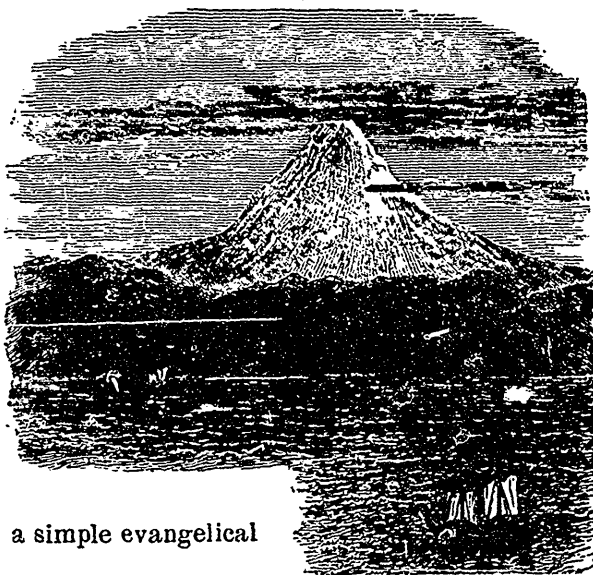


desire to please their teachers, and some, perhaps, from a true interest in Christianity. The Acts of the Apostles were read in course day after day; that the Japanese present might take part intelligently in the service, the Scripture of the day was translated extemporaneously into their language. After a week or two the Japanese for the first time in the history of the nation were on their knees in a Christian prayer-meeting. Their prayers were characterized by intense earnestness. Captains of men-of-war, English and American, who witnessed the scene, said, "The prayers of these Japanese take the heart out of us."

"As a direct fruit of these prayer-meetings, the first Japanese Christian Church was organized in Yokohama, in March, 1872. It consisted of nine young men, who were baptized on that day, and two middle-aged men, who had been previously baptized. They gave their new Church the catholic name of 'The Church of Christ in Japan,' and drew up their own constitution, a simple evangelical creed.



FUJIYAMA, JAPAN.

The following year the Government removed the edict against Christianity from the public notice-boards throughout the empire. This did not mean that the law was abrogated by any means. Still it was an indication of what soon became evident, namely, that liberty of conscience was to be allowed to the people.

The last two decades have more than fulfilled the most sanguine hopes of those early toilers, several of whom are still on the field to rejoice in the mighty spoils won for the Saviour. Instead of the one church, of one mission, in one of the treaty ports of Japan, there are now hundreds of churches scattered up and down the four main islands, with scores of well-equipped native ministers, and forty thousand communicants. There is not a