

It is a pleasing proof of sincerity that laudable efforts are being made in this latter direction, a few instances of which are here given. In Chiba prefecture two churches have been built recently, largely with funds contributed by native Christians. One was at Togame village, where Christianity was introduced about three years ago by the Evangelical Association. Nearly fifty souls having been brought from death unto life, these felt the need of a church building, and contributed over two hundred *yen* (dollars) toward its cost. At the other place the members contributed over five hundred *yen*.

Among the reports of native contributions for the cause of missions is one from the Orphan Home at Okayama from Mr. Ishii Juji, the "George Müller of the Orient." The substance is: "We send this \$1.50 as the fruit of the missionary society within the orphanage, to be applied toward mission expenses. It is the tithe of the gains of the trade department, and money obtained by selling waste papers, and some portion of the money given to the children by Mr. Ishii, besides his own contribution." And here is the soul-stirring report of the heroic deeds of students in the Kobe Girls' School, who had just contributed to the missionary cause, and finding themselves without means to contribute to the summer school, "they preferred to take salt (with their rice) instead of any other side food for their breakfast, so as to enable them to contribute."

Then we have had "self-denial week" among the *Kumiai* churches (Congregational), the results of which have been such as to make the plan worthy of widespread imitation. A Christian young lady was about to be married at the time during which a church was being built for her congregation. Being an earnest Christian, she wished very much to contribute also, and not being very well to do, she persuaded those concerned to allow her to dress so much more plainly for the wedding and give the balance to the church. The steps just taken by the Methodist Episcopal, Canada Methodist, and other churches at their recently held conferences, all look toward developing self-support among Japanese Christians. The opinion of the Japanese leaders may be gauged from the following utterance of Rev. Hiraiwa, of the Canada Methodist Church: "Although some ascribe the cause of the present unprosperous condition of the Japanese Church to the conservative reaction or the 'New Theology,' I think it is due to the want of an independent and self-sacrificing spirit. We have had, in Japan, three periods in missionary work. First, the period of missionaries; second, the period of the rise of the spirit of evangelization; and third, the period of its decline. In the second period, from 1881-85, all were filled with the missionary spirit. Then no one (native worker) got ten *yen* per month, the best being satisfied with six or seven. During the year 1882-83 the *Kumiai* churches increased wonderfully in numbers, rising from eight hundred and fifty-two to twenty-five hundred members in one year. Afterward clerks, rice-field laborers, and others made real sacrifices to support the pastors with thirty *yen* per month, but as these