

Shūkyō Nenkan (Religions Year Book)

*Prepared by the Religious Affairs Section of the
Ministry of Education, Tokyo: Printing Bureau,
Ministry of Finance, 1963, pp. 551, ¥1,300,
(Out of Print.)*

The Japanese language *Religions Year Book* (*Shūkyō Nenkan*), which is compiled by the Religious Affairs Section of the Ministry of Education and published by the Printing Bureau of the Ministry of Finance, are very useful reference volumes and the should be found in all libraries concerned with religion in Japan.

1962 Edition. The 1962 volume is divided into three parts. Part I, "General Outline," consists of (1) a review of developments in the religious world for the previous year, (2) a chronology for the year 1962, and (3) administrative actions and activities of the Religious Affairs Section.

Part II, "The Situation of Religious Organizations." (Kyōdan no

Genjō), consists of brief information regarding each of the 380 denominations and sects (145 Shinto, 166 Buddhist, 39 Christian, and 30 unclassified) incorporated with the Ministry, and 25 incorporated on a prefectural level, which include the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the head offices, the names of the official (legal) representatives, organization, propaganda activities and statistics (number of Shrines, temples, churches, propaganda centers, religious workers, and believers.)

Part III, "Materials and Statistics," consists of an historical review of religions in Japan (pp. 155-206), tables showing the sectarian divisions that occurred after the abrogation of the Religious Organiza

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tions Law in 1945 (pp. 213-226), a map showing the number of local religious organizations and adherents in each prefecture, a religious chronology from antiquity to the present (pp. 227-275), brief information about 549 of the principal shrines, temples, and churches in country (pp. 276-483), a list of inter-sectarian organizations, such as the Religions League of Japan, and a list of institutes devoted to the study of religion (pp. 484-515), statistical tables (pp. 576-543), and finally an index to the denominations incorporated with Ministry that are listed in Part II. In most cases the denominations are discussed under the four divisions of Shinto, Buddhism, Christianity, and unclassified sects.

As can well be imagined this volume, like its predecessors, contains a veritable gold mine of information, most of which is not elsewhere available. It is compiled by competent hands and is presented in a convenient form. Aside from

the fundamental question as to the propriety of the government indulging in some of the studies found in the volume, the book's most serious limitation, at least as far as the foreign reader is concerned, is that it is in Japanese. Whenever funds can be made available, it is to be hoped that the most useful of the materials published since 1945 will be translated and published in an English volume.

1963 Edition The 1963 edition has only sections I and II, as described above, and the statistics as of Dec. 31, 1962, which are in a more complete form than in the 1962 edition. It is very questionable, however, whether there is any real value in collecting statistics annually. They would be much more valuable, if they were collected only every four or five years and a carefully prepared analysis were made to help the ordinary reader to know what has happened.

W. P. W.

Note: Where the editor's initials are in parentheses, the material has been largely taken from the book jackets. Thus these are introductions, rather than reviews. W. P. W.