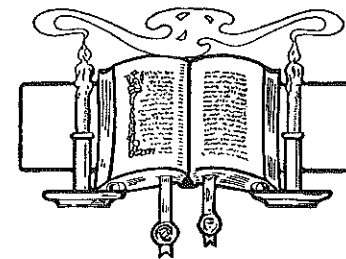


Japanese Baptists

IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Are Marching On



TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY (1914-1939)

JAPANESE BAPTIST MISSIONS
IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

There are over one thousand Japanese children who attend the public schools in the vicinity and the population of Japanese in this whole district is nearly seven thousand within a radius of five miles. It is the only Christian work for Japanese in this community, except a small Sunday School conducted by another denomination near Compton. Thus our work has progressed among this great number, while the Japanese population is still increasing. Some of the young men and women of this church today were but small children when the work was started, but many of them are now attending universities and some have graduated.

Present pastor, Rev. Masahiko Wada, is tireless in his effort to spread the gospel among the Japanese people in this widely opened field of Gardena, Compton, Dominguez, Torrance, Hawthorne and Redondo.

In June, 1930, Rev. and Mrs. C. H. Ross entered into the work of this mission. Their work is being done splendidly.

In March, 1932, a finely equipped bungalow for young people's work was added at the same location, with the cooperative effort of Rev. Ross and Rev. Wada. In this church the work for young people is amazingly blessed.

Gardena has one great difficulty in reaching the Japanese. Because the farmers are widely scattered, it therefore requires the operation of the church school bus in order to collect the Sunday School pupils and to deliver them safely to their homes.

In this church, the testimony of Mrs. Misao Tsunoda is really an impressive one. She was a born Buddhist, a native of Nagoya. When she left home for America many years ago her father gave an order over and over that "You may do anything except become a Christian." When she landed at San Francisco her companion brought her to a certain Christian church without mentioning the denomination to her. She prayed to Buddha while the minister prayed to God.

Once Rev. Kanamori, a noted evangelist, came to her town and she wouldn't refuse the meeting. Her friends, who were zealous Christians, urged her to sign a decision card, and so she became a Christian. Her unhappy days continued day after day with anguished tears because she had betrayed the promise made to her beloved father. Not only this, but she added another agony in her mind when she found her devoted friend, Mrs. Takeno, was teaching a Sunday School so faithfully and happily. She was in a great dilemma between her old faith and this new religion. Fin-

ally she took all of the Buddha images out of her family altar and cast them into the bottom of an old trunk. Thus her complete decision brought her relief from burdens and also happiness.

Her husband owned twenty acres of farm land at Madera, California, and at this location they wished to be buried when the time came. But a disastrous depression came and drove them out. They came to Redondo. Here they were happy to live near a Christian church. But even here other disasters were awaiting them. First her son, fifteen years of age, was killed in an automobile accident; then she became sick and had to have an operation. Then her husband broke his foot in an accident. Through these bitter experiences she learned many things, and more than anything else to love and trust God. The more she suffered the more she leaned on God. She is now happy.

For the women's society to accept responsibility for work in their own church and community is a sign of real progress. This church seeks to hold high the Gospel banner in this community, and reports an increase in attendance and a number of conversions.

PASTORS AND MISSIONARIES

1. H. Y. Shibata, Pastor; July, 1914-May, 1918.
2. K. T. Shiraishi, Pastor; May, 1918-March, 1921.
3. H. Y. Shibata, Pastor; March, 1921-1922.
4. K. Egami, Pastor; 1922-1925.
5. C. H. Ross, Counselor and Young People's Director; June, 1929-
6. P. Y. Watanabe, Pastor; September, 1926-July, 1930.
7. M. Wada, Pastor; July, 1929-

TERMINAL (Formerly called "East San Pedro")

K. T. Shiraishi was appointed as a first settled missionary to this new field of "East San Pedro" in September, 1917. There was neither room for lodging, nor a meeting place. After searching around we were permitted to start a kindergarten in a certain fisherman's kitchen, a home-made blackboard and gift books being used. An oilcloth covered dining table and rough board benches were also used. Five children attended the first day. Primary songs, handwork with paper and Bible stories were the daily schedule. Twinkling eyes were added each day and by the month's end the total enrollment was fifteen. At the beginning of the second week we were requested to move out from the kitchen, and finally we found a net barn, and there we were happy without any interference.

In the meantime, Mrs. S. G. Swanson, Mrs. Berry and other ladies from the First Baptist Church of San Pedro, came along and opened a knitting class and an English class for the fishermen's wives. These were very helpful.

Thus our work at East San Pedro was started. A little later a great influx of Japanese moved into this place, at that time known as Fish Harbor, and the County Council allocated this to the Baptists. Then H. Y. Shibata removed here from Moneta. Lots were leased from the city by the Los Angeles Baptist City Mission Society and a large chapel and a parsonage were erected in 1918 by the Society and a dedication service was held on June 30th, and an aggressive work begun. The First Church of San Pedro took a fatherly interest in this Japanese work and many converts have been baptized and received into the fellowship of the First Church of San Pedro.

There is no work so well known among Japanese churches in Southern California for its noteworthy conversions. Rev. Shibata was succeeded by Rev. Minosuke Ito, now gone to his reward, after five years of service in bringing many souls to Jesus Christ. Some of his converts went back to Japan preaching Jesus to their native people.

To relate the story of a few of his converts will explain the importance of the work of this Mission. Mr. Kakuzo Nakashima is one of the converts saved through his ministry. Mr. Nakashima was an expert in the fish canning industry. He was loved by many, but he had one weakness, and in spite of the imploring of his friends he could not overcome the habit of drinking. He was drunk in the morning, noon and through the night; in fact, he was always drinking. More than once he slept in the cellar of the police station. He himself wished that he might be able to stop

this evil habit. One day he just happened to be in the church listening to Mr. Ito's preaching, but he ignored it and never came back to church again. Members of the church, together with Mr. and Mrs. Ito, were praying earnestly for the salvation of this man. A miracle was worked and he finally accepted Jesus, and he is a changed man. Mr. Nakashima now has a wife and two children, and lives a Christian life, happy to be working for Jesus, witnessing to his friends that Jesus has power to save, even as he has been saved. To show his gratitude, he put a cross, electrically illuminated, upon the roof of the church building. When you go to the church you will notice that this electric cross is a shining force, manifesting the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Toyotaro Miyazaki is another that illustrates the miraculous power of Christ in San Pedro. One night when Mr. Ito was preaching in Tuna Street, a crowd was pressing to listen to hear the gospel. Up came a drunken fisherman to interfere with the meeting, holding a dollar bill in his hand and saying, "You had better stop preaching and I will give you this money." No one supposed that such a man could be saved, but God touched his heart and Mr. Miyazaki was saved, and he became one of the most faithful members of this church. When he goes out to fish he never leaves the shore without prayer. People say, "There goes Miyazaki, once a drunkard, but now a saint through Jesus Christ." He sometimes called himself a prodigal son who ran away from his father's home in Japan when he was young. His father was getting very old and wished to see his runaway boy. So he decided to return home and see his father, whom once he had forsaken. And at the same time he greatly desired to testify for Jesus and see the salvation of his countrymen. The church sent him back to Japan as an ambassador of Christ. He is now living on one of the islands of the South Sea, a good laborer for Christ.

Mr. Tokijiro Kanai is another example, and the oldest man in the church and community. His wife became a Christian first, but he could not become one. The reason was a big one—he was a strong Buddhist, and an appointed officer of a Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles. The night before Mr. Ito died he talked to his friends about his approaching death without fear and with perfect confidence in God to take care of him. This brought Mr. Kanai to see that Christian death is so different from his professed religion, and in the course of a little time he accepted Jesus as his Saviour and became a Christian.

There is another testimony of one who ate "bread of sorrows." She was Mrs. Ritsu Nakagawa. Numerous sufferings she endured. Through her own sickness she had a first lesson of life. After recovery from a

lengthy illness she was baptized, because she learned through that experience that a person never can live without God. But there was another trouble awaiting. Mr. Nakagawa, her husband, failed in his business several times. Bankruptcy of a fish canning industry in which he had invested; loss of fishing nets which were expensive. Property seized for debts of his company; then he became seriously ill. And some other troubles which distressed her bitterly. She never refused to eat such "bread of tears" that is inevitable outcome of circumstances in which she was placed. Nevertheless she stood bravely to bear the cross for the others. Her faith shone after suffering. She never forgot to count the blessings instead of the sufferings, as Paul said "and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience and hope." (Rom. 5:3-4.)

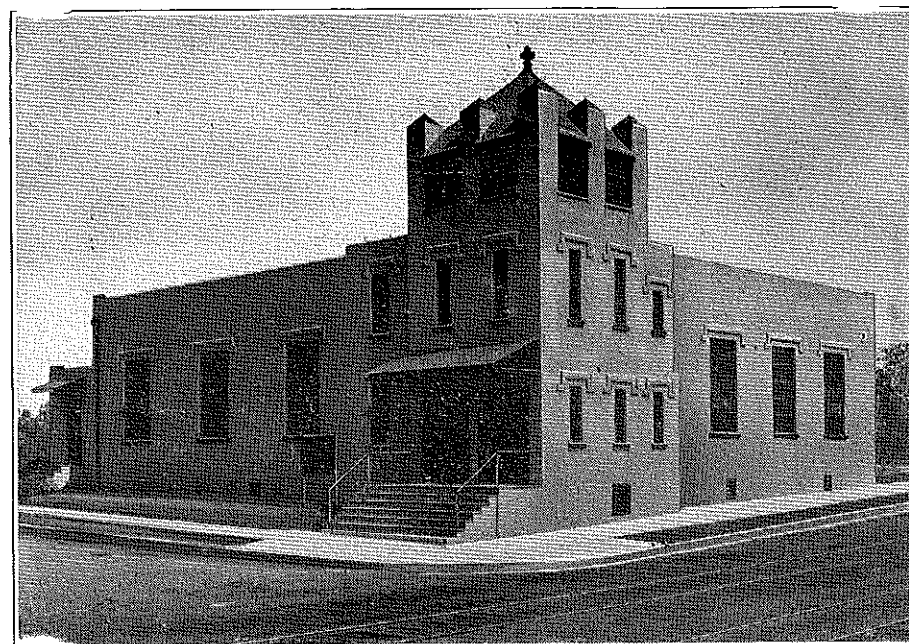
Later, after a number of notable conversions and finding need for more room, a most complete stucco building was built on the opposite side of the street from the old building. There are a chapel room, Sunday School class rooms, a parlor, a kitchen, a large dining room, kindergarten rooms, young people's director's room, a pastor's study and a courtyard. The old building is now used mostly for educational purposes, Sunday School and a daily language school, which has enrolled about 250.

Miss Virginia Swanson, as a director of young people's work, arrived from Sacramento in October, 1932. She is a most faithful worker and serves with a motherly love. She started a daily nursery school two years ago, with the assistance of Miss Takii. This has proved a good service for the community as well as for the children.

The entire work of the Terminal Island Church has been wonderfully blessed, giving evidence of stable growth.

PASTORS AND WORKERS

K. T. Shiraishi, Missionary, September, 1917-June, 1918.
H. Y. Shibata, Pastor, June, 1918-April, 1921.
Miss Olive A. Warren, Missionary, September, 1918-Aug. 1932.
M. Ito, Pastor, April, 1921-April, 1926
Miss Virginia Swanson (Y.P. Director), October, 1932-
K. Yamamoto, Pastor, July, 1933.



BOYLE HEIGHTS JAPANESE CHURCH

BOYLE HEIGHTS (Los Angeles)

The 18th of November, 1939, is the thirteenth anniversary of the dedication of this Boyle Heights Church. We are reminded that when we began the work in this section of Los Angeles we were told the Japanese population was about one thousand, and that they were scattered all over the east side of the Los Angeles River, an area of nearly four square miles.

Rev. E. H. Jones, who served thirty-five years (1884-1919) as a missionary in Japan, and who had returned to America and settled in Los Angeles, began the work among the Japanese people at Boyle Heights, visiting homes, hospitals and sanatariums. A little later, he started a Sunday School with about twenty Japanese children at the Christian Center on East First Street. He also started a Sunday evening service for the railroad men who were employed on the Union Pacific Railroad. He was a pioneer missionary at this corner of the great city for Japanese Baptist work. There were about twenty Japanese Baptist members who belonged to other churches on the Pacific Coast.

Rev. Ito of East San Pedro decided to organize a Japanese Baptist Church here in the city with these members. He and Rev. Jones canvassed around the city and then called a meeting of the Organization Committee which was held at the Christian Center in September, 1925. A resolution to organize a church was passed unanimously. Application was made, which was warmly received, for support to carry on under the direction of the Los Angeles Baptist City Mission Society. Rev. H. Y. Shibata was first invited to this field from Sacramento in October, 1925.

At first they endured inconveniences from lack of a meeting place. Earnest prayers finally were answered, and a beautiful home for worship was built on the present site in May, 1926. The busy activities were then begun.

Since this building has been built a standard city playground was established on the other side of the street from where the church stands. Japanese residents began to move around this section and today it has become one of the most thickly settled Japanese residential sections. We believe there are more than five thousand Japanese living in this district, and the general tendency is for more and more Japanese moving toward this side of the river. There is also one of the oldest temples for Buddhists in America located within a few blocks from this church. Another temple of almost equal size of this sect is also nearby. A beautiful and most commodious Shinto temple, which has seating capacity of about one thousand was recently dedicated, also within a few blocks. The home of the Catholic church for children is in this section. Our Japanese Baptist Church represents the Protestant denomination in this Japanese community.

A good testimony was told recently. A Christian woman was supporting a family of three without a definite source of income in the heart of the city while her husband and daughter returned to Japan. She was weak after a long illness and operation. But she did not fold her arms. She stood bravely up to work: cooking, sewing, washing and all kinds of hired domestic work; drove here and there in the city and kept busy every day from morn till night. We wondered how she could work so hard yet be happy. The answer was, she never forgot to testify of the love of God and wonderful message of Jesus. She once said that "if I had been at home I would have no chance to testify for Christ to others, but God drove me out and gave me a chance to talk something about Jesus and serve others in wonderful ways." Under such circumstances, Mrs. J. Sato is one of the faithful laborers of Jesus in this church.

There is a Sunday School with enrollment of two hundred fifty chil-

dren. They have B.Y.P.U. and clubs for boys and girls conducted under the different leaders. They have established a daily kindergarten, which has now about thirty children. Afternoon Japanese school is also being conducted every day with the enrollment of about one hundred fifty children. In this way we enlist the names of the parents of children as sympathetic friends of the church. Through this medium parents who may be Buddhists or Shintoists send their children to our daily educational department. It requires the operation of the church school bus in order to collect and deliver the children safely between home and church.

We believe the Boyle Heights work under the Baptists deserves the attention of our American Baptist constituency, for there is no field with so great an opportunity to come in contact with our work in bringing the Japanese young people who were born in America to Christ.

Today we are told that we have more than six hundred Japanese students in universities in Southern California, including University of Southern California, Occidental, Pomona, Redlands, Whittier, Pasadena, University of California at Los Angeles, and other higher institutions of learning. Some twenty or twenty-five years ago the Missions of Moneta and East San Pedro were the only Missions recognized by many of the Japanese—today these churches are centers of the spiritual forces of Japanese youth in Southern California.

The Japanese born in America are destined to solve many problems existing between Japanese and Americans. If Christ is missing, the very task of harmonizing the two nations will not be accomplished. They must be evangelized—they need Christ our Saviour.

PASTORS AND WORKERS

H. Y. Shibata, Pastor, October, 1925-January, 1930.
P. Y. Watanabe, Pastor, September, 1930-May, 1935.
P. Y. Watanabe, Pastor, 1936-April, 1938.
K. Muraoka, Supply Preacher, June, 1938-November, 1938.
T. Yoshizaki, Supply Preacher, November, 1938.
Miss Robuck, Miss Evans, Miss Shaif, Rev. Ivan C. Ellis.
Miss Thelma Dudrow, Rev. D. R. Robertson.

ARTICLE V—COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES

There shall be a Council of Representatives consisting of three representatives chosen from each of the affiliated churches or missions, one of whom shall be a Junior member.

ARTICLE VI—MEETINGS

Regular meetings shall be held as follows:

- (1) A general annual meeting of the Union.
- (2) An annual meeting of the Council of Representatives.
- (3) Three meetings of the Executive Committee: In February, June and October.

Additional meetings may be held whenever necessary at the call of the President.

ARTICLE VII—DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

There shall be four departments to carry out the purposes of this organization, each with a Superintendent, as follows:

- (1) Evangelism—Cooperative programs, special lectures, exchange of pulpits, etc.
- (2) Young People—Cooperative programs, correlation of church and Young People's activities, etc.
- (3) Publication—Pamphlets, bulletins, reports, surveys, translations, literature, library and other educational materials, etc.
- (4) General Affairs—General meetings, rallies, socials, introductions, communications, etc.

ARTICLE VIII—FINANCES

The expenses of this organization shall be met by assessments levied upon each of the member organizations, by special offerings and by personal donations.

ARTICLE IX—OFFICE

The office of this organization shall be in the Japanese Baptist Mission of Los Angeles, 2923 East Second Street, Los Angeles, California.

ARTICLE X—AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this constitution may be made at any of the general meetings of the Union.

A STATISTICAL TABLE

OF THE

JAPANESE BAPTIST MISSIONS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Annual Report of Year Ending December, 1938

Abbreviations: M.—Moneta; E.S.P.—East San Pedro; L.A.—Los Angeles; P.—Pomona; G.G.—Garden Grove; D.—Downey

	M.	E.S.P.	L.A.	P.	G.G.	D.
MISSION	1	1	1	1	1	1
Membership Enrollment	133	83	107	37	42	18
Male	60	39	51	16	13	3
Female	73	44	56	21	29	15
Associated Members	5	2	0	0	6	0
Average Attendance:						
Worship Service	18	38	32	10	15	
Bible Study	15	11	12		13	
Prayer Meeting	15	11	12		13	
Home Meeting	18	12	28	30	20	
Out-Stations	0	2	0	1	0	
Tracts Distributed	20	50	50	120	220	
Bulletins Distributed	50	0	65	1300	250	
Bus Operated	1	0	1	0	0	
Finance:						
Total Receipts	\$ 2500.00	\$ 850.00	\$ 1728.01	\$ 364.74	\$ 209.17	
Membership Offering..	326.00		1020.89	136.50	113.80	
Meeting Offering	106.48		218.11	79.19	47.00	
Church School Offering	485.00	300.00	221.97	33.91		\$ 100.00
Pastor's Salary or Rent	444.00	100.00	120.00	36.00		
CHURCH SCHOOL	1	2	1	2	0	1
Pupils, Enrollment	150	380	179	22		45
Male	70	160	83	7		12
Female	80	220	96	15		33
Average Attendance....	120	290	158	19		35
Teachers	17	19	26	2		3
Japanese	15	9	13	2		
American	2	10	13	0		
Branch Schools	0	1	0	1		1
Enrollment	0	30	0	21		
B.Y.P.U.	1	2	1	1	1	1
Membership, Sr. and Jr....	40	107	55	13	46	45
Male, Sr. and Jr.....	22	50	25	7	19	
Female, Sr. and Jr....	18	57	30	6	27	
Average Attendance	25	94	48	10	25	40

	M.	E.S.P.	L.A.	P.	G.G.	D.
Baptist Members	23	15	12	37	18	
Male	12		6	11	3	
Female	11		6	26	15	
Other Church Members.....	3	8	0	1	10	
Non-Church Members		32	1	15	17	
High School Students.....	2	25	9	12	20	
College Students	0	7	0	7	2	
Finance:						
Total Receipts	\$ 150.00	\$ 182.12	\$ 31.67	\$ 98.92		
Total Expenditures.....	90.00	124.47	18.86	75.25		
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION:	1	1	1	0	0	0
Membership	36	95	85			
Baptist Membership		13	30			
Other Church Members		2	6			
Finance:						
Total Receipts	\$ 137.04	\$ 2500.00	\$ 228.11			
Total Expenditures.....	137.04	2500.00	185.25			
JAPANESE SCHOOL	0	1	1	2	0	0
Students, Enrollment		235	106	47		
Male		105		20		
Female		130		27		
High School Students.....		40		15		
College Students		0		0		
Teachers:						
Male		3	3	1		
Female		2	1	2		
Finance:						
Total Receipts	\$ 3500.00	\$ 2143.97				
Total Expenditures.....	3500.00	2743.89				
Teacher's Salary	2300.00	1560.00				
KINDERGARTEN	0	1	1	0	0	0
Enrollment		10	21			
Teachers		2	2			

A STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE MISSIONS

MISSIONS	6
Membership	420
Male	182
Female	238
Associated Members	13
Total Receipts	\$5,651.92
Total Pastor's Support.....	\$ 700.00
CHURCH SCHOOLS	7
Enrollment	776
Male	332
Female	444
Average Attendance	622
Teachers	67
Total Receipts	\$1,140.88
B.Y.P.U.	7
Membership	306
Male	
Female	
Average Attendance	242
Baptist Members	
Male	
Female	
Finance	
WOMEN'S ORGANZATIONS	3
Membership	216
JAPANESE SCHOOLS	4
Students	388
Teachers	12
Total Receipts	\$5,643.97
Total Expenditures	\$6,243.89
KINDERGARTENS	2
Enrollment	31
Teachers	4

SOME PROMINENT WORKERS

MR. SUIKICHI AMANO, president of the Japanese Baptist Union for the last three years. He came to America more than thirty years ago, and settled at Seattle, Wash. Under the influence of the late Rev. F. Okazaki, pastor of the Seattle Japanese Baptist Church, he became a Christian and faithfully served for many years as a deacon and in other offices of the church. Several years ago he and his family removed from Seattle to Los Angeles and joined the Boyle Heights Church. With his long experience in the former church he soon became one of the popular lay leaders, and a faithful servant for the church and Christ.

REV. KIKUSABURO MURAOKA was born July, 1866, a native of Fukuoka, Japan. He became a Christian in 1887. He was ordained in 1898. Graduated from Meiji Gakuen, Tokyo, he served ten years at the Chiba Reformatory as a director. Later he came to America and was a Presbyterian minister at Sacramento. While Rev. Shibata was pastor in Sacramento, Mr. Muraoka expressed his desire to join the Baptist Church, which he did, and while studying the Baptist doctrine was convinced Baptist doctrine was right and he and his family were baptized. He was ordained in the First Baptist Church of Sacramento and served as a Baptist minister for the Japanese of Oak Park just outside of Sacramento. After ten years of service there he retired on his age limit. He came to Los Angeles and transferred his membership to the Boyle Heights Church. He is now actively serving as a lay leader among his fellow members. He has excellent health even at the age of 74, and is a very useful laborer for the church of Christ.

MISS AMY A. ACOCK is a native of Haute, Indiana. Baptized in October, 1891, she arrived in Japan as a Baptist missionary in October, 1905. She was stationed at Sendai first, then Morioka, Osaka, Inland Sea and Himeji. She has done not only missionary work but was a good teacher for many years and her influence was great. She returned to America several years ago when she was retired from the work in Japan. After she came to America she could not hold her arms when she saw a situation still needing her help. She soon became a busy missionary, again holding group meetings here and there in Southern California, paying her own expenses. We Japanese people appreciate very much this service of love on her part.

REV. KICHITARO YAMAMOTO of East San Pedro church is one of many worthy young men and women among the members. Some of them are in college and other higher institutions. Rev. Yamamoto, the present pastor, was once a Sunday School pupil, and later Sunday School teacher and now a minister of the same church. He is a hard worker, earnest, genuine Christian character. The following is known as one of the episodes in his youthful days: One Summer he worked as a lumber yard laborer to raise traveling expenses for a trip to Japan. Late one night a young man was found by a watchman, who he thought was trying to steal lumber. But he was greatly surprised when he found that fellow was Yamamoto. Yamamoto explained that the wages he received was too much. When taken back to the office he tried to refund a little of the amount. But the cashier said you have no reason to complain, because you are lucky if you received more than you actually worked for. But he was too honest to accept the cashier's suggestion, so he decided to work overtime by night to pay back the surplus wages he believed he received. Such is an example of his clean-hearted character.

A CLOSING WORD

The achievements as set forth in this book should be an inspiration to our people to support our work in the best possible way in order that we may more adequately meet the needs upon this growing field of Japanese work. Surely the Lord has blessed the Southern California Japanese Baptist Union, and with the cooperation of our consecrated people and the opportunities before us in this mission field, we have every reason to expect still greater achievements in the future.

At this unique occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Japanese Baptist Missions in Southern California, we are reminded of many happy experiences, as well as sad ones. We cannot forget that during these years we have lost some of our good friends who have been encouragers and supporters of the Japanese Mission work. Yet, when we remind ourselves of the success and achievements of our devoted people we thank God and resolve to march on. Again we express our gratitude and extend our love to all of our Mission Boards, American churches, pastors, members and young people.

K.T.S.