



Staff Photo—Bill Young

MISSIONARY MAKES ACQUAINTANCE OF TWIN GRANDSONS
Mrs. John B. Cobb With Dickie, Left, and Andy Cobb

Missionaries to Japan Spending Leave in Atlanta

By ANNIE LOU HARDY
 Atlanta Constitution Society Editor

"Two chimneys were all that was left of our school in Kobe at the end of World War II," said Mrs. John B. Cobb, who with her husband, Dr. Cobb, is spending a year's leave in Atlanta after 37 years as Methodist missionaries in Japan. "You may recall that 80 per cent of Kobe was destroyed by bombing.

"We were home on leave when fighting broke out," she continued in her characteristically enthusiastic way, "but by the time we returned at war's end, Palmore Institute had been reorganized, thanks to the alumni. Then the Methodist Mission Board, which we represent in Japan, sent us four prefabricated houses. We now have one large new building completed, and there are plans for a new chapel."

The Cobbs are guests here of their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. John B. Cobb Jr., and are making the acquaintance of their four young grandsons, Clifford, Ted, and the 6-month-old twins, Dickie and Andy Cobb.

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THEY LEFT for the Orient shortly after their marriage in 1918, Dr. Cobb having volunteered for missionary work while still a senior at Mercer. His bride, the former Theodora Atkinson of Newnan, was graduated from Wesleyan the same year he received his degree, and they had met in Macon.

"We spent the first year on Shikoku, the smallest of the Japanese islands, learning the language from a native teacher," explained Mrs. Cobb, a vivacious, soft-voiced woman. "The next year we were sent to the institute in Kobe and we have been there off and on ever since. I still speak Japanese with a southern accent," she laughed.

Palmore Institute (named for an American benefactor) has an enrollment of 2,500 students and a faculty of 40-odd members. The principal is a Japanese, Dr. Cobb is chairman of the board of trustees, and Mrs. Cobb is a teacher of English, which, she says,

is the universal language of commerce. Classes are held every afternoon and evening, and the school is self-supporting, except for the missionaries' salaries.

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"**WE WORK** with the United Church of Christ in Japan, with Dr. Cobb serving in both an evangelistic and an educational capacity," Mrs. Cobb explained. "The work is vastly interesting because the students are so eager to learn. They come to school of their own accord."

She believes there is perhaps a Communist cell in every university, but that it is made up of the idealistic type of student rather than of Moscow-directed Reds. She does not consider communism too much of a threat at present, though it is strong in Japanese labor circles.

"However all missionaries should have ready answers to questions asked," she continued, "for the Japanese are cognizant of communism and they want to know what American democracy offers in its stead."

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AFTER THEIR first assignment of six years at Palmore, the Cobbs went to Hiroshima where they started the Fraser School of English. Then the Mission Board took over the English night school at Osaka, and they had a seven-year stint there.

Though she misses American conveniences and super markets, Mrs. Cobb likes Japanese food. She especially likes the Japanese people and is constantly impressed by their kindness and generosity.

During his leave Dr. Cobb is busy speaking to schools and churches to acquaint them with missionary progress in Japan.

He and Mrs. Cobb look forward especially to next June when their only daughter, Mrs. J. L. Foley, and her three young sons come from California for a family reunion here.

"For the very first time we

will have all seven of our grandsons under one roof," smiled Mrs. Cobb happily.

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