

Schools Grow in Japan

Seinan Boy's School was born in April 1916, the Higher Department of the same, including the preparatory department of the seminary, began in April 1921 and Seinan Jogakuin (Jo- means female) at Kokura began in April 1922.

Now, April 3, 1962, these institutions have close to 7,000 students, teachers numbered by the hundreds and enough graduates to make these schools known pretty widely, and the quality of their work is known by the behavior of their graduates.

But to some of us, who in the early twenties were in the prime of life, it was still mainly faith and vision and hope. But some of us even then had little doubt that the hatake (garden) was good. The Doshisha at Kyoto since the days of Jo Niishima and the 1870's had been the morning star of Protestant education in Japan.

Blue-prints that were not too blue.

When the resources of the 75-Million campaign came rolling in one day, a delegation of us took a nice piece of paper and showed it to some Japanese officials whose approval we sought for some of our plans for Seinan Gakuin. It had some figures printed very boldly showing that a sum of \$250,000 was being promised for the Boy's School at Fukuoka. One official said "that is an estimate isn't it?" "Yes sir", we replied, "But we believe it will come. It came, and much more followed it.

We had to take responsibility and take the risk of errors of judgement. Here is an example:- In the early twenties, when I was a

substitute president of Seinan, we got a teacher who had had a good many years in a responsible position at Doshisha in Kyoto. He came to me one day and said he knew a young Baptist man that would be a good man for some place in our work. He was well educated in Japan and a graduate of a leading college in America. Why not try him? I agreed and soon he was with us. We found he could interpret a Japanese speech into English, or vice versa, better than any of us.

He had married the daughter of a Japanese Baptist preacher and had been adopted into the preacher's family as he had no son of his own. If one looked with the eye of a critic this preacher had once given up his class to become a full member of a community that ranked as outcasts in the old days.

Well, I was put on a committee made of people of two races and two sexes. We were to try to find a Japanese head teacher for the Girls' school that was to open in 1922. It seemed to me that the Boy's school should let the Girls have the young man we had just found.

"Better think a little" a voice from somewhere was saying to me.

Up to then most of the Japanese leaders were apt to think back to the days "when knighthood was in flower" but I was inclined to think back to William Carey who said "I mean to be a brother to the people among whom I work." So we chose Mr. Matsuta Hara as the head teacher of Seinan Jogakuin and he later became president and before he passed to his reward I think he had seen the school which was his main life work approach the goal now attained: that is, a woman's college with 1700 students.