

plan for its accomplishment, and give intelligent reasons for hope of ultimate success.

The early romance of missions gives way to the prosaic commonplace of well-known facts. Our missionaries go to no mysterious and distant world never to return. Every land has been explored; we know the geography of our globe. Every people has been studied; we know the history, the language, the population, the customs, the religion of all. No land is far away, no nation is alien—modern civilization binds all together. The world grows small as we can state its area accurately in square miles, but our work grows large as the consciousness of the mighty populations of heathen empires is thrust upon us.

A new study of engrossing interest is begun—new questions of supreme importance press for solution. What is to be the future of the East? Are the great empires of Asia forever to repeat the history of the past? Shall the coming centuries bring no Kingdom of God for the great majority of the human race? Is Asia to continue oppressed, superstitious, ignorant, idolatrous, degraded, wretched? Is there national regeneration, is there new birth for a continent, is it possible for great empires to start upon a new life of liberty, progress and truth after millenniums of slavery, stagnation and error?

Such questions demand earnest study from all who study their fellow men, from all who love their fellow men; and to the Christian no subject can be of more absorbing interest. Foreign Missions are not remote, of far-away interest; to the Christian they concern his own personal faith and hope. He confesses Christ to be Lord, he calls Him Light of Light, Very God of Very God. Christ is not one among many prophets; He is the brightness of the Father's glory. Christ's teaching is absolute and final truth; not one of ten great religions. Such a faith makes great demands—it is everything or it is nothing. Christ is Son of God, or an impostor. This faith is to be vindicated, not so much by labored argument as by victory. Let Christ divide the sovereignty of the world with others, and we cannot hold our faith. As we learn the world, we learn also that Christ must reign over all, that at His name every knee must bow. Foreign Missions are the realization of the faith of the church.

Japan, first of all Asiatic empires, seeks answer to these problems. Under most favoring conditions it tries the great experiment, turning from the East and striving for position among the progressive, enlightened and Christian nations of the West. So far as man can judge, upon the issue of this experiment rests the future of Asia. Let Japan succeed, and China will follow in the same path; let Japan fail, and what hope remains for the greater empires which will face their greater problems under less favoring conditions? Let us briefly consider the conditions in Japan favorable to success.

I. Japan is an empire of thirty-seven millions of people. It has a