

IX

英語で発表した文章



9-1

“Merrell - Sensei and I”

Our friendship began when I met Merrell-Sensei 44 years ago at the Tokyo office of Vories Architects to consult him to build an Italian villa style residence. After the completion of the house the friendship continued. I met him almost every chance when he came to Tokyo.

In those days I had a definite purpose for my life to be a physicist. Not to rise in the world in ordinary sense, but to build up the ivory tower of truth which has eternal worth was my ideal. Though I admired Merrell-Sensei and his evangelistic work, I thought no religion is necessary for me who has the ability to study “The science of sciences.” Therefore he called me atheist or agnostic. He urged me to attend Kanzo Uchimura's Biblical Lecture. I began to attend the Lecture several months after the great earthquake of Tokyo in 1923. My spiritual eye was opened by Uchimura-Sensei. I found that my sin is wholly forgiven by the Cross of Jesus. I found the greater truth of Gospel than the physical truth. I changed my ideal. I resolved to study the Gospel truth, and prepared for the purpose in the remaining university course. When I graduated in the spring of 1926, I resolved to help voluntarily Merrell-Sensei and waited his return from his American tour. I spent the summer at Karuizawa with him and the Omi Mission people. After my three months' work in Omi I had to enter army service by conscription for ten months. My family condition was changed much while I was in the army and I had to support my family and I had to work for salary. So I went to Omi to consult Merrell-Sensei about my work in Omi Mission after the army service. And I knew that Merrell-Sensei was expecting me to be baptized ceremonially. I don't criticise others to be baptized, but for me to be baptized is to lose the simplicity and the chastity toward Christ whose death on the Cross is my only salvation.

We agreed to work separately much to the sorrow of us both. I don't know whether my action was right or not, but we both acted according to our conscience. This increased our friendship. I met Merrell-Sensei every time when he came to Tokyo as before. I got a position in the faculty of science in Tokyo University.

In 1932 I resigned the position and prepared to found a rural evangelistic centre and at the end of the following year and moved to the present place (Oguni, Yamagata Pref.)

where I had visited during the summer vacations several years. Merrell-Sensei is a great educator. He brought up Messrs. Yoshida, Murata and others as fine Christian

gentlemen. So my evangelistic centre must be a school. When I told him my new plan, he was very glad and lent me his dear book, David Grayson's (Ray Stannard Baker) : "Adventures in Contentment", which is a story of a man who is content with rural life after an unsuccessful money - making in a city. I appreciated the book very much, and am teaching in our school four chapters from that book as the text every year. When I showed him the map of our region he found out that the outline of the region resembled that of Omi Province and called it "little Omi". In 1934 from April 29 to May first Merrell — Sensei visited our place, before my wife and baby came from Tokyo. The report of the visit "Real rural Evangelization" is in the Omi Mustard Seed, June-July number of 1934. He had to walk more than seven miles from the railway station to my place on the thick snow, and experienced a heavy snow falling on May first, and left for us a sheet of paper with his poem "*Snowbound on May First*" and good impressions of Christian love for the neighbouring people.

My wife and baby came from Tokyo after the thaw. The small waterpower for electricity was completed. In September we had a dedication service of the Christian Independence School, inviting village people and a few friends from Tokyo. Yet students did not come. We must make a workshop for students to earn school expense. In those days in the mountainous village no one would go to school after the compulsory education. Our school began by teaching English and the Bible to a few employees.

While I was endeavouring to find a good work for our workshop, the war with China happened and I was mobilized as a technical officer in 1937. Demobilized in the midst of the Pacific war in 1943. And in the next year I was arrested and confined in a cell until February 1945, for 8 months, because of being a Christian and a pacifist. After release, in March, I called On friends and relations in Tokyo and Merrell-Sensei in Karuizawa who was suffering from heart disease of the war between the two nations which he loved most.

At last the war ended. The new age began. Almost all my young friends died in the war. My evangelistic work had to be renewed. Owing to the precious sacrifice of those who died in the war, Japan was reborn as a pacific nation.

A new senior high school system was established, junior high school being made compulsory. So our Christian Independence School had a new start as a senior high school. The mountainous village people recognized the importance of education. The authorization obtained, we started with 15 students of first year class and the staff of all Christians in May 1948.

Seventeen years elapsed under God, depending on God only and independent of earthly things. This is the Christian Independence. As Merrell-Sensei left all, we left all

to follow Jesus. We are 85 students of three classes and 14 all Christian Members of teaching and managing staff. So far 196 boys and girls graduated. We have taught the Christian Truth, the Truth changes some of them and will change the others. We will reduce the number of students to 75, each class being 25, and endeavour not to be large.

Our education shall be conducted upon Christian Truths. It will not be hampered by any pressure. Present high school education in Japan is distorted by the preparation of the entrance examination for colleges. But we do not do that preparation. Our graduates enter colleges which know our education and welcome them. More than one third of our graduates have entered colleges. In Japan no real moral education is given, because the Christian faith is neglected. But we can do it. May our little efforts serve God and people.

“The Omi Mustard Seed” 1965

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“An Appeal to the American People” (1969)

I love the nation of George Washington. I love the nation of Abraham Lincoln. I love the nation which was founded by the Pilgrim Fathers and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

I love the country where Kanzo Uchimura got his purely evangelical faith. He stayed in Amherst College, Massachusetts, 84 years ago. I love the native country of William Merrell Vories. He founded a unique missionary foundation, Omi Brotherhood, in Japan.

I admire the nation which did great things for human welfare under God. You promoted the freedom of the world. You propagated the Christian Truth.

But to my great sorrow you are going to cease relying upon God. You cannot defend yourself by your military force. Your shelter will not shelter you.

In ancient times a war is a very profitable enterprise. But nowadays any war does not pay economically and politically. I think this change took place in the Napoleonic Wars. This results from God's graceful will of rescuing the sinful humankind from all the wars which are foolish and meaningless.

I am told that modern wars are wars of ideology. But you cannot make your ideology win by force. Against ideology you must fight only with ideology. To use military force for the purpose will be back up the opponent ideology. And that is why the ideal of communists does not realize even after the efforts of one century, and why you cannot succeed in Vietnam.

Lincoln said “Malice toward none, charity for all.” By the Christian Love you can make communists faithful. Your enemy will become your friend.

Therefore, revive your faith, and depend on God and recover your ancestor's glory.

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