The Japanese Family.
The great general idea

The fundamental idea, underlying every persistent ancestor-worship, is that the welfare of the living depends upon the welfare of the dead. Under the influence of this idea, and of the cult based upon it, were developed the early organization of the family, the laws regarding property and succession, the whole structure, in short, of ancient society, whether in the Western or the Eastern world.

But before considering how the social structure in old
Japan was shaped by the ancestral cult, let me again remind the reader that there were at first no other gods than the dead. Even when Japanese ancestor-worship evolved a new theology, its gods were very human -figure ghosts, - and this is the history of all mythology. The ideas of heaven and hell did not exist among the primitive Japanese, nor any notion of modern psychology. The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth, - a late borrowing, - was totally inconsistent with the archaic Japanese beliefs, and required an elaborate metaphysical system to support it. But we may suppose the early ideas of the Japanese about the dead to have been much like those of the Greeks of the pre-Homeric era. There was an
underground world & which spirits descended; but they were supposed & haunting by preference their own graves, or their "ghost-houses". Only by slow degrees did the notion of their power of ubiquity become evolved. But even then they were thought to be particularly attached to their tombs, shrines, and home-steads. Harata, wrote, even in the early part of the nineteenth century: "The spirits of the dead continue to exist in the unseen world which is everywhere about us; and they all become gods of varying character and degrees of influence. Some reside in temples built in their honour; others hover near their tombs; and they continue to render service to their princes, parents,lings, and children, as even in the body."
Evidently "the wicked world" was thought to be in some sort a duplicate of the visible world, and dependent upon the help of the living for its prosperity. The dead and the living were mutually dependent.

The all-important necessity for the first was sacrificial worship; the all-important necessity for the man was to provide for the future cult of his own spirit; and to die without assurance of a cult was the supreme calamity. Remembering these facts we can understand better the organization of the patriarchal family, shaped and maintained to provide for the cult of its dead, any neglect of which cult was believed to involve misfortune.
The reader is doubtless aware that in the old Aryan family the bond of union was not the bond of affection, but a bond of religion, 2 which natural affection was altogether subordinate. This condition characterizes the patriarchal family, wherever ancestor worship existed. Now the Japanese family, like the ancient Greek or Roman family, was a religious society in the strictest sense of the term; and a religious society it yet remains. Its organization was primarily shaped in accordance with the requirements
of ancestor worship; — its later implica-
does of filial piety had been
doratories already developed in China to
meet the needs of an older and
similar religion. We might
expect to find in the structure,
the laws, and the customs of
the Japanese family, many points
of likeness to the structure
and the traditional laws of
the old Pryan household, —
because the law of sociological
evolution admits of only minor
exceptions. And many such
points of likeness are obvious.
The materials for a serious
comparative study have not
yet been collected; very much
remains to be learned regarding
the past history of the Japanese family. But, along certain
general lines, the resemblance between domestic institutions in
ancient Europe and domestic institutions in the Far East
can be clearly established.

Above in the early
European and in the old Japanese
civilization it was believed that
the prosperity of the family de-
pended upon the strict fulfillment
of the duties of the ancestral cult;
and to a considerable degree, this
belief rules the life of the Japanese
family today. It is still thought
that the good fortune of the household
depends on the observance of it.
cally, and that the greatest possible calamity is to die without leaving a male heir to perform the rites and to make the offerings. The paramount duty of filial piety among the early Greeks and Romans was to provide for the perpetuation of the family cult; and celibacy was therefore generally forbidden; the obligation to marry being enforced by opinion where not enforced by legislation. Among the free classes of Old Japan, marriage was also, as a general rule, obligatory in the case of a male heir: otherwise, where celibacy was not condemned by law, it
was condemned by custom. To die without offspring was, in the case of a younger son, chiefly a personal misfortune; to die without bearing a male heir, in the case of an elder son and successor, was a crime against the ancestors, the cult being thereby threatened with extinction.

No excuse existed for remaining childless; the family law in Japan, precisely as in ancient Europe, having provisions against such a contingency. In case that a wife proved barren, she might be divorced. In case that there were reasons for not
divorcing her, a concubine might be taken for the purpose of obtaining an heir. Further more, every family representative was privileged to adopt an heir. An unworthy son, again, might be disinherited, and another young man adopted in his place. Finally, in case that a man had daughters, but no son, the succession and the continuance of the end could be assured by adopting a husband for the eldest daughter.

But, as in the ancient European family, daughters could not inherit.
descend being in the male line, it was necessary to have a male heir. In old Japanese belief, as in old Greek and Roman belief, the father, not the mother, was the life-giver; the creative principle was masculine; the duty of maintaining the cult rested with the man, not with the woman.*

Whenever, among an ancestor-worshipping race, descent is in the male line, the cult follows the male line. But the reader is doubtless aware that a still more primitive form of society than the patriarchal,—the matrilineal,—is supposed to have had its ancestor-worship. Mr. Spencer has said: "What has happened when descent in the female line obtains, is not clear. I have not with no statement showing that, in societies characterized by this usage, the duty of administering to the wants of the dead man devolved on one of his children rather than on others."—Principles of Sociology, Vol. III. p. 601
The woman shared the cult; but she could not maintain it. Besides, the daughters of the family, being destined, as a general rule, to marry into other households, could bear only a temporary relation to the home-cult.

It was necessary that the religion of the wife should be the religion of the husband; and in Japan, unlike the European woman, on marrying into another household, necessarily became attached to the cult of her husband's family.

For this reason especially the females in the patriarchal family are not equal to the males;
The sister cannot rank with the brother. It is true that the Japanese daughter, like the Greek daughter, could remain attached to her own family even after marriage, provided that a husband were adopted for her;—that is to say, taken into the family as a son. But even in this case, she could only share in the estate which it then became the duty of the adopted husband to maintain.
The constitution of the patriarchal family everywhere derives from its ancestral cult; and, before considering the subjects of marriage and adoption in Japan, it will be necessary to say something about the ancient family organization.

The ancient family was called uji, a word said to have originally signified the same thing as the modern term uchi, "interior", or "household", but certainly used from very early times in the sense of "name" or clan-name especially. There were two kinds of
uki: the ō-uki, or great families,
and the ko-uki, or lesser families,
—either term signifying a large
body of persons united by kinship
and by the yoke of a common
ancestor. The ō-uki corresponded
with in some degree to the
Greek ἱέρως or the Roman gens:
the ko-uki were its branches,
and subordinate to it. The
unit of society was the uki.
Each ō-uki, with its dependent
ko-uki represented something
like a phratri or curia;—
and all the larger groups making
up the primitive Japanese society
were but multiplication of
the uki, — whether we call them
clans, tribes, or borders. With the advent of a settled civilization the greater groups necessarily divided as subdivided; but the smallest subdivision still retained its primal organization. Even the modern Japanese family partly retains that organization. It does not mean only a household: it means rather what the Greek or Roman family became after the dissolution of the gens. With ourselves the family has been disintegrated; when we talk of a man's family, we mean his wife and children. But the Japanese
family is still a large group. To marriages take place early, it may consist, even as a household, of great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, and children—sons and daughters of several generations; but it commonly extends much beyond the limits of one household. In former times it might consti-
tute the entire population of a village or town; and there are still in Japan large communities of persons all bearing the same family name. In some districts it was former custom to keep all the children, as far as possible, within
the original family group—husband being adopted for all the daughters. The group might thus consist of sixty or more persons, dwelling under the same roof; and the houses were of course constructed by successive extension, so as to meet the requirement. (I am mentioning these curious facts only by way of illustration.) But it was inevitable that no family group could be indefinite, kept together in this way; and although there are said to be house-communities still in some remote districts of the counties, the primal patriarchal groups must have been broken up almost everywhere.
at some very early period. Therefore, the main cult of the uji did not cease to be the cult also of its subdivisions: all members of the original gens continued to worship the common ancestor, or uji-no-kami, "the god of the uji." By degrees the ghost-house of the uji-no-kami became transformed into the modern Shinto parish-temple; and the ancestral spirit became the local tutelar god, whose modern appellation, uji-gami, is but a shortened form of his ancient title, uji-no-kami. Meanwhile,
after the general establishment of the domestic cult, each separate household maintained its special cult of its own dead, in addition to the communal cult. This religious condition still continues. The family may include several households; but each household holds its own cult of its dead. And the family-group, whether large or small, preserves its ancient constitution and character: it is still a religious society, exacting obedience, on the part of all its members, to traditional custom.
Do much having been explained, the customs regarding marriage and adoption, in their relation to the family hierarchy, can be clearly understood. But, a word first regarding this hierarchy, as it existed today. Theoretically, the power of the head of the family is still supreme in the household. All must obey the head. Furthermore, the females must obey the males — the wives, the husbands; and the younger members of the family are subject to the elder members. The children must not only obey the parents.
and grandparents, but must observe among themselves the domestic law of senility: thus the younger brother should obey the elder brother, and the younger sister the elder sister. The rule of precedence is enforced gently, and is cheerful, obeyed even in small matters: for example, at meal-time, the elder boy is served first, the second son next, and so on, an exception being made in the case of a very young child, who is not obliged to wait. This case comes accounts for an amusing popular term often applied in jest to a second son, "Master Cold Rice" (Hameshi-San); as the second son, having to wait
and it both in fact and elders have been served, is not likely to find his position desirable, nor when it reaches him. Legally, the family can have but one responsible head. It may be the grandfather, the father, or the eldest son; or it is generally the eldest son, because according to a custom of Chinese origin, the old folks usually resign their active authority as soon as the eldest son is able to take charge of affairs.

The subordination of young and old, and of females and males, in fact, the whole existing constitution of the modern family, suggests a great deal
in regard to the probable structureorganization of the patriarchal family, whose
chief was at once ruler and priest,
with almost unlimited powers. The
organization was primarily, and still
remains, religious: the marital
bond did not constitute the
family; so the relation of the
parent to the household depended
upon his or her relation to the
family as a religious body. Today
also, the five adopted into a
household as wife ranks as
as an adopted child: marriage
signifies adoption. She is called
"flower-daughter" (hana-yome).
In like manner, and for the
same reasons, the young man
received into a household as a
husband of one of the daughters.
ranks merely as an adopted son.

The adopted bride or bridegroom is necessarily subject to the elders, and may be dismissed by their decision. As for the adopted husband, his position is both delicate and difficult, — as an old Japanese proverb bears witness: — Konuka sangō
aréba, mukoyoshi to naruna.

("While you have even three gō* of rice-bran left, do not become a son-in-law.").

Rachel: he is given to Rachel on demand; and his service

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*A gō is something more than a pint.
Then begins. And after twelve seven years of service, Jacob may be sent away. It is that event his children do not any more belong to mine, but to the family. His adoption may have had nothing to do with affection; and his dismissal may have nothing to do with misconduct. Such matters, however they may be settled in law, are really decided by family interests — interests relating to the maintenance of the house and of its call. *

* Recent legislation has been in favour of the master; but, as a rule, the law is seldom resorted to except by men disappointed from the family for misconduct, and anxious to make profit by its omission.
It should not be forgotten that, although a daughter-in-law or a son-in-law could in former times be dismissed almost at will, the question of marriage in the old Japanese family was a matter of religious importance; marriage being one of the chief duties of filial piety. This was also the case in the early Greek and Roman family; and the marriage ceremony was performed, as it is now performed in Japan, not at a temple, but in the house. It was a rite of the family.
religion,—the rite by which the bride was adopted into the cult in the supposed presence of the ancestral spirits. Among the primitive Japanese there was probably no corresponding ceremony; but after the establishment of the domestic cult, the marriage ceremony became a religious rite, and this it still remains. Ordinary marriages are not, however, performed before the household shrine or in front of the ancestral table, except under certain circumstances. The rule, as regards such ordinary marriages, seems to be that if the parents of the bridegroom are yet alive, this is not done; but if they
are dead, then the bridegroom leads his bride before their mortuary tablets, where she makes obeisance.

Among the nobility, in former times, at least, the marriage ceremony appears to have been more distinctly religious, judging from the following curious relation in the book Thörre-Hitki, or "Record of Ceremonies"*:- "At the wedding of the great, the bridal chamber is composed of three rooms thrown into one [by removal of the sliding screens ordinarily separating them], and nearly decorated.

... The shrine of the family... god is placed upon a shelf adjoining the sleeping- place."

* The translation is by Miss Balfour. There are no "shrines" of the family gods; and I suppose none of the family shrines, shrine is meant, with its usual Biblical connotation.
It is noteworthy also that imperial marriages are always officially announced to the ancestors; and that the marriage of the heir-apparent, or other male offspring of the imperial house, is performed before the Kashiko-dokoro, or the imperial temple of the ancestors, which stands within the palace grounds. * * * 

To a general rule it would appear, that the vow-taking of the marriage ceremony in Japan closely followed Chinese precedent; and in the Chinese patriarchal family the ceremony is in its own way, quite as much...
of a religious rite to the early Greek or Roman marriage. And though
the relation of the Japanese rite to
the family cult is less marked,
it becomes sufficiently clear upon
investigation. The alternative
drinking of rice-wine, by bridegroom
and bride, from the same vessels,
corresponds in a sort to the
Roman comparsatio. By the
Roman comparsatio, the bride is adopted
with the family religion. She is
adopted not only by the living,
but by the dead; she must
therefore reverence her ancestors
of her husband as her own
ancestors; and should there be
no elders in the household, it
will become her duty to make the offerings as representative of her husband. With the help of her own family she has nothing more to do; and the funeral ceremonies performed upon her departure from the parental roof,—the solemn sweeping out of the house-rooms, the lighting of the death-fire before the gate,—are significant of this religious separation.

Davi

Speaking of the Greek and Roman marriage, etc. de Contugues observes:—"Une telle religion ne pouvait pas admettre
la polyganie." As relating to the highly-developed domestic ends of these communities, considered by the author of *La Cité Antiquē*, his statement will scarcely be called in question. But as regards ancestor-worship in general, it would be incorrect; since polygamy or polygyny, and even polyandry, may coexist with milder forms of ancestor-worship. The Western Aryan societies, in the epochs studied by M. de Coulange, were practically monogamous. The ancient Japanese society was polygynous; and polygyny persisted, after the establishment of the domestic cult.
In early times, the marital relation itself would seem to have been indefinite. No distinction was made between the wife and the concubines: "they were classed together as 'women'." Probably under Chinese influence the distinction was afterwards sharply drawn; and with the progress of civilization, the general tendency was towards monogamy, although the ruling classes remained polygynous. In the 5th article of Iyegawa's legacy, this phase of the social condition is clearly expressed, — a condition which prevailed down to the present era: —
"The position a wife holds towards a concubine is the same as that of a lord to his vassal. The emperor has twelve imperial concubines. The princes may have three concubines. Officers of the highest class may have five mistresses. A samurai may have two handmaids. All below this are ordinary married men."

# 3 lines
This would suggest that polygamy had long been (with some possible exceptions) an exclusive privilege; and that it seems to have persisted down to the period of the abolition of the penalties and of the military class, is sufficiently explained by the military character of the ancient society.* Though it is untrue that domestic ancestor worship cannot exist with polygamy or polygyny (Mr. Spencer's term is the more accurate), it is at least true that such worship is favoured by the monogamic relation, and tends therefore to establish it, — since monogamy ensures

to the family, succession a stability that no other relation can offer. We may say that, although the old Japanese society was not strictly monogamous, the natural tendency was towards monogamy, as the condition best according with the religion of the family, and with the more feeling of the masses.
Once the domestic ancestor cult had become universally established, the question of marriage, as a duty of filial piety, ceased to be judiciously left to the will of the young people themselves. It was a matter to be decided by the family, not by the children; for mutual satisfaction could not be expected to interfere with the requirements of the household religion. It was not a question of affection, but of religious duty; to think otherwise was impious. Affection might and ought to spring up from the relation. But any affection powerful enough to
en danger the cohesion of the family, would be condemned. A wife might therefore be divorced because her husband became too much attached to her;—an adopted husband might be divorced because of his power to exercise, through affection, too great an influence upon the daughter of the house. Other causes would probably be found for the divorce in either case,—but they would not be difficult to find.

For the same reason that commercial affection could be tolerated as within limits, the intimate rights of parenthood (as we understand them) were necessary restricted in the old Japanese households. Marriage being
for the purpose of obtaining heirs to perpetuate the line, the children were regarded as belonging to the family rather than to the father and mother. Hence, in case of divorcing the son's wife, or the adopted son-in-law, or of disinherit the married son, the children would be retained by the family. For the natural rights of the young parents was considered subordinate to the religious rights of the house. In opposition to these rights, no other rights could be tolerated. Practically, of course, according to more or less fortunate circumstances, the individual might enjoy freedom under the paternal
roof; but theoretically and legally there was no freedom in the old Japanese family for any member of it, nor excepting even its acknowledged chief, whose responsibilities were great. Every person, from the youngest child up to the grandfather, was subject to somebody else; and every act of domestic life was regulated by traditional custom.

Yard

Like the Greek or Roman father, the patriarch of the Japanese family appears to have had in early times power of life and death over all members of the household.
In the rudest ages the father might either kill or sell his children; and afterwards, among the ruling classes his power remained almost unlimited until modern times. Allowing for certain local exceptions, explicable by tradition, or class exceptions, explicable by condition of servitude, it may be said that the Japanese patrician was at once ruler, prince, and magistrate within the family. He could compel his children to marry or forbid them to marry; he could distribute or repudiate them; he could ordain the profession or calling which they were to follow; and his power extended to all members
of the family, and the household dependents. At different epochs limits were placed to the exercise of this power, in the case of the ordinary people; but in the military class, the patria polícia was almost unrestricted. In its extreme form, the paternal power controlled everything, — the riñir  its life and liberty, the riñir  its marry, or its keep the esposa or husband already exerted power, or the riñir  one's own children, or the riñir  hold property, or the riñir  hold office, or the riñir  choose or follow an occupation. The family was a despotism.
It should not be forgotten, however, that the absolutism prevailing in the patriarchal family has its justification - in a religious belief, - in the conviction that everything should be sacrificed for the sake of the end, and every member of the family should be ready to give up even life, if necessary, to assure the perpetuity of the succession.

Remembering this, it becomes easy to understand why, even in communities otherwise advanced in civilization, it should have seemed right that a father could kill or sell his children. The crime of a son might result in the extinction of a line through the ruin of the family, - especially.
in a sedentary society like that of Japan, where the entire family was held responsible for the acts of each of its members, so that a capital offense would involve the penalty of death on the whole of the household, including the children. Again, the sale of a daughter, in line of extreme need, might save a house from ruin; and filial piety exacted submission to such sacrifice for the sake of the cult.

As in the Aryan family, properly descended by right of primogeniture from

* The laws of succession in Old Japan differed considerably according to class, place, etc. The entire subject has not yet been fully treated; and only a few case general statements can be ventured on the present date.
fathers & sons, but the eldest son, even in cases where the other
property was to be divided among the children, always inheriting
the homestead. The homestead
property was, however, family
property; and it passed to
the eldest son as representative
not as individual. Generally
speaking, sons could not hold
property without the father's
consent, during such time as
be retained in his handship. As
a rule, to which there were
various exceptions, a daughter
could not inherit; and in
the case of an only daughter,
for whom a husband had been
adopted, the homestead property
would pass to the adoptee.
husband, because (until within recent
times) a woman could not become
the head of a family. This was
the case also in the Western
American household, in ancestral
worshipping times.

To modern thinking, the
position of a woman in the old Japanese
family appears to have been the
reverse of happy. As a child
she was subject, not only to the
elders, but to all the adults of
the household. Adopted into
another household as wife, she
never passed into a similar
state of subjection, alleviated
by the affection which parental
and paternal ties assured her
in the ancestral home. Her
rejection in the family of her
husband did not depend upon
to affect her, but upon the will of the majority, and especially of the elders. Divorced, she could not claim her children: they belonged to the family of her husband. In any event, her duties as wife were more trying than those of a hired servant. Only in old age could she hope to exercise some authority; but even in old age she was under inelkage. Throughout her entire life she was in inelkage. “A woman can have no house of her own in the Three Universes,” declared an old Japanese proverb. Mostly could she have a cult of her own: there was no special cult for the women of a family—no ancestral rôle distinct from
that of the husband. And she liked the rank of the family to which she owed her marriage; the more difficult would be her position. For a woman of the aristocratic class no freedom existed: she could not even pass beyond her own gates except in a palanquin (kago) or under escort; — and her existence as a wife was likely to be embittered by the presence of

— Such was the patriarchal family in old times; — yet it is probable that conditions were really better than the laws or the customs would suggest. The
race is a joyful and kindly one; and at discovered, long centuries ago, many ways of smoothing the difficulties of life, and of modifying the harsher reactions of law and custom. The great powers of the family-head were probably but seldom exercised in cruel directions. He might have legal rights of the most formidable character; but these were required by reason of his responsibilities, and were not likely to be used against common sense judgment. It must be remembered that the individual was not legally considered in former times; the
family only was recognized; and the head of it legally existed as representative. Should he, sir, the whole body were liable to suffer the penalty of his error. Furthermore, every exercise of his authority involved proper solemn responsibilities. He could divorce his wife, or compel his son to divorce his adoptive daughter-in-law; but in either case he would have to account for this action to the family of the divorced; and the divorce-regime, especially in the senatorial class, was greatly restrained by the fear of family resentment; the unjust dismissal of a wife being considered as an enormity in itself.
to her husband. He might disinherit an only son; but in that event he would be obliged to adopt a kinsman. He might kill or sell either son or daughter; but unless he belonged to some outcast class, he would have to provide for his action to the community. He might be reckless in his management of the family property; but in that case no appeal to communal authority was possible, and the appeals might result in his deposition. So far as we

* Samurai fathers might sell a daughter on account of rashness, or sell a son convicted of murder, or any action calculated to disgrace guilt of any action calculated to disgrace the family name. But they would not sell a child. The sale of daughters was practiced only by the abject classes, or by families of older and less reduced to desperation by circumstances. A girl might, however, sell herself for the sake of the family.
are able to judge from the remains of old Japanese law which have been studied, it would seem I have been
the general rule that the family head
could not sell or alienate the estate.
Though the family rule was despotic,
it was the rule of a body rather
than of a chief; the family-
head really exercising authority
in the name of the rest. In
this sense, the family still remains
a despotism; but the power of
its legal head are now checked,
from within as well as from
without, by local custom. The
acts of adoption, of inheritance,
mARRIAGE, or divorce are decided
usually by general consent; and
the decision of the household on
kindred is required in the taking
of any important step in the
advantage of the individual.
Of course the old family organization had certain advantages which largely compensated the individual for his state of subjection. It was a society of mutual help; and it was not less powerful to give and than to enforce obedience. Every member could do something to assist another member in case of need: each had a right to the protection of all. This remains true of the family today. In a well-conducted household, where every act is performed according to the old forms of courtesy and kindness, — where no harsh word is ever spoken, — where the young look up to the aged with...
affectionate respect, — where those whose years have incapacitated for more active duty, take upon themselves the care of the children, and render priceless service in teaching and training, — an ideal condition has been realized. The daily life of such a home, — in which the endeavours of each is to make existence as pleasant as possible for all, — in which the bond of union is really love and gratitude, — represents religion in the best and purest sense; and the place is holy...
It remains to speak of the dependants in the ancient family. Though the fact has not been fully established, it is probable that the first domestics were slaves or serfs; and the condition of servants in later times, especially of those in families of the ruling classes, was much like that of slaves in the Greek and Roman families. Though necessarily treated as inferiors, they were regarded as members of the household; they were trusted families, permitted to share in the pleasures of the family, and to be present at most of its religious. They could legally be dealt with harshly; but there is little doubt that, as a rule, they
were treated kindly, — absolute loyalty being expected from them. The best indication of their status in past times is furnished by yet surviving customs. Though the power of the family over the ser-

vant no longer exists in law or in fact, the pleasant features of the old relation continue; and they are of no little in-

terest. The family takes a sincere interest in the welfare of its domestics, — almost such interest as would be shown in the case of poorer kinfolk.

Formerly the family furnishing servants to a household of higher rank, stood to the latter in the relation of vassal to liege lord; or between the
too there existed a real bond of
loyalty and kindness. The occu-
pation of servant was then here-
delay; children were trained for
the duty from an early age. After
the man-servant or maid-servant
had arrived at a certain age,
permission to marry was accorded
on the relation of service then
ceased, but not the bond of
loyalty. The children of the
married servant would be sent
when old enough, to work in
the house of the master, and
would leave it only when the
hee also came for them to
marry. Relations of this kind
still exist between certain arist-
oblic families and former
vassal families, and conse-
some charming traditions and customs of
the old days, service, unaltered
for hundreds of years.

In feudal times, of course,
The bond between master and
servant was of the most serious
kind; — the latter being expected,
in case of need, to sacrifice
life and all else for the
sake of the master or of the
master's household. This also
was due to the demands of
the laws on Roman domestic
life before there had yet come
evidence that in human
form a slave was a burden.

The bond was purely a
religion, one. There does not seem to have been in ancient Japan any custom corresponding to that described by M. de Coulanges, of adopting the Greek or Roman servant into the household code. But as the Japanese vassal-families, furnishing domestic service, as vassals, necessarily attached to the clan-celt of their lord, the relation of the servant to the family was in some extent a religious bond.
The reader will be able to understand, from the facts of this chapter, to what extent the individual was sacrificed to the family, as a religious body. From servant to master — up through all degrees of the household hierarchy — the law of duty was the same: obedience absolute and custom and tradition. The ancestral rule permitted no individual freedom; nobody could live according to his or her pleasure; every one had to live according to rule. The individual did not even have a legal existence; — the family was the unit of society. Even its patriarchy existed in law as representative only — responsible both to the living and the dead. And, public responsibility, however,
was not determined merely by civil law. It was determined by another religious bond, that of the ancestral cult of the clan or tribe; and this public form of ancestor-worship was even more exacting than the religion of the home.