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THE ASSEMBLY HERALD.

AUGUST, 1901.

Japanese and Chinese in the U. S.

The Japanese Work in San Francisco.

By E. A. Sturge, M.D.

In 1884, when there were very few of the Mikado's subjects on our Pacific coast, an illiterate Japanese cook was working for a family on Mason street, in San Francisco. When not needed in the kitchen, he retired to the barn, where he passed his nights in company with a large collection of discarded books, which had been piled up there and neglected. These literary companions did little to relieve the loneliness of this stranger from the Orient, as their language was an unknown tongue to him. One evening he received a call from a fellow-countryman. After chatting for a time on various subjects, the eye of the visitor was attracted by the literary array, such as is rarely to be met with in such a place. Becoming more interested, he arose and selected the volume which appeared to hold out the greatest promise. He was not influenced in his choice by any knowledge of the value of the contents, but judged its worth by the expensive binding and gilt edges. Brushing off the thick coating of dust he spelled out the words "Holy Bible," but at that time the name was meaningless to him. Not knowing that they had stumbled upon a mine of inexhaustible treasure, the two young foreigners began to make an investigation. Night after night they pored over the words of wisdom, sometimes spending an hour or more in trying to decipher a single verse. An Anglo-Japanese dictionary lay open before them on the table, and they seemed to study this quite as much as the volume they sought to interpret. One evening, while thus engaged, a Christian Japanese of the student

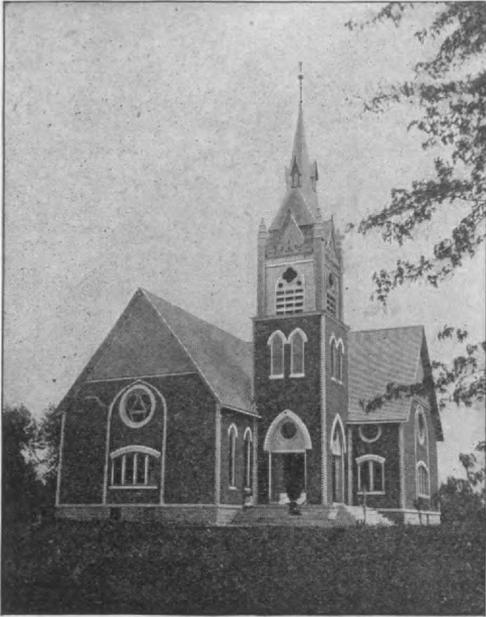
class, who had been led to the Saviour but a short time before, called upon the cook and was greatly surprised to find him and his friend eagerly trying to read the Word of God. He gladly assisted them with their translation, and opened up to them the Scriptures, especially the sweet story of Jesus and His love. These two young men soon became earnest Christians. The finder of the volume, after doing much good among his countrymen in San Francisco, returned to his own land, where he is now preaching the gospel. The other man is still a member of our Japanese church. I have dwelt at some length upon this incident because it was the germ from which sprang our work among the Japanese on this coast.

The cook and some companions became so interested in the study of the Bible that they formed a little association called The Gospel Society, the chief object being the study of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. These young men met in an upper room on Golden Gate avenue, and were greatly encouraged by Elder Roberts, Rev. John Carrington and others interested in their welfare. In May, 1885, at the request of the Bible students, the First Japanese Presbyterian Church was organized in that upper room. God's blessing has rested upon it. Hardly a communion season has passed without witnessing some additions to this little fold. In all, three hundred and eighteen—mostly young men of the student class—have united with it. Many of these have returned to Japan, where they are witnessing for the Master. The Japanese of San Francisco now have a large suitable building for their work, with a Y. M. C. A. of more than a hundred members, and a Branch Mission Home in another part of the city.

Our Latin and Slavonic Population.

By the Rev. Chas. E. Edwards, Pittsburg, Pa.

European immigrants in our land who are destitute of the gospel are chiefly of four classes, French, Italians, Bohemians and Poles. The first two of these speak Latin tongues; the last two, Slavonic. Each of these may number one and a half millions,



FRENCH CHURCH, ST. ANNE, ILL.

though sometimes Slavonic estimates make them about equal to twice the French and Italians combined. Census reports, at present are not yet finished. If these, and minor nationalities such as Croatians and Servians (numbering two or three hundred thousand) Lithuanians (the same number or less), Roumanians, Magyars, etc., do not number six millions, they soon will; for the government statistics of immigration, more discriminating than formerly, show that over 300,000 came from Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia last year, while the French Canadians are one of the most prolific races on the continent. History is as clear concerning the success of evangelization among them as among Scotch or Dutch. One of Milton's noblest sonnets is a prayer for the Waldensian Italians,

"Who kept the faith so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped sticks and stones."

The French Huguenot Presbyterian Church once had 400,000 members and 2000 churches. Bohemia was once almost wholly protestant, but was forced to become Catholic as some other lands have been forced to become Mohammedan. A Jesuit once confessed that there were 2000 Protestant churches in Poland. Most of these were Reformed or Presbyterian, some surviving to this day. Histories of the Reformation are good missionary reading for America, as she deals with the same peoples, languages, errors, means of grace, and results, with the great advantage of a free country for the gospel. The amount of crime among our foreigners has been exaggerated; but it will increase if they are taught America's wickedness instead of America's Bible. Too often American employers deprive them of the Sabbath.

The French Presbyterian churches under our Board of Home Missions are four in Wisconsin, three of which are in one pastoral charge. Our French church in St. Anne, Ill., was made famous by Father Chiniguy; and the veteran Rev. Henri L. Grandlienard, who has been pastor of the French Evangelical Church in New York since 1872, has made it a shining light. The interesting Woodhaven Mission in Brooklyn completed the list of such churches until lately, since Pittsburg and neighboring presbyteries began work among Belgians in western Pennsylvania. A hundred French Catholics joined the Presbyterian church at Tarentum in two years. Rev. Mr. F. A. Billom, a Waldensian, is now their missionary; and Rev. J. E. Charles, a Belgian, alternates services at Charleroi and Jeannette. There are forty thousand French converts, the result of fifty years work by Presbyterians in Canada. Many have removed to New England, where Congregationalists have built fine churches for them; and many of their workers among the half million French there, are of Presbyterian Canadian antecedents. Presbyterians should do more for the French, as they owe their theology to a

Frenchman, John Calvin, "the virtual founder of American common schools." Philadelphia has had an independent French church, sometimes classed as Presbyterian.

No foreigners can choose a Scriptural motto more appropriate than Italians—"They of Italy salute you." For years, our religious papers have mentioned the work of Rev. Antonio Arreghi in New York City. Rev. Mr. Philip Grilli's church and mission in Chicago, each provided with a building, make one of the best Presbyterian missions in that city. Besides a new mission in Detroit, Mich., the rest of our Italian work is in two states—in Pennsylvania, at Pittsburg (whose converts have created two missions already in Italy) at Pittston, Bangor, Hazleton and Philadelphia—and in New Jersey at Trenton, Hammondton and Newark. Rev. F. Pesaturo is pastor of the latter, which claims to have the first building erected for an Italian Presbyterian church in this country. Here the Italian Evangelical Alliance was formed Sept. 25, 1900, with thirty and more of ministers and missionaries of different denominations. It assembles again this year, August 20th, at Buffalo. Volumes might be written on the steadfastness of these Italians under persecution, and of the transformations of grace. In the South, Rev. M. C. Russo, of New Orleans, is the solitary laborer, who pleads for laborers at Galveston and Houston, Tex.; Mobile, Ala.; San Francisco, San Jose and Los Angeles, Cal. Valdesi, N. C., is a colony of Waldensians whose work differs entirely from the missionary work above mentioned. With Protestant grit, under hard conditions they made the wilderness blossom as the rose.

Our Slavonic foreigners are less known to Americans than any others. Bohemians and Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenians, Russians, Slovenes, Croatians and Servians, are all Slavonic.

A man who speaks one Slavonic tongue can reach all the others. They think that their race will surpass the Anglo-Saxon in the contest for the world's supremacy. Presbyterian work among Bohemians has had nearly all its growth in the last ten years, although the first Bohemian church in this country was Presbyterian. At present Presbyterians probably exceed all other denominations combined, in the number of churches and mis-

sion stations, their last reports showing 24 congregations, not counting stations; 1648 communicants, 24 ordained ministers, (nearly all of whom have had a classical education), 2 licentiates, 6 theological students. In Western Pennsylvania work has been begun among the Slovaks, at Connellsville, Schoenville (near Pittsburg), Latrobe and Johnstown. Slovaks speak a dialect of Bohemia and are from Hungary, though not Hungarians proper, who are Magyars. Last fall Rev. Mr. V. Losa was called by Pittsburg Presbytery from Clarkson, Neb., where his field seemed ready to become our first self-supporting Bohemian charge, and has been suc-



REV. VACLAV LOSA.

cessful at Schoenville, hoping soon to form a neighboring mission. He is editor of the only Presbyterian Bohemian periodical, a semi-monthly. There are thirty infidel Bohemian papers in the country, one of the worst of which has a circulation of 15,000. Infidelity has spread among Bohemians and occasioned many suicides. Yet since the death of John Huss, in 1415, as Mr. Losa remarks, there has been "a spark of Protestantism in every Bohemian." Presbyterians arranged the first interdenominational convention of Bohemian Protestants, held in the Bethlehem Congrega-

tional Church, Chicago, last May. Presbyterian Bohemians are organized as an Evangelical Union; and Rev. Joseph Bren, Racine, Wis., who is of their information bureau, will gladly supply correspondents with all information at his command. Presbyterian Bohemian congregations have been largely in the country, but lately are increasing in the cities, as for instance, Omaha. The salaries of some ministers are too low, and they must take time to support themselves by farming—a loss to the church. Their Young People's Societies last year supported a young missionary in a field that could be organized into a church if funds were supplied. Presbyterians need more women workers and more students, and both could be obtained if Americans contributed money.

According to some estimates, the Poles are more numerous than any foreign-speaking people except Germans, yet our Church has no mission among them. The United Presbyterian Church has begun a Polish mission at Pittsburg. Will not our Church pray for a new Reformation among the Poles? Thousands of them, as of all other foreigners, have

left the Catholic church; and thousands belong to the new Independent Polish Catholic organization. They are lost sheep.

One of the strangest, saddest things concerning foreigners is the lack of colportage. No country in the world is more unsystematic than ours in this respect. The American Bible Society has nearly 250 colporteurs in foreign lands, but not one among the foreigners of this country. From Hazleton, Pa., Rev. Mr. Brunn writes that there is absolutely no colportage among 50,000 to 75,000 Italians in the anthracite coal region. Others testify that there is little for Italians anywhere else. Bohemian Protestants have made an appeal for more colportage, as they know of none, except some at Omaha, Chicago and in western Pennsylvania. Colportage is an old, cheap, simple, expeditious method of spreading the gospel. Presbyterians employ it in foreign fields, and should have a score of colporteurs for Italian and Slavonic multitudes in the United States as soon as possible. "The Lord loveth the stranger." "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."



BOHEMIAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CUBA, KANS.