The Chinto Revival.
The slow weakening of the Tokugawa Shogunate was due to causes not unlike those which had brought about the decline of previous regencies: the fine race degenerated during long periods of peace which it had inaugurated; the strong but dull were succeeded by feeble and glibber men. Nevertheless, the machinery of administration, astutely devised by Ieyasu, was further perfected by Ieyasu, worked so well that the treachery of the Shogunate could find no opportunity for a successful attack until foreign aggression unexpectedly came to their aid.
The most dangerous enemies of the government were the great clans of Datsunuma and Chōshū. Iyeyasu had not ventured to weaken them beyond a certain point: the risk of the undertaking would have been great; and, on the other hand, the alliance of those clans was for the time being a matter of real political importance. The only wise measure to preserve a safe balance of power; placing between those formidable allies new lordships in whose rulers he could put absolute trust — trust based upon interest, secondly upon kinship. But he always felt that danger to the Chōshū might come from Datsunuma and Chōshū; and he kept in his
successors careful instruction about
the policy to be followed in dealing
with such possible enemies. He
feet that his word was not perfect,
that certain underlying blocks of
the structure had not be properly
chamfered to the rest. He could
not do more in the direction of
consolidation, simply because the
material of society had not yet
sufficiently evolved, had not yet
become plastic enough, to permit
a perfect and permanent cohesion
of perfect and permanent cohesion.
In order to effect that, it would
have been necessary to dissolve
the clans. But Iyéjasu did not
all dead human force so that could
have safely attempted under the
circumstances; and no one
was more keenly conscious than
himself of the weak point in his wonderful organization.

For more than two hundred years the Shogunate and Choshu clans, and several others, ready to league with them, submitted to the discipline of the Tokugawa rule. But they chafed under it, and watched for a chance to break the yoke. All the while this chance was being slowly created for them—not by any political changes, but by the patient toil of Japanese men of letters. Three among these—the greatest scholars that Japan ever produced—especially prepared the way, by their intellectual labours, for the abolition of the Shogunate. They were Shinto scholars; and they represented
The not unnatural reaction of native conservatism against the long tyranny of alien ideas and alien beliefs—against the literature and philosophy and bureaucracy of China—against the preponderant influence upon education of the foreign religion of Buddhism. To all this they opposed the old native literature of Japan, the ancient poetry, the ancient cult, the early traditions and rites of Shinto. The names of these three remarkable men were Mabuchi (1697–1769), Motowori (1730–1801), and Hirata (1776–1843). Their efforts actually resulted in the reestablishment of Buddhism, and in the great Shinto revival of 1871.
The intellectual revolution
made by these scholars could have
been prepared for during a long
era of peace, and by men enjoy-
ing the protection and patronage
of members of the ruling class.
By a strange chance, it was
the home of Tokugawa itself
which first gave a literature
such encouragement and aid
as made possible the labours
of the Dōshidō scholars. Tokugawa
had been a lover of learning;
and has devoted the latter years
of his life — passed in retire-
ment at Dōshidzukō — to the
collection of ancient books and
manuscripts. He bequeathed his
Japanese books to his eldest
son, the Prince of Owari; and
to Chinese books & another son, the Prince of Kishū. The Prince of Tojō himself composed several works upon Japanese early literature. Other descendants of Iyeyasu, under the great Shōgun's love of letters, one of his grandsons, Midōrō Kuni, the Second Prince of Mito (1622-1700) compiled, with the aid of various scholars, the first important history of Japan, the Dai-Nihon-Shi, in 240 books. Also he compiled a work of 500 volumes upon the ceremonies and the etiquette of the Imperial Court, and set aside from his revenues a sum equal to about £30,000 per annum, to cover the cost of publishing these splendid productions. Under his patronage
of great lords like these — collectors of libraries — have gradually developed a new school of men of letters: men who turned away from Chinese literature to the study of the Japanese classics. They reedited the ancient poetry and chronicles and rewritten works; they republished the sacred records, with ample commentaries. They produced whole libraries of works upon religious, historical, and philosophical subjects; they made grammars and dictionaries; they wrote treatises on the art of poetry, on popular errors, on the nature of the gods, on government, on the manners and customs of ancient days... The foundations of his new scholarship were
The wise patrons of learning never suspected the possible results of these researches which they had encouraged and aided. The study of the ancient records, the study of the Japanese literature, the study of the early political and religious conditions, naturally led men to consider the history of these foreign literary influences which had well-nigh satisfied native learning, and to consider also the history of the foreign creeds which had overwhelmed the religion of the ancestral gods. Chinese ethics, Chinese ceremonial, and Chinese Buddhism, had reduced the ancient faith to the state of a minor belief—almost to the state of a superstition. "The Chintō gods," exclaimed one of the...
scholars of the new school, "have become the servants of the Buddhhas!" But
how these gods were the ancestors of the race — the fathers of its emperors in persones — and their degradation could not but involve the degradation of the imperial tradition. Already, indeed, the emperors had been deprived not only of their immemorial rights and privileges, but of their revenues: many had been deposed and banished and insulted, just as the gods had been admitted only as inferior personages to the Buddhist pan-
ttheon, so their living descendants were now permitted to reign only as the dependents of military masters. By sacred law the whole soil of the empire belonged
To the Heavenly Sovereign: yet there has been great poverty at times in the imperial palace, and the revenues, allotted for the main defence of the Mikado, had often been insufficient to relieve his family from want. Accordingly all this was wrong.

The Shogunate had indeed established peace and inaugurated prosperity; but who could forget that it had only originated in a military usurpation of imperial rights? Only by the restoration of the Om of Heaven to his ancient position of power, and by the relegation of the military chiefs to their proper state of subordination, could the best interests of the
government. Yet it was not until the year 1841 that the Obō-Imami
drew alarm, and proclaimed its
disunion by banishing from the
capital the great scholar Hirata,
and forbidding him to write any-
thing more. Not long afterwards
he died. But he had been
able to lecture for forty years;
he had written and published
several hundred volumes, on
the school of which he was
the last and greatest exponent
already exerted far-reaching
influence. The relative lords
of Chōshū, Daidōma, Tosa,
and Hizen were watching on
watching. They perceived the
worth of the new ideas and their
own policy; they encouraged
the new Shintōism; they felt that a tide was coming when they could hope to shake off the domination of the Tokugawas. And their opportunity came at last with the advent of Japan of Commodore Perry's fleet.

The events of that time are well known, and need not here be dwelt upon at any length. Suffice it say that after the Ōkūgime had been verified and making commercial treaties with the United States and other powers, and practically compelled to open ordinary ports to foreign trade, much discontent arose and was fomented as much as possible by the enemies of the military government. Mean-

while the Ōkūgime had ascen-
claimed for itself the impossibility of resisting foreign aggression; it was fairly well informed as to the strength of Western countries. The imperial court was now less informed; and the Shogunate naturally dreaded to furnish the information. To acknowledge incapacity to resist; Occidental aggression would be to invite the ruin of the Tokugawa house; to resist, on the other hand, would be to invite the destruction of the Empire. The European enemies of the Shogunate then persuaded the imperial court in order the repulse of the foreigners; and this order— which, it must be remembered was essentially a religious order, emanating from the source of all
acknowledged authority placed the military government in a serious dilemma. To yield to effect by diplomacy what it could not accomplish by force; but while it was negotiating for the withdrawal of the foreign settlers, matters were suddenly forced to a crisis by the prince of Chōshū, who fired upon various ships belonging to the foreign powers. This action provoked the bombardment of Shimomoriši, and the demand of an indemnity of three million dollars. The Ohōjin Iyémochi attempted to chastise the daimyō of Chōshū for this act of hostility; but the attempt only proved the weakness of the military government. Iyémochi died.
soon after this defeat; and his successor Hitotsubashi had no chance to do anything, — for the now evident freethinkers of the Ohgimale gave its enemies courage to strike a fatal blow. Pressure was brought upon the imperial court to proclaim the abolition of the Ohgimale; and the Ohgimale was abolished by decree. Hitotsubashi submitted; and the Tokugawa régime came to an end — although its more devoted followers warred for two years afterwards, against hopeless odds, to re-establish it.

In 1867 the military administration was reorganized; the supreme power, both military and civil, being restored to the
At Kanoya. Soon afterward the Dhūdrō cult, officially revived at its purest simplicity, was declared the Religion of State; and Buddhism was disallowed. Thus the Empire was re-established upon the ancient lines; and all that the literary party had hoped for seemed to be realized—except one thing...

But it here observed that the adherents of the literary party wanted to go much further than the great founders of the new Dhūdrōism had dared dream of doing. These latter individualists were not satisfied with the abolition of the Dhūdrōsū, the restoration of imperial power, and
the renewal of the ancient cult: they desired a return of all society to the simplicity of primitive times; they desired that all foreign influence should be got rid of, and that the official ceremonies, the future education, the future literature, the sciences, the laws, should be purely Japanese. They were not even satisfied with the disendorsement of Buddhism: there was a vigorous proposal made for its total suppression! And all this would have signified, in more ways than one, a social retrogression towards barbarism. The great scholars had never proposed to cast away Buddhism or all Chinese learning: they had only wished that the native religion
and culture should have precedence. But the new literary party desired what would have been equivalent to the destruction of a thousand years' experience. Happily the good clausmen who had broken down the Dharma saw both past and future in another light. They understood that the national existence was in peril, and that resistance to foreign presence would be hopeless. Dharma had witnessed the bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863; Choshu the bombardment of Shimoda in 1864. Evidently the only chance of being able to face Western power would be through the patient study of Western science; and the survival of the empire
depended upon the Europeanization of society. By 1871 the daimyōs were abolished; in 1873 the edicts against Christianity were withdrawn; in 1876 the wearing of swords was prohibited. The samurai, as a military body, were suppressed; and all classes were declared henceforward equal before the law. New codes were compiled; a new army and navy organized; a new police system established; a new system of education introduced at government expense; and a new constitution promised. Finally, in 1891, the first Japanese parliament (strictly speaking) was convoked.

By that time the entire framework of society had been remodeled, so far as laws could remodel it, upon a European pattern. The nation had fairly entered upon its third
period of decadence. The clan has been dissolved; the family was no longer the legal unit of society; by the new condition the individual had been recognized.

When we consider the history of some vast and sudden political change in its details only,—the factors of the movement, the combinations of immediate cause and effect, the influences of strong personality, the conditions in-pelling individual action,—then the trans-formations apt to appear to us the work and the triumph of a few superior minds. We forget, perhaps, that those minds themselves were the product of their epoch, and that every such rapid change...
must represent the working of a national or race-modified quite as much as the operation of individual intelligence.

The events of the Meiji reconstruction strangely illustrate the action of such instinct in the face of peril,—the readjustment of internal relations to sudden changes of environment. The nation had formed its old political system powerless before the new conditions; as it bruised, it formed that system. It had formed its military organization incapable of defending it; as it reconstructed that organization, it had formed its educational system useless in the presence of unforeseen necessitates; as it replaced that system,—simul-
daneously crippling the power of Brooklinus, which seemed otherwise
have offered political opposition to the new developments required. And in that hour of greatest danger, the national instinct turned back at once to the moral experience upon which it could best rely, — the experience embodied in its ancient cult, the religion of unquestioning obedience. Relying upon this tradition, the people rallied about their ruler, descendant of the ancient gods, and awaited his will with unconquerable zeal of faith. By strict obedience to his commands the peril might be averted, — never otherwise. This was the national conviction. And the imperial order was simply that the nation should advance by study and make itself
as far as possible, the intellectual equal of its enemies. How faithfully that command was obeyed—how well the old moral discipline of the race served it in the period of that supreme emergency, I need scarcely say. Japan, by right of self-acquired power, has entered into the circle of the modern civilized powers, formidable organization by her new military strength, respectable through her intellectual achievements in the domain of practical science. And the force to effect this astonishing self-improvement, within the short space of thirty years, she owes primarily to the moral habit derived from her ancient cult, the religion of its ancestors.
To that measure the fact we should remember that Japan was evolutionally younger than any modern European nation, by at least twenty-seven hundred years, when she went to school!

Herbert Spencer has shown that the great value of society of ecclesiastical institutions lies in their power to give cohesion to the mass, to strengthen rule by enforcing obedience to custom, and by opposing revolutions likely to supply any element of disturbance.

In other words, the value of a religion, from the sociological standpoint, lies in its conservative claim... Various writers have alleged that the Japanese national
religion proved itself weak by incapacity
in period the overwhelming influence
of Buddhism. I cannot help
thinking that the entire social
history of Japan yields proof
of the contrary. Though Buddhism
did for a long period appear to
have almost entirely absorbed
Shinto, by the acknowledgement
of the Shinto scholars themselves;
— though Buddhist emperors
reigned who neglected or despised
the cult of their ancestors;—
though Buddhist directed, during
ten centuries, the education of
the nation, — Shinto remained
all the while so very much alive
that it was able not only to
dispossess its rival at last, but
To save the country from foreign domination. To assert that the Ch'ing revival signified no more than a stroke of policy inspired by a group of statesmen, is to ignore all the antecedents of the event. No such change could have been wrought by mere decree had not the national sentiment welcomed it.

Moreover, there are three important facts to be remembered in regard to the former Buddhist predomination:—(1.) Buddhism conserved the family cult, modifying the forms of the rite;—(2.) Buddhism never really supplanted the "jigami" cults, but maintained them;—(3.) Buddhism never interfered with
the imperial cult. Now these three forms of ancestor worship, the domestic, the communal, and the national, constitute all that is vital in China. No simple essential of the ancient faith has ever been weakened, much less abolished, under the long pressure of Buddhism.

[Handwritten note: 

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Oh indo is not today accepted as the State Religion; by request of the chiefs of the cult, it is not even officially classed as a religion. Obvious reasons of State policy decided this course. Having fulfilled its supreme duty, Oh indo abdi-]
...called. But as representing all these traditions which appeal to race, feeling, to the sentiment of duty, to the passion of loyalty, and the love of country, it yet remains an immense force, a power to which appeal will not be vainly made in another hour of national peril.