

## To Fukuoka

It was near noon when we were through customs and found ourselves on the train moving on toward Fukuoka 125 miles to the northeast. It was a train that made a good many stops and the trip usually took four or five hours.

We six new-comers were "Innocents Abroad" and to all appearances had given no thought to the matter of something to eat on the train. But the train was one of about average comforts in the second class and after the new wore off and the sun moved on across the Meridian our Senior looked us over and raised the question of food. Someone answered about as follows, "I am not hungry" and memory does not recall any contrary answer, but our Senior did not take very seriously the answers he heard and began to open some baskets and when we saw what was coming out, there was a remarkable resurgence of appetite as well as appreciation and countenances brightened up quite surprisingly when it was revealed that there was somebody thereabouts that could prepare food in the American style and could also imagine that people get hungry when traveling.

There were only three families of missionaries in our mission on the field at that time: the J. W. McCollums, the Nathan Maynards, and the E. N. Walms, and they were well represented at the big house on Daimys Machi in Fukuoka on September 28, 1906.

The mission house at 96 Daimys Machi was built four-square, four big rooms down stairs and four big rooms upstairs. Thus if three young couples live in the house they can have two rooms for each couple and two rooms for all to use. Then the two servants have a place to live in the rear of the house.

The old Japanese couple who were our first servants knew something about American cooking and they knew one word about a meal—"sappa"! the old woman would call, no matter which meal was ready.

But we inherited one good tradition—if we are going to work in Japan, we must learn the language. We accepted that tradition without argument. The first Sunday we were in our station we went to church. Pastor K. Sato preached on "Shinja no nagusame." When we had returned home I said to our Senior "what is the meaning of nagusame"? He said "that was his subject" Shinja, believer, and nagusame<sup>2</sup>, comfort" the believer's comfort. And he seemed surprised that I had caught that word, but it sounded so much like naga-saki, and he used the word so many times.

Five or six days each week we had two teachers for their whole time and we had plenty of text books, and studying Japanese was our main job till further notice.

### Learning Diplomacy

If anyone thinks we didn't need to learn diplomacy, or be taught by diplomatic methods, let him please read this,

Our house was on a lot of good size and on the east side of the house, but on our land was a small tennis court. We three young fellows proceeded to get balls and rackets and the necessary equipment, for we felt the need of exercise after a full day of study.

But there was a mud and tile wall between us and our neighbor to the east. It was seven or eight feet high, but amateur tennis players who have strong arms can easily knock a tennis ball over such a wall.

If one goes over what shall we do? It is so quiet over there. We have never even seen anyone who lives in that house. I don't

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remember who climbed over the wall to recover a stray ball, but someone of us evidently did. There was not a word of complaint from that house as far as we knew.

But one day an acquaintance who lived more than 100 miles from us dropped in for a visit at our house. He was a man and was visiting with us three young men. He waited for a suitable moment and then mentioned the ball over the wall as mildly as possible, but let it out that it would be better not to climb a neighbor's wall. "Why?" we enquired. "It's in the Bible." (Juo. 10:1) "He that entereth not by the door is a thief, and a robber." We didn't have to be told that a second time.

#### British Neighbors

On the same street with us in Fukuoka<sup>o</sup> lived an elderly couple of British people who were under the Church Missionary Society of London. There was a young man staying with the old people, also a British young man under the same Missionary Society, and he might not have a wife until he had finished the two years language course. He came to see us and we enjoyed his visits, but he soon had a name for us and our house: "The Dove's Nest."

He stayed in Japan until he was quite an old man and he and his wife, which he got in due time, were always good friends and neighbors with us. He became a Bishop, and we hope he still lives in London: Bishop John C. Mann.

We were happy in the Dove's Nest and the language study seemed to go very well, but too many places were unoccupied, and hardly had we passed our first New Year in Japan before we began to hear talk of "who is going where."

It just happened that we were the first of the three couples to be located in a station by ourselves. Maybe the humility of a young wife had something to do with it. The mission was assembled and the oldsters were proceeding very carefully. "Who (among the new ones) will be willing to go to Kagoshima?" A distant place, hard to get to. Maggie spoke up, "I just imagined we would be sent there." And we were.

To Kagoshima February 11, 1907

A "Move" is an adventure and requires some special thought, preparation and activity. But we don't recall any dread connected with this change of residence. We are twenty-five and twenty-four years of age and we are taking up a new work with growing responsibility. But we were fortunate in being among friends who would freely help us at each step of the way.

Send the household things by turning them over to a shipping company. Our teacher knows where to go to call one. They will come when we are ready for them and bring the necessary wrapping materials, in those days in that land made mainly of rice straw: ropes and straw matting made for the purpose of taking care of things that might get broken or injured in shipping. The man would take pains to take care of valuable and breakable articles and listen to what they were told about special pieces of household goods.

And they would write our new address carefully, making a copy for each bundle or package. And we would be told the time at which the shipment ought to arrive at their destination. Whether we paid in advance, or when the things were delivered to the new place of residence, we carried the necessary written information as to where we should enquire if enquiry were necessary. How different from what we might have guessed!

Having said goodbye at this place we took rikishas to the railroad station and with us our Japanese teacher and our Senior Missionary, worth more than rubies to us. An experienced person buys our tickets and leads the way when the train arrives, through the gate allowing the gate keeper to see and clip the tickets and return them to our leader.

We take seats in the second class car. Most of the people on such trains ride in the third class coaches, so the second class coaches are usually not crowded.

When we have ridden southward about one hour the train comes to Tosu where the line divides, the right hand line going to Nagasaki and the straight ahead line going to Kumamoto and other points south. We go southward and about noon pass through Kumamoto and soon come to the sea-shore where the railroad ends. This is Kome-notsu and here we must take a steamer for a part of our trip. It is the business of this steamer to pick up passengers from this train, and we are soon on board and away we go on this part of our trip. The sun is still fairly high in the sky when we land on the peninsula where our journey is to be finished in a one-horse bus. We were informed that we were to ride sixty miles in this one-horse bus before reaching our station, Kagoshima. The horse was small but very active and made good time over the fairly good gravelled road. At intervals the driver would stop and hang a small basket on the horses head and the horse would eat some sweet potatoes that were in the basket. If the horse was ill-natured and the driver seemed to respond in kind I never tried to tell the

driver that kindness would be better, for you see, my teaching had not yet begun.

We stay over night at a Japanese Hotel. The bus had traveled till rather late at night, presumably to get about half the journey over the first day and not get into the city too late the second night. We had tasted a Japanese meal before, but sleeping on the floor was new to us, and so was the Japanese bath. I guess both of us youngsters decided we could get along without a bath this time.

By getting an early start in the morning we got into Kagoshima before it was too late in the day on February 13, 1907. Since our Japanese leader, Dr. Chiba, and his family were living in the Japanese residence used at that time for both residence and Church, our Senior and we stayed a little time at a hotel in Kagoshima. This would give our household effects time to overtake us and give Dr. Chiba and family time to move to Fukuoka to get ready to be President of the Seminary which was to be started for the training of preachers in the fall of that year. It would give us a chance also to attend a Sunday service in the residence while Dr. and Mrs. Chiba were still in charge. It gave me an opportunity to preach my first sermon in the meeting place to the regular congregation. It was delivered in English of course, Dr. Chiba, who was an excellent interpreter, putting it into Japanese as I went along.

It was just a few more days until Maggie and I were settled in the house and were the missionaries in charge of the Station, though Mr. Arase, a young evangelist who lived in another Japanese house, was the main preacher now and the one in charge of building up the congregation. Our main work was still learning the language.

Kagoshima was built in a beautiful location looking right out to the East where the often active volcano, Sakurajima (Cherry Mountain), lifted its stately head high into the sky not more than two or three miles from the shore of the bay on which the city stood. The volcano was entirely surrounded by the water of the bay which formed a good harbor for the ships that sailed in the Pacific Ocean.

Kagoshima was a city proud of its history and of the part it had played both in ancient and modern history in Japan. Many people still living in the city remembered the Satsuma rebellion of 1877 when Satsuma (whose capitol was Kagoshima) had fought against Japan because it did not like the way the Tokugawa government was making treaties with foreign nations. But the rebellion failed and Satsuma's great leader, Saigo Takamosi, was buried on the hill just north of the city, where he made one of his retainers ~~cut off~~ his head when he found that he was hopelessly surrounded by Imperial troops and was unwilling to be made a prisoner.

But a new day had come to Satsuma. It had helped Japan to carry out two wars: with China in 1895 and Russia in 1904-05. It was the proud location of the Fifth Koto Gakko, one of the five colleges preparing students to enter the Imperial Universities.

The city had enough beauty and fame and pride to make one want to live a life-time with its ambitious people, and its spirit began to take hold of us and we had no doubt we should grow old sharing the progress and aspirations of Kagoshima and the Satsuma people. We liked the climate and the people and though we lived in a Japanese house we were allowed by the owner to put in a stove to furnish heat and do what seemed necessary to make things comfortable for us. We found a good natured rikisha man, Hamaji San, who learned to cook very well and was a popular servant for us and others as long as we kept track of him.

We always had a Japanese man for our language teacher and both of us put in a suitable number of hours a day with and without textbooks and we took advantage of every day and every opportunity to learn Japanese and things Japanese. There had been able students of the language from America, England, Germany and many other countries whose writings were available and all our atmosphere seemed to say to us "learn the language."

#### Passing a Unique test

Though we seemed to have gone to a place so much off of the beaten track as one would expect to find we soon had occasion to learn that we were very much in the world.

We had been in our station only two months when we received a call from some missionary neighbors that cannot be easily forgotten. Aside from two missionary households of single ladies, there were besides us, three missionary families in the city: one English family belonging to the Church of England, one American Methodist family and one family from Michigan belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church.



It was early in April when we had a visit from the head of one of these three families. Maybe I had heard of the big Conference that was being held in Tokyo: people that seemed to be from everywhere, people who represented The World's Christian Student Federation. There ~~was~~<sup>were</sup> many distinguished speakers and Christian leaders from many countries. When the conference should come to a close those Christian leaders would be divided into small groups and disperse from Tokyo and spend a few days speaking in all the principal cities of Japan. At last it is known who are coming to Kagoshima. There are supposed to be four speakers coming and there are four missionary families in Kagoshima.

We were the only missionaries in the city that had come from the South in America. So it occurred to the three older families that it would be nice if the new couple from the South would entertain the colored man that was coming to Kagoshima, a Y.M.C.A. <sup>man</sup> from New York it was reported. My heart beat rapidly while I tried to think of how to answer. Of course I didn't say all I thought, and I didn't want to accuse them of not wanting to take the colored man. But I said we would take the one they sent us.

The day came. The boat was about to dock. We were on the pier only two white men appeared on the dock. My heart beat normally. Then a black man appeared. My heart----Well I had promised, Hadn't I? Just then the Englishman pulled my sleeve. "Bouldin, I want to swap guests with you", "that black man is from Ceylon where I was born." "All right" I said and I took the Swede.

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The Swede, a missionary to India, was a nice man and stayed with us a few days and with the others of his party, saw the sights of the city and attended many meetings at the Churches and told of their purpose in coming to Japan.

But let it be told, Mr. De Silva the man from Ceylon was the star of the party, the best speaker of English, and was listened to with interest and enthusiasm wherever he went. Just look at him! he is an Aryan, descended from our own ancestors who used to live on the plains of India and spoke Sanskrit, the mother of all European Languages, almost. His hair was black and straight, his nose high, his build just like that of an educated European. But why so black? Well, where was his native land? Ceylon is south of India, in the middle of the Indian Ocean, deep in the tropics. Didn't he come by the coal black face honestly?

Now, did I pass the test? I have now had fifty years and more to interpret the experience. More than once I have turned to Acts 10 and read the original story. The net was let down before Peter three times. He was told to "Arise, slay and eat". He was not hurried. There was no occasion for being in a hurry. Finally, the sheet was taken back up into heaven. The result? Evidently Peter had passed his examination. And he didn't have to eat 'em! He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!

April of our first year in Japan rolled on into May and May into June. Somewhere along there Mr. Arase told me we had some young people who were ready for baptism. He had not been ordained and it was my place to baptize those who wanted to join the Church. Of course I was more than glad to baptize for the first time as a foreign missionary. Let us say it was a sunny Sunday afternoon in May 1907.

All the congregation went to the seashore maybe two miles from our meeting house. It was a beautiful place and the sea was quiet and the sand was white and clean. It looked like it was made for a place for converts to be baptized. One was Masuda San who soon became a candidate for the ministry. The other I believe was a young woman, but I am sorry I can't call her name, not having the records at hand.

I wish I could now drop in at a Sunday service at the Kagoshima Baptist Church. I well remember that Pastor Arase, who lived to be an old pastor was one of my most faithful friends. The last time I saw him, he did not hesitate to show his loyalty.

In June we shall see our first <sup>nyubai</sup> "nyubai," rainy season in Japan and Hamaji San will put out the cuttings for some fine chrysanthemums in the fall.

July will come and we must go to Fukuoka to attend mission meeting and take our examinations on a year's work in the Language.