

No. 23. Tsukiji, Tokio, Japan. Oct 6th 1887

Rev. W. H. Belden:

Dear Bro:

Your communication dated July 27th reached me some weeks ago. I have delayed writing my reply mainly to see if our meeting of Chu Kwai or Presbytery would bring any new facts to light which I might communicate to you. The 2^d Presbytery of Tokio with which I am connected, adjourned yesterday at noon. Reports were read from our seventeen organized churches, which showed an increase in membership since April last, (when our spring meeting was held) of 174 persons, men, women and children, but I am sorry to say, showed also a striking decrease in contributions, notably for church building; in other departments the decrease was insignificant & in one department i. e. for pastors, there was a considerable increase. There were loud calls for preachers from some of

our small pastorless churches in the interior. This demand will be met in time. Five promising young men were received under care of Presbytery, & two others were examined on studies assigned. Among the people at large we every where observe a willingness to hear the Word such as we have not seen in former years.

To speak now of the special matter concerning which you wrote to me. We are all rejoiced to see the interest which the home-church takes in our work here as manifested in your preparation for the Nov. Simultaneous Meetings. We will remember to pray for you, and ask you all to pray for us, for our work here is in such a state as at once to excite our liveliest hope, and anxiety or apprehension. It may soon be firmly established; and at the same time it would take but little to seriously injure it. Pray then that God may order all things by His Providence & Spirit, that this young church may be enlarged & established.

As to calls that come to us from the heathen themselves. "to have the Gospel brought to them and their people." these are not always calls for the simple Gospel, but often for the benefits that the Gospel brings or promotes such as Christian Education. Hence of late there have been in Japan many calls for Christian teachers of Science, literature & of the English Language, to supply the present demand felt in high schools & Academies of the country. Such a call led to the founding of the now flourishing Church of Kochi on the Island of Shikoku. which work is now in the hands of the Missionaries of the Southern Pers. Church. Another like call this Summer came not directly from an idolater or heathen but from a native Christian a director in a public school in the large town of Mito about 75 miles N. E. of this place. In consequence of this call & response to it on the part of some missionaries the whole place has been moved, & the people who were all formerly most bigoted opponents of Christianity

now manifest a desire to hear. (The writer knows the above to be true, because some years ago he had to shake off the dust of his feet & suddenly leave a town in that vicinity.)

Another example, or call, that came to my knowledge about a month ago, comes to us, not to teach in schools, but, preach; & not from a native Christian but from an unbeliever. This is a call from Kagoshima in the Southern part of the Island of Kiusiu. The name of the man I forget; but he is a director in what is known as "Saigo's School" in Kagoshima. General Saigo is the man who some years ago resigned his position in the Japanese Cabinet, headed a great rebellion & in the end was defeated & lost his life. He first established a military school to train men for his army; and now one of the directors of this school, (or what remains of it) asks a missionary to be sent to his place to preach the Gospel. I saw the man recently in company with Rev Yamakawa of this city. Rev Dr. Verbeck & Rev

Mr. Miller have promised to go to Kagoshima next December. It is a great distance from here in the extreme south of Japan. and cannot be visited sooner.

The above are cases of calls coming to us in this country either from native Christians or unbelievers. Some who make these calls may have ulterior or even selfish ends in view. No one can tell. Still when responded to they give unexpected facilities for proclaiming the Gospel to the people of whole cities & provinces. Hence we regard them as providential; (though the human instrument of conveying them may be seeking his own private ends. I say, "may be", because no one can say certainly that he is so doing, though ^{some} surmise this to be the case.), and being Providential they should be responded to by the Church.

I hope your Simultaneous meetings in Nov. next will awaken such an interest

in the church at home that we will be
able to respond to more of these calls, & thus
preach more extensively the Gospel of Christ.

As to your request for pictures avail-
able for missionary tracts, I have none at
present that I can conveniently send,
but will remember your request and
be on the look-out for such objects.

My wife unites with me in much
love to Mrs. Belden & yourself. We will
long remember with pleasure our brief
stay together at Thousand Island Park.

Very sincerely yours,

David Thompson.