

SPIRITUAL BONDS OF EAST AND WEST

ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY with the organization in London of the Association Concordia last June there came into existence in Tokyo a similar association whose Japanese name is the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai, or literally "Reducing-into-Oneness Society." It was a happy coincidence, the initiators of each organization having had no knowledge of the undertaking of the other. Both have for their aim the promotion of mutual intellectual and spiritual understanding between the Orient and the Occident, thus laying secure foundations for international peace and goodwill. So great was the similarity between the manifesto of the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai and that of the Association Concordia that the Tokyo organization has adopted for its English title the very name of the London society. The initiator of the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai is President J. Naruse, of the Japan Women's University of Tokyo, one of the foremost educators of Japan. Indeed, he is the pioneer in the field of higher education for Japanese girls. Educated in America, Mr. Naruse derived inspiration, it is said, from our Eastern colleges for girls such as Vassar and Wellesley. In a recent issue of the *Katei Shuho*, the weekly organ of the Japan Women's University, Mr. Naruse tells us how he came to organize the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai. He writes:

"No one will deny that Japan has in the past few decades made wonderful progress, yet every one must concede that this progress has been chiefly in the field of material civilization. On the other hand, the intellect, the ideals, the spiritual aspirations of the nation have received but little impetus. Inevitable as it is in a period of transition, the course which Japan has pursued in her efforts to modernize herself is none the less unfortunate. Happily for the wholesome growth of the Empire, such a period of transition is well-nigh at an end and a period of spiritual awakening has already dawned. The recent religious conference held at the initiative of the Home Minister was undoubtedly an indication of this new tendency. Unfortunately that conference is not likely to bear any fruit—we never expected it would. Spiritual and intellectual advancement can not be achieved by governmental measures, but must be attained by the spontaneous efforts of the people.

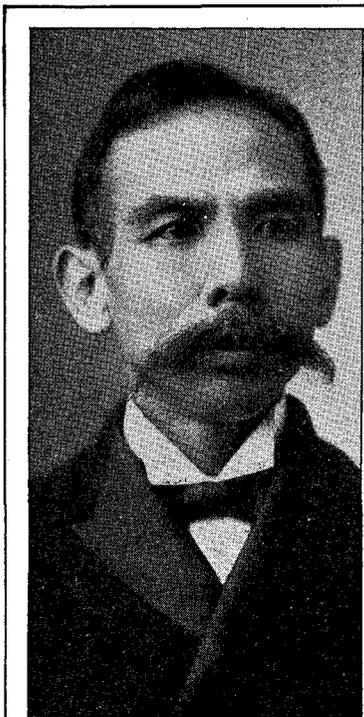
"It is with this need in view that I have undertaken the organization of the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai. The aim of the association is not national, but international. There are many spiritual problems whose satisfactory solution requires cooperation among all civilized nations. That this need is also keenly felt in the Occident is indicated in the organization in London of the Association Concordia. The time has come when the West and the East should clasp each other's hand in the field of the intellect and the spirit."

President Naruse is now in America aiming to ascertain whether our leading men in the world of thought as well as our publicists and financial leaders will be willing to cooperate with him in the realization of the ideas of the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai. It is said that President Jordan of Stanford University, President Judson of the University of Chicago, President Van Hise of the University of Wisconsin, and many other scholars and educators have already pledged hearty cooperation. It is the plan of the Executive Committee of the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai, which Mr. Naruse represents, to organize headquarters and launch a magazine in New York or Boston, if the sympathy of representative Americans seems to justify such a step. Why the association should

be made international is explained in the English prospectus of the Ki-ichi Kyo-kai in these words:

"Altho in its more superficial aspects the intercourse between the East and the West is growing increasingly intimate and their scientific interests are becoming wider, there is still a failure on each side to appreciate the deeper things of the spirit which underlie the life of the other. The removal of causes of irritation as regards political and commercial affairs is an imperative duty. But the promotion of a better understanding between the East and the West regarding each other's faith and ideals, and the creation of a reciprocal sympathy in relation to the deeper problems of the spirit, are matters of no less urgency. . . . No nation and no religion can maintain its life apart from the ever onward movement of the world's thought. The civilization of the world will hereafter flow in one strong current. Each nation and each religion must, it is true, give expression to its own characteristic virtues and thus contribute something to the universal civilization. Yet in its ultimate purposes it must bring itself into harmony with the grand symphony of the world's ideal. . . . Every nation faces, in spite of its particular history and character, many of the same problems and many of the same difficulties. The conflict between individualism and imperialism; the lack of harmony between traditional faith and ideas, on the one hand, and the various social and economic questions, on the other; the apparent hostility between the positivistic tendency, due to the rise of modern science, and the idealistic principle of religious faith; the opposition between practical morality and education and metaphysical thought—these and many another problem are awaiting our solution. Is it not the duty of both the East and the West to exert themselves to their utmost, each in its characteristic way, but in a spirit of helpful cooperation, for the mastery of these great problems? No sat-

isfactory solution can be reached without world-wide cooperation."—*Translation made for THE LITERARY DIGEST.*



PRESIDENT J. NARUSE,

Founder of the first woman's college in Japan, now organizing a society to bind the spiritual forces of the Orient and Occident.

A NEW CHILDREN'S PRAYER—Some mothers "feel that there is something gruesome in teaching small children the time-honored prayer, 'Now I lay me down to sleep,'" says *The Continent* (Chicago), and it proposes a substitute for those who wish it. Objection to the old one lies in the suggestion of death in the third line, tho it may be found that the force of habit and tradition can only slowly give way to the new reluctance to entertain the idea of death. We read:

"Of course what has been so dear to so many generations of little folks and grown folks is not to be driven out of the field by this one objection from sensitive parents, but on the other hand traditional acceptance won't overcome the objections of any mother who, as one mother recently testified, remembers having lain awake whole nights in childhood terrified by the fear of death which the little prayer had instilled. Any mother with that experience in her own life will certainly refuse to submit a child of her own to the peril of such a horror. Fortunately there are many beautiful substitutes that can be taught a child with equal ease and which will be in his later memory just as dear as 'Now I lay me' can be to any one. One of the simplest and sweetest of such substitutes is from the kindly pen of William Canton of England:

"Father, whom I can not see,
Look down from heaven on little me;
Let angels through the darkness spread
Their holy wings above my bed;
And keep me safe, because I am
The heavenly Shepherd's little lamb;
Teach me to do as I am told
And help me be as good as gold."

JUDGING NOGI'S SUICIDE

ADMIRATION or approval of the act of General Nogi and his wife in taking their own lives on the eve of their Emperor's funeral is naturally commoner in the secular press than in the religious. Many of the religious editors regret that they have to condemn the final deed of so admirable a man. So important a journal as *The Christian Work and Evangelist* (New York), in reviewing Nogi's life and death, abstains wholly from judgment of the act. The shock of his suicide is all the greater, as *The Christian Century* (Chicago) points out, because we have the "habit of thinking of Japan as a modern and civilized nation." The death of the famous General is of especial importance to the Western world because "it serves to remind us again that the task of evangelization and civilization is not yet accomplished in Japan." It adds:

"Some newspapers have lauded the act of General Nogi as being commendable in the light of his faith and traditions. We must not be allowed to forget, however, that this cheap view of human life that would permit a man to sacrifice his life for the glory of the Emperor is not in a civilized nation. Many more decades of Christian teaching must yet be given to Japan before she will hold life sacred, as it is held everywhere in Christendom."

The Lutheran (Philadelphia) is another journal that finds a popular fallacy in the habit of saying "all civilized nations are Christian except Japan," adding:

"The truth is, Japan's civilization is a recent growth, is borrowed from the Christian nations of the West. It has not yet sunk deep into the Japanese heart, nor taken hold on the deeper things of his life. He is still a pagan and an Oriental. Nothing could bring out more vividly the difference between Christianity and Shintoism, the immeasurable superiority of the former, than the death of Nogi. But there is reason to believe that Japan will rise above her religion by casting it off for a better one, as many a people have done. The Japanese are a sagacious people. They will not forever be content with the husk of Western civilization. They will want the kernel."

The Catholic review *America* (New York) has "nothing to say regarding the personal guilt or innocence of the unhappy General," but shows its amazement at the tone of approval observed here and there:

"With regard to the act, considered in itself, every Christian must hold it in horror and detestation. We know how wicked is the crime of self-murder. So wicked is it and so irremediable that the devil, a murderer from the beginning, never ceases urging men to it. In false religions he gives it a place. In the early heresies it was not unknown. To-day it is wide-spread and still growing.

"Some excuse can be offered for the possible ignorance of the pagan soldier; but what can be accepted for men and women who, in spite of the light of Christianity, praise unstintedly his rash act? Their shameful approbation of the shameful deed shows that the light of the gospel is an essential part of our civilization, and that those who ignore God's revealed religion fall down to the level of pagan degradation."

Words less stern appear in some other religious organs, *The Guardian* (London) speaking thus for the Established Church:

"Who does not wish to judge as leniently as possible the great Japanese soldier and his wife in respect of that supreme tribute of devotion to their departed sovereign which has so profoundly affected the civilized world? Christianity plainly declares self-murder to be mortal sin, tho Christian charity can whisper hope even to those who mourn the death of a suicide, since one never knows what was the last thought in a man's mind after he had taken the irrevocable step. Count Nogi can not be judged by Christian standards, nor even by the moral code of Europe, which on this point reflects the code of the Church. How far his action consorts with the temper of new Japan seems at least doubtful, for we learn with satisfaction that his example is not likely to be followed."

The Universalist Leader (Boston) takes a philosophical view

of the deed, seeing in it at least partial confirmation of the impression that "the New Japan is, after all, but a thin crust over the old," adding:

"The Christian civilization, which is producing such quick fruits, is like the seeds of old which fell on shallow ground and quickly sprang up, but having no depth did not endure. The changing of a nation is a matter of generations, perhaps of nations as well as of men. General Nogi was a connecting link between the past and the present. He saw with his eyes the better and larger life of the new, but the feelings of his heart had not yet been touched. . . . Sad, even unreasonable, as all this seems to us, there is in it a touch of something greater than most men know. A heroism not to be judged by a heroism commission, a fragment of the great universal religion which faces the future with confident step, a testimony to the good soil of Japanese life, in which the good seed of the Religion of Love falling, it shall bring forth many fold."

GREEK SHOEBLACK SLAVERY

FORM of white slavery, or what is seemingly as bad as the peonage system of the South, exists among the Greek shoeblacks of this country, particularly of New York, and is attracting attention in the religious press. Among the owners of the shoe-shining "parlors" a well-organized *padrone* system is in full operation, it is asserted, and under it "the life of a bootblack boy is pitiable in the extreme." *The Presbyterian Examiner* (New York), which exposes the system, prints facts that may be "substantiated from the published reports of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration." Here is the history and daily life of some 1,500 boys "employed" in the 250 or more of the shoe-shining establishments of New York:

"Most of these boys are here without their parents—coming to so-called relatives, chiefly 'cousins' and 'uncles,' who are the *padroni* who pay their passage over. A contract is entered into by the boy and his parents, binding him to work for the *padrone* for a specified period after landing in America in return for the passage money advanced by the *padrone*. But that agreement, drawn up in ignorance on the other side of the Atlantic, frequently binds the boy to toil for a whole year to repay an advance of fifty or sixty dollars. Parents and papers are furnished to help him through Ellis Island, and he arrives well coached as to the answers necessary to get him past the inspectors who are trying to enforce the laws against contract laborers and youths under sixteen unaccompanied by their parents. Once landed at the Battery, ignorance guarantees that the boys will faithfully serve their master, and there begins a daily round of black and bitter servitude.

"Rising shortly after five, breakfasting on dry bread and black coffee, these bootblack boys open their places of work by half-past six. At noon they one by one disappear behind a partition or down-stairs for a moment to hurriedly snatch a lunch of bread and cheese, or olives. In the evening at nine-thirty or ten, later on Saturdays and Sundays, they close the doors and finish the day's work by polishing the fixtures and mopping up the floors and marble stands. After that they are free to go to their wretched lodgings and prepare a stew for their sumptuous chief meal. Too tired often to pull off more than coat and shoes, they pack themselves like sardines into their crowded beds for a few hours of stifling oblivion before the next weary day. Seven days in the week they work, watched by the crafty *padrone* or his relative, isolated from learning the English language as far as possible, kept in such complete ignorance that it is not uncommon to find Greek bootblacks who have lived here for upward of three years and yet know nothing of the city beyond their shop, their quarters, and the streets they must traverse in getting from one to the other. For this they receive from \$80 up to a maximum of \$250 per year, the average wages running from \$120 to \$180, together with such food and lodging as have been described and the additional privilege of buying old clothes from the *padrone* at three times their value. A Greek bootblack in New York receives from fifty cents a day upward in tips alone. In nine cases out of ten as soon as the tipping patron leaves the place the money goes into the register or a special receptacle provided by the *padrone*, and thence into his pocket. Such is the average life of a bootblack in the great city of New York."