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Back in Japan

Rev. J. COOPER ROBINSON

AFTER nearly two years' absence it is nice to be back in Japan. One is glad to return to the place where nearly half of one's life has been spent, which has been the scene of by far the greater part of one's ministerial work, and where one feels that the time which still remains to be spent in the Master's service can be most profitably employed. En route at Vancouver I had the opportunity of a visit to Stanley Park. This was particularly interesting on account of its being made on the occasion of the unveiling of a fine monument to the memory of fifty-six Canadian-Japanese soldiers who fell in France and Flanders while fighting for liberty and justice in the army of their adopted country. It is to be hoped that this monument will help to keep Canadians from forgetting that the Japanese, while still owing allegiance to their Emperor or as naturalized subjects of King George, did their part readily and bravely to win the war. One hundred and ninety-two went from British Columbia, of whom fifty-four laid down their lives with our sons and

beginning of our work. He told me that he still uses the Bible that I gave him at that time. Talks with some of the missionaries, including one from Korea, and two of the leading Japanese clergy helped me greatly to understand the present situation and what has been going on during the two years of absence from Japan. Now I am back again in the city where we made our first home in Japan in 1888, and am writing in the house where we lived for 13 years. This is not to be my home again, however, as the Bishop has appointed me to Gifu, which is the centre of a district about thirty miles long, in which my work will be done. When I can take up my residence at Gifu is at present quite uncertain as Japan, like other countries, is suffering from a shortage of dwellings, and the best I can now do is to engage a house which will be vacated about the first of October. My Japanese associates are now two less than they were when I went to Canada two years ago, and there is no immediate prospect of increase, as we have lost two theological students during that time, and have only one left at the College of Tokyo. It will thus be seen that we must constantly pray to the Lord of the harvest not only to send out more missionaries from Canada but to raise up among the Christians here men and women of spiritual power and gifts for ministry who will be able to resist the greater financial attractions of other callings and esteem the "reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures" of this world. There can be no doubt that the majority of missionaries as well as their Japanese fellow-workers have been inadequately supplied during the past two years with those things which are necessary for the satisfactory prosecution of their work. Prices have lately declined a little, and it is hoped that they will continue to fall. However, it is a great privilege to be here again, surrounded by multitudes of needy souls, many of whom are ready to hear and receive the word of life. Prayer is earnestly requested that the work now being resumed may be done entirely under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that it may be successful in the true sense of the word and for the glory of "our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ."



FORMER HOME OF REV. J. COOPER ROBINSON, HIRASHIMA, JAPAN. BOY AND GIRL IN GARDEN.

brothers, and of those who returned one hundred and three were wounded—some of them crippled for life—while ten Military Medals were won, and several were promoted from the ranks to be non-commissioned officers. As one listened to the words of appreciation with which the monument was received on behalf of the city by a member of the City Council, and the brief but loyal and patriotic speeches by Japanese which followed, and looked around upon the quiet orderly crowd of Japanese present, mostly workmen and women, but clean and well-dressed—and when one further contemplated the fact that among the 13,000 Japanese now in Canada between 4,000 and 5,000 are Canadian citizens who are proud to have given their sons and brothers to die for Canada, one wondered how it was possible for serious-minded people to regard the Japanese as a menace to our civilization. We reached Yokohama two weeks after leaving Victoria. While in Tokyo I had a very interesting conversation with the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, and an old friend, whom I had not seen for years, who also spent several years in the Foreign Office and participated in many important international transactions, including the peace treaty with Russia at the close of the war between Japan and that country in 1905. This man was a schoolboy when I first met him, over 30 years ago, and lived in Nagoya. He was a Christian and helped us for a while at the very

THE JAPANESE WAY. Perhaps the Japanese are no more cruel in kind than are the Christian peoples. At all events, from a recent educational report, it is learned that children are taught not to expect mercy in the hereafter if they torture dumb animals. Thus, the little fellows are taught that if they kill a cat, the animal will revenge itself for seven generations. If a boy kills a frog and watches the twitchings of its death struggles, the boy's hand will tremble when he tries to write. These precepts are inculcated not by the rod, which is left to spoil in Japan, but by moral suasion.

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