

way of protection against fire may be we here reproduce the picture of the San Francisco city hall before and after the fire, showing the immunity of the



THE CITY HALL OF SAN FRANCISCO AFTER THE FIRE.

top of its tower due to a tile floor which must have effectively checked the progress of the fire.

---

#### NOTES FROM JAPAN.

We learn through Professor Ernest W. Clement, who has recently been called again to the University of Tokyo, of the unusual circumstance that

three young Chinese Buddhist priests recently arrived at Yokohama for the purpose of completing their education in Japan. They were led to take this step through the influence of Admiral Togo and General Nogi, who stopped at Penang where these students were stationed while on their way to Europe to attend the English coronation ceremonies. One of the three will enter a medical school so as to become a medical missionary in his tropical home. The other two expect to study the philosophy of Buddhism and fit themselves for ecclesiastical positions.

Another item of interest gleaned from the same source is the recent conversion to Mohammedanism of Baron Hiki and his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. U. Hatano. This was the first conversion to Islam to take place in Japan. In April 1910 the *Islamic Fraternity* was established in Tokyo as an organ to represent Islam in Japan. Mr. Hatano, who was a neighbor of the editor, Mr. Barakatullah, by serving occasionally as interpreter became interested in the tenets of Mohammedanism and was especially struck by the simplicity of its creed. When he was informed that suicide was a rare occurrence among the followers of the Prophet he said (as reported in the *Islamic Fraternity*): "This is the religion for me; I will try my best to introduce it among my countrymen, to save the community from the curse of suicide, which claims thousands of victims annually from this otherwise happy land of the cherry-blossom and chrysanthemum."

A recently striking incident of the prevalence of suicide in Japan, which gives emphasis to Mr. Hatano's remark is that of the station master at Moji who killed himself to acknowledge his responsibility when the Emperor was delayed in a journey because his private car had been derailed at Moji and was not in readiness for him. Although the suicide was highly lauded by many, there are serious thinkers among the Japanese who recognize the danger to society if death is treated so lightly.

The simple ceremony of receiving these Japanese into the membership of Islam took place on December 3, 1911, and was performed by Mr. Barakatullah. "He stood facing the Caaba, Mr. Hatano in front of him, Baron Hiki at his right hand and Mrs. Hatano at his left. Then the whole assembly rose to their feet. Mr. Ibraheem Ahmad recited the last portion of the second chapter of the Koran, which deals with the creed of Islam. Then, having recited the sacred formula uttered at the time of pilgrimage Mr. Barakatullah asked Mr. Hatano to repeat the declaration of the faith in Arabic and English thrice, which he did accordingly. Following this came a short address and a few prayers in Arabic. The new brethren in the faith were then cordially greeted with a hearty shaking of hands. Baron Hiki, Mr. Hatano and Mrs. Hatano received the Muslim names of Ali, Hasan and Fatimeh respectively."

Many foreign guests were present from Turkey, India and Malay Asia, Switzerland, Germany and Austria. America was represented in this company by Prof. Philip Henry Dodge and his wife, and also by Miss Beatrice E. Lane, of New York, who less than a fortnight later became the bride of Mr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, the translator of *Ashvaghosha's Awakening of Faith*, Shaku's *Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot*, and other valuable Oriental works, and an associate for several years in the editorial department of *The Open Court*. p