

the individual Christian and the Christian Church. By all means let us do whatever we can to face the situation involved in the social and economic problems of our parishes, but while we are thus concerned with conditions we must never lose sight of the underlying causes, especially the cause of all causes, that of sin. The minister must never be content with altering conditions. He must attack causes. All this will prove a peril, and, like the man of old, we may say, "Thy servant was busy here and there, and he was gone"; "They made me keeper of the vineyards, but mine own have I not kept." (3) The protection of ministry. For the power we need and against the perils we meet the one protection is that suggested by the text, the Holy Scriptures of God. They are at once our medicine and our food. They will provide that prophylactic which we must have against every foe of the spiritual life, and that nourishment which we shall require for our strenuous service. And the man who puts first things first and gives himself unreservedly to the ministry as depicted in the Scripture and in the Ordinal will always find blessing in his service and will certainly bring glory to God. This will mean consecration and concentration. As St. Paul says, we are to take "heed to ourselves and our doctrine." We are to "continue in these things," and when we heed the words, "this one thing I do," we shall easily make "full proof of our ministry."

The Famine in Japan

By the Rev. J. Cooper Robinson, M.A.

FAMINE conditions now prevail in the northern districts of Japan, including the Island of Hokkaido.

The scarcity is due to the unseasonable weather, which prevailed last summer and autumn, and resulted in the almost entire failure of the rice crop. Added to this the catch of fish, on which a large part of the people depend for their living, was very small. The afflicted territory stretches northward from the town of Fukushima and includes the Provinces of Fukushima, Miyagi, Iwate, Aomori and the Hokkaido.

In a report given out as official, it was stated that "9,375,325 people were in need of food." This was explained to mean that, in order to tide over until the new crop came in, rations sufficient for that number of people must be provided. The extent, therefore, of the present distress is very great.

In much of this territory the conditions in ordinary circumstances are of such a nature as to give the impression of extreme poverty and there is little reserve power for a time of famine. In the train of distress from the failure of crops there has followed a paralysis of business, besides which the population is menaced, in certain localities, with the spread of epidemic diseases.

The reports of those who are on the ground leave no doubt as to the pitiable condition of the people. For example, writing concerning the famine district in the Hokkaido, the Rev. W. T. Johnson says:—

"I have seen the official report and have talked with others who sent a committee to visit the worst places mentioned in that report and I know that the report is very conservative and pertains to the suffering at present and not to the suffering that will be in a month or two.

"A summary of that report is as follows:— 'There is a famine district in Hokkaido, covering an area of 456,231 cho, or 1,141,577 acres. Of this district, 50,240 cho are devoted to rice culture and 405,982 are devoted to general farming. The estimated loss is 20,491,191 yen. There are 12,334 households, or 66,670 persons in need of help. The past summer and fall were cold and the rice crop was practically a total failure. For the past three years, the immigrants, who must work hard to clear up their land, have had poor crops and the failure this year leaves them in a pitiable condition. Men are subsisting on straw, the bark of trees, unmaturing daikon (a kind of radish or carrot), acorns powdered and made into gruel, buckwheat chaff powdered and made into gruel by pouring on hot water. Mothers living on such food have been unable to feed their babies and have made a milk substitute for them out of the hulls of rice which they beat into a powder and mix with boiling water. The young men have left home in search of work, while the aged and the children are left behind to freeze or starve, unless outside relief is brought to them. The committee that went from Sapporo

to examine the conditions in three of the worst villages found one woman out of 15 who was able to nurse her infant."

"Dempun, a starch used by confectioners, is made out of Irish potatoes. When the starch is taken from the potato, very little nourishment is left in the dregs; still one of the delicacies of the famine district is a dumpling made of straw and this Dempun dregs. To flavour, and the food certainly needs flavouring, brine of last year's pickles is used while the dregs of the daikon pickle, is a delicacy."

Writing from Sendai concerning conditions in the Province of Miyagi, Rev. E. K. McCord, makes the following statement:—

"There are 900 families, 2,800 people, with absolutely no means of living. Having some means, but insufficient to maintain life, there are 3,700 families, or 9,800 people; without work and if uncared for, who will soon be destitute, there are 8,900 families, or 47,300 people. As far as possible work will be provided for these people. It is manifestly the purpose of the Provincial Government to do its best to look out for these people without outside help, which will not be possible on the whole."

Writing from Morioka to one of the local newspapers, Rev. J. C. Ambler an Anglican missionary, gives to the public the following information concerning the epidemic of typhoid fever:—

"On January 27th, the Rev. Mr. Shiga was informed that there were 30 families in distress, for want of rice, at the village of Shikawa in Minami Tsugaru Gun. Also, in addition to the scarcity of food, an epidemic of typhoid fever is raging in the same village, there being as many as 10 persons afflicted in this way, with the probability that the disease will spread throughout the village."

It is difficult to form an accurate estimate of the amount needed for the relief of the sufferers from famine, but it is safe to say that the funds contributed will fall far short of the amount needed to tide over until the summer season. The Japanese Government has appropriated \$3,000,000. This will be used, however, not for direct relief, but in supplying funds to public corporations and banks in order that work may be given to people in the famine district, and that capital may be provided with which to prepare for future farm work. About a million yen (\$500,000) have been contributed in response to an appeal made to the public by the business men of Japan. The foreign community and the missionaries have also collected funds which have been sent to the relief committees. The contributions made through charity organizations by private individuals will not be sufficient to meet the needs of the afflicted people. For this reason it has been deemed necessary to appeal to the churches abroad for help.

As regards methods of raising funds locally, and applying relief, Rev. W. T. Johnson, speaking of the work of the Christian community, says:

"Let me add one word about the way the Sapporo Christians went to work to aid the sufferers. A committee, composed of members of the different churches of the city, met and organized itself into the Hokkaido Famine Relief Society and opened headquarters in the city Y.M.C.A. building. This committee took the official figures pertaining to the famine district and sent a sub-committee to verify the facts. This committee returned and reported that the conditions were worse than the official report revealed. It was then decided to block off the city into sections which would be visited by volunteers. Each church was made responsible for the collection to be taken in a certain district. The canvass was made on six consecutive nights. Before beginning the nightly canvass a prayer meeting was held in the Y.M.C.A. rooms and then the volunteers went through the districts to be canvassed that night. Sometimes 50 or 60 would engage in this canvass. People were asked to give rice, barley, clothing, bedding and money as they chose. Viewed from a distance, the committee looked like a small lantern procession. The houses visited were taken by storm, and people who thought they could give nothing, soon learned that they could fill a small bag with one sho of rice. The first complete canvass resulted in a collection of rice, clothing, etc., and money to the value of nearly 1,000 yen.

As soon as the collection was completed, the rice and various grains were sent to the Sorachi district to be distributed. The clothing and bedding were disinfected and this too has been sent. The money will be turned into food supplies and sent to the famine district. This is the first canvass but there will be others as the season advances. There have been some pleasant experiences and surprises for those who carried on the

canvass, but the one lesson is that a united body, though small, can carry on a very great work. We hear of Buddhist committees at work in other parts of the Island and we are thankful that this work, started and carried on by the Sapporo Christians, is having such widespread effect."

A Famine Relief Committee has been appointed by the Conference of Federated Missions, an organization comprising some 30 Missions working in Japan. All funds entrusted to this committee will be used, in co-operation with others engaged in the same good work, in bringing aid to the famine sufferers.

Contributions should be sent to the Rev. H. K. Miller, 9 Tsukiji, Tokyo, the newly-elected treasurer of the Conference of Federated Missions.

(Signed) S. H. Wainwright,
Chairman, Publicity Committee,
Conference of Federated Missions.
Committee.

Rev. S. H. Wainwright, Rev. F. N. Scott,
Rev. S. E. Cooper, Rev. S. V. H. Peeke,
Rev. H. Pedley, Miss Ruth Ragan,
Rev. J. Cooper Robinson, Rev. W. P. Buncombe,
Rev. G. Allchin. (C.M.S.)

[In sending the above article Mr. Robinson says that the distress is very great and is likely to continue for a good while. "I have just received \$100 from a kind friend in Toronto to be used for the relief of the sufferers and should be glad to receive and forward other contributions if any should prefer to send them to me. Cheques on Canadian banks can be cashed here, but in many respects the best way to send money is through the Post Office. The sender gets a receipt and the order is sent directly from the P.O. in Canada to the P.O. exchange office in Tokyo from which an order in Japanese money is promptly sent to the payee here."—Ed. Canadian Churchman.]

THIS AND THAT

Thoughts of an Eastern Churchman

The Summer School of Theology, which proved so successful last year, is to be held again, this year at King's College. Rev. Dr. Abbot-Smith, Canon Cowie, Canon Vroom and other clergymen, will read papers. Rev. W. S. H. Morris, of Aylesford, N.S., whose paper last year on the Incarnation was so favourably received, will lecture on "The Christian Ministry."

A general Mission, during the last week in October, is to be held in the Deanery of Avon, which comprises the two counties of King's and Hants. A committee of management has already been appointed.

A prominent politician, I see from the Toronto papers, has recently been deploring in public the folly of our sectarian differences, and the terrible resultant evils to the cause of religion generally. All of which, of course, is undeniably only too true. But what of the "sectarian" divisions of politicians? Now our unhappy religious divisions do (or did) stand for what people honestly believed were fundamental principles. They may or may not have been mistaken, but they did originate in, and they do represent conscientious differences based upon very strong and sacred convictions. We are probably coming to realize that these differences which we honestly believed involved essential truths and fundamental principles were due rather to a divergent outlook, or what is more probable, to our inability to make ourselves intelligible to each other. And, however they came, nine-tenths of us at least are heartily ashamed of them. Not a Christian church but has officially acknowledged the evils of our divisions, and expressed the earnest hope that they may be healed, and scarcely one that has not taken definite steps in that direction.

But what of the divisions of politicians. Can anything more farcical, paltry and unreal be imagined than the questions which "divide" our political parties. What principles, I would like to know, are even ostensibly at stake. Once perhaps in a generation, or say twice in a lifetime, an issue arises between parties that does involve some principle, and we have a contest about something that is really worth fighting for and threshing out. With the exception of these very rare occasions when an appreciable percentage of our citizens do rise above blind unreasoning partyism, and vote according to the merits of some particular question, how often do our party conflicts rise any higher than mere faction fights, and "the battles of kites and crows"? The party system of