

It may not be known to many that the Japanese are mostly idolaters, and that in all their temples there are strange instruments called *praying machines*, or, in the Japanese language, "The Precious Wheel of Religion," which are generally made of brass, but in some cases they are of gold, and enriched with precious stones. The handle passes up through the cylinder, and forms the spindle round which it revolves; only a very slight action of the hand is necessary to make it turn. The whole of the interior of the cylinder is filled with papers or cloth closely printed with the prayer, and the letters on the outside have the same meaning as those on the inside. Such machines are in constant use all the day long. Sometimes they are placed over streams of water from which people get their supply for domestic use, and it would seem that the people imagine the water is blest by means of the wheel of Buddha having passed over it. Such are some of the absurdities of heathendom in Japan, reminding us of what the Scripture saith: "Surely they are without understanding; having eyes they see not, neither have they hearts to understand."

We are glad to know that the Scriptures are being translated into the Japanese language, and the work of revision has been completed through the Gospel of Luke. The translation is being published under the auspices of the American Bible Society.

The people of Japan give great encouragement to schools, and in several instances have availed themselves of the services of missionaries to act as teachers, as in the case of Dr. McDonald at Shidizuoka. A former prince has given \$30,000 for the establishment of a new primary school in each village of the provinces which he ruled before the empire was consolidated.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions are contemplating the building of a training school for Japan, hoping that by this means they will not only secure the education of the youth, but also secure many native ministers. Several sums have been promised, and it is hoped that a sufficient amount will be realised to justify the inauguration of such an important institution.

All the missionaries, like our own noble brethren, are appealing to their respective societies for reinforcements. One, however, writes in the following strain, fearing that the bright side is too much presented and the dark side too little:—"The Churches should know that the way here is not wide open, so that all we have to do is to go out, preach a sermon or two, and then baptize the believers till we are tired. We all think that the work in this land will be a great and glorious one . . . Christianity is a *despised* doctrine and way in Japan; yes, it is a *hated* thing, and an offence to thousands. Government does not fight it, neither does it tolerate it, except when the officials of the place where the Bible is being taught are quiet about it. If one or two of these