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(To consider Missionary Problems in relation to the Non-Christian World)

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF NON-CHRISTIAN RACES TO THE BODY OF CHRIST

BY PRESIDENT TASUKU HARADA

*Address delivered in the Assembly Hall on Sunday
Evening, 19th June*

MY LORD, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—This subject which I have to treat this evening calls for a great deal of knowledge, insight and judgment, and a sympathy with all faiths and ideas which are alien and even antagonistic to those with which we are more familiar. I do not for a moment assume any large measure of knowledge or insight, but there is one thing I am sure I have, and that is a deep sympathy with the non-Christian faiths and the non-Christian lands, because I was born and bred among them. I owe more than I can adequately express to the old faith and ideas for the preparation of myself for the acceptance of the Gospel and for the enjoyment of the present Christian life. The world is God's own: nothing exists separate from Him. Our motto therefore should be, "Have we not all one Father, has not one God created us, is God the God of the Jews only, is not He the God of the nations also? Yea, of the nations also!" The non-Christian races are no less God's own than the Christian races of the present day. The Master said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfil." The Body of Christ in its true realisation will be broad and comprehensive, to take in whatever is true and good wherever it may be discovered.

The word "non-Christian" is an indefinite term. It may include the larger proportion of mankind, but time will not

allow me to take up all those non-Christian nations. I shall limit myself to three of them only, with which I am more or less familiar, and to which I think I am related, viz. India, China, and Japan. They are the representatives of the leading non-Christian religions, Hinduism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism.

Let us consider for a moment what contributions we may expect from these nations in the upbuilding of the Body of Christ. India, I need not tell you, is the land of religions, "the land of the Vedas, the home of Brahmanism, the birthplace of Buddhism, the refuge of Zoroastrianism and Mohammedanism." Nowhere on the face of the world do you find a more religious people than the Indians are. Religion is the life of the Indian people. No doubt their religious ideas are full of superstitions, and the idea of God is phantastic and often non-ethical. Indians lack the synthetic faculty—practicability is not their characteristic; but, after all, the undeniable fact remains that the Indian race is a race with a deep religious consciousness, a feeling for the unseen, an unquenchable craving after something real and fundamental. Nothing short of getting to the very bottom of things will satisfy the Indian mind. Mr. Slater, the author of *Higher Hinduism*, says: "Religion has been an aspect of his very existence,—indeed, to him existence has no other meaning than the realisation of religion." Then he goes on to say, "The demand of the Indian heart is for a fixed unchangeable foundation on which the soul may rest amid the changes of this world. The God whom the Indian seeks and must find is a God who is eternal and unchangeable and who abides in the heart, whose true home is the innermost soul of man." This reflective spirit of the Indian race could not but be a substantial contribution to Christian life. When I was in India four years ago I was deeply struck by the intense spirituality of the Indian Christians. To commune with God continuously for many hours a day, or even through the whole night till the dawn, is not considered extraordinary. It is no wonder that the Brahmins emphasise the use of *Yoga* as a means of spiritual development. The highest state of mind as signified in

Yoga is death to self and death to the world, whole-hearted surrender to the complete overcoming of the self. Does it not essentially agree with the Spirit of Christ who said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me"? India produced Chunder Sen and Mozoomdar, both captivated by the life of Christ—though perhaps not to the fulness we might wish. Professor Saththianadan, among the Christian leaders, a philosopher and educationist, whose untimely death four years ago was most lamented; the late Hon. K. C. Banurji, a scholar, orator, and statesman; Father Goreh, a philosopher and saint; and, besides them, a multitude of Christian ministers and professional men and women may stand side by side with the great names of Christendom, and I believe more and more will arise in the future. Shall we not expect much from the reflective mind of the Indian Christians?

When we turn from India to China you will simply be astonished by the great contrast between them. The Chinese, if I may be allowed to characterise them, are a most practical people. Dr. Williams characterised them as thrifty, industrial, and practical. Confucianism may not be called a religion according to the more common definition of that term. It is a code of morality for the proper Way of human life; but after all, Confucius had the greatest religious influence on the Chinese people. His whole system is founded on the idea of the obedience of inferior to superior. For more than two thousand years they have been trained under this fundamental idea. Dr. Williams says: "If there be any connection between their regard for parent and superior, and the promise attached to the Fifth Commandment that 'thy days may be long in the land which thy God giveth thee,' then the long duration of the Chinese people is a stupendous monument of the good effects of even a partial obedience to the law of God." Their patience is another well-known characteristic. Do you not wonder at the great crowds of Christian martyrs at the time of the Boxer trouble? Those ten thousand men, women, and children who died in the faith during the

trouble stand as a stupendous witness to the power of the Gospel in Chinese Christians.

When I come to Japan I am able to speak with a little more authority. Of course there is this disadvantage at the same time, as was well said by an ancient writer, "One who is in the mountain cannot see the real mountain." I shall simply point out two of the most important characteristics. The loyalty of the Japanese will be recognised by all. Their patriotism and loyalty to the Emperor are unbounded. It must be said that the spirit of loyalty and the spirit of patriotism have been greatly developed since the Restoration and Japan's intercourse with foreign nations. The dauntless courage exhibited at Port Arthur, and the bravery shown throughout the war with China and Russia, must be taken as some of the expressions of their patriotic spirit and loyalty. Professor Royce of Harvard University defines loyalty as follows: "Loyalty is the will to believe in something eternal and to express that belief in the practical life of a human being." Is not such a loyalty a religious virtue? Would you not think that the Body of Christ could be enriched by the intense spirit of loyalty of the Japanese? Take, for example, Dr. Neesima. A truer patriot it would be hard to find. When he was in Northfield in America on his second visit to the States, Mr. D. L. Moody asked the congregation to pray for him, and he at once protested—"Not for me, not for me, but for Japan." He used to tell us boys, "We want you to be men willing to live and die for the sake of *your country*." The late Hon. T. Miyoshi, chief justice, and the late Hon. K. Kataoka, the Speaker of the House of Parliament for more than ten years, and the late Admiral Serata are the type of Christians who have shown their loyalty to their faith as well as to their country.

I should mention in the second place, and lastly, the Japanese worship of ancestors and great men and, I must add, great women. The greatest ancestor of the Japanese imperial dynasty is a woman who has been worshipped as the Great Heaven-Shining Goddess. The spirit of hero-worship may be a fruit of Shintoism fostered by the teaching

of Confucius. I do not believe in ancestor worship, but I do believe in paying veneration to ancestors and to great men. The admiration of great characters is a prominent Japanese characteristic, and is a most influential factor for the maintenance of a high standard of morality. Japanese history is not lacking in men of character as well as men of learning and culture through centuries of peace and war. They are enshrined in all parts of Japan, but their admiration is not limited by national boundaries. Since I came to Edinburgh I have read an account of the memorial services for your late august and beloved King Edward held in Tokyo and Kobe and other centres in Japan. In the Cathedral in Tokyo, where the English service was held, there were present the Crown Prince of Japan and the Crown Princess, as the representatives of the Emperor and Empress respectively. Besides them there were eight royal princes with their princesses, the members of the Cabinet, the chief officers of the army and navy, leading statesmen and representatives of various associations and unions, about three hundred in all. On the 20th of May, the day of the funeral, it is said that all the shops, except a few minor houses in the city of Kobe, were closed, and the whole city expressed mourning for the occasion. Would you believe that this could be where, only forty years ago, the religion of Jesus was forbidden on pain of death? A more remarkable thing than that, it seems to me, is that a memorial service was held in the largest Buddhist temple in Tokyo. The service was conducted by the High Abbot, with seventy or more priests assisting. There was a tablet for the late King placed upon the altar and worshipped by the Abbot and the other priests, as well as by the audience. I suppose King Edward is the first Christian saint ever worshipped in a Buddhist temple. This shows the Japanese regard for a great person, disregarding racial and even religious distinctions. Japan that produced Nichiren and Shinran, religious reformers, Hideyoshi and Iyeyasu, statesmen, Nakae and Ninomiya, educationists, cannot, I believe, fail to contribute Christian leaders for the future Church of Christ.

In the description of the various national and racial characteristics I have not mentioned any of their defects and errors, because, with Carlyle, I am a "firm believer in the maxim that for right judgment of any man or thing it is useful, nay essential, to see his good qualities before pronouncing on his bad."

If I had time I might say something about the Koreans and the Africans, and the people of Polynesia. I am sure they will one and all contribute something to the glory of Christ. Mr. Slater, whom I quoted before, says that "the West has to learn from the East, and the East from the West. It is no accident, but a Divine purpose, that has brought East and West together so that each may recognise the other's strength and each understand and appreciate the other's best ideals." Just as the religion of Christ triumphed over the religion of Rome, not by destroying, but by absorbing all that was valuable in the older faith, so the appropriation of all that the ancient culture of the Orient can contribute will be for the Glory of God, our Father, and of our common Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.