Reflections 1816, 21 June

He is particularly requested that the
honored pontiff in this final chapter
be strictly followed,
in spite of office rules.
In the preceding pages I have endeavoured to suggest a general idea of the social history of Japan, and a general idea of the nature of those forces which shaped and tempered the character of her people. Certainly this attempt leaves much to be desired: the time is yet far away at which a satisfactory work upon the subject can be prepared. But the fact that Japan can be understood only through the study of her religious and social
Paradise?—Why should we feel
obliged to confess the ethical
glamour of a civilization so
far away from us in thought
as the Egypt of Ramses?
Are we really fascinated by
the results of a social dis-
-olition that refused to recog-
- nize the individual?—Ena-
- nounced of a cult that
exacted the suppression of
personality?
No: the charm is
made by the fact that this
vision of the past represents
as much more than past
or present,—that it fore-
-shadows the possibilities
of some higher future, in a
world of perfect sympathy.
After many a thousand years
there may be developed a
humanity able to achieve,
with never a shadow of illusion,
those ethical conditions presaged
by the ideals of Old Japan:
inscrutable unselfishness,
a common desire to find
the joy of life in making
happiness for others, a
universal sense of moral
beauty. And whenever
men shall have so far
advanced upon the present
as to need no other code
than the teaching of their
own hearts, then indeed the ancient ideal of Thinto will find its supreme realization.

Moreover, it should be remembered that the social state, whose results thus attract us, really produced much more than a beautiful mirage. Simple characters of great charm, though necessarily of great fixity, were developed by it in multitude. Old Japan came nearer to the achievement
of the highest moral ideal than our more highly-evolved societies can hope to do for many a hundred years. And but for the immense ten centuries of war which followed upon the rise of the military power, the ethical end which all social discipline tended might have been much more closely approached. Yet if the better side of this human nature had been further developed at the cost of harsher and stern qualities, the con-
-sequence might have proven unfortunate for the nation. No people so ruled by al-

-inism as it lose its capa-
cities for aggression and cunning, could hold their own in the present state of the world, against races hardened by the discipline of competition as well as by the discipline of war. The future Japan must rely upon the least amiable qualities of her character for success in the universal struggle; and she will need to develop them strongly.
How strongly she has been able to develop them in one direction. The present war with Russia bears startling witness. But it is certainly to the long discipline of the poet that she owes the moral strength behind this unexpected display of aggressive power. No superficial observer could discern the silent energies masked by the resignation of the people in choosing this mass of folly.
millions could, — the compressed force ready to expand at Imperial bidding either for construction or destruction. From the leaders of a nation with such a military and political history, one might expect the manifestation of all those abilities of supreme importance in diplomacy as in war. But such capacities could prove of little worth were it not for the character of the masses, — the quality of the material that moves and commands with the power of conditions. The variable strength of Japan still lies in the moral nature of her
common people,—her farmers and fishers, artisans and labourers,—the patient, quiet folk one sees toiling in the rice-fields, or occupied with the humblest of crafts or calling in city byways.
All the unconscious heroism of the race is in these, and all its splendid courage,—a courage that does not mean indifference to life, but the desire to sacrifice life at the bidding of the Imperial Master who raises the rank of the dead. From the thousands of young men now being summoned to the war, one hears no expression of hope
To return to their homes with glory; — the common wish uttered is only to win remembrance at the Shōkonsha — that "Spirit-Invoking Temple," where the souls of all who die for Emperor and fatherland are believed to gather. As no time was the ancient faith stronger than in this hour of struggle; and Russian power will have very much more to fear from that faith than from repeating rifles or White-head torpedoes. * Chineto,
The following reply, made by Vice Admiral Togo, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese fleet, to an Imperial message of commendation received after the second attempt to block the entrance to Port Arthur, is characteristic of Shinto:

"The warm message which Your Imperial Majesty condescended to grant us with regard to the second attempt to seal Port Arthur, has not only overwhelmed us with gratitude, but may also influence the patriotic manes of the departed heroes to hover long over the battlefields and give unseen protection to the Imperial forces." [Translated in The Japan Times of March 31st, 1904.]

Such thoughts and hopes about the brave dead might have been uttered by a Greek admiral after the battle of Salamis. The fleet and convoy which helped the Greeks to repel the Persian invasion were of the same quality as that religious devotion which now helps the Japanese to challenge the power of Russia.
evolution, has been, I trust, sufficiently indicated. The affords us the amazing spectacle of an Eastern society maintaining all the outward forms of Western civilization; using, with unquestionable efficiency, the apportioned science of the Occident; accomplishing, by prodigious effort, the work of centuries within the time of three decades,—yet sociologically remaining at a stage corresponding to that which, in an older Europe, preceded the Christian era by thousands of years.

But no suggestion of origin and cause should
as a religion of patriotism, is a force that should suffice, if permitted fair play, to affect not only the destinies of the whole Far East, but the future of civilization. No more irrational assertion was ever made about the Japanese than the statement of their indifference to religion. Religion is still, as it has ever been, the very life of the people,—the motive and the directing power of their every action: a religion of doing and suffering, a religion without cant and hypocrisy.
cially developed by it are just those qualities which have startled Russia, and may yet cause her many a painful surprise. She has discovered alarming force where she imagined childish weakness; she has encountered heroism where she expected to find cowardice and helplessness.

*The case of 10 Japanese officers on board the transport Kinshu Maru, sunk by the Russian warships on the 26th of last April, should have given the enemy time for consideration. Although allowed an hour's quarter for reflection, the soldiers refused to surrender, and opened fire with their rifles on the battleships. Then, before the Kinshu Maru was blown in two by a torpedo, a number of the Japanese officers and men performed harakiri... This striking display of the fierce old feudal spirit suggests how nearly a Russian success would be bought.
For countless reasons
this terrible war (of which no
man can yet see the end) is
unbearably to be regretted; and
of these reasons not the least
are industrial. War must
temporarily check all tendencies
toward the development of
that healthy individualism
without which no modern nation
can become prosperous and
wealthy. Enterprise is number.
markets paralyzed, manufacture
stopped. Yet, in the extraordinary
case of this extraordinary people,
it is possible that the social
effects of the contest will prove
do some degree beneficial. Prior
to hostilities, there had been a
visible tendency to the premature
dissolution of institutions founded
upon centuries of experience,—
a serious likelihood of moral
dissipation. That great
changes must hereafter be
made,—that the future
well-being of the country
requires them,—would seem to
admit of no argument. But
it is necessary that such changes
be effected by degrees,—not
with such indecisive haste
as to imperil the moral con-
stitution of the nation.
was for independence,—a war that
obliges the races & states to all
upon the issue,—must bring about
a dissipation of the old social
bonds, a strong quickening of
the ancient sentiments of loyalty
and duty, a reinforcement of
conservatism. This will signify
repression in some directions;
but it will also mean intimidation
in others. Before the Russian
menace, the Dawn of Yamato
revives again. Out of the
crisis Japan will come, if
successful, morally stronger
than before; and a new sense
of self-confidence, a new spirit
of independence, might then
rest itself in the national
attitude toward foreign policy
and foreign pressure.
There would be, of course, the dangers of over-confidence. A people able to defeat Russian power on land and sea might be tempted to believe themselves equally able to cope with foreign capital upon their own territory; and every means would certainly be tried of persuading or bullying the government into some fatal compromise on the question of the right of foreigners to hold land. Efforts in this direction have been carried on persistently and systematically for years.
and these efforts seem to have received some support from a class of Japanese politicians, apparently incapable of understanding what monstrous tyranny a single privileged syndicate of foreign capital would be capable of exercising in such a country.

It appears to me that any person comprehending, even in the vaguest way, the nature of money-power and the average condition of life throughout Japan, must recognize the certainly that foreign capital, with rival of land tenure, would easily find means to control legis.

Lature, to control govern-
ment, and I bring about a state of affairs that would result in the practical domination of the empire by alien interests. I cannot resist the conviction that even Japan yields to foreign industry the right to purchase land, she is lost beyond hope. The self-confidence that might tempt to such yielding, in view of immediate advantages, would be fatal. Japan has incomparably more to fear from English or American capital drawn from Russian battle ships and beyond. Behind her military capacity is the disciplined experience
of a thousand years; behind her industrial and commercial power, the experience of half-a-century. But she has been fully warned; and if she chooses hereafter to invite her own ruin, it will not have been for lack of counsel, — since she had the wisest man in the world to advise her.

* See Appendix.
To the reader of these pages, at least, the strength and the weakness of the new social organization—its great capacities for offensive or defensive action in military direction, and its comparative feebleness in other directions,—should now be evident.

All things considered, the marvel is that Japan should have been so well able to hold her own; and it was assuredly no common wisdom that guided her first unsteady efforts in new and perilous ways.
diminish the pleasure of contem-
plating this curious world,
psychologically still so far
away from us in the course
of human evolution. The
wonder and the beauty of
what remains of the Old
Japan cannot be lessened by
any knowledge of the condi-
tions that produced them.
The old kindness and grace
of manners need not cease
to charm us because we
know that such manners
were cultivated, for a thousand
years, under the edge of
the sword. The common
pottiness which appeared, but
a few years ago, is almost
Having her power to accomplish what she has accomplished was largely derived from her old religious and social training; she was able to keep strong because, under the new forms of rule and the new conditions of social activity, she could still maintain a great deal of the ancient discipline. But even thus it was only by her firmest and shrewdest policy that she could avert disaster, to prevent the disruption of her whole social structure under the weight of alien
pressure. It was imperative that vast changes should be made, but equally imperative that they should not be of a character to endanger the foundations; and it was above all thing necessary, while preparing for immediate necessities, to provide against future perils. Never before, perhaps, in the history of human civilization, did any rulers find them selves obliged to cope with problems so tremendous, so complicated, and so inexorable. And of these
problems the most irremovable remain to be solved. It is furnished by the fact that although all the successes of Japan have been so far due to unselfish collective action, sustained by the old Shinto ideals of duty and obedience, her industrial future must depend upon egoistic individual action of a totally opposite kind!
What then will become of the ancient morality? — the ancient cult?

— In this moment the conditions are abnormal. But it seems certain that there will be, under normal conditions, a further gradual loosening of the old family-bonds; and this would bring about a further moral disintegration. By the hand of the Japanese themselves, such disintegration
was spreading rapidly among the upper and middle classes of the great cities, prior to the present war. Among the people of the agricultural districts, and even in the country towns, the old ethical order of England has yet been little affected. But there are other influences than legislative change or social necessity which are working for disintegration.

The Old Faith have been rudely shaken by the introduction of larger knowledge: a new generation is being
laughed, in twenty-seven thousand primary schools, the rudiments of science and the modern conception of the universe. The Buddhist cosmology, with its fantastic picture of Mount Meru, has become a nursery-tale; the old Ohinooz nature-philosophy finds believers only among the little educated, or the survivors of the feudal era; and the youngest schoolboy has learned that the constellations are neither gods nor Buddhas, but far-off groups of stars. No longer can popular fancy picture the Milky Way as the River of Heaven; the
legend of the Weaving Maidens, and her waiting lover, and the Bridge of Birds, is now told only to children; and the young fisherman, though dwelling, like his fathers, by the light of stars, no longer dreams in the northernsky the form of Mioken Bosatsu.

Yet it was easy to misinterpret the weakening of a certain class of old beliefs, or the visible tendency to social change. Under any circumstances a religion decays slowly; and the most conservative forms of religion are the last to yield
I do not know. It were a strange thing to suppose that the
ancestors of the people of the tribe have not been affected
by exterior influences of any kind, or
I imagine that it continues to
exist merely by force of hab-
nored custom, and not because the
majority still believe. No
religion— and least of all
the religion of the dead—
could have suddenly lose its
hold upon the affections of
the race that evolved it.
Even in other directions the
new skepticism is superficial:
it has not spread down-
wards in the core of things.
There is indeed a growing clas...
of young men with more scepti-
icism of a certain sort is the
fashion, and scorn of the
past an affectation; but
even among these no word
of disrespect concerning the
religion of the home is ever
heard. Protests against
the old obligations of filial
piety, complaints of the
growing weight of the
family yoke, are sometimes
uttered; but the domestic
end is never spoken of
lightly. As for the communal
and other public forms of
Okindo, the vigour of the old
religion is sufficiently indicated
by the continually increasing
number of temples. In 1897 there were 191,962 Hindu temples; in 1901 there were 195,256.

It seems probable that such changes as must occur in the near future will be social rather than religious; and there is little reason to believe that these changes—however they may tend to weaken the feelings of piety in Sunday direction—will seriously affect the ancestor cult itself. The weight of the family bond, aggravated by the increasing difficulty and cost of life, may be more and more lightened for the individual; but no legislation can abolish the sentiment of duty to the dead.
universal, and the rarity of quarrels, should not prove less agreeable because we have learned to treat, for generations, and generations, all quarrels among the people were punished with extraordinary rigor; and that thecustom of the vendetta, which rendered necessary such repression, also made every body cautious of word and deed. The popular smile should not seem less winning because we have been held off a period, in the past of the subject classes, when not to smile in the teeth of pain might cost life itself.
When that sentiment utterly fails, the heart of a nation will have ceased to beat. Belief in the old gods, as gods, may slowly pass; but Shinto may live on as the Religion of the Fatherlands, a religion of heroes and patriots; and the likelihood of such future modification is indicated by the memorial character of many new temples.
It has been much
ascended of late years (chiefly
because of the prominent in-
pression made by Mr. Percival
Lowell's "Song of the Far
East") that Japan is des-
perately in need of a Gospel
of Individualism; and
many pious persons assume
dual the conversion of the
country to Christianity would
suffice to produce the Indi-
vidualism. This assumption
has nothing to rest on ex-
cept the old Superstition
that national customs and
davies and modes of feeling,
slowly shaped in the course
of thousands of years, can be suddenly transformed by a mere act of faith. Those further dissolution of the old order which would render possible, under normal conditions, a higher social energy, can be safely brought about through industrialisation only—through the working of necessities that enforce competitive enterprise and commercial expansion. A long peace will be required for such healthy transformation; and it is not impossible that an independent and progressive Japan would then consider the question of religious change.
* No inferences can be safely drawn from the apparent attitude of the government toward religious bodies in Japan. Of late years the seeming policy has been to encourage the least tolerant forms of Japanese religion; but this might be accounted for by influence exercised through various legations. In contrast to this policy is the non-tolerance of Freemasonry. Strictly speaking, Freemasonry is not allowed in Japan — although, since the abolition of extraterritoriality, the foreign lodges at the open ports have been permitted (or rather, suffered) to exist upon certain conditions. A Japanese or American is free to become a Mason; but he cannot become a Mason in Japan.
from the standpoint of political expediency. Observation and study abroad must have served to convince many Japanese statesmen of one truth forcibly expressed by Michelet,—that "money has a religion,—that "capital is Protestant,"—that the power of wealth and intellectual energy of the world belong to the races who control the yoke of Rome, and freed themselves from the creed of the middle ages.* A Japanese statesman is said to have lately declared that his countrymen were "rapidly drifting towards Christianity." Indeed, paper reports of eminent utterances are not often unworthy;
but the report in this case is probably inaccurate, and the declaration suggests undeniable possibilities. Since the declaration of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, there has been a remarkable softening in the attitude of Safeguard conservatism which the government formerly maintained toward Western religion. But as for the question whether the whole Japanese nation will adopt an alien creed under official encouragement, I think that the sociological answer is evident. Any understanding of the fundamental structure of society should make equally obvious the
imprudence of attempting hasty trans-
formation, and the impossibility
of effecting them. For the
present, at least, the religious
questi
in Japan is a question
of social integrity; and
any efforts to precipitate
the natural course of change
can result only in provoking
reaction and disorder. I
believe that the line is far
away at which Japan can
remain to abandon the policy
of change that has served
her so well. I believe that
had the day on which she
adopted a foreign creed, her
immortal dynasty is
doomed; and I cannot
escape the conviction that
whenever she yields to foreign capital the right to hold so much as one square mile of her soil, she signs away her birthright beyond hope of recovery.
With a few general remarks upon the religion of the Far East, in its relation to Occidental aggressions, this attempt at interpretation may fairly conclude.

All the societies of the Far East are founded, like that of Japan, upon ancestor-worship. This ancient religion, in various forms, represents their moral experience; and it offers everywhere the introduction of Christianity, as not intolerantly preached, obstacles of the most serious kind. As barriers upon it must seem, those whose lobes are directed by it, the greatest of outrages and the most unpardonable of
A religion for which every member of a community believes it is his duty to die at call, is a religion for which he will fight. His patience with attacks upon it will depend upon the degree of his intelligence and the nature of his training. All the races of the Far East have not the intelligence of the Japanese, nor have they been equally well trained, under ages of military discipline, to adapt their conduct to circumstances. For the Chinese peasant, in especial, attacks upon his religion are intolerable. His cult remains the most precious of his possessions, and his supreme guide in all matters of social right and wrong.

The East has been tolerant of all creeds which do not assault the foundation of its societies; and if Western missions had been wise enough to leave these forms alone — I deal with the ancestor cult as Buddhism.
And the Japanese woman, as cultivated by the old home-training, is not less dear a being because she represents the moral ideal of a vanishing world, and because we can frankly admire the cost, — the inestimable cost in pain, — of producing her.

No: what remains of this older civilization is full of charm, — charm unspeakable, — and I witness its gradual destruction must be a grief for whosoever has felt that charm. However in tolerable may seem, to the mind of the artist or poet, those senseless restrictions which once ruled all this fairy-world,
did, and I show the same spirit of tolerance in other directions,—the introduction of Christianity upon a very extensive scale should have proven a matter of no difficulty. That the result would have been a Chris-
dianity differing considerably from Western Christianity is obvious,—the structure of Far-Eastern Society not admitting of sudden transformation;—but the essen-
tials of doctrine might have been widely propagated, without exciting social antipathies, much less race-hatred. Today it is probably impossible to undo what the sterile labour of intolerance has already
The habits of Western religion in China and adjacent countries is undoubtedly due to the needlessly and implacable attacks which have been made upon the ancestor-cult. To demand of a Chinese or an Annamese that he cast away or destroy his ancestral tablets is not less irrational and inhuman than it would be to demand of an Englishman or a Frenchman that he destroy his mother's tomb-stone as proof of his devotion to Christianity. Nay, it is much more inhuman, for the European attaches to the
funeral monument no such idea of sacredness as that which attaches, in Eastern belief, to the simple tablet inscribed with the name of the dead parent. From old times these attacks upon the domestic faith of a docile and peaceful community have provoked massacre after massacre; and, if persisted in, they will continue to provoke massacres while the people have strength left to strike. How foreign religious aggression is answered by native religious aggression; and how Christian military power avenges the foreign
victims with tenfold slaughter or strong robbery, need not here be recorded. It has not been in these years only that ancestors-worshipping peoples have been slaughtered, impoverished, or subdued, in revenge for the uprisings that missionary in-tolerance provokes. And while Western trade and commerce directly gain by these revenges, Western public opinion will suffer no discussion of the right of provocation or the justice of retaliation. The less tolerant religious bodies call it a wickedness even to raise the question of moral right; and against the impartial observer, who dares to lift his voice in protest,
fanaticism lurks as ferociously as if he were proved an enemy of the human race.

From the sociological point of view the whole missionary system, irrespective of sect and creed, represents the diminishing force of Western civilization in its general attack upon all civilization of the ancient type — the first line in the forward movement of the strongest and most highly evolved societies upon the weaker and less evolved. The conscious work of these fighters is that of preachers and teachers; their unconscious work is that of sappers and destroyers. The
Subjugation of weak races has been aided by their work to a degree little imagined; and by no other conceivable means could it have been accomplished so quietly and so surely. For instruction they labour unceasingly; like a force of nature, yet Christianity does not appreciably expand. They perish; and they really die down their lives, with more than the courage of soldiers, not as they hope, to assist the spread of that doctrine which the East must still of necessity refuse, but to help industrial enterprise and Occidental aggression. The real and avowed object of missions is defended by persistent indifference to sociological
And the martyrdoms and sacrifices are utilized by Christian societies for ends essentially opposed to the spirit of Christianity.

Needless to say that the aggressions of race upon race are fully in accord with the universal law of struggle, that perpetual struggle in which the more capable survive. Inferior races must become subservient to higher races, or disappear before them; and ancient types of civilization, too rigid for progress, must yield to the pressure of more efficient and more complex civilization. The law is pêle-pêle.
and plain: its operations may be mercifully modified, but never prevented, by humane consideration.

Yet for no generous thinker can the ethical questions involved be thus easily settled. We are not justified in holding that the inevitable is morally ordained, — much less that, because the higher races happen to be on the winning side in the world-struggle, might can ever constitute right. Human progress has been achieved by denying the law of the stronger, — by battling against those impulses to crush the weak, to prey upon the helpless, which rule in the world of the brute, and are no less in
accord with the natural order
than are the courses of the
stars. All virtue and
reasons are making civilization
possible have been developed
in the teeth of natural law.
Those races which lead are
the races who first learned
that the respect power is
acquired by the exercise of
forbearance, and that
liberty is best maintained
by the protection of the weak,
and by the strong repression
of injustice. Unless we
be ready to deny the whole
of the moral experience
thus gained, — unless we
are willing to assert that the
religion in which it has been ex-
pressed is only the creed of a
particular civilization, and not a religion of humanity; — it were difficult to imagine any ethical justification for the aggressions made upon alien peoples in the name of Christendom and enlightenment. Certainly, the results in China of such aggression have not been Christendom nor enlightenment, but revolts, massacres, deplorable cruelties, the destruction of cities, the devastation of provinces, the loss of tens of thousands of lives, the exaction of hundreds of millions of money. If all this be right, then might's might indeed; and our
and shaped the soul of it, he cannot but admire and love their best results: the simplicity of old custom,—the amiability of manners,—the daintiness of habits,—the delicate tact displayed in pleasure-giving,—the strange power of presenting outwardly, under any circumstances, only the best and brightest aspects of character. What emotional poets, for even the least believing, in the ancient home-religion,—in the lamplet nightly kindled before the names of the dead, the tiny offerings of food and drink, the welcome fires lighted to guide the visiting ghosts, the little ships prepared to bear them
professed religion of humanity and justice to prove to be as exclusive as any primitive cult, and intended to regulate conduct only as between members of the same society.

But to the evolutionist, at least, the matter appears in a very different light. The plain teaching of sociology is that the higher races cannot with impunity cast aside their moral experience in dealing with feeble races, and that worsted civilization will have to pay, sooner or later, the full penalty of its deeds of oppression. Nations that, while refusing to endure religious intolerance at home, steadily maintain religions intolerance abroad,
must eventually lose those rights of intellectual freedom which cost so many centuries of abortion struggle to win. Perhaps the period of the penalty is not very far away. With the return of all Europe to militant conditions, there has set in a vast ecclesiastical revival of which the menace to human liberty is insensible and the spirit of the Middle Ages threatens to prevail again; and anti-Semitism has actually become a factor in the politics of these Continental powers.

[signature]

#3 line

To has been well said that no man can call the force of a religious conviction until he has died for
oppose it. Probably no man can imagine the wicked side of con-
vention upon the subject of missions until the masked ballads of its malevolence have been directed against him. Yet the question of mission-policy cannot be answered either by secret slander or by public abuse of the person raising it. Today it has become a question that concerns the peace of the world, the future of commerce, and the common interest of civilization. The integrity of China depends upon it; and the present war is not foreign to it. Perhaps this book, in spite of many shortcomings, will not fail
I convinced some thoughtful persons that the constitution of Far—
Eastern society presents insuperable obstacles to the propagation of Western religion, as it had been conducted; that these obstacles now demand, more than at any previous epoch, the most careful and humane consideration; and that the further maintenance of an uncompromising attitude towards them can result in nothing but evil. Whatever the religion of ancestors may have been thousands of years ago, today throughout the Far East it is the religion of family affection and duty;
and by inhumanly ignoring this fact, Western zealots can scarcely fail to provoke a few more "Boxer" uprisings. The real power is force upon the world a part from China (now that the chance seems lost for Russia) should not be suffered to rest with those who demand religious tolerance for the purpose of preaching un-tolerance. Never will the East learn Christian while dogmatism requires the convert to deny his ancient obligation to the family, the community, and the government, — and further insists that he prove his zeal for an alien creed by destroying the records of his ancestors, and outraging the memory of those who gave him life.
back to their rest! And this immemorial doctrine of felicitous piety, — exacting all that is noble, not less than all that is terrible, in death, in gratitude, in self-denial, — what strange appeal does it make to our lingering religious instincts; and how close to the divine appear to us the finer natures forgotten by it! What queer weird attraction in those parish-temple festivals, with their happy mingling of merriment and devotion in the presence of the gods! What a universe of romance in that Buddhist art which has left its impress upon almost every
product of industry, from the toy of a child to the heirloom of a prince; — which has peopled the solitude with statues, and chiselled the wayside rocks with lines of Sutras! Who can forget the soft, indolent, enchantment of this Buddhist atmosphere? — the deep music of the great bells? — the green peace of gardens haunted by fearless things: doves that flutter down at call, fishes rising to be fed? .... Despite our incapacity to enter into the soul-life of this ancient East, —
despite the certainty that...
might as well hope to remove
the River of Time and share
the vanished existence of some
old Greek city, as I share
the thoughts and the emotions
of Old Japan, — we find
ourselves bewitched forever
by the vision, like those
wanderers of folk-tale who
visited Elf-land.

We know that there
is illusion, — not as to the
reality of the visible, but
as to its meanings, — very
much illusion. Yet why
should this illusion attract
us, like some glimpse of