

THE RECORD, THURSDAY, May 8, 1919

MISS A. M. HENTY.

Miss A. M. HENTY (Japan): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is a great privilege to be able to speak to you today. You have heard a great appeal from India; we want to make a great appeal from Japan. We are out today to make a new world, and Japan is one of the five Powers that is used by God in making that world.

About Japan.

Japan has been called in America the "Young Giant of the East." Japan has controlled Korea, and is trying to control parts of China. Japan has an army of five millions, is building her own navy, and is getting a good navy, and is going ahead commercially. Five thousand new companies were started last year, with a capital of £40,000,000 sterling. Japan is an over-populated country, having fifty-eight million people, as against forty-two or forty-three millions in Great Britain. Her population is far ahead of our population today and the area of Japan is about equal to the area of Great Britain. Japan must have an outlet; Japan is seeking her outlet. What has that to do with the Mission side of the question? Japan is a civilised country, but Japan's civilisation has not Christianity at the back of it. Compare that with our English civilisation. The people in England forget; because the darkest place is always under the candlestick, as we say in Japan, that all our great positions are backed by Christianity. The whole position of women today in England is the result of Christian teaching. The Labour movements have His teaching to back them. Education and the rights of the individual, from the rights of the King to the rights of the crossing-sweeper, are all based on the rights that Our Lord Himself has taught us. We, each individual of us, have a right; but He has given it to us. You take Japan's civilisation, and you have a civilisation with the foundation-stone dropped out, or never included. If that civilisation is going to spread through the world, it is a menace to the world. Here we are. What are we going to do?

The Religions of Japan.

Perhaps someone here is saying they have not Christianity, but they have Shinto and Buddhism. Shinto is Emperor worship, a sort of Kaiserism forced on the people by the bureaucratic party. Shinto is based on mythology, and Shinto based on that mythology will do what? Whether harm or good to the country you have only to study the modern history of Europe to find out, and to see the end of Shinto. But look at Buddhism, somebody else says. Buddhism, when it gets to Japan, is Buddhism deteriorated — at all events Buddhism Japanised. Buddhism in Japan stands for an intellectual philosophy for the select few, and rank superstition for the vast mass. Over any of them Buddhism has no ennobling power, no raising power for those who are oppressed; and, very little does it affect their lives in general. Therefore, we have to turn to something other than Buddhism. Moreover, Buddhism is getting in low water. The Buddhist priests often do not believe in what they are teaching. They enter the ministry as children, and they find it difficult to leave, as it is impossible to make a living when they leave. Therefore, they stay on, and teach that which they openly do not believe. "We are co-religionists; let us forget that," they said to me. As Professor Anezaki has said: Buddhism is rotten to the core, and Christianity has not yet taken root. What shall Japan turn to? You have Christianity. Our all must be applied to meet the great and pressing needs of Japan. People have written books, such as Mr. Pooley's book "Japan at the Cross Roads," giving a dark picture of that country.

Christianity Must Help Japan.

I should like to mention three great fundamental matters in which Christianity must change that country. First, the home; secondly, the great social evil; and thirdly, the whole labour position.

Firstly, the home: Marriage is done by contract, the parties generally having only seen a photograph of each other. In Japan we have a proverb: "That which is united can be separated." That is the idea of marriage. The woman is an unpaid servant, not her husband's

social equal very often, and not his friend. She loses all her legal right at marriage. Her husband may be unfaithful to her, He may go to play with these terrible geishas; he may even keep a separate establishment and the woman is powerless. On the other hand, he can divorce her either by a simple written form or by going to law. It is generally arranged in this way - by the husband going to the registry office and re-registering her, name back into her father's name, and then all responsibility regarding her is at an end. He will do this for an incurable illness - say consumption. I have known a woman thrown over at a moment's notice by husband for that. If she does not please him he will find another wife. Childlessness is a common reason for divorce. The woman loses her children if she has any; they become the man's property, You cannot expect a home to be a happy one if it is based on that idea of marriage. That idea of a woman simply crushes the mother. She has not got the sense of responsibility that she must have, both as regards her children and her devotion to her husband. He spends his pleasure away from her, generally with a geisha,

There you have the second great evil in Japan, the awful social evil, so exquisitely white-washed for England's sake by that very well-known opera or play, the "Geisha." But it does not mean just simply what that play lets you imagine that curse means. Just to show what Lord Kitchener thought of it, may I mention this incident? He announced, when he was in Japan that at no meeting at which he was present would he allow any geisha to attend as a service girl. The authorities thoroughly approved, in true Japanese style. They always approve in Japan, and very often do a totally different thing. The great feast at Kioto was awaiting him. Six o'clock came, and Lord Kitchener was waited for by a large number of people of the place. They waited with their Oriental patience till eight o'clock, when they telephoned to Lord Kitchener to his hotel. The answer came back, " Lord Kitchener will not attend tonight." The next morning the best newspapers in Japan were singing Lord Kitchener's praises, "That is what England's General - thinks of the curse of Japan." That is what they said. So we are out to help that.

Then as to labour. The Labour Unions have struggled to get official recognition, and have failed. They are not yet recognised, though they have again been fighting the matter in Parliament this year. They have not got official recognition yet. There was a Bill passed in 1916 to ensure better conditions in the factories. The better conditions would shock you if you knew them — twelve-hour shifts — but that at all events did away with seventeen-hour shifts. The factory workers are women and children, 700,000 women and over 100,000 children. They live in such shut-in places with a high wall round the factory that last year, after twelve years' life in Japan, I was idiot enough to get myself inside a prison, mistaking it for a factory. You would hardly find yourself mistaking a prison for a factory out here. But that shows you the high walls that surround the factory. Inside the girls aged from thirteen to twenty, are working on these long twelve-hour shifts, and then often obliged to use the same bed as the other shift has just vacated. The pay is high, but fines are numerous, and the physical strain is intense. They cannot stand it and thousands go down every year with consumption. We are out to help them.

Nothing but Christianity can do anything with that. For all these Buddhism has no reality. Buddhism is a religion of compromise. The Buddhist priests themselves spend thousands on the curse of Japan, the Geisha. The Buddhist priest has no reality or appreciation of the great social problems, and Japan is looking to Christianity, and to Christians arising there.

What are our Forces ?

What forces have we to help Japan today. Ignoring the Roman Catholic and Greek churches which do not belong to the Japan Federated Mission — that is a federation of all Missions — we have 1,037 men and women. Add to that your Japanese men and women workers, and you have some 3,900. This hall holds 3,000. Add on another 900 and fill it, and you have the sum-total of the men and women, Japanese and English, of every missionary society to help fifty-eight million people.

To put it in another way: we have one missionary — Man or woman, Baptist, Presbyterian, or any Mission you like to take — one missionary to 55,000 people. That is thirteen missionaries in Liverpool or Manchester — thirteen men or women. What can they do in face of the great industrial problems that come before us to-day? What could you do to help if you were thirteen people in Manchester? What can you do to help the children? How can you help the

women? How can you guide these people who are now asking for a bigger franchise? Hitherto there were 1,600,000 who have been enfranchised. They are now asking for three millions to be enfranchised, and women also are now demanding in Japan that they shall be enfranchised. It is being asked that all men and women over twenty-five shall have the vote. That would give them a voting franchise of twenty-five millions. What are we going to do to educate those people? If we do not educate them it will react on us. Japan, must have an outlet.

Japan is already one of the Five Powers of the world. Is there no one here coming out to help us in this great problem? It is an awful problem. The country is losing its religion and turning to materialism in despair, and that country is one of the five Powers of the world.

The Great Appeal.

There is no glamour in the missionary work in Japan. I am appealing here for men and women who will go out, not to lead from the front, because we have to lead from behind - in Japan. We go out to learn humility we go out, not with logic, because you never convince a Japanese by logic: you can convince them by love. But we must go ' out to Japan. These last four years we have been asked: "When are the missionaries coming?" We have been depleted in our staff. Members of the C.M.S. staff have joined the Labour contingent. Another of our missionaries went as Chaplain to the Front, so in different ways we have been depleted, and practically we have had only one recruit. We have to-day all that great work 110,000 people in Kouri, the leading arsenal in Japan. The C.M.S. has free scope there and a missionary house built there, but no one in it today. Why not? Because you are not going out. I am appealing to men and women to join us. It is much the same difficulty as you will find in England. There is no glory and glamour in it, but it is Christ and His Cross that is calling to us, and we must go out to try and live His life out there, and then the whole fate of Asia will be changed because Japan is ruling Asia today.

Do come out! We have been praying for an opportunity of speaking to you, and they are praying out in Japan. Will the C M.S. let Japan be represented? We are praying and praying for it. Letters come home every month about it, and to-day God has given this opportunity, but Oh! go home and offer yourselves to Him and His service. Wherever He may send you. (Applause.)

[Miss HENTY spent much of her life in the Japan Mission Field, dying there just before Christopher arrived in Japan in 1937.]