

# Hundreds of Millions of Buddhists.

Something About the Wonderful Statues, the New Temples and the Curious Tricks of This Sect—The Revival of the Faith in Japan—Buddhist Missionaries for the United States—A New Temple Which is to Cost Eight Million Dollars, and the New Side Shrine of Buddha Which Cost Fourteen—A Buddhist Church With a Statue of Buddha, and How the People Work for Their Religion—Something About Buddhism in Siam, Burmah and India—How the Hindoo Missionaries Invited the Buddhist Archbishop of Japan and Other Fresh News About Japanese Religion—Christianity and the Missionaries.

Special Correspondent of the News.  
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It will be a surprise to many to know that there is a strong Buddhist revival going on in the Japanese empire. The church has been stirred up by the mission of the minister of religion, and within a few years Buddhist prayers have been argued, and the Japanese press is full of articles about religious matters. A movement was started some time ago for the establishment of a Buddhist theological course in the Imperial University at Tokyo, and some of the priests would like to make it the state religion. They even talk of sending missionaries to the United States, and also to the Atlantic countries, including China and Korea and India. Last spring a famous Buddhist priest visited Japan and described the backward condition of the faith in India, where most of the richest of the Buddhists took a famous image of Buddha, which was celebrated throughout Japan, and shipped it off to India, in order that it might be put in the Temple of Buddha Gaya, on the site where the founder of the religion had his great fight with the evil ones and conquered. This statue was 200 years old, and it was a work of fine art. One of the Buddhist archbishops of Japan went with it, and when he got there the high priest of the temple desired to let the image be put in. He had several thousand men about him, and he was ready to enforce his refusal with bloodshed. This matter has created great excitement among the Buddhists of Japan, and some of them insist that the Hindoo priest must be dismissed, and they want the government to take up the matter. The Buddhists intended the sending of the statue to be the beginning of a revival of Buddhism in India, and they will not probably let the matter rest as it is.

and India. There are in Japan 22,000 Buddhist temples, and in the city of Kyoto which is about as big as Washington, there are 1,500 temples which are devoted to the religion. Some of the most gorgeous temples of the world are the wonderful structures in which Buddha is worshipped at Bangkok in Siam, and at Lassa in Burmah, the famous structure known as the Golden Palace, which is said to cost over several of the actual lives which came from Buddha's head. It is a mountain of gold, or rather, of brick and stone plastered over with gold leaf. It is built upon a slightly platformed, its base is about a quarter of a mile in circumference, and these stories of gold go upward in bell-like tapers to a height greater than that of any church spire or any structure in this country, excepting the Washington monument. It is a base of fourteen acres, and on its top there is a great golden umbrella, to the rim of which are jewels as long. The whole of this structure is plated with gold as fine as any ever put into an American tooth. It is in fact a mountain of gold, and it is plated again and again, and there are, undoubtedly, millions of metal beads with the brick and plaster of which it is made. One king of Burmah vowed that he would give his weight in gold to this monument if Buddha would grant him something that he wanted. Buddha accepted the proposition. At least, he was told to do so, and when he stepped on the imperial scales it is said that he registered 727 pounds. The year cost him just about \$1,000,000 in gold leaf. Well, this great monument is now being repaired, and a small fortune is being put into its restoration. I visited temples in China which contained thousands of little gold Buddhas, and there is one at Nanking which I saw last spring in which there were seven girls under one roof. Some of them were very small girls, but the priests told me that they actually numbered 10,000, and all were played with gold leaf. During my stay in Siam some years ago I visited one temple devoted to Buddha, a part of which was covered with silver, and I found a very lively missionary in Corea in which there were hundreds of monks. Throughout the whole eastern world the finest of the temples and the finest of the priests are those of the Buddhist religion, and though the faith may be sleeping, it is by no means dead. I do not know whether it is due to their religion or not, but the Buddhists of the east are, in most respects, kind and gentle one toward another. The Japanese people are the soul of refinement, and you see many old faces which you would not expect to have among your ancestral portraits. A great deal has been written about the young girls of Japan. The old women are to me quite as charming, and I have seen old couples

in different parts of Japan, and I saw magnificent statues of Buddha being made here and there. At Kobe I saw one which had just been completed, and which could not have cost much less than \$100,000. It is just outside of the temple of Nishikido, and it is an immense image (image as tall as a two-story house, and eighty-five feet in diameter) about the waist. It is so tall that if you stood on its shoulders, you could hardly reach to the top of its ears, and the length of the nose is a whole and one-half feet. Each of its eyes is a yard wide, and its mouth is two feet in circumference, or almost twice the circumference of a telephone pole. I judge the gold sits with its legs crossed, like a Turk, and its feet covers as much space as a good sized parter. This gold sits on a marble pedestal, at the back of which is a door, and there is a little temple beside it. It is a wonderfully beautiful statue, and it is only one of thousands that may be found throughout the empire.

**THE GREAT BUDDHA IN BURMAH.**  
Japan has, in fact, the biggest Buddha of the world. The biggest Buddha of Nara, not far from the old capital, Kyoto, which is the largest. I traveled twenty-five miles in going from Nara to Kyoto, and I spent a day in this center of the Japanese Buddhists. The statue is in a temple, which is as tall as any New York skyscraper, and you have to take your shoes off before you can go inside of it. It is a pedestal, and there are dozens of gold gods all about it. Some of these gods are sixteen feet high, but they look like pigmies beside the great image which sits, with its legs crossed and its right hand upraised, among them. There is a little house around it, and it is possible for me to make my own measurements, but the priests told me that it was fifty three feet in height, and that it was made of bronze, which is no cut that they look like one solid mass. The Buddha is more than a thousand years old, or, at least, the material of which it is composed has been worshipped at Nara for that time. It was originally made of gold and copper, about 725 A.D., but the temple containing it has been buried again and again, and it has had each time been re-erected and remade.

**THE OTHER GREAT BUDDHA IS THAT AT KAMAYURA,** which has been written about by nearly every traveler who has gone to Japan. It is another immense image. It is not so tall by six feet as that of Nara, and all travelers so far have spoken of its wonderful beauty and the peaceful content shown in its features. I went out to see it and looked for the piece, but I could not find it. I sat and stared and studied, but its face was rather plain, and I did not like it. It is not so tall by six feet as that of Nara, and all travelers so far have spoken of its wonderful beauty and the peaceful content shown in its features. I went out to see it and looked for the piece, but I could not find it. I sat and stared and studied, but its face was rather plain, and I did not like it. It is not so tall by six feet as that of Nara, and all travelers so far have spoken of its wonderful beauty and the peaceful content shown in its features. I went out to see it and looked for the piece, but I could not find it. I sat and stared and studied, but its face was rather plain, and I did not like it.

**STITCHED CHURCHES WITH BIR FIGURES.**  
Some of these Buddhist temples have enormous incense-burners. There is one right near the new temple, which has been described which takes in about 200,000 a year, and this church has frequently raised in one year from half a million to a million dollars. It is called the Nishi Hongwanji temple, and it is a wonder in the richness of its interior decoration. It has hundreds of rooms walled with gold leaf, and it contains hundreds of screens painted by the Japanese masters. A

lancet left-handed artist of Japan, Jingoroku, most of the carving which it made here and there. At Kobe I saw one which had just been completed, and which could not have cost much less than \$100,000. It is just outside of the temple of Nishikido, and it is an immense image (image as tall as a two-story house, and eighty-five feet in diameter) about the waist. It is so tall that if you stood on its shoulders, you could hardly reach to the top of its ears, and the length of the nose is a whole and one-half feet. Each of its eyes is a yard wide, and its mouth is two feet in circumference, or almost twice the circumference of a telephone pole. I judge the gold sits with its legs crossed, like a Turk, and its feet covers as much space as a good sized parter. This gold sits on a marble pedestal, at the back of which is a door, and there is a little temple beside it. It is a wonderfully beautiful statue, and it is only one of thousands that may be found throughout the empire.

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