

Canterbury, more especially in the Lower House in the month of February, 1857; and that in the following May, that House appointed a 'Committee on Lay Co-operation,' which shortly afterwards presented a report containing several recommendations of great practical moment. That the Convocation of Canterbury, when assembled in pursuance of the Queen's writ, has thus, without let or hindrance, proceeded to the appointment of committees, the reception and consideration of reports, and the general transaction of business; and that, as your memorialists would respectfully submit—the Convocation of York being of equal antiquity, and possessed of similar rights and privileges—the clergy of this province may now, in like manner, lawfully proceed to take counsel together in their Convocation on the several important subjects which demand their attention. Your memorialists, therefore, desire humbly to lay before your Grace the expression of their earnest hope that, when the Convocation of this province is next assembled in pursuance of the Queen's writ, its attention may be duly directed to several matters which now so urgently demand consideration. And your memorialists, &c.

At the monthly meeting of the Christian Knowledge Society, on the 6th inst., a grant of £300 was placed at the disposal of the Bishop of Huron for purposes of church building, with £20 towards a Diocesan Library, Common Prayer Books to the value of £30, and 12 sets of 4to books for the performance of divine service. A grant of £30 was made towards the completion of a new church at Danville, in the Diocese of Quebec; and the sum of £50 was voted in aid of the expenses of the anniversary of Charity Schools. The last-named sum has been granted annually by the Society for the last sixty years without any specific vote having been made. On the present occasion some discussion took place, and three unsuccessful amendments were moved, two of which deprecated the interruption to the usual services of the Cathedral caused by the preparations for the Anniversary, while the third opposed the grant.

A monument is to be erected in St. Paul's to the late Bishop of London, £1200 being at the disposal of a committee for the purpose. They have issued invitations to compete to no fewer than eighteen artists.

On Sunday evening, 3rd inst., the Bishop of London preached at the omnibus dépôt, Islington, to a congregation of 600 persons, composed chiefly of men employed on the "Favourite" omnibuses.

The Bishop of London lately laid the foundation stone of a new church at Newington Butts, which is to contain 1000 sittings, all to be free; and a letter appears in the *Guardian* of 30th ult., offering assistance to the clergy who, in destitute London districts, are prepared to institute the weekly offertory, and to make all the church sittings absolutely free.

JAPAN.

The Empire of Japan consists of three large islands lying on the eastern coast of Asia, between the degrees 31 and 46 north latitude, and stretching nearly diagonally from southwest to northeast. These three large islands are surrounded by a vast number of small ones included under the same nation and government, and, it is said, containing more than three thousand in their list. The whole territory, thus included, we find estimated by different authorities from 160,000 to 240,000 square miles. The islands are of such different size and shape, and their whole coasts

are so indented with deep bays and harbors, that the difficulty of an accurate estimate of superficial territory must be very great; and actual surveys cannot determine the question till a far higher civilization is made to rule over it. The population of this empire, thus extended and divided, is more than thirty millions, or nearly the same as the present population of the United States.

Japan was first discovered to Europe in the thirteenth century, by the famous Marco Polo, a native of Venice. After seventeen years' absence in travelling in Asia, he returned, in 1295, to his home, and made known some of the wonderful things which he had seen. Among the rest, was this discovery of the great island of Zipango, which, he said, was east of the coast of Cathay, as he called China. He suffered the habitual fate, however, of human minds, who are far in advance of the knowledge and customary thought of their age. His stories were treated as utterly incredible by his contemporaries, and rejected, as either romantic inventions or exaggerations of his imagination, or as designed attempts to delude the minds of others. But some years after, Marco Polo's maps fell into the hands of another Italian, the Genoese Columbus, and awakened in his mind the kindred passion of maritime discovery. In the full persuasion of the rotundity of the globe, Columbus believed he could reach this great island of Zipango by sailing west, and, in this assurance, set out upon his renowned voyage. When he landed on the shores of Cuba, he supposed he had actually verified Polo's statement, and had reached the rich island which he sought. Little as his hope was then verified, he really opened this vast empire on the American continent, from which his successors in enterprise discover no other land between their western limit and the long-sought Zipango. Thus Japan seems to have been prospectively placed in peculiar connexion with America, in that America was actually discovered in looking for Japan.

From Marco Polo's time, we hear nothing of Japan till Ferdinand Pinto, one of the numerous Portuguese adventurers who crowded the East in the sixteenth century, landed there in 1543. His return led to the Portuguese settlement there, which remained an establishment for a century. In 1549, they fully fixed themselves in Japan. But mingling with the wars and dissensions of the people, and seeking, perhaps, to overturn, for their own control, the native government of the land, in 1637, a decree was issued for their complete banishment. Not a Portuguese, male or female, was allowed to remain. And after a terrific persecution, they were completely rooted from the soil, and destroyed or driven away in 1649.

In 1609, the Dutch arrived as traders, and effected a settlement also. When the contests arose with the Portuguese, they gratified both their spirit of rivalry and their religious hostility, by taking part with the natives against the Portuguese, and were themselves the main instruments of their destruction in 1619.

In 1641, the Dutch were confined for their trade to the single harbor of Nigasaki, on the western coast of the island of Kiu Siu, and, even there were shut up on a little island in the harbor, 600 feet long by 240 wide, called Desima, surrounded with a high fence, forbidden to build any other than low bamboo houses, and connected with the main land by a single bridge, the gate of which was guarded by the Japanese, day and night. The people of Japan appear to have been peculiarly a frank and ingenious people, before their bitter experience with the Portuguese. They welcomed the Dutch and the English to their trade. From 1611 to 1623, the

English maintained a commercial settlement there. But since then, they have never succeeded in forming another. In 1673, the effort was met by the question from the Japanese, "Did not your king marry a Portuguese princess?" And as that could not be denied, their entrance was prohibited, and their trade refused. They have repeated the attempt several times since, with no better success. And down to the time of the successful expedition from the Government of the United States, under Commodore Perry, the whole trade of Japan was in the hands of the Dutch, and confined to a very narrow and restricted system of exchange.

The first connexion of America with the Japanese, was the restoration of a crew of shipwrecked Japanese, in 1831, to China, that they might be returned to their own land. These men were sent from Macao to Nagasaki, in the ship *Morrison*, in 1837. But they were not suffered to land, and the ship was driven from the harbor. In 1840, an unsuccessful expedition was conducted from the United States, by Commodore Biddle. Without accomplishing anything in the opening of Japan for American trade, this fleet returned. In 1849, Capt. Glynn, in the U. S. Ship *Pebble*, rescued some shipwrecked American seamen from Japan; but was forbidden to remain, or to communicate with the people. And thus the relations of the two nations remained, until Com. Perry's remarkable Expedition in 1852.

Our short review of the commercial relations of Japan to the Governments of other nations, would naturally lead to a similar notice of the past history of Christian effort and influence there. The first actual relation of Japan to the Western nations was with the Portuguese. The adventurous spirit of that people, in the sixteenth century, led to many successive expeditions around the Cape of Good Hope, to the southern and eastern shores of Asia. Their main establishments were on the western coast of India; and pressing onward to China and the Indian Archipelago, one of these men, named Pinto, in 1542, made the new discovery of Japan. The Portuguese were welcomed as traders, and as Christians. The people were, as they are now again described in our day, open, friendly, and sincere, and made no objections, and displayed no hostility, to the introduction of the Christian teaching and worship of the Portuguese among them. The story of this new effort we may shortly trace.

Francis Xavier was the second convert of the famous Loyola. He was of a noble Austrian family, and not more distinguished for his high connexion in life, than for his own personal accomplishments and virtues. His name and character have been adequate to impart a high glory to the scheme of religious submission which he adopted; and his true devotion to the Saviour's cause, for which he cheerfully gave himself entirely, can never be doubted. The King of Portugal, desiring to spread the dominion of Christianity, and the Papal Church, over his new possessions in the East, applied for adequate agents and messengers, to the Pope, as the head of the Church. A pontifical order was issued to Loyola to dispatch six missionaries from his new-found company for this service. But two, however, could be spared, and one of these selected two was Francis Xavier. Xavier leaped for joy when the summons was announced to him, and hesitated not a moment to set out for Portugal on this new and wonderful mission, the conversion of India to the Christian faith. His earthly ties and relations had been completely relinquished, and he was ready for the Lord's work in any sphere. A few hours answered for his preparation. By the next noon he was ready. He had mended his tattered garments with his own hands,