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WORK IN SAPPORO, JAPAN.

Last Sabbath we had the pleasure of seeing two of our pupils unite with the Church. One had been in the school since it first opened—the subject of many prayers. She has several brothers and sisters, none of them Christians, and until last year she could not obtain permission to openly confess Christ. Another of our older girls received baptism. Two years ago when her brother, an intelligent young graduate from the Agricultural College, brought her to me he wished her to be excused from Bible class, as her parents as well as himself were very unwilling that she should become a Christian. I could not excuse her from the study of the Bible, as it is the only book of ethics used in the school. After several talks with him it was decided that she should remain with

her brother, her parents not living here, and attend as a day pupil instead of boarding in the school “ where there were so many Christians. ” I let him have my copy of “ The Ministry of Life,” by Dr. Knox, which, after several weeks, he returned, saying he had purchased one for himself, as he thought it very good and should like to study it more. He received baptism at the same time with his sister and is quite an addition to our little church.

But what gave me most pleasure was receiving the parents of one of my early pupils into the Church. This girl was with me two years when I first opened the school, but when she became a Christian she was taken from the school and made a prisoner in her room, where she was given rice and water and allowed to see none of her Christian friends. But the dear child would not give up that which had become so precious to her. She was fond of study and begged to return to school, but her father, who was a judge of very good standing in the courts, would not listen. He sent her away to be among Buddhist friends. But she has remained firm. Last summer when she was home on her vacation her father one day picked up her diary and opening it carelessly found this written on every page : “ Eight A. M., prayed for father and mother ; ” or, “ six P. M., prayed that father and mother would listen to the truth and become Christians. ” This earnestness so surprised him that he began privately to study, with the result of which I have already spoken. What a glad day it was for their only daughter ! She told me, with tears in her eyes, when she went away that she did not mind going from home or being shut in her room with only rice and water, but that to have her father and mother, whom she loved so dearly and who had always been so good to her, prostrate themselves before her and beg her to listen to them, that they need not send her away from them, just broke her heart.

Another very bright, promising girl has been taken from the school this year for the same reason. I hope you will ask our friends at home to pray for her, for she is only a child of eleven and has six brothers as well as her parents to oppose. She writes that she shall not give up her Savior, and that when they make her bow she always prays to God and not to the image or spirit.

There is one more of our early pupils—*only* one more now in school—who is not a Christian. She graduates this year in a class of four, all Christians but herself. I sometimes think she is only afraid to confess, as she lives with her grandfather, who is a temple-keeper.

Will you and our other friends of the Ladies' Board kindly remember this one in your prayers ?

In April we had a week's vacation, when I made an itinerating trip into the country. It was a rough journey, but paid well. One of our teachers accompanied me. We left Sapporo at eight in the morning and should have reached our destination by four in the afternoon, but owing to a "breakdown" and bad roads did not arrive until eight in the evening. We had three very interesting meetings during the two days we remained. The town has three or four thousand inhabitants and is in the midst of a fine farming country. Some Christian women who heard we were coming walked in from their farms, five and six miles distance, over the country roads—in the first week in April, please remember—to attend the meetings. One woman, coming in the evening because she could not attend the day meeting, having irretrievably lost her shoes in the mud and darkness, was obliged to finish her journey with unprotected feet, which means a great deal when roads are not only muddy in places, but have long stretches of ice and frozen ground.

You kindly ask what you can do for us. Thank you very much. There are many things we should like to have, but considering the present financial condition of the Board, one would hardly be justified in telling what they would like. The one thing *most needed* just now is your earnest prayers. The satisfactory treaty with England and America and the success of the country in the war with China has created a decidedly better feeling toward foreigners and Christianity. Since the first of January we have nearly doubled the number of pupils in our school, fifteen of the number having been received since peace was declared. We have no kindergarten now, but instead we have again opened the primary which our former director (Japanese) closed. We have at present a total of fifty pupils in our school.

Sarah C. Smith