

effort to evangelize them, especially when just such an effort would be the best thing possible for the Church at home according to the Scripture promise, "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

About the time this reaches you the fourth bi-annual synod of the Church of Japan, which opens on the 29th inst., will be in session. At this synod a committee will present the result of their four years' work in the form of a revised translation of the Book of Common Prayer, and several important canons, including one on the very difficult question of marriage and divorce, will come up for consideration; and I trust that all those who are interested in the progress of true religion and virtue in this country will pray very earnestly that the Holy Spirit may indeed, in all things, direct and rule the hearts of all those who shall take part in this synod. The writer is the only Canadian among the delegates, and not only for himself, but also for all the others, both native and foreign, both lay and clerical, he earnestly asks the prayers of God's people of the Church of England in Canada. The present seems to be a time of sifting and trying, of planting and watering, rather than a time of gathering in. It is no doubt disappointing to see few or no results of one's labors; but it is well to remember that it is often "after many days," in God's good time, and not ours, that fruit appears, and that it is our duty to labor on in the full assurance that God's Word which we preach "will not return unto him void."

A distinguished member of the English House of Commons, from whose facile pen several very interesting articles on the "Far East" have lately appeared, says that "the chief result of missionary work in Japan so far has been to galvanize into new life Buddhism, the very religion which Christianity came to destroy." That this has been one result appears to be evident, but that it is not the *chief* result can be abundantly demonstrated.

Regarding the present condition of Buddhism, the writer above quoted gives very correct information to the effect that among Japanese Buddhists there are now two parties. One of these parties is utterly hostile to Christianity, regarding it as nothing less than the country's greatest enemy. The other party, being "broad and catholic," feels the new life of the times, and claims that Buddhism is wide enough to hold all the truth of all the religions in the world. This "New Buddhism" renounces the old pessimistic teaching that life is not worth living, and endeavors to arouse men to realize and make use of their opportunities. The writings of some of these "New Buddhists" have led some people to believe that they were almost Christians, but this is a great mistake. They are merely adopting Christian customs and methods for the purpose of rescuing their

own religion from impending destruction. Among other things they have recently adopted a distinctively religious marriage ceremony, and are imitating Christians in missionary and educational methods. As an illustration, I might mention that about three months ago they took a house just opposite our church and hung out a notice board and lantern exactly like ours, announcing preaching meetings at exactly the same time as our evangelistic services are held. For a while they got good audiences twice a week, but this did not long continue, and for some time back the Thursday evening meeting has been discontinued, and I was told yesterday that they are talking of giving up the Sunday evening one also.

I recently came across an interesting account of the entrance of Buddhism into Japan. It was first brought to this country about the middle of the sixth century, A.D. At that time the authority of the court did not extend over the whole country, and the people had not to any great extent developed that nationalistic sentiment which has since reached such a high pitch, and is now being appealed to to prevent the spread of Christianity. Still, at the end of 100 years, Buddhism was only able to report 48 temples, 815 priests, and 569 nuns in Japan and it was not till the great priest, Gyoki, and the equally great statesman, Tachibana Moroye, originated the famous doctrine of the incarnation of Buddha in the national gods of Japan that Buddhism began to prosper. It was not only unable to conquer the original superstitions of the people, but had to accommodate itself to those superstitions. It is worthy of notice that this is exactly what is demanded of Christianity at the present time, and what some so-called Christians seem to be working to secure. People say, "This religion which you preach is undoubtedly good; its effect on western countries has been beneficial; but to us it is a foreign religion, and contrary to certain customs and ideas of the Japanese people; bring it into conformity with these, and we will accept it." What this conformity means is easily learned from the teaching and conduct of not a few of those who profess and call themselves Christians. May God restrain His people from making any attempt of the kind, and give them grace to walk faithfully in the old paths, whatever may be the consequences!

It may interest some to know that in Japan in 1890 there were 12 Buddhist sects with 72,154 temples, against 10 sects with 72,117 temples in 1880.

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THE mind has a certain vegetative power, which cannot be wholly idle. If it is not laid out and cultivated into a beautiful garden, it will of itself shoot up in weeds or flowers of a wild growth.