thunder and bathing the glittering armour of our soldiers guarding the coastline in white flashes of dazzling light. The very heaven and earth shook before the mighty anger of nature. The result was that the dawn of the next morning saw the whole fleet of the proud Yuan, that had darkened the water for miles, swept completely away into the bottomless sea of Genkai, to the great relief of the horror-stricken populace, and to the unspeakable disappointment of our determined soldiers. Out of the hundred thousand warriors who manned the invading ships, only three are recorded to have survived the destruction to tell the dismal tale to their crestfallen great Khan!

Then after a short interval of a score of peaceful years, Japan was plunged again into another series of internal disturbances, from which she can hardly be said to have emerged until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when order and rest were brought back by the able hand of Tokugawa Ieyasu. During all these troublous days, the original Contemplative sect, paralleled soon after its establishment in
Japan by a new school called Sôtô, as it was again supplemented by another, the Ōbaku school, five centuries afterwards, found ample material to propagate its special method of enlightenment. This sect, which drew its patrons from the ruling classes of Japan, was unanimously looked up to as best calculated to impart the secret power of perfect self-control and undisturbable peace of mind. It must be remembered that the ultimate riddance in the Buddhist sense, the entrance into cold Nirvana, was not what our practical mind wanted to realise. It was the stoic indifference, enabling man to meet after a moment’s thought, or almost instinctively, any hardships that human life might impose, that had brought about its otherwise strange popularity.

Another charm it offered to the people of the illiterate Middle Ages, when they had to attend to other things than a leisurely pursuit of literature, was its systematic neglect of book-learning. Truth was to be directly read from heart to heart. The intervention of words and writing was
regarded as a hindrance to its true understanding. A rudimentary symbolism expressed by gestures was all that a Zen priest really relied upon for the communication of the doctrine. Everybody with a heart to feel and a mind to understand needed nothing further to begin and finish his quest of the desired freedom from life's everlasting torments.

The self-control that enables us not to betray our inner feeling through a change in our expression, the measured steps with which we are taught to walk into the hideous jaws of death, in short, all those qualities which make a present Japanese of truly Japanese type look strange, if not queer, to your eyes, are in a most marked degree a product of that direct or indirect influence on our past mentality which was exercised by the Buddhist doctrine of Dhyāna taught by the Zen priests.

Another benefit which the Zen sect conferred on us is the healthy influence it exercised on our taste. The love of nature and the desire of purity that we had shown from the earliest days of our history, took,
under the leading idea of the Contemplative sect, a new development, and began to show that serene dislike of loudness of form and colour. That apparent simplicity with a fulness of meaning behind it, like a Dhyāna symbol itself, which we find so pervadingly manifested in our works of art, especially in those of the Ashikaga period (1400-1600 A.D.), is certainly to be counted among the most valuable results which the Zen doctrine quickened us to produce.

In short, so far-reaching is the influence of the Contemplative sect on the formation of the Japanese spirit as you find it at present, that an adequate interpretation of its manifestations would be out of the question unless based on a careful study of this branch of Buddhism. So long as the Zen sect is not duly considered, the whole set of phenomena peculiar to Japan—from the all-pervading laconism to the harakiri—will remain a sealed book.

This fact is my excuse for having detained you for so long on the subject.

I now pass on to the consideration of our own native cult.
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Shinto, or the 'Path of the Gods,' is the name by which we distinguish the body of our national belief from Buddhism, Christianity, or any other form of religion. It is remarkable that this appellation, like Nippon (which corresponds to your word Japan), is no purely Japanese term. Buddhism is called Buppō (from Butsu, Buddha, and hō, doctrine) or Bukkyō (kyō, teaching); Confucianism is known as Jukyō (Ju, literati); and both terms are taken from the Chinese. In keeping with these we have Shinto (Shin, deity, and to, way). This state of things in some measure explains the rather unstable condition in which Buddhism on its first arrival found our national cult. It has ever since remained in its main aspects nothing more than a form of ancestor-worship based on the central belief in the divine origin of the imperial line. A systematised creed it never was and has never become, even if we take into consideration the attempts at its consolidation made by such scholars as Yamazaki-Ansai (1618-1682), who in the middle of the
seventeenth century tried to formalise it in accordance with Chu-Ihs'i's philosophy, or, later still, by such eager revivalists as Hirata-Atsutane (1776-1843), etc. At the time when Shintoism had to meet its mighty foe from India, its whole mechanism was very simple. It consisted in a number of primitive rites, such as the recital of the liturgy, the offering of eartables to the departed spirits of deified ancestors, patriarchal, tribal, or national. This naive cult was as innocent of the cunning ideas and subtle formalisms of the rival creed as its shrines were free from the decorations and equipments of an Indian temple. So, although at the start Buddhism met with some obstinate resistance at the hand of the Shintōists, who attributed the visitations of pestilence that followed the introduction of the foreign belief to the anger of the native gods, its superiority in organisation soon overcame these difficulties: especially from the time when the great Buddhist priest Kūkai (774-835 A.D.) hit upon the ingenious but mischievous idea of solving the dilemma by the estab-
lishment of what is generally known in our history as Ryôbu-Shinto, or double-faced Shinto. According to this doctrine, a Shinto god was to be regarded as an incarnation of a corresponding Indian deity who made his appearance in Japan through metamorphosis for Japan's better salvation—a doctrine which is no more than a clever application of the notion known in India as Nirmanakâya. This incarnation theory opened a new era in the history of the expansion of Buddhism in Japan, extending over a period of eleven centuries, during which Shinto was placed in a very awkward position. It was at last restored to its original purity at the beginning of the present Meiji period, and that only after a century of determined endeavour on the part of native Shintoist scholars.

From these words you might perhaps conclude that Buddhism succeeded in supplanting the native cult, at least for more than a thousand years. But, strange to say, if we judge the case not by outward appearances, but by the religious conviction that lurks in the depth of the heart,
we cannot but recognise the undeniable fact that no real conversion has ever been achieved during the past eleven centuries, by the doctrine of Buddha. Our actual self, notwithstanding the different clothes we have put on, has ever remained true in its spirit to our native cult. Speaking generally, we are still Shintoists to this day—Buddhists, Christians, and all—so long as we are born Japanese. This might sound to you somewhat paradoxical. Here is the explanation:

For an average Japanese mind in present Japan, thanks to the ancestor-worship practised consciously or unconsciously from time immemorial, it is not altogether easy to imagine the spirit of the deceased, if it believes in one at all, to be something different and distant from our actual living self. The departed, although invisible, are thought to be leading their ethereal life in the same world in much the same state as that to which they had been accustomed while on earth. Like the little child so touchingly described by Wordsworth, we cannot see why we should not count
the so-called dead still among the existing. The difference between the two is that of tangibility or visibility, but nothing more.

The *raison d'être* of this illusive notion is, of course, not far to seek. Any book on anthropology or ethnology would tell you how sleep, trance, dream, hallucination, reflection in still water, etc., help to build up the spirit-world in the untaught mind of primitive man. Yet it must be remembered that these origins have led to something far higher, to something of real value to our nation, and to something which is a moral force in our daily lives that may well be compared to what is efficacious in other creeds. Notice the fact that Buddhism from the moment of its introduction in the sixth century after Christ to this very day has on the whole remained the religion, so to say, of night and gloomy death, while Shintoism has always retained its firm hold on the popular mind as the cult, if I might so express it, of daylight and the living dead. From the very dawn of our history we read of patriarchs, chieftains, and national heroes
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deified and worshipped as so many guardian spirits of families, of clans, or of the country. Nor has this process of deification come to an end yet, even in this age of air-ship and submarine boat. We continue to erect shrines to men of merit. This may look very strange to you, but is not your poet Swinburne right when he sings--

'Whoso takes the world's life on him and his own lays down,
He, dying so, lives.'

Might not these lines explain, when duly extended, the subtle feeling that lurks behind our apparently incomprehensible custom of speaking with the departed over the altar? The present deification is, like your custom of erecting monuments to men of merit, a way of making the best part of a man's career legible to the coming generations. The numberless shrines you now find scattered all over Japan are only so many chapters written in unmistakable characters of the lessons our beloved and revered heroes and good men have left us for our edification and amelioration. It is
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in the sunny space within the simple railing of these Shinto shrines, where the smiling presence of the patron spirit of a deified forefather or a great man is so clearly felt, that our childhood has played for tens of centuries its games of innocent joy. Monthly and yearly festivals are observed within the divine enclosure of a guardian god, when a whole community under his protection let themselves go in good-natured laughter and gleeful mirth before the favouring eyes of their divine patron. How different is this jovial feeling from that gloomy sensation with which we approach a Buddhist temple, recalling death and the misery of life from every corner of its mysterious interior. Such seriousness has never been congenial to the gay Japanese mind with its strong love of openness and light. Until death stares us right in the face, we do not care to be religious in the ordinary sense of the term. True, we say and think that we believe in death, but all the while this so-called death is nothing else than a new life in this present world of ours led in
a supernatural way. For instance, when the father of a Japanese family begins a journey of any length, the raised part of his room will be made sacred to his memory during his temporary absence; his family will gather in front of it and think of him, expressing their devotion and love in words and gifts in kind. In the hundreds of thousands of families that have some one or other of their members fighting for the nation in this dreadful war with Russia, there will not be even one solitary house where the mother, wife, or sister is not practising this simple rite of endearment for the beloved and absent member of the family. And if he die on the field, the mental attitude of the poor bereaved towards the never-returning does not show any substantial difference. The temporarily departed will now be regarded as the forever departed, but not as lost or passed away. His essential self is ever present, only not visible. Daily offerings and salutations continue in exactly the same way as when he was absent for a time. Even in the mind of the modern
Japanese with its extremely agnostic tendencies, there is still one corner sacred to this inherited feeling. You could sooner convince an ordinary European of the non-existence of a personal God. When it gets dusk every bird knows whither to wing its way home. Even so with us all when the night of Death spreads its dark folds over our mortal mind!

But ask a modern Japanese of ordinary education in the broad daylight of life, if he believes in a God in the Christian sense; or in Buddha as the creator; or in the Shinto deities; or else in any other personal agency or agencies, as originating and presiding over the universe; and you would immediately get an answer in the negative in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. Do you ask why? First, because our school education throughout its whole course has, ever since its re-establishment thirty-five years ago, been altogether free from any teaching of a denominational nature. The ethical foundations necessary for the building up of character are imparted through an adequate
commentary on the moral sayings and maxims derived mostly from Chinese classics. Secondly, because the little knowledge about natural science which we obtain at school seems to make it impossible to anchor our rational selves on anything other than an impersonal law. Thirdly, because we do not see any convincing reason why morals should be based on the teaching of a special denomination, in face of the fact that we can be upright and brave without the help of a creed with a God or deities at its other end. So, for the average mind of the educated Japanese something like modern scientific agnosticism, with a strong tendency towards the materialistic monism of recent times, is just what pleases and satisfies it most.

If not so definitely thought out, and if expressed with much less learned terminology, the thought among our educated classes as regards supernatural agencies has during the past three centuries been much the same. The Confucian warning against meddling with things supernatural,
the atheistic views and hermit-like conduct of the adherents of Laoism, and the higher Buddhism, all contributed towards the consolidation of this mental attitude with a conscious or unconscious belief in the existing spirit-world. Except for the philosophy which they knew how to utilise for their practical purposes, the educated felt no charm in religion. The lower form of Buddhism with its pantheon has been held as something only for the aged and the weak. For the execution of the religious rites, at funerals or on other occasions (except in the rare instances when some families for a special reason of their own preferred the Shintoist form), we have unanimously drawn on the Buddhist priesthood, just in the same way as you go to your family doctor or attorney in case of a bodily or legal complication, knowing well that religion as we have understood it is something as much outside the pale of the layman as medicine and law.

For the proper conduct of our daily life as members of society, the body of Confucian morality resting on the tripod of
loyalty, filial piety, and honesty, has been the only standard which high and low have alike recognised. These ethical ideals, when embraced by that formidable warrior caste who played such an important part in feudal Japan, form the code of unwritten morality known among us as Bushido, which means the Path of the Samurai. This last word, which has found its way into your language, is the substantival derivative from the verb *samurau* (to serve), and, like its English counterpart 'knight' (Old English *cnuht*), has raised itself from its original sense of a retainer (cp. German *Knecht*) to the meaning in which it is now used. To be a Samurai in the true sense of the word has been the highest aspiration of a Japanese. Your term 'gentleman,' when understood in its best sense, would convey to you an approximate idea if you added a dash of soldier blood to it. Rectitude, courage, benevolence, politeness, veracity, loyalty, and a predominating sense of honour—these are the chief colours with which a novelist in the days of yore used to paint
an ideal Samurai; and his list of desirable qualities was not considered complete without a well-developed body and an expression of the face that was manly but in no way brutal. No special stress was at first laid on the cultivation of thinking power and book-learning, though they were not altogether discouraged; it was thought that these accomplishments might develop other qualities detrimental to the principal character, such as sophistry or pedantry. To have good sense enough to keep his name honourable, and to act instead of talking cleverly, was the chief ambition of a Samurai.

But this view gradually became obscured. It lost its fearful rigidity in course of time, as the world became more and more sure of a lasting peace. Literature and music have gradually added softening touches to its somewhat brusque features.

It must, however, be always remembered that the keynote of Bushido was from the very beginning an indomitable sense of honour. This was all in all to the mind of the Samurai, whose swords at his side
reminded him at every movement of the importance of his good name. The care with which he preserved it reached in some cases to a pathetic extreme; he preferred, for example, an instant suicide to a reputation on which doubt had been cast, however falsely. The very custom of seppuku (better known as harakiri), a form of suicide not known in early Japan, is an outcome of this love of an unstained name, originating, in my opinion, in the metaphorical use of the word hara (abdomen), which was the supposed organ for the begetting of ideas. In consequence of this curious localisation of the thinking faculty, the word hara came to denote at the same time intention or idea. Therefore, in cutting open (kiru) his abdomen, a person whose motives had come to be suspected meant to show that his inside was free from any trace of ideas not worthy of a Samurai. This explanation is, I think, amply sustained by the constant use to

1 The first mention in books of a similar mode of death dates from the latter part of the twelfth century. But it does not seem that the custom became universal until a considerably later period.
this very day of the word *hara* in the sense of one's ideas.

So Bushido, as you will now see, was itself but a manifestation of those same forces already at work in the formation of Japanese thought, like Buddhism, Confucianism, etc. But as it has played a most important part in the development of modern Japan, I thought it more proper to consider it as an independent factor in the history of our civilisation. Had it not been for this all-daring spirit of Bushido, Japan would never have been able to make the gigantic progress which she has been achieving in these last forty years. As soon as our ports were flung open to the reception of Western culture, Samurai, now deeply conscious of their new mission, took leave of those stern but faithful friends, their beloved swords, not without much reluctance, even as did Sir Bedivere, in order to take up the more peaceful pen, which they were determined to wield with the same knightly spirit. It is, in short, Bushido that has urged our Japan on for the last three centuries, and will continue
to urge her on, on for ever, onward to her ideals of the true, the good, and the beautiful. Look to the spot where every Japanese sabre and every Japanese bayonet is at present pointing with its icy edge of determined patriotism in the dreary fields of Manchuria, or think of the intrepid heroes on our men-of-war and our torpedo-boats amid blinding snowstorms and the glare of hostile searchlights, and your eyes will invariably end at the magic Path of the Samurai.

Having thus far followed my enumeration of the various factors in the formation of the present thought in Japan, some of you might perhaps be curious to know what Christianity has contributed towards the general stock of modern Japanese mentality.

It must surely have exercised a very healthy influence on our mind since its re-introduction at the beginning of the present Meiji period. Some have indeed gone so far as to say that we owe the whole success we have up to now achieved in this remarkable war to the holy inspiration we drew from the teaching of Jesus Christ.
I indorse this opinion to its full extent, but only if we are to understand by His teaching that whole body of truth and love which are of the essence of Christianity, and which we used in former days to call by other names, such as Bushido, Confucianism, etc. But if you insist on having it understood in a narrow sectarian sense, with a personal God and rigid formalities as its main features, then I should say that I cannot agree with you, for this Christianity occupies rather an awkward place in our Japanese mind, finding itself somewhere between the national worship of the living dead, and modern agnosticism, or scientific monism. In our earlier fishery for new knowledge in the Western seas, fish other than those fit for our table were caught and dressed along with some really nourishing; the result was disastrous, and we gradually came to learn more caution than at first. The Roman Catholics, more enthusiastic than discreet, committed wholesale outrage on our harmless ways of faith in the early days of the seventeenth century, which did much to leave in bad
repute the creed of Jesus Christ. And since the prohibition against Christianity was removed, many a missionary has been so particular about the plate in which the truth is served as to make us doubt, with reason, if that be the spirit of the immortal Teacher. The truth and poetry that breathe in your Gospels have been too often paraphrased in the senseless prose of mere formalism. Otherwise Christianity would have rendered us better help in our eternal march towards the ideal emancipation.

There remains still one highly important thing to be considered as a formative element of the Japanese spirit. I mean the landscape and the physical aspects of Japan in general.

It is well known that an intimate connection exists between the mind and the nature which surrounds it. A moment's consideration of the development of Hellenic sculpture and of the Greek climate, or of the Teutonic mythology and the physical condition of Northern Europe, will bring conviction on that point. Is not the effect of the blue sky on Italian
painting, and the influence of the dusky heaven on the pictorial art of the Netherlands, clearly traceable in the productions of the old masters? A study of London psychology at the present moment will never be complete without special chapters on your open spaces and your fogs.

In order to convey anything like an adequate idea of the physical aspects of Japan from the geographical and meteorological points of view, it would be necessary to furnish a detailed account of the country, with a long list of statistical tables and the ample help of lantern slides. But on this occasion I must be content with naming some of the typical features of our surroundings.

Japan, as you know, is a long and narrow series of islands, stretching from frigid Kamchatka in the north to half-tropical Formosa in the south. The whole country is mountainous, with comparatively little flat land, and is perforated with a great number of volcanoes, the active ones alone numbering above fifty at present. With this is connected the annoying
frequency of earthquakes, and the agreeable abundance of thermal springs—two phenomena that cannot remain without effect on the people's character.

There are two other natural agencies to be mentioned in this connection. One is the Kuro-shio, or Black Stream, so called on account of the deep black colour which the ocean current displays in cloudy weather. This warm ocean river, having a temperature of 27 centigrade in summer, begins its course in the tropical regions near the Philippine Islands, and on reaching the southern isles is divided by them into two unequal parts. The greater portion of it skirts the Japanese islands on their eastern coast, imparting to them that warm and moist atmosphere which is one source of the fertility of the soil and the beauty of the vegetation. The effect of the Kuro-shio upon the climate and productions of the lands along which it flows may be fairly compared with that of the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic Ocean, which in situation, direction, and volume it resembles. To this most noticeable cause
of the climatic condition of the Japanese islands must be added another agency closely related to it in its effect. Our archipelago lies in the region of the north-east monsoon, which affects in a marked degree the climate of all those parts over which the winds blow. Although the same monsoon blows over the eastern countries of the Asiatic continent, the insular character of Japan, and the proximity of the above-mentioned warm current on both sides of the islands, give to the winds which prevail a character they do not possess on the continent.

Although the effect of the chill and frost of the northern part of Japan, with its heavy snowfall and covered sky, cannot be without its depressing influence on human nature in that part of the island, this has not played any serious rôle in the formation of the Japanese character as a whole. It is only at a rather recent date that the northern provinces began to contribute their share to the general progress of the country. This can very easily be explained by the gradual advance of Japanese civilisa-
tion from the south-west to the north-east. Until comparatively lately the colder region of Japan north of the 37th degree of latitude has remained very nearly inactive in our history. It is almost exclusively in the more sunny south, extending down to the 31st degree, that the main activity of the Japanese mind and hand has been shown. And the effect is the sunniness of character and rather hot temperament which we, as a whole, share in a marked degree with the southern Europeans, as contrasted with the somewhat gloomy calm and deliberation noticed both among oriental and occidental northerners.

Notwithstanding the comparatively high amount of rainfall, the fact remains that as a nation we have spent most of our life under the serene canopy of blue sky characteristic of a volcanic country. Mountains, graceful rather than sublime, and fertile plains with rich verdure, its beauties changing slowly from the white blossoms of spring to the crimson leaves of autumn, have afforded us many welcome sights to rest our eyes upon; while the
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azure stretch of water, broken agreeably by scattered isles, washes to-day as it did in the days of the gods the white shore, rendered conspicuous by the everlasting green of the pine-trees, which skirts the Land of the Rising Sun.

The winter, though it begins its dreary course with a short period of warm days known as the Little Spring, is of course not without its bleak mornings with cutting winds and icy wreaths. But the fact that even as far north as Tôkyô no elaborate system of warming rooms is at all developed, and that the occasional falling of snow is hailed even by aged men of letters, and still more by the numerous poetasters, as a fit occasion for a pedestrian excursion to some neighbouring localities for a better appreciation of the silvery world, serves to show how mild the cold is in south Japan.

A people on whom the surrounding nature always smiles so indulgently can be little expected to be driven to turn their thoughts in the direction of their own self, and thus to develop such a strong sense
of individuality as characterises the rigid northerners; nor are the nations panting under a scorching sun likely to share our friendly feelings towards nature, for with them Father Sun is too rigorous to allow a peaceful enjoyment of his works.

All through the four seasons, which are almost too varied even for a Thomson's pen, eventful with the constant calls of one after another of our flowery visitors — beginning with the noble plum that peeps with its tiny yellowish-white eyes from under the spotless repose of fleecy snow, and ending in the gay variety of the chrysanthemum — we have too many allurements from outside not to leap into the widespread arms of Mother Nature and dream away our simple, our contented life in her lap. True, there also are in Japan many instances of broken hearts seeking their final rest under the green turf of an untimely grave, or else in the grey mantle of the Buddhist monkhood. But in them, again, we see the characteristic determination and action of a Japanese at work. To indulge in Hamlet-like musing,
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deep in the grand doubt and sublime melancholy of the never-slumbering question 'To be, or not to be?' is something, so to say, too damp to occur in the sunny thought of our open-air life.

If asked to name the most conspicuous of those physical phenomena which have exercised so great an influence on our mind, no Japanese will hesitate to mention our most beloved Fuji-no-yama. This is the highest and the most beautiful of all the great mountains in the main group of the Japanese islands. Gracefully conical in shape, lifting its snowclad head against a serene background 12,365 feet above the sea, it has from the earliest time been the object of unceasing admiration for the surrounding thirteen provinces, and where it stands out of the reach of the naked eye, winged words from the poet's lyre, and flying leaves from the artist's brush, have carried its never-tiring praise to all the nooks and corners of the Land of the Gods.

Here is one of the earliest odes to Fuji-yama, contained in a collection of lyrical
poems called Man- yö-shû, or ‘Myriad Leaves,’ by Prince Moroe (died A.D. 757), somewhere in the first half of the eighth century:

There on the border, where the land of Kahi
Doth touch the frontier of Sono’a’s land,
A beauteous province stretched on either hand,
See Fujiyama rear his head on high!

The clouds of heav’n in reverent wonder pause,
Nor may the buds those giddy heights essay,
Where melt thy snows amid thy fires away,
Or thy fierce fires he quench’d beneath thy snows.

What name might fitly tell, what accents sing,
Thy awful, godlike grandeur? ‘Tis thy breast
That holdeth Narusaha’s flood at rest,
Thy side whence Fujiwaka’s waters spring.

Great Fujiyama, towering to the sky!
A treasure art thou giv’n to mortal man,
A god-protector watching o’er Japan
On thee for ever let me feast mine eye!

This now extinct volcano, besides inspiring poetical efforts, has been an inexhaustible subject for our pictorial art; it is enough to mention the famous sets of colour prints, representing the thirty-six or the hundred aspects of the favourite mountain, by Hiroshige, Hokusai, etc. “The groups of rural pilgrims that annually
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swarm from all parts of Japan during the two hottest months of the year to pay their pious visit to the Holy Mount Fuji, return to their respective villages deeply inspired with a feeling of reverence and of love for the wonders and beauty of the remarkable dawn they witnessed from its summit.

There is many another towering mountain with its set of pilgrims, but none can vie with Fujiyama for majestic grace. More beautiful than sublime, more serene than imposing, it has been from time immemorial a silent influence on the Japanese character. Who would deny that it has reflected in its serenity and grace as seen on a bright day all the ideals of the Japanese mind?

Another favourite emblem of our spirit is the cherry blossom. The cherry-tree, which we cultivate, not for its fruit, but for the annual tribute of a branchful of its flowers, has done much, especially in the development of the gay side of our character. Its blossoms are void of that sweet depth of scent your rose possesses, or the calm repose that characterises
China's emblematic peony. A sunny gaiety and a readiness to scatter their heart-shaped petals with a Samurai's indifference to death are what make them so dear to our simple and determined view of life. There is an ode known to every Japanese by the great Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801 A.D.) which runs as follows:

Shikishima no
Yamata-gokoro wo
Hitte toka ba,
Asai ni mina to
Jama akurabana

(Should any one ask me what the spirit of Japan is like, I would point to the blossoms of the wild cherry-tree bathing in the beams of the morning sun.)

These words, laconic as they are, represent, in my opinion, the fundamental truth about the Japanese mentality—it's weakness as well as its strength. They give an incomparable key to the proper understanding of the whole people, whose ideal it has ever been to live and to die like the cherry blossoms, beneath which they have these tens of centuries spent their happiest hours every spring.
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The mention of a Japanese poem gives me an opportunity to say something about Japanese poetry. Like other early people, our forefathers in archaic time liked to express their thoughts in a measured form of language. The whole structure of the tongue being naturally melodious, on account of its consisting of open syllables with clear and sonorous vowels and little of the harsh consonantal elements in them, the number of syllables in a line has been almost the only feature that distinguished our poetry from ordinary prose composition. The taste for a lengthened form of poems had lost ground early, and already at the end of the ninth century after Christ the epigrammatic form exemplified above, consisting of thirty-one syllables, established itself as the ordinary type of the Japanese odes.

This form subdivides itself into two parts, viz. the upper half containing three lines of five, seven, and again five syllables, and the lower half consisting of two lines of seven syllables each. This simplicity has made it impossible to express in it
anything more than a pithy appeal to our lyrical nature; epic poetry in the strict sense of the word has never been developed by us.

But it must be noticed that it is this simplicity of form of our poetical expression that has put it within the reach of almost everybody. To all of us without distinction of class and sex has been accorded the sacred pleasure of satisfying and thus developing our poetical nature, so long as we had a subject to sing and could count syllables up to thirty-one. The language resorted to in such a composition was at first the same as that in use in everyday life. But afterwards as succeeding forms of the vernacular gradually deviated from the classical type, a special grammar along with a special vocabulary had to be studied by the would-be poet. This was avoided, however, by the development in the sixteenth century of a popular and still shorter form of ode called *Hokku*, with much less strict regulations about syntax and phraseology. This ultra-short variety of Japanese poetry, con-
sisting only of seventeen syllables, is in form the upper half of the regular poem. Here is an example:

_Asagaho no_
_Tsurube tomaret e_
_Morai-mide u._

Sketchy as it is, this tells us that the composer Chiyo, 'having gone to her well one morning to draw water, found that some tendrils of the convolvulus had twined themselves around the rope. As a poetess and a woman of taste, she could not bring herself to disturb the dainty blossoms. So, leaving her own well to the convolvuli, she went and begged water of a neighbour'—a pretty little vignette, surely, and expressed in five words.

This new movement, which owes its real development to a remarkable man called Bashō (1644-1649), a mystic of the Zen sect to the tip of his fingers, had an aim that was strictly practical. 'He wished to turn men's lives and thoughts in a better and a higher direction, and he employed one branch of art, namely poetry, as the vehicle for the ethical influence to whose
exercise he devoted his life. The very word poetry (or *haikai*) came in his mouth to stand for morality. Did any of his followers transgress the code of poverty, simplicity, humility, long-suffering, he would rebuke the offender with a "This is not poetry," meaning "This is not right." His knowledge of nature and his sympathy with nature were at least as intimate as Wordsworth's, and his sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men was far more intimate; for he never isolated himself from his kind, but lived cheerfully in the world.\(^1\)

Now, this form of popular literature by virtue of its accessibility even to the poorest amateurs from the lowest ranks of the people, was markedly instrumental, as the now classical form of poetry had been during the Middle Ages, in the cultivation of taste and good manners among all classes of the Japanese nation. Even among the *ricksha* men of to-day you find many such humble poets, taking

snapshots as they run along the stony path of their miserable life. I wonder if your hansom drivers are equally aspiring in this respect.

In all these phases of the development of our poetry, we notice, as one of its peculiarities, a strong inclination to the exercise of the witty side of our nature. Even if we leave out of consideration the so-called ‘pillow word’ (mukura-kotoba), so profusely resorted to in our ancient poems, part of which were nothing but a naive sort of jeu de mots, and the abundant use of other plays on words of later development, known as kakekotoba, jo, shûku, etc. (haikai-no-uta), it is noteworthy that poems of a comic nature found a special place in the earliest imperial collection of Japanese odes named ‘Kokinshifu,’ which was compiled in the year A.D. 908. This species has flourished ever since under the name of Kyôka, and also gave rise to a shortened form in seventeen syllables, called haikai-no-hokku. When in the hand of Bashô this latter form developed itself into something higher
and more serious, the witty and satirical Senryû, also in seventeen syllables, came to take its place.

One thing to be specially noted in this connection is the introduction from China of the idea of poetic tournaments, the beauty of which consisted in the offhand and quick composition of one long series of odes by several persons sitting together, each supplying in turn either the upper half or the lower half as the case might be, the two in combination giving a poetical sense. This usage of capping verses known as *renge* came to be very popular, from the Court downward, as early as the thirteenth century. After a while the same practice was applied to comic poetry, thus producing the so-called *haikai-no-renge*, or comic linked verses. This coupling of verses gave plenty of occasion for sharpening one's wit as well as one's skill in extemporising. It is to a later attempt to express all these subtleties in the upper half of the poem composed by one person that the present *kokku* owed its origin. You can easily imagine the effect such an
exercise produced on the popular mind. Besides the moral good which this literary pursuit has brought to the populace, it has given a fresh opportunity for the cultivation of our habit of attaching sense to apparently meaninglessness groups of phenomena, and our fondness of laconic utterance and symbolic representation, not to say anything about our love of nature and simplicity.

All this tends in my view to show that we Japanese have a strong liking for wit in the wider sense of the word. We try to solve a question, not by that slower but surer way of calm deliberation and untiring labour like the cool-headed Germans, but by an incandescent flash of inspiration like the hot-blooded Frenchmen. This fact is singularly preserved in the earlier sense of the now sacred word Yamato-damashi, which had not its present meaning, viz. 'the spirit of Japan' in the most elevated sense of that term, but signified the 'wit of the Japanese' as contrasted with the 'learning of the Chinese' (wakon as opposed to kansai). The word umashi, which now
expresses the idea of 'spirit,' corresponds in the compound in question to the French esprit in such combinations as homme d'esprit or jeu d'esprit.

Turning now to the consideration of other sets of phenomena, as an illustration of the Japanese character, let me tell you something about the tea-ceremony and kindred rites.

To begin with the Cha-no-e (or Cha-no-yu), or tea-meeting, this much-spoken-of art originated among the Buddhist priests, who learned to appreciate the beverage from the Chinese. Indeed, the tea-plant itself was first introduced into Japan along with the name Cha (Chinese Ch'a) from the Celestial Empire, in the tenth century after Christ. During the following centuries its cultivation and the preparation of the drink was monopolised by the priesthood, if we except the cases of a few well-to-do men of letters. This fact is gathered from the frequent mention of tea-cups offered to the emperor on the occasion of an imperial visit to a Buddhist monastery. During all this time a sense
of something precious and aristocratic was attached to this aromatic beverage, which had been regarded as a kind of rare drug of strange virtue in raising depressed spirits, and even of curing certain diseases.

This high appreciation of the drink, as well as the need of ceremony in offering it to exalted personages, gradually developed in the hands of monks with plenty of leisure and a good knowledge of the high praise accorded to its virtues by the Chinese savants, into a very complicated rite as to the way of serving, and of being served with, a cup of tea. A print representing a man clad as a Buddhist priest in the act of selling the beverage in the street at a penny a cup is preserved from a date as early as the fourteenth century, showing that the drink had then come to find customers even among the common people. But the ceremony of Cha-no-e, as such, never made its way among them until many centuries after. It was at first fostered and elaborated only among the aristocracy. Already in the fifteenth century, when the luxury and extravagance of the Ashikaga
Shogunate reached its zenith in the person of Yoshimasa (1435-1490), the tea-ceremony was one of the favourite pastimes of the highest classes. Yoshimasa himself was a great patron and connoisseur of the complicated rite, as well as of other branches of art, such as landscape gardening and the arrangement of flowers.

There are two different phases of the tea-ceremony, the regular course and the simplified course, known among us as the 'Great Tea' and the 'Small Tea.' In either case, it might be defined in its present form as a system of cultivating good manners as applied to daily life, with the serving and drinking of a cup of tea at its centre. The main stress is laid on ensuring outwardly a graceful carriage, and inwardly presence of mind. As with the national form of wrestling known as ju-jitsu, with its careful analysis of every push and pull down to the minutest details, so with the Cha-no-e, every move of body and limb in walking and sitting during the whole ceremony has been fully studied and worked out so as to give it the most grace-
ful form conceivable. At the same time the calm and self-control shown by the partaker in the rite is regarded as an essential element in the performance, without which ultimate success in it will be quite impossible. So it is more a physical and moral training than a mere amusement or a simple quenching of thirst. But this original sense has not always been kept in view even by the so-called masters of the tea-ceremony, who, like your dancing-masters, are generally considered to be the men to teach us social etiquette. Thus, diverted from its original idea, the Cha-no-i-e is generally found to degenerate into a body of conventional and meaningless formalities, which, even in its most abbreviated form as the 'Small Tea,' is something very tiresome, if not worse. To sit à la japonaise (not à la turque, which is not considered polite) for an hour, if not for hours together, on the matted floor to see the celebration of the monotonous rite, daring to talk only little, and even then not above a whisper, in the smallest
imaginable tea-room, is not what even a born Japanese of the present day can much appreciate, much less so Europeans, who would prefer being put in the stocks, unless they be themselves Cha-jin or tea-ceremonialists, that is to say, eccentrics. How to open the sliding-door; how to shut it each time; how to bring and arrange the several utensils, with their several prescribed ways of being handled, into the tea-room; how to sit down noiselessly in front of the boiling kettle which hangs over a brasier; how to open the lid of the kettle; how to put tea-powder in the cup; how to pour hot water over it; how to stir the now green water with a bamboo brush; how to give the mixture a head of foam; how and where to place the cup ready for the expecting drinker—this on the part of the person playing the host or hostess; and now on the part of the guest—how to take a sweet from the dish before him in preparation for the coming aromatic drink; how to take up the cup now given him; how to hold it with both hands; how to give it a gentle stir; how to drink it up
in three sips and a half; how to wipe off
the trace of the sipping left on the edge of
the cup; how to turn the cup horizontally
round; how to put it down within the reach
of his host or hostess, etc. etc., *ad infinitum*
---these are some of the essential items to
be learned and practised. And for every
one of them there is a prescribed form even
to the slightest move and curve in which a
finger should be bent or stretched, always
in strict accordance with the attitude of
other bodies in direct connection with it.
The whole ceremony in its degenerated
form is an aggregate of an immense
number of *comme il faut's*, with practically
no margin for personal taste. But even
behind its present frigidity we cannot fail
to discern the true idea and the good it has
worked in past centuries. It has done a
great deal of good, especially in those
rough days at the end of the sixteenth
century, when great warriors returning
blood-stained from the field of battle
learned how to bow their haughty necks
in admiration of the curves of beauty, and
how to listen to the silvery note of a boiling
tea-kettle. They could not help their stern faces melting into a naive smile in the serene simplicity of the tea-room, whose arrangement, true to the Zen taste to the very last detail of its structure, showed a studied avoidance of ostentation in form and colour. To this day it is always this Zen taste that rules supreme in the decoration of a Japanese house.

Visit a Japanese gentleman whose taste is not yet badly influenced by the Western love of show and symmetry in his dwelling: you will find the room and the whole arrangement free from anything of an ostentatious nature. The colour of the walls and sliding-doors will be very subdued, but not on that account gloomy. In the niche you will see one or a single set of *kakemono*, or pictures, at the foot of which, just in the middle of the slightly raised floor of the niche, we put some object of decoration—a sculpture, a vase with flowers, etc. These are both carefully changed in accordance with the season, or else in harmony with the ruling idea of the day, when the room
is decorated in celebration of some event or guest. This rule applies to the other objects connected with the room—utensils, cushions, screens, etc.

The European way of arranging a room is, generally speaking, rather revolting to our taste. We take care not to show anything but what is absolutely necessary to make a room look agreeable, keeping all other things behind the scenes. Thus we secure to every object of art that we allow in our presence a fair opportunity of being appreciated. This is not usually the case in a European dwelling. I have very often felt less crowded in a museum or in a bazaar than in your drawing-rooms. 'You know so well how to expose to view what you have,' I have frequently had occasion to say to myself, 'but you have still much to learn from us how to hide; for exposition is, after all, a very poor means of showing.'

To return to the main point, we owe to the Cha-no-yu much of the present standard of our taste, which is, in its turn, nothing more than the Zen ways of looking at
things as applied to everyday life. This is no wonder, when we remember that it was in the tasteful hands of the Zen priests that the whole ceremony reached its perfection. Indeed, the word *cha* is a term which conveys to this day the main features of the Contemplative sect to our mind.

In connection with the tea-ceremony, there are some sister arts which have been equally effective in the proper cultivation of our taste. Landscape gardening, in which our object is to make an idealised copy of some natural scene, is an art that has been loved and practised among us for more than a thousand years, although it was not indigenous like most things Japanese. This practice of painting with tree and stone soon gave rise to another art, the miniature reproduction of a favourite natural scene on a piece of board, and this is the forerunner of the later *bonkei*, or the tray-landscape, and its sister *bonsai*, or the art of symbolising an abstract idea, such as courage, majesty, etc., by means of the growth of a dwarf tree.

The same love that we feel for a symbolic
representation is also to be traced in the arrangement of flowers. The practice of preserving cut branches, generally of flowering trees, in a vase filled with water is often mentioned in our classical literature. But it was first in the sixteenth century that it assumed its present aspect, when, in conjunction with the Cha-no-e, it found a great patron in that most influential dilettante Shogun Yoshimasa. Already in his time there were a great many principles to be learned concerning the way to give the longest life and the most graceful form to the branches put in a vase, besides investing the whole composition with a symbolic meaning. Up to this day we look upon this art as very helpful for the cultivation of taste among the fair sex, who receive long courses of instruction by the generally aged masters of floral arrangement, who, along with their teaching in the treatment of plants, know how to instil ethics in their young pupils, taking the finished vase of flowers as the subject of conversation. The masters of the tea-ceremony are also well
versed in arranging flowers in that simple manner which is yet full of meaning called cha-bana, or the 'Zen type of floral art.'

You see how much all these arts have contributed to the production of our taste, whose ideals are the dislike of loudness and love of symbolic representation, with a delicate feeling for the beauty of line as seen in things moving or at rest. This last quality must have been immensely augmented by the linear character of our drawing, and also by the great importance we are accustomed to attach to the shape and the strokes of the characters when we are learning to write.

All these qualities you will see exemplified in any Japanese work of art—from a large picture down to a tiny wooden carving. Take up a girl's silk dress and examine it carefully, and note how the lining is dyed and embroidered with as great, if not greater care, in order to make it harmonise in colour and design with the visible surface and add some exquisite meaning. Do not forget to look at the back when you come across a lacquered box, for it is
not only the surface that receives our careful attention. And above all, you must always keep in mind that our artists think it a duty to be suggestive rather than explicit, and to leave something of their meaning to be divined by those who contemplate their works.

The time is now come to conclude my essay at an exposition of the Japanese spirit. I think I have given you occasion to see something of both the strong and the weak sides of my countrymen; for it is just where our favourable qualities lie that you will also find the corresponding weaknesses. The usual charges brought against us, that we are precocious, unpractical, frivolous, fickle, etc., are not worthy of serious attention, because they are all of them easily explained as but the attendant phenomena of the transitory age from which we are just emerging. Even the more sound accusation of our want of originality must be reconsidered in face of so many facts to the contrary, facts which show us to be at least in small things very
original, almost in the French sense of that word. That we have always been ready to borrow hints from other countries is in a great measure to be explained by the consideration that we had from the very beginning the disadvantage and the advantage of having as neighbours nations with a great start in the race-course of civilisation. The cause of our being small in great things, while great in small things, can be partly found in the financial conditions of the country and in the non-individual nature of the culture we have received. These delicate questions will have to be raised again some centuries hence, when a healthy admixture of the European civilisation has been tried—a civilisation the effect of which has been, on the whole, so beneficial to our development, that we feel it a most agreeable duty gratefully to acknowledge our immense obligation to the nations of the West.