PART III

JAPAN
THE BEGINNINGS OF JAPANESE HISTORY
AND THE FOUNDATION OF JAPANESE CULTURE

There lies to the East a fair land girdled by blue mountains: let us make it our home. JIMMU TENNO.

I

The Japanese Islands, first called Nihon or Nippon¹ about the seventh century of our era, cover an area of some 150,000 square miles, and are largely mountainous. These facts help to explain both the complexity of the origin of the Japanese people and the unity which they early achieved in language and culture, and in their strong national spirit. For though but few of them belong to an autochthonous race, and there have been many waves of invaders, these could only come in small ships, a few at a time, and as they penetrated the mountains or spread through the valleys they were absorbed into the nation.

Their origins are even more baffling a problem than those of the Chinese. For while there are two chief types—one short and thickset with flat and broad faces, and the other taller and more slender with long, often aquiline faces—both seem to be immigrants. Before them the Ainus of Proto-Caucasian or Polynesian stock were in the field, and philological, archaeological, and other evidence suggests that they were once undisputed masters of all the Islands.

That they were driven slowly northward to their present home in Yezo is clear, for in the shell-mounds their skulls are often found side by side with those of Mongoloid type, while in caverns and elsewhere are found stone implements which improve as we follow the course of the Ainu northwards. This suggests that the invaders improved in

¹ These names, and the modern 'Japan', are variants of the Chinese Jih-pen—Source of the Sun: i.e. 'Land of the Rising Sun'.
their tool-making as they advanced. The so-called Yayoi remains—pottery, crude clay images, and weapons of stone—are of the neolithic type found in Korea and North Manchuria, while early Japanese religion had close affinity with the Shamanism of those countries.

The dominant type is certainly Mongolian,¹ the household habits are Malay:² and the summary of a modern lay-anthropologist of Japan, 'northern mother, southern father', while it is too schematic, is suggestive. For the language of the Japanese seems to be a blend of Polynesian and mainland tongues, their habits of tool-making and building are those of the Islanders, adopted and modified, and in their dolmens or burial-mounds are found not only clay models of huts of Malayan type and of men in the curious beetle-shard armour characteristic of Japan, but also metal swords, highly wrought bronze mirrors, ornaments of mainland provenance, and frescoes akin to those of Korea. Here, then, southern waves of immigrants are to be detected meeting others from the mainland, from among whom the islanders must have obtained wives. Coming in outrigger ships from great distances they cannot have brought women with them, and they would not intermarry freely with the Ainu. If we date the shell-mounds as lasting to about the first millennium B.C. and the dolmens as beginning about the fifth century B.C., we shall be approximately correct.

Their earliest history, vague as it is, is told in baffling picture-form in the old sagas of the Japanese. We read of Jimmu Tenno, the first ruler, prototype of the Tenson or dominant race, and of Susano-o, 'Lord of Violence, expelled from heaven', leader perhaps of an immigration from the mainland. But the official records belong to the eighth century A.D., and were edited and rewritten with a didactic purpose, the Kojiki—Record of Ancient Things—to establish the divine origin of the royal house, the Nihongi—Chronicle of Nihon—to adapt this early history

¹ i.e. the eyelid has the 'Mongolian fold', the skull is broad and prognathic, the hair straight. ² e.g. diet, clothing, architecture.
to Chinese models. 'The Chronicles begin with a cosmogonic myth which is clearly of Chinese origin. There follows a theogonic myth which bears a striking resemblance to Polynesian legends of the creation. In a word linguistic, literary, ethnologic, and archaeological studies all point to their mixed mainland and Polynesian origin.

To find the kernel of truth in all this myth and saga is very difficult; but we can at least learn something of the beliefs and rituals of these early peoples, and can watch their cult of tree-, animal-, and stone-worship blending with that of gods and ancestors. The national cult Shin-to, or Kami-no-michi, 'way of the gods', is here seen in the making, and out of this matrix the worship of the Imperial House is seen in process of crystallization. Their aesthetic appreciation of their new home is also seen in the names of this mythology—'land of fresh rice ears', 'land of lush plains', are their tribute to the fertility of the soil; 'princess blooming as a flowering-tree', is a name for a goddess. And their Kami, or Lords, are nature gods whose presence they find in the beautiful as well as in the useful, in the dreaded as well as in the beloved. The ruler must be related to these gods, and to whom better than the heaven-shining-august-sun-goddess? Even when he was not useful he was never allowed to be uncolourful—and his 'seed of the sun' are called hiko, sun prince, and hike, sun-princess, shining in the splendour of the unbroken succession of a natural yet divine order. Next in importance to the divine ruler is the soil of Japan, personified as the 'great earth-spirit'.

'Because the Great God heaven-shining who dwells at Ise . . . has bestowed on him the land of the Four Regions . . . therefore will the first-fruits of the soil be piled up for the god, and he, the Ruler, will enjoy the rest in peace,' says an early Harvest Ritual.

These twin-stars then of Yamato Damashii, the Soul of Japan, are seen rising in the dim dawn of her history—a passionate devotion to the Land of the Gods, as she was later to be called, and a worshipful loyalty to the living

1 Sansom, Japan, p. 21.
The myths begin with Izanagi and Izanami who, standing on the floating bridge of heaven (perhaps the rainbow), thrust down the 'jewel thunderbolt'. This is a fertility symbol, and the whole story is a kind of Adam and Eve saga. This pair may well be the prototypes of an autochthonous or very early immigrant race. They come to earth, build a house supported on a central pillar, walk ceremonially about it, and in due course give birth to islands and to gods, youngest of whom is Fire, 'the Evil Child' whose birth costs Izanami her life. She goes to the land of Yomi or Darkness. Like Orpheus, Izanagi follows her, discovers the grim realities of death and decay, and after strange adventures comes back and takes a ceremonial bath. From the tears of his left eye is born Amaterasu the sun-goddess, and from those of his right the Moon.

Here clearly is a strange farrago—but not of nonsense, as is sometimes said. It is rather a stratified account of beginnings, of early marriage-rituals, of fertility-cults, of historic migrations, of an eclipse, of meditation upon death. These pictures of the desolate sky-god and the 'evil child' may be symbols of a famine, when Mother Earth no longer yielded good offspring to the Sky-Father, and was herself burnt up in the drought.

When Izanagi seizes his great sword and kills the child, we read:

Then the blood at the sword-point gushed, and clung to many rocks, and three gods were born. . . .

The blood from the blade of the sword also gushed, and clung to many rocks, and other three gods were born. . . .

And the blood from the hilt of the sword oozed from his fingers, and other three gods were born. . . .

Three gods from each part of the great 'ten-hands' breadth sword'—what can this mean? The first three are. Dark Rain, Dark Water, and Dark Mountain: the second, Swift Fire, Fire-God, Thunder-God: the third, Rock-heaver, Rock-splitter, Rock-wielder.
The 'great sword' is in a word a vivid symbol-picture of a thunder-storm; after drought comes this creative blast from heaven, and new creatures spring into being. Here, then, is the oldest and in some ways the grandest of Japanese poem-pictures, her characteristic way of expressing ideas in puzzles of profound beauty, albeit often with a touch of the macabre and the bizarre, and the 'Soul of Japan' stands revealed. The Yamato race, however mixed to-day, are descendants of the groups here symbolized. Coming through the dread experience of a devastating famine and of fierce heat they carry with them an awful picture of Earth swooning and dying, and of Heaven itself coming at last to their rescue—after perhaps an eclipse of the sun—in the crashings and torrential rains of a tropical thunder-storm.

If this is the meaning of the myth, then it is a close parallel to the search of Íshtar for Tammuz in Babylonian lore; and in an early ritual the goddess is made to return and teach her lord that 'the Evil Child' Fire can be tamed by the God of Water, and by 'river leaves', which suggest such vegetation-gods as Attis, child of the river-god. The gourd is also mentioned—symbol in early rituals of water—and 'clay-mountain Goddess', who when married to 'the Evil Child' gives birth to the 'Young Growth God', father of the five cereals.

It is noteworthy that the first history, the first rituals and drama, the first poems of the Japanese are concerned with food, and it has ever since been the most pressing concern of a people with so small a cultivable area—depending on rain to irrigate their terraced rice-fields, desperately afraid of fire in their flimsy thatched houses, continually shaken by earthquakes. Children of Earth and Sky, of Izanagi and Izanami, the people of Yamato retain folk-tales of a great calamity which drove them to these islands: they perhaps preserve in Amaterasu a memory of some early priestess, and in that of Susano-o her brother that of the leader of an early migration.

It is possible, however, that these two are the protagonists
in a Light and Darkness myth, for she hides from him in the Rock Cave of Heaven, and is only enticed forth by a stratagem of the gods. Early ritual practised at times of an eclipse no doubt explains some of this myth: the Shinto priestess is called out from the inner shrine by the singing and dancing of the priests; and the Mirror of the Imperial Dynasty is the emblem of this early cult of the sun.

The pantomimic dances of Japanese ritual are derived from the dance of Ame-no-Uzume, the Dread Woman who kindled a fire and performed a sex-dance to tempt the sun-goddess to come forth; and her song is the beginning of Japanese enumeration—from one to ten.

With Jimmu Tenno we come more obviously to actual history, the conquest of Central Japan by a leader from the southern island of Kyushu. 'I have heard', he says in the Kojiki, 'from the sun-father of old, that in the east there is a fair land girdled by blue mountains: let us make our home there.' He sails to a point near what is now Osaka, so long to be a great centre of Japanese civilization, and meeting opposition from the islanders and from storms, he jumps into the sea and becomes a god—the Blade-Holder, Sabimochi. The other gods fight against the invaders, belching forth smoke and poisonous fumes, and so the story goes on till 'in winter on the first day of the tenth month they tasted the food of Azube, and marched on in battle array'.

Is this the memory of a festival to eat the new rice now safely harvested? All the objects and persons connected with it have the prefix Idzu, 'sacred', and again we seem clearly in the presence of ritual embodying history, in which the Ruler is organizing priest. His house of the Tenson, or aristocratic group, was to assume great honours —its members owning the land and the property of its subjects, and wielding power of life and death. While many emperors have been actually powerless, they have never ceased to be regarded as gods, and it is not only impious but also rebellious to question even the genuine antiquity of the
Royal Emblems; though it is clear that the mirror came from China during Han times.

II

Gradually from among the vague and shadowy forms of these early divine rulers, types rather than individuals, there stands forth an empress, Jingu, and her son, Ojin, who are personalities, idealized no doubt yet historic. They appear at the time of the fall of the House of Han in China, and it is noteworthy that there are many grave-objects of this period in Japan, and that our first account of the Japanese is from a Chinese historian of this date. This is Fan Kua, who, writing at the beginning of the third century of our era, records the arrival of a Japanese envoy in the first century, and says, 'The land of the Dwarfs (Wa) lies to the south-east of Korea, mountainous islands in the sea. It consists of more than a hundred states, and of these thirty or more have paid homage to the Han, since King Wu-ti conquered Chao-hsien, or North Korea. Each has an unbroken dynasty. . . . The men are tattooed on face and body according to their rank. . . . Their clothes, similar to our summer garments, are made of strips of cloth with a hole for inserting the head. . . . ' He goes on to say that they understand writing, sit in a squatting posture, use fingers to eat from wooden plates, go barefoot, and are given to intoxicating drink: that the women are faithful, greatly exceeding the men in number, and that while polygamy is practised jealousy is unknown. The men are good sailors, and practise human sacrifice to induce the gods to prosper their voyages.

China evidently regarded her island-neighbours as rather primitive savages; and the famous novel San Kuo Chih tells us that a queen, Pimiko, who had subdued the people by witchcraft, sent an embassy to pay homage to the emperor of China, and received in reply the imperial commission and seal as Queen of Jih-pen, and gifts of dragon-embroideries

\[\text{i.e. in 108 B.C. Chao-hsien is Chosen—now used for Korea.}\]
'in return for your tribute'. Pimiko is evidently Himeko, 'sun-daughter' or princess, and Korean chronicles tell us that she sent asking for help against her enemies. As to the Chinese claim that she sent tribute it embodies the stock official reply to all foreign embassies, from the Han to the end of the Manchu eras, two thousand years, and we may be sure that Himeko and her successors took it very much more seriously than did George III.

Himeko can be identified with Jingo, widow of the Emperor Chuai, who is credited with the invasion of Silla, South Korea; but who more probably sought alliances with its ruler as she did with the Chinese. She reigned from about A.D. 201 to 270, when her son Ojin succeeded her.1

A man of peace, he carried on her policy of alliances with the mainland, imported Korean scholars to teach his sons, and encouraged others to settle and impart their civilization to the islanders. His castle near Osaka on the Inland Sea stood where is now the Shrine of Hachiman, the God of War with whom he is identified: and while he remains one of the types of early ruler he is sufficiently clear-cut as an historic personage to mark a distinct era, that of the spread of Chinese and Korean civilization to Japan. Beginning with the Han it went on for another five or six hundred years, for the soul of Japan turned to China as to a lodestar—'as the birds migrate', says a Japanese historian. The Han era was indeed a pattern for much of Asia. Japanese alliances with Paikche—one of the three Korean kingdoms, brought scholars to their help: Akichi, Wani, and others whose coming marks an era in history. Now records after the Chinese style were kept, and the throne was strengthened to fit Chinese ideas, and the emperors sometimes imitated Chinese ideals.

Ojin’s son and successor Nintoku (A.D. 313–99) was a friend of the common people: he is credited with saying ‘Their poverty is our poverty, their well-being is our well-being’, and with neglecting his own palaces till his people

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1 These traditional dates are being critically studied. Prof. Kume puts Jingo about A.D. 350.
had rethatched their cottages, and he saw the smoke rising from a prosperous countryside. This looks suspiciously like an imitation of the Shun-Ideal of China; and these early rulers like those of China are credited with such long reigns—seventeen of them covering a thousand years—that we cannot accept the records without suspicion.

Whatever claims they make, these early rulers seldom behaved as Sons of Heaven should. Like many of the Han, they were weak, licentious, and cruel. Yuryaku during his short reign (457–9) turned the Court into a shambles, and the divine seed was almost exterminated in this dark period. Buretsu (499–507) was a despot, and the clans rose against him, in their turn oppressing the people. Sujun was murdered in 593 by Soga-no Umako, a devout Buddhist who had previously killed two of the princes. The Sogas and other great families emerge at this time, destined to play a great role in history, and an early picture of Takanouchi Soga, Prime Minister of the Empress Jingu, holding in his arms her infant son, is prophetic. The Nakatomi and Imabe clans who had taken part in early rituals for the sun-goddess both claimed descent from gods, and the former were almost as powerful from early days as the emperors. It was the rivalry of these proud families which ensured the success of Buddhism, for the Soga used it to score off the other clans and guilds, as in later days the Shoguns were to foster Christianity to keep the Buddhists in check. We can also see at this early date the tendency of great clan-chiefs to control the Royal Family by intermarriage and intrigue, to make puppets of the ‘descendants of the gods’, and serfs of the common people, till ‘slavery formed the backbone of the social structure’, and at last a dictator ruled as regent of a puppet Shogun, himself the regent of a puppet-emperor.

Society consisted in these early days of uji or clans, claiming the same ancestor and worshipping him as Kami or lord. Attached to each clan was a guild or be, hereditary craftsmen under an hereditary chief. Next came slaves; and these two groups were both under control of the
clan-chief—though not related to him. Here as in India we can trace a conquering group, the Yamato, at work organizing the rest to suit their convenience. From such clan-chiefs came the emperor and the great lords through whom in theory he exercised his powers, and gradually a hierarchical society emerges, emperors and great lords, O-omi, his ministers, territorial officials, O-muraji, local chiefs and guild heads, then the ‘good people’ ryomin, and lastly the serfs, or ‘base people’. ‘In short’, says Sansom, ‘the social and political organizations were one, since the administrative hierarchy corresponded, at least ideally, with the gradations of nobility.’

But great barons seldom behave as they should: there were early rivalries in which the throne itself was threatened, and even emperors were murdered if they stood in the way of an ambitious family.

The picture of early society in Japan is, in fact, a dark one: morality is largely a matter of tabus, and religion of ritual cleanness. The people groan under arrogant chiefs, and many are serfs: justice is a farce, and strangers are regarded as unclean.

Confucian ideals, slowly seeping in with teachers and immigrant families, are not constraining enough to reform society. On the other hand women seem to play a leading role: some Chinese speak of Jih-pen as the ‘Queen Country’, others note the devotion of women to their polygamous husbands, and the great respect paid by the Semmin to their lords, and say that litigation is rare and theft unknown.

Early rituals of purification make much of sins such as murder and incest, but also of the defilement of the sex-act and of childbirth.

The national cult is that of nature-gods and national heroes. It is called Kami-no-michi—The Way of the Lords—and this was later translated into Chinese Shin-to (Shen-tao). This cult is one of gratitude to ancestors who are gods, and to gods who are ancestors; it is a cult not of

1 Japan, p. 37.
fear but of confidence. Japan is 'the land of the gods': they will help and protect their people. This cult called for an awareness of unseen presences, but not for any philosophical concept of the One behind the Many, and it helped to develop the imaginative rather than the rational powers of the people; and to feed their patriotism as well as their native aestheticism.

At the heart of it was sun-worship; for Amaterasu, the ancestress of the royal house, is a sun-goddess; and the imperial regalia represent mirror, jewel, and sword—sun, moon, and lightning. For the rest we may trace the growth of fertility rituals and of oracles, and the emergence of a clan of 'abstainers'—the Imabe, who guarded the ritual and insisted on purity among the worshippers, and of another clan of liturgists, the Nakatomi, who were soon to become all-powerful.

It was these families which, as we have seen, objected to the introduction of foreign gods. The Soga clan on the other hand was opposed to the powerful alliance of the conservatives, and advocated giving Buddhism a trial. Its head Soga Iname was appointed Chief-Chieftain, O-omi, in 536; and he had vast power, marrying his daughter to a prince of the blood-royal, and beginning a long process of feudal dominance.

To him the emperor handed over a Korean image of the Buddha, and when an epidemic followed, the rival clans insisted that it be thrown into a canal. But Umako Soga, the son of Iname, was convinced that these rivals were getting out of hand, insisted that Japan needed the new religion and culture, and took orderly steps to introduce it, till, towards the end of the sixth century, it was rooted in Japanese soil—the Korean kingdoms vying with one another to foster its growth.

The other clans continued their opposition and even persecuted the religious, but Yomei was at once Buddhist and Shintoist, and after the murder of his successor Sujun by Umako, a devout empress, Suiko, came to the throne and Yomei's young son, Umayado (572–621), ruled as
Regent. To this great man, known to history by his posthumous title Shotoku—Sage Virtue—Japan looks as the Father of her civilization. He is the true founder of Japanese Buddhism, and the patron of those rich arts and crafts which have made her a land of artificial as well as of natural beauty.

If she is Greek in her hills and bays, her mountains and woods, she is Greek also in her love of beauty, and in her genius in choosing and adapting what she has needed from the mainland peoples. Her spirit is at once strong and delicate, the influence perhaps of Malay and Korean blood respectively, and at the heart of her culture are the ideals of purification, of physical cleanliness and ritual rightness, and of the importance of fertility and virility.

This blend of the aesthetic and the procreative is perhaps the key to the understanding of the Japanese. Utilitarian in all things, they have seldom ignored the claims of beauty. And if Japan has never risen to the clarity and balance of Greece she has shown real genius in selection and simplification.

In marked contrast to the primitive conditions of fifth-century Japan are the advanced cultures of Wei and Sui China and of the Three Kingdoms of Korea, and there was much to adopt and adapt.

We need only mention such paintings as those of Ku K’ai-chih and the philosophy, poetry, and sculpture of Han and Wei to remind ourselves how much China had to teach her neighbours. There was, too, the whole classical culture of Chou and of Buddhism.

These had civilized Korea, whose tomb-paintings, vivid and harmonious in colour and graceful in design, are followed by great bronze bells of intricate workmanship, and by such masterpieces of sculpture as those of the cloistered cave of Sokulan—strong and rugged Lohan, gracious Bodhisattvas; and the bronze figure of Miroku or Maitreya in the Museum of Seoul. Archaic in its simplicity it reveals mastery of technique and spiritual genius.

Architecture too had reached a great height—palaces
with tiled roofs and wooden pillars with heavy brackets supporting them; whereas in Japan even the great families lived in wooden huts with thatched roofs and projecting cross beams, of which the great shrines at Ise are perhaps a glorified modification, and the little clay models in the tombs exact copies.

These arts Korea was now to send to Japan with her Buddhist missions, and Japan was prepared by slow infusion of Korean culture to seize her gifts with eager hands and to develop her own native genius. In both adoption and adaptation Shotoku showed true genius.

But with this great man one era ends and another begins. A nation which can produce such a leader is no longer primitive; and Japanese history after the primitive period (600 B.C.—A.D. 400) falls into the following epochs:

1. An epoch of the transition, as the mainland cultures are introduced and slowly naturalized: c. 400–640.
2. The Nara epoch—a golden age of Buddhist culture, and of the transformation of the mainland civilization to suit the Japanese: 7th to 9th centuries.
3. The Heian epoch—marked by domination of aristocratic families; the classical age of Japanese literature with Kyoto as capital: 9th to 13th centuries.
4. The Kamakura epoch—marked by the rise of feudalism in the warrior classes, the coming of Zen Buddhism, and a new virility.
5. The Muromachi epoch—15th to 17th centuries—Dark Ages, with alleviations in cultural life.
6. The Tokugawa epoch—an era of strong central rule and of the spread of culture among the masses: 17th century to mid-19th.

The history of Japan has many affinities and parallels with that of England. The two island peoples were built up by many invading groups: their position at once isolated them politically from the mainland, and made them culturally dependent upon it; and their characteristic
national institutions emerge as this influence comes to its full strength.

In both lands feudalism plays a long and leading role with its sacrifice of 'lower' to 'higher' classes, its military organization, its twin pillars of great churchmen and great overlords, its contrasts of splendour and sordid poverty, its blend of barbarism and culture.

Nor is there much truth in the old distinction between a static orient and a dynamic occident, at any rate so far as Japan is concerned. Trevelyan's description of mediaeval England is largely true of the Japan of the same era—from about the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries. It is a scene of progress through much suffering and many vicissitudes, of life intense, if often brutal: 'out of uniformity into variety; out of feudal cosmopolitanism into national monarchy; out of a hegemony of the priesthood into lay emancipation; out of the rule of the knight into the world of the craftsman, the capitalist and the yeoman'. So the modern era comes to each island people—after incredible victory over redoubtable foes. The armadas of Kublai Khan and of Philip are scattered by bravery and by 'an act of God'; 'God blew and the enemy was scattered', was the paean of both nations; and a new era dawns, ushering in a new world, a strange blend of piracy and patriotism, and a great efflorescence prepares each nation to play its part on the international stage, and to give back mainland cultures assimilated and incredibly changed. Their relation to the sea, at first 'passive and receptive', becomes 'active and acquisitive'. If the spirit of the island-peoples is akin in their hatred of tyranny or dictation from abroad it is also akin in discipline at home, and the differences are largely to be found in those between Buddhist and Christian institutions. For while both peoples make a religion of nationalism both often recognize a larger loyalty—and this is simpler for Japan than for England: Buddhism, though an international religion, making no ultramontane claims, and no attempt to interfere with emperor-worship.

The Japanese, cleaving to the myth of their 'divine
seed’, like the English cleaving to that of a king who is divinely appointed head of the Church, have known at once how to reverence and to rule their rulers, and if Japan very slowly learns parliamentary methods of doing this she too discovers the other technique of doing it through great ministers of state. These become constitutional rulers in the seventeenth century after a period in many things reminding us of Tudor England. The rich pageant of the Middle Ages passes—baron and abbot, monk and friar, henchman and outlaw, castle and abbey and hovel, scholar and man of war despising scholarship, artist and strolling minstrel—ruthless deeds and their expiation in pilgrimage and mass and endowment—all this gives place to another scene while preserving many of the old landmarks and conserving much of the old spirit. As the Tudors guide England from one age to the next with crafty conservatism and daring innovation, so the Shoguns lead Japan.

In both the invention of cannon shatters the power of feudal castles, that of printing the authority of clerical or official prestige; and a new and cultured middle class pushes its way through—between lord and serf, as between exploiting cleric and gaping peasantry.

If Henry VIII smashed the wonder-working relics and shrines, Hideyoshi, more temperate, made new images out of the weapons of the people—telling them with irony that he was securing their welfare in both worlds. Neither Tudors nor Shoguns were irreligious: but they knew how to use religion to foster national growth, and if we find Henry VIII coquetting with Protestantism while he burns Protestants, we find Hideyoshi coquetting with Catholicism and burning Catholics, and Nobunaga playing off Catholics against Buddhists in a similar burst of anti-clericalism. The Japanese are like the English, at once religious and impatient of priestcraft, respecting religion and using it. They are too, at once utilitarian and aesthetic, and their museums, like ours, are full of ugly things of historic interest and lovely things treasured for their beauty. So the visitor may learn much of their rich and colourful
history in places like Nara, their Canterbury, and Tokyo, their London, as well as in their remoter shrines on Koya and Hiei, or their country villas like the Phoenix Hall and the Golden Pavilion of Kyoto; and in museums the printed book and the wood-block tell of a growing mass-education side by side with Buddhist manuscripts and great scrolls of historic and almost epic interest. Here, too, is the stirrup of the giant monk Benkei and there the tea cup of a Fujiwara or the fan of a Tokiyori: here the edict of a Shogun condemning Christians to the cross, and side by side with it the crucifix on which they were bidden to trample, and the cannon which the Protestant skippers taught Japan to make in preparation for the fleets of Spain and Portugal. It is interesting to remember that Ieyasu and Shakespeare died in the same year. The saying: 'Nobunaga made the fire: Hideyoshi cooked the meal: Tokugawa ate it' may be aptly applied to the Tudor Henrys and Elizabeth.

THE SPIRIT OF EARLY JAPAN

I. From an Early Ritual

Give ear, all ye Imperial Princes, Ministers of State, and high functionaries, who are here assembled, and hearken to the great purification by which at this interlune of the sixth month are purged and washed away all sins which may have been committed by Imperial officials and attendants—whether they wear the scarf (women) or the shoulder strap (stewards); whether they bear on their back the bow, or gird on them the sword.

Of yore, our Imperial ancestors who dwell in the plain of high heaven, summoned to an assembly the eight hundred myriads of deities, and held divine counsel with them. And they gave command, saying, 'Let our August Grandchild hold serene rule over the land of fair rice-ears—the fertile reed-plain'. But in the land thus delivered to him there were savage deities. These they chastised with a divine chastisement, and expelled with a divine expulsion. Moreover, the rocks, trees, and leaves of grass which had the power of speech, were silenced. Then they dispatched him downward from his celestial, everlasting throne, cleaving as he went with an awful way-cleaving the many-piled clouds of heaven. Here at the middle point of the
land entrusted to him, in Yamato, the High Sun Land, the August
Grandchild established his peaceful rule and built a fair palace,
basing deep on the nethermost rock the massy pillars, and upraising
to high heaven the timbers of the roof wherewithal to shelter him
from sun and sky.

II. A Pre-Buddhist Code

If there be any of our number who are unkind to parents, or neg­
lectful or disobedient, we will not conceal it or condone it, but will
report it . . .

We shall require children to respect their parents, servants to obey
their masters, husbands and wives and brothers and sisters to live
together in harmony, and the younger people to revere and to cherish
their elders. . . . Each kumi (group of five households) shall carefully
watch over the conduct of its members, so as to prevent wrongdoing.

If any member of a kumi, whether farmer, merchant, or artisan,
is lazy, and does not attend properly to his business, the ban-gashira
(chief officer) will advise him, warn him, and lead him into better
ways. If the person does not listen to this advice, and becomes angry
and obstinate, he is to be reported to the toshiyori (village elder). . . .

When men who are quarrelsome and who like to indulge in late
hours away from home will not listen to admonition, we will report
them. If any other kumi neglects to do this, it will be part of our
duty to do it for them. . . .

All those who quarrel with their relatives, and refuse to listen to
their good advice, or disobey their parents, or are unkind to their
fellow-villagers, shall be reported (to the village officers). . . .

Dancing, wrestling, and other public shows shall be forbidden.
Singing- and dancing-girls and prostitutes shall not be allowed to
remain a single night in the mura (village).

Quarrels among the people shall be forbidden. In case of dispute
the matter shall be reported. If this is not done, all parties shall be
indiscriminately punished. . . .

Speaking disgraceful things of another man, or publicly posting
him as a bad man, even if he is so, is forbidden.

Filial piety and faithful service to a master should be a matter of
course; but when there is any one who is especially faithful and
diligent in these things, we promise to report him . . . for recom­
modation to the government. . . .

As members of a kumi we will cultivate friendly feeling even
more than with our relatives, and will promote each other's
happiness, as well as share each other's griefs. If there is an unprin-
cipled or lawless person in a kumi, we will all share the responsibility
for him.

The above are samples of the moral regulations only: there were even more minute regulations about other
duties—for instance:

When a fire occurs, the people shall immediately hasten to the
spot, each bringing a bucketful of water, and shall endeavour, under
direction of the officers, to put the fire out. . . . Those who absent
themselves shall be deemed culpable.

When a stranger comes to reside here, enquiries shall be made as
to the mura whence he came, and a surety shall be furnished by
him. . . . No traveller shall lodge, even for a single night, in a house
other than a public inn.

News of robberies and night attacks shall be given by the ringing
of bells or otherwise; and all who hear shall join in pursuit, until the
offender is taken. Any one wilfully refraining, shall, on investiga-
tion, be punished.

III. Letter from the King of Kudara
(one of the provinces of Korea) to the emperor Kimmei in A.D. 552.

This teaching (dharma) is the most excellent of all teachings. It
is hard to understand and very hard to master; even K'ung Fu-tse
could not grasp it. But it brings infinite and immeasurable fruits to
the believer, even to final enlightenment (bodhi). Just as the chi-
tamani jewel is said to give inexhaustible wealth to its possessor, so
the treasure of this glorious law never ceases to give assurance to
those who seek for it. Moreover, it has come to Korea from far-off
India, and the peoples of the countries lying between these two are
now all its supporters.
XIV
THE ASUKA AND NARA AGES—
AN ERA OF ADAPTATION

The Ruler is master of the people—the officials he appoints are his vassals.

SHOTOKU.

I

The Nara epoch should be studied with that of Suiko or Asuka (593–645) if the transformation of Japan under mainland influences is to be understood. This transformation becomes articulate with Umayado—the Prince Regent known to history by his posthumous title Shotoku—Sage Virtue—and continues to the end of the Nara Age. He was born in A.D. 552, and became a Buddhist at sixteen—as ardent a convert as Asoka, with whom he is often compared. Like Asoka he was a wise and far-sighted statesman as well as the father of a civilization and the prophet of a religious reformation. He wisely gauged the tendencies of his time, and encouraged the already active process of sinification. But he had the genius to see that the mainland cultures must be naturalized, and to choose with unerring judgement those Buddhist books and Confucian ideals which could be best used to weld the State together, and to foster a spirit of service. Like Asoka he also encouraged the older religion of his people, and gave to them a code of moral maxims which were of universal application.

Shotoku stands, in fact, midway between the old Japan and the new—at once product and creator of a great movement.

Let us look first at his Code of Seventeen Articles—‘a useful key to contemporary sentiment’. First is struck the note of harmony—those above must be well ordered, those below well disposed. The second article teaches reverence for the Three Jewels of Buddhism. Here, then, Confucian and Buddhist ideals are put side by side and related to one another: Confucian harmony is to be achieved by Buddhist
devotion. The third article sets forth the Chinese theory of kingship, and the fourth the complementary view of the duties of the governed. Li—decorum—is the key-word. Then come warnings against the temptations which beset officials: gluttony, venality, flattery, nepotism, idleness, bad faith, bad temper, pride, laxity, extortion—these are attacked, and their opposite virtues enjoined. For the rest officials are reminded that they are not necessarily right nor others wrong; that they should consult one another, and that they are only to exact forced labour at certain seasons. ‘Hidden within these apparently harmless exhortations . . . is a new view of the state . . . a centralized state in which the ultimate power resides in the Emperor, and is exercised through his functionaries.’

These articles reveal Shotoku as a shrewd ruler as well as a wise synthetist. But the lot of the peasantry was still hard, and even his own special creation—the College of Horiuji—was built like its successors at great cost to the masses, and for centuries to come owned large bodies of slaves. This is but one of his ambitious foundations which aimed at spreading the gospel of Buddhism, and of epitomizing its culture. That of Shi-tenno-ji—the Four Heavenly Guardians—can still be traced in the great industrial city of Osaka on the Inland Sea. It was at once a temple, an orphanage, an art-school, and a hostelry for the stranger and the aged.

But the genius of Shotoku is best seen in Horiuji, which after thirteen centuries stands serene and perfect in its setting of low hills and dark trees—the most venerable wooden building in existence. As one enters by a tiled gateway, guarded by the grim figures of armed titans, and finds oneself in a sanded courtyard, one gets a strong and vivid impression of an immemorial peace. Here are the exquisite little gardens and villas of abbot and teachers, and beyond rises the Kondo, or Golden Hall, with its massive Korean roof and its low wooden pillars, silver-grey with age. This and the storied pagoda remain to tell us

1 Sansom, *Japan*, p. 72.
AN ERA OF ADAPTATION

of the original group,\(^1\) and within are treasured Korean, Chinese, and primitive Japanese statues and paintings which make this the most interesting museum in Asia. It is indeed a Museum of all Asia; for on the walls of the Hondo are frescoes which speak of Ajanta but also of Turkistan, and on the altars are images which tell of Wei Tartar influences upon Chinese and Korean art, and even of Greek and Sasanian prototypes. The great bronze triad on the main altar with its stylized drapery is akin to the Wei statuary of Lung-men; the little clay figures in the Pagoda are of T'ang provenance; the exquisite tall Kwannon in Shotoku's octagonal 'Hall of Dreams', the Yumedono, is Korean, and the painting of Shotoku as a child is early Japanese, but influenced by the great Wu Tao-tse of China. Here too is preserved a robe of Shotoku, and a ewer, both of Sasanian design; and a manuscript of his on the Lotus Scripture is amongst the imperial treasures, as is a portrait of the Regent and his sons—attributed to the Korean prince, Asa.

As a scholar Shotoku achieved great distinction—revealing a real understanding of Chinese and Indian thought; himself a disciple of Nagarjuna he showed great insight in choosing the 'Lotus' as the best expression of the new evangel. For it is universal in its appeal, and easy to understand; and its parables and apocalypses are popular and picturesque. The Shoman-kyo, which tells of the ideal Buddhist queen, Srimala, and the Yuima-kyo which tells of a great Buddhist layman, are the other works he popularized, himself preaching and expounding these themes to devout audiences. The arcana of the faith he seems wisely to have left to priests of the Hosso Sect, which lives on fitfully at Horiiji, and still expounds with subtle commentary the eight scrolls of the Lotus.

Shotoku is not only the father of Japanese Buddhism: he is worshipped as an incarnation of the compassionate Kwannon whose lovely image in the little nunnery of Chuguij (once his mother's home) is attributed to him—

\(^1\) Probably destroyed by fire in 670 and rebuilt in the same style in 708.
a vision of other-worldly calm and detachment. It is more likely a later image of Miroku—the coming Buddha. Shotoku is also regarded as the patron saint of art, and the founder of the Japanese Constitution. 'The Sovereign', he says, 'is Lord of the people, and the officials whom he appoints are his vassals.' Shotoku, in short, is the Father of Japan. He found anarchy and darkness, and he left order and light. He found a people just emerging from barbarism, and he led them with consummate wisdom and industry into ways of high culture, and into the paths of peace. He began a process of centralization which came to its fruition a century later; and an adaptation of things Chinese and Korean which flowered in the classical age of Heian. When Shotoku died in A.D. 621, his main tasks unfinished, 'sun and moon were darkened', and a grateful nation mourned its greatest benefactor.

Before the foundation of Nara in 710 Shotoku’s reforms were carried farther by several rulers, coins were minted from copper discovered in 708, trade with Korea and China throve, and the Fujiwara began to assert their power over the State. A dictatorship was indeed needed: for the Uji or clan-chiefs were turbulent, and dynastic succession was often decided by war.

II

The Nara Age is one of triumph for Buddhism and for the Fujiwara clan, and also one of a growing scholarship. A Confucian university throve side by side with a great Buddhist cathedral, both foci of a city copied from Chang-an, both enjoying imperial patronage. It is an age of Japanese poetry, and of growing mastery of Chinese arts. But lack of a Japanese script and inadequate understanding of Chinese hamper the processes of growth. The Nara Age is known to the Japanese as 'the age of gold and poetry'. But it began with a period of blood and iron—of dynastic intrigues, abdications forced and voluntary, the malign influence of monks and barons, even murder of royal persons.
MAITREYA BODHISATTVA
AT CHUGUJI
(Seventh Century)
The myth of the divine emperor and of the unbroken dynasty is not supported by the facts. Made implicitly by Shotoku this arrogant claim becomes explicit in the proclamation put into the mouth of the boy-emperor Mommu at his accession in 697. 'In performing the task of the Exalted Throne and in succession to the Sun in Heaven' he is 'God manifest in the flesh, to rule over The Land of Many Islands—that there may be an unending succession of august rulers, beginning in the High Plain of Heaven'.

Such is the prototype of all such proclamations, and the emperor of Japan still reports all important policies to his divine ancestors. As Sansom points out, here is a theory of sovereignty quite at variance with that of China—and, we may add, with the lives of many emperors.

Nor have the feudal lords of Japan hesitated for a thousand years to overshadow their liege. For six reigns Fujiwara Fuhito—prototype of Japan's 'elder statesman' and son of Kamatari (d. 669) who founded the potent Fujiwara house—dominated the rulers 'by marriage, re-marriage, and inter-marriage'. Father-in-law of two emperors, he was in due course grandfather of a third; yet he kept judiciously in the background, and worked through the women of the Court, advising abdication, setting up a minor, and intriguing with the genius of a Chinese eunuch. These tactics his family kept up for several centuries—yet they did Japan good service in many ways, and balanced the growing power of Buddhist abbots, whom many empresses favoured, and whose monastic houses grew rich on gifts of land exempt from taxation, and of slaves whom they began to turn into armed retainers. One monk, Dokyo, became the paramour of the Empress Koken, and even aimed at seizing the throne, playing upon her infatuation and superstition. Yet the age saw great advances in art and in political theory; it is one of the slow naturalization of Chinese and Korean culture on Japanese soil. 'If the Japanese mastered somewhat painfully and slowly the elements of Chinese culture their hearts leaped to welcome all its beauty.'
This culture came in three great waves—that of the Wei Tartars and the Sui Dynasty of China (A.D. 386–551) and of their contemporaries in Korea; that of the efflorescence of T’ang (618–906); and that of the renaissance of Sung (twelfth century). It is with the two former that we are now concerned.

At first the Japanese took with eager hands, and soon naturalized this Tartar art, making it more delicate and at the same time more robust. But the second wave, that of the consummate art of T’ang, set in before they had completed the task, and they cannot be said to have improved upon their teachers, who are indeed supreme artists.

If we now consider in detail the masterpieces of Horiuji we shall see that the architecture of the Kondo is Korean, but already has a Japanese touch in the entasis of the columns and the curves of the soaring roofs. The great triad by Tori the sculptor that stands upon its main altar is Wei Tartar in inspiration, but has a peculiarly architectonic quality in its pyramidal form—and the archaic wooden figure of Maitreya at the little nunnery of Chuguji is an exquisite expression of Japanese devotion, timeless and universal in its appeal, at once remote from the world, and full of compassion for men. How well the sculptor has understood the inner spirit of Buddhism, and with what consummate art he has combined realism with idealism. With what a delicate touch the architect has set his buildings into the landscape of low hills and dark woods. These—Kondo, pagoda, and statues—are usually accepted as works of the Akusa or Suiko era. For comparison with them we may choose from the early Nara Age the Yakushiji pagoda—built in 680, but removed to Nara in 718: the bronze image of Yakushi, Buddha of Healing, on its altar, and the murals of Horiuji.1

The pagoda is marked by greater grace and freedom than its prototype, and towers up to a lovely finial of bronze angels and heavenly musicians, whose flowing garments and scarves form a flaming nimbus.

1 The Musée Guimet has good copies.
TORI BUSSIHI TRIAD
HORIUJI
TAMAMUSHI SHRINE
The Yakushi triad is also an immense advance upon that of Horiuji—made of a deep black bronze and ‘perfect in the flow of its curved surfaces and the justness of its proportions’. The frescoes are also by a master hand, and are closely related to those alike of Ajanta and of Tun-huang, outlined in flowing red line upon the walls of the Kondo. Here are the other-worldly reverie and grace of India, the rich jewellery of Sanchi and Barhut, the straight Aryan nose, but here also the double arch of the Turkic mouth and moustache—the more stylized grouping and modelling of Khotan. If these great figures are by a Japanese hand it is that of an apt pupil who is also a master.

During the Nara period then it was T'ang China—the China of T'ai-tsung and Ming-huang—which dominated the mind and spirit of Japan. If the triad of Horiuji is of Wei Tartar provenance, and the Yumedono Kwannon is Korean, that of Yakushiji, made about a century later, is essentially T'ang. Yet it is a Japanese masterpiece, and the sculptor has made amazing progress not only in the splendid black patina of his figures, but also in their calm and serene beauty, and in the grace of their clinging robes. Here too Guptan elegance is seen in the long straight limbs and in the jewelled necklace and girdle, while below are dwarfs or goblins, or aboriginal negritos. 'From these varied elements, Greek, Indian, Chinese—there soon emerges a truly Japanese sculpture which in its expression of grace, of moral beauty and of strength, attained classic form almost at a bound.'

During the first half of the era relations with China were much closer than we should expect, when we remember the dangers and difficulties of the sea-passage. Not only political embassies but cultural missions continued; and such scholars as Kibi-no Makibi, who left for China in 717, were careful students of her civilization. He returned in 734, and was made President of the University of Nara, where he lectured on the Chinese classics. Many Buddhist monks too—we have records of over seventy—went to

China as the Chinese of an earlier day to India, to study under the Masters of the Law who carried on the work of Fa Hian and Hiuen Chang, and many remained in China for long periods, mastering much besides Buddhist lore. By the eighth century, then, Chinese civilization was understood and intelligently imitated in Japan, in spite of the barriers of sea and of language, by a growing number of leaders, and Chinese ideals of kingship and of scholarship, of family life and of guild organization, of art and craftsmanship, were being blended with the more primitive ways of Japan, or were replacing them.

The Chinese love of classification, too, was making itself felt, and vague ideals of morality were made articulate and codified. Chinese learning, in a word, was introduced. But ‘the Japanese failed in borrowing the greatest of all Chinese institutions, to take over its essence, which was a respect for learning coupled with a desire for its spread’. The old feudalism persisted, and no village boy could become prime minister as in China.

Yet much of Chinese culture fitted well into that of the Japanese. We need only instance the ideals of the Throne as representing Heaven, and of the family as the unit of society. And if Japan could assimilate much of the Confucian pattern, she grasped even more eagerly at the ideals of Buddhism and at its aesthetic expressions. In Japan as in China we find a new sense of the importance of the individual, a new other-worldliness, new visions of Buddhas and their Paradises, new ideals of compassion.

When the capital—modelled on Ch‘ang-an—was built at Nara, its chief structure was a vast Buddhist cathedral, Todaiji, which took seven years to complete (745–52), and stood in a great park two square miles in area.

This is the age of Tempyo (725–94); and between it and the Suiko Age comes that of Haku-ho (645–725), also an age of borrowing and adaptation.

If Yakushiji is its masterpiece, that of Tempyo was the Todaiji and its vast Buddha Vairochana—the Sun Buddha

1 Sansom, Japan, p. 109.
FIERCE AND GENTLE POWERS ON BUDDHIST ALTARS AT NARA
of the ‘Lotus’ and other fully-developed Mahayana texts. On its Lotus-throne and vast halo are incised the fair forms of Bodhisattvas of whom two are here illustrated, and the whole vast cathedral was planned as a microcosm with the sun at its centre, symbol of the indwelling Buddha—source of light and life. It was the work of Gyogi, and a later Japanese artist has admirably reconstructed the gorgeous scene of its dedication when the eyes were painted in the ‘life-giving’ ritual, three years after the emperor Shomu had gone into a monastery. He has come back to his court for the great occasion and is standing in T'ang costume before the vast Lotus-throne: behind him, rank upon rank, are the courtiers and officials with their insignia, and on a level with him are seated the great monks Gyogi and Bodhisena with shaven heads and rich brocades from the looms of the mainland and India. Behind them are ordered lines of monks chanting the slokas of Buddhist devotion—new forms of old sun-worship very well suited to Japanese ideas. They have passed down long avenues of giant trees, and between the decorated screens now preserved in the treasury of Nara. Before them the slow posturing of solemn dance and the other-worldly notes of pipe and lute tell of the long journey of Buddhism, and of the synthesis of many cultures, and masked actors solemnly pacing, remind all, courtier and monk and emperor, of the transiency of human pomp.

Many of these masks and instruments are preserved in the Shosoin—a simple log-cabin to house such treasures. On a lovely black lute inlaid with silver and gold are three musicians seated under a tree, and the very Confucian inscription:

Notes of the lute purify the mind,
As the calm of uprightness comes o'er it.
Peace prevails, vulgarity flees, lewdness departs,
Joy and harmony are in right and moderation.

But luxury prevailed at a Court eagerly imitating the splendours of Ch'ang-an as Nara imitated its general plan and its massive architecture. Here to-day one may see not only
drugs, which tell a long story of Egyptian medicine, coming first to Greece and then to India and the Far East, but also the choice celadons of China and the bird-like goblets of Persia.

These works of art belong to the middle of the eighth century. They are the possessions of Shomu, collected as a memorial by his widow, and preserved ever since with loving care. The visitor may see them when they are given their yearly airing, and they are indeed a veritable epitome of a cultivated age, numbering three thousand pieces, and worthy of a large museum. Of Tempyo works we may mention not only the majestic cathedral, but such classical figures as the Brahma of our illustration which stands in the Lotus Hall, Greek in its long severe lines, Indian in its attitude of worship, Chinese in head-dress and shoes—but an authentic work of Japanese genius in its blending of idealism and realism. The same qualities are found in great portrait statues of the powerful monks of Nara: nowhere except in ancient Egypt is there such a vivid impression of calm authoritative power, and we can easily understand the conflict which arose between these lords spiritual and the great secular barons. Both were patrons of art and learning. The best picture of this age belongs to Yakushiji; it is a rendering of the Goddess of Beauty, Kichi-jo-ten, wonderful in colour and harmony of line. The Japanese love of nature is revealed in the animals, birds, and landscapes which are used to decorate mirrors and musical instruments, and here in a word is the fountain-head of Japanese civilization. On a sixfold screen of this time are fine paintings of women under trees, and here too, realism is at work. They are strangely different from the tall, slim, hieratic goddesses of Korea and Asuka, and resemble T'ang court ladies in their flowing draperies such as are found in the frescoes of Turkistan. They are very interesting to the student of the rich life of this age—an age of luxury and elegance, when Japan tries to outshine the splendours of Ch'ang-an, and it is fashionable to write Chinese lyrics and to play Chinese music.

1 In November—a relatively dry month in Japan.
BRAHMA IN ANJALI POSE
(HORIUJI)
EARLY JAPANESE PAINTING OF AN INDIAN GOD IN CHINESE ROBE (NARA)
In 751 was published the Kaifuso—an anthology of poems in Chinese style, which gradually give place to the shorter lyric epigrams of Japan, notes of a passing mood or impression in five or three lines each. Other anthologies begin to vie in quantity but not in quality with those of China. The Manyoshu, ‘bundle of ten thousand leaves’, is the most famous, and Hitomaru, who died in 737, may be compared with Lipo in his love of nature and his praise of court beauties. But his poems and those of his age have their own qualities—extreme brevity and vivid impressionism, and though poetry is at present a hobby of scholar and court lady, it is before many centuries to become a national pastime. To trace the spread of such arts among the masses is one of the most interesting tasks of the historian. This is a typical poem by Hitomaru:

The sky is a sea, where the clouds move shiplike,
The moon is a galleon, sailing to the stars.

Akahito is another nature-lover, in whom a poignant sense of the transiency of the world, which is essentially Buddhist, plays delicately upon the native Japanese delight in Nature:

A fine spring day—no frost nor wind;
But thou, fair flower, fadest fast in death.

These are typical poems chosen by Monsieur Grousset from the tenth-century Kokinshu, whose editor Tsurayuki says, ‘the song of the nightingale, the croaking of the frog, are themselves poems: all that lives breathes poetry and sings its song’.

III

Nor is this age less remarkable for its political achievements and social readjustments. The process of centralization begun by Shotoku was carried on by the Emperors Tenchi (662–71), Shomu (724–49), and others, and a series of reforms and codes reveals Japan in the throes of adapting Chinese legislation to fit her national needs, and her different social structure. Here too the
Japanese are emerging from apprenticeship. In 646 the Taikwa Reform instituted a new system of land tenure and of taxation. Both involved in theory the transfer to the central authority of ownership and jurisdiction which had been held by the territorial gentry. It was an application to Japan of the system then in operation in the T'ang Empire. But despite various revisions Chinese institutions could not be made to fit the very different social theory of the Japanese, whose strong feudal sense was behind the clans. These were still largely independent, even if in theory they held their lands in 'fief' from the emperor. Nor could 'officials' of the Chinese type replace these feudal lords. Chinese education might be imitated, might even in theory provide an official career for a village boy: it did not in reality change the hierarchical structure of Japan. What the Reform really accomplished was a redistribution of economic power, and a more uniform system of taxation. The land was now in theory the property of the emperor, but it was redistributed amongst the cultivators according to the number of their households, and for this purpose a census was taken. Rent was paid in rice, and there was also a corvée and a produce-tax on commodities other than rice. Certain official and temple lands were exempt, and thus began a long process of enrichment which made both monastic houses and clans unduly powerful. For them the masses toiled, and military service as well as forced labour bore heavily upon them.

In 702 the Taiho (Great Treasure) was formulated, a code which, though based on Chinese models, actually gave all the high offices, not to successful candidates in examinations, but to the existing feudal lords. So old abuses were perpetrated, and for a thousand years great families overshadowed the throne. To build up the growing national sentiment the Kojiki—or Records of Ancient Things—was compiled in 712. Dealing largely with mythology, these records read back into early days the conditions of Nara, and attempt to reconcile conflicting traditions, and to edit all in consonance with Chinese ideas. Written
in archaic Japanese mixed with Chinese, they embody ancient poems and seek to make 'edifying history' out of them, to support imperial claims, to connect the two cults of emperor and of nature, and to make all this fit into a framework of Chinese cosmogony. This work was completed in 712, but is the achievement of the era as a whole.

The Nihongi, completed a few years later, carries the process farther; it begins in Chinese fashion: 'Of old time, before Heaven and Earth were separated, before the Yin and the Yang parted', attributing to Heaven (Chinese T'ien) the conduct of affairs, and putting Chinese edicts and speeches into the mouths of Japanese rulers.

In other words, the long history of the Japanese imperial cult is now being rationalized, and the islands are playing the assiduous pupil to China, which under the Suí and T'ang is a worthy teacher—if not of morals yet of luxurious and elegant arts and learning.

Tenchi (662–71) established schools for the study of Chinese classics, history, mathematics, and law—a quadrivium akin to that of mediaeval Europe. Their aim was, as in China, to train officials, but in Japan only young nobles were admitted. Kwammu, before he became emperor in 782, was rector of the University of Nara, and he and other Confucians kept Buddhist studies out of the curriculum. The university at the new capital Kyoto was lodged in fine buildings near the palace, and a Confucian shrine was its nucleus—while the annual celebrations in honour of the sage were held in its spacious grounds.

The rise of the monastic houses and of the great feudal families are main features of Japanese history for several centuries, and both curtailed the power of the Throne, in spite of the theories of eminent domain and of divine sovereignty. The politico-religious nature of the State may be regarded as the product of that complex of Shinto, Buddhism and Confucianism, which is the real faith of Japan. And in this it is Shinto which is the dominant factor. To it the imported religions and ethics were made to conform, and soon there emerges Ryobu-Shinto—or
‘Two-way’ Shinto, in which Amaterasu, the Sun-goddess, is identified with the Sun-Buddha worshipped at Nara, and a long process of synthesis is begun. And if Buddhist devotion has to accommodate itself by a well-wrought theory of hoben (paedagogic strategy) no less has the Confucian social ethic to be remade on Japanese lines.

The former soon developed from a mystical and otherworldly to a vigorous and world-affirming cult as the Middle Path of the Buddha was made not only the way for proud abbots, but also for doughty warriors; and the democratic ideal of Confucius had also to bow to the facts of the case, the feudal lord remaining at the head of society, and calling himself a scholar and an official.

The social life of Nara is still largely feudal, with a free rural population enjoying no political rights, and artisans in a condition of semi-slavery. Education and religion are also aristocratic, but some advance towards paternalism is seen in the encouragement of agriculture and in the reclaiming of waste lands. After the middle of the eighth century those who did such reclamation might own the land—which was still in theory the property of the Crown. Slaves and animals were also regarded as private property, and some organized effort to improve conditions was made by guilds and by associations of five households for mutual service. The household is still the unit of Japanese society.

Buddhism did not yet alleviate the life of the poor. Upon them the burden of the splendours of Court and Temple fell heavily. They continued to pay for the use of the land which now belonged to the Throne; and by the close of the ninth century the farmer was paying a tithe of the gross products of his land, and was forced to give a full month of labour annually. There were also local taxes and ‘gifts’ to the monasteries; and the life of the masses was strenuous and simple to the point of severity. The food of the well-to-do was rice and millet: fish, seaweed, and certain meats enriched it, as to-day. The poor enjoyed none of these

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1 Taxation in more technical terms was of three kinds: (a) so—rice-tax; (b) cho—tribute; (c) yo—corvée.
PORTRAIT STATUE OF BUDDHIST ABBOT ENUMERATING MYSTIC FORMULAE (Eighth century A.D.) (NARA)
luxuries. 'A poem of the period shows that instead of fish, salt was their principal relish; instead of rice, barley or millet their staple article of diet; and instead of clear sake (rice-wine) they drank the lees of the brewer’s vat diluted with water.' The artisans were almost serfs, and a large proportion of the workers were wholly so.

Our enthusiasm for a great age and a noble religion is damped by the knowledge that the temple foundation of Horiuji in the year 730 owned over five hundred slaves, and that pious Buddhists presented multitudes of slaves, besides vast estates, to the great cathedral of Nara. Our admiration is further chastened when we watch the growing hauteur and pomp of the monks of the day; great religious houses began to acquire so much land that the Taikwa Reforms themselves were undone.

But Buddhism has like Christianity the seeds of its own reformation always within it; and soon there were to appear pioneers of a new and more disciplined way, and of a more patriotic and useful church.

With the coming of the Heian era and of its great religious leaders Japan enters upon her classic age, an age of religious reformation, of the achievement of an indigenous church and of the full adaptation of the culture of the mainland.

THE SPIRIT OF ASUKA AND NARA

I. FROM THE LAWS OF KOTOKU (A.D. 645)

Rules for Officials

When you proceed to your posts, prepare registers of all free subjects of the State and of the people under control of others, whether great or small. Take account also of the acreage of cultivated land. As to the profit arising from the gardens and ponds, the water and land, deal with them in common with the people. Moreover, it is not competent for the provincial governors, while in their provinces, to decide criminal cases, nor are they permitted by accepting bribes to bring the people to poverty and misery. . . . On all, from the rank of Hangwan downward, who accept bribes, a fine shall be imposed
of double the amount, and they eventually be punished criminally according to the greater or less heinousness of the case.

Nine men are allowed as attendant on the chief governor, seven on an assistant, and five on a secretary. If this limit is exceeded, and they are accompanied by a greater number, both chief and followers shall be punished criminally.

II. Regulations on Burial Customs

Let small stones be used for the tombs of all from the rank of Prince down to that of Shochi, and let white cloth be used for the hangings . . .

When a man dies, there have been cases of people sacrificing themselves by strangulation, or of strangling others by way of sacrifice, or of compelling the dead man's horse to be sacrificed, or of burying valuables in the graves in honour of the dead, or of cutting the hair, and stabbing the thighs, and pronouncing a eulogy on the dead. Let all such old customs be entirely discontinued.

A certain book says: 'No gold or silver, no silk brocades, and no coloured stuffs are to be buried'. Again it is said: 'From the ministers of all ranks down to the common people, it is not allowed to use gold or silver'. Shall there be any cases of this decree being disregarded and these prohibitions infringed, the relatives shall surely receive punishment.

III. An Early Court Record

The closing sentences of the thirtieth and last book of the Nihongi are typical of the rest, and run as follows:

11th year, Spring, 1st month, 7th day (11th year of the reign of Empress Jito, A.D. 697). An entertainment was given to the Ministers and Daibu.

11th day. Presents of rice in ear of various values were given to all widowers, widows, orphans, and childless persons, to those suffering from grave disease, and to those who from poverty were unable to support themselves, throughout the Empire.

166th day. An entertainment was given to the Ministers and public functionaries.

(It closes with the record of the abdication of Empress Jito on the first day of the eighth month, A.D. 697, in favour of the Prince Imperial.)
IV. Tanka of Thirty-one Syllables in Five Lines

(a) Seventh-century Poems

Tenchi Tenno (668–71)

In autumn fields they toil,
My people, reaping grain:
In this poor hut I shelter sought in vain!
Through the thin thatch pours in the rain.

Jito Tenno (690–6)

Daughter of the kindly Tenchi, wife of Temmu, she herself became sovereign and patroness of the arts. Here she refers to the old story—retold in the famous No-drama—of the angel-robe hung on a pine where a fisherman found it.

Spring's gone and summer's nigh:
Far off my eyes descry
The mountain peak, where angels seek
Their dazzling robes to dry.

The Japanese sounds thus:

Haru sugi te
Natsu-ki ni kerashi
Shiro-taé no
Koromo hosi teu
Ama-no-kagu yama!

(b) Eighth-century Poems

Prince Moroe (8th century A.D.)

Fujiyama

Upon the frontier where Suruga's Land
Marches with Kahi see great Fuji stand.
The clouds in awe are still, and no bird flies
Where snow melts in thy flames, and flame in snowflake dies.

What words suffice to hymn thy god-like form?
Father of waters thou towerest in the storm.
Ah! let me gaze upon thee, gift of gods to man,
A god thyself, thou guardian of Japan.

(From the Manyoshu.)
Yakamochi

on

Nara

With all its hundred spires
The Great City teems with men,
But riding in my heart
Is my beloved only.

Akahito

The brave gallants
Are at the hunt to-day:
The ladies trail
Their red dresses
Over clean sea-beaches.

Hitomaru

See on the Great Sea
No Islands float;
But white clouds settle
Upon the tossing waves
Of ocean's spreading plain.
XV

THE HEIAN ERA
(A.D. 794–1186)

THE CLASSICAL AGE OF JAPAN AND THE CULTURE OF ARISTOCRACY

The lover turns from the scriptures to his love-letter. SEI-SHONAGON.

I

With this era Japan enters upon her classical age. It is marked by the emergence of a national culture and by the dominance of the great Fujiwara house. It is an age at once brilliant and sordid, and if the climax of its splendour comes with the last of the Fujiwara so does its valour become brutal and its chivalry predacious; and if it produces a great series of notable works of art and literature these degenerate into long epic novels glorifying the deeds of rival clans and praising the extravagances of feudal loyalty, when women counted their chastity cheap if they could further the cause of a feudal lord.

If again it is an age of scholarship, it is also one of gross superstition and its early Buddhist leaders of genius are succeeded by proud and warlike prelates. If some preached an easy Paradise others delighted in the Dantesque horrors of a well-merited Hell.

The era is known as that of peace and tranquillity, and begins with the removal of the capital first to Nagaoka and then to the foot of Mt. Hiei. The chief reason for this expensive and elaborate change seems to be that Kwammu was oppressed by the dominance of the powerful monks of Nara. He was a Confucian scholar, and his Fujiwara advisers were also opposed to any rival power. They were as hostile to ecclesiastics as to rival officials.

The building of the new capital had been going on for ten years when suddenly it was decided to move to Miyako or Kyoto, again at immense loss, and again for obscure
political and other reasons. Intrigues within the Fujiwara clan and the growing influence of Chinese astrological ideas may be mentioned as contributing causes. The new city, however, became a worthy capital and, like that of Nara, was modelled on Ch‘ang-an. A rectangle stretched for about three miles in each direction, surrounded by a moat, and divided into squares. The running water which cooled it is still a notable feature of Kyoto. To the north were the palace enclosure and offices of state, and about these clustered other palaces and mansions, and the university, largely devoted to Chinese studies. Above the city was Mount Hiei, whose oldest temple was built to guard it against evil influences from the north-east.

As to-day, so in these early centuries the capital, disappointing at first sight, was full of interesting buildings, and the Heian period was in many things one of important beginnings as well as of the consummation of great Japanese arts.

The development of Chinese institutions went on apace during the first part of the period; but from the end of the ninth century intercourse with China was interrupted and there followed a period of adaptation and new growth. Now Japan produces a truly indigenous church and a culture expressive of her genius—yet in both keeps close to Chinese models.

II

The outstanding political event was the growing domination of the Fujiwara clan; and the era is accordingly divided into pre-Fujiwara (794–851) and Fujiwara (851–1186). The Emperor Kwammu (781–806) owed his succession to a member of this clan who first insisted on his appointment as Crown-prince, and later as Emperor; and they now began their suppression of all rivals, and for some generations led the State with great skill and wisdom. Theirs was a theocratic bureaucracy with its roots in the hereditary priesthood of the Nakatomi, and in 866 the office of Kwam-paku, Regent, was handed over to them. They now became
DEATH OF SAKYAMUNI
(KOYASAN)
almost Brahmins, leaving to emperors the duties of nominal suzerainty, and to other clans such matters as wars against the Ainu. While Buddhist monks went to China to study, the Fujiwara encouraged Confucian learning, and Chinese art still provided classic models. But by the end of the ninth century civil wars in China and the decline and fall of the T'ang interrupted this intercourse, and Japan was left to assimilate and to develop what she had borrowed. Kyoto was now as for many centuries the artistic as well as the administrative capital, and Buddhism was the inspiration of the arts.

In the pre-Fujiwara period it was a Buddhism deliberately modelled on the great monastic systems of China which exerted the strongest influence, and the great names are those of Dengyo or Saicho (767–822) and of Kobo or Kukai (774–835), ecclesiastics of genius in adaptation who did much for Japan. Their shrines stand among giant trees on Mount Hiei above Kyoto, and on Mount Koya some eighty miles away, and from these centres religious and artistic impulses have continued to radiate. On the former is the ancient Kompon-chudo, typical of the Buddhist architecture of the age, and on the latter are famous Japanese primitives such as the strong and dramatic ‘Red Fudo’ and the magnificent and poignant ‘Death of Sakyamuni’. These are by unnamed masters of the ninth century, and here too is the serene and sensuous ‘Buddha and twenty-five Bodhisattvas’, a seraphic choir radiant in the heavens. It is by Eshin Sozu, an early abbot of the Paradise Sect, who lived from 942 to 1017, and who is believed to have seen this vision of the Western Paradise where Amida welcomes the faithful. This master, and Kobo and Kanaoka, are the founders of a true Japanese school still influenced by the China of early Sung, but beginning to express itself in Japanese style, and Buddhist influence is still strong in the first part of the Heian Age.

The later Heian period is more secular, and is perhaps better epitomized by the lovely Phoenix Hall built as a villa in 1053 at Uji, a suburb of Kyoto, by Yorimichi.
Fujiwara. It is the most graceful and symmetrical of wooden buildings, with a central hall or body, and wings, as of a great bird in flight; 'in delicacy of proportion and refinement of composition it marks the culmination of Japanese architecture'. In the days of its splendour it glowed with rich colour—fresco and lacquer and inlay of mother-of-pearl and ivory. Turned later into a chapel, this sumptuous and elegant villa now houses one of the great Buddhist masterpieces of the eleventh century, the 'Amida' of the sculptor Jocho, who like Eshin Sozu, expressed the new pietism of the Paradise schools. Before him sculpture had reached its climax, and had then for a time declined, until this new and emotional cult called it into fresh activity, and kept a large body of artisans at work.

While, then, the Normans were building their great stone castles in France and England, the rulers of Japan were dreaming in wood and lacquer, and long before the first Gothic cathedrals Japan had built a Horiuji, a Yakushi, and a Todaiji. But this splendour, religious and secular, cost the country dear; and the ambitious Fujiwara remained in the saddle long after their usefulness had ceased, and their virility had degenerated. The Court became a 'mere nest of lovemaking, versifying and feasting', and a passionate dilettantism craved novelty.

Like Fuhito in the early Nara Age the Fujiwara of the end of this era, nearly four hundred years later, were relatives and masters of their emperors. Michinaga (995–1018) was not only all-powerful as Regent, but supplied three empresses and several emperors from his immediate family. Compared with these proud barons the poor rulers cut a sorry figure—one dying in such poverty that there was none to bury him, and all glad if they could escape to some monastery and be left in peace. During these centuries eight of the fifteen abdicated, and if one ventured to assert himself he was put under the control of some lordly abbot, himself often a soldier, who saw to it that he occupied himself in piety or in harmless scholar-

A child was meantime put upon the throne, and a wife chosen for him at a tender age from the ranks of Fujiwara ladies.

The helplessness of such emperors is well illustrated by the oft-quoted saying of one who himself became a monk: 'Three things I cannot control: the river in spate, the monks of Hiei, and the fall of the dice'. The dice were indeed loaded against the royal house, and between Court and monastery their lives were spent in harmless scholarship and calligraphy—now almost a religion. For if the monk was a soldier and the emperor a puppet, the soldier of this age was a scholar, who made a careful study of Chinese classics. For tactics he went to the Book of Changes, and for strategy to the dualistic philosophy of the Yang and the Yin! While battles were a series of theatrical single-combats, swordsmanship became a passion, and played a great part in Japanese history. Among the arts and crafts of Japan the work of the swordsmith ranks high, and Japanese blades are unsurpassed even by those of Damascus or Persia. The sword is known as the 'Soul of the Samurai', and the names of great craftsmen like Masamune and Muramasi are handed down with veneration. In a land of craftsmen their craft is looked upon as the most honourable of all. Large shipments of such swords went to China in exchange for the masterpieces of Sung art, many of which are preserved in Japan. Japanese armourers now reached their zenith, and gold lacquer was perfected.

Now begins too the development of the masked dance, which was to play so great a part in Japanese life. From the early germ of ritual-dances at Shinto shrines this great art received a new impetus with the coming of Buddhism, whose Bugaku or Mysteries now blent with the native folk-dances known as 'rice-field music', such as the Dengaku, which celebrated harvest-home. As in India and China these folk-festivals of Japan were elaborated by the priests into miracle-plays, and we hear of a masked dance as early as 807, when a great earthquake shook Nara, and
it was performed to allay the wrath of the gods. Some of the masks preserved in the Shoso-in were perhaps used on this occasion—strong and dramatic works which are the prototypes of No-masks still used in Japan.

From these three ancient roots, Šarugaku or Shinto-ritual, Dengaku folk-dance, and Bugaku masked Buddhist dance, springs the No-drama so characteristic of Japanese genius. First known as Saru-gaku-no-No, it dates in its present form from the fourteenth century, and we may postpone a further study of it; but its roots are deeply and firmly planted in the Heian era. It owes much to Buddhism, and in its blending of awe and wonder and mystery with a high aesthetic appeal to eye and ear as well as to imagination, it is a characteristically Japanese achievement.

III

We must now look more closely at the classical figures of Saicho, known to posterity as Dengyo, and of Kukai whose posthumous name is Kobo. They and their fellow monks made Japan free of the cultured world; they introduced philosophy and ethics, medicine and astronomy, and so helped to naturalize on Japanese soil the art and religion of the mainland.

Saicho was a deeply religious youth who became disgusted with the politics and pride of the monks of Nara. Leaving the capital, he built himself a hut on the slopes of Hiei, looking down upon Lake Biwa on one side and the valley of the Kamo River on the other. Here he passed into manhood, and in 788 built the first small Buddhist shrine which later under the name Enriakuji was to become the metropolitan temple of a great new sect. The Emperor Kwammu was meantime building his new capital at the foot of the mountain, and called Saicho to dedicate it. He encouraged the young monk also in preaching-tours to expound the Lotus Scripture, which was to become the philosophic basis of the new church, and the inspiration of a great art. In due course Kwammu sent him with his ambassador to Ch'ang-an, and he passed on to the great
Tien-tai range where he spent some years studying the systematic Buddhism of Chi-kai. This school takes the Lotus Scripture as its foundation, and arranges all Buddhist texts in a developing series: it insists that all men are potentially Buddhas, and is thus much more democratic than the exclusive monachism of Nara. Religion is to be a servant of man, and salvation is for all. Armed with this philosophy Saicho returned to build up a new church, which was to do much for Japan, and to become the parent of many of its most powerful sects.

Hiei has been compared to a lotus-pod shedding many seeds: Koyasan to a lotus turned sunwards. Here Kukai built his temple to the Sun-Buddha. A many-sided genius, he published a dialogue at the early age of twenty in which Buddhism, Shinto, and Confucianism are compared; and to prepare himself further for his great task he too went to Ch’ang-an and studied the True Word, or Chen-yan, which he brought back to Japan as Shingon. This is a highly ritualistic and symbolic expression of pantheistic philosophy, expressing itself in gesture and act, and often degenerating into magic. Choosing Koyasan with its cluster of hills and giant forests he built up a new church, introduced something of Sanskrit learning and of Indian iconography, and carried farther the amalgamation of Shinto with Buddhism. Himself a sculptor, a poet, and a famous calligraphist, he gave classical demonstration of the cultural values of Buddhism. A great painting attributed to him is treasured at the Toji Temple in Kyoto, 'The Seven Patriarchs of Shingon', strong and vivid figures boldly portrayed. Some of his disciples went to India for further study, and others to China, bringing back much besides Buddhism. They encouraged the culture of the silkworm, began schools for the common people, and made roads and bridges. Jitte, Jikaku, and Chisho are his Japanese successors, Amoghavajra and Vajrabodhi his Indian masters—mystics whose by-products were works of great practical value.

The great Kwammu, then, found in Buddhism a useful
ally, and the two new sects did much in these earlier days of the era to foster the work of civilization. The Japanese of to-day recognize perhaps more fully than their European contemporaries the debt that they owe to religion. Count Okuma, who has so generously expressed their gratitude to Christianity, is even more emphatic in attributing to Buddhism the leading place in the civilization of his country. He mentions among its gifts:

The carving of images, building of temples, painting and the manufacture of tiles, concrete, lacquered and earthen wares, woven goods, embroideries, paper, ink, and dyeing materials. It was also through Buddhism that calendars, music, and useful plants were brought into the country, and by means of their philanthropic work medical art was improved, schools and orphan asylums built, and hot springs discovered . . . From this array of facts we can safely conclude that the civilization peculiar to Japan and existing before the Restoration undoubtedly had its source in Buddhism.

Yet the historian cannot ignore the superstitions and intrigues, the jealousies and battles between Buddhist temples which darken this age. Nor must he neglect to note that it was a very superstitious Buddhism which appealed to the masses.

IV

But the early Heian era was one of great personalities in Church and State. Japan has no more revered figures than the scholar-statesman Michizane and the scholar-priest Kukai: both are worshipped by countless millions. She looks back to this age also as that of the flowering of her national art and literature.

Two new cursive and phonetic scripts were invented—one by Makibi, one by Kukai, and these set her genius free to express itself. Poetry, if not so good as that of Nara, abounded, and a new national school of painting and drama, as of architecture, landscape-gardening and decoration, is seen emerging.

In the latter part of the era the Samurai, ‘servants of the overlord’, set a new standard of Spartan simplicity and loyalty, and Zen masters from China provided a technique
of meditation to train soldiers and statesmen for action and endurance. The Fujiwara domination lasts till 1086, and is followed by a brief era of restored imperial authority lasting till 1167, while great families strive for the mastery, and prepare the way for the military rule of Kamakura, which a Japanese writer calls ‘bushiocracl’—the rule of the knights. Pauperization of the masses and demoralization of the local officials are both due to complex causes, notably to civil wars and to usurpation of central authority. Might is right, though the emperor is in theory supreme, and is still a god. From various sources Bushido—the unwritten code of the knight—is being slowly formulated to meet the needs of this complex situation. In a word Japan is producing her own typical and strange culture.

The foundations of a truly indigenous school of painting—later to be known as Yamatoye—were well and truly laid by Kose-no-Kanaoka (850–90). A courtier and no doubt an intimate of scholars like Michizane, who were close students of things Chinese, Kanaoka was surely well acquainted with the masterpieces of Wu Tao-tse (or Godo-shi), copies of whose works are treasured in Japan to this day, notably a great triad, Sakyamuni and Bodhisattvas. It is doubtful if anything by Kanaoka himself remains, but we know that he was a skilled landscape-gardener, and that he painted delicate landscapes as well as altar-pieces for Buddhist temples in which the powerful brush strokes of Wu Tao-tse were imitated, but in which a new delicacy appeared. A fine portrait of Shotoku is probably a copy of one of his works; and that he was a brilliant and versatile artist—the father of Japanese painting—seems clear. If he was an imitator of Chinese masters he seems to have been no copyist, but to have gone to local scenes and national heroes for inspiration. Even if the works attributed to him are themselves copies or even copies of copies, yet the Japanese see in him a master of brush-work akin to Giotto in suavity and delicacy, yet vigorous as Michael Angelo. ‘A picture without vigorous strokes is like a body

1 See Frontispiece.
without a soul’, says Mr. Sei-ichi Taki, editor of the great art journal, the *Kokka*, who goes on to explain that a true artistic triumph is to represent an object or scene with the least possible use of strokes, as well as with vigour and life. This is the Japanese criterion also of a good poem. As in China, so here, the two are intimately related: ‘if painting is voiceless poetry, poetry is vocal painting’. This has been the strength, at times the weakness, of both arts in Japan. The subjective is sometimes so emphasized that the meaning remains hidden from all but a very small coterie of the initiated. In the Nara Age poets such as Hitomaru and Yakamochi were the protégés of Shomu and his empress, and if the paintings of the Heian Age have perished, its lyrics have been preserved in the memories of the people as well as on the scrolls of anthologists, which towards the end of the era begin to give place to printed books, but are written for three centuries in the new phonetic scripts. But such poetry was not fashionable at Court. For some time indeed to write Japanese was to write ‘like a woman’. The poetic tourneys of the Court were imitations in every way of their Chinese originals, and for the rest the men left literature to their women. But there are notable exceptions: and the ‘bureau of poetry’ continued to encourage the lyrist. The Kokinshu, or ‘Anthology of old and new’, was completed in 922 by Ki-no Tsurayuki (883–946), a critic as well as a poet of distinction. His introduction is the first masterpiece of true Japanese prose, and it is full of Chinese turns of speech and ‘the trick of antithesis so dear to Chinese authors’. This and his Tosa-nikki, a diary of his journey between Tosa and the capital, entitle him to be called the father of Japanese prose: a master of clear and sensitive writing. The ‘god of education’ in Japan is Sugawara Michizane (845–903) a voluminous writer of history and a great teacher, who though himself an admirer of Chinese learning composed freely in Japanese, and suggested to the emperor that intercourse with China had gone far enough. He rose to very high office, aroused the suspicious jealousy of the Fujiwara, and
was banished to Kyushu, where he ate his heart out in exile, as a Viceroy who ought to have been President of the University.

Other classical scholars of the age were Kiyotsura (847–918), who wrote a memorial urging reforms, and the earlier Sadanushi (785–852) who inaugurated the making of a prose anthology of nearly a thousand volumes.

Others were specialists in a narrow sense, each devoting himself to one Chinese classic and its Han commentary, and these became family traditions. The favourite works were the 'Book of Rites', 'The Chronicles of Lu', and 'The Classic of Filial Piety', but next to calligraphy the great craze was Chinese poetry, and the inspiration of T'ang went on, though the Court preferred the earlier poets, and emperor and officials capped verses in the winding-water tourneys familiar in Chinese paintings and Japanese caricatures. Seated by a stream they caught little cups of wine as they floated by, drank and made a couplet, capping one another's sentiments, and drinking one another out. In such noble emulation and in stern wars with the Ainu, in Chinese scholarship and in experiments in Japanese, in intrigues and love-affairs, in compiling anthologies and histories, the early Heian Age passed. From the tenth century on there are signs of new vigour and freedom, and women are its pioneers.

This process began during the Nara Age. Jito, herself a poetess, saw to the completion of the Kojiki, and gathered at Nara artists and men of letters. Her daughter Gensho inspired the Nihongi, and Gemmyo, consort of Shomu, was the patroness of the poets Hitomaru and Yakamoshi.

If the Nara era has been described as pre-eminently a woman's era, the Heian women were no less remarkable. Seven of the ten great literary figures of this era are women. They could watch with detached and humorous eye the elaborate ceremonies of the Court, the scholarly trivialities and amours of the nobles; and they developed the art of
story-telling to while away the tedium of their own secluded lives. Some of their lyrics show that they were by no means meek and gentle.

The greatest Japanese work of fiction, one of the great novels of all time, is the long romance Genji Monagatari, completed in 1003 by the Lady Murasaki Shikibu. As in China so in Japan while poems cannot be too short novels can hardly be too long. Here, too, China influenced Japan, and her great novel of The Three Dynasties must be remembered amongst the influences which made up Bushido, with its tales of loyalty and courage and adventure, and which served as a model in literature.

But the Genji Monagatari is unique, an authentic work of Japanese art. Written seven centuries before Pamela, with which it is often compared, this very modern novel was composed to beguile a young princess who had become a Shinto priestess, and found little to occupy her. It is a religion which leaves even the mind empty.

Murasaki was herself a humble member of the Fujiwara clan, who saw to it that all positions of authority and influence were parcelled out among them, and her fine apartments at Ishiyama, looking out on a lovely garden above Lake Biwa, are still kept intact. From this quiet retreat came her spirited account of the amours and adventures of Genji, the Prince Charming of the age, poet, connoisseur, and libertine. Like a gorgeous scroll the sixty-four chapters of this masterpiece unfold, a priceless document for studying the life of the nobility of the era, its elegant futility and polished licentiousness. It is indeed as a true historical record that the authoress offers her work to her readers: 'History,' she says, 'is usually a dull record, and biassed.' Is she thinking of the dynastic histories of China, or of Kojiki and Nihongi? 'Romances,' she goes on, 'are true history, vivid scenes of contemporary society. Their authors are free to choose what is best when that is their aim, what is most amusing when they wish to amuse.' Japanese genius has always shone brightest in this art of selection, and as her editor Mr.
Waley says, Murasaki has 'a pre-eminent capacity for saying the most relevant things in the most effective order'.

The success of the novelist set a fashion, and Murasaki's daughter and other women of the Court began to write. Notable are the 'Pillow Sketches', Makura-no-Soshi, of Sei-shonogon, a diary of minute and sometimes amusing impressions of an acute mind, which have had a great vogue in Japan. The authoress, a lady-in-waiting, calls it 'A record of what I have seen and felt, jotted down to solace the loneliness of my life and home, not written for the eyes of others'. Like a picture by Botticelli (upon whom a Japanese has produced perhaps the best commentary yet written) the 'Pillow Sketches' are full of quaint details—the emperor's dog is being punished for fighting with his cat, and the foibles and vanities of the Court are not missed by her quick eye, which notes all the little telling details that less gifted artists ignore. Her lyric translated below reveals this keen humour. She tells much of the last decade of the tenth century, of Buddhist ceremonies and courts, of incantations and spirit possession, of picnics and pilgrimages, above all of her own whims and moods. These writers are distinguished by the quaint 'delicacy' of their minds, noted by all the Europeans who have studied them, from Xavier to Hearn. An Eshin among religious painters and a Murasaki among secular novelists—these reveal the true spirit of eleventh-century Japan, a spirit of refinement and charm in danger of effeminacy, of an eager search for novelty.

With the exception of wars against the Ainu there was nothing to distract the Court of this era from the task of imitating and assimilating the culture of the mainland; and when communication with China was interrupted they showed vitality and genius in adapting what they had borrowed. Thus side by side with frescoes of Indian provenance, with T'ang and Silla works of art, we see Japanese originality asserting itself in authentic and original sculpture and architecture. The straight tiled roofs now take
on a graceful sweeping curve, and a new elegance appears in every detail.

But there was still abundant strength. Especially characteristic are the vigorous wooden carved figures which guard the temple gateways. These Shi-Tenno are the four guardians or Devaraja of Indian mythology, which reflect the military enthusiasm of the early Heian era, and are masterpieces of titanic energy. Their close-fitting armour seems to derive from the Turkistan uplands, for that of the Japanese is a kind of shard or screen hung about the body, and it was perfected in this era, whereas exact prototypes of these cuirasses and plates for arms and thighs are found in the frescoes of the East Asian hinterland and of T'ang China.

The same vigour and power is to be seen in the famous 'Red Fudo' of Koyasan. It belongs to the ninth century according to Japanese critics, some of whom attribute it to Kukai himself. The artist has evidently watched a devastating fire, and if the main figure is primitive the halo is the work of an advanced art. Fudo is the Hindu god Achala, the Immovable, adopted into the Buddhist Pantheon, and adapted to Japanese ideas.

This process, begun by Gyogi and carried on by Kukai, was completed in the Fujiwara era, and though Nichiren called Kukai the 'prize liar of Japan' he was rather the exemplar of a process inevitable in a missionary religion, which gradually takes over existing deities, and adapts them to its uses. The pantheistic philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism made this process easy, for it taught that the Buddha-nature was in all things, and a Shinto god or a local hero easily became a Bodhisattva, or even a Buddha. The classical example of this process is the identification of the imperial ancestress Amaterasu with the Sun-Buddha Vairochana, and the worship of sun-gods like Apollo and Mithras may well have entered into the stream of Buddhism as it spread through Graeco-Indian kingdoms and Persian satrapies. To-day at Koyasan the cult of the all-pervading sun is celebrated with great pomp, and ancient Vedic practices such as the homa-sacrifice and the cult of fire live on in the
THE RED FUDO OF KOYASAN
(Tenth Century)
shrines of Fudo, where priests in scarlet burn fragrant sandal-wood and pour libations, and with mystic gesture and Sanskrit mantras invoke the Fire-god.

Now Brahma, the Creator, and Sarasvati, goddess of learning, and many another Indian deity crowd into the pantheon of Ryobu (or mixed) Shinto.

On the altars of Sakyamuni himself tower titanic forms like Hachiman, god of war, once the Emperor Ojin, and of destructive forces of nature now tamed by the spirit of Buddhism. Never have these powers received such dramatic representation as in the sculptures of this period, and they make a splendid foil to the gentle and remote figure of Kwannon the Compassionate, and the allurements of Fugen, whose pious devices are examples of Buddhist strategy, Hoben, to win men to salvation. She may even play the geisha to lure them on to Nirvana.

Secular art also flourished at this time. The practice of painting on walls and doors, which came in with early Korean works like the Tamamushi shrine, was carried to great perfection in the palaces and villas as well as in the temples of Kyoto. The fair forms on the screens of the Todaiji and their trees of careful realism and minute detail seem to be the work of a Japanese master of the end of the Nara or the beginning of the Heian era, which, if it ended in over-refinement and effeminacy, began in strong and vigorous work like that of the gigantic Vairocana and the Shi-tenno. The Buddhism of this age is perhaps best summarized in these figures: for the secular cannot be separated from the sacred, for 'all nature is an embodiment of the Buddha', and is thus a sacrament.

The power of the Fujiwara culminated at the close of the tenth and the opening of the eleventh centuries with Michinaga and Yorimichi, who were as ostentatious as the Medici, while crime and misery grew apace, bandits and pirates made travel unsafe, and temples became nests of lawlessness. Even in the capital these monkish pests were to be seen engaged in drunken brawls. Michinaga openly boasted that all the world was made for his enjoyment, and
when he died (in 1019) ten thousand priests were diverted from their squabbles to the no less barren task of interceding for him, while a general amnesty was declared. It is no accident that two opponents of the Fujiwara—the Emperor Masakado and the statesman Michizane—are worshipped to-day as Shinto deities. Here gratitude is winged by dislike of both Fujiwara insolence and Buddhist arrogance. These are in many respects dark ages. Loyalties were intense but narrow, and the earlier reforms had failed to control feuds and civil wars.

The long-drawn-out rivalries of clan and clan came to a head in the bloody strife of Taira and Minamoto. If the luxury of the Fujiwara is told in the Eigwa—‘Tales of Glory and Splendour’—and the intrigues of the Court in the Genji, we have the whole drama of these wars in the Gempei Monogatari.

This is the true epic, as the Samurai, feudal servant, is the beau ideal of Japan. To the brave much is forgiven, and in the picturesque much is forgotten.

Some rulers such as Shirakawa (1073–86) tried to rule the clans. But Shirakawa was forced into a monastery, and set the bad precedent of rule from behind the scenes, seeking during the reigns of his three successors to dictate their policy. So these poor puppets had to put up with the ‘advice’ of their predecessor as well as with the ‘suggestions’ of the Fujiwara. Shirakawa’s counsel was largely the echo of that of the great abbots of Hiei, who attracted to their houses lawless men and vagabonds of every kind, till these became veritable castles and fortresses. In the next reign the Ainu and discontented Japanese made common cause, and were put down by a punitive expedition under the Minamoto leader Yoshiye, who also became a god, being named Hachiman Taro. He and his brother Yoritoshi were famous archers of whom many good stories are told.

These powerful families, invited by Shirakawa to the capital, stirred up trouble, and in their feuds the Fujiwara were ruined, and Japan entered on an era of military domination based on force. It is strange that it was the
power of the monks which led to the downfall of the Fujiwara: called in to help, the rival clans were their undoing.

It is a picturesque age, but the tales of fighting and adventure mean more to the Japanese than to the student of history. The deeds of Yoritomo and of the youthful Yoshitsune whom he foully did to death, of the giant monk Benkei and of the lovely peasant-girl Tokiwa, are they not portrayed in innumerable prints of the early eighteenth century; collected into albums, and recorded in the contemporary novels, as picturesque as the deeds of their contemporaries Robin Hood and Maid Marian?

It is as we have said a cruel as well as an heroic tale. Men cheerfully sacrificed their lives and women their honour to help the cause of their clan: and the victor had no mercy upon the vanquished. The Heike Monogatari, written in the thirteenth century, describes the rise of the Taira, and opens with a chapter on famous swords; and the whole country was for long a stage for dramatic single combats, till with the battle of Dannoura in 1185 the Taira went down, and a military dictatorship gave Japan a breathing space from famine, pestilence, and sudden death.

‘If we go to sea our bodies shall rot in the water. If we turn to the hills the grass will cover them’ is at once the warlike boast and the epitaph of countless Samurai.

VI

So the ‘Age of Heavenly Peace’ comes to an end in the feuds of lawless barons, and a great classic civilization awaits its further development through some decades of strife. Of the life of the common people during this era we know that they used the rice of their growing for barter, that slavery continued, and that between the Court and the temple the peasants were heavily burdened. A land-tax was still levied, and a tax on products, and the farmer now had to serve three months in the year on imperial and Court work; he was in fact a serf. Reclaimed land was largely free of taxes, but this was monopolized by temples
or local gentry, and the small man had little time or opportunity to grow rich, and was always at the beck and call of feudal or spiritual lords. Many became rovers, Ronin, lawless men ready to serve in the armies of either, or to become vagabonds and free-lances.

But towards the end of this age the farmers began to band together, forming manors of their own, and so escaping the avaricious monk or baron. A ‘manor’ was a centre not only of agriculture but of trade in cloth and other commodities, and the great families of this age are supported by and rooted in the manor system. Within the manors arose a military class, the Bushi: bound by feudal ties to their lords, these soldiers were to play a picturesque role in subsequent ages.

The economic roots of the long struggle which now culminates must be examined. The Kuge or imperial family, and its branches, had, as we have seen, been in control of national revenues since the Taikwa Reformation; but feudal lords had usurped more and more power, and had enriched themselves, as had the great monastic houses, by amassing lands and serfs. Conflicts of an economic nature thus arose, for the tax-free manorial and temple-lands—some reclaimed by their owners, some given in reward for services to the Throne—accumulated, and the imperial revenues decreased. When the Minamoto under Yoritomo shamelessly usurped the collection of revenue for the whole country it was the climax of a long process of encroachment.

Robber barons vying with Buddhist abbots and lords of the manor all preyed upon the farmers and artisans, and all attracted to them armed retainers. It soon became a question of which could grab and hold most, and a true military feudalism emerges as the better disciplined armies impose their will on the country.

Our illustrative readings, if they tell of the lover and his beloved, of the craftsman and his craft, tell also of the sad disillusionment of a rough and turbulent close to an age of high achievement.
THE HEIAN ERA

THE SPIRIT OF HEIAN

I. FROM THE DIARY OF SEI-SHONAGON

(a) A scripture reciter should be handsome. Only if it is a pleasure to look at him all the time is there any chance of feeling religious. Ugliness may become a cause of sin: for then one’s attention wanders.

(b) An annoying experience is to hear fond parents praise and pet an ugly child, and to have to listen to their repetition and imitation of its sayings.

II. TENTH-CENTURY POEMS

(a) SEI-SHONAGON TO HER LOVER
In vain you pine and linger there:
For though a cock you imitate
’Twill not unlock the toll-bar gate:
Await the dawn, my chanticleer!

(b) SEI-SHONAGON IN OLD AGE
Ah! if to those who seek me, I
Can scarcely bring myself to say
‘She is at home’: don’t wonder, pray!
I scarcely know at times if I am I.

(c) MINA-YU-KI MINAMOTO
How solitary the mountain hamlet lies:
When friends are gone, it fills my soul with dread;
The mountain bare, the leaves all shed—
It seems as if the world itself were dead.

(d) YOSHINOBU—A PRIEST
The lady of my heart I’ll ne’er forsake:
As constant as the guards who make
Each night their watch-fire till day break.

III. LATER HEIAN POEMS

(a) SANSONO MINAMOTO (d. 1219)
A son of Yoritomo, he was famous as a man of letters. On the day when a priest—his own nephew—murdered him in the
War-God’s temple at Kamakura he wrote this haunting lyric, all the more meaningful as he was the last of his house.

When I am gone and masterless
This house may seem, yet not the less
Remember me, fair tree, I pray—
Again these eaves with blossoms spray.

(by) Okura—a Court official

Sic transit.

In this our world woe follows woe
As year succeeds to year and day to day,
Its changes and its chances endless flow;
Calamities o’ertake us as they may.

Fair ladies, as their wont is, play
With gems, embroidering their flowing sleeves:
And fain the springtime they would stay,
But blossoms yield in turn to falling leaves,
And white hairs show in raven tresses sleek,
And wrinkles willy-nilly mar the rosy cheek.

IV. SWORDSMANSHIP

Not only physical fitness, but something in addition by way of spiritual sway was necessary. The Yagiu style required the fencer’s mind to be so concentrated on his sword that it became a part of the steel or the steel a part of the mind. A man with a sword is expected completely to cover himself against attacks from all quarters. Yagiu went a step farther and said one must conceal oneself in a sword. This sounds meaningless to those not initiated in Japanese fencing. But it has a great significance. An accomplished fencer, especially one with the so-called spiritual sway, poses himself in a certain attitude, and his opponent, while watching for an unguarded spot to attack, gradually feels lost in the labyrinth of feint attacks and foibles. Presently he feels that his antagonist has disappeared, the only visible thing being the point of his antagonist’s blade. At this point he is attacked and defeated. The loser is apparently in a trance which is brought about by the spiritual aggression of the victor. A sort of mesmerism? In Japan the noted organizers of well-known schools of fencing resorted to this method. They all repaired to the mountain fastnesses and for years practised the art. In the absence of a better term, it was named Kiai Jitsu, or the art of spiritual swaying. . . . In books of military anecdotes, examples of flying
sparrows or rats infesting ceilings being either brought down or killed by Kiai Jitsu are mentioned ad infinitum; children’s folklore also abounds in these episodes.¹

V. JAPANESE CRITICISM

The Buddhist Archbishop, Henjo, is excellent in form, but the truth is not in him. If I may venture a comparison, it is as if you should vainly give your heart away to a woman drawn in a picture.

Arihara no Narihira has plenty of heart; but the words are deficient; as it were, withered flowers, that still keep their fragrance, though their colour is gone.

As for Bunya no Yasuhide, his words are fine, but not well fitted to the matter; even as though a man of the lowest class, a mere merchant, should clothe himself in fine silks.

The priest of Mount Uji, Kisen, is obscure; beginning and end lack connexion; as if we saw the Autumn moon, first bright, then hiding pale in clouds at dawn. However, but few of his poems are in circulation to judge by.

Ono-no-Komachi follows the style of the Empress Sotohori of ancient times. She has feeling but lacks vigour; like a woman fair but suffering from illness. Still, lack of vigour is only natural in a woman’s poems.

Otono-no-Kuronushi is agreeable in substance, but his style is low; as though a mountain peasant with faggots on his back should stop to rest beneath the cherry-blossoms.

Of others . . . for the most part they yearn after poetry, rather than attain it.  

¹ Kume-no-Heinai, Tokyo Nichi Nichi (English ed.), 1924.
XVI
THE KAMAKURA AGE OF MILITARY RULE
(1180–1392)
All sufferings that befall my fellow beings are my sufferings. Nichiren.
New energies were at work on every side, and new inspirations were the need of the time. M. Anesaki.

I
The degenerate Fujiwara were doomed long before they finally fell, and the new age is one of a new feudalism and a new vigour and initiative. It resembles in many things the Age of Chivalry in Europe. The Bushi are the knights, the Samurai their retainers, and Bushido is the code of the times; and there is a certain austerity, almost monastic, in their devotion to duty, and a passionate loyalty, almost religious, in their devotion to their daimyo or feudal lord.

The figures of Yoritomo, Yoshitsune, and Toshiyori are comparable to those of the knights of King Arthur, and with them manhood returns to Japan. It is an age of bards and of epic song, of heroic deeds and of religious expiation of violence. As in the Sung era in China men now begin to think for themselves, and activity is the role for which quietism is a preparation, not a substitute. The monastic spirit is in a word to fructify not to sterilize life; and the Zen masters are inspirers to something more virile than the dissipations of court life, or the repetition of hypnotic hymns to Amida. Like the Sung Age this era is one of transition from the ancient to the modern world, and its new feudalism is a stage in the long evolution to that centralized government which has made Japan strong. Its new individualism, too, is a preparation for that free discipline of reasoned obedience which is the keynote of her later development.

The military usurpation of the Taira (1159–85) came to an end when the Minamoto under the brilliant soldiers Yoshitsune and Yoritomo won the great sea-battle of
Dan-no-ura in 1185, and Japan passed to complete military
feudalism.

Minamoto-no-Yoritomo (1147–99) is a remarkable
figure; famous not only for military prowess but for the
double revolution by which he set up 'camp-rule' at
Kamakura, and brought into power with him men who
had been serfs under the old barons. His dictatorship was
the inevitable outcome of the incipient feudalism of Fuji­
waran times, and was to see its full fruition in the Shoguns
of the seventeenth century, who redeemed it by great
skill from being a tyranny, and gave Japan a constitution.

In 1180 Yoritomo set up the Bakufu or camp-rule
at Kamakura some three hundred miles from the capital,
and a system of dyarchy which was to have far-reaching
effects, and to last in various modifications till the 'restora­
tion' of the emperor in the nineteenth century.

The control of national finance was vested in the dic­
tator, who set up his own judiciary, kept a large standing
army, and appointed officials to both central and local
posts. To all these reforms the emperor 'consented': they
were in fact timely, for it was an age needing a strong
hand.

The Shoen or land-grant system had been so abused
that the whole country was divided among barons, monas­
teries, and manors, and Yoritomo and his retainers con­
tinued to think in such terms. But he could at least check
the power of his lieutenants, and to this end he 'humbly
petitioned' the emperor for the position of Shogun or
Generalissimo. It was refused at first, but granted in 1192,
and now a real military dictatorship began. Yoritomo's
men held vast estates and controlled vast armies not only
in the east but all over Japan, and by the end of the era
some provinces had only a tithe of public lands—the rest
belonging to great families and temples. But the Shoen,
or tax-free land, was now controlled, and taxes collected
by constables appointed by the Shogun, and many grants
were made only for life and not in perpetuity. The Shin­
den system of grants of land to colonists was also a notable
reform, and new business centres such as Nagasaki grew up, while guilds or za were organized—which had almost a monopoly in such trades as the sale of wine and rice.

Foreign trade throve, but so did piracy; and the threat of the Mongols begins about the fourteenth century to stimulate shipbuilding, already well developed.

In a word the dictatorship was justified by its fruits, and the Japanese are grateful to Yoritomo.

In 1192 he became Sei-i-tai Shogun, or Great Conqueror of the Barbarians, commander-in-chief and virtual dictator, but did not long enjoy his power. His death in 1195, when his son succeeded to the title of Shogun, was only to illustrate the Japanese saying: Taisho ni tanega nashi—‘to a military leader no seed’—and the commissioner Hojo Tokimasa became the wire-puller of this ‘puppet Regent of a puppet Emperor’.

The Japanese have named one of their insect pests Hojo, and have little but abuse for the old usurper. Yet the Hojo, though they did not call themselves Shogun, were able to quell the hostile clans and to repel the Mongols; and they gave Japan peace after long strife, and improved her economic and cultural life.

II

The period is in fact marked by a new virility, and coincides with the coming of a new spiritual impulse in the contemplative school of Buddhism. Zen masters played a great part in influencing scholars and artists as well as soldiers and statesmen, and stimulated the growth of many things characteristic of Japanese genius. No-drama, tea-ceremony, flower-arrangement, landscape-gardening, and a new and simpler architecture—these, with the stern code of Bushido, are its fruits.

And if Zen Buddhism did this for the aristocrats a new tide of the spirit was also flowing among the masses in the pietistic Buddhism of the Western Paradise, of which the Daibutsu Amida, set up at Kamakura in 1252, is the best known expression. Great, not as a work of art, but in
other-worldly calm and compassion, this colossal figure welcomes the believer to his paradise, asking only faith.

Now too Japanese Buddhism produced its great pietists Honen (1113–1212) and Shinran (1173–1262) and its most rugged and interesting figure Nichiren (1222–82), fierce critic of the pietists and of a degenerate nobility, who in due course convinced his persecutors and won over the Commissioner himself to the teachings of the Lotus Scripture, and to the need for national unity.

A new interest in personality is seen in the lives of the saints now compiled and illustrated, which, with the biographies of great statesmen and soldiers, form a kind of national epic. During the degeneracy of the Fujiwara, art had become tame and pretty; during the early shogunate it awoke to new and astonishing power. The name Yamatoye ‘Japanese’ is now used to distinguish this art from that of the mainland and its imitations, and it is remarkable for its vigour and for the national spirit manifest in it. The artists of the Kasuga, Tosa, and Sumiyoshi schools vied with one another in developing the new art, and sought in heroic tales, biographies, and histories of great temple foundations themes of a patriotic nature. Their Yemakimono or scrolls are realistic and dramatic, in vivid contrast to the calm and still figures of Buddhas and saints, or of scholars in some pleasant garden. The true founder of this school is the monk Toba Sojo, caricaturist and allegorist. Just as the Lady Murasaki wrote the Genji to amuse her princess so this good monk began towards the close of the same century to amuse his Emperor, Toba, in his retirement. His panoramas of frogs and animals at play are satires of human life, and his famous ‘Fighting Bulls’, reminiscent of Ajanta, are full of strength and fury. That he often painted without didactic purpose, whether of satire or of allegory, is also clear, and he is a harbinger of the modern age. The new art spread very rapidly; even fans covered with texts from the Buddhist scriptures are decorated also at this time with scenes from common life, precursors of the Ukiyoye or
'Passing Scenes' of the wood-block prints. A woman at her washing, a driver urging on his bullocks, these are the themes of such monk-artists, and they are painted with immense relish and vigour.

Humour and movement expressed in lines of great power and flexibility—these are the keynotes of the revolution in painting. The great scrolls illustrating the history of the Shigi-zan temple attributed to Toba Sojo are indeed 'unapproachable by any master of the preceding periods' in the esteem of Japanese connoisseurs, and they are followed by many masterpieces. They are a purely Japanese product, and such a scroll as Tosa Mitsunaga's All-Year-Round-Activities is a priceless record of the life of the age. He lived from 1166 to 1198 and his school has many great painters. Mitsunaga, Nobuzane, and Keio are a great trio of this era; what the Genji did for the Court they did for the nation at large, and for its heroes. Keio's scrolls of the Heiji war are the grandest and most classical of all battle-paintings, and Nobuzane's biographical studies of the adventures of Michizane are at once the symbol and fruit of the new zest and interest in living. Amidst all its shocks and catastrophes life in this period was never dull—except for shut-in emperors—and instead of the still and classic posing of the saints we get the vigorous movement of men at war, or of animals in combat.

Scions of the Fujiwara were caught by the new spirit, and the portraits of Fujiwara Takanobu are precious documents of the age. A portrait of Yoritomo himself exists; he is shown in his dark robes of office and his strong and ruthless character is well portrayed—with a suggestion of the grim cruelty which caused him to slay his young brother in the hour of victory.

Perhaps it was such dark deeds that called men to dwell on the horrors of hell—now most vividly portrayed by such Japanese painters as Nobuzane, a contemporary of Dante. For if Medicis and Yoritomos make a paradise of earth they also let hell loose, and Nobuzane dwells with grim detail upon the flames and demon-torturers who
await the proud victor. He shows us with glee a Fujiwara meeting the reward of his persecution of a Michizane, and who can doubt a didactic purpose in this son of Takanobu, himself a Fujiwara, who had seen with his own eyes the horrors of the rise of Yoritomo?

Strong portraits and statues also mark this new vigour and interest: Unkei, Kawaikei, and Tankei are great sculptors of this era, and a school of anonymous monk artists has left many a noble portrait of abbots and Zen masters. The people too were deeply interested—moved to tears at the death of the boy Yoshitsune at the hands of Yoritomo, or at the exile of the great Michizane; moved to ecstatic fervour by some great landscape or some ‘Buddha in the Mountains’. Kamakura served Japan well in this national awakening; and Kyoto continued the Chinese traditions of decorative and classic arts. But the new art could not be killed and the fifteenth century produced Japan’s greatest painters, Sesshu (1420—1506) and the Kano school, who are in turn the forerunners of the popular and plebeian art of the Ukiyoye.

The literary output of Kamakura was colossal—and mediocre; more than a million poems are preserved in sixteen official anthologies—such as the Shin Kokinshu—‘New Collection, Ancient and Modern’, and Kinyoshu—‘Golden Leaves Anthology’. Kamo Chomei is the best poet of the age, and Yoshida Kenko, another recluse, follows him. A new development was the Renga, a series of lyrics of such men as Tona and Mijyo Yoshimoto; and the naga-uta gave place to the imayo with alternating lines of seven and five syllables.

Military chronicles abound, such as the Gempei Seijuiki, ‘Rise and Fall of the Clans’, and the Taiheike or ‘Records of Peace’. This literature reflects a virile age, still aristocratic, but much more Spartan than that of Heian. In novels, travel-diaries, and ‘sentiments’ this age follows its predecessor with feeble imitations. Japan is needing a new impetus from China. It came with Zen Buddhism and with the great landscapes of Sung. They saved the
age from effeminacy, and brought some of its most noteworthy achievements to fruition. If the blossoming season lasted on into the Ashikaga period the seed was planted and largely harvested within that of Kamakura.

III

The chief Zen teacher of the era was Eeisai (1141–1215), a monk of Hiei who visited China and mastered the technique of contemplation and of the ‘dark sayings’ which encourage intuition by baffling reason and logic. Chinese Zenists also found in Japan a peaceful refuge from China in unrest, and they helped to lead Japan into ways of transcendental and carefree mysticism. Coming at the moment when the military were asserting their authority, and had need of firmness and courage, Zen played a great part also in political life. It could be practised in camp, on the march, or even on the battle-field; for it scorns images and books and sends man to find truth within. In their difficult daily decisions as governors too, these soldiers found guidance in this mental discipline, and men like Tokiyori (who ruled from 1246 to 1256) and Tokimune (1268–84) found constant inspiration in their Zen masters. Proud and highhanded with others, they had to humble themselves as children to enter into the Kingdom of Zen.

It is a kingdom in which all things are one in the indwelling Buddha, and it inspired painters like Mu-shih or Mokkei, a Chinese of Hangchou, and his Japanese pupil Mokuan, and through them the great Sesshu and Sesson and the Kanos—to simplify and strengthen their art by omission. With a few powerful strokes these contemplators would draw in a mood of ecstasy some large and tranquillizing landscape, or a mighty upland, or a Zen master at some dramatic moment in his spiritual history. Zen has been well described by Dr. Anesaki as ‘an adaptation of Hindu idealism to Chinese quietism and then to the intuitive insight and the practical nature of the Japanese people’. China had developed a peculiar technique which
gave strange new powers to her artists, and Japan intensified this by making it the discipline for the governing class. Combining a strong and austere ethic with keen sensitiveness to beauty it proclaimed a way of life, Bushido, which is Athenian in its search for the Good, the True and the Beautiful, and Spartan in its stern simplicity.

Seated in his bare yet lovely tea-room the nobleman looked out into a garden of perfect proportions, an abode of serenity, and here his idealism was quickened and his courage nerv ed to the tasks of the day; or, failing, sought here resignation and stoicism; and as he developed powers of intuition reached at rare moments Satori or enlightenment. For Zen—tutor of warrior and of aristocrat—is after all Buddhism; garden and tea-ceremony and zazen are but the technique ‘for the dispersal of the clouds of ignorance and worldly care that the moon may shine undimmed’. So man awakes to the Inner Light. Satori as written in the Chinese chronicles means ‘I’ and ‘Mind’; it is the symbol for the discovery of the true self—or core of one’s own being and of all things. This leads to acquiescence and resignation as well as to peace, and another aspect of it is resolution to go forward, repenting of the evil or expiating the past.

Bushido means the Way of Knighthood, and it is Zen which called into articulate expression this code of the Samurai. Handed down orally, or accepted almost unconsciously, it is an organic growth with many roots. Some are in the old Shinto with its sense of unseen presences, ‘a cloud of witnesses’ calling on their descendants to be worthy; some are in Buddhism, such as resignation and the sense of the transiency of life. Thus when a great teacher of sword-play had done his part he could say ‘Beyond this I leave you to Zen’. If then the Shinto root is loyalty and reverence to the Kami, the Buddhist root is in mystical experience: when all passes that abides. If Shinto inculcated loyalty to country, Buddhism taught loyalty to truth, and these as we know are often in conflict.
The clear and systematic ethic of K'ung Fu-tse helped at times of doubt and difficulty; with its insistence on right relationships it gave to the nobles many a clue, for it is a worldly-wise system for the statesman who has to take things as he finds them, and can only change them by slow orderly processes. The more democratic theories of Meng-tse, too, helped the usurpers by reminding them that the Son of Heaven is their Lord only so long as he fills the role worthily, and they could not take the poor puppets at Kyoto seriously. Thus loyalty to the empire became a convenient substitute for loyalty to the throne, and on the whole they did well by it.

The Hojo regents were competent rulers, and until 1333 nine of them carried on the government efficiently. In 1232 they put out a new code of rules for judges—the Joei Shikimoku—to regulate military administration and to inculcate morality. 'I fear that the people of the capital will scoff at such maxims—the work of ignorant barbarians,' said Yasutoki its author. But it became the law of the land—its very simplicity being in its favour and winning the support of the people, who prefer a rough and ready justice to the slow machinery of law.

'The Kamakura rulers have it to their credit that they recognized in the cultivator the basis of the country's economy,' says Sansom, though he points out that the code favoured the feudal magnate at the expense of the peasant. Yet taxation was adjusted to the harvest, and water-rights protected, and from the earliest times until now the question of boundaries has occupied the attention of rulers in a land of small terraced fields.

To Kyoto Kamakura set an example of frugality and simplicity, and by sumptuary laws sought to curb the ostentation of the rich. When calamities such as the great earthquake of 1257 and the famine and plague of 1259 decimated the country the Hojo saved Japan from revolution and anarchy. In 1274 a vast Mongol fleet of Korean ships was put to flight, and in 1281 after fierce fighting another armada of 50,000 Mongols and Koreans and
100,000 Chinese, attacking in two great squadrons, was routed by the islanders, aided by a great storm. Of 4,000 ships only a tithe escaped, and of the army only a fifth.

Yet the Kyoto clans were dissatisfied and envious of Kamakura, which was losing its morale. Supporting a rival claimant to the throne the Bakufu was finally crushed by Daigo II, and Kamakura captured and destroyed in 1333. Kyoto was now once more the capital, and the regency was at an end. But feudal families were still potent, and the Minamoto came back to power in the person of Ashikaga Takauji, who had thrown in his lot with Daigo II, and by 1392 his family was again in the saddle, and the Ashikaga Shogunate began.

IV

But we must now turn back to the pietists who made salvation by faith their main teaching, and bade men rejoice in the grace of Amitabha and accept the Paradise prepared for them. Honen and his disciple Shinran were contemporaries of Bernard of Clairvaux and of Francis of Assisi, and they afford interesting parallels.

Coming after the futility and confusion of the Crusades these devotees of Christ brought new life to monastery and people. So Honen and Shinran, after the civil feuds of Taira and Minamoto, called weary men to other-worldly peace and joy. Denouncing luxury and degeneracy all four great figures held up a more excellent way of happiness, and, embracing the Lady Poverty, rebuked the wealthy and proud leaders of the Church. Of all mediaeval Christian saints Bernard and Francis made the deepest impression on their times, not by their intellect nor by their might, but rather by their childlike joy and their strong sense of the Divine Grace.

So was it in mediaeval Japan with Honen and Shinran. They compelled men by the contagion of their joy to sing the praises of Amitabha. Men of meekness thus became men of might, and pioneers of a new democracy in Church and State. Out of their ‘other-worldliness’ sprang a new
ethnic for the affairs of this world; men were to love their 'little brethren', who are also pilgrims of the Eternal and sons of the Compassionate. By their loving example they incarnated the Divine anew among men; and if the Hymns of Bernard, and Francis' 'Canticle of the Sun' ring with this love for God and his creatures, so, though with less genius, do the Wasan or Psalms of Honen and Shinran. For the Sun of Eternal Love has illuminated their hearts and all things have become new.

As in Europe, so too in Japan a great impetus was given to art by these men who were not themselves artists, and the Kamakura and Ashikaga periods—with all their failings—produced sublime things such as the gorgeous kakemonos of Amitabha and the Bodhisattvas preserved in imperial museums. Many a vision of the saints was thus recorded: for men learned by a popular technique of meditation to see the Unseen, to look for Amida and the loving Kwannon seated in the spray of some waterfall, or to find Jizo, the friend of dead children, in the gloom of some forest cemetery.

To help in this process of popularization the drama was also called in and adapted to the No mysteries or miracle-plays of transcendental purport, which even if they are inspired by Zen owe many of their themes also to Amida Buddhism. They were, and are still, played in the courtyards of the temples of both sects.

To the genius of Kawanami Kiyotsugu (1333–84) and his son Seami Motokiyo (1363–1444) Japan owes the No in its present form. Developing the old Shinto masquerades and ritual dances, and blending them with Chinese dramas, Japan gradually produced and evolved this exquisite art. Yoshimitsu, towards the end of the Kamakura era, has the credit of recognizing in the actor Kawanami a man of genius, and he protected him and his little son, whom he petted and invited to his own table. Deeply imbued with the teachings of Zen these actors sought to lead their audiences 'below the surface of things' to their real meaning, from the transient to the abiding values.
JAPANESE GARDENS
But the Buddhism of Amitabha and of Kwannon—of Sukui, salvation, is not really separate from that of Satori, enlightenment. They are but aspects of the same thing, stages of the same journey, and Zen masters if they deny the Western Paradise in space find it in time, in the heart of man. In one well-known No play, Sotoba Komichi, we find Zen masters and the monks of Shingon arguing about their respective creeds; but Buddhism in its wider teachings—salvation from rebirth and sorrow, and the dread laws of Karma and Samsara, are the themes of many of the plays. Ghosts appear, to tell us of the dread land of shadows, or monks expiating in a lifelong penance some deed of violence or of treachery. The strifes of Taira and Minamoto naturally supply many a theme: and Kumagai, who slew the boy Atsumori, is seen in the play dedicated to his memory as the priest Rensei, meeting the ghost of his gallant young victim.

The play opens, as always, with an enigmatic couplet, the jidai:

Life is a nightmare; he alone awakes
Who casts aside the world as dross.

It then states who is the chief speaker, and tells his story in brief:

Of Musashi am I, once known as Kumagai;
Leaving home-life I am the Priest Rensei.
From grief for Atsumori whom I slew
I took the vows and robes of monkish life;
To Ichinotani I go, to pray for Atsumori's soul.

This is followed by the slow and stately dance of the traveller; and his travel-song, with its dissolving pictures, floating glimpses of scenery which represent the phantasmagoria of the phenomenal world. All this is intended to attune the audience, to awaken intuition and imagination. There follows a dialogue between a young reaper (who is the ghost of Atsumori) and the priest, and a solemn dance and the wailing of the boy's pipe make vivid the inner meaning of the words, as he reveals his lineage to his slayer.
As the first scene closes we find the priest upon his knees making to Amida his own famous vow to enter no paradise till all the universe is saved; for he too was once a monk, and knows human needs. The deep voices of the chorus take up his words:

_Ah! Turn me not from Paradise!_
_O one vow enough; yet night and day_
_Let endless supplication rise_
_For me, whom, knowing not, thou sav’st_
_With prayers at dawn and at the twilight hour._

Then comes a recitative, telling how Kumagai slew the boy, and the audience is ready for the ghost, now dressed as a young soldier. Priest and victim are reconciled in the bonds of faith, and at last with solemn chant and slow dance the play ends with the wondering cry of Atsumori, who advances on the priest with drawn sword:

_‘Lo! My enemy!’ he shouts, and is about to strike;_
_But the other has grown compassionate,_
_And calling upon the Buddha’s name_
_Has won for his late foe deliverance._
_So shall these twain be born again_
_And sit together on one lotus-throne._
_‘Nay, Rensei is no enemy of mine!_
_‘Ah, pray for my salvation, pray again.’_

Like the dying of a wind in a great storm the voice of the young soldier ends in a sigh, as he slowly passes from the scene.

The religious values—numinous and tragic—of this great drama must be felt to be appreciated. It was and is a mighty power for refining and chastening the soul of man in an age of conflict and difficulty, and to followers of the Minamoto or Taira or to devotees of Amida and disciples of Honen it had a specially poignant appeal. The very archaism of the language and gestures heightens the effect of its grandeur and mystery; and the gorgeous costumes, the impersonality of masked faces, the deep sepulchral voices and the wailing notes of the chorus—all
A NO ACTOR
this set in the simplest setting of plain wooden stage with one painted pine tree produces an indescribable effect.

We of the West cannot fathom its mysteries, but we can recognize a high and complex art in which the architectural perfection of the speeches and the harmonious blending of rhythm and tone are a truly great achievement.

The comic spirit of the old 'monkey-dances' lived on in Kyogen, light social comedies which charmed the crowd as the No allured the intelligentsia. While in No the other-worldly and superhuman is expressed, in Kyogen it is the human and everyday that delights the audience, and as in the drawings of the Yamatoye here is satire as well as comedy. 'Realism upon low levels finds free play . . . the moral weakness of degenerate priests, the buffoonery of country clowns, the plight of unsuspecting men, and the shrewdness of immoral women.'

Yet it was often Buddhist monks who wrote such plays. We learn that in the year 1300 Engaku Shonin of the Paradise Sect introduced them to attract the crowd, and to give ethical precepts in humorous and palatable form. It is at the Festival of the Buddha's Birth that such plays—often a kind of pantomime—are given, as the Christian mysteries were given at the Christmas Festival in mediaeval Europe. Historical drama grew out of the novels through the dramatic chanting of such tales as the Heike Monagatari, and the adventures of Yoritomo; puppets and music were introduced to make the tale vivid, and these in the seventeenth century gave place to the actors of the Kabuki or popular stage.

The common people also—no less imbued with a deep love of the beautiful but less articulate and sophisticated—found great delight at this time in the haiku or popular lyrics, in which the life of the wayside and of the wayfaring man finds gem-like expression. Some wandering monk or painter would be entertained at farm or cottage, and would pay for his entertainment by composing and singing for his hosts brief impressionist accounts of his

journey. As with a vivid stroke or two the Zen artist made a picture, so these strolling minstrels would call up in a little lyric epigram of three lines a series of scenes which linger in the mind like the notes of a bell. 'Pregnancy and suggestiveness, brevity and ellipsis,' says Dr. Miyamori, are the qualities of haiku: 'symbolism, naturalism, and quietude their essence.'

Were it not for his thin cry,
The heron sitting motionless
Is but a drift of snow upon a log,
says one such haiku of the fifteenth century, and from now on this art became very popular.

A mountain shack,
And by the well
A flowering plum,
is one haiku:

A boat and a fishing net
Fade into shadowy darkness;
 Falls the cool evening calm,
is another.

Such little landscapes are the inspiration of the haijin, and in the art of Sesshu and his school is found its counterpart in painting, learning the technique from China and adding original motifs, free from bonds of convention.

The decorative figure-paintings and gay colour schemes of the Ashikaga palaces were in part a reaction against this simplicity, and the fact that the common people preferred the scenes of everyday life to the gorgeous cloud palaces and Taoist paradises of China is to their credit. It is a revelation of the true spirit of Japan. Out of popular taste, too, grew the Ukiyoye or colour-prints, which for humour and vigour are unsurpassed. But these belong to a later age, as do great haijins like Basho: they may best be studied in their setting of the rising tide of democratic life during the later Shogunate.

If, then, the age of the earlier Shoguns was one of social darkness and chaos, with two rival thrones as well as a dictatorship, and with fears of invasion from the Mongols,
it was also an age of the maturing of Japanese civilization and of the flowering of a spirit which is unique and characteristic of the complex mentality of a very gifted race. Idealism and imagination are seen blending with realism: and the great arts of No, of the tea-ceremony, as of painting and calligraphy are an escape from the rigours of life, a compensation for toil and sad realities. So too might the soul escape from cold and poverty to the rich and splendid paradise of Amitabha, as one might behold in ecstasy the vision of the eternal Sakyamuni, seated on a heavenly mountain peak, welcoming his followers to Buddhahood.

Characteristic of this age is the rough prophet and seer Nichiren (1222–82). His life was set in difficult times, and he was a man of the people, his father being a humble fisherman. Poverty, earthquake, flood, famine, and the horrors of civil strife combined to convince him that the times were evil, and that he must call men to repentance and to ‘establish righteousness’. Blaming the sentimental pietism of Amida and the subtle philosophy of Shingon as much as the corrupt courtiers and plotters, he bade all turn back to the eternal Sakyamuni. He warned the government of impending disaster, and when the fleets of Kublai Khan were actually on the sea, prayed to his Buddha and saw them scattered by a great typhoon.

Amidst great hardships, through exile and persecution, he continued to preach the saving power of the Lotus Scripture, in which he saw cosmic reality incarnate, as the remedy for the weakness of the times. Unsparing of himself he went on missionary tours throughout the empire, and with him Buddhism assumes a popular and virile form, filtering down to the poorest. If Shinran is Japan’s Wesley or Francis, Nichiren is its Luther—a combative and bold reformer, ruthless in attack and iconoclastic in his zeal. All other Buddhist leaders were not only mistaken, they were traitors in his eyes, inculcating strange foreign ways, and leading men not to salvation, but to perdition.
420 KAMAKURA AGE OF MILITARY RULE

There were fortunately others who, like Erasmus, went on with the work of a larger and more humane scholarship. Many of them were aristocrats of Fujiwara and Minamoto stock, patrons of the arts, and themselves amateurs of ability, such as Fujiwara Shunsei (1144–1204), Minamoto Hanetamo (1153–1216) and Fujiwara Tsoka (1182–1241). As men fled to Buddhist monasteries and to the other-worldly joys of Amidism or the transcendentalism of Zen, so those man of affairs found alleviation and solace in the arts, emperors among them. While the Shoguns lived in luxury and pomp the Imperial House languished in poverty. Of one emperor we read that as deserted and impoverished he had lived in seclusion so in death he lay forty days unburied, till his heir had to borrow from Buddhist monks to pay for the ceremonies of enthronement. His successor in turn took to selling his poems or copies of the classics in his own exquisite calligraphy. What was left to such men but scholarship?

Japan had fallen on evil days; the Ashikaga paid tribute to China, and Japan was in humiliation and in darkness when there arose a group of men who are rightly regarded as her saviours in the Dark Ages.

At this time Marco Polo had reported to Europe upon the wealth of Zipangu, and Columbus had sought the sea-route to India and had hoped to find the islands of Japan —soon now to be awakened by the emissaries of the Cross and by the captains of Spain and Portugal and of Protestant rulers who were founding upon the spoils of war a new imperialism. As in Mogul India so in Ming China and in the Japan of the Shoguns, the West was knocking at the door.

THE SPIRIT OF MEDIAEVAL JAPAN

I. HONEN’S BOYHOOD

After Sada-akira's flight, he went into a life of seclusion, and his mind gradually became subdued and penitent for his past sins. He grieved lest deserved suffering should befall him; so he did not neglect prayer to the Buddha, until he realized his fond hope of birth
into the Pure Land. Through the influence of Honen his posterity adopted the sole practice of the Jodo. Being no common boy, how could he hate an enemy? Such facts clearly illustrate the marvellous way in which the Buddhas overrule even the most untoward events for the carrying out of their saving purpose towards men. So let none who still wander in the mazes of illusion, entertain any doubt regarding these wonderful occurrences.

Now in this province there was a cloister known as Bodaiji, the abbot of which was Kwangaku, a priest who bore the honourable title of Tokugo. When he was a student in the Enriakuji Temple on Mount Hiei, he was much disappointed at not being able to obtain this coveted title, and so he removed to the southern capital (Nara), where he studied the doctrine of the Hosso sect, and at length realized his long cherished ambition. So people called him Hisashi no Tokugo (the long desiring Tokugo). As he was Hada's younger brother, he was the uncle of Seishi Maru, who, in harmony with his father's dying request, had been put under Kwangaku's care. The boy's natural aptitude for study was as quick as the swiftly flowing mountain stream. If you told him one thing he understood ten. He never forgot anything he was told.

As Kwangaku saw that the boy's talents were unusual, he thought it was too bad for such a genius to waste his time, covered up in the dust of an out-of-the-way country-side, and so, as was most fitting, he began to make preparations for sending him up to the cloud-land of Hiei, the sacred Mount of Tendai. As soon as the boy heard of his uncle's intention, he had no more heart for remaining in his native place, but thought only of hastening away to the capital.

Kwangaku gladly went with him to his mother to talk the matter over, when the boy spoke to her in the following strain, 'After many painful transmigrations, I have at length attained the glory of being born a man. In a world of illusion I have at length come face to face with the teaching of the Buddha which dispels it all. When one comes to see before one's very eyes the utter changeableness of all things, he cannot but reject the bloom-like glory of the visionary world. Above all my father's parting words keep ringing in my ears, and I cannot forget them. And so I must at once proceed up Mount Shimei, and enter upon the study of the one only Vehicle. Of course, mother, as long as you live, I shall fulfil my filial duty to you morning and evening to the utmost; but as one of the Sutras says, the best way for children to show their gratitude to their parents is by turning away from the temporal, and devoting themselves to the eternal.
Let not therefore your sorrow over a morning good-bye cast its
gloom over the whole day.' With many such words did he comfort
his mother's heart.

She was so thoroughly convinced of the reasonableness of all he
said, that she gave consent to his request, and yet she was so over­
whelmed with grief that the tears ran down her sleeve upon the boy's
raven locks. It was hard for her, as it always is for flesh and blood,
to bear up under such sorrows, and so easy to yield to the feelings
of nature which are bound to arise at a time of separation from loved
ones. Her grief found expression in the following memorable lines:

Alas for me! what shall I do when I must even part
With this my boy—his father's one last gift to cheer my heart!

But in spite of all her heart protests, she sent the boy by Kwangaku
to a priest called Kihobo Genko, who was living in the northern part
of the western section of the three groups of temples on Mount
Hiei. In his letter of introduction to Genko, Kwangaku said,
'I send you herewith an image of the great and revered Monju',
by which he meant to indicate the boy's extraordinary ability.

Thus in his fifteenth year, like one who leaves behind him the
dense mists of the work-a-day world and ascends into the beautiful
cloud-land, the boy bids farewell to his country home, and comes up
to the capital, on the thirteenth day of the second month of the third
year of Kyuan (1147) in the reign of the Emperor Konoe. As he
was passing along the Toba road to Kyoto, he met the Regent,
Tadamichi Fujiwara of the Hoshoji Temple. Dismounting from
his horse, he made obeisance, when the Regent ordered his carriage
to be stopped, and asked who that person was. A priest accompany­
ing the boy told who he was, whereupon the Regent courteously
saluted him and passed on. At this his attendants were quite sur­
prised, but later he said to them, 'The boy we met by the way had
a peculiar light in his eyes, and I am sure he is of no common mould.
That is why I saluted him.' And when we come to think of it, may
not the fact that his son Kanezane of Tsudinowa became an earnest
believer in Honen, have been due to the deep impression left on his
mind by hearing this story from his father. It is indeed quite possible.

(From the Life of Honen, tr. by Coates and Ishizuki.)

II. A LETTER FROM NICHIREN TO TOKIMORI HOJO

I, Nichiren, am perhaps the most intractable man in Japan. I
warned you that all manner of disasters would take place, because
you worshipped Amita, Dainichi, and those Buddhas whom you
held dearer than your parents and more precious than your sovereign; and that you were destined, in this world, to ruin yourselves and cause the fall of the country, and in the future life, to sink to the nethermost hell. Because I gave these warnings incessantly, I am suffering from persecutions. . . . I am suffering from the perils heaped upon me by my adversaries, three in kind, simply because I am the one who lives the life of the Lotus of Truth. That you have become a follower of such a man is something beyond common expectation; there must be some significance in the fact. Be strenuous in your faith, and prepare yourself to partake in the communion of the Paradise of Vulture Peak!

You have sent one sword, with its mate, as your offering . . . to the Lotus of Truth. The swords were, while in your hands, weapons of malice; now, being offered to Buddha, they are weapons of good. . . . These swords will serve as staves in your journey beyond. Know that the Lotus of Truth is the staff for all Buddhas on their way to enlightenment! Especially rely on me, Nichiren, as the staff and pillar! . . . The Sacred Title will be your guidance and support on the journey after death. The Buddhas Prabhuta-ratna and Sakya-muni, as well as the four chief Bodhisattvas, will surely lead you by the hand. If I should be there before you, I, also, will not fail to welcome you . . . I cannot say all I have to say in this letter. Put your faith in all the deities (the guardians of the Truth)! March indefatigably on in the way of faith, and reach your final destiny! Tell your ladies also of all this! Sincerely in reverence.

(From M. Anesaki's Nichiren.)

III. SHINRAN PRAISES SHOTOKU

That mighty compassionate Bodhisattva our Saviour was made manifest in the flesh as Lord Shotoku, who like a father forsakes us not, like a mother is ever with us.

From the beginning of time even until now hath the great Prince the compassionate dwelt amongst us like father and mother. He in his pity has urged us to claim the Divine Promise of the Light-bearer in his wondrous wisdom. Through this we are pressed to all the virtues, no more to birth and death. . . . Him must we praise evermore, having sought refuge in him with a single mind: Shotoku, Lord of Teaching, whose great mercy is beyond the expression of our hearts.
To have mastered the five classics is no sure road to amiability.

GENJI MONAGATARI.

I

The era takes its name from a section of the city of Kyoto in which the Ashikaga Shoguns lived much more magnificent and less ineffective lives than the emperors. ‘Ostensibly a contest between two rival courts, essentially it was a phase of redistribution of feudal privilege. . . . For more than sixty years the whole country was wasted by struggles between feudal barons . . . striving to satisfy personal ambitions’, says Sansom, who points out that the Ashikaga had to bargain with these ‘war-lords’ for support, and that the centralized government of Kamakura gave place to a shadowy authority, loyalties being narrow and local if they were intense and often chivalrous.

The first Shogun, Takauji, and the second, Yoshiakira, spent their time in ceaseless struggles with their nominal vassals, and from 1336, when they moved to Kyoto, to 1392, when the long dispute as to the royal succession ended, the Shogunate was a pale copy of that of Kamakura. The Ashikaga were no match for their vigorous predecessors, and theirs is an age not only of anarchy but of luxury, vice, and degeneration.

It is the fashion to sentimentalize about Bushido, largely because it was robust and austere in an age of effeminacy: it is hard to justify the lives of most of the Bushi by this or any other moral code; and the last century of Ashikaga rule, like the first, was made a farce by their lawlessness and greed rather than redeemed by their discipline and detachment. Yet the fourteenth century saw a growing cultural influence as these men of war came under Kyoto’s spell, and were somewhat refined by Chinese studies and tamed by Zen. ‘The successful warriors, while treating the
court nobles with contempt, aspired to their elegance', and
the Ashikaga were better as connoisseurs than as rulers.

The third Shogun, Yoshimitsu, resembles Jahangir in
his passionate dilletantism and love of display. The whole
Court had a craze for novelty: to China they looked for
this, for elegant models, and also for money. We find
little of the professed horror of the Samurai for either
luxury or sordid wealth; nor did they 'let national pride
interfere with business', making trade-treaties with the
Sung, and employing Zen monks as intermediaries.

Like our own Quakers and India's Jains here were
pacific quietists engaged in the promotion of worldly
enterprises.

Zen was becoming not only the official religion but
the arbiter of taste and ethics and the promoter of com­
merce: yet Buddhist monks were soon to accuse their
Christian rivals of mixing religion with trade and politics.

The situation is made even more piquant by the nature
of their cargoes—swords and other weapons, copper and
sulphur. The latter the Chinese used largely to make fire­
works and ceremonial bowls; the former they collected,
but seldom used. In return Japan received cash, pictures
(often priceless), drugs, and printed books—the neo-Con­
fucian classics and encyclopaedias in which Sung China
delighted. The port-cities grew in importance, and a new
class of wealthy middlemen grew up, who were useful to
the military as money-lenders and contractors, and to
Japan as collectors. The religious houses, both Shinto and
Buddhist, patronized the guilds, and helped them to get
just treatment: so money made in war went, as often else­
where, to enrich the Church, which spent it largely in
keeping up garrisons of armed retainers.

The parallels between mediaeval Japan and mediaeval
Europe are many and interesting. The farmers and
peasants as usual paid the bill, and often complained, even
at times rioting and pillaging merchant and monastery;
and piracy became a lucrative and safe alternative to
unrequited toil.
After a long period of impotence the Ashikaga Shogunate came to an end in 1597—though the last Shogun had actually abdicated twenty-two years before and died in exile.

As we have seen in post-Mauryan India and in pre-T'ang China an age of war and violence may yet produce much of cultural value. During the whole Muromachi era the arts throve, encouraged by rich patrons in Church and State, and made possible by the new prosperity. The influence of Sung China was, as we have seen, another important factor, and Kyoto, a copy of Ch'ang-an, became the successor of Hang-chou.

Following Zen masters like Mokkei, we find great portrait painters like Cho Densu (d. 1431) a typical painting by whom is the strong and realistic work here reproduced. The former was a Chinese who was followed by a school of painters in black and white, and the latter also worked in this medium. The visitor to Kyoto will be shown the wonderful triptych of Mokkei, a Kwannon flanked by cranes and monkeys, a masterpiece of skilful brushwork. But it was a Zen principle that 'real mastery is as it were unskilful', and there now begins a succession of Zen masters whose brushwork differs notably from that of earlier Japanese painters. The succession is from Josetsu, to Shubun, to Sesshu; and some critics place Shubun at the very pinnacle of Japanese art. Sesshu acknowledged him as his master and he was the Shoguns' official artist. Their palaces, in marked contrast to their rather gaudy successors, were decorated by such Zen masters, who went direct to Korea and China for inspiration. Shubun, who lived from 1397 to 1476, was the arbiter of taste in this aesthetic age, which relied upon understatement and impressionism for its effects. These men are far from being mere copyists of Sung China: their works are 'aglow with lustrous qualities of their own invention', says Mr. Taki, who exalts Sesshu above his teachers, because of this flame of genius in him. He lived from 1420 to 1506, and his virile and yet sensitive landscapes
PORTRAIT OF A ZEN ABBOT

(CHO DENSU)
are known everywhere. Here subtlety blends with strength, and simplicity of line with architectonic grandeur. If the rhythm is Taoist and the simplicity is Zen there is a peculiar Japanese blend of vigour and charm in these almost crystalline rocks to which gnarled pines or skeleton maples cling precariously. If the season be spring the artist simplifies a cliff into a few bold strokes, but paints every leaf of a ginko or a bamboo: or with a few strokes shows us some frail craft driven by a winter gale.

A new school arose from this new technique, that of the Kanos; and new vigour was put into the old Tosa school, which had specialized in historic scrolls, and which now began to intermarry with the Kanos.

And as in painting Japan begins to vie with her teachers so in domestic architecture. This period produces the Kinkaku, or Golden Pavilion, to remind us of the glories of Hang-chou. It is a three-story villa with graceful curving roofs, and blends several styles of architecture with studied simplicity, from the simple gilded prayer-room at the top to the decorated hall at the middle where the Shogun Yoshimitsu used to gather his friends for contests in poetry and calligraphy, or for some tea-ceremony or No play. Below are his living-quarters, set in a perfect garden of rock and water and stunted shrubs.

Vying with this refinement Yoshimasa, the Lorenzo Medici of Japan, built the Ginkaku, or Silver Pavilion some fifty years later; and to this lovely villa he retired to collect objects of art from China and Korea and from living Japanese masters, or gathered a select group to watch his company of No actors, for whom many able writers supplied plays.

Poetry of other kinds declined, but from now on many a haijin excelled in the art of extemporization, and the novelette appears to prepare the way for the story-tellers of the next era. These writers and actors supplemented the work of the temple schools, which produced their own school-texts and story-books. They also encouraged the carving of images and of masks for No-drama. Compared
with the secular art of painters and architects they have little to show that is characteristically religious: for, through Zen, religion has done its work in inspiring the 'secular'.

II

After the Ashikaga another era of war between great barons is accompanied by a growing demand for peace and for a strong hand; and by the beginning of the seventeenth century the great Tokugawa family was supreme. Fore-runners of this era of reconstruction and modernization are three remarkable leaders—Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu. Nobunaga (1534—82), son of a country gentleman and known in his youth as 'my Lord the Fool', made himself master of Kyoto, and deposed the Shogun in 1573, and though he could not assume the title—now hereditary in the Minamoto clan—he usurped the functions of the Shogunate.

After long struggles in which Hideyoshi, an ugly adventurer of amazing courage and ambition nicknamed 'Monkey-face', and Ieyasu, a very wise scion of the Minamoto, helped him, Nobunaga subdued his rivals, mastered the Buddhist abbots, flirted with the Jesuits, and finally broke the power of feudal lords, laying the foundations for a unified government. As he was burning monasteries and slaying monks on Hiei San a general protested, only to be told 'I must give peace to the empire and re-establish the throne. For these ends I go in daily peril.' And he comforted himself with the lines:

The fool alone fears death; the idler dreams life away.
Man dies but once; let death be swift and grand, I pray.

His prayer was heard, and at the height of his vigour this vivid figure, the last of the great mediaeval barons, met his end. Imprisoned in a Buddhist temple, he is said to have committed harakiri, the last refuge of a Japanese gentleman from disgrace, and his body was burnt in the flames of this last of the many temples he had destroyed.

1 Suicide by disembowelling.
So against a lurid background we catch a last glimpse of this rugged figure—one of Japan’s great men, a brilliant empire-builder of undaunted courage and of constructive genius.

During the intervals of his stormy life Nobunaga showed wise statesmanship in strict control of his army and in curtailing customs and other taxes. He lent money to encourage trade, and began to improve roads and lanes, which had fallen into terrible disrepair, till they were ‘only fit for birds and beasts’. He taxed the great temples heavily, and also, it must be said, bore heavily upon the country-folk to the benefit of the citizens of Kyoto. As he played off Christians against Buddhists so he did not scruple to play off the town against the country. The people of Kyoto were loud in his praises, while the missionaries believed he was about to ask for baptism. The only baptism he actually received was on the historic occasion when he jumped into a bath full of Buddhist priests, his enemies in the spiritual sphere, to escape the armed retainers of his rivals in the material.

He was a wise financier, minting gold coins for the first time in Japan, and using interest on government loans for public works. He laid sound foundations for fiscal and other reforms.

Hideyoshi (1536—98) is an even more arresting figure. A loyal lieutenant, he crowned an amazing youth by becoming Nobunaga’s counsellor and friend, and his obvious successor. Building the massive castle of Osaka and a gay palace at Kyoto, he coveted the Shogunate but had to be content with the Regency. This office of Kwampaku was given him in 1571 and in 1586 he was made Taiko, or Great Merit. In wars with the Satsuma and the Hojo and in a great expedition against Korea he proved his genius as a general, and he even cast eyes on China, saying he could ‘roll it up like a carpet’.

At home he showed a realistic grasp of affairs; he suppressed bandits, built roads and bridges, encouraged farming, employed his large army in constructive activities,
and kept a strong hand on the great nobles, protecting the people from exactions. He had the country surveyed between 1589 and 1595 and for the first time since the land-system of Taikwa had been disrupted by greedy barons and greedier monks, Japan had a unified and orderly system of laws and ordinances. Henceforth every farmer was to have one-third of the produce of the land he rented. Most of them then, as now, had very small farms; and Hideyoshi deserves credit for increasing, by about one-tenth, the land under cultivation.

He needed much money for the central government and for his own lavish expenditure, and he undoubtedly taxed the provinces too heavily to obtain it; yet his fiscal system ranks with his defeat of the Satsuma and the invasion of Korea as one of his greatest exploits. None of them is perfectly laudable; for he was after all a self-seeking adventurer. But he did Japan notable service, and is considered by many the greatest statesman of his age. A great soldier and administrator, Hideyoshi is remembered also as a master-builder, a genial and merry spirit, a man of the new Japan, who had given her unity and peace. Like Elizabeth of England he encouraged both piracy and trade, and like her had good reason to suspect Rome of mingling politics with religion.

The Japanese have two interesting epitomes of this era; one the very familiar proverb of the nightingale: 'If it won't sing I'll wring its neck', said Nobunaga; 'I'll coax it', said Hideyoshi; and 'I'll sit and wait', said Tokugawa Ieyasu. The other sets these three remarkable men together in relation to one another: 'Nobunaga made the fire, Hideyoshi cooked the meat, Ieyasu ate it.'

This aristocrat inherited a great task and great beginnings. Appointed president of a council of five by Hideyoshi he reorganized the new feudalism which goes by his family name of Tokugawa, and set up an intricate machinery of government with checks and counter-checks. But this belongs to modern history, and we may leave the great diplomat informing himself of the affairs of Europe,
and determining that Japan shall remain mistress in her
own house. The unity and order which Hideyoshi and he
gave her established a new era of discipline and obedience
to central government which has served her well. Unique
in so many other things, Japan is unique also among the
nations of Asia in maintaining her integrity.

As she learned more of Europe she became cautious
about admitting its envoys. ‘Those were the days of the
Inquisition, of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, of Alva’s
torture of the Netherlands, and of the merciless slave
trade.’ Hideyoshi and Ieyasu had no doubt ‘sniffed the
faintest perfume of all those flowers of the Renaissance’,
says Sansom. But they were rather the weeds of the
Counter-Reformation; and Japan, while she welcomed the
religion of Europe as akin to Buddhism, and had nothing
but respect for Francis Xavier, the Spanish nobleman
who came in humility and poverty in 1549, grew sus-
picious of the ethics of Europe, and of the intrigues of
some of Xavier’s successors. Will Adams, the stout Eliza-
bethan sailor, taught the Shogun something beside ship-
building and the making of maps and guns. Increasing
suspicions of Spain and Portugal made Hideyoshi and
Ieyasu put on the screws—dreadful enough, but mild com-
pared with those of the Inquisition—alike on the Catholic
Orders and the Protestant trading companies, both of
which groups were making much headway. In 1612 after
preliminary edicts and proscriptions, Ieyasu, crying ‘A
plague on both your houses’, let loose the pent-up furies
of persecution upon the Catholics, and narrowly limited
the activities of the Dutchmen, who, true to the principles
of Luther, were quite content to leave the heathen to God.
Shut into their factory at Nagasaki from which they had
exported many cargoes of bullion and of the art treasures
now in Dutch museums, they were left to chew the cud
of their own bitter invective against the Catholics.

The Samurai often showed mercy to the religious. So
far as we can gather the Protestants egged them on to the
task of crucifixion and holocaust.
But let us turn away from the disgusting spectacle of the followers of the Prince of Peace at internecine feuds and abetting the followers of the Middle Path in their defiance of moderation and Ahimsa, and visit the tombs of the Shoguns, a true epitome of this age.

Beside a mountain-stream at Nikko, whose banks are a flame of crimson maple in the autumn, and amidst a forest of cryptomerias two of the great pioneers lie, honoured by a grateful country with tombs which are also shrines. Resplendent in gaily painted and intricate carving, sombre with black lacquer, strong in massive roofs, with stone stairways, and avenues of lanterns, they are approached through tiers of silent courtyards. And here are gathered the pathetic memorials of the daily life of these great rulers, who gave Japan an ordered and disciplined life.

If they lack the chastity of Horiuji, the grace of the Phoenix Hall, and the sophisticated simplicity of the Kinkaku and if they have no works of master-painters or sculptors, they are yet the fine flower of a splendid age, when craftsmen delighted in their craft, and when men breathed, as in Elizabethan England and in the India of Akbar, the invigorating breath of a new era. At the end of the seventeenth century the Dutch scientist Kaempfer was as much impressed with Japan as were the Frenchmen with the Court of the Moguls. 'Well and firmly governed, united and peaceful; schooled to give due worship to the gods, due obedience to the laws, due respect to their superiors, due love and consideration to their neighbours; civil, obliging, virtuous; in art and industry exceeding all other nations, they are possessed of an excellent country, enriched by mutual trade and commerce, courageous, and abundantly provided with all they need.' Here in fact was a Japan little influenced by any but Far Eastern models and in no urgent need of Europe. Yet there is a darker side to the picture, and the maxims of Hideyoshi must be compared with his private correspondence, as the
PAINTINGS ON SCREENS
(Seventeenth Century)
code of Bushido must be read in the light of the conduct of the Bushi.

The civilization of this age while it is over-decorated and over-elaborate in architecture, and in such typical arts as the Satsuma pottery, is still characteristically Japanese: and it is this art, its popular and decorative prints, its porcelains and lacquers and brocades which the West knows to-day. The achievements of Japan's modern age are rooted in the distant past—the Meiji era is a 'Restoration'; and her arts whether of hand-block prints or of the popular stage are developments which can only be understood in the light of her long history.

Although the Ukiyo-ye or 'Pictures of the Passing Scene' are considered a vulgar achievement by her old scholars, they are rooted in such early masters as Toba Soja, and have a continuous ancestry through the Tosa and Kano schools, in themselves classical, but with an eye for the daily life of the people and the picturesqueness of the countryside. If Hiroshige and Kuniyoshi drew the mists and rains of Japan and her waterfalls and lakes so did the early Kanos, and they too painted characters of daily life as early as the fifteenth century, when Motonobu saw them in all their picturesqueness; and in the next century Matabei of the Tosa school carried on the tradition, while Kano Yetoku and Kano Senyaku painted dancing-girls for Hideyoshi's palaces.

A glance through the list of Hokusai's themes—actors, monkeys with a strolling showman, wrestlers and the gods of fishing and of prosperity, surveyors and carpenters, illustrations for fairy-tales and epics—will remind us that these were also the themes of such great painters as Itcho Hanabusa of the seventeenth century. Book-illustration in the secular field dates from about 1600, and is a natural development of an art already old in China. So the common people enter into their heritage in the modern period and in the haijin from the fifteenth-century Sokai, down through Buson and Isshu to Basho in the last half of the seventeenth, they had their own beloved poets, whose lyrics are universally known and imitated.
Like her latest artists and her earliest singers they would hymn Fuji 'sudden in the autumn sky', or Nara, the sight of which makes them 'laugh in the rainstorm'; like Soba they saw the beauty of 'a frog by an old pond splash in the silence', and prayed 'friend sparrow to spare the bee busy at his harvesting'. They even recorded their tenderness for plant-life in such verses as these of the poetess Chiyo:

The morning glory to the well-rope clings:
I go for water to the distant springs.¹

So Basho (1644–94), greatest of the haijin, inscribed on the Chinese Zen temple at Uji, which looks out on to the famous tea-plantations:

Within Old China's peace,
Without the tea-girls' song.

Popular painters like Buson belong also to their company, and his drawings at the Kinkakuji Pavilion are as swift and powerful as his haika:

The boat grounds in the sand.
I leap out amidst the violets.

Famous too is the lament of the poetess for her child:

Ah! little hunter of dragon-flies,
To what far land hast thou gone hunting?

These are known to every Japanese, while the Kabuki Theatre gives them in such old yet ever-new stories as the Forty-seven Ronin all the pageantry of their history, and they are as appreciative of the meaning of them as the aristocrats are of the subtle mystery of the No.

**IV**

The political reforms begun by Ieyasu and continued by his house may be described as complete centralization of power in the hands of the shogun, for the good of the country as a whole. Daimyos were set to watch one another, made to visit the new capital Yedo every two years, forbidden even to marry without the shogun's consent. But the sovereignty of the emperor was proclaimed, and the shogun acted as his servant in giving a lead to the

¹ Lit.: 'Well-bucket held by convolvulus—gift water.'
nation in education, founding universities and schools for Chinese, Japanese, and even Western learning, which through English, Dutch, and Portuguese merchants and sailors now begins to penetrate Japan. But a policy of isolation is maintained, and when the missionaries of Rome appear they are first welcomed with courtesy and interest, as in India and China, but later fiercely persecuted as catspaws of imperialism.

For about fifty years, 1675-1725, there was a renaissance of literature, and the whole era is marked by a growing popularization of culture.

In the ruling classes and among successful merchants the Neo-Confucianism of Sung has played a great part. First, under the patronage of Ieyasu, Fujiwara Teikwa (1560-1619) and his great pupil Hayashi Reizan (1583-1657) drew students to their lectures on Chu Hsi; and this rationalism was welcomed by all who disliked the other-worldliness of Buddhism, as well as by some who resented the intrigues of the monks.

But the intuitionism of Wang Yang Ming is better suited to the Japanese mind, and found many exponents—while others began to show that eclecticism for which Japanese are noted, and Confucian and Shinto ideas began to mingle and to be fused, often animated by contempt of Buddhism and by the desire to nationalize Chinese culture on Japanese soil. This is one great note of the age: a revived interest in everything Japanese, the old poetry, the old drama, the old national cult, led to commentaries on the *Kojiki* by Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), and treatises on such works as the *Manyoshu* and *Genji Monogatari* by Kamo Mabuchi (1697-1769) and his master Kada Azumamaro (1669-1736). The process was begun by a Buddhist monk, Keichiu, but soon developed on more secular lines, and was actuated by anti-religious as well as anti-foreign bias. Japanese culture for Japan was in effect its watchword.

The drama flourished as never before and Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724) produced thirty or more plays of modern life, and about seventy historic dramas. He had
many contemporaries and followers but few rivals. Fiction now begins to develop in abundance, Saikaku, Bakin, Sanma, and Ikku being famous names—the last two humorists, the first two serious historical novelists—one naturalistic and one romantic.

When Europe and America compelled Japan to enter the modern world she had a remarkable culture of her own and a disciplined people ready for the effort and sacrifice involved in the heroic task of modernization. If she has ‘taken opportunities of falling into temptation’—the phrase is that of Dr. Nitobe—she has not been slow to prove that she has very good reasons for following bad examples. If she ‘played the assiduous ape’ to China she has done as well by the West. If she has imitated she has done it well, and has adapted what she has borrowed with amazing skill and tenacity.

THE SPIRIT OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY JAPAN

(a) Hideyoshi’s Maxims

Life is like a long journey with a heavy pack. Let thy pace be slow and sure. Stumble not. Know that hardship is man’s natural lot and there is no place for grumbling or despair. When vaulting ambition rears itself remember days of adversity. Forbearance is the root of quietness and steadfastness. Look on wrath as thine enemy. If thou knowest only victory—woe unto thee: ill fortune awaits thee. Blame thyself not others.

(b) His Morals

(From a letter to his wife about his concubine Yodo.)

We have the enemy like birds in a cage, and are in no danger. Pray set your mind at rest.

I long for the Young Lord my son, but must not yield for the sake of the future. . . .

I am looking after my health, and even having moxa (cautery).

I am telling the Daimyos they may send for their wives . . . and I want Yodo. Please make arrangements for her journey, and tell her that next to you she is my favourite. . . .

May, 1590.

(c) From a letter of Francis Xavier

These people charm my heart. They are more delicately minded than we.

1551.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>India.</th>
<th>China.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Korea.</th>
<th>Japan.</th>
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<td>Indus Valley civilization at a</td>
<td>Ancestors of the Chinese reach the Yellow River Valley.</td>
<td>3000</td>
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<td>Early Minoan Period. Pyramids of Gizeh (Egypt).</td>
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<td>high stage 2500 B.C. (Chalcolithic).</td>
<td>Five emperors: already civilized, with fixed habitations, cultivated lands, systems of government.</td>
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<td>2356: Yao emperor, Shun emperor.</td>
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<td>Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strong political organization.</td>
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<td>Neolithic remains found in Honan reveal stone and pottery arts—divination by inscribed bones.</td>
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<td>Late Minoan Period. Rise of Assyrian power.</td>
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<td>Beginnings of religious poetry, early Rig Veda.</td>
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<td>Beginnings of lyric poetry, early odes.</td>
<td>1500</td>
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<td>Kalidasa. The Seven Jewels of Ujjain. Pallavas dominate Southern India.</td>
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### CHRONOLOGY (A.D. 800–1300)

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<td>968. Annam becomes independent.</td>
<td>Mahmud of Ghazni invades North India. The Sultans of Ghazni rule North India.</td>
<td>900</td>
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<td>Beginnings of Siam.</td>
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<td>1100</td>
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<td>1275. Burma made tributary to China.</td>
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### CHRONOLOGY (A.D. 1300–1600)

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<td>Malacca founded,</td>
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<td>Rise of universities.</td>
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<td>1380.</td>
<td>Babur, 1525,</td>
<td>Ming Dynasty continues Sung</td>
<td>1500</td>
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<td>1549. Francis Xavier.</td>
<td>1337–1453. Hundred Years War.</td>
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<td>Annam reconquered</td>
<td>founds Mogul</td>
<td>traditions (1368–1664).</td>
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<td>Nobunaga and Hideyoshi</td>
<td>Columbus discovers America, 1492.</td>
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<td>Portuguese</td>
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<td>Dutch in China.</td>
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<td>Japan closed to</td>
<td>Spanish Armada.</td>
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<td>English reach China.</td>
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