XIII

PATRIOTISM-APOTHEOSIS-COURAGE

one that leaps to his lips when his country is assailed or maligned, "Yamato-Damashii." In prosaic English this means "Japan Soul." But the native word has a flavor and a host of associations that render it the most pleasing his tongue can utter. "Yamato" is the classic name for that part of Japan where the divinely honored Emperor, Jimmu Tenno, the founder of the dynasty and the Empire, first established his court and throne. "Damashii" refers to the soul, and especially to the noble qualities of the soul, which, in Japan of yore, were synonymous with bravery, the characteristic of the samurai. If, therefore, you wish to stir in the native breast the deepest feelings of patriotism and courage, you need but to call upon his "Yamato-Damashii."

There has been a revival in the use of this word during the last decade. The old Japan-Spirit has been appealed to, and the watchword of the anti-foreign reaction has been "Japan for the Japanese." Among English-speaking and English-reading Japanese there has been a tendency to give this term a meaning deeper and broader than the historic usage, or even than the current usage, will bear. One Japanese writer, for instance, defines the term as meaning, "a spirit of loyalty to country, conscience, and ideal." An American writer comes more nearly to the current usage in the definition of it as "the aggressive and invincible spirit of Japan." That there is such a spirit no one can doubt who has the slightest acquaintance with her past or present history.

Concerning the recent rise of patriotism I have spoken elsewhere, perhaps at sufficient length. Nor is it need-

ful to present extensive evidence for the statement that the Japanese have this feeling of patriotism in a marked degree. One or two rather interesting items may, however, find their place here.

The recent war with China was the occasion of focusing patriotism and fanning it into flame. Almost every town street, and house, throughout the Empire, was brilliantly decked with lanterns and flags, not on a single occasion only, but continuously. Each reported victory, however small, sent a thrill of delight throughout the nation. Month after month this was kept up. In traveling through the land one would not have fancied that war was in progress, but rather, that a long-

continued festival was being observed.

An incident connected with sending troops to Korea made a deep impression on the nation. The Okayama Orphan Asylum under the efficient management of its founder, Mr. Ishii, had organized the older boys into a band, securing for them various kinds of musical instruments. These they learned to use with much success. When the troops were on the point of leaving, Mr. Ishii went with his band to the port of Hiroshima, erected a booth, prepared places for heating water, and as often as the regiments passed by, his little orphans sallied forth with their teapots of hot tea for the refreshment of the soldiers. Each regiment was also properly saluted. and if opportunity offered, the little fellows played the national anthem, "Kimi-ga yo," which has been thus translated: "May Our Gracious Sovereign reign a thousand years, reign till the little stone grow into a mighty rock, thick velveted with ancient moss." And finally the orphans would raise their shrill voices with the rhythmical national shout, "Tei-koku Ban-zai, Tei-koku Ban-zai"; "Imperial-land, a myriad years, Imperialland, a myriad years." This thoughtful farewell was maintained for the four or five days during which the troops were embarking for the seat of war, well knowing that some would never return, and that their children would be left fatherless even as were these who saluted them. So deep was the impression made upon the soldiers that many of them wept and many a bronzed face bowed in loving recognition of the patriotism of these Christian boys. It is said that the commander-in-chief of the forces himself gave the little fellows the highest military salute in returning theirs.

Throughout the history of Japan, the aim of every rebellious clan or general was first to get possession of the Emperor. Having done this, the possession of the Imperial authority was unquestioned. Whoever was opposed to the Emperor was technically called "Choteki," the enemy of the throne, a crime as heinous as treason in the West. The existence of this sentiment throughout the Empire is an interesting fact. For, at the very same time, there was the most intense loyalty to the local lord or "daimyo." This is a fine instance of a certain characteristic of the Japanese of which I must speak more fully in another connection, but which, for convenience, I term "nominality." It accepts and, apparently at least, is satisfied with a nominal state of affairs, which may be quite different from the real. The theoretical aspect of a question is accepted without reference to the actual facts. The real power may be in the hands of the general or of the daimyo, but if authority nominally proceeds from the throne, the theoretical demands are satisfied. The Japanese themselves describe this state as "yumei-mujitsu." In a sense, throughout the centuries there has been a genuine loyalty to the throne. but it has been of the "yumei-mujitsu" type, apparently satisfied with the name only. In recent times, however, there has been growing dissatisfaction with this state of affairs. Some decades before Admiral Perry appeared there were patriots secretly working against the Tokugawa Shogunate. Called in Japanese "Kinnoka," they may be properly termed in English "Imperialists." Their aim was to overthrow the Shogunate and restore full and direct authority to the Emperor. Not a few lost their lives because of their views, but these are now honored by the nation as patriots.

There is a tendency among scholars to-day to magnify the patriotism and loyalty of preceding ages, also to emphasize the dignity and Imperial authority of the Emperor. The patriotic spirit is now so strong that

it blinds their eyes to many of the salient facts of their history. Their patriotism is more truly a passion than an idea. It is an emotion rather than a conception. It demands certain methods of treatment for their ancient history that Western scholarship cannot accept. It forbids any really critical research into the history of the past, since it might cast doubt on the divine descent of the Imperial line. It sums itself up in passionate admiration, not to say adoration, of the Emperor. In him all virtues and wisdom abound. No fault or lack in character can be attributed to him. I question if any rulers have ever been more truly apotheosized by any nation than the Emperors of Japan. The essence of patriotism to-day is devotion to the person of the Emperor. It seems impossible for the people to distinguish between the country and its ruler. He is the fountain of authority. Lower ranks gain their right and their power from him alone. Power belongs to the people only because, and in proportion as, he has conferred it upon them. Even the Constitution has its authority only because he has so determined. Should he at any time see fit to change or withdraw it, it is exceedingly doubtful whether one word of criticism or complaint would be publicly uttered, and as for forcible opposition, of such a thing no one would dream.

Japanese patriotism has had some unique and interesting features. In some marked respects it is different from that of lands in which democratic thought has held sway. For 1500 years, under the military social order, loyalty has consisted of personal attachment to the lord. It has ever striven to idealize that lord. The "yumei-mujitsu" characteristic has helped much in this idealizing process, by bridging the chasm between the prosaic fact and the ideal. Now that the old form of feudalism has been abruptly abolished, with its local lords and loyalty, the old sentiment of loyalty naturally fixes itself on the Emperor. Patriotism has perhaps gained intensity in proportion as it has become focalized. The Emperor is reported to be a man of commanding ability and good sense. It is at least true that he has shown wisdom in selecting his councilors. There

is general agreement that he is not a mere puppet in the hands of his advisers, but that he exercises a real and direct influence on the government of the day. During the late war with China it was currently reported that from early morning until late at night, week after week and month after month, he worked upon the various matters of business that demanded his attention. No important move or decision was made without his careful consideration and final approval. These and other noble qualities of the present Emperor have, without doubt, done much toward transferring the loyalty of the people from the local daimyo to the national

An event in the political world has recently occurred which illustrates pointedly the statements just made in regard to the enthusiastic loyalty of the people toward the Emperor. In spite of the fact that the national finances are in a distressing state of confusion, and notwithstanding the struggle which has been going on between successive cabinets and political parties, the former insisting on, and the latter refusing, any increase in the land tax, no sooner was it suggested by a small political party, to make a thank-offering to the Emperor of 20,000,000 yen out of the final payment of the war indemnity lately received, than the proposal was taken up with zeal by both of the great and utterly hostile political parties, and immediately by both houses of the Diet. The two reasons assigned were, "First, that the victory over China would never have been won, nor the indemnity obtained, had not the Emperor been the victorious, sagacious Sovereign that he is, and that, therefore, it is only right that a portion of the indemnity should be offered to him; secondly, that His Majesty is in need of money, the allowance granted by the state for the maintenance of the Imperial Household being insufficient, in view of the greatly enhanced prices of commodities and the large donations constantly made by His Majesty for charitable purposes." * This act of the Dietappeals to the sentiment of the people as the prosaic, business-like method of the Occident would not do. The * Japan Mail, December 10, 1898.

significance of the appropriation made by the Diet will be better realized if it is borne in mind that the postbellum programme for naval and military expansion which was adopted in view of the large indemnity (being, by the way, 50,000,000 ven), already calls for an expenditure in excess of the indemnity. Either the grand programme must be reduced, or new funds be raised, yet the leading political parties have been absolutely opposed to any substantial increase of the land tax, which seems to be the only available source of increase even to meet the current expenses of the government, to say nothing of the post-bellum programme. So has a burst of sentiment buried all prudential considerations. This is a species of loyalty that Westerners find hard to appreciate. To them it would seem that the first manifestation of loyalty would be to provide the Emperor's Cabinet and executive officers with the necessary funds for current expenses; that the second would be to give the Emperor an allowance sufficient to meet his actual needs, and the third,-if the funds held out,-to make him a magnificent gift. This sentimental method of lovalty to the Emperor, however, is matched by many details of common life. A sentimental parting gift or speech will often be counted as more friendly than thoroughly business-like relations. The prosaic Occidental discounts all sentiment that has not first satisfied the demands of business and justice. Such a standard, however, seems to be repugnant to the average Japanese mind.

The theory that all authority resides in the Emperor is also enforced by recent history. For the constitution was not wrung from an unwilling ruler by an ambitious people, but was conferred by the Emperor of his own free will, under the advice of his enlightened and progressive councilors.

As an illustration of some of the preceding statements let me quote from a recent article by Mr. Yamaguchi, Professor of History in the Peeresses' School and Lecturer in the Imperial Military College. After speaking of the abolition of feudalism and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, he goes on to say: "But we must not suppose that the sovereign power of the state

has been transferred to the Imperial Diet. On the contrary, it is still in the hands of the Emperor as before. . . The functions of the government are retained in the Emperor's own hands, who merely delegates them to the Diet, the Government (Cabinet), and the Judiciary, to exercise the same in his name. The present form of government is the result of the history of a country which has enjoyed an existence of many centuries. Each country has its own peculiar characteristics which differentiate it from others. Japan, too, has her history, different from that of other countries. Therefore we ought not to draw comparisons between Japan and other countries, as if the same principles applied to all indiscriminately. The Empire of Japan has a history of 3000 [!] years, which fact distinctly marks out our nationality as unique. The monarch, in the eyes of the people, is not merely on a par with an aristocratic oligarchy which rules over the inferior masses, or a few nobles who equally divide the sovereignty among themselves. According to our ideas, the monarch reigns over and governs the country in his own right, and not by virtue of rights conferred by the constitution. . . Our Emperor possesses real sovereignty and also exercises it. He is quite different from other rulers who possess but a partial sovereignty. . . He has inherited the rights of sovereignty from his ancestors. Thus it is quite legitimate to think that the rights of sovereignty exist in the Emperor himself. . . The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal. (Constitution, Art. LXXIII.) . . . The sovereign power of the state cannot be dissociated from the Imperial Throne. It lasts forever, along with the Imperial line of succession, unbroken for

Empire falls."

In a land where adopted sons are practically equivalent to lineal descendants (another instance of the "yumei-mujitsu" type of thought), and where marriage is essentially polygamous, and where the "yumei-mujitsu" spirit has allowed the sovereignty to be usurped in fact, though it may not be in name, it is not

ages eternal. If the Imperial house cease to exist, the

at all wonderful that the nation can boast of a longer line of Emperors than any other land. But when monogamy becomes the rule in Japan, as it doubtless will some day, and if lineal descent should be considered essential to inheritance, as in the Occident, it is not at all likely that the Imperial line will maintain itself unbroken from father to son indefinitely. Although the present Emperor has at least five concubines besides his wife, the Empress, and has had, prior to 1896, no less than thirteen children by them, only two of these are still living, both of them the offspring of his concubines; one of these is a son born in 1879, proclaimed the heir in 1887, elected Crown Prince in 1889, and married in 1900; he is said to be in delicate health; the second child is a daughter born in 1890. Since 1896 several children have been born to the Emperor and two or three have died, so that at present writing there are but four living children. These are all offspring of concubines.*

In speaking, however, of the Japanese apotheosis of their Emperor, we must not forget how the "divine right of kings" has been a popular doctrine, even in enlightened England, until the eighteenth century, and is not wholly unknown in other lands at the present day. Only in recent times has the real source of sovereignty been discovered by historical and political students. That the Japanese are not able to pass at one leap from

^{*} I have found it difficult to secure exact information on the subject of the Imperial concubines (who, by the way, have a special name of honor), partly for the reason that this is not a matter of general information, and partly because of the unwillingness to impart information to a foreigner which is felt to tarnish the luster of the Imperial glory. A librarian of a public library refused to lend a book containing the desired facts, saying that foreigners might be freely informed of that which reveals the good, the true, and the beautiful of Japanese history, customs, and character, but nothing else. By the educated and more earnest members of the nation much sensitiveness is felt, especially in the presence of the Occidental, on the subject of the Imperial concubinage. It is felt to be a blot on Japan's fair name, a relic of her less civilized days, and is, accordingly, kept in the background as much as possible. The statements given in the text in regard to the number of the concubines and children are correct so far as they go. A full statement might require an increase in the figures given.

the old to the new conception in regard to this fundamental element of national authority is not at all strange. Past history, together with that which is recent, furnishes a satisfactory explanation for the peculiar nature of Japanese patriotism. This is clearly due to the nature of the social order.

A further fact in this connection is that, in a very real sense, the existence of Japan as a unified nation has depended on apotheosis. It is the method that all ancient nations have adopted at one stage of their social development for expressing their sense of national unity and the authority of national law. In that stage of social development when the common individual counts for nothing, the only possible conception of the authority of law is that it proceeds from a superior being-the highest ruler. And in order to secure the full advantage of authority, the supreme ruler must be raised to the highest possible pinnacle, must be apotheosized. That national laws should be the product of the unvalued units which compose the nation was unthinkable in an age when the worth of the individual was utterly unrecognized. The apotheosis of the Emperor was neither an unintelligible nor an unreasonable practice. But now that an individualistic, democratic organization of society has been introduced resting on a principle diametrically opposed to that of apotheosis, a struggle of most profound importance has been inaugurated. Does moral or even national authority really reside in the Emperor? The school-teachers are finding great difficulty in teaching morality as based exclusively on the Imperial Edict. The politicians of Japan are not content with leaving all political and state authority to the Emperor. Not long ago (June, 1898), for the first time in Japan, a Cabinet acknowledging responsibility to a political party took the place of one acknowledging responsibility only to the Emperor. For this end the politicians have been working since the first meeting of the national Diet. Which principle is to succeed, apotheosis and absolute Imperial sovereignty or individualism with democratic sovereignty? The two cannot permanently live together. The struggle is sure to

be intense, for the question of authority, both political and moral, is inevitably involved.

The parallel between Japanese and Roman apotheosis is interesting. I can present it no better than by quoting from that valuable contribution to social and moral problems, "The Genesis of the Social Conscience," by Prof. H. S. Nash: "Yet Rome with all her greatness could not outgrow the tribal principle. . . We find something that reveals a fundamental fault in the whole system. It is the apotheosis of the Emperors. The process of apotheosis was something far deeper than servility in the subject conspiring with vanity in the ruler. It was a necessity of the state. There was no means of insuring the existence of the state except religion. In the worship of the Cæsars the Empire reverenced its own law. There was no other way in which pagan Rome could guarantee the gains she had made for civilization. Yet the very thing that was necessary to her was in logic her undoing. . . The worship of the Emperor undid the definition of equality the logic of the Empire demanded. Again apotheosis violated the divine unity of humanity upon which alone the Empire could securely build." *

That the final issue of Japan's experience will be like that of Rome I do not believe. For her environment is totally different. But the same struggle of the two conflicting principles is already on. Few, even among the educated classes, realize its nature or profundity. The thinkers who adhere to the principle of apotheosis do so admittedly because they see no other way in which to secure authority for law, whether political or moral. Here we see the importance of those conceptions of God, of law, of man, which Christianity alone can give.

From patriotism we naturally pass to the consideration of courage. Nothing was more prized and praised in Old Japan. In those days it was the deliberate effort of parents and educators to develop courage in children. Many were their devices for training the young in bravery. Not content with mere precept, they were sent alone on dark stormy nights to cemeteries, to houses re-

fear was no more. He also told me how for the sake of becoming inured to ghastly sights under nerve-testing circumstances, the sons of samurai were sent at night to the execution grounds, there, by faint moonlight to see, stuck on poles, the heads of men who had been recently beheaded.

The Japanese emotion of courage is in some respects peculiar. At least it appears to differ from that of the Anglo-Saxon. A Japanese seems to lose all self-control when the supreme moment comes; he throws himself into the fray with a frenzied passion and a fearless madness allied to insanity. Such is the impression I have

gathered from the descriptions I have heard and the pictures I have seen. Even the pictures of the late war

with China give evidence of this.

But their courage is not limited to fearlessness in the face of death; it extends to complete indifference to pain. The honorable method by which a samurai who had transgressed some law or failed in some point of etiquette, might leave this world is well known to all, the "seppuku," the elegant name for the vulgar term "hara-kiri" or "belly-cutting." To one who is sensitive to tales of blood, unexpurgated Japanese history must be a dreadful thing. The vastness of the multitudes who died by their own hands would be incredible, were there not ample evidence of the most convincing nature. It may be said with truth that suicide became apotheosized, a condition that I suppose cannot be said to have prevailed in any other land.

155

In thus describing the Japanese sentiment in regard to "seppuku," there is, however, some danger of misrepresenting it. "Seppuku" itself was not honored, for in the vast majority of cases those who performed it were guilty of some crime or breach of etiquette. And not infrequently those who were condemned to commit "seppuku" were deficient in physical courage; in such cases, some friend took hold of the victim's hand and forced him to cut himself. Such cowards were always despised. To be condemned to commit "seppuku" was a disgrace, but it was much less of a disgrace than to be beheaded as a common man, for it permitted the samurai to show of what stuff he was made. It should be stated further that in the case of "seppuku," as soon as the act of cutting the abdomen had been completed, always by a single rapid stroke, someone from behind would, with a single blow, behead the victim. The physical agony of "seppuku" was, therefore, very brief, lasting but a few

I can do no better than quote in this connection a paragraph from the "Religions of Japan" by W. E. Griffis:

"From the prehistoric days when the custom of 'Junshi,' or dying with the master, required the interment of living retainers with their dead lord, down through all the ages to the Revolution of 1868, when at Sendai and Aidzu scores of men and boys opened their bowels, and mothers slew their infant sons and cut their own throats, there has been flowing a river of suicides' blood having its springs in devotion of retainers to masters, and of soldiers to a lost cause. . . Not only a thousand, but thousands of thousands of soldiers hated their parents, wife, child, friend, in order to be disciples to the supreme loyalty. They sealed their creed by emptying their own veins. . . The common Japanese novels read like records of slaughter-houses. No Molech or Shivas won more victims to his shrine than has this idea of Tapanese loyalty, which is so beautiful in theory but so hideous in practice. . . Could the statistics

of the suicides during this long period be collected, their publication would excite in Christendom the utmost incredulity." *

I well remember the pride, which almost amounted to glee, with which a young blood gave me the account of a mere boy, perhaps ten or twelve years old, who cut his bowels in such a way that the deed was not quite complete, and then tying his "obi" or girdle over it, walked into the presence of his mother, explained the circumstances which made it a point of honor that he should commit "seppuku," and forthwith untied his "obi" and

died in her presence.

These are the ideals of courage and loyalty that have been held up before Japanese youth for centuries. Little comment is needful. From the evolutionary standpoint, it is relatively easy to understand the rise of these ideas and practices. It is clear that they depend entirely on the social order. With the coming in of the Western social order, feudal lords and local loyalty and the carrying of swords were abolished. Are the Japanese any less courageous now than they were thirty years ago? The social order has changed and the ways of showing courage have likewise changed. That is all that need be said.

Are we to say that the Japanese are more courageous than other peoples? Although no other people have manifested such phenomena as the Japanese in regard to suicide for loyalty, yet any true appreciation of Western peoples will at once dispel the idea that they lack courage. Manifestations of courage differ according to the nature of the social order, but no nation could long maintain itself, to say nothing of coming into existence,

without a high degree of this endowment.

But Japanese courage is not entirely of the physical order, although that is the form in which it has chiefly shown itself thus far. The courage of having and holding one's own convictions is known in Japan as elsewhere. There has been a long line of martyrs. During the decades after the introduction of Buddhism, there * P. 119.

was such opposition that it required much courage for converts to hold to their beliefs. So, too, at the time of the rise of the new Buddhist sects, there was considerable persecution, especially with the rise of the Nichiren Shu. And when the testing time of Christianity came, under the edict of the Tokugawas by which it was suppressed, tens of thousands were found who preferred death to the surrender of their faith. In recent times, too, much courage has been shown by the native Chris-

As an illustration is the following: When an eminent American teacher of Japanese youth returned to Japan after a long absence, his former pupils gathered around him with warm admiration. They had in the interval of his absence become leaders among the trustees and faculty of the most prosperous Christian college in Japan. He was accordingly invited to deliver a course of lectures in the Chapel. It was generally known that he was no longer the earnest Christian that he had once been, when, as teacher in an interior town, he had inspired a band of young men who became Christians under his teaching and a power for good throughout the land. But no one was prepared to hear such extreme denunciations of Christianity and Christian missions and missionaries as constituted the substance of his lectures. At first the matter was passed over in silence. But, by the end of the second lecture, the missionaries entered a protest, urging that the Christian Chapel should not again be used for such lectures. The faculty, however, were not ready to criticise their beloved teacher. The third lecture proved as abusive as the others; the speaker seemed to have no sense of propriety. A glimpse of his thought and method of expression may be gained from a single sentence: "I have been commissioned, gentlemen, by Jesus Christ, to tell you that there is no such thing as a soul or a future life." Although the missionary members of the faculty urged it, the Tapanese members, most of whom were his former pupils, were unwilling to take any steps whatever to prevent the continuation of the blasphemous lectures. The students of the institution

accordingly held a mass-meeting, in which the matter was discussed, and it was decided to inform the speaker that the students did not care to hear any more such lectures. The question then arose as to who would deliver the resolution. There was general hesitancy, and anyone who has seen or known the lecturer, and has heard him speak, can easily understand this feeling; for he is a large man with a most impressive and imperious manner. The young man, however, who had perhaps been most active in agitating the matter, and who had presented the resolution to the meeting, volunteered to go. He is slight and rather small, even for a Japanese. Going to the home of the lecturer, he delivered calmly the resolution of the students. To the demand as to who had drawn up and presented the resolution to the meeting, the reply was: "I, sir." That ended the conversation, but not the matter. From that day the idolized teacher was gradually lowered from his pedestal. But the moral courage of the young man who could say in his enraged presence, "I, sir," has not been forgotten. Neither has that of the young man who had acted as interpreter for the first lecture; not only did he decline to act in that capacity any longer, but, taking the first public opportunity, at the chapel service the following day, which proved to be Sunday, he went to the platform and asked forgiveness of God and of men that he had uttered such language as he had been compelled to use in his translating. Here, too, was moral courage of no mean order.

XIV

FICKLENESS—STOLIDITY—STOICISM

FREQUENT criticism of the Japanese is that they are fickle; that they run from one fad to another, from one idea to another, quickly tiring of each in turn. They are said to lack persistence in their amusements no less than in the most serious matters of life.

None will deny the element of truth in this charge. In fact, the Japanese themselves recognize that of late their progress has been by "waves," and not a few lament it. A careful study of school attendance will show that it has been subject to alternate waves of popularity and disfavor. Private schools glorying in their hundreds of pupils have in a short time lost all but a few score. In 1873 there was a passion for rabbits, certain varieties of which were then for the first time introduced into Japan. For a few months these brought fabulous prices, and became a subject of the wildest speculation. In 1874-75 cock-fighting was all the rage. Foreign waltzing and gigantic funerals were the fashion one year, while wrestling was the fad at another time, even the then prime minister, Count Kuroda, taking the lead. But the point of our special interest is as to whether fickleness is an essential element of Japanese character, and so dominant that wherever the people may be and what-ever their surroundings, they will always be fickle; or whether this trait is due to the conditions of their recent history. Let us see.

Prof. Basil H. Chamberlain says, "Japan stood still so long that she has to move quickly and often now to make up for lost time." This states the case pretty well. Had we known Japan only through her Tokugawa period, the idea of fickleness would not have occurred to us; on the contrary, the dominant impression would