

MISSION FIELD.

MISSION IN JAPAN.

The following extract from a letter by one, who has been resident in Japan for a quarter of a century will not be without interest.

"You ask about the Greek Church in Japan. In Hakodate and North of Yesso there is no doubt that the Russian priests are working hard and making progress by educating gratuitously and gaining the goodwill of the lower classes. They have also good schools in the capital under the charge of an eminently gifted priest, by name 'Nicolai,' who holds a high position in the Church. They seem to understand the idiosyncrasies of the people, and select pretty situations for their schools, which they construct in an elegant and tasty manner. The French priesthood is also doing good as teachers, and, like the Russians, they adopt the customs of the people as much as possible. The convent school, managed by French sisters in Yokohama, has a large number of girl students, who will go into the world and become mothers of families, and probably educate their children in the Christian faith. The American and English Missionaries certainly work hard, but unfortunately they do not try to assimilate themselves to the people. They make study tedious, and dry; and most of them try to instil the precept that pleasure and Christianity are opposing influences. Of the American Missionaries few are educated beyond a knowledge of the Bible, and belong to a number of different sects at war with each other. I am of opinion that as the Government is giving every facility to the different schools, in twenty years hence the country will have more than half the population professing Christianity. They are anxious to become what they call civilized; and they look upon their present forms of religion as bars to their becoming 'civilized' in the eyes of the world."

CALCUTTA.

The Rev. J. P. Smitheman in a letter on the Kacharis of Assam, says: "There can be little doubt that they have a future before them of some promise. Intellectually inferior to their Hindu and Mussulman neighbors, they are physically and morally their superiors. Their liberal diet,—for they eat freely every kind of flesh, that of the cow alone excepted, tends to give them a sturdy physique; a result to which their industrious habits also largely contributed; while in their simplicity, straightforwardness, and freedom from crooked, deceitful ways, they give proof of a type of character which one often looks for in vain among more civilized communities. Hitherto they have been the drudges of Assam, maintaining themselves by unskilled labor. But now—that education is spreading among them, they are gradually forcing their way to higher things. Several old pupils of the Kachar Mission Schools in Darrang now

fill positions of importance and responsibility as Monzadars, Mandals, &c., whilst others act as Mohurirs in tea factories, and have virtual charge of the factories during the absence of the European managers. There is reason then to hope that the Kachari element in the population of this province will come to the front more and more and play an increasingly important part in raising themselves and their neighbors to higher and better things.

LAHORE.

The *Sind Times* says of the late Rev. G. Shirt: "He was a member of the Royal Asiatic Society and fellow of the Bombay University. He was the author of a good deal of Christian literature in the Sindhi language, the translator of nearly the whole Bible into the same tongue, and joint compiler of a Sindhi-English dictionary. Mr. Shirt's rare linguistic talents are well-known, as besides possessing a scholarly knowledge of the original languages of the Bible, he was master of many Oriental languages, including Sanskrit and Arabic. At the time of his death he was busily engaged learning Pushtu and Brohi. He was known throughout the whole of the Punjab and Sind, and deeply respected by all for his high Christian character and great literary attainments. His early death is not only a terrible blow to the Sind Church Mission, but also a great loss to the whole Province. At the meeting of the Max Denso Hall Literary Society, in which Mr. Shirt took a great interest, a vote of sympathy and condolence with his bereaved widow and children was passed, and as a mark of respect to his honored name and memory, the large meeting of the members dispersed without proceeding to any business. Of Mr. Shirt's self-devotion to his high and holy calling the grave of the first Christian Missionary in Beluchistan is a silent and eloquent witness.



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