

SENDAI BAPTIST GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

(SHOKEI JOGOKKO)

SOME one has said that "God's method was a man." That man so far as our work here is concerned is Dean Yoshikawa, a graduate in law of the Imperial University with several years business experience in New York City. He has the keen mind of the lawyer, but, speaks with the simplicity of a child. Any one can understand him. He teaches some of the Bible courses in the school and preaches every Sunday at the "School Church." He is not a "preacher" nor has he studied Theology but *he knows his Bible and his heart is on fire with evangelistic zeal.*

Gathered about him is a faculty almost entirely Christian, men and women who love Christ and want to make his name known. These men and women are so thoroughly saturating the atmosphere with Christian idealism that it seems as if the girls just naturally turn to Christ as the solution for their life's problems.

This is a Christian school and everybody knows it. We have made no special efforts, held no special meetings, made no special appeals. We depend upon the Christian atmosphere, upon the Bible teaching and the regular week-day and Sunday services. Every girl in the school has at least two hours and some classes have three hours of Bible each week. While the mid-week prayer meeting is not compulsory, practically all of the teachers and students attend, and this in addition to the well attended daily chapel. Many of the younger students attend our Sunday School and a number of the older girls teach. One hundred and fifty neighborhood children make up our Sunday School. Two years ago we opened our school as a preaching place on Sundays. Attendance steadily grew until the average attendance for last year reached one hundred and thirty. We now have fifty-eight regularly emersed members and eight associate members, who hold membership elsewhere as well. Among those who regularly attend are fifty non-Christians. So you see we are fast attaining the proportions of a regular church.

In the past we have seldom graduated a girl from our regular five year course who was not a Christian, but, this year there were eight in the graduating class who were not Christians and so we felt somewhat troubled. About two months before graduation I reminded one of these eight that, when she was in the third year, she had said she wanted to follow Christ, but that of late she seemed to be the leader of the group who were not Christians. I asked if she had changed her attitude towards Christ, or, if she still loved him. She insisted that she had not and that she still loved him. That night she wrote me a note:

"I am very glad that I could talk with you and I thank you very much. I do want to be baptized. I told mother that I wanted to be baptized and she said, "All right." When can I be baptized? I am not a leader of the girls who are not christian, but I will talk with Miss A..... and Miss S..... and Miss S..... . I think Miss A..... wants to be baptized because she told me so one day. Her mother will not dissent. I think Miss H..... Miss K..... and Miss T.....

believe God, I will talk with them about it. They want to talk with you about it but they are shame. If you call them and talk with them they will be glad."

I did not call them, for I did not want to over influence them, but, a few days later this girl brought five of them to my office and we talked an hour or so about following Christ, about becoming a Christian, about baptism and the church. They wanted to pray before we separated and each led in a prayer of confession and dedication of self to Christ.

On the following Sunday these six came to my room with the other two of the class who were not Christians. Mr. Yoshikawa was over at the school, so I called him and both of us talked with them. Then he led us in prayer.

I write this to show that the students are interested in each other. They have their own little meetings for prayer and fellowship. Great was their joy over having every member of their class a Christian before they graduated.

A few Sundays later one of the higher department girls came to my room to say that Christ had found her. A short time before at a little group meeting she had told of the fact that she wanted to be a Christian, that she was suffering over her sin and was trying to find Christ.

One Sunday at the close of morning worship Mr. Yoshikawa announced that there would be baptism and asked if any wanted to be baptized. Five gave him their names. A week or ten days later five more of the higher department girls came to my office to talk about this same thing. They too wanted to follow Christ, and so it came about that twenty met the officers of the church, told their experiences and spoke of what had influenced them for Christ. They were accepted and were baptized the next Sunday in the river near our school by Mr. Ross.

Mr. Ross was present at the examination of the candidates, and afterward he remarked to me, that he wished those who doubt that schools are agents of evangelism could have been present at that meeting and could have heard those girls tell of their faith in Christ and their purpose to follow Him. My heart ached for some of them for I knew just what they would have to face in the way of opposition and in some cases persecution in their homes.

Some of them were to go at once to little country villages where the name of Christ is not known. Although it was still cold and snow was on the ground, and the river full of melting snow, they would not agree to wait. They wanted to go to these places where Christ is not known bearing his name. A letter came just to-day from one of these girls. She writes that the greatest joy she has is to gather the children together on Sunday and teach them in Sunday School.

May I close this with another quotation from a letter recently received from another higher department girl. These higher department girls came to us only a year ago, from government schools, so it is very encouraging to us to see so many becoming Christians. They are such fine girls too, the very pick of the Government High School graduates.

"I have had no opportunity to speak to you because I could not

have the courage to do it. How often I have wished to visit your room but now I will write. Please permit me to do it. I know that I cannot live in the world without loving God. I know that people try to cleanse from sin by themselves but I now know that it is impossible."....
....."I hoped to be baptized but this is impossible for me. I must wait till it comes that my wish can be fulfilled. I try to comfort myself by my thought that it is very good for me to be strong in my faith and to suffer for it, and that I can believe God even though I cannot be baptized. But I am overcome with loneliness, and I think of my friends who could be baptized, with envy. I looked for one to whom I could speak my mind but I could not find such a one among my friends or family, so pardon me that I write all this to you. I think only you know my heart."

MARY D. JESSE.