

Praise the Eastern King, the Divine Breath, who atones for faults and saves men.

Praise the Western King, the rain teacher, as high as heaven honourable man.

Praise the Southern King, the cloud teacher, as high as heaven upright man.

Praise the Northern King, the thunder teacher, as high as heaven benevolent man.

Praise the Assistant King, the lightning teacher, as high as heaven righteous man."

The rest of the ode is in praise of the true doctrine, and is taken from a former publication, entitled "The Book of Religious Precepts." These rules are not to be understood as implying a claim to any control over the elements. They are intended merely for effect, and probably do not strike the Chinese as absurd, however we may regard them. Some officers of rank, of whom I inquired the meaning of the title "Brother of Jesus," as applied to Hang Smitzen, seem as much puzzled by it as myself, and I therefore infer that he does not lay much stress upon it among his followers. They seemed not only to understand it, but not to have even heard of it.

The worship engaged is attended to three times daily, that is, before each meal. It consists of the chanting of a hymn, in which all join, remaining seated, and a short prayer, all kneeling. This is done with solemnity and reverence. I could see, however, little or no evidence of any just views of true religion. With so little opportunity of judging, it would be folly to affirm that none such exists; but I fear the number of spiritually enlightened men is small. I was told that there was occasional preaching, and was shown a large stage in the open field used for this purpose. The printing of the Scriptures is still carried on, and that of the Old Testament still extends to Joshua, if not further.

The above facts tends to increase the fears, rather than the hopes, which have been entertained with regard to the immediate effect of this revolutionary movement. Whatever the character of the insurgent chief, and whatever errors they may have imbibed, the Lord will make use of them, in answer to the prayers of his people, to prepare the way for the triumph of the truth in this land. We may well hope, too, that the publication of the Bible, even though the motives be purely selfish, will accomplish good. It is still God's word, and will not return unto him void. If the chiefs are indeed mere impostors, they have made a great mistake. What imposture ever yet succeeded by encouraging the people to read the word of God? Impostors have ever been afraid of the Bible. I do not think, however, that the way is yet open for missionary efforts at Nanking.

### THE RELIGION OF THE JAPANESE.

An officer of the Japan Expedition gives the following account of the religion of the Japanese:

The temples, chiefly Buddhist, are beautifully situated in the suburbs. The entrance to them leads generally through rows of elegant trees and wild camellias. They are large, plain structures with high peaked roofs, resembling the houses painted on Chinese porcelain. In the space immediately in front is a large bell for summoning the faithful, a stone reservoir of holy water, and several roughly hewn stone idols. The doorway is ornamented with curious looking dragons, and other animals carved in wood. Upon entering, there is nothing special about the buildings worth noting, the naked sides and exposed rafters having a gloomy appearance.—The altars is the only object that attracts attention. It so much resembles the Roman Catholic, that I need not describe it. Some of the idols on these altars are so similar to those I have seen in the churches of Paris, that if they were mutually translated, I doubt whether either set of

worshippers would discover the change. The priests count beads, shave their heads, and wear analogous robes, and the service is attended by the ringing of the bells, the lighting of candles and the burning of incense. In fact, except the cross is nowhere to be seen, one could imagine himself within a Roman Catholic place of worship.

During the 17th century, Christianity was introduced by the Jesuits, and, for a time, made rapid progress; but the missionaries inflamed by success, became haughty and presumptuous, and began to interfere in politics and government, which brought about a violent persecution. So deadly a hatred was conceived against the Portuguese, that in the space of 40 years, they and their religion were completely extirpated. To this day, in some parts of the empire, the custom of trampling on the cross is annually celebrated. To such a pitch were the Japanese exasperated, that none of the Romish ceremonial was permitted to survive. Now the resemblance in the outward forms of the two religions, as I before stated, is strikingly remarkable, and is an interesting fact in reference to the priority of the ceremonies of the Church of Rome, as it is still undetermined whether they originated with herself, or were borrowed from Pagans.

Great liberty of conscience exists. Every Japanese has a right to profess whatever faith he pleases, provided only it be not Christianity. Religious sects are said to be as numerous as in the United States. The chief among them are the Sinto or Buddhist, the former being the old national faith of the country, and is represented by the Mikado, or spiritual Emperor, who is thought to be a literal descendant of the gods.

They have some vague notions of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of rewards and punishments. Buddhism, the most widely diffused religion of Japan, is supposed to have been introduced about the sixth century. Its principal tenet is the metempsychosis, or transmigration of the soul. The Buddhists believe that the spirits of the departed enter into the bodies of animals, and there remain, passing from one animal to another, until their sins on earth being purged away, they are received into realms of everlasting happiness. They abstain from all animal food, and their priests are under a vow of celibacy. The great majority of the temples are Buddhist.

In addition to these, there are sects of philosophers who hold the morality of Confucius in great estimation. The whole tenor of their doctrine is to render man virtuous in this life.—They endeavour to preserve a good conscience, inculcate filial affection, and a due obedience to the laws of their sovereign. All these different faiths have become so mingled and blended together, and their doctrines have so penetrated each other, that scarcely any religion preserves its original purity.

### CHRISTIAN WITNESS-BEARING AGAINST THE SIN OF INTEMPERANCE

From Tract by Boner.

Not a few Christian friends stand aloof from the Temperance movement on the ground that its supporters are *concessions*; so concessions, that some of them will hardly admit the piety of those who do not join their ranks.

The best way of setting this objection aside is by honestly confessing the truth. My answer,—at least some of them,—have been far too much given to sin judgment upon others. They have thus not only done and spoken what was sinful, but they have sadly hindered their own cause. The writer of this knows not a few who have been repelled from Abstinence societies, nay, from the fellowship of abstaining friends, solely by the *concessions* which was exhibited. Union with the League seemed to be made a test of union to Christ. The injury thus done has been wide and great.

Let this be frankly admitted. It would only

do harm to evade or hide it. But while confessing it, we must be allowed to add three remarks: (1.) That it is wrong to judge of a cause by the statements of its fiery and injudicious advocates; (2.) That the number of these evil men and ill-balanced supporters is greatly on the decrease, at least in this country; (3.) That the true and tried friends of the cause, from whom its real nature is alone to be learned, are seeing more and more the duty of placing it on a thoroughly Christian basis, that all who seek the welfare of their fellows may feel themselves at liberty to join and that, least of all, those should be repelled who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and who would gladly give all possible countenance and help to any association that would not act in the very face of one of His most solemn injunctions, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

We would fain, as individuals, act according to the mind of Christ, and in the spirit of Him who was meek and lowly, and our desire is that the principles and laws of our societies, no less than our own personal deportment, should be in harmony with His precepts. And we would remember that His Apostle, in the spirit of His Master, has said, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart." (1 Cor. iv. 5) In our attempts at well-doing we would be careful not to overstep the least of his statutes, or to speak otherwise than he would have spoken, or to forget that "the Judge standeth before the door."

Taking up this ground, and endeavoring calmly to act in this spirit, we make our appeal to our Christian brethren. They cannot surely refuse to listen to us while we, in the name of our common Lord, approach them, and ask them to weigh our arguments. Nor can they treat the matter lightly, when we speak in the name of dying thousands, who with frantic recklessness, and at double speed, are rushing headlong to the unquenchable fire. We may be right or we may be wrong in this effort of ours;—still it is confessedly an effort in the right direction; it is an effort in reference to a terrific evil; and we may ask a fair hearing and well-weighed judgment.

It is admitted that the evil is a fearful one; though those only who come into close contact with it know how fearful. It is an evil of appalling magnitude sweeping millions before it, like a swollen torrent. It is an evil of the most fatally malignant type, committing havoc both on soul and body. It is an evil of the most infectious kind, every hour laying hold of new victims, and demanding the enactment of sanitary laws of the most rigid and searching application.

Christian brethren, what have you done to abate or remedy this evil? Have you done anything at all, beyond a few signs of well-meant utterances of horror? Have you taken any active measures, of any kind whatsoever, were it for nothing more than the exhortation of your own consciences? You disapprove, perhaps, of our plans. Be it so. Have you, however, adopted any of your own? Surely your rejection of our schemes ought to have led you, by this time, to devise a more efficient and unobjectionable one. Have you done this? If so, produce your plan, and let the public know it. Produce your plan, and we shall give it most thorough consideration. We are not wedded to any special scheme. Provided the end is effected, we care little *whence* is the plan by which it is reached, whether yours or ours. Let a testimony be lifted up against the evil,—a testimony explicit and effective,—a testimony, by means of which the wanderer shall be reclaimed, and the whole community aroused,—let this be done,—we shall not quarrel about any minor details, far less about the origination of the scheme. If, then, you cannot fall in with the plans already in existence, do be entreated to from one of your