

*From the Rev. G. M. MEACHAM, M.A., dated Numadzu, Japan,
26th April, 1877.*

As I recall our last interview with you in your office, and your most tender and earnest prayer for us as you commended us to God, I am reminded of your request to write frequently and fully as to the work we are engaged in. At my last writing I was sanguine as to the prospects at Yoshiwari. I did see what made me think they did not want my colleague to go alone, but the congregations were remarkably good and attentive. We were selling Chinese Bibles and Japanese Gospels to numbers of the people, and acting on the principle of giving no offence so far as possible consistently with declaring the whole counsel of God; and so thought ourselves warranted in expecting success. But on the 31st ultimo, we were surprised to find that our congregation consisted only of four adults and a few children, and to hear that it was impossible to have services any longer. A number of reasons were given, which were evidently only feints to draw my attention away from some real reason. "Don't you want to hear the gospel?" said I. "Oh, yes," was the reply, and a troubled look gathered on their brows. But when I offered to come and teach ever so small a number of persons, my offer was declined. And it was not till we had come away that Mr. Satow told me that some official had interfered to stop our work. Since then Dr. McDonald has written me that he learns that an officer of the Kincho (the Local Government) had put his ban upon the services, but that he thought that the door might be opened again after awhile.

One thing is as evident as daylight,—that however favourable the Central Government may to the spread of Christianity, there is little disposition on the part of the local authorities to have the gospel preached, and that we are tolerated only because it is to their advantage. I do believe that if it would cease to-morrow to be to their interest to have

me in Numadzu, my last sermon here has been already preached. We cannot conceal it from ourselves that a vigilant enemy is on the alert. Doors of usefulness, that were opening, are being closed. Persons in whom we were becoming deeply interested, and who were showing every interest in Christianity, and in some cases had asked for baptism, are suddenly whisked away, and nothing more is seen of them. A fine young fellow, the son of Buddhists, who would have been baptized before this, and whose heart was set on becoming a Christian minister, is not allowed to come near us. An omnipresent and sleepless foe, all the more formidable because invisible, seeks to neutralize all our efforts. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." But our Captain is invincible, our weapons are of the right metal, and the issue we do not fear.

Our work at Yoshiwari was not utterly in vain. Hundreds there and in the surrounding country heard from us the words of everlasting life and eternal truth. The word of God, has found its way into that section of the country. A few there, I believe, are worshipping the living God, and will be saved with the power of an endless life; and a few of my students from that region, who, I hope, will become Christians, may yet spread the flame far and wide.

I was distressed last night by the remark of a valued correspondent, the Rev. Hugh Johnson of Hamilton, touching my progress in the Japanese language. It seems that he has heard that I have preached to this people in their own tongue, and straightway leaped to the conclusion that I have made wonderful progress. It is not so. Only with very abundant help from my interpreter, and most laborious effort at putting