

reveals the true key to all missionary success. "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers unto his harvest."

Space is too limited to touch upon the Home Field, Medical Missions, and other themes that shared the discussion of the Convention.

The Japan-China War.

BY REV. J. G. DUNLOP, B.A.

I DO not propose in this letter to deal with the causes of the war, or with the progress of events in Korea and China up to this date, but rather with the subject as it presents itself in our everyday life and work here in Japan. The war news from the far east, misleading and false as a great part of it has been, has served at least to give the reader of the daily papers a fairly correct idea of the fortunes of the two great powers now engaged in deadly strife. I wish merely to set down a few of the symptoms of the war fever manifested at home in Japan.

The most striking symptom is the universal excitement. A leading English paper, writing recently on the war, incidentally made the statement that national feeling is a thing that does not exist in Asia; that the ideal of nationality is not an Asiatic product; that national uprisings can never be counted on to defeat the plans of great conquerors.

Such a statement when applied to Japan is simply absurd. Nowhere else in the world, perhaps, is there such exuberant nationalism. Though in most of its manifestations a thing worthy and admirable, it is a prime obstacle in Christian work. The independence movement in the Japanese churches is not evangelical, but nationalistic. But this same nationalism becomes a mighty force in time of national danger. The passionate patriotism exhibited in these days astonishes Europeans who have spent several decades in this land, and should be expected to know its people. National feeling seems at present almost to swallow up every other feeling and ambition. The calling out of the reserves has been attended with many sad, painful partings. The wives and children of many of these men will have to undergo a winter (or longer) of want and hardship. But in most cases the ordeal has been gone through with willingly and cheerfully. There have been many proposals for different sorts of volunteer work. A great many of the *soshi*—a semi-criminal class of reckless fellows, who have undertaken by such gentle means as club, sword and gunpowder to educate the nation in things political—have been for once whipped into line: they volunteered for coolie work, and are now hard at it in Korea and China. Women have offered, not only as nurses, but as soldiers and coolies. Some have travelled long distances to the capital to find openings for service, and a number have been accepted and sent to the front as Red Cross nurses.

The city children in scores play at war some days from morning till night, up and down over the sand dunes near our house. With bugles and banners, forts and batteries; with sorties and surprises, cheers, charges and retreats, they put as much soul and enthusiasm into it as their nation's heroes at the front. A number of workmen in the compound below our house, congregate a dozen times a day in the shade under our windows (a genuinely Oriental way of getting work done) to smoke and chat, invariably about Chōsen, Shina (Korea and China), and the war. The whole country is aflame with engravings in the most fiery colors, representing Japanese deeds of valor by sea and land.

Sacrifice for the sake of home and country is the order of the day. Contributions of both necessities and luxuries of life have been flowing in to a central depot in Tokyo, to be forwarded to the seat of war. The Emperor and the Houses of Parliament are among the contributors. A rich Tokyo banker has given timber and lumber enough for winter quarters in China for an army of thirty thousand men. A Christian soldier, a member of the Second Reserve, was on his way from this place to Sendai, the Reserve having been called out. On getting to the end of

his journey one night, his jinrikisha-man refused to receive any money from him, saying that he himself could not go to the war, and he was not going to take a fare from any man who was going.

Another symptom. The papers of a score of political parties and factions are, for the first time in their history, united in loyal support of the Government. When the press is thus united, there can be no doubt but that the nation is at one. Seldom has there been such a spectacle of national unanimity. And whatever the men at the top who see into the inwardness of the causes of this war may think, the nation at large is convinced that it is a righteous war. The hosts of Joshua and Gideon were not surer of the righteousness of their warfare than are these Japanese.

A nation thus roused, thus actuated, and thus united must win. They cannot lose. Even in defeat they would be victors; they would gain a national prestige in higher aims and broader, nobler views of national destiny.

How does it affect Christian work? I cannot answer better than by an illustration. A fellow-missionary here went a few nights ago to preach in an inland town. On getting to the theatre, he found that his subject had been chosen for him by the preacher and Christians of the place (without any notice to himself), and was "Christianity and the war." Happily, he had an hour behind the scenes in which to get his thoughts in order. When his turn came and he stepped out and announced his subject, the people called back, "Never mind Christianity; give us the war."

But though preaching just now is at a discount, this war will, in the end, prove an immense blessing and help in our work here. Japan's side of this dispute will yet be fully stated and understood in the West. Better still, the people of England and America will learn of the enlightened and humane way in which Japan is prosecuting the war—with her hospitals and Red Cross Society and kind treatment of prisoners; most amazing to the poor wretches of Chinese prisoners themselves, who, on capture, expect nothing short of mutilation and death. Clear understanding on these subjects means an immense increase of sympathy on the part of Christian nations for this nobly-inspired island power of the far East. Treaties will be revised; Great Britain made a new treaty with Japan in August, and there are rumours that revision with the United States also has been effected, and Japan will be given a place among the more enlightened nations of the world.

Barriers broken down, hearts warming to one another, and then comes our opportunity. May God prepare the Church for it!

Niigata, Japan, Oct. 26th, 1894.

Christmas.

WELCOME, once more, Christmas morning!

Welcome with thy Christmas cheer!

Happy voices hail thy dawning,

Brightest day of all the year!

O'er the mountains high and hoary,

O'er the forest dark and wide,

Let the bells ring out the story

Of Christ who lived and died!

In the country, in the city,

Hearts respond to Christmas claim,

And each gift of love and pity

Bears the stamp of Christ's dear name.

Let these gifts reach o'er the waters!

Send the blessed news afar,

Till earth's suffering sons and daughters

Hail the "glory-beaming star."

—Heathen Children's Friend.

SNAKE worship takes precedence of all other forms of Dahomeyan religion, and its priests and followers are the most numerous. The python is regarded as an emblem of bliss and prosperity, and the killing of one of these sacred reptiles is sometimes punished by death.