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Another year has passed and for a language student this just means more books behind one and more "kanji" to forget. I am certainly grateful for the teachers of the language school who have persevered as we ploughed through our text books, and especially for those who kept us laughing as we did so. It is so much easier and more pleasant to learn if there is rapport in class.

The students at the language school are a varied group. During the break between classes we have some strict fundamentalists at the front gate passing out tracts, while inside the garden, priests and nuns are pacing up and down saying their prayers. As well as missionaries from many different denominations there are embassy personnel, movie actors and producers, salesmen and scholarship students. It is assumed that everyone can speak English but the native languages vary—German, French, Spanish, Swedish—and the English used has different accents including "English" English and that of several Commonwealth countries, as well as the Southern drawl, midwestern twang and other American varieties.

Retreat at Karuizawa

The Bible class at which I assist held a three-day retreat during the summer at Karuizawa under the leadership of the minister. All organizational plans and arrangements were made by a committee of the students themselves. In the fall all members of the group who attended, and some even who didn't, wrote about their experiences at the retreat and these were printed and published in book form.

Partially as a result of the retreat two members of the class were baptized at the first fall service when new members were received into the Church. Two others were baptized at the Christmas service. By coincidence, at each service it was a girl and a boy and all four were from different universities.

A Dairy Center

During the summer I was able to participate in a National Council of Churches affiliated work camp. Church World Service is establishing a dairy center in a marginal farming area in a mountainous district in Iwate Ken. The campers, in spite of poor weather, cleared land for a clover field and also cleared and levelled land and put in poles for a pole barn.

Under the outreach program we were able to visit many of the pioneer farmers in their homes. Most of them spoke quite frankly of their problems—the big one being how to make a living from their land where, due to weather conditions there is a crop failure about

every three years, and at the same time pay back the government loan which helped to get them started.

It is hoped that the dairy centre will be able to guide these farmers to make a better living from their land. The man in charge of the centre is a strong Christian who has given up the financial advantages and prestige of lecturing in a university to live as a pioneer in that isolated area in order to help the farmers solve some of their problems.

During the summer, talking to students from various places, I could not help noticing that a large number were drawn to study in Christian groups because they wonder if Christianity will give them guidance to help society. One young pre-med student said, "I want to have faith so that I can be a Christian missionary doctor in an isolated area in Japan or in some other country which desperately needs doctors." Many of these students are disillusioned by what they see in the Christian schools and churches and may turn away before they find what they are looking for. There is a real challenge today for the Christian community to live its faith and witness to these seekers.

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"The 14th World Convention on Christian Education, under the auspices of the World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association officially opened on Wednesday evening, August 6, 1958." So read many newspaper reports last year, and for me 1958 will always mean "The World Convention" and the other 13 meetings which were held in Japan in conjunction with the major meetings held from August 6-13.

Preparation for the Convention

All of Japan took part in the Convention from Hokkaido to Kyushu. Not only did the Standing Committees work long and arduously but unnumbered men and women and young people gave ungrudgingly of their time and talent. We think of those who typed for hours; those who acted as receptionists, interpreters, guides; those who did the running of messages, eager Scouts and Guides, to say nothing of the Japanese office staff as they worked almost the clock around often, in order to meet the needs of the Convention. Behind our Japan Preparation Committee were all the committee members around the world who laid the plans, and the World Council officials from America, Britain and the Philippines and their office staffs.

I could tell you of the earlier months of 1958 when our financial obligations loomed large. We had promised to take responsibility for

the housing and travel within Japan of a certain number of delegates from all the Asian countries. The Finance Committee was very discouraged at times and New York was openly worried. During this time there were groups of consecrated Christian business men working faithfully. Christian groups gave sacrificially. The Nursery-Kindergarten Schools Association over-subscribed its quota and slowly but surely the money continued to come in, and we were able to fulfil our promises for hospitality.

I could tell you of the hours of work that went into the Convention, the devoted labors of Christian Japanese and missionaries. Of the moments when we wondered how we would get things all straightened out, especially with regard to transportation when ships and planes did not always run on schedule. This was a major problem since the three largest meetings were all held in different parts of the main island. We had anxious moments over visas, but our Korean and Philippine delegates did arrive.

The Convention Setting

On Wednesday night, August 6th, the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, we looked out upon the Tokyo Sports Arena in the centre of Tokyo. There in the centre of the platform a large cross hung suspended from the ceiling, behind it was the Convention motto: "Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life". The choir sat in tiered seats above the platform and the body of the auditorium presented a sea of faces. On the platform were men of state, representatives of the churches throughout Japan, officials from across the seas. The whole setting was most impressive and stirring, but for me the most moving moment came as the representatives of each of the 67 nations came forward in their national dress to present their Friendship Book and be welcomed to the World Convention. Here was the culmination of all the work which had been going on for nearly three years in Japan.

The Delegates

As each delegate went to the platform my past work as Assistant Executive Secretary for the Japan Preparation Committee took on new meaning. No longer was it thought of in terms of letters sent out to strangers in strange places. There was Rev. John Havea, a friend of Queen Salote's son, from the Tonga Isles. A sturdy man, not as tall as Queen Salote, but with flashing brown eyes and a ready smile. In his dress skirt and his broad shoulders, I could again hear his soft-spoken words telling us, not without some justifiable pride, that his country was almost 100 per cent. Christian.

Nearby were our friends from Borneo or Sarawak. Tonight Joshua Bunsu and Henry Ajat Buah were dressed in their colorful costumes and feathered headdresses, complete with highly decorated and intricately carved shield and ivory spear. It was fantastic to realize

that Mr. Bunsu, a graduate in Theology, and Mr. Buah, a student interested in rural work, were only one generation removed from the head hunters of Borneo.

In sharp contrast to the men from Sarawak was Rev. William Haddad bringing with him all the historic atmosphere of the Bible lands in his own costume. His contribution both at the Institute (where more intensive study of the problems of religious education took place) and also at the Convention sessions, will long be mulled over in the hearts of those present.

There was Dr. Mercedes Gonzales, a very beautiful young lady of twenty-four from Chile, but not the typical professional medical person we found that she really is! In her very quiet way she also left an indelible impression on many of the Japanese delegates. (She also impressed one fortunate delegate from the Philippines and may even now be on her way back to spend her life there as his wife!) And there in the very midst was Japan, not only as host country but also as a very strategic point in the life of Asia. Many delegates from Asia were able to return home with a different feeling about Japan. Wounds of long standing had a chance to begin to heal and the hospitality of Christians was a never-ending source of admiration and appreciation.

Aftermath of the Convention

Following the Convention proper, deputation teams were sent out to different parts of Japan. People were thus able to gain something of the spirit of the World Convention and were privileged to listen to experts speak on different aspects of Christian Education. There was much more opportunity to have fellowship with these smaller groups and for the delegates to see Japan in its natural setting away from the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Tokyo.

As we look to the future we trust that the 5,500 children who were representatives from Church Schools throughout Japan, will never forget the program prepared for them on Saturday afternoon. The words of Rev. William Haddad with the help of Canon Timothy Olufosoye of Nigeria and Rev. John Havea of Tonga will not quickly be forgotten by the older people either. These children were billeted by the churches in Tokyo and that project brought forth a real sense of *The Church in Japan*.

We could write much about the capable world leadership that was given in the daily Commission groups, of the hours of organizing done by the offices across the waters, and all of their efforts were deeply appreciated. When the newspapers gave us such coverage, and when men of Dr. Dibelius' stature would come to Japan, many scholars were awakened to the deeper dimensions of the Church. We cannot tell how God will use the seed that was sown, but we must now set ourselves the task to nurture it that it may grow and bear fruit. We have been on the mountain top and now we must go down to the plains as we see more clearly the task which lies before us.