

Missionary.

Blossom Time in Japan.

I am beginning to understand why Japan is called "The Flowery Kingdom," though I cannot begin to describe the floral splendor which entrances me as I go out along the country roads or even through the city. I have never even dreamed of such profusion and beauty in flowers. The plum trees have been in bloom for several weeks. The cherry trees are just beginning to blossom. The fruit of these are of little or no value; they are cultivated for the sake of their beautiful blossoms. Some of them are white as snow, and some are a lovely delicate pink, unlike any blossoms that I have seen in Canada. Some blossoms are single and some are double. In the park here in Kanazawa is a cherry tree whose branches cover an area of eighty feet in diameter. If you can imagine this great tree all aglow with blossoms like a great dazzling snowy mound, then I need not attempt any further description. But the Camellias! Such indescribable fascination. As I go along through Noto last week I saw many masses of Camellia trees over thirty feet in height, their dark green glossy leaves set off by hundreds of bright red flowers about the size of roses, and at a distance resembling handsome roses. But I have not described the flowers, nor can I. As I gaze upon nature all about me, I feel that the God of nature is truly a God who loves beauty, and I feel my own moral and spiritual deformity and ugliness; then am I filled with a longing, ardent desire to be saved from every meanness and sin that my character may harmonize with the Beautiful and Good that is all about me. How much more will He who painted with such exquisite and delicate touch, delight in the sweetness and perfection of His children?

D. N.

Ways to Promote Giving.

The Young People's Societies should by all means bestir themselves to promote scriptural habits of giving. They may well hold a public meeting when the idea of Christian stewardship is fully presented. This meeting should be a meeting extraordinary, and should be very carefully worked up. The preparations should be begun weeks beforehand. Members should be asked to engage in daily prayer that the meeting may be especially honored of God. A special card may be printed soliciting prayer and inviting attendance. Leaders should be carefully selected, and should have placed in their hands literature bearing on the subject. In this meeting especially we should follow Carey's motto, "Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God."

At the close of the meeting pledges may be taken, stating clearly the amount, daily or weekly, which each propose to give.

Dr. Gordon once said: "Human nature cannot be trusted to carry out its generous impulses. If I should succeed in winding any of you up to a determination to do generous things you would run down again before next Sunday, unless your resolution was fastened by a ratchet. This is what a solemn pledge to pay money to God amounts to, a ratchet to hold us up to the pitch we have reached."

The public meeting may be followed by a personal canvass by a carefully appointed committee, so that no one who was not at the meeting may be overlooked,

and that those who canvass may find out and correct erroneous impressions that may have been given.

It goes without saying that collections of payments should be made regular and promptly, whether the envelope plan is adopted, or the mite box, or whatever it may be. A great responsibility is upon the committee to see that the payments are regularly made. Those who are young, and are in the formative period of life, will not acquire scriptural habits of giving without much help.—S. Earl Taylor.

Modern Heroes.

If this terrible massacre (of Chinese Christians) had occurred in the days of Diocletian, monuments would have been built and days set apart to commemorate so great a sacrifice, so heroic and convincing a testimony. But it has occurred in our own time; it has barely mentioned in the newspapers, which were chiefly concerned, first, with the fate of the foreign legations, then with the progress of foreign armies of relief, and now with the slow delays and machinations of diplomacy. During all this time, unrecorded and largely unrecalled, an army of men and women have gone to painful death without hesitation. Cases of apostasy have been so few that they are not worth taking into account, and the converts whose acceptance of Christianity was cruelly interpreted as a measure of their blood. The closing year of the century was one of the most heroic in the annals of the Christian Church. When time has given that sense of perspective which brings out the heroic proportions of a great human achievement, the death of the Chinese Christians will find its record at the hands of poets and orators.—The Outlook.

Among the Indians.

Mr. C. B. Oakley, teacher of the Indians on Georgina Island, in Lake Simcoe, contributes to the Newfoundland "Monthly Greeting" the following interesting particulars concerning his work:

"I will briefly tell you something of the Indian work in Ontario. The Indians live on reserves in bands of from ninety to two or four hundred. Ours is an island in Lake Simcoe, about fifty miles from the city of Toronto. There are some encouraging and many discouraging features in connection with Indian work. My time is taken up in this way: I teach five days of the week, take at least one and most frequently two services and the Sabbath-school on Sunday. There are one hundred and twenty all told in this band. They all speak the English language well, but will only do so when they have to—for they cling very tenaciously to their own tongue. Of course there is nothing taught in the school but English.

In the church we use hymn books with English on one side and Indian on the other. In every service we can hear some singing in one, and some in the other tongue, harmonizing fairly well. The following is the first verse of the first hymn in our book in the Ojibwa tongue:

"Oh uh ne-gish ko che ing' dwok,
Neet uh ne sho nah baig,
Che nuh nuh guh mo tuh wah woid
King e Zha Mun e-doom."

They are good singers and fond of music, many of them play fairly well, though they have never taken lessons. Their playing, I may say, is not by ear, but by note, and they very quickly detect a mistake either in vocal or instrumental music.

Their conduct in the house of God is

good, with one exception. Many, especially the young men, lounge, in fact, actually lie down, while the service is going on. We are doing our best to bring them out of that irreverent habit. They are good listeners; it seems as if they want to catch every word. One of our number is a local preacher; another an exhorter, both are very fond of preaching, and seem to be delighted when asked to take a service. In such cases the service is entirely Indian. I have never heard of them pray in the English. I will give you as near as I can the words of our chief in the conference: "I can talk to you in English all right, but when I talk to God I must use my own tongue." I suppose there is something in it. Of the one hundred and twenty about forty are church members."

Outcome of Livingstone's Work.

It is but twenty-six years since David Livingstone died near the shores of Lake Tanganyika, in South Central Africa, and his body was carried in triumph to his native land and laid with England's greatest heroes in Westminster Abbey. To-day more than thirty steamers are run on the two great lakes, Nyassa and Tanganyika, in the interests of Bible missions and a growing commerce, while scores of towns, with their schools, churches, and cultivated fields and gardens, are found in this land, first opened to Christian civilization through the efforts of Livingstone and the many of missionaries, inspired by his heroic life.

Settlement Work.

The Presbyterian Board in India has plans made for "settlement work." Six ladies, one of whom is a physician, are to settle in the centre of a cluster of villages where no work is being done and work from that centre. It is to be away from a mission station and where the villages are under native rule. The points of difference between it and itinerating are, first, economy in living, and, second, that by living in the midst of these distant villages it is thought more permanent work can be accomplished.

Last Words of Christ.

At a meeting of the Liverpool Convention a missionary said: "I believe that not one in ten of the ministers in my own denomination could tell, off-hand, the last recorded words of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have often asked the question over the tea-table; directing the question, of course, to some juvenile member of the household, but really aiming it at the clergyman, who generally could not tell that the words were: 'The uttermost parts of the earth.'" (Acts i. 8.)

Rev. A. N. and Mrs. McNeil, who have been appointed missionaries at Bedford House, have left for their field, and will travel with Mr. and Mrs. Gaudin, of Nelson House.

Forty-eight thousand volumes of the Epworth League Missionary Library, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, have been sold. Who can calculate what that will mean to the future of missionary enterprise?

The Rev. D. Norman is visiting the Leagues of the Bradford District. For four years Mr. Norman has represented the League of the Bradford District in Japan. His home-coming has been the occasion of rallies throughout the district. Bradford District has supported Mr. Norman not only by paying his salary, but by a deep personal interest in his work.