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PROGRESS

IN JAPAN.

The Japanese are among the brightest and most intelligent people of the Orient. Of them it may almost be said in the words of Scripture, "That a nation is born in a day." A few years ago it was almost unknown and its influence was almost utterly insignificant. Now, it is one of the great war powers of the world. It humbled in a few weeks the most populous nation on the face of the earth, one ten times its size. It has adopted in a marvellous manner Western institutions and Western civilization. It has an admirable public school system, with first-class colleges and a great imperial university. It is the only one of Eastern nations which has adopted representative institutions and has its regularly elected Parliament, a considerable number of whose members are converts to Christianity. Its postal, telegraph and railway systems will compare favourably with those of any country in the world. The people are very polite and courteous to each other, and exceedingly fond of their children. Japan has been called the paradise of boys and girls, so many ingenious toys are made for their amusement, and so heartily do their elders enter into the fun.

To the waking up of the spirit to the advantages of Western civilization, the Christian Churches have largely contributed. In this our own Church has taken a prominent part. Our mission to Japan was our first foreign missionary enterprise,



JAPANESE SINGING GIRLS.

begun by those veteran missionaries, Dr. Cochran and Dr. Macdonald. Twenty years ago at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, I said to one of the Japanese commissioners, "Do you know Dr. Cochran or Dr. Macdonald?" The man brightened up and said, "Why, Dr. Mac-

donald baptized me." He also told me that another of the commissioners was a member of our Church in Japan. I asked him why it was that the Japanese adopted the Western costume while the Chinese still wore their pig-tails and long gowns. He laughed and replied that he supposed that the Japanese were more receptive of Western ideas and institutions. The circumstance illustrates the policy of the nation and explains their remarkable progress.

We have now about thirty-six missionaries, including native preachers, in Japan, with a separate Conference. Besides the missionaries of the Woman's Missionary Society, who have several educational and industrial schools, an orphanage, and other operations. We have in all 65 preaching appointments, 70 Sunday-schools, and 2,800 scholars. There are 19 ministers, 44 preachers and local preachers, 20 exhorters, and 96 class leaders.

The Japanese are very fond of music, and although much of it is very discordant to Western ears, yet the natives seem to like it, which speaks much for their fortitude. The Japanese have very rare taste in art. Their painting, embroidery, bronze modelling, and tapestry are of surpassing excellence and beauty. The native costume, as shown in our cut, is singularly graceful. The Japanese lanterns are also quite artistic.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.