

flood the air with their deep, mellow tones. The altars within the temples are gorgeous with gilded images, candelabra, and the other paraphernalia of worship. The air is heavy with incense. Priests in gorgeous robes chant Sanscrit prayers, whose meaning is unintelligible to the hearers and even to most of the priests themselves. In the yards of some of the temples there are seen wooden pillars incised with prayers, and having a little iron wheel attached. The wheel can easily be set in motion by the hand, every revolution bringing as much merit to the worshipper as though he had repeated the prayer."

Confucianism, on the other hand, has no temples and no priests. It is propagated by teachers.

Shintoism teaches no code of morals, and nothing of the life hereafter. It is largely an instrument of the government, inculcating reverence for the Emperor. Buddhism satisfies the emotional cravings. Confucianism gives rules of moral conduct "Yet," says our text-book,

"We must not forget that the average person in Japan does not analyze or separate the three systems. To him they are an amalgam forming one method of life. Except the severely bigoted sectarians, the mass of the people use various temples, and the reading classes get their mental pabulum alike from the books of the writers or teachers of the native Japanese, the Aryan, or the Chinese systems."

So much for the darker side of the religious problem in Japan. But there is another, a tenfold brighter side. The heaven is working, and already the world perceives the flavor of Christianity in the nation. The num-

ber of Japanese Protestant Christians may seem insignificant (55,315 in a population of 50,000,000), but their effect upon the life of the nation leads us to ask what wonderful things may we not expect when the harvest has been greatly multiplied?

By no means the least interesting chapter in the history of missionary progress in Japan is that on the work done by the Roman Catholic Church nearly four centuries ago and the attendant persecutions. It affords



KOMAGOME CHURCH, TOKIO.

abundant illustrations of the kind and quality of Japanese Christians.

Says Mr. Addison:

"Thirty years after the landing of Xavier it was estimated that the Roman Catholics had two hundred churches and one hundred and fifty thousand converts in Japan.

"The priests had great success till 1587, when the Shogun, thinking he had discovered a plot of the priests to overthrow his government, decreed the banishment of all foreign teachers of religion.

"Ten years later, twenty-six persons were publicly crucified in Nagasaki for defying the edict. The great persecution, however, came in 1614, when Ieyasu, believing he had dis-