

Reformed Buddhism in Japan and China.

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The extensive currency which Buddhism has attained in the Eastern World is largely due to its facile adaptation to the varying conditions of the countries in which it is propagated. Rising near the base of the Himalayas and spreading over half the Continent of Asia, and extending to the more populous of the adjacent islands, it everywhere takes the tinge of the soil over which it flows, and the complexion of its adherents is not more diverse than the aspects which it presents in Tibet and Tartary, Ceylon and Burmah, China and Japan.

That Buddhism should undergo profound modifications in consequence of contact with Christianity is nothing more than we have a right to expect; and, in fact, modifications on an extensive scale are already visible wherever the two religions have been fairly brought together face to face. Of this permit me to adduce one or two examples.

Passing through Japan, en route for this country, early in the last summer, I turned aside to visit Kioto, the ancient seat of the Mikados. The industrial exhibition which I saw in the grounds of its now deserted palace I shall not pause to describe, nor the flourishing schools under the care of American missionaries; but pass at once to an object which more than either shows how deeply Japan has become imbued with the spirit of Western civilization. I mean to a college of Reformed Buddhists.

This sect assumes the title of *Shinsin*, or the "True Religion," and a temple of vast extent, bearing their name and dating back several centuries, suggests that the spirit of reform is not of yesterday. The temple differs little from others; but the college connected with it is without a parallel in the empire, and proves conclusively that the reform spirit, whatever may have been its origin, has of late awakened into fresh activity.

The buildings, in the most approved style of European architecture, and said to have been erected at the cost of \$60,000 *yen*, or about \$300,000, supply accommodations for the several departments of instruction usually found in our Western universities; but the organization is not yet complete. In the department of natural philosophy we saw a large assortment of apparatus for physical experiments; and in that of the ology we saw a class of forty candidates for the priesthood, taking notes of a lecture which was being delivered by a venerable looking Bonze.

The vice-principal, the Rev. Akimatz, who was in part educated in England, gave me a tract composed by himself in the English language, parts of which I here transcribe without alteration, that your readers may judge for themselves of the nature and extent of the reforms professed by the fraternity of *Shinsin*:

"The principal object of Buddhism is to enable men to obtain salvation from misery according to the doctrine of extinction of passion. This salvation we call Nirvana, which means eternal happiness and is the state of Buddha. It is, however, very difficult to cut off all the passions; but Buddhism professes to teach many ways for obtaining this object.

These ways may be classed in two divisions: one being called self-power, or help through self, and the other being called the power of others, or help through another. Our sect, called *Shinsin*, literally means 'free doctrine,' teaches the doctrine of help from another.

"Now what is 'the power of another'? It is the great power of Amita Buddha. Amita means 'boundless,' and we believe that the life and light of Buddha are both perfect.

"Amita Buddha always exercises his boundless mercy upon all creatures, and shows a great desire to help and influence all people who rely on him; to complete all merits and be reborn into Paradise (Nirvana).

"Our sect pays no attention to the other Buddhas, and, putting faith only in the great desire of Amita Buddha, expect to escape from the miserable world, and to enter into Paradise in the next life. From the time of putting faith in the saving desire of Buddha, we do not need any power of self-help, but need only keep his mercy in heart and invoke his name in order to remember him. These doings we call 'thanksgiving for salvation.'

"In our sect we make no difference between priest and layman as concerns the way of obtaining salvation, the only difference being in their profession or business; consequently, the priest is allowed to marry, and to eat flesh and fish, which is prohibited to the members of other Buddhist sects.

"CREED.—Rejecting all religious austerities and other action, giving up all idea of self-power, we rely upon Amita Buddha with the whole heart for our salvation in the future life, which is the most important thing; believing that at the moment of putting our faith in 'Amita Buddha our salvation is settled. From that moment invocation of his name is observed to express thankfulness and gratitude for Buddha's mercy. Moreover, being thankful for the reception of this doctrine from the founder and succeeding chief priests, whose teachings were so benevolent and as welcome as light on a dark night, we must also keep the laws, which are fixed for our duty during our whole life.

In these extracts there are several points of resemblance to Christian faith and practice, which can hardly fail to strike the attention of the most casual reader.

1. Worship is rendered to one Buddha, to the exclusion of all others.

2. This one Buddha bears the title of Amita, the 'boundless,' or Infinite.

3. The worshiper renounces all personal merit, and puts faith in nothing but the mercy of Amita.

4. The soul is brought into a state of salvation by the act of faith.

5. Though salvation is therefore assured, the believer does not abandon the conflict with sin; but growth in holiness is the result, not the cause, of salvation.

Let any one compare these several points with ancient Buddhism, as set forth in the poem of Mr. Arnold, and he will perceive at once the evidence of radical reform. The philosophy of the poem, notwithstanding its drapery of Christian phraseology, is in violent opposition to that of the Gospel of Christ. This tract, on the contrary, breathes the spirit of the Gospel. The one glorifies ascetic austerities; the other expressly renounces them. In the poem there is no God; in the tract, Amita the Infinite puts on the attractive attributes of the God-man. And, not to extend the contrast, the former teaches salvation by works; the latter, salvation by faith. The tract, indeed, expressly rejects the method of salvation which Gautama professed to reveal to mankind. The student of history knows that the old religions of Southern and Northern Europe borrowed much from Christianity, while still retaining the names and rites of paganism. In India something of the same kind has occurred, and, as we think, this tract indicates that the same process is now going on in Japan.

In China the sects of Reformed Buddhists are numerous. They generally agree in the rejection of popular polytheism, and in confining their worship to some one divinity—as, for example, Kwanzin, the Goddess of mercy. One of them bears the identical name which in Japan appears as

Syinsin, and another calls itself *Wu Wei-i. e.*, (salvation), *without works*; but they have not advanced so far in the direction of Christianity as their co-religionists of the neighboring islands.—*Ec.*

Christopher North.

The real man was never got between the arms of a college chair, nor between the covers of a book. He was a character rather than a thinker; a great, handsome, healthy, whole-hearted, generous, heroic soul; a natural noble; one of whom—reading his life, and the good stories of him, and his work too—we may imagine Krishna as saying to Arjoon, "He my servant is dear unto me who is free from enmity, the friend of all nature; he is my beloved of whom mankind are not afraid."

Probably they alone who saw Christopher North amid these lakes and mountains ever really saw him at all. "More than one person" wrote Harriet Martineau, "has said that Wilson reminded them of the first man Adam, so full was his large frame of vitality, force, and sentience. His tread seemed to shake the ground, and his glance to pierce through stone walls; and as for his voice, there was no heart that could stand before it. In his hours of emotion he swept away all hearts whithersoever he would. Not less striking was it to see him in a mood of repose, as he was seen when steering the packet-boat that used to pass between Bowness and Ambleside before the steamers were put upon the lake. Sitting motionless, with his hand upon the tiller, in the presence of journeymen and market-women, his eye apparently looking beyond everything into nothing, and his mouth closed above his beard, as if he meant never to speak again, he was quite impressive and immortal image as he could have been to the students of his moral philosophy class, or the comrades of his jovial hours. He was known, and with reverence and affection, beside the trout stream and the mountain tarn, and amidst the deep gloom of Elleray, where he could not bring himself to let a sprig be lopped that his wife had loved. Every old boatman and young angler, every hoary shepherd and primitive dame, among the hills of the district, knew him and enjoyed his presence. He made others happy by being intensely happy himself, when his brighter moods were on him; and when he was mournful, no one desired to be gay. He has gone with his joy and grief, and the region is so much darker in a thousand eyes." Miss Martineau became a poet whenever she wrote about the professor, whose health she drank in the first spring breath, and pledged him in the sparkling thunder-shower. "Blessings above all on Christopher North!" she exclaims again; "we can not but wonder whether he ever cast a thought upon such as we are when breasting the breeze on the moors, or pressing up the mountain-side, or watching beside the trout stream.

Whether he is now conscious of the fact or not, his spirit has come many a time, while his tired body slept, and opened our prison doors, and led us along flight over mountain and moor, lake and lea, and dropped us again in our beds, refreshed and soothed, to dream, at least, of having felt the long-lost sensation of health once more."

Elleray Cottage, with its "several roofs shelving away there in the lustre of loveliest lichens, each roof with its own assortment of doves and pigeons preening their pinions in the morning pleasure," remains, and over it the tutelary sycamore—that sycamore of which Christopher wrote, "Never in this well-wooded world, not even in the days of the Druids, could there have been such another tree; it would be easier to suppose two Shakespeares." Here Wilson passed the eight brightest years of his

life; to this spot he brought his bride for the never-waning honey-moon; and though the loss of his little for tune by the dishonesty of an uncle compelled him to leave this cottage (1815), enough was won back when eight years later he was able to take up his summer quarters here again. "He was in a position," writes his daughter, "once more to take up his summer quarters in this beautiful villa of Elleray, the place which he loved above all others on earth; and in the summer of 1820 we find him here, with his wife and children again under the old roof tree." "He was in the habit of sauntering the whole day long among the woods and walks of Elleray." In one of those fond letters of his to his wife, which hardly bear printing, he says, "The country now is in perfect beauty; and I think of one who has been a kind and affectionate and good wife to me at all hours. If I do not, may the beauty of nature pass away from my eyes!" It was years after when Jane passed away, and sure enough with her the beauty of Elleray. "Sadly," writes the daughter, "comes the confession from his lips of the dreariness which fell upon him at Elleray, a place at one time as enjoyable as paradise." He tried to go there again, but when he slept at the Bowness hotel "the silence and loneliness of the night to him were not to be borne." He went off, and saw Elleray no more.

Christopher North, in the history of the Lakes, occupies the place of a Prospero; all that this region has known in the way of pageants and regals is associated with his wand. Of these the most notable was that which occurred on the occasion when Sir Walter Scott and Canning came to be the guests of Mr. Bolton, a merchant, at Storrs Hall on Windermere. The host threw his house open to all the literary men—Wordsworth, Wilson, Southey and the rest—and they stayed there night and day. "It would have been difficult," says Lockhart "to say which star in the constellation shone with the brightest or the softest light. There was 'high discourses,' intermingled with as gay flashings of courtly wit as ever Canning displayed; and a plentiful allowance on all sides of those airy, transient pleasantries in which the fancy of poets, however wise and grave, delights to run riot when they are sure not to be misunderstood. There were beautiful and accomplished women to adorn and enjoy this circle. The weather was as Elysium as the scenery. There were brilliant cavalades through the woods in the mornings, and delightful boatings on the lake by moonlight; and the last day Prof. Wilson ('the Admiral of the Lakes,' as Canning called him) presided over one of the most splendid regattas that ever enlivened Windermere. Perhaps there were not fewer than fifty barges following in the professors radiant procession when it paused at the point of Storrs to admit into the place of honor the vessel that carried kind and happy Mr. Bolton and his guests. The three bards of the Lakes led the cheers that hailed Scott and Canning; and music and sunshine, flags, streamers and gay dresses, the merry hum of voices and the rapid splashing of innumerable oars, made up a dazzling mixture of sensations as the flotilla wound its way among the richly foliaged islands, and along bays and promontories peopled with enthusiastic spectators."—M. D. CONAWAY, in *Harper's Magazine*, for December.

Vacant Places

In the dental ranks will never occur if you are particular with your teeth, and cleanse them every day with that famous tooth-wash, SOZODONT. From youth to old age it will keep the enamel spotless and unimpaired. The teeth of persons who use SOZODONT have a pearl-like whiteness, and the gums a roseate hue, while the breath is purified, and rendered sweet and fragrant. It is composed of rare antiseptic herbs and is entirely free from the objectionable and injurious ingredients of Tooth Pastes, etc.

"I am the Good Shepherd."

Seven thousand miles away, on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, lies the land where the Savior lived when he was on the earth; and we call it Syria, or Palestine, or the "Holy Land." It is a rough, hilly country, with no roads such as we have in America, but rocky paths and long sandy beaches. Over these stony roads and through the heavy sand toil the shepherds, caring for their sheep. Sometimes one man will have a hundred sheep, with only his dog to help him. And you would think it would be hard to keep them in order. But they have grown up together; and these sheep have followed their shepherd ever since they were little lambs, and know his voice so well that they will come at his call. He has names for them all; and some of them have such a love for him that they keep close beside him all the time.

Several years ago I was riding over a long beach not far from the old Bible city of Sidon, and I saw two flocks of sheep with their shepherds coming from opposite directions. They met, and all stopped to rest, lying down in the sand; and the two flocks were mingled together so that they seemed but one. The shepherds talked together for awhile, and then one of them arose and began to call his sheep, apparently, by name, for one after another jumped up as he called them, and soon they were ready to start. The shepherd went before, and the sheep followed; but not one of the other flock had stirred. Do you remember the verse, "And the sheep follow Him, for they knew his voice; and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers?"

When they come to a river that must be forded, the shepherd goes into the water, and they follow him even there, never doubting their safety when he leads the way. If any of them are sick or wounded, he lays them over his shoulder and carries them across one by one, and the little lambs he carries in his bosom. Every shepherd wears a loose jacket, open in front and belted tightly at the waist. It is like a bag; and in that he places his lambs, sometimes two or three, and takes them over the rough places and through the deep waters. Once in a dark, windy night, high up on Mount Lebanon, I heard a strange sound. I listened and heard it again and again, till it grew fainter and fainter in the distance; and some one said, "That is a shepherd hunting for a lost sheep. He will not go home until he has found it, and put it safely in the fold with the others."

Then these words came to my mind, "How think ye? if a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he finds it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more over that sheep than of the ninety and nine that went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."—*The Well Spring.*

Our brethren and readers must not fail to read the two column advertisement of "Dobyns' Sure Cure" for Catarrh, Neuralgia and Nervous Headache, etc., in this paper. To say that it is strongly recommended would be simply to assert what all can see by the immense number of certificates, when such men as Pres. W. K. Pendleton, of Bethany College, W. Va.; Rev. H. A. M. Henderson, Rev. Dr. Milburn, Pres. Rob't. Graham, Elder Thos. Munnell, Elder C. C. Cline, and a host of others, not only certify to the great virtue of a remedy, but squarely endorse the proprietors as straightforward and honest Christian men. We assume no risk, and do not hesitate to advise every one of our readers who suffer with Catarrh, Neuralgia or Nervous Headache, to at once enclose a dollar to Messrs. Dobyns & Mitchell, Covington, Ky., for a box of "Dobyns' Sure Cure." It is no humbug, but is an honest remedy, run by honest men for honest purposes.