

Sept. 13, 1923.

### The Great Earthquake of Sept. 1.

Since we came to Japan six years ago, there have been a number of striking occurrences like the typhoon of 1917, the influenza epidemic of 1918, the burning of the S. S. Convention Hall in 1920, the Unzen earthquake less than a year ago, and now the great earthquake that has wrought so much destruction in Tokyo and Yokohama, and such wide-spread sorrow. Life is uncertain in Japan as everywhere else, but in the realm of nature there seem to be some perils peculiar to this island country.

The great shock came on Sat. the 1<sup>st</sup>, being very, very severe even here in Karuizawa, several chimneys being thrown down. During the afternoon we heard that there had been heavy destruction in Tokyo, and that trains could not go all the way to that city. On Sunday the news of more serious nature about Tokyo and Yokohama had come in to some extent, but communication by mail and telegraph being broken, definite news could not be had. We knew, though, that there had been much

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destruction by earthquake and fire. Since Mess  
Kuyper had returned to Yokohama the day before  
the quake, and since Mess Couch was supposed  
to be in the Hakone region, we began to be anxious  
about them. On Monday a community-meeting  
was held, and committees appointed to go to Tokyo  
and Yokohama to get definite information about what  
could be done for relief. We were very anxious those  
days about our own house and Meiji Gakuin, and  
awaiting word from Dr. Pecke, who left for Tokyo  
on Saturday afternoon.

As it had fair to be two or three days before  
definite word would come about our house, and  
as I did not know how long I might have to  
be in Tokyo later on in case our house was  
badly damaged, I decided to go up at once to  
Nojiri to close the house there. So I left early  
Tuesday A.M., finding scant standing-room on  
a refugee-train, ~~or~~ I gave my "bento" away,  
and a clean handkerchief to help bandage the  
leg of a little baby. That afternoon Mr. Ziemann  
told the Nojiri community about what he had seen  
in Tokyo. News had come that Mr. Blum had been  
instantly killed. Mrs. Blum had spent the summer

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As it bade fair to be two or three days before definite word would come about our house, and as I did not know how long I might have to be in Tokyo later on in case our house was badly damaged, I decided to go up at once to Nojiri to close the house there. So I left early Tuesday a.m., finding scant standing room on a refugee-train. I gave my "bento" away, And a clean handkerchief to help bandage the leg of a little baby. That afternoon Mr. Ziemann[?] told the Nojiri community about what he had seen in Tokyo. News had come that Mr. Blum had been instantly killed. Mrs. Blum had spent the summer

(Mrs. Hoekje 43)  
in Nojiri. By Thursday A. M. we were ready to return  
to Karuzawa, and we were happy to get seats on the  
train. We passed a good many refugee trains; people  
were even riding on top of the coaches. Water and food  
and medical relief were being given along the line.  
When we got to Karuzawa, we heard that it was  
probable that Miss Kuypers had been killed; also  
that our house had been only slightly injured, two  
chimneys being down, and one servant's room <sup>allege.</sup>  
and its floor carried away <sup>and that Mr. J. Sakai was in very good</sup> a couple  
cables this week as a mission, and on Sat. evening  
Mr. Shafer cabled definitely that Miss Kuypers  
was dead. Ferris, too, is totally destroyed. Dr.  
Peeke had returned on Thursday, and told us about  
his trip to Tokyo & Yokohama.

As Ferris was destroyed, and as life  
in Tokyo this year may be not wholly comfortable,  
a mission-meeting to reconsider locations  
and to talk over our future policy regarding work  
in Yokohama, was held on Monday afternoon, Sept. 10th.  
It was too early to decide much on the latter  
question, but adjutant and study-committees  
(study of our future policy) were appointed. Also  
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As Ferris was destroyed, and as life in Tokyo this year may not be wholly comfortable, a mission-meeting to reconsider locations and to talk over our future policy regarding work in Yokohama, was held on Monday afternoon, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>. It was too early to decide much on the latter question, but adjustment and study-committees (study of our future policy) were appointed. Also several members were re-located, all the language students now to be in Kyushu. Miss Noordhoff is to

work in Yokohama as best she can, and may live with us in Tokyo.

The trains every day have been packed, both leaving and going toward Tokyo. As there were lots of refugees on the out-trains, relief was also carried on at the Karuzawa depot, and the foreigners also took a hand. I worked three nights -- every other night -- from 10:30 to 3:30, generally handing out "mei-yi" (a sort of tea) or hot water. Rice-balls also were given out, and injured people were treated. The need for this work is almost over now. The congestion on the trains has kept many foreigners in Karuzawa longer than they first had planned.

On Monday, the 10th, a meeting of missionaries was held to discuss the situation created by loss of publishing-houses, schools, churches, etc. We stand appalled, but the spirit is "Carry on." The need of uniting schools was greatly stressed; some see in this disaster an opportune time to stress unity in future effort. It was decided that a committee of missionaries should be appointed to study with a Japanese committee the best policy for future Christian effort.

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