

## CONCLUSION.

The study of the history of modern missions is one of the most interesting, fascinating, inspiring subjects that can engage an active young mind. It deepens the spiritual life. It promotes intelligent prayer. It increases giving. It reacts wonderfully upon the spiritual life and activities of the local church.

## QUESTION.

If hundreds of Young People's Societies have found in the study of Christian missions that breadth of outlook and spiritual uplift which has put new life, purpose, and power into its half-slumbering organization, and made its influence felt throughout the church, why may not I take steps to secure the organization of a class in my own church during this present winter season?

## Some Objections

Obstacles will be encountered in an attempt to organize a Mission Study Class, but they merely test your purpose. What really worthy enterprise ever succeeds without either smashing through or quietly, tactfully circumventing a few obstacles? We note the following among the objections that we hear to the organization of Mission Study Classes:

1. No Time.—It does seem really as if there were not enough evenings in the week to enable us to meet all of our church and social obligations, but it is to be noted that most people have approximately seven evenings each week, more or less, at their disposal, and they presumably appropriate these evenings for the things that are most important in their lives. If we really have convictions that the study of the progress of Christ's Kingdom is an important, helpful study, we will find time for that study somewhere in the seven days and nights of the week. We find time for other things, and the discovery of time for mission study may merely call for a change or emphasis as to what things are of trustworthiness. It has been noted that "Miss Pleasure" usually has no difficulty in finding an evening for her whist party, and "Miss Culture" usually in some way manages to find time for her "Browning Club." If we are equally earnest as to the importance of mission study, we will find time for it in some way, and the testimony of those who have been enrolled in study classes indicates that there are few ways in which time can be more profitably employed.

2. There are very few persons who will join.—So much the better. Experience has shown quite conclusively that a small class is very much to be preferred to a large class. Some of the best work has been done in a class of five or six.

3. No leader.—Missionary specialists have put in months of time and hundreds of dollars have been spent in preparing and printing manuals, helps, and reference books, are placed at the disposal of the leader, in order to enable him to conduct the class successfully without having to master the entire subject of Japanese missions. The helps that are prepared for leaders include, among many other things, the exact selection of Scripture appropriate to the evening, suggestions for the assignment of the next lesson, suggestions for the review, a pronunciation drill, questions and answers on the lesson, a chart drill

giving in miniature form an appropriate chart that may be reproduced by the class artist on a large sheet of paper or on the blackboard, illustrations suited to the lesson, suggestions for special topics that may be assigned to the members of the class for special investigation, and in connection with each of these special topics, reference is made to the exact page of reference books where material on these topics may be found. Similar reference is also made to timely articles that are appearing in the current magazines and periodicals.

With these helps, furnished by the Methodist Mission Rooms, it is possible for an inexperienced leader to conduct a class very successfully, if the leader is but willing to give the subject earnest thought, prayer, and time.

4. Our young people will not study.—This is really a somewhat serious obstacle and one not easily overcome, for it is true that a successful Mission Study Class does require some work on the part of its members, but once begun, the work proves fascinating. The textbook is an interesting story of missionary achievements, the side references open up new fields of knowledge, and persons who, it was thought, would not give time to the study of missions, are found enthusiastically searching after new sources of information.

5. Our people are not interested in missions.—No better reason could be given for the organization of a Mission Study Class than the fact that at present people are not interested. Their lack of interest merely indicates their lack of knowledge, and there is no better way to get them interested than to gather them once a week around a table for the united, prayerful study of missionary heroes and heroines.

After all, the best answer to all objections is faithful prayer that the obstacles may be removed. Not infrequently has a successful class been organized and conducted in societies, where at the beginning only one person had any sympathy with the suggestion; but that one person, by prayer and by tactful effort, overcame the objections and enlisted one after another of the members, until the Mission Study Class came to be regarded as one of the essential and most fruitful missionary societies of the church.

## The Best Books on Japan

Three editions in three months is sufficient assurance of the popularity of the Mission Study Reference Library on Japan.

It was published with some fear and trepidation lest it prove a financial loss. The offer of \$10.25 worth of the best and newest books on Japan for \$5.50—about one-half the publisher's price—did not leave much margin for losses caused by unsold volumes, etc. But the value, the quality, the brightness, the up-to-dateness of the books has secured for them a most gratifying sale.

The Library Committee of the Young People's Missionary Movement, consisting of representatives of six prominent Missionary Boards and Societies, selected nine of what they regarded as best of the recent books on Japan, the selection being made with special reference to the needs of Mission Study Classes studying "Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom." These books were then purchased from the publishers, in the form of flat, unbound sheets, and bound in attractive, uniform, cloth binding, enabling the Young People's Missionary Movement to sell them through denominational boards, in sets of nine volumes, at about one-half the publisher's price, or \$5.50 per set.

The following are the books that are contained in the Library:

"A Maker of the New Japan." By Rev. J. D. Davis, D.D.

"Japan and Its Regeneration." By Rev. Otis Cary.

"Japan—Country, Court and People." By J. C. Calhoun Newton, M.A.

"Evolution of the Japanese." By Rev. Sidney L. Gulick.

"A Hand-book of Modern Japan." By Ernest W. Clement.

"A Maker of the New Orient." By William Elliot Griffis, L.H.D.

"The Gist of Japan." By Rev. R. B. Perry, A.M., Ph.D.

"Japanese Girls and Women." By Alice Mabel Bacon.

"Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom."

"Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom" is substituted for "Dux Christus," when requested, for the use of Women's Missionary Societies that are using "Dux Christus" as a text-book, and consequently prefer "Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom" in their Reference Library.

These books may be ordered only through the Methodist Mission Rooms, Address P. C. Stephenson, 33 Richmond Street West, Toronto, Ont.

## Mission Study Class Notes

1. Nearly 40,000 copies of the new book on Japan, "Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom," have been sold in the last four months.

2. Several shipments of the Forward Mission Study Text Books and Library have gone to Great Britain, where the series has been adopted by the Young People's Organizations of the Church Missionary Society.

3. Among the interesting accessories for the study class hour is the set of United Study Pictures, consisting of twenty-five attractive, half-tone prints representing Japanese life, and furnished to classes by the denominational Mission Boards at twenty-five cents per set.

4. More than twice as many Mission Study Classes have been organized in Young People's Societies during the first three months of this year, 1904, as were organized during the entire twelve months of last year, and the best of the mission study season, January, February, and March, is yet before us.

5. The fact that three editions of the Mission Study Reference Library on Japan have been ordered within three months indicates the demand on the part of Study Classes for reference books and the eagerness with which they avail themselves of the best literature concerning the most interesting nation of the Orient.

6. A large cloth map of Japan, three by five feet in size, has been prepared for the special use of Study Classes, and by having them made in large quantities, the price has been reduced to \$1.00. The maps can be secured through the denominational missionary boards.

7. The "Helps for Leaders" on the individual lessons of "The Heart of Japan," are prepared in a much more attractive form than were the "Helps" of last year, and include a wealth of suggestions for the class hour that make it possible for almost any leader to command and retain the interest of the class throughout the entire session.

8. Classes that organize and fail to report their organization and the name of their leader to the Secretary of the Forward Movement, deprive themselves of the special helps that are to be had through the Secretary, and of the inspiration and uplift that comes from contact with the general mission study movement that centres in the Secretary's office.