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WAKASA AND AYABE.

A ROMANCE OF MISSIONS.

In the year 1854 an English fleet-of-war entered the harbor of Nagasaki, Japan. There was then no treaty between Japan and England. Native troops gathered to watch the new-comers, and Wakasa, their commander, used to sail about in a boat to see that they had no secret communication with the shore. One day Wakasa found in the water a small Testament. He was anxious to know its contents and asked a Dutch interpreter, who said it told about God and Jesus Christ. This made Wakasa still more curious, and he finally sent to Shanghai for a Chinese translation. He returned to his home at Saga and began to study the Testament. He induced his brother Ayabe, with a retainer named Montono and one other man, to join him.

Eight years after, Ayabe came home from Saga to Nagasaki to seek further instruction from Dr. Verbeck, a missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church, who answered his questions. But Ayabe soon left, having received a government appointment; and then Wakasa sent Montono, who had learned to read English. Montono was charged to read over and get explanations from Dr. Verbeck, of those parts of the Testament which they could not understand. For three years this Bible class was kept up, the faithful Montono making the two days' journey and returning to Saga with the desired information.

On the fourteenth of May, 1866, a messenger arrived at the house of Dr. Verbeck, announcing that some high officials from the province of Hizen were about to visit him. At the time appointed the train appeared, and it proved to be Wakasa and his two sons, with Ayabe, Montono, and their attendants. These men had fully believed the gospel and only sought light as to Christian customs and character. They spoke of the love and power of Christ, and finally asked for baptism. They knew perfectly that it was perilous, as the law forbade it; but only asked that it should be done in private, that their lives and those of their families might not be endangered.

Dr. Verbeck told them that they must not suppose baptism would save them, explaining that it was but the outward sign of an inward faith. He also showed them how sacred was the obligation it laid upon them to follow the Lord Jesus in all things. But they were not discouraged, and it was arranged that the three converts should come the next Sunday evening to be received into the fellowship of the Church of Christ. When the time arrived they dismissed their retainers and came to the missionary home, where the shutters had been closed and preparation made for the simple, precious rites of our religion. After some words of exhortation and encouragement they were baptized and received the sacrament. "Now," said Wakasa, "I have what I have long been heartily wishing for. He then told the story of the little book he found twelve years before in the harbor of Nagasaki and

of all that it had led to. He returned to Saga rejoicing in the love of God and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Fourteen years passed away. In April, 1880, there appeared in the congregation at Nagasaki two strangers. One of them was evidently a lady of high rank, the other her attendant. They gave close attention to the service, and after it was over they were introduced. The lady was Wakasa's daughter. She said her father had died eight years before, in firm and joyful hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. He had faithfully taught her and her nurse about the true God and His Son our Saviour. She had learned the Lord's Prayer and some portions of the Scriptures which her father had written out for her in simple characters. She had married and come to live at Nagasaki, but, as Dr. Verbeck had left, she knew of no Christian or missionary to whom she could go for instruction. So she sent home to Saga for

her old nurse, and together they had searched through Nagasaki for a Christian teacher. After some days they found a shop where Bibles were sold. They bought a full supply and learned

where a Christian service was held. The next Sunday they appeared among the congregation, as we have before described.

They desired baptism at once, especially as the lady's husband had concluded not to remain in Nagasaki. He came with her to witness the baptism. The old nurse returned to Saga and taught a little school for girls and soon opened a class of women for Bible study. After a time she opened a Sunday-school with the Bible-class women as teachers. There are now about twenty Christians in Saga, and most of them have been brought to Christ through that nurse's efforts.

Among them is a son of her master Wakasa.

Her young mistress went to Osaka with her husband, where she soon became a

leader in Christian work. When her husband returned from a trip to some island and reported that he had found a people without any religion, she went to the pastor and begged that a teacher might be sent there, and offered to pay half the salary and expenses. She has returned to Nagasaki and is now, with her family, a regular attendant at the church in that place.

Dr. Verbeck is now in Tokio, Japan. One day, recently, he was speaking at a meeting, and at the close a man came to him and said: "I am Ayabe, the brother of Wakasa." Since his baptism he had been in the army, and through all these years had carried the Bible with him, reading it every day. The next day he came bringing his only child, a daughter of fifteen, and asked that she might be baptized. Ayabe's family are now connected with the church in Tokio, and it is his earnest wish to devote the rest of his life to spreading the gospel in Japan.—*Missionary Herald.*

BE WHAT YOU SEEM.

A nobleman gave a grand supper to a few guests. While they sat at table two masked personages came into the room. They were not larger than children five or six years of age, and represented a lady and gentleman of high rank. The gentleman wore a scarlet coat with gold buttons. His curly wig was powdered snow white, and in his hand he held a fine hat.

The lady was dressed in yellow silk with silver spangles, and had a neat little hat with plumes on her head, and a fan in her hand. Both danced elegantly, and often made agile springs. Everybody said the skill of these children was wonderful. An old officer who sat at the table took an apple and threw it between the gay dancers. Suddenly the little lord and lady rushed for the apple, quarrelled as if they were mad, tore off their masks and head-gear, and instead of the skilful children appeared a pair of ugly apes. All at the table laughed loudly; but the nobleman said, with much earnestness: "Apes and fools may dress as they please; it soon becomes known who they are."—*From the German.*

AN ITALIAN WAITER in a London hotel, who had been led to see the sin of his gay life, and to know God, through the preaching of Mr. Moody, was so distressed at his employer's sinful life, that he wrote on a slip of paper and pinned it to his master's pillow: "Oh, dear master, the kingdom of God is at hand, and you are not ready!" Mr. V., finding who had written this, said to the man, "Now, my good fellow, since the kingdom of God is so near, I shall not need you any longer, because you will be wanted there; so go to-night." The poor waiter was ready with an answer, "Ah, sure, you will need me. I am to show you ze way!" For this bold speech the man was sent off at once; but so strongly did the words cling to his late master, that at the end of a week he sent for the man, who became the humble instrument of his salvation.



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A JAPANESE FAMILY.

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