



THE REV. MR. KENNEDY AND MASAZO KAKUZEN.

determination of character and of the guiding providence of God.

Matsumoto is a flourishing town, situated in the midst of a most fertile and populous plain. It was formerly the seat of a daimyo, or territorial baron, whose castle still remains intact, forming with its walls and lofty turreted roof a picturesque landmark for the neighborhood. The town itself was greatly injured in the floods through the bursting of the banks of a river which runs across the plain behind and above the town. The water rushed through the streets in torrents, washing them out in many cases to the depth of several feet, and covering the lower floors of the houses with mud and slime and refuse from the rice fields. Several people were drowned in the streets themselves, and the town, after some months, still presents a very dilapidated appearance.

The missionary work is, of course, in its infancy, but Mr. Kennedy is gathering about him a band of earnest Japanese workers. Mr. Kakuzen, a Japanese who was ordained in Canada, had come to Matsumoto some little time before him to begin the work, and, besides preaching and teaching at Matsumoto itself, they have work in four or five other towns distant from one to two day's journey from their centre. Their house is situated in one of the main streets, and they seem on excellent terms with their neighbors, having immedi-

ately on their arrival been properly enrolled in what is called the five house band. This is an interesting relic of the old social customs of the country which has passed away to a large extent in Tokyo and the larger towns. According to the custom, your neighbors on your right and left, together with the three houses opposite, form one band mutually responsible to the authorities for each other. A head of one of the houses is chosen as chief, whose duty it is to represent the others in all matters needing application to the governing body of the town. The first duty of a new member who takes up his residence in one of these communities is to send small presents to each house, humbly requesting admittance into their fellowship. The morning after my arrival we had an amusing illustration generally of the unity of human nature, and specifically of Japanese life. At a little after seven in the morning a terrible uproar was heard proceeding from the right hand of the three opposite houses—crochery smashing, paper slides flying about, and all the signs of a violent domestic commotion. Soon the head of the "five band" was seen hurrying across the street to inquire into the matter, and his arrival soon restored affairs to their ordinary quietude. Later on we heard the cause of the turmoil. At breakfast the husband, who does not bear the best of reputations, had

incidentally remarked that he had no very high opinion of his wife's father. She retorted that singular to say her opinion of his own father was of a similar nature. This was of course too much for any husband's temper, and, as she had stood up to emphasize her opinion, the push he gave her sent her through one of the paper slides, which in falling knocked over the boiling pot of silk worms cocoons, which had been got ready for the morning's work of spinning. This was indeed adding injury to insult on the wife's part, and led to the general breaking up of crochery, etc., which we had heard, and finally to the attendance of the head of the band to pacify the household.

In the evening there was a "Sobetsu kai," or meeting of welcome, in my honor, which was attended by all of the little band of converts. It was held in Mr. Kakuzen's house, in which also the Sunday services are carried on. There were about thirty present, young and old, among whom were some who, so far, are only inquirers, that is, Japanese who are favorably disposed towards Christianity, and are willing to attend classes for instruction, but who have not yet been regularly admitted into the order of catechumens. We had a very pleasant evening together, congratulatory speeches and their answers; tiny cups of tea and bean cakes by way of refreshments; and then the younger