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The Introduction of Buddhism.

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Wagler

The nature of the opposition which the ancient religion of Japan could offer to the introduction of any hostile alien creed, should now be obvious. The family being founded upon ancestor-worship, the commune being regulated by ancestor-worship, the clan-group or tribe being governed by ancestor-worship, and the Supreme Ruler being at once the high-priest and deity of an ancestral cult which united all the other cults in one common tradition, it must be evident that the promulgation of any religion essentially opposed to Shinto would have signified nothing less than an attack upon the whole system of society. Considering

These circumstances, it may well seem strange that Buddhism should have succeeded, after some preliminary struggles (which included one bloody battle) in getting itself accepted as a second national faith.

But although the original Buddhist doctrine was essentially in discord with Shintō beliefs, Buddhism has learned in India, in China, in Korea, and in diverse adjacent countries, how to meet the spiritual needs of peoples maintaining a persistent ancestor-worship. Intolerance of ancestor-worship would have long ago resulted in the extinction of Buddhism; for its vast conquests have all been made among ancestor-worshipping races. Neither in India nor

in China nor in Korea, - neither in Siam nor Burmah nor Annam, - did it attempt to extinguish ancestor-worship. Everywhere it made itself accepted as an ally, nowhere as an enemy, of social customs. In Japan it adopted the same policy which had secured its progress on the continent; and in order to form any clear conception of Japanese religious conditions, this fact must be kept in mind.

$\frac{1}{2}$ lin)

As the oldest extant Japanese texts - with the probable exception of some Shintō rituals - date from the eighth century, it is only possible to surmise the social conditions of that earlier

epoch in which there was no form of religion but ancestor-worship. Only by imagining the absence of all Chinese and Korean influences, can we form some vague idea of the state of things which existed during the so-called Age of the Gods, — and it is difficult to decide at what period these influences began to operate. Confucianism appears to have preceded Buddhism by a considerable interval; and its progress, as an organizing power, was much more rapid. Buddhism was first introduced from Korea, about 552 A.D.; but the mission accomplished little. By the end of the eighth century, the whole fabric of Japanese administration

had been reorganized upon the Chinese
 plan, under Confucian influence; but
 it was not until well into the
 nineteenth century that Buddhism
 really began to spread throughout
 the country. Eventually it over-
 -shadowed the national life, and
 coloured all the national thought.
 Yet the extraordinary conservatism
 of the ancient ancestor-cult, - its
 inherent power of resisting
 fusion, - was exemplified by the
 readiness with which the two
 religions fell apart on the dis-
 -establishment of Buddhism in
 1871. After having been literally
 overlaid by Buddhism for nearly
 a thousand years, China immediately
 reassumed its archaic simplicity,
 and re-established the unaltered
 forms of its earliest rites.

R. Leary

But the attempt of Buddhism
 to absorb Shintō seems at one
 period to have almost succeeded.
 The method of the absorption is
 said to have been devised, about
 the year 800, by the famous
 founder of the Shingon sect,
 Kūkai or "Kōbōdaishi" (as he
 is popularly called), who first
 declared the higher Shintō
 gods to be incarnations of
 various Buddhas. But in
 this matter, of course, Kōbōdaishi
 was merely following precedents
 of Buddhist policy. Under the
 name of Ryōbu-Shintō,* the
 new compound of Shintō and
 Buddhism obtained imperial

* The term "Ryōbu" signifies "two-department" or
 "two-religions".

approval and support. Thereafter, in hundreds of places, the two religions were domiciled within the same precinct — sometimes even within the same building: they seemed to have been veritably amalgamated. And nevertheless there was never a real fusion: after ten centuries of such contact they separated again, as though as if they have never touched. It was only in the domestic form of the ancestor-cult that Buddhism really effected permanent modifications: yet even these were neither fundamental nor universal. In certain provinces they were not made; and almost everywhere a considerable part of the population preferred to follow the

Shin-tō form of the ancestor-cult.
 Yet another large class of persons,
 converts to Buddhism, continues
 to profess the older creed as well;
 and, while practicing their ancestor-
 worship according to the Buddhist
 rite, maintained separately also
 the domestic worship of the elder
 gods. In most Japanese houses
 to day, the "god-shelf" and the
 Buddhist shrine can both be
 found; - both cults being
 maintained under the same
 roof. * . . . But I am mentioning

* The ancestor-worship and the funeral rites
 are Buddhist, as a general rule, if the family
 be Buddhist; but the Shin-tō gods are also
 worshipped in most Buddhist households, except
 those attached to the Shin sect. Many followers
 of even the Shin sect, however, appear to follow
 the ancient religion likewise; - and they have their
 Ujigami.

these facts only as illustrating the conservative
 vitality of Shintō, not as indicating
 any weakness in the Buddhist propa-
 ganda. Unquestionably the influence
 which Buddhism exerted upon Japanese
 civilization was immense, profound,
 multi-form, incalculable; and the
 only wonder is that it should not
 have been able to stifle Shintō
 forever. To state, as various
 writers have carelessly stated, that
 Buddhism became the popular
 religion, while Shintō remained the
 official religion, is altogether mis-
 leading. As a matter of fact
 Buddhism became as much an
 official religion as Shintō itself,
 and influenced the lives of the
 highest classes not less than the
 lives of the poor. It made
 monks of Emperors, and nuns

of their daughters; it decided the conduct of rulers, the nature of decrees, and the administration of laws. In every community the Buddhist parish-priest was a public official as well as a spiritual teacher: he kept the parish register, and made report to the authorities upon local matters of importance.

~~1/2~~ line

By introducing the love of learning, Confucianism had partly prepared the way for Buddhism. As early even as the first century there were some Chinese scholars in Japan; but it was toward the close of the third century that the study of Chinese literature first really

became fashionable among the ruling
 classes. Confucianism, however, did
 not represent a new religion: it
 was a system of ethical teachings
 founded upon an ancestor-worship
 much like that of Japan. What
 it had to offer was a system of
 social philosophy, - an explana-
 -tion of the eternal reason of
 things. It reinforced and ex-
 -panded the doctrine of filial
 piety; it regulated and elaborated
 preëxisting ceremonial; and it
 systematized all the ethics of
 government. In the education of
 the ruling classes it became a
 great power, and has so remained
 down to the present day. Its
 doctrines were humane, in the
 best meaning of the word; and

striking evidence of its humanizing effect on government policy may be found in the laws and the maxims of that wisest of Japanese rulers, — Iyéyasu.

But the religion of the Buddha brought to Japan another and a wider humanizing influence, — a new gospel of tenderness, — together with a multitude of new beliefs that were able to accommodate themselves to the old, in spite of fundamental dissimilarity. In the highest meaning of the term, it was a civilizing power. Besides teaching new respect for life, the duty of kindness to animals as well as to all human beings, the consequence of present acts

upon the conditions of a future existence, the duty of resignation to pain as the inevitable result of forgotten error, it actually gave to Japan the arts and the industries of China. Architecture, painting, sculpture, engraving, printing, gardening, - in short every art and industry that helped to make life beautiful, - developed first in Japan under Buddhist teaching.

§ 3. 10

There are many forms of Buddhism; and in modern Japan there are twelve principal Buddhist sects; but, for present purposes, it will be enough to speak, in the most general way, of popular Buddhism only, as distinguished from philosophical Buddhism which I shall touch upon in a subsequent chapter.

The highest Buddhism could not, at any time or in any country, have had a large popular following; and it is a mistake to suppose that its particular doctrines — such as the doctrine of Nirvāna — were taught to the common people. Only such forms of doctrine were preached as could be made intelligible and attractive to very simple minds. There is a Buddhist proverb: — "First observe the person; then preach the Law", — that is to say, Adapt your instruction to the capacity of the listener. In Japan, as in China, Buddhism had to adapt its instruction to the mental capacity of large classes of people yet unaccustomed to abstract ideas. Even to this day the masses do not know so much as the meaning

of the word Nirvāna (Néhan): they have been sought out the simpler forms of the religion; and in dwelling upon these, it will be needless to consider differences of sect and dogma.

To appreciate the direct influence of Buddhist teaching upon the minds of the common people, we must remember that in Shintō there was no doctrine of metempsychosis. As I have said before, the spirits of the dead, according to ancient Japanese thinking, continued to exist in the world: they mingled somehow with the restless forces of nature, and acted through them. Every thing, happened by the agency of these spirits — evil or good.

Those who had been wicked in life remained wicked after death; those who had been good in life, became good gods after death; - but all were to be propitiated. No idea of future reward or punishment existed before the coming of Buddhism: there was no notion of any heaven or hell. The happiness of ghosts and gods alike was supposed to depend upon the worship and the offerings of the living.

With these ancient beliefs Buddhism attempted to interfere only by expanding and expounding them, - by interpreting them in a totally new light. Modifications were effected, but no suppressions: we might even say that Buddhism accepted the

whole body of the old beliefs. It was
 true, the new teaching declared, that
 the dead continued to exist invisibly
 ; and it was not wrong to suppose
 that they became divinities, — since
 all of them were destined, sooner
 or later, to enter upon the way
 of Buddhahood, — the divine con-
 -di-tōn. Buddhism acknowledged
 likewise the greater gods of
 Shintō, with all their attributes
 and dignities, — declaring them
 incarnations of Buddhas or
 Bodhisattvas : Thus the
 goddess of the Sun was identified
 with Dai-Nichi-Nyōrai (the
 Tachāgata Mahāvairokana) ; the
 deity Hachiman was identified
 with Amida (Amitābha). Nor

did Buddhism deny the existence
 of goblins and evil gods: these
 were identified with the Preṭas
 and the Mārakāyikas; — and
 the Japanese popular term for
 goblin, Ma, today reminds us
 of this identification. As
 for wickiā ghosts, they were
 to be thought of as Preṭas
 only, — kyaki, — self-doomed
 by the errors of former lives
 to the Circle of Perpetual
Hunger. The ancient sa-
 -crifices to the various gods
 of disease and pestilence, —
 gods of fever, small-pox, dys-
 -entery, consumption, coughs
 and colds, — were continued

with Buddhist approval; but converts were bidden to consider such maleficent beings as Pretas, and to present them with only such food-offerings as are bestowed upon Pretas, — not for propitiation, but for the purpose of relieving grief, pain. In this case, as in the sake of the ancestral spirits, Buddhism prescribed that the prayers to be repeated were to aid for the sake of the hangers, rather than to them. . . The reader may be reminded of the fact that Roman Catholicism, by making a similar provision, still practically tolerates a continuance of the ancient European ancestor-worship. And we cannot consider that worship extinct in any of those

Western countries where the peasants' side feast their dead upon the Night of All Souls.

~~Observe~~ Buddhism, however, did more than tolerate the old rites. It cultivated and elaborated them. Under its teaching a new and beautiful form of the domestic cult came into existence; and all the touching poetry of ancestor-worship in modern Japan can be traced to the teaching of the Chinese Buddhist priests. Though ceasing to regard their dead as gods in the ancient sense, the Japanese converts were encouraged to believe in their presence, and to address them in terms of reverence and affection. It is worthy of remark

that the doctrine of Pretas gave new
 force to the ancient fear of neglect-
 -ing the domestic rites. Ghosts
 unloved might not become "evil
 gods" in the Shin^{to} meaning of
 the term; but the malevolent
Gaki was even more to be dreaded
 than the malevolent Kami, - for
 Buddhism defined in appalling
 ways the nature of the Gaki's
 power to harm. In various
 Buddhist funeral-rites, the dead
 are actually addressed as Gaki, -
 beings to be pitied, but also to
 be feared, - much needing human
 sympathy and succour, but
 able to recompense the good giver,
 by ghastly helps.

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One particular attraction of Buddhist teaching was its simple and ingenious interpretation of nature. Countless matters which Ichiō had never attempted to explain, and could not have explained, Buddhism expounded in detail, with much apparent consistency. Its explanations of the mysteries of birth, life, and death were at once comforting to pure minds, and wholesomely discomforting to bad consciences. It taught that the dead were happy or unhappy, not directly because of the attention or the neglect shown them by the living, but because of their past conduct while in the body.*

Note a preceding page —

*

The reader will doubtless wonder how Buddhism could reconcile its doctrine of successive rebirths with the ideas of ancestor-worship. If one dies only to be born again, what could be the use of offering food or addressing any kind of prayer to the reincarnated spirit? This difficulty was met by the teaching that the dead were not immediately reborn in most cases, but entered into a particular condition called Chiu-U. They ^{might} remain in this disembodied condition for the time of one hundred years, after which they were reincarnated. The Buddhist services for the dead are consequently limited to the time of one hundred years.

Ancestor Worship
— Lesson

I did not attempt to teach the
^{higher} real doctrine of successive rebirths,
 — which the people could not
 possibly have understood, — but
 the merely symbolic doctrine of
 transmigration, which everybody
 could understand. To die was
 not to melt back into nature,
 but to be reincarnated; and
 the character of the new body,
 as well as the conditions of the
 new existence, would depend upon
 the quality of one's deeds and
 thoughts in the present body. All
 states and conditions of being were
 the consequence of past actions.
 Such a man was now rich and
 powerful, because in previous
 lives he had been generous and
 kindly; — such another man
 was now miserably and poor, because

in some previous existence he had been sensual and selfish. This woman was happy in her husband and her children, because in the time of a former birth she had proved herself a loving daughter and a faithful spouse; - this other was wretched and childless, because in some anterior existence she had been a jealous wife or a cruel mother. "To hate your enemy," the Buddhist preacher would proclaim, "is foolish as well as wrong: he is now your enemy only because of some deed, that you practised upon him in a previous life, when he desired to be your friend. Resign yourself to the injury which he now does you: accept it as

The expectation of your forgotten friend.

... The girl whom you hoped
to marry, has been refused you by
her parents, — given away to another.
But once, in another existence, she
was yours by promise; and you
broke the pledge then given...

Painful indeed the loss of your
child; but this loss is the
consequence of having, in some
former life, refused affection
where affection was due...

Maimed by mishap, you can
no longer earn your living as
before. Yet this mishap is
really due to the fact that
in some previous existence you
wounded inflicted bodily injury.
Now the evil of your own act
has returned upon you: repent

of your crime, and pray that its Karma may be exhausted by this present suffering..." All the sorrows of men were thus explained and consoled. Life was expounded as representing but one stage of a measureless journey, whose way stretched back through all the night of the past, and forward through all the mystery of the future, — out of edemities forgotten into the edemities to be; — and the world itself was to be thought of only as a traveller's resting-place, an inn by the roadside.

Subin 2 las }
 Instead of preaching
 to the people about Nirvâna,

Buddhism as courses of them of
 blisses to be won and pains to
 be avoided: the Paradise of
 Amida, Lord of Immeasurable
 Light; the eight hot hells
 called To-kwatsu, and the
 eight icy hells called Abuda.
 On the subject of future punish-
 -ment the teaching was very
 horrible: I should advise no
 one of delicate nerves to read
 the Japanese, or rather the Chinese
 account of hell. But hell
 was the penalty for supreme
 wickedness only: it was not
 eternal; and the demons
 themselves would at last be
 saved... Heaven was to be
 the reward of good deeds: the

reward might indeed be delayed, through many successive rebirths, by reason of lingering karma; but, on the other hand, it might be attained by virtue of a single holy act in this present life.

Besides, prior to the period of supreme reward, each succeeding rebirth could be made happier than the preceding one by persistent effort in the holy Way. Even as regarded conditions in this transitory world, the results of virtuous conduct were not to be despised. The beggar of today might tomorrow be reborn in the palace of a daimyō; the blind shampover might become, in his very next life, an imperial minister. Always

The recompense would be proportional to the sum of merit. In this lower world to practise the highest virtue was difficult; and the great rewards were hard to win. But for all good deeds a recompense was sure; and there was no one, however weak or ignorant, who could not acquire merit.

Even the Shinjō doctrine of conscience, — the god-given sense of right and wrong, — was not denied by Buddhism. But this conscience was interpreted as the essential wisdom of the Buddha dormant in every human creature, — wisdom darkened by ignorance, clogged by desire, fettered by karma, but destined sooner or later to fully awaken, and to flood the mind with light.

#1/2 line

It would seem that the Buddhist teaching of the duty of kindness to all living creatures, and of pity for all suffering, had a powerful effect upon national habits and customs, long before the new religion found general acceptance. As early as the year 675, a decree was issued by the Emperor Tenmu forbidding the people to eat "the flesh of kine, horses, dogs, monkeys, or barn-door fowls," and prohibiting the use of traps or the making of pitfalls in catching game.* The fact that all kinds of flesh-meat were not forbidden is probably explained by this Emperor's zeal for the maintenance of both creeds, — an absolute prohi-

*See Nelson's Translation of the Nihongi, Vol. II., p. 328

-bidon might have interfered with Hindu usages, and would certainly have been incompatible with Hindu traditions. But, although fish never ceased to be an article of food for the laity, we may say that from about this time the mass of the nation abandoned its habits of diet, and forswore the eating of meat, in accordance with Buddhist teaching. This teaching was based upon the doctrine of the unity of all sentient existence. Buddhism explained the whole visible world by its doctrine of karma, - simplifying that doctrine so as to adapt it to popular comprehension. The forms of all creatures, - birds, reptile, or mammal; insect or fish, - represented our different

results of karma : The short life in
 each was one and the same ; and,
 in even the lowest, some spark
 of the divine existed. The frog
 or the serpent, the bird or the
 bat, the ox or the horse, — all
 all had had, at some past
 time, the privilege of human
 — perhaps even of superhuman —
 shape : Their present conditions
 represented only the consequence
 of ancient faults. Any human
 being also, by reason of like
 faults, might hereafter be re-
 duced to the same dumb
 state, — might be reborn as
 a reptile, a fish, a bird, or
 a beast of burden. The con-
 sequence of wanton cruelty to

any animal, might cause the perpet-
-rator of that cruelty to be reborn
as an animal of the same kind,
destined to suffer the same cruel
treatment. Who could even be
sure that the loaded ox, the
over-driven horse, or the slaughtered
bird, had not formerly been a
human being of closest kin, —
ancestor, parent, brother, sister,
or child? . . .

He lie

~~Prayer~~ Not by words only
were all these things taught.
It should be remembered that
Ohio to had no art: its
ghost-houses, silent and void,
were not even decorated. But

Buddhism brought in its train all the
 arts of carving, painting, and decora-
 -tion. The images of its Bodhisattvas,
 smiling in gold, — the figures of
 its heavenly guardians and infernal
 judges, its feminine angels and
 monstrous demons, — must have
 startled and amazed imaginations
 yet unaccustomed to any kind
 of art. Great paintings hung
 in the temples, and frescoes limned
 upon their walls or ceilings, explained
 better than words, the doctrine of
 the Six States of Existence, and
 the dogma of future rewards and
 punishments. In rows of Kakemono
 , suspended side by side, were
 displayed the incidents of a Soul's
 journey to the realm of judgment,
 and all the horrors of the various
 hells. One pictured the ghosts
 of faithless wives, for ages doomed
 to pluck, with bleeding fingers,

the rasping bamboo-grass that grows
 by the springs of death; — another
 showed the torment of the slanderer,
 whose tongue was torn by demon-
 -pinners; — in a third appeared
 the species of lustful men, vainly
 seeking to flee the embraces of
 women of fire, or climbing, in
 frenzied terror, the slopes of the
 Mountain of Swords. Pictures
 also were the circles of the Preta-
 -world, and the pangs of the
 Hungry Ghost, and likewise the
 pains of rebirth in the form of
 reptiles and of beasts. — And the
 art of these ^{early} representations — many
 of which have been preserved — was
 an art of no mean order. We
 can hardly conceive the effect upon
 inexperienced imagination of the
 crimson frown of Emma (Yama),

Judge of the dead, — or the vision of
 that weird Mirror which reflected
 to every spirit the misdeeds of its
 life in the body, — or the monstrous
 fancy of that double-faced Head
 before the judgment seat, representing
 the visage of the woman Mirumé,
 whose eyes behold all secret sin;
 and the vision of the man Kaguhana,
 who smells all odours of evil-
 -doing... Parental affection must
 have been deeply touched by the
 painted legend of the world of
 children's ghosts, — the little ghosts
 that must toil, under demon-
 -surveillance, in the Dry Bed
 of the River of Souls... But
 pictured terrors were offset by
 pictured consolations, — by the
 beautiful figure of Kwannon,
 white goddess of mercy, — by the

compassionate smile of Jizō, the playmate
of infant-ghosts, — by the charm also
of celestial nymphs, floating on
iridescent wings in light of azure.

The Buddhist painter opened
his triple fancy the palaces of
heaven, and guided hope, through
gardens of jewel-trees, even
the shores of that lake where
the souls of the blessed are reborn
in lotus-blossoms, and tended
by angel-^{nurses} maids.

~~Next~~ Moreover, for people
accustomed only to such simple
architecture as that of the
Shintō miya, the new temples
erected by the Buddhist priests
must have been astonishing.
The colossal Chinese gates, guarded
by giant-saints; the lions

and lanterns of bronze and stone; the enormous suspended bells, sounded by swinging-beams; the swarming of dragon-shapes under the eaves of the vast roofs; the glimmering splendour of the altars; the ceremonial *rikō*, with its chanting and its incense-burning and its weird Chinese music, — cannot have failed to inspire the wonder-loving with delight and awe. It is a noteworthy fact that the earliest Buddhist temples in Japan still remain, even to Western eyes, the most impressive. ☐ The Temple of the Four Deva Kings at Ōsaka — which, though more than once rebuilt, preserves the original plan — dates from 600 A.D.; the yet more remarkable temple called Hōryūji, near Nara, dates from

about the year 607.

Of course the famous paintings and the great statues could be seen at the temples only; but the Buddhist image-makers soon began to people even the most desolate places with stone images of Buddhas and of Bodhisattvas. These ^{kind} were made those icons of Jizō, which smile upon the traveller from every roadside, - and the images of Kōshin, protector of highways, with his three symbolic Apes, - and the figure of the Batō-Kwannon, who protects the horses of the peasant, - with other figures in whose rude but impressive art suggestions of Indian origin are yet recognizable. Grad-

usually the graveyards ~~also~~ became
 thronged with dreaming Buddhas
 or Bodhisattvas, - holy guardians
 of the dead, throned upon lotus-
 flowers of stone, and smiling
 with closed eyes the smile of the
 Calm Supreme. In the cities
 everywhere Buddhist sculpture opened
 shops, & furnish pious households
 with images of the chief divinities
 worshipped by the various Buddhist
 sects; and the makers of ihai,
 or Buddhist mortuary tablets, as
 well as the makers of household
 shrines, multiplied and prospered.

Meanwhile the people
 were left free to worship their
 ancestors according to either creed;
 and if a majority eventually

gave preference to the Buddhist rite, this preference was due in large measure to the peculiar emotional charm which Buddhism had infused into the cult. Except in minor details, the two rites differed scarcely at all; and there was no conflict whatever between the old ideas of filial piety and the Buddhist ideas attaching to the new ancestor-worship. Buddhism taught that the dead might be helped and made happier by prayer, and that much ghostly comfort could be given them by food-offerings. They were not to be offered flesh or wine; but it was proper to gratify them with fruits and rice and cakes and flowers and the smoke of incense.

Besides, even the simplest food-offerings might be transmuted, by force of prayer, into celestial nectar and ambrosia.

But what especially helped the new ancestral-cult to popular favour, was the fact that it included many beautiful and touching customs not known to the old.

Everywhere the people soon learned to kindle the hundred and eight fires of welcome for the annual visit of their dead, — to supply the spirits with little figures made of straw, or made out of vegetables, to serve for oxen or horses,* — also

* An eggplant, with four pegs of wood stuck into it, to represent legs, usually stands for an ox; and a cucumber, with four pegs, serves for a horse... One is reminded of the fact that, at some of the ancient Greek sacrifices, similar substitutes for real animals were used. In the worship of Apollo, at Thebes, apples with wooden pegs stuck into them, to represent feet and horns, were offered as substitutes for sheep.

to prepare the ghost-ships (shōryōbuné), in which the souls of the ancestors were to return, over the sea, to their under-world. Then too were instituted the Bon-odori, or Dances of the Festival of the Dead*, and the custom of suspending white lanterns at graves, and colored lanterns at house-gates, to light the coming and the going of the visiting dead.

* The dances themselves — very curious and very attractive to witness — are much older than Buddhism; but Buddhism partly made them a feature of the festival referred to, which lasts for three days. No person who has not witnessed a Bon-odori can form the least idea of what Japanese dancing means: it is something utterly different from what usually goes by the name, — something indescribably archaic, weird, and nevertheless fascinating. I have repeatedly sat up all night to watch the peasants dancing. Japanese dancing-girls, be it observed, do not dance: they pose. The peasants dance.

Small
4/22

Perkins

But the greatest immediate value of Buddhism to the nation was educational. The Shinto priests were not teachers. In early times they were mostly aristocrats, religious representatives of the clans; and the idea of educating the common people could not even have occurred to them. Buddhism, on the other hand, offered the boon of education to all, — not merely a religious education, but an education in the arts and the learning of China. The Buddhist temples became common schools, or had common schools attached to them; and at each parish temple the children of the community were

taught, at a merely nominal cost, the
 doctrines of the faith, the wisdom
 of the Chinese classics, calligraphy,
 drawing, and much besides. By
 degrees the education of almost the
 whole nation came under Buddhist
 control; and the moral effect was
 of the best. For the military
 class indeed there was another
 and special system of education;
 but Samurai scholars sought to
 perfect their knowledge under
 Buddhist teachers of renown;
 and the imperial household itself
 employed Buddhist instructors.
 For the common people everywhere
 the Buddhist priest was the
 schoolmaster; and by virtue
 of his occupation as teacher not
 less than by reason of his religious
 office, he ranked with the Samurai.

Much of what remains most attractive
 in Japanese character, — the winning
 and graceful aspects of it, — seem
 to have been developed under Buddhist
 training. ~~Even today the pupils~~
 of ~~Buddhist~~ schools are distinguished
 by their quiet earnestness, and
 by those kindly and courteous
 manners which were once universal,
 but are now too rapidly disap-
 -pearing elsewhere under the new
 system of education.

It was natural enough that
 to his functions of public instructor,
 the Buddhist priest should have
 added those of a public registrar.
 Under the period of disendowment,
 the Buddhist clergy remained,
 throughout the country, public
 as well as religious officials.
 They kept the parish records, and
 furnished at need certificates of
 birth, death, or family descent.

#1 (in)

To give any just conception of the immense civilizing influence which Buddhism exerted in Japan, would require many volumes. Even to summarize the results of that influence by stating only the most general facts, is scarcely possible, — for no general statement can embody the whole bulk of the work accomplished. As a moral force, Buddhism strengthened authority, and cultivated submission, by its capacity to inspire larger hopes and fears than the more ancient religion could create. As teacher, it educated the race, from the highest to the humblest, both in ethics and in esthetics. All that can be classed under the name of art in Japan was

either introduced or developed by
 Buddhism; and the same may
 be said regarding nearly all Japanese
 literature possessing real literary
 quality, — excepting some *Shin* to
 rituals, and some fragments of
 archaic poetry. Buddhism intro-
 -duced drama, the higher forms
 of poetical composition, and fiction,
 and history, and philosophy. All
 the refinements of Japanese life
 were of Buddhist introduction, and
 at least a majority of its diversions
 and pleasures. There is even today
 scarcely one interesting or beautiful
 thing, produced in the country,
 for which the nation is not in
 some sort indebted to Buddhism.
 Perhaps the best and briefest
 way of stating the range of
 such indebtedness, is simply to

say that Buddhism brought the whole of Chinese civilization in to Japan, and thereafter patiently modified and reshaped it to Japanese requirements. The elder civilization was not merely superimposed upon the social structure, but fitted carefully in to it, interfused through it, amalgamated with it so perfectly that the marks of the welding, the lines of the juncture, in most instances totally disappeared.

