

"THIS IS THE VICTORY



EVEN OUR FAITH."



Monthly Letter.

PUBLISHED BY

The Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, Canada
ROOM 20, WESLEY BUILDINGS.

Vol. XV.
No. 2.]

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1898.

[Price 5c.
a year.]

SUBJECTS FOR PRAYER.

The Indians of our Dominion.

The Methodist Orphanage in Newfoundland.

JAPAN.

"A lengthening of cords and a strengthening of stakes."

From Miss Blackmore.

AZABU, December 2nd, 1897.

I do not think I have told you about our class of policemen. Last spring we were asked to assist in this work by teaching them English, and following each lesson by a Bible lesson. For various reasons the class was not started until about three weeks ago. We give them an hour twice a week; and as they come to our dining-room for the lesson, we lose no time. Misses Hart, Wigle and myself divide the work among us, so no one feels it burdensome. Indeed, the men are so eager to learn, and manifest so much interest in the Bible lesson, that it is refreshing to teach them,

At the close of the last lesson one of the men spoke out in the presence of the others, and said he had a brother who had been in a mission school, and that he had heard a little about Christianity from him; that as much as he had heard he believed to be good, and he wished to know more. He has been to church every Sunday since. We have always found the police very ready to give assistance; but now, when we appear in the streets, we are greeted as special friends by each of the twenty members of the class.

From Miss Alcorn.

SHIZUOKA, *Nov. 29th, 1897.*

Ten years ago an attempt was made to open Christian work in Shimada. The opposition to Christianity, however, being so great, a house could not be rented for the purpose.

About eight years ago one of the pupils of the Shizuoka school, after returning to Shimada (her home), received permission from her father to have a woman's meeting in her own house. As this father was one of the first men in the town, his action did much to overcome the prejudice of the people, and for a short time Miss Hargrave and her interpreter held a woman's meeting twice a month. A preaching place was then procured, and an evangelist was sent to work among the people. A children's meeting was also held.

The work seemed so hopeful one of the native pastors went to preach in the theatre, but the old opposition again appeared, and he had to flee for his life, closely followed by hundreds of people. The evangelist then wrote to Miss Cunningham—who was the evangelistic worker from our Society—not to come again, as it was unsafe. She went, however, and continued the children's meeting, having sometimes an attendance of one hundred.

In the meantime, one of the leading men of the town was converted. He asked to have Christianity taught to his wife, and Miss Cunningham, accompanied by her interpreter, went to the home for the purpose of teaching her. This was the nucleus of our present woman's meeting,

which is held on the first and third Thursday of each month. We reach Shimada at eleven in the morning, just one hour by train from home. A short walk from the station brings us to the preaching place. This preaching place is the home of the evangelist. He converts it into one room by removing the shoji.

We do not always hold our woman's meeting here, as there are women who would attend a meeting at the house of a friend who would not enter a preaching place. We suit ourselves to the women, and go to the home where we can gather the largest number, which never exceeds five. These have been hand-picked, and we are very proud of them. The work is slow. *It is only here a little and there a little.* We are trying to interest the women in a regular study of God's Word, believing the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit.

After our meeting we return to the preaching place, where we find ninety-five or one hundred children waiting for us. These children's meetings are always a sign of hope; for were the people of the town opposed to us, the public school teachers would not allow the children to listen to us. For instance, at Fujieda we cannot entice one child to enter the church. The little ones listen very attentively to Noguchi-san as she tells them a gospel story, but the moving crowd of men and women in the background is very distracting. It is a risk to close the doors, for numbers crowd forward to receive papers when the children receive theirs; so we take the opportunity of seed sowing, and scatter tracts.

After this meeting we have between twenty and thirty big boys, who come to hear the foreigners speak English. Their desire for English is much greater than their interest in the Bible; but in order to hear the foreigners they must listen to a short Bible lesson, and thus we sow, it seems broadcast. But, as one of the missionaries in India says, "We sow, and in our ignorance expect the seed to be choked by thorns; but God sees that it bears fruit, in spite of its thorny surroundings."

The three meetings over, we go to the house of a doctor, who has asked us to teach his wife Christianity. I cannot

describe the hopelessness that came over me as for the first time I sat face to face with a soul who knew nothing of God. We talked to her for a short time, then knelt in prayer. May God teach us to teach those who are in darkness. My whole heart goes out for that baptism of power, without which we are unable to lead one single soul to Christ.

After making a few calls, we wend our way to the station. This ends a busy day, but I must say a happy one; for I never go to a meeting, or call on the women, that I am not thankful for the privilege of being here.

Trusting that strength and wisdom may be given for every moment of need and perplexity, I am, yours in Christ.

New Work.

From our new station, Nagano, a line comes from Miss Hargrave, December 1st: "I think it is quite time you heard that we are established in the Nagano Branch and have some regular work started. We have been very busy, and getting settled in our new home has not been conducive to much correspondence. I will write just as soon as I can and give details of our work so far."

From Miss Robertson

KOFU, JAPAN, Nov. 30th, 1897.

Our school is steadily increasing. We have had seven new pupils this term, and constantly people are coming to look through the school or ask for calendars. There is a prospect for an increase next term. Some of the girls take only sewing, or sewing and Japanese; with such girls we foreign teachers never meet in the school room. It makes me ambitious to do something more at the language. I would so like to have personal contact with every girl in the school, and the language is *such* a barrier.

The first Sunday in November two of our girls were baptized, and the Sunday before Christmas one more is to receive the rites. One or two more have pleaded at home for permission to be baptized, but have not yet full consent of the

families. We are trusting that the obstacles in their way may be removed, and this desire of their hearts granted.

The daily Bible lesson becomes more and more a responsibility. When I look at the class before me and think of the possibilities for spreading the Gospel which its members present, I can only earnestly implore that I may present Christ to them and not hinder the work by any of *my own* teaching.

We have an excellent teacher at the head of the Japanese department at present. She spent three years in America, and has more of the foreign methods of teaching than is usually found among Japanese teachers. We find her a great help; she takes her part in all the religious exercises of the school, and has the good of the girls at heart. I find myself growing quite fond of her. I trust she may always continue as she has begun. We are exceedingly fortunate in our teaching staff this term; our sewing teacher is very competent.

CHINA.

From Miss Brackbill.

CHENTU, Oct. 18th, 1897.

Regarding Orphanage work, I hope it may be commenced this year. We have plenty of land, and the building required would be small. Of course, were Miss Ford still living, she would have had charge of it; but someone else will have to take it as part of her work.

I did get very tired during the spring and early summer—did not realize how much so until I got away for a change—but the rest did me a great deal of good, and I am feeling quite myself again since my return.

We have seven boarding pupils in now, and expect more when the dormitories are ready. We scarcely know where to put these last ones, but thought we could manage for a few weeks.

We require unbound feet. There is nothing in the agreement about this. They are unbound as soon as they come

in, otherwise we would not take them. Two agreements are written—one signed by us and given to the parents, the other signed by the parents and given to us. In them is stated the number of years the children are to remain with us; that they are not to be betrothed without our consent; in case of sickness or death no trouble is to be made; in case of disobedience we have the right to send them home, and while here our government is not to be interfered with. Having control of them thus, we hope that, with proper teaching, most of them will become Christian workers.

A little girl who has been in the hospital is very anxious to come in, but her brother says he wants the right to take her away at any time. He has been told that if her feet are unbound—she has had an operation on one foot—and they are willing to pay the cost, thirty taels per year, they may do so. In that case, we could not be expected to be consulted as to her betrothal.

Just now, a woman in our employ has come in to say she would like her little girl, eight years old, to enter the school and will unbind her feet. We have all been so anxious for this child's feet to be unbound; but she is betrothed, and the future mother-in-law would not hear of it. The parents, who are both enquirers, sent out gospels and other literature to these people, and to-day word has come in that they have been reading the doctrine and think it good, and if the parents wish the child's feet unbound they may do so. We can have her until she is sixteen years old; and who knows but she may do more evangelistic work in the neighborhood to which she then goes than she can ever do here.

And so the work goes on. If these two come, and another of whom we have had the promise, it will make eleven, and probably there will be others.

We are building larger dormitories than were thought of at first—large enough to accommodate thirty pupils in single beds upstairs; and below, matron's room, kitchen and wash room, etc.

The ladies are all studying regularly, and making good progress. We are looking forward to the time when the work can be opened in all its departments; a cause for thanksgiving, and an incentive to continue in prayer,

Miss Foster writes from Chentu, Oct. 22nd : " I wish you could attend one of our weekly prayer meetings. I am sure your heart would be rejoiced to hear these native Christians tell of the peace of God in their hearts. I think I enjoy the prayer meetings more than any other that we have, although I do not understand much that they say.

" It means so much for this people to give up their false religions, and to boldly confess the Lord Jesus : but, thank God, a few have dared to do so.

" I think that Mr. Hartwell's teacher is one of the brightest Christians in the church. He heard the gospel for two years, and was almost daily associated with Mr. Hartwell for this length of time before he manifested any interest in the truth ; but when convinced that it was the true gospel, he deliberately counted the cost, and willingly became an outcast from his own family for Christ's sake. He is now telling the good news of salvation by faith to his blinded countrymen. I believe that Mr. Hartwell has a church membership of twelve or more, and as many on probation. We will thank God and take courage, for it is the Lord's own work, and must triumph in the end. We are all well."

COREA.

From "Facts on Foreign Missions," compiled by
W. J. Wanless, M.D.

Corea, "The Hermit Nation," and the battle ground of the recent Japanese-Chinese war, twenty years ago was practically unknown to the Western world, but is now widely opened to the preacher of the Gospel. Here God used a medical missionary, Dr. Allen, in opening a door for missions. In 1882 a treaty was made with the United States, and in 1884 Dr. Allen entered. The king's nephew, with others, was injured in a riot at Seoul, the capital. The native doctor staunched their wounds with wax, and but for the timely intervention of Dr. Allen, several would probably have died. The king, in appreciation of the services performed, encouraged the building of a hospital, which was afterward put in charge of Dr. Allen, the Pres-

byterian medical missionary, and with permission to "preach" as well as to "heal." This hospital is still in charge of a missionary physician. The first convert in Corea was baptized in 1886, and the first church formed with ten members in 1887. There are now six Protestant societies, with a force of sixty-seven male and female missionaries. Prior to the opening of Corea, John Ross, a Scotch missionary in Mongolia, translated the New Testament, and circulated it with other books throughout the country. Christian vernacular literature is now freely scattered, and the Bible is undergoing translation. The people have begun to increase in numbers, where previously there were only ones and twos; schools are filling, and baptisms are now much more frequent.

INCREASE.

London Branch—Belmont Auxiliary, Tilbury Auxiliary, Stratford (Waterloo Street) Auxiliary.

Bay of Quinte Branch—Deseronto ("Fancy" Mission Band).

Nova Scotia Branch—South Farmington Auxiliary, Pictaux Auxiliary.

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OUR W. M. S. PIN.—A fresh supply of our W. M. S. pins, a silver star encircling the world, and attached as pendant to a small pin, is now ready. Price 25 cents. May be ordered from Room 20 and the Branch Depots.

Suggested Programme—March.

Subjects for Prayer and Study.

Japan, Corea, and the Isles of the Sea.

(To be read at the opening of the meeting.)

- I. Opening Exercises—"Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers take ye no rest, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."—ISAIAH lxii. 6-7.
- II. Regular Business.
- III. Hymn.
- IV. The Watch-Tower.
- V. Name the missionaries of the W. M. S. stationed in Japan (see Annual Report).
- VI. Name, and point out on map, missions in Japan supported by the Church.
- VII. Readings, * "The most thoughtful men in Japan feel that, despite victorious armies on foreign models, steel and steam navies, and the miscellaneous borrowed furniture of modern civilization, something still is lacking. 'More moral oil to run the machinery,' is a native editor's cry."—*W. Elliott Griffis, D.D.*
 1. Slavery in modern Japan.
 2. Facts bearing on the slave trade in constitutional Japan.
- VIII. Hymn. Prayer.

*See Leaflet, price 1c., at Room 20 (please enclose 2c. extra for postage and wrapping).

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