

INDUSTRIALISM IN JAPAN.

By

WALTER F. FRANCE, M.A.

*(Chief S.P.G. Organizing Secretary for the Northern Province;
sometimes missionary in the Diocese of South Tokyo).*

With a Preface by

CECIL, BISHOP OF SOUTHAMPTON.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE, BY CECIL, BISHOP OF SOUTHAMPTON ...	5
CHAPTER I.	9
CHAPTER II.	36
APPENDIX	66

PREFACE.

The reading of these pages has been of keen interest, partly because I know a little of the subject matter, enough to enable me to recognize how true the picture and estimate given are to fact. But that is not all. Much of the preliminary information sketched can be found, less comprehensively and attractively set out, elsewhere; but the distinctive interest of this essay is that the interpretation of the phenomena offered is something deeper than the pious but unexplained conviction that the publication of the Christian gospel in Japan will somehow ameliorate industrial conditions.

Twenty years ago it fell to me to preside at a public debate between Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and the late Mr. St. Loe Strachey on the question of socialism versus individualism as the best basis of government. In summing up I expressed belief that whatever form of social organization we might adopt, we should only arrive at a different kind of hell, unless we could get a new sort of man to be organized. The outburst of applause which met that unsympathetic sentiment was surprising, and from both sides of the house. Deep in its heart the English West knows that man does not live by bread alone. The Japanese East is beginning to suspect the same, and that salvation is from within.

Mr. France demonstrates cogently that the tragedy of the industrial revolution in Japan is not only or mainly one of material conditions, possibly temporary, but of an internal chaos of mind and spirit which disqualifies men for battling with present experiences and still more for reforming them.