

the religious future of those fair and fertile provinces of the West. The religious and political differences of Protestants have too often prevented them exerting their due influence on the destiny of the country. But Romanists, at the dictates of an astute and far-seeing hierarchy, have acted as a unit to make their political influence the servant of their religious zeal. To enlighten that spiritual darkness, to instruct the ignorance, to overcome the prejudice, to carry the regenerative power of the Gospel to hearts and homes that are barred against it, is the glorious but difficult task of the united Methodism of Canada.

FRENCH ROMANISTS.

The French population are also largely isolated from the Protestants by difference of language, and are attached by national and filial sentiments to the religion of their fathers. These are grave obstacles in the way of Gospel effort. But, on the other hand, there are also remarkable facilities in its favour. The missionaries have not to go to a distant land or unhealthy climate, nor to propitiate a foreign and probably jealous Government. These people dwell in our midst—at our very door. They walk in the same streets, traffic in the same marts, travel in the same public conveyances, work in the same shops and at the same trades with our own population. They are associated in the same civic and legislative offices, are united by a thousand social and business ties, and dwell together in peace beneath the protecting folds of the same broad banner of freedom. The French Romanists, though attached to their ancestral faith, by no means share the intense bigotry often manifested by some of their co-religionists. They are a courteous, kindly, docile, and agreeable race; hospitable in their homes, and generally free to converse on disputed religious points without passion and with candour and a tolerance of antagonistic opinions. Yet they are deplorably ignorant of Scripture truths, and multitudes have never seen a copy of God's Word. On one occasion, when the present writer wished to appeal to the Romish version of the Scriptures, as authority concerning a point in dispute with a French lady, she introduced a well-worn copy of an English dictionary as the nearest approach to a New Testament in the house.

The Protestant element has of late years relatively increased in numbers, and still more in wealth and influence. Still, nearly a million and a quarter of our fellow-subjects are the victims of the anti-Christian errors of Rome. It seems as though Providence had committed the work of their evangelization especially to the care of Canadian Protestantism. Nor has our own Church, together with the other Churches of Canada, been unmindful of the heavenly call; although, for lack of suitable agents, the work has not been so vigorously prosecuted as its importance demands. But God is opening the way, and raising up instrumentalities, especially of an educational character, that will greatly assist this department of missionary effort.

GERMAN MISSIONS.

But the Teuton as well as the Gaul is in our midst; and we gladly welcome the increasing numbers swarming from the old Teutonic Fatherland across the

sea. But in that immigration is an element of danger. Unless it be evangelized, it will leaven our national life, in its very infancy, with the infidel virus of the corrupt civilization of Europe. In the United States the German population has in many places abolished the Sabbath, or destroyed its sanctity, and diffused an infidel spirit through society. A similar danger menaces our own land, unless we imbue this foreign element with the principles of morality and religion. Methodism owes much to the land of Bohler and Zinzendorf, and of the Palatine emigrants by whom its doctrines and institutions were introduced into Canada. It can best repay this debt by administering its consolations to the pilgrim strangers from Vaterland, by teaching the lessons of the beautiful Saubian song, "The soul's true Fatherland is heaven." The doctrines and usages of Methodism are especially congenial to the simple, home-loving, and sunny-souled Germans, and they readily embrace its teaching.

OUR EASTERN MISSIONS.

In the provinces of Eastern British America, missionary work is vigorously prosecuted, and with remarkable success. In Newfoundland, itself the first colony of Great Britain, and the first foreign mission of Methodism, the membership of the Methodist Church has been greatly increased, and this notwithstanding the exodus from the island to the more westerly Conferences of the Methodist confederacy. Among the hardy toilers of the sea, who enrich the world with the spoils of ocean, the Gospel, whose first apostles left their nets to become fishers of men, has had some remarkable triumphs. All along the far-extending coast of that great island, as well as on the French island of St. Pierre—the sole remaining dependency of France, once the mistress of well-nigh the whole continent—our Church is erecting moral lighthouses, whence the light is streaming into the surrounding darkness. Our missionaries also extend their labours to the bleak shores of Labrador, where adventurous industry plucks a subsistence from the stormy bosom of the deep. The lonely and storm-swept island of Anticosti is also visited by our missionaries, who, perpetuating the apostolic zeal of Wesley, go not only to those who need them, but to those who need them most.

Beneath skies of sunnier sheen, amid fairer scenes, and surrounded by the sapphire-shining seas, our missionaries in the Bermudas—important as the winter station of Her Majesty's North American fleet—labour among an intelligent white and coloured population. At Hamilton and St. George's are commodious and elegant churches and prosperous societies.

In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward's Island, among the fishing, lumbering, and agricultural populations, are vigorous Home Missions, and a spirit of missionary enthusiasm exists not surpassed in any part of our far-extended work.

On the Pacific Slope Methodism is endeavouring to mould, after a Christian type, the institutions of the youngest member of the Canadian Confederacy. And our brethren in still more remote Japan are achieving unparalleled missionary triumphs among the idolatrous races of the Old World. To these latter missions the greater part of this paper is devoted.

SUPPOSE.

SUPPOSE, my little lady,
Your doll should break her head,
Could you make it whole by crying
Till your eyes and nose are red?
And wouldn't it be pleasanter
To treat it as a joke,
And say you're glad "'Twas Dolly's
And not your head that broke?"

Suppose that you're dressed for walking,
And the rain comes pouring down,
Will it clear off any sooner
Because you scold and frown?
And wouldn't it be nicer
For you to smile than pout,
And so make sunshine in the house,
When there is none without?

Suppose your task, my little man,
Is very hard to get,
Will it make it any easier
For you to sit and fret?
And wouldn't it be wiser,
Than waiting like a dunce,
To go to work in earnest
And learn the thing at once?

Suppose that some boys have a horse,
And some a coach and pair,
Will it tire you less while working
To say, "It isn't fair!"
And wouldn't it be nobler
To keep your temper sweet,
And in your heart be thankful
You can walk upon your feet?

And suppose the world don't please you,
Nor the way some people do,
Do you think the whole creation
Will be altered just for you?
And isn't it, my boy or girl,
The wisest, bravest plan,
Whatever comes or doesn't come,
To do the best you can!

—Phoebe Cary.

CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN.

BY REV. T. J. SCOTT.

THERE are many indications that Japan, containing thirty-seven millions of people, is to be the first of the great modern pagan nations to become Christian. In a recent visit to this charming country, as we steamed into Nagasaki, past the pine-clad little island of Pappenberg we were shown the cliff from which the last of the Catholic converts of three hundred years ago were hurled into the sea; and it is recorded that men and women died like true martyrs. The Jesuits had come in peace and were kindly received. Christianity had spread till more than a half million were numbered in the new faith. Then Jesuits and Dominicans and Franciscans quarrelled among themselves, and political intrigue seeking to grasp the reins of empire aroused the hostility of the Japanese and the Christians were persecuted to the death and till the last vestige of the faith that had made itself detested was swept from the country. An edict was issued saying that "the evil sect called Christians is strictly prohibited. Suspected persons should be reported to the proper officers and rewards will be given." Japan was closed to foreigners for nearly three hundred years till in 1853 Commodore Perry came and by threats and persuasion the gates of the empire were again thrown open to a measure of foreign intercourse. Then came the Protestant missionaries with a better spirit of propagandism. The government edict against Christians was renewed after a time. The representatives of foreign governments protested, and finally in 1876 all edicts against Christianity were recalled, and since then it has spread with rapidity. Many societies have entered the field and the missionaries are full of heart

and hope. The reader will recall how that within a dozen years Japan has aroused from her pagan slumber and is putting forth every energy to acquire civilization and stand abreast of the enlightened nations. Her efforts are truly heroic. As light has poured in the old superstitions have let go their hold of the learners. While the missionaries have been teaching Christianity other foreign instructors invited in, have been teaching materialism and evolution. As a consequence many Japanese are sceptical or indifferent. They are for progress at all events. Recently upwards of a thousand young men held a social gathering in the Chiba-Prefecture, where flags were displayed bearing the mottoes: "Hurrah for liberty," and "Sweep away the humiliating customs of the East." Many of the best young men in the country are becoming Christians and are finding in Jesus the only true hope of morality.

The government puts no obstruction in the way of Christianity. There seems to be an impression among some leading Japanese statesmen that Christianity as a form of civilization is needed to put their country abreast of the great nations of the world, and all this not because Christianity is divine. These men see that the great powers of the world are nominally Christian, hence this as a national fashion must in some way be an advantage to Japan also. Infidel teachers in Japan have told the people that in reality the leading minds of these great nations have abandoned Christianity as among the superstitions. But a profound counter impression was recently made on the mind of Mr. Ito, one of the leading Japanese, who had gone to Europe to study the constitutions of various countries. Well, in conversation with Bismarck Mr. Ito was surprised to find him a firm believer in Christianity, and also that the great Gladstone is loyal to the faith. Since his return it is said that Mr. Ito, himself not an avowed Christian, has induced the Mikado to study the Bible. It is a notable fact that the Gregorian calendar has been introduced into Japan, and that Sunday is made a day of rest. It is affirmed by those best prepared to know that there is a widespread impression among the Japanese that the Christian civilization and morality are the best in the world.

"The battle is the Lord's." The hour is a most important one. The missionary societies should stand by their missionaries with full support of money and men. The best educated and consecrated intellect of the Church should be laid on the altar of Japan. The missionaries are much encouraged in their work. There is in the main a fine *esprit de corps* among them. Denominations of the same type are assisting, and there is not the slightest reason why the Canada Methodists and the Methodist Episcopal Church should not unite their forces—something desired by the missionaries in the field.

It is pointed out as suggestive of the influence of the gospel on the condition of women, that in Turkey, where a few years ago men yoked their wives with oxen, and treated them as beasts of burden, the education offered to females in some of the colleges compares favourably with similar institutions in Christian lands.