

N. S. M.
Via Vancouver

A. V. Bryan -

Bridgeton, New Jersey.

OCT 8 1887

Rev. W. H. C.

Bridgeton

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Aug. 31 '87

Dear Mr. Belden:

I ought at least to answer your letter though I fear it will not be such an answer as you want. I know the feeling at home about the heathen and how interesting, stories from heathen lands are. Still I must confess that there are serious objections in my mind to this indiscriminate circulation of stories which are to increase the good of Christians in our home lands. In many cases the after results are entirely different from those under which the stories were at first written. In Japan there are various considerations by which people here are ~~lead~~ led to invite missionaries to begin work in different places. Intelligent people look upon Christianity as a civilizing agent and when they have the benefits

of the railroad, telegraph, foreign dress
if they think they ought to have Christianity.
They look upon our religion as a
moral teaching simply; perhaps as
not differing very much from
Buddhism or Confucianism. The
student class regard missionaries
as nothing more nor less than teachers
of the English language and are
perfectly willing to be taught the
Bible provided it is done through
the medium of English. Many regard
Christianity as a new and curious
teaching and for this ~~very~~ reason
they will go to the preaching places:
when they recognize Christianity as the
purifier of the life then they do not
want it. From this it is quite evident
to me that they do not from a sense of
sin come to Christ as the savior from
sin. And till they know what sin is
how can they realize that they are the

servants of sin? And yet with all these
sinister motives for desiring the
presence and help of missionaries we
have in Japan a much broader door
open to us than ~~we~~ we may enter in
to possess this land. What is hopeful
in the work here lies in the fact that
a study of the scriptures, after reception
into the church, the attendance on the
church services and other means of
grace are bringing this people into
the liberty of the sons of God. As Dr.
Imler said in our last annual
report I do not believe that this people
is hungering & thirsting for the bread
and water of eternal life. I do
believe that the Truth is being under-
stood and appreciated and that
our work here is a success. When the
contributions increase as they do: when
the church members inaugurate
work in different places then I
believe that we are right in being

hopeful. The causes are always doubted
doubtful but the results are certain.
The meetings of our Presbyteries and
Synods each year are the signs that
the work here is in good progress. The
large number of baptisms give us joy
because so many are brought into the
way of being instructed in Biblical
truth. The applicants for baptism are well
instructed in Biblical truth but I
believe it is not till afterwards that
they have an Experimental knowledge
of saving truth. What I maintain is that
we ought not to rely too much upon the
beginnings of a work but rather to
note its progress and results. Therefore
if I differ from many who can con-
tinue stirers it is not because I am
less hopeful but because I view it
from another point of view. I am
spending the summer in Kobe but expect
to move next month to Hiroshima to open
a new station there.

Yours sincerely
A. J. Ryan