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The Shinto Revival.
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The slow weakening of the Tokugawa Shōgunate was due to causes not unlike those which had brought about the decline of previous regencies: the fine race degenerated during that long period of peace which its rule had inaugurated; the strong builders were succeeded by feeble and feeble men. Nevertheless the machinery of administration, astutely devised by Iyeyasu, and further perfected by Iyemitsu, worked so well that the enemies of the Shōgunate 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 Dairuma and Chōshū. Iyeyasu had not ventured to weaken them beyond a certain point: the risks 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 vast political importance. He only took measures to preserve a safe balance of power; placing between those formidable allies new lordships in whose rulers he could put absolute trust, — ^a trust based first upon interest, secondly upon kinship. But he always felt that danger to the Shōgunate might come from Dairuma and Chōshū; and he left to his

successors careful instructions about
 the policy to be followed in dealing
 with such possible enemies. He
 felt that his work was not perfect
 — that certain outlying blocks of
 the structure had not been properly
 clamped 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
 of perfect and permanent cohesion.
 In order to effect that, it would
 have been necessary to dissolve
 the clans. But Iyeyasu did
 all that human foresight 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 Satsuma and Chōshū 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 Shōgunate. They were Shintō 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 philo-
 -sophy 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 Shintō. The names
 of these three remarkable men
 were Mabuchi (1697-1769), Motoori
 (1730-1801), and Hirata (1776-1843). Their
 efforts actually resulted in the
 disestablishment of Buddhism, and
 in the great Shintō revival of
 1871.

#1 line >

~~Murray~~ The intellectual revolution
 made by these scholars could have
 been prepared only 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 house of Tokugawa itself
 which first gave to literature
 such encouragement and aid
 as made possible the labours
 of the Shintō scholars. Iyeyasu
 had been a lover of learning;
 and had devoted the later years
 of his life — passed in retire-
 -ment at Hidzuzaka — to the
 collection of ancient books and
 manuscripts. He bequeathed his
 Japanese books to his eighth
 son, the Prince of Owari; and

his Chinese books & another son, the Prince of Kishū. The Prince of Owari himself composed several works upon Japanese early literature. Other descendants of Iyeyasu inherited the great Shōgun's love of letters: one of his grandsons, Mitsu-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 the patronage

of great lords like these — collectors
 of libraries — there gradually devel-
 -oped a new school of men of
 -letters : men who turned away
 from Chinese literature to the
 study of the Japanese classics.
 They recited the ancient poetry
 and chronicles and ~~narrative~~ works
 ; — they republished the sacred records,
 with ample commentaries. They
 produced whole libraries of works
 upon religion, historical, and philo-
 -sophical 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 ~~the~~ this new scholarship were

lata by two Shinto priests, - Kada and Mabuchi.

The high patrons of learning never suspected the possible results of those researches which they had encouraged and aided. The study of the ancient records, the study of old Japanese literature, the study of the early political and religious conditions, naturally led men to consider the history of those foreign literary influences which had well-nigh stifled native learning, and to consider also the history of the foreign creed, 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 Shinto gods," exclaimed one of the

Erskell

scholars of the new school, "have become
 the servants of the Buddhas!" But
 those Shinto gods were the ancestors
 of the race, — the fathers of its
 emperors and princes; — 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 privi-
 leges, 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-
 -theon, so their living descendants
 were now permitted to reign only
 as the dependants of military
 usurpers. By sacred law the
 whole soil of the empire belonged

to the Heavenly Sovereign: yet there had been great poverty at times in the imperial palace; and the revenues, allotted for the maintenance of the Mikado, had often been insufficient to relieve his family from want. Assuredly all this was wrong.

The Shōgunate had indeed established peace and inaugurated prosperity; but who could forget that it had ~~its~~ originated in a military usurpation of imperial rights? Only by the restoration of the Son 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

nation be really served...

Cantall
 All this was thought and felt and strongly suggested; but not all of it was openly proclaimed. To have publicly preached against the military ^{government} rulers as a usurpation, would have been to invite desolation. The Shintō scholars dared only so much as the politics and the temper of their time seemed to permit, — though they closely approached the danger-line. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, their teaching had created a strong party in favour of the official revival of the ancient religion, the restoration of the Mikado to supreme power, and the repression, if not suppression, of the military

government. Yet it was not until the year 1841 that the Shōgunate took alarm, and proclaimed its disquiet by banishing from the capital the great scholar Hirata, and forbidding him to write anything more. Not long afterwards he died. But he had been able to teach for forty years; he had written and published several hundred volumes, and the school of which he was the head and greatest theologian already exerted far-reaching influence. The restive lords of Chōshū, Satsuma, Tosa, and Hizen were watching and waiting. They perceived the worth of the new ideas & their own policy; they encouraged

the new Shintōism; they felt that a time was coming when they could hope to shake off the domination of the Tokugawa. And their opportunity came at last with the advent to 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 to say that after the Shōgunate had been terrified into making commercial treaties with the United States as other powers, and practically compelled to open sundry ports to foreign trade, much discontent arose, and was fanned as much as possible by the enemies of the military government. Meanwhile the Shōgunate had ascer-

-ained for itself the impossibility of
 resisting foreign aggression: it
 was fairly well-informed as to
 the strength of Western countries.
 The imperial court was nowise
 informed; and the Shōgunate
 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 observant
 enemies of the Shōgunate then
 persuaded the imperial court
 to order the expulsion 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. It tried 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 Shimoda, and the demand of an indemnity of three million dollars. The Shōgun 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

17843

soon after this defeat; and his successor Hitotsubashi had no chance to do anything, — for the now evident feebleness of the Shōgunate gave its enemies courage to strike a fatal blow. Pressure was brought upon the imperial court to proclaim the abolition of the Shōgunate; and the Shōgunate was abolished by decree. Hitotsubashi submitted; and the Tokugawa régime thus came to an end — although its more devoted followers warred for two years afterwards, against hopeless odds, to reestablish it. In 1867 the entire administration was reorganized; the supreme power, both military and civil, being restored to the

1844

McKado. Soon afterward the
Shinto cult, officially revised
in its primal simplicity, was
declared the Religion of State;
and Buddhism was disavowed.
Thus the Empire was reestablished
upon the ancient lines; and all
that the literary party had
hoped for seemed to be realized
— except one thing...

~~But~~ ^{But} it here observed
that the adherents of the literary
party wanted to go much further
than the great founders of the
new Shintoism had dreamed
of going. These later individuals
were not satisfied with the
abolition of the Shogunate, the
restoration of imperial power, and

the revival of the ancient cult: they
 wanted a return of all society to
 the simplicity of primitive times;
 they desired that all foreign in-
 -fluence should be got rid of, and
 that the official ceremonies, the
 future education, the future literature,
 the edicts, the laws, should be
 purely Japanese. They were not
 even satisfied with the disincor-
 -poration 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 and all
 Chinese learning: they had the
 only idea 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 great clansmen who had broken down the Shōgunate saw both past and future in another light. They understood that the national existence was in peril, and that resistance to foreign pressure would be hopeless. Daisuma had witnessed the bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863; Chōshū 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 daimiōs
 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
 thenceforward equal before the
 law. New codes were compiled;
 a new army and navy organized;
 a new police-system established;
 a new system of education intro-
 -duced 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 integration. The clan has been ^{legally} dissolved; the family was no longer the legal unit of society: by the new constitution the individual had been recognized.

#1 line
 Ellis
 When we consider the history of some vast and sudden political change in its details only, — the factors of the movement, the contributions of immediate cause and effect, the influences of strong personality, the conditions impelling individual action, — then the transformation is 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-instinct quite as much as
the operation of individual intelligences.

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.

Dalton
The nation had found its old
political system powerless before
the new conditions; and it trans-
-formed that system. It had
found its military organization
incapable of defending it; and
it reconstructed that organization.
It had found its educational
system useless in the presence of
unforeseen necessities; and it
replaced that system, — simul-
-taneously crippling the power
of Buddhism, which might otherwise

have offered ^{serious} 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
~~the~~ ancient cult, the religion of
 unquestioning obedience. Relying
 upon Shintō 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
 strive by study to make itself

, as far as possible, the intellectual
 equal of its enemies. How faith-
 -fully 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 ^{strength} ~~power~~,
 has entered into the circle of the
 modern civilized powers, — formidable
 by her new military ^{organization} ~~strength~~,
 respectable through her ~~intellectual~~
 achievements in the domain of
 practical science. And the
 force to effect this astonishing
 self-improvement, within the
 time of thirty years, she owes
 assuredly to the moral habit
 derived from her ancient cult,
 — the religion of her ancestors.

To fairly measure the feat 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!...

11

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 innovations likely to supply any element of disintegration. In other words, the value of a religion, from the sociological standpoint, lies in its conservatism... Various writers have alleged that the Japanese national

religion proved itself weak by incapacity
 to resist the overwhelming influence
 of Buddhism. I cannot help
 thinking that the entire social
 history of Japan yields proof
 to the contrary. Though Buddhism
 did for a long period appear to
 have almost entirely absorbed
 Shintō, by the acknowledgement
 of the Shintō 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, — Shintō 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 Shinto revival signified no more than a stroke of policy imagined 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 predominance:— (1.) Buddhism conserved the family cult, modifying the forms of the rite;— (2.) Buddhism never really supplanted the Ujigami 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 Shintō. No single essential of the ancient faith had ever been weakened, much less abolished, under the long pressure of Buddhism.

$\frac{1}{2}$ line

— Shintō is not today ac-
 - knowledged 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 task, Shintō abdi-

-cated. But as representing
all those 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.

