

## Foreign Missions.

Send all contributions for Foreign Missions to A. McLEAN, Box 750, CINCINNATI, O.

### Prayer Meeting Topics for January and February.

Jan. 8. Topic—THE SCRIPTURE TEACHING ON FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The promise to Abraham. Missions in the life of Christ. The commission. Acts of Apostles are simply a missionary record. The letters of Paul are only a body of missionary correspondence.

Jan. 15. Topic—OPPOSITION TO FOREIGN MISSIONS.

William Carey was told to "sit down" when making a plea for the lost in India. When the American Board was seeking a charter, a member of the Massachusetts Legislature in opposing it said, "We have no religion to spare," "The heathen at home," etc.

Jan. 22. Topic—THE SUCCESS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

In a century there have been 3,000,000 conversions. The increase in heathen lands greater than at home in proportion to the money expended and the preachers employed. There are 100,000 conversions annually.

Jan. 29. Topic—MOTIVE TO ENGAGE IN FOREIGN MISSIONS.

1. Loyalty to Christ. 2 Cor. v. 14.
2. Interest in Missions. Rom. xv. 1-3.
3. Reflex influence upon the Church. 2 Cor. ix. 8-11.

Feb. 5. Topic—THE AGGRESSIVENESS OF THE EARLY GOSPEL. Acts xix. 8-20.

In permeating society, and in overcoming evil, did it ever cease to spread or to wage war on evil doing? Have we this spirit?

Feb. 12. Topic—CAN WE BE CHRISTIANS AND NON-MISSIONARY? Matt. xxvi. 16-20; Acts xxii. 17-24.

If he means to be like Christ and all His Apostles, no. Can one be a missionary who does nothing to spread the Gospel? No heresy of misbelief compares with the heresy of inaction.

Feb. 19. Topic—THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT. HOW FOSTERED? Acts xiv. 11-28.

Heroic missionary examples. Missionary information. What is being done in the mission fields of the earth. What our own people are doing.

Feb. 26. CHEERFUL GIVING. 2 Cor. ix. 1-12.

Giving is only learned by practice. No more beautiful grace. Vital to progress of the kingdom. The cheerful giver finds inexpressible delight in it. The obligation of this church to the March offering.

The Foreign Society asks the churches to adopt these topics.

## A Circuit of the Globe.

A. McLEAN.

No. xii.—*The First Sunday in Japan.*

The morning was cool and bright. After breakfast and worship, Mr. and Mrs. Guy took me to see the first Sunday-school. The hour of meeting was 8 o'clock. The school met in one of the buildings used for the Charity school. The first piece sung was Knowles Shaw's noble hymn, "Bringing in the Sheaves." Imagine my feelings on listening to a hymn written by one of our own illustrious men! It was like meeting an old friend in a strange land. In his youth, Knowles Shaw was wild and wayward. He went to balls and played the fiddle while the others danced. This wild lad gave his heart to God. His was a thorough and genuine conversion. He preached and won thousands to the faith. His sweet songs have been naturalized in every land, and are sung round the globe. He died in the prime of life, but his work abides. The Scripture was read and prayer offered. Kodira San, Mrs. Guy's Bible woman, taught the children. The lesson was "Christ Sending out the Twelve." The children responded to the questions as promptly and as heartily as at home. This was my introduction to the work in Japan. Here, in a non-Christian land, children were being taught of God. My soul was deeply stirred. One little girl was pointed out by Mrs. Guy. Her father was a soldier and was killed in the war. Her mother was left with several children. Because of her poverty, she feels that she must sell this child. God only knows all that that means. If she is sold, she is doomed to a life of shame and sorrow. Such things are not uncommon in this land. But when a child that we have known and loved is thus sold, we feel differently. Mrs. Guy hopes to be able to take this girl into her own home and bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

At 9 o'clock, we went to another school. The singing and responses were as hearty here as at the other. The lesson was "The Transfiguration of Christ." Some of the children had faces as bright and as full of interest as one can see in the schools of America. They sang "Jesus Loves Me" and "When He Cometh" as if they understood and believed them. Others were there for the first time. Their faces were blank and dull. They did not know what to expect. A few were suffering from some disease. Their heads were covered with blotches and

knobs. Evidently the sins of their fathers are being visited upon their children to the third and fourth generations. One of the workers testifies that he is surprised in finding how much Bible truth has been sown by the children taught in the Sunday-schools. They carry the essence and the aroma of the Gospel into the homes that are closed to the Bible-women. Parents say that their children tell every night what they have learned in the Bible. The mother of one of the smallest of and most uninteresting girls told the missionary that she had heard about Christ from her little girl, and wanted to hear more. So the Scripture is fulfilled—"A little child shall lead them."

At half-past ten there was a preaching service. Nishioka San spoke. He urged his hearers to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. He set forth what the Lord required of them as His redeemed children. After the sermon, we had the communion. We sat together in heavenly places in Christ and partook of the emblems of His broken body and His shed blood. I trust we drank deeply into His Spirit at the same time. The service was orderly and impressive. The audience gave earnest heed to the words that were spoken. Though I did not understand what was said, I felt "Surely God is in this place. This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." We were separated by race and by language, and by habits of thought and life, but we were one in Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Japanese or American, and were all made to drink one Spirit. I was asked to say a few words. Imai San interpreted for me. After the benediction, I was introduced to all present. I was assured over and over again that I was a welcome visitor. The people of Japan do not shake hands. The women do not kiss each other. They salute by bowing low and bowing repeatedly. Each strives to go lower than the other.

In the evening we had a sermon from Imai from the text, "Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted." At this service a young man made the good confession and was baptized. The audience came forward to congratulate him. They did this by bowing low and speaking a few appropriate words. So the Gospel runs and is glorified. The good seed is sown at all hours according to the divine command. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in

the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou canst not tell which will prosper, either this or that, or whither both will be alike good." Some may fall on rocky ground or among thorns or by the wayside, but some will surely fall on good ground and bring forth fruit a hundred and a thousand fold. God's word shall not return to Him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases and prosper in the thing whereunto He sent it. There is in the grounds of one of the temples in Japan a young tree growing out of a mammoth stump. One is alive and vigorous; the other is dead and must give place and feed the new life that has grown out of its heart. One must increase; the other must decrease. So it is with the Gospel in Japan. It must prosper and prevail, for it is alive and has in it the power of an endless life. At the close of each service the audience sat down and engaged in silent prayer for a few moments. This was better than if they had slapped each other on the back, and proceeded to light their cigars or talk about the baseball score or any other irreverent topic. There was no flitting or writing of notes. The young men do not take the young ladies to church or escort them home. There is no courtship in Japan. Marriage is arranged by middle-men and not by the parties most deeply concerned. The young people get married, but they miss a deal of fun.

The audience was a study. It was evident that some were without Christ. Their faces were hopelessly sad. How could these people be happy? Life with them is an incessant struggle after food and raiment. The catechism which they repeat every morning is this, "What shall I eat? What shall I drink? And wherewithal shall I be clothed?" There is nothing in their experience or in their horizon to fill them with hope and joy. Their worship in the temples does not elevate and spiritualize them. The priests are no better. Their is as much animation in the face of a mummy as there is in theirs. They have blank, leathery faces. The faces of the Christians are very different. The face of Mrs. Guy's teacher shines as the face of Moses did when he came from the mountain. She has seen the glory of the Lord. She is busily engaged in His service and she has entered into His joy. The Gospel makes beautiful faces, so it is said. "But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." The first convert in Japan has a handsome face. It is intelligent and spiritual. The

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