

RELIGION IN JAPAN IN 1961

by the editor

(In preparing this review the editor has consulted a number of different sources, but he has depended mainly on an article entitled "The Religious World in 1961" which appeared in the December issue of the monthly bulletin of the Sōtō Sect of Zen Buddhism, one of the largest Buddhist sects in Japan. The author of the article is the Reverend Shūten Ōishi, a Zen priest of the Sōtō Sect who is currently executive secretary of the Union of New Religious Organizations in Japan and editor of its weekly newspaper. All the direct quotations in this review, whether credited or not, are from his article.)

GENERAL

Interfaith Organizations

Everyone at all familiar with religions in Japan knows in a vague sort of way at least that there are Shinto shrines, and Shinto sects, Buddhist temples and sects, Christian churches and denominations, and some so-called new religions in this country. Few people, however, are aware that most of the influential religious denominations are organized into five federations or committees, which in turn have an overall organization called the Religions League of Japan (Nihon Shūkyō Renmei).

Some of these constituent groups have a rather long history of mutual cooperation. For example, the Buddhists have been organized in one form or another for many years, and so have the Christians. Moreover, there were numerous attempts in the past century to bring the religions of Japan together in one

form or another of cooperative endeavor. But until the outbreak of World War II there was no overall organization which included within its scope a large majority of all the religious denominations or sects of the country.

Religions League of Japan—Originally sponsored and dominated by the Japanese Government as a means of mobilizing religion for the country's war effort, the Religions League of Japan today is a voluntary association of five constituent bodies: the Japan Buddhist Federation (Zen Nihon Bukkyō Kai), the Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō), the Sectarian Shinto Federation (Kyōha Shintō Rengō Kai), the Christian Liaison Committee (Kirisuto-kyō Rengō Kai), and the Union of New Religious Organizations of Japan (Shin Nihon Shūkyō Dantai Rengō Kai). Thus, the Religions League probably encompasses ninety to ninety-five percent of all organized religion in Japan.

At the time of its re-organization as a voluntary association in the fall of 1945 after the end of hostilities, the League consisted of the Buddhist, Sectarian Shinto, and Christian groups. In 1949 the Association of Shinto Shrines joined, and in 1951 the Union of New Religious Organizations was admitted.

During the Occupation (1945—1952), the League and its constituent bodies performed many useful functions in connection with problems related to the Japanese government and the Occupation. Subsequently, it has continued to perform numerous services for its constituent members, and in a general way represents the religious world. (The activities of the five

RELIGION IN JAPAN IN 1961

constituent associations are mentioned below in connection with the several religions.)

In spite of its great potential for useful service the spirit of cooperation among religious bodies is still weak, and the League is not a strong organization today. To some extent this is also true of four of the five constituent members. Only the Association of Shinto Shrines exerts effective leadership in its own area.

In 1961, aside from routine business, the League re-considered its previous negative decision and decided to cooperate with the Ministry of Education in a projected survey of religious organizations. It voted against participation in the Religious Peace Council's meeting in July and the Anti-A H Bombs Conference in August. It sponsored memorial services conducted by three of its constituent members at the Tomb of Unidentified Soldiers on August 15, and it selected individuals representing various religions to participate in a delegation which visited the United States in November. Not a very impressive record.

The League has no staff other than a part-time secretary. Leadership rotates annually among the official representatives of the five constituent members. Its office is at the Tsukiji Honganji Temple, Tsukiji, Chūō Ku, Tokyo.

Council for Interfaith Cooperation—Of a different nature is the Council for Interfaith Cooperation which is composed of individual members representing various faiths who live in the Tokyo area. The membership of the Council does not exceed a few hundred, but it performs a valuable service in providing

an opportunity for members of different faiths to hear addresses on current topics of interest to the religious world and discuss current problems in a friendly atmosphere. The group sponsors a weekly Saturday noon luncheon in Tokyo. The Venerable Benkyō Shiio, Abbot of Zōjōji Temple in Shiba, Minato Ku, Tokyo, and ex-president of Taishō University, is Honorary President. The Reverend Shin'ichi Imaoka, President Emeritus of Seisoku High School in Shiba, Minato Ku, Tokyo, is the executive secretary and prime mover in the organization.

Religious Situation in General

Religious organizations in Japan—shrines, temples, and churches—report the number of their adherents as approximately 140 million. The total may even be as large as 150 million, which is probably something of world record! Of course, not all those counted will admit that they are adherents. Some may even deny it. But that does not matter.

In a population of less than 95 million, a very large number of people very obviously are considered to be adherents of two or more religious bodies, which are very often of different traditions such as Buddhism and Shinto, or perhaps even Christianity.

The problem of what constitutes religion, and whether Buddhism or Shinto are religions, need not detain us here. Not a few thoughtful Christians are prepared to argue that Christianity itself, in its truest form, is not a religion but a way of life! We are dealing here with religion in its broadest and, at the same time, its most concrete aspects, so we can leave the academic problem of what is religion for another

RELIGION IN JAPAN IN 1961

occasion.

1961 Statistics According to the latest available statistics, in the 1962 *Religions Year Book* (*Shūkyō Nenkan*) of the Ministry of Education and the 1962 *Christian Year Book* (*Kirisutokyo Nenkan*) published by the Christ News Company, there are some 400 denominations operating more or less on a national level; and about 229,000 local organizations, that is, shrines, temples, and churches, which have nearly 352,000 religious workers, ordained and unordained, promoting the several faiths. According to the Ministry of Education the number of adherents increased about five million over the previous year (1959).

Some religious organizations are thriving. Generally speaking, however, religions in Japan are in the doldrums. Yet it would be a mistake to write them all off, or even most of them, as of no social significance.

A generation ago, when the country faced a national emergency, the Japanese government exerted itself to mobilize religion to provide spiritual sanction for the war effort. Today, although everything seems relatively quiet on the religious front, astute leaders, both on the left and right, are preparing for the morrow. They are trying to win the support of religious leaders in order to bring more strength to their activities, both legitimate and questionable.

POLITICAL ASPECTS: RIGHT AND LEFT

Except perhaps for the year-end display of posters by the notorious Bin Akao, urging the people to join hands with the

RELIGION IN JAPAN IN 1961

peace-loving Christians, there was very little activity by rightists during the year which directly involved religion, but a number of actions of a political nature impinged on the field of religion.

Noteworthy in 1961 was the increasing effort on the part of certain so-called "progressives" to utilize religion to bolster their leftist-inclined projects, but the conservatives were not far behind. In the somewhat forboding days ahead, it will be difficult for religious leaders to steer a steady course which avoids both extremes.

National Cultural Council At the fifth general meeting of the National Cultural Council, under the leadership of the well-known leftist critic, Akio Saki, the section on religion discussed the status of Shrine Shinto and the relation between trade unions and the new religions. It ended by adopting a resolution opposing the granting of special legal status to the Grand Shrine of Ise and calling for fuller guarantees of religious freedom and the separation of religion and state. Later in the year this organization created a sub-committee on religion and took actions opposing the proposed lese majesty law, and the use of the Tokyo Municipal Gymnasium by the Tokyo Christian Crusade!

World Religionists Peace Council Undeterred by the determination of religious organizations to avoid becoming involved in the annual leftist-dominated council against A H bombs, many religious leaders lent their names to, and in some cases even participated in, a World Religionists Peace Council held in July in Kyoto. Attended by 250 delegates, including foreigners representing fifteen countries, the Council, which was described

by the Democratic Socialist Party as "a communist-led religious conference," among other actions passed a resolution condemning the Japan-United States Security Treaty.

A well-known Buddhist commentator, Mr. Shūten Ōishi, writing a review of the religious world in the December issue of the official bulletin of the Sōtō Sect of Zen Buddhism expressed regret that "there are religionists in Japan who are so naive as to allow themselves to be misused for political purposes in the name of religious freedom and world peace".

Concerning the Council, an American scholar, Dr. Robert Bobulin, who attended the meetings, writing in the Japanese Buddhist Quarterly, *Young East*, said that the "Kyoto Declaration" was "an almost entirely one-side condemnation of the West" with "no mention of Soviet Russia and not even a suggestion that the Kremlin policies could stand any improvement".

Religious Juridical Persons Law A perennial subject of debate in recent years has been that of amending the Religious Juridical Persons Law. Nevertheless, the tenth anniversary of the enactment of the law was observed by the Religious Affairs Section of the Ministry of Education in October and commendations were given to prefectural officials who have administered the Law since its promulgation in 1951.

Although there is considerable legitimate criticism of the Law from different quarters, religious leaders, other than those affiliated with Shrine Shinto, are apparently reluctant to have the Law changed lest it open the way for granting special legal status to Shinto Shrines: a proposal which, outside Shrine

Shinto circles, is rather generally opposed in the religious world.

It was a matter of considerable relief to some leaders when the Minister of Education announced in April that the government did not regard the administration of Shinto shrines by the state, nor revision of the Law, as necessary at this time. It would be naive, of course, to suppose that this ended the problem, but it would seem to indicate that the demand that the Law be amended was not as general as it sometimes seemed.

Anti-nuclear Tests Resolutions The resumption of nuclear tests by the USSR and underground testing by the United States brought forth a large number of resolutions from the Religions League of Japan, its constituent members, and numerous other religious bodies. Although politically-minded leaders take advantage of this sentiment, it would be a serious mistake to regard these resolutions as indicating anything more than a deep abhorrence of the possibility of nuclear war.

Delegation to the United States On October 27th a party of ten religious leaders, representing the major religious groups in Japan and sponsored by American friends, left for a one-month tour of the United States. However, because of a much-too-crowded schedule, the tour was not as successful as those concerned had hoped.

SHRINE SHINTO

National Foundation Day The campaign to re-designate February 11th as National Foundation Day, which has been promoted

by Shrine Shinto leaders and others, continued unabated, although in June the government was forced to shelve the proposed National Holiday Bill. Among suggestions for new national holidays, April 8 (Buddha's Birthday in Japan) and December 25 (Christmas) appear to have been seriously considered.

The Grand Shrine of Ise A second subject of general interest in which Shrine Shinto leaders were especially involved was the question of the status of the Emperor and the Grand Shrine of Ise. At a meeting of the Constitution Investigation Committee, the question of the relation of the Emperor to the Grand Shrine of Ise was discussed and it was decided that the status of the shrine and its sacred symbol, the mirror (one of the three Imperial Regalia), needed to be clarified. Although the Grand Shrine of Ise is a private religious juridical person and has custody of the mirror, the shrine has consistently declined to register the mirror as shrine property.

Lese Majesty Law A third subject of interest to shrine leaders was the government proposal to enact a lese majesty law. This met with an enthusiastic response on the part of leaders of the Association of Shinto Shrines and Seichō-no-Ie (House of Growth), but elsewhere in the religious world, particularly among Christians, there was much opposition.

Yasukuni Shrine Members of the Bereaved Families Association submitted a petition with nearly two million signatures urging that the state take over the administration of Yasukuni Shrine.

Jingū Kōgakkan Re-establishment of a college at the Grand Shrine of Ise was a noteworthy event of the year. Dissolved by Occupation order, because it was a government-sponsored institution for the training of priests, Jingū Kōgakkan now will become a rival of Kokugakuin University in Tokyo, a Shinto institution that, among other departments, trains shrine priests within the framework of courses on the history of religion.

The institution will lay stress on the Imperial-country character of Shinto and the Japanese classics. Thus, it represents a strengthening of the conservative tendencies in the Shrine Shinto world. It must not be forgotten, however, that a considerable segment of the shrine world is not pleased with this sort of development and wishes for a more liberal leadership.

Association of Shinto Shrines Although there are some fifteen associations or sects based on shrines, which number over 81,000, the shrines are primarily represented in the religious world by the national Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō), a member of the Religions League of Japan, which is composed of some 79,000 constituent shrines. The total constituency claimed by Shinto Shrines is approximately 50 million, but this is a purely arbitrary number. These shrines are served by 16,000 priests.

In connection with the fifteenth anniversary of the Association's founding (February 3, 1946) commendations were given to persons who had worked for the advancement of shrines and a five-year plan was adopted, which included pro-

motion of a lese majesty law and the designation of February 11 as National Foundation Day.

Shinto Youth In May a National Conference of Shrine Shinto Youth was held in Tokyo to promote the propagation of Shinto among the youth of the country. In August a national assembly of shrine-affiliated Boy Scouts was attended by 550 scouts representing thirty-seven troops, and in October a national organization of scout masters was created. Scouting is a relatively new activity for shrines.

New Housing Areas To cope with the enormous housing projects which are appearing all over the country, the Association is developing plans to reach the residents of these areas, especially the children, in order that they may not become completely uprooted from the Shinto faith into which they were born.

Shinto Teachers Union In the field of education, in spite of the opposition of the Japan Teachers Union, shrine priests, who are concurrently teachers in public schools, met at Ise in August, 1959, and organized an association to promote sound education and combat communist influence in the schools. Its strategy is to collaborate with the Teachers Union in areas where it is weak and to encourage individuals to withdraw where the union is strong.

Shrines are thus showing a great deal of initiative and imagination in dealing with modern problems and in re-adjusting their program to a democratic society.

SECTARIAN SHINTO

There are approximately 130 Shinto associations and sects in Japan not based on shrines which have an estimated strength of 12 million adherents. However, only two of these, Tenri-kyō and Izumo Ōyashiro-kyō, formerly Izumo Taisha-kyō, claim more than a million. Most of them have less than one hundred thousand.

Shinto sects, in general, have not provided much in the way of significant news in recent years. Among the five constituent members of the Religions League, the Sectarian Shinto Federation, with thirteen affiliated denominations, is the least influential. In fact, the only news at all worth reporting from this area concerns Tenri-kyō, a sect which can hardly be regarded as a true Shinto sect, and Ōmoto, which only recently affiliated with the federation.

Tenri-kyō Tenri-kyō laid the foundation stone for Tenri Hall in downtown Tokyo which is being erected at a cost of nearly \$4 million.

Ōmoto Ōmoto, which suffered serious persecution both before and during World War II, caused something of a sensation by the announcement in the fall that one hundred fifty-six persons belonging to thirty-four households in two small villages of the remote Gotō Islands of Nagasaki prefecture had been converted to its faith. These people are said to have belonged to the "Hidden Christians," which have persisted in their unique faith for more than three hundred years, that is, since the suppression of Christianity by the Tokugawa feudal govern-

ment. The conversion comes as the result of work by an Ōmoto missionary who has lived among the people for the past ten years.

BUDDHISM

Buddhist Federation Buddhist denominations in Japan are represented in the Religions League by the Japan Buddhist Federation, an organization that includes practically all the 170 Buddhist sects of any importance. There are some 91,700 Buddhist temples, churches, and propaganda centers in the country, which are served by 106,000 priests and 19,600 nuns, and have an estimated total of nearly 60—65 million adherents.

Regarding the June meeting of the Buddhist Federation at Sōjiji, the great head temple of the Sōtō Sect of Zen Buddhism in Tsurumi, between Tokyo and Yokohama, Mr. Ōishi, who has been quoted above, wrote that “though the meeting was seemingly marked by ardent participation on the part of the delegates, the debates got lost in trivia and yielded no definite results, except that “the delegates voted not to participate in the World Religionists Peace Council,” which was held in August.

However, in spite of this negative vote, a number of Buddhist leaders did participate as individuals, which caused Mr. Ōishi to express deep regret. “Today it is commonly recognized,” he writes, “that Buddhism has become enfeebled, especially in its missionary activities, and that such behavior only accelerates this tendency and is self-defeating.”

As already indicated above, some temples such as the Asakusa Kannon temple (Sensōji) in Tokyo and Narita Temple

(Shinshōji) in Chiba prefecture, are thriving, but for the most part Buddhist leaders are seriously concerned about the future.

Anniversaries Outstanding among the activities of the Buddhist world was the commemoration in Kyoto of the 750th anniversary of the death of Saint Hōnen, founder of the Jōdo (Pure Land) Sect and the 700th anniversary of the death of Saint Shinran, founder of the Jōdo Shin (True Pure Land) Sect.

Chion'in Temple reported that some 269,000 believers attended the services for Saint Honen (March 1—7), while the Nishi Honganji (March 10—21) and Higashi Honganji (April 14—28) temples reported the number of pilgrims attending the services for Saint Shinran as 516,000 and 850,000 respectively. The cost of the festivals for the last two temples was estimated at \$10 million.

Opinions differ in Buddhist circles as to the significance of these figures. Some argue that they are evidence of the continued vitality of the Buddhist faith, but others believe that the sightseeing aspect of the pilgrimage took precedence over the religious. Sightseeing has always been a factor in religious pilgrimages, so this should not be over-emphasized. The fact that the subject was discussed at all would seem to be significant as indicating the degree of concern in Buddhist circles regarding the state of the faith.

Life of Buddha Film Undoubtedly the Daiei film, Sakya, which purports to depict the life of the Buddha, was the most controversial issue to arise in Japanese Buddhist circles. Enraged

by the careless manner in which historical material was handled, and taking special offense at the sacrilegious introduction of a totally unfounded and uncalled-for rape and suicide of the Buddha's wife, Buddhist leaders, having unsuccessfully sought to have the film changed, have vowed to bring about the downfall of the producer. In the face of protests from diplomatic representatives from six predominantly Buddhist South east Asian countries, the Daiei Company apparently has agreed to change the film to make it acceptable for showing abroad, but it is doubtful whether this will be successful.

Because of this film, Buddhist leaders feel that Japanese Buddhism has suffered a disgrace. Moreover, they believe that not only Buddhists but all religious people should cooperate in opposing actions which offend or insult religion. They view the fact that the film has made such a successful run as indicative of the depth of religious indifference which prevails in Japan today.

Urban Temples Late in the year the Cultural Interchange Institute for Buddhists completed a survey of the social functions of urban temples which concludes that such temples are gradually losing their traditional functions and, therefore, are doomed to decline.

Buddhist Peace Council The Buddhist Peace Council, another group of so-called "progressives," adopted a resolution opposing the proposed law for the suppression of political violence.

World Fellowship of Buddhists Twenty-three Japanese Buddhists, including three official delegates, attended the sixth biennial

conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, which met at Pnompenh, Cambodia, in November. This meeting should have been held in the fall of 1960 but was postponed because of the death of the king of Cambodia. The presence of representatives from communist countries introduced an element of discord into the sessions which caused the delegates from Japan to consider withdrawal from the meeting.

At its inception in Ceylon in 1950 the World Fellowship of Buddhists promised to develop into a dynamic organization uniting the Buddhists of the world, but a decade later it is still very weak and hardly does more than promote international fellowship between Buddhists. As is so often the case, nationalistic and personal ambitions, as well as international political machinations, appear to be preventing the organization from asserting any genuine religious leadership.

SOKA GAKKAI

Buddhism is apparently very much concerned over the inroads of the so-called new religions, and is endeavoring to find ways to counteract their influence. However, the only real threat appears to come from Sōka Gakkai, which is carrying on its proselytizing activities with unrelenting vigor.

In November at the 8th meeting of the Kyoto Buddhist Council, sixty leaders devoted their major attention to this subject, although, according to the Sōtō Sect Bulletin, "no real authority on the subject was present."

In July, on complaint of the Buddhist Federation, the Tokyo District Court began hearing a suit against the Ministry of Welfare relative to the rights of temples in respect to the use

of temple burial grounds. The basic cause of the suit is the refusal of Sōka Gakkai believers to respect the traditional rites required by temples.

The Butsurū Sect of Nichiren Buddhism took the initiative in organizing an anti-Sōka Gakkai Society.

Sōka Gakkai is generally regarded as a new religion because it emerged as a nationally significant organization in the post-World War II period; but it is a Buddhist organization closely identified with the Nichiren Shō Sect of Nichiren Buddhism, which arose in the thirteenth century. Consequently, it is included here with Buddhism in general.

Sōka Gakkai continues to be a major problem for much of the religious world. The numerous sects of Nichiren Buddhism, which the organization regards as its prime object of proselytizing, appear to be greatly concerned, but the main victims are said to be Shinto shrines and Christian churches, particularly those in the smaller cities, towns, and villages.

Besides an intensification of its propaganda, the organization has entered the foreign field and is endeavoring to make its particular form of Buddhism the world religion. In January and February the new president, Daisaku Ikeda, together with a number of his followers, made an eighteen-day tour of South-east Asia. In August, several high-ranking members visited North America for one month. In October a party, including the president, visited Europe for twenty days.

One particular group that is being exploited to the fullest extent by Sōka Gakkai is the wives of American servicemen. It is understood that as a result the organization is being investigated by American official agencies.

Youth education is given great emphasis by this society. For example, in November a mass meeting for young men at the National Stadium in Tokyo had an estimated attendance of 100,000, and a separate meeting for young women in Yokohama had an estimated attendance of 70,000.

At the Tokyo meeting it was declared that the ultimate object of Sōka Gakkai's youth education program was "to let our youth become aware of their duties as soldiers of the nation, because Japan is the savior of the world and Sōka Gakkai is the savior of our country."

In the political realm Sōka Gakkai selected nine candidates for the 1962 House of Councillors election. If all are successful the organization will have fifteen of its adherents in that body. It is not clear how many of the candidates are earnest followers and how many are using the organization for political advancement.

Ever since its emergence into politics, Sōka Gakkai has been accused of violations of the election law. A number of arrests have been made in this connection and in November the Public procurator of the Osaka District Court demanded imprisonment of ten months for President Daisaku Ikeda for alleged violations committed by the organization in the election of 1957. Final judgement is scheduled for 1962.

The expansion of establishments around the head temple of the Nichiren Shō Sect, Taisekiji, near the foot of Mount Fuji in Shizuoka prefecture, continues apace. In connection with a campaign to raise approximately \$3 million for the erection of a Visitors' Hall, three times that sum, or nearly \$10 million, dollars, was received within a few weeks. It is thought in

some quarters, says Mr. Oishi, that some of this money may be diverted for use in the coming election.

Although Sōka Gakkai has selected Risshō Kōsei Kai, which has its headquarters in Nakano Ward, Tokyo, as a special object for its proselytizing and intends to crush it, there is no evidence that this campaign is meeting with success. In the past, efforts of this sort have only resulted in increasing the strength of Risshō Kōsei Kai.

The newer religious movements do not appear to have anything to fear from Sōka Gakkai, but for the so-called established religious denominations of Buddhism, Shinto, Christianity, and Shinto shrines, which are more or less caught in a stereotype of activities, the situation is very serious. Generally speaking, they appear to be at a loss as to how to meet the Sōka Gakkai attack.

The organization claimed that in August alone it added members from 80,000 additional households.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity occupies a unique position among the religions of Japan. The membership of the churches is less than one percent of the total population, but the estimated number of those who regard themselves as Christians is about three million. Moreover, the influence of Christianity in Japan is entirely out of proportion to its numerical strength.

For this reason, as well as because of reader-interest, it might not be improper to give a disproportionate amount of space in this review to the Christian movement in general, as well as to the three branches, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant, re-

presented in this country. However, it seems better to follow the pattern already adopted in regard to the other faiths and deal only with matters which are of general interest, leaving discussion of sectarian activities to another occasion.

According to the 1962 *Christian Year Book* (*Kirisutokyō Nenkan*), as of the spring of 1961, church membership totaled 727,445, of which number 287,943 (as of June 30, 1961) belonged to the Catholic, 35,656 to the Orthodox, and 403,846 to the Protestant faith. The number of baptisms for the three groups was 15,343 Catholic, 301 Orthodox, and 19,318 Protestant, or a total of 34,962. The net gain for the year was approximately 24,000, that is, about 3.5 percent.

Christian churches are represented in the Religions League of Japan by the Christian Liaison Committee, in which the three main branches of the Christian movement, including about twenty Protestant denominations, participate. During 1961 a resolution was passed opposing the resumption of nuclear tests, and for the third year a program of choral singing at the Tomb for Unidentified Soldiers in Tokyo was sponsored on Christmas day. This program was carried on a national network and reportedly was enthusiastically received.

In spite of the relatively small number of church members, it is a source of constant surprise to everyone concerned that the distribution of the Christian Bible continues year after year to be so high. As a matter of principle, the Japan Bible Society does not give away the scriptures. They are sold. Nevertheless, the total distribution of the Bible and portions for the year ending October 30th was 2,524,409, including 106,056 complete Bibles, 480,536 Old or New Testaments, and 1,579,909 portions.

RELIGION IN JAPAN IN 1961

The outstanding event in the Christian world in 1961 was the Tokyo Crusade sponsored by World Vision, which was held in the Tokyo Municipal Gymnasium, May 6 to June 4. The total reported attendance was 236,762 of whom 8,941 indicated their desire either to be baptized or to receive instructions.

Although there was widespread cooperation on the part of Christian leaders, both Japanese and foreign, a considerable number were sincerely opposed to the Crusade either because of doctrinal differences or because of a basic disagreement as to the wisdom of such a project.

A few, who are noted for their generally leftist sympathies and were very vociferous in their opposition, charged the leaders of the Crusade with political motives and sought to label it as an anti-communist rather than a religious movement. This group picketed the Crusade and were instrumental in stirring up opposition in non-Christian quarters.

Among the non-Christian observers reactions varied, but generally speaking it appeared that "the enormous expenditure of material and spiritual resources was hardly justified by the scanty results." Nevertheless, they felt that "the zeal of the Christians should not be underestimated."

In this connection, it is very easy to get the mistaken impression that the Christian movement in this country is dominated by the foreign missionary. The facts are quite to the contrary. All the bishops of the Catholic Church are Japanese. There is one foreign bishop in the Japan Orthodox Church and one in the Anglican Episcopal Church. In the Protestant movement the majority of the local churches are in charge of

Japanese pastors and the denominational oversight is likewise Japanese.

Many missionaries help churches but very few "run" them. This is not said in order to belittle the service that missionaries are rendering to the Christian movement in Japan. Quite the contrary. But it must be recognized that, for the most part, the Christian movement in Japan is in the hands of the Japanese.

It has been said, for example, that the Tokyo Crusade "taught the Japanese how to conduct such a campaign," as if the Christians were entirely without experience in this field. This is incorrect. During the half-century before World War II Japanese Christian leaders were constantly conducting extensive campaigns. There were great speakers in those days, and they secured many converts. Kanamori, Yamamuro, Nakada, Kagawa, to name only a few, could hold large audiences with their Christian message. In present-day Japan there appears to be only one Christian leader, the Reverend Kōji Honda, who is drawing large crowds; but this is not because the Japanese don't know how to do it.

To be sure, the Christian movement does not have the funds to sponsor a crusade on the scale of the Tokyo Crusade, but this should not be interpreted as meaning that the foreigner is needed because the Japanese don't know how to do it.

NEW RELIGIONS

Although a great deal has been written about "new religions" in Japan, the number of new religious organizations operating more or less on a national level, that can not be classified as

either Buddhist, Shinto, or Christian, is only about thirty. Their reported adherents total some 4.3 million. However, due to circumstances that cannot be discussed here, a large number of Buddhist and Shinto new religious movements have organized themselves outside the Buddhist and Sectarian Shinto federations.

The Union of New Religious Organizations, which is affiliated with the Religions League of Japan, is the largest organization of such "new religions". It consists of eighty constituent religious bodies, some of which have already celebrated their fiftieth anniversary, while some arose as recently as ten years ago. The total number of adherents represented in the Union is estimated at six million.

Commenting on the general situation of such religious movements, Mr. Ōishi states that, although many people thought that, with the stabilization of society, the strength of the so-called new religions would wane, this has not occurred. In support of this he notes that the "Dancing Religion," which has its headquarters in Tabuse, Yamaguchi prefecture, is building a new "Believers' Hall" at a cost of over one million dollars. He also notes that some of these organizations are increasing their membership at the rate of one or two hundred thousand a year. He might also have mentioned the new sanctuary which Rissō Kōsei Kai is building in Nakano, Tokyo. When completed it will accommodate at least thirty thousand people!

The caption used in introducing the subject of the so-called new religions in the Sōtō Sect Bulletin, "Enticement by Promises of Worldly Success must be Abandoned to Win True Believers," is very significant. In this field, Mr. Ōishi, who

as Executive Secretary of the Union of New Religious Organizations is an outstanding authority on the subject, says that, while it is true that these new organizations gained their initial strength by claims of curing disease and giving worldly success, an increasing number of adherents, estimated at from 60—70%, are now going to them for spiritual reasons, that is, to “solve the problems of human existence.”

In connection with the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Union of New Religious Organizations, a six-day seminar, at which outstanding scholars and religious leaders gave addresses on group organization and activities, was conducted in Tokyo in August, attended by 700 leaders.

At the same time a three-day seminar for youth was held in Tokyo attended by about 1,500 young people. Then, in November, with an attendance of 2,500 youth from all over the country, a “New Religions Youth Organization,” was established. It is estimated that the total membership of its affiliated bodies will exceed one million! The potential of these youth organizations has not yet been fully appreciated.

— 終 —