



SCENE IN ST. ANDREWS (N.B.) PARISH.

(See page 251.)

centuries, the kaleidoscopic changes of the last thirty years in Japan have been wonderful. For a few years during that period the people seemed to fix some attention on religion, but it was distracted by political excitement. And now those who thirty years ago were practically slaves are either in possession of the franchise or clamoring for it. Every one seems to think he has now reached a rank where nothing is impossible. All are on the *qui vive* for the next move in the political field. And at the same time a nation, until now very poor, has entered madly into the race for riches. People's minds are so absorbed with political changes and with striving after wealth and position that religion is altogether overlooked. Christianity, Buddhism, and Shintoism are almost equally disregarded by the general mass. Threatened with complete destruction, Buddhism has of late put forth extraordinary efforts, with the result that it is experiencing in some places a slight revival. But, in general, it seems to be treasured by old women and a portion of the farming class. There are many places, such as Nagano, here where Buddhism, through its large possessions and through its pilgrimages, wields a great secular influence, although its religious power has so much waned.

In this indifference to all religion, the leading statesmen set the example. It is boasted of as

a national virtue by many of the newspapers, and, most wonderful of all, is proclaimed to the pupils of almost every common government school.

At present the belief is general in the schools that religion and education can never be anything but enemies. In the Normal, or teachers' training schools of the two *ken*, with which I am best acquainted, the future school teachers are taught that the true foundation of national morality and virtue is patriotism and secular education; that religion is a thing which can be dispensed with.

It is true that the officials, school teachers, and scholars are compelled to worship the emperor and the emperor's picture, but even this idolatry seems altogether formal, and is in no sense a substitute for religion.

In the sudden rush for education the majority have been attracted by its form, but have missed its true meaning. There seems just now no immediate cure for these fallacies. We must leave Japan to pursue her educational course until she has taken up the book of fact, and learnt therein the hard lessons best taught by experience.

(4) Another great obstacle to the progress of missions in Japan is *national prejudice*.

"There never has been a nation which did not think itself at least the equal of every other nation. There never has been a great nation which did not think itself superior to every other," says Lew. Wallace. This is especially true of the whole of the Mongolian race. As the ancient Jew, considering himself a member of a superior and favored people, not only hated, but despised the Gentile, even to his Roman conqueror, so does the Mongolian to-day regard the foreigner. This feeling is most marked in China—in a slightly less degree, it appears, in Japan. Among a large portion of the middle class this antipathy to and dread of foreigners seems to be the mainspring of almost every political impulse. This prejudice is a great bar to Christianity, the enemies of which rarely miss an opportunity of telling the people that the religion of Jesus is a foreign thing, is the religion of foreigners, and brought to Japan by foreigners.

When speaking to the more ignorant, one is often told that Japan's gods are different from those of other countries, and that Japan has no more need of a foreigner's God than she has of a foreigner's king. Those more educated will commonly tell you that Japan has already two excellent religions, Buddhism and Shintoism, which are quite sufficient for one country. Even among native Christians, this dread of being called foreign is so great that the hope and aim of a large number of them is to set up a type of Christianity in Japan which shall be distinctly Japanese—just as Shintoism is Japanese, and as Buddhism in Japan bears little