

EDITORIAL

THE earthquake disaster of September 1, 1923, with all its story of destruction, misery, and desolation, is already well known to all the world. Its results have been far-reaching, and hardly any activity, industry, or individual here in Japan but has been affected by it to a greater or less degree. *The Eastern Buddhist* is no exception to this. Our printing house in Tokyo was entirely burned out on September 1, and for some time it was impossible to get the work done elsewhere. Later it seemed desirable to wait for our regular printer to re-establish himself; for he had served us well, and moreover it is difficult to get suitable English type in Japan. As the period of waiting increased, besides other circumstances more or less connected with the earthquake disaster which also caused delay, and finally in view of the fact that there was a lack of editorial and clerical assistance, the Editors became convinced that to try to make up several numbers of *The Eastern Buddhist* in arrears besides current numbers would be a task for which they were unequal. It, therefore, seemed to them wise to cut out the numbers in arrears entirely and make a fresh start, letting Volume III begin, not with April 1923, but with April 1924. This would be a great gain in every way for the Society and Editors and no real loss to subscribers and readers. The Society has therefore decided that henceforth *The Eastern Buddhist* shall be quarterly instead of bi-monthly, and that Volume III shall start with the April-May-June, 1924, number, making No. 1 of Vol. III, follow the last number of *The Eastern Buddhist*, which was Vol. II, No. 6, March-April, 1923, issued in August 1923, and that no numbers in arrears shall be issued. We beg our subscribers to notice this decision and especially to note that Vol. III, No. 1, April, 1924, follows Vol. II, No. 6, issued in August of last year. Hereafter it is proposed and

expected that publication will go on regularly, four numbers of about 90-100 pages each, to be issued in one year. Subscribers who have already sent money for Vol. III. will have their money applied for that purpose and will receive the magazine for the full year. We ask our subscribers and exchanges to continue their faith and patience with us, to renew their subscriptions if they have not already done so and to try to interest others in the magazine. Sample copies will be freely and gladly sent to any persons likely to be interested in our magazine if names and addresses are supplied to us. We also hope that our exchanges will help us by reviewing our magazine in their columns and we shall be pleased to reciprocate in the same way. We feel that our magazine is unique in its field. We know that its appeal is not a wide one but we are anxious to come in contact with all those persons, societies, and publications that take an interest in Mahayana Buddhism. We shall feel most grateful to any persons who help us in our object.

The sympathy of the Eastern Buddhist Society is given to all the sufferers in the great disaster of the earthquake and fire of September 1, 1923. In comparison with large losses it hardly seems as if small ones should be mentioned, but our *Eastern Buddhist* has had its share in the terrible calamity. The destruction of the printing house made publication of our magazine impossible for some time and thereby greatly delayed it, the temple home at Kamakura of the Editors of this magazine was demolished and ruined, and many friends and acquaintances lost their homes and property and some even their lives. Greatly to their regret, the Editors and members of the Society have to report the death on September the first in Yokohama of one of the subscribers, of the *Eastern Buddhist*, Mr. W. D. Visser, Vice-consul of the Netherlands, who was killed in the earthquake.

Besides the terrible loss of life and property, many fine

libraries were destroyed. At the Imperial University Library in Tokyo where seven hundred thousand volumes were housed, there were many books valuable to Buddhists, many of which are now absolutely irreplaceable. The Max Müller collection, the Tibetan and the Manchurian Tripitaka were among those burned. Other fine libraries met the same fate. Many ancient Buddhist temples were burned, among them splendid edifices belonging to the Eastern and the Western Hongwanji in Tokyo. In Kamakura many historic temples were demolished, in their number one dear to the *Eastern Buddhist* Editors, Engakuji, the famous meditation temple of the Zen sect. Many temple treasures were ruined and lost.

In regard to relief work the Buddhists have been active and have contributed money, time, and energy. Reconstruction is being rapidly carried on, but much has gone forever never to be replaced.

All changes and passes away. The Buddhist principle of impermanence has been most realistically brought home to our minds. "This world is but a dew-drop world," a Buddhist poet has put it. It is indeed a world of change, the wheel of life is forever turning, and karma is working and bringing out new developments of life, and it is on these new developments that we must centre our thoughts and our hopes and not mourn too much over the past.