

So, too, has the government shown its impartiality. It has been charged with hostility to Christianity, and in isolated instances subordinate officials have given occasion for the charge; but during the war the government has directly aided efforts put forth by the Church and the Bible societies. This has been the more noticeable as the war might have served as a pretext for a different attitude; but no pretext was sought, as none was desired. Prince Komatsu, commander of the Imperial Guard, gave permission to distribute copies of the Bible to all in his command, thanked the workers, and appointed men to assist. Mr. Loomis, of the Bible Society, was given special permission to visit all garrisons, and the missionaries and Japanese Christians in Hiroshima, the headquarters, had full opportunity for evangelistic work. Finally, two Japanese clergymen were allowed to go to the seat of war on the same terms as the Buddhist priests.

With the national triumph the Church feels an increased responsibility. It has long talked of foreign missions, now it begins the work. A united effort is making for the evangelization of Korea. As part of this work it should be noted that some of the Korean students recently come to Japan have been sent to the school in Sendai which is maintained by the Reformed (German) Church in the United States and is under the control of the Rev. M. Oshikawa.

At home more than ever the Church talks of independence. This is peculiarly manifest in the Kumiai churches (Congregational). Two years ago the General Conference decided to admit no church to membership which is aided by the American Board, and this year (the first week in May) the Conference voted to receive no further subsidy for its home missionary society.

Were this action the result of heightened national feeling only, it perhaps need not be regretted. One hesitates about it, and fears it is premature, but in other lines of action such hesitation and doubt have been proved mistaken. Why not in Christian work also? But the doubt is increased as we are told that the action is also from a desire for greater freedom of thought—in fact, of complete emancipation from all creeds. No matter what a man may think about Christ, no matter what is his belief about God, if only he seek to live the life of our Lord and to extend the kingdom. Some of the leaders, we are told, hold “not Christianity at all, but simply the Confucianism of olden times.” And though “most of the pastors and evangelists are within the limits of a reasonable orthodoxy, yet with almost perfect unanimity they stand for freedom of thought.” That is freedom for men who find “no room at all for an objective revelation,” and eliminate from the “definition of God all that we of the West prize in the idea of personality.” As neither the funds nor the missionaries of the American Board stand for such “freedom,” complete independence is declared.

At the same time it must not be forgotten that the Kumiai churches