SOME NEW BOOKS.

An Authoritative History of Japan.

FIRST NOTICE.

There have been many books about the Mikado's people, but the most comprehensive and trustworthy work accessible to English and American readers is comprised in the four volumes collectively entitled *Japan; Its History, Arts and Literature*, by Capt. F. BRINKLEY (The J. B. Millet Company, Boston and Tokyo). We have here the outcome of original research and first-hand observation prosecuted on an unprecedented scale. Extensive studies in the native history and literature have qualified the author to depict the evolution of Japanese civilization, and long residence in the country has enabled him to elucidate the extraordinary transformations, political, social and industrial, which the Japanese people have undergone in recent times. Every past and present phase of Japanese life will here be found delineated and interpreted. The author's copious and recondite learning is supplemented with a wide and accurate knowledge of contemporary affairs. The stores of information collected in upward of a thousand pages are turned to effective account by an exceptional faculty for analysis and for synthesis. Above all, the author is endowed with insight and with sympathy. The result of labors undertaken under such favorable auspices is a work which is likely long to remain preeminent within its province and which entitles the author to be ranked among public benefactors. The scope of the narrative cannot be adequately indicated in a single notice and, for the moment, we shall confine ourselves to that part of the first two volumes which recounts the history of Japan from the earliest times to the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century of our era.

I.

In a chapter on "Primæval Japanese" we learn that there are three written records of Japan's early history. The oldest of them dates from the beginning of the eighth century of the Christian era, and deals with events extending back for 1,400 years. The compilation of this work was one of the most extraordinary feats ever undertaken, for the compiler had to indicate the sounds of his own tongue by means of ideographs devised for transcribing a foreign language. That is to say, he had to render Japanese phonetically by using Chinese ideographs. Capt. Brinkley suggests that "it was as though a man should set himself to commit Shakespeare's plays to writing by the aid of the cuneiform characters of Babylon. A book composed in the face of such difficulties could not convey a very clear idea of contemporary speech or thought." It seems that the same thing may be said, though in a less degree, of the other two records on which it is necessary to rely for knowledge of ancient Japan.

When the Japanese first undertook to explain their own origin in the three records mentioned, they were so unfettered by genuine reminiscences that they had recourse to the supernatural and represented themselves as descended from celestial beings. Reduced to its outlines, the legend they set down was that in the earliest times a band of the divine dwellers in the plains of heaven descended to a place now unidentifiable, and thence, gradually pushing eastward, established themselves in the "Land of Sunrise," giving to it a race of monarchs, direct scions of the Goddess of Light.

Many things are related about these heaven-sent folk who peopled Japan hundreds of years before the Christian era. By the Japanese historians these tales are regarded as allegories, from which emerges the servicable political doctrine that the emperors of Japan, being of divine origin, rule by divine right. By the foreign student much of Japan's ancient history is dismissed as a purely imaginary product of latter-day imagination. Capt. Brinkley suggests that the incredulity expressed may be too sweeping, and that it may be rash to assume that the Japanese had no kind of writing previously to the acquisition of Chinese ideographs in the fifth century of the Christian era. He has little hope, however, that the student will ever be in position to decide such questions conclusively. For the present, at all events, he must be content to regard the annals of primæval Japan as an assemblage of heterogeneous fragments from the traditions of South Sea Islanders, of central Asian tribes of Manchurian Tatars and of Siberian savages, who reached her shores at various epochs, sometimes drifted by ocean currents, sometimes crossing by ice-built bridges, sometimes migrating by less fortuitous routes.

What the early records, stripped of all their fabulous features, have to tell, is this: "At a remote date, a certain race of highly civilized men—highly civilized by comparison—arrived at the islands of Japan. Migrating from the south, the adventurers landed on the southern island, Kiushiu, and found a fair country, covered with luxurious vegetation, and sparsely populated by savages living like beasts of the field, having no organized system of administration and incapable of offering permanent resistance to the superior weapons and discipline of the invaders, who established themselves with little difficulty in the newly-found land. But on the main island two races of men very different from these savages had already gained a footing. One had its headquarters in the province of Izumo, and claimed sovereignty over the whole country. The other was concentrated in Yamato. Neither of these races knew of the other's existence, Izumo and Yamato being far apart. At the outset, the immigrants who had newly arrived in Kiushiu, imagined that they had to deal with the Izumo folk only. They began by sending envoys.

"The first of these, bribed by the Izumo rulers, made his home in the land he had been sent to spy out. The second forgot his duty in the arms of an Izumo maiden whose hair fell to her ankles. The third discharged his mission faithfully, but was put to death in Izumo. The sequel of this somewhat commonplace series of events was war. Putting forth their full strength, the southern invaders shattered the power of the Izumo court, and received its submission. But they did not transfer their own court to the conquered province. Ignorant that Izumo was a mere fraction of the main island, they imagined that no more regions remained to be subjugated. By and by they discovered their mistake. Intelligence reached them that, far away in the northeast, a race of highly-civilized men, who had originally come from beyond the sea in ships, were settled in the province of Yamato holding undisputed sway. To the conquest of these colonists Jimmu, who then ruled the southern immigrants, set out on a campaign which lasted fifteen years, and ended, after some fierce fighting, in the Yamato rulers acknowledging their consanguinity with the invader, and abdicating in his favor."

Whether Jimmu's story be purely a figment of later-day imagination, or whether it consists of poetically-embellished facts, there is no doubt about its interest, since it exhibits the kind of hero that subsequent generations were disposed to picture as the founder of the sacred dynasty, the chief of the Japanese race. This chief during his lifetime was not called "Jimmu;" that is his posthumous name. The appellation, which means "the man of divine bravery," typifies the honor that has always attached to the profession of arms in Japan. The distance from the primitive Viking's starting point to the place where he established his capital and consummated his career of conquest can easily be traversed by a modern steamer in twice as many hours as the number of years devoted by Jimmu and his followers to the task. That the craft in which they travelled were of the rudest and most inefficient type may be deduced from the legends that the Viking's progress eastward would have been finally interrupted by the narrow strip of water dividing Kiushiu from the main island of Japan, had not a fisherman seated on a turtle encouraged him to strike seaward. Thenceforth, the turtle assumed a leading place in the mythology of Japan—the type of longevity, the messenger of the marine deity who dwelt in the crystal depths of the ocean, his palace peopled by lovely maidens. The Goddess of the Sun shone on Jimmu's enterprise at times when tempest or fog threatened serious peril, and a kite circling overhead indicated the direction of inhabited districts, when he and his warriors had lost their way among mountains and forests.

It is impossible to determine how much of these legends was transmitted by tradition, written or oral, to the compilers of Jimmu's history in the eighth century of the Christian era; how much was a mere reflection of national customs which had then become sacred, and on which the political scholars of the time desired to set the seal of antique sanction. If Jimmu and his warriors brought with them the worship of the sun that fact would offer an interesting inference as to their origin. If the aid that they received from his light was suggested solely by the grateful homage that rice cultivators thirteen centuries later had learned to pay to his beneficence, then the oldest written records of Japan must be looked upon as mere transcripts of the faiths and passions of the era when they were compiled, not as genuine traditions transmitted from previous ages.

II.

So much seems certain, that the annals here epitomized reveal three tides of more or less civilized immigrants, and a race of semi-barbarous autochthons. All the researches of modern archæologists and ethnologists teach us but little more. It may now be averred with tolerable certainty that the so-called autochthons were composed of two swarms of colonists, both coming from Siberia, though their advents were separated by a long interval. The first colonists whose pit dwellings and shell mounds are extant, were the Koro-pok-guru, or "cave men." They are believed to be represented to-day by the inhabitants of Saghalien, the Kuriles and southern Kamschatka. The second swarm of colonists were a flat-faced, heavy-jawed, hirsute people, known as the Ainu, who completely drove out their predecessors and took possession of the land. The Ainu, at the time when they invaded Japan, had much in common with animals.

They burrowed in the ground for shelter; they used stone implements; they recognized no distinction of sex in apparel, nor did they pay any heed to consanguinity in sexual intercourse; they clad themselves in skins; they drank blood; they practised cannibalism; they were insensible to benefits and inexorably resentful of injuries; they resorted to savagely cruel forms of punishment, severing the tendons of the leg, boiling the arms, and slicing off the nose. They persistently resisted the civilized immigrants who subsequently reached the islands, but were driven northward by degrees, and finally pushed across the Tsugaru Strait into the Island of Yezo. The long struggle and the disasters and sufferings it involved radically changed the nature of the Ainu. They became a timid, gentle, submissive folk; they lost most of the faculties essential to survival in a racial contest, and dwindled to a mere remnant of semi-savages, incapable of progress, indifferent to improvement, and presenting a more and more vivid contrast to the energetic, intelligent and ambitious Japanese.

The true Japanese—who were they originally? Whence started the three or more tides of immigration which ultimately coalesced to form the race now standing at the head of Oriental peoples? Widely different answers have been given to this question. Hyde Clarke identified the primeval Japanese with Turano-Africans, who had travelled eastward through Egypt and China to Japan. Macleod recognized in them one of the lost tribes of Israel. Several writers have regarded them as Malayan colonists. Recent scholars incline to the belief that they belong to the Tatar-Mongolian stock of central Asia. Capt. Brinkley thinks that the diversity of view is partly attributable to the fact that the Japanese are not a pure race. They exhibit several types easily distinguishable, notably the patrician and the plebeian.

The difference is not merely one of coarseness contrasted with refinement, nor is it simply the outcome of the degeneration due to toil and exposure contrasted with the improvement produced by easy living and mental culture. The representative of the Japanese plebs has a sallow conspicuously dark, prominent cheek bones, a large mouth, a robust and heavily-toned physique, a flat nose, full straight eyes and a receding forehead. The exemplar of the aristocratic type is symmetrically and delicately built; his complexion varies from yellow to almost pure white; his eyes are narrow, set obliquely to the nose, the eyelids are heavy and the eyebrows low; the mouth is small, the face oval and the nose, aquiline, the hand is remarkably slender and supple. Not only are these types radically distinct at the present time, but they have been discriminated by the Japanese themselves ever since any method of recording visible distinctions existed. From the time when he began to paint pictures the Japanese artist recognized and portrayed only one type of male and female beauty, namely, that distinguished in a marked and often exaggerated degree by the features just enumerated as belonging to the patrician class. There has been no evolution in the matter. The painter had as clear conception of his type ten centuries ago as he has to-day. Consequently, our author is inclined to accept the hypothesis that the higher type represents the race of immigrants that eventually became dominant; the lower type were aboriginal competitors or opponents.

Capt. Brinkley thinks that the theory best fitting the facts is that the Japanese are compounded of elements from central and southern Asia, and that they derive their patrician type from the former region, their plebeian from the latter. The Asiatic colonists arrived by the way of Corea. But they were neither Coreans nor Chinese. This our author pronounces certain, although he cannot find room to set forth in detail the evidence for the assertion. Chinese and Coreans, indeed, came from time to time in later ages; came occasionally in great numbers and were absorbed into the Japanese race, leaving on it some faint traces of the amalgamation. The original colonists, however, did not set out from either China or Corea. Their birthplace was somewhere in the north of central Asia.

As for the south Asiatic immigrants, they were drifted to Japan by the current known as the "black tide" (Kuro-Schiwo), which sweeps northward from the Philippines, and then, bending toward the east, touches the promontory of Kii and Yamato before permanently shaping its course away from the main island of Japan. It is a perplexing fact that, in the chronological order suggested by early Japanese history, the southern colonists succeeded the northern and are supposed to have gained the mastery, whereas among the Japanese as we now see them the supremacy of the northern type appears to have been established for ages. Our author would explain the fact by the following hypothesis, namely, "that, although the onset of the impetuous southerners proved at first irresistible, they ultimately coalesced with the tribes they had conquered, and in the end the principle of natural selection replaced the vanquished on their proper plane of eminence." Capt. Brinkley goes on to note that "the distinction between the aristocratic and the plebeian types is one of outward form and feature rather than of moral attributes. Neither history nor observation furnishes any reason for asserting that the so-called 'aristocratic' or Mongoloid cast of features accompanies a fuller endowment of either physical or mental qualities than the vulgar or Malayan cast. Numerically, the patrician type constitutes only a small fraction of the nation and seems to have been lacking in a majority of the country's past leaders, as it is certainly lacking in a majority of her present public men and even in the very crème-de-la-crème of society. The male of the upper classes is not generally an attractive product of nature. He has neither commanding stature, refinement of features nor weight of muscle. On the other hand, among the laboring populations and especially among the seaside folk numbers of men are found who, though below the average Anglo-Saxon or Teuton in bulk, are cast in a perfectly symmetrical mould and suggest great possibilities of muscular effort and endurance. In short, though the aristocratic type has survived, and though its superior beauty is universally recognized, it has not impressed itself completely on the nation, and there is no difficulty in conceiving that its representatives went down before the first rush of the southern invaders, but subsequently, by tenacity of resistance and by fortitude under suffering, recovered from a shock which would have crushed a lower grade of mankind."

III.

As regards the manners and customs of the earliest civilized inhabitants of Japan the student has to rely mainly on archæology, the compilers of Japan's first annals of the eighth century paying little attention to this subject. It appears that the ancient Japanese, by which is meant not the Koro-pok-guru (cave-men) or the Ainu but the ancestors of the Japanese proper, buried their dead, first in barrows, and afterwards, in dolmens. The barrow was merely a mound of earth heaped over the remains, after the manner of the Chinese. The dolmen was a stone chamber, which had walls constructed with blocks of stone, generally unhewn, and rudely laid, but sometimes hewn, and carefully fitted; its roof consisted of huge and ponderous slabs; it varied in form, sometimes taking the shape of a long gallery only; sometimes that of a gallery and chamber and sometimes that of a gallery and two chambers; over it was reared a mound of earth which occasionally assumed enormous dimensions covering a space of seventy or eighty acres, rising to a height of as many feet, and requiring the labor of thousands of workers. The builders of the barrows were in the bronze age of civilization; the constructors of the dolmens, in the iron age. In the barrows are found weapons and implements of bronze and vessels of hand-made pottery; in the dolmens, weapons and implements of iron and vessels of wheel-turned pottery. The line of division is absolute. No iron weapon or any machine-made pottery occurs in a barrow; no bronze weapon, or any hand-made pottery in a dolmen.

Capt. Brinkley poses, and ultimately answers, the question: "Are the barrow-builders and dolmen-constructors to be regarded as distinct races, or as men of the same race at different stages of its civilization?" Barrow and dolmen bear common testimony to the fact that, before the ancestors of the Japanese nation crossed the sea to their island home, they had already emerged from the stone age, for neither in barrow nor in dolmen have stone weapons or implements been found, though these abound in the shell-heaps and kitchen-middens that constitute the relics of the Koro-pok-guru and the Ainu. On the other hand, barrow and dolmen introduce their explorer to peoples who stood on different planes of industrial development.

Capt. Brinkley deems it certain that the evolution of dolmen from barrow did not take place within Japan. The dolmen constructor must have completely emerged from the bronze age, and abandoned the fashion of barrow burial before he reached the Japanese archipelago. Otherwise search would certainly disclose some transitional form of sepulture between the the barrow and the dolmen, and some iron implements would occur in the barrows or bronze weapons in the dolmens. If, then, the barrow builder and the dolmen constructor were radically identical, it would seem to follow that the latter succeeded the former after a long interval in the order of immigration, and brought with him a greatly improved type of civilization evolved in the country of his origin. Does the geographical distribution of the dolmens and the barrows furnish any help toward the solution of this problem? Our author answers that "though the exceptional number [of dolmens?] found on the coast opposite to Corea tends to support the theory that the stream of Mongoloid immigration came chiefly from the Corean peninsula via the island of Tsushima, there is not any local differentiation of one kind of sepulture from the other, and, for the rest, the grouping of the dolmens supplies no information except that their builders occupied the tract of country from the shores opposite Corea on the west to Musashi and the south of Shimotsuke on the east, and did not penetrate to the extreme northeast, or to the regions of mountain and forest in the interior." Another question here presents itself for consideration. If the fashion of the Japanese dolmen was introduced from abroad, evidences of its prototype should survive on the adjacent continent of Asia. If the numerous dolmens found on the coasts of Kiushiu and Izumo facing Corea, are to be taken as indications that their constructors emigrated originally from the Corean Peninsula, then Corea should contain similar dolmens, and, if an ethnological connection existed between Japan and China in prehistoric days, China, too, should have dolmens. Our author points out, however, that "no dolmens have hitherto been found in China, and the dolmens of Corea differ radically from those of Japan, being merely cists with megalithic capstones.

"It has been shown, further, that dolmens similar to those of Japan are not to be found in any part of continental Asia eastward of the shores of the Caspian Sea, and that western Europe alone offers exactly analogous types. In short, from an ethnological point of view the dolmens of Japan are as perplexing as the dolmens of Europe, and the prospect of solving the riddle seems to be equally remote in both cases. All that can be affirmed is that the dolmens offer strong corroborative testimony to the truth of the Japanese historical narrative, which represents Jimmu as the leader of the last and most highly civilized among the bands of colonists constituting the ancestors of the present Japanese race. Thus the 'divine warrior,' after having been temporarily erased from the tablets of history by the modern sceptic of the West, is projected upon them once more from the newly opened brains of the primeval Japanese."

Collecting all the available evidence derived from archæology, Capt. Brinkley would shape as follows the story of the abrupt transition from the bronze to the iron age of civilization in Japan: "Previously to the third, or, perhaps, the fourth, century of the Christian era, when as yet the dead were interred in barrows, not dolmens, the Japanese, although they stood on a plane considerably above the general level of Asiatic civilization, did not as yet understand the forging of iron or the use of the potter's wheel. They were still in the bronze age, and their weapons—swords, halberds and arrowheads—were made of that metal. Concerning the fashion of their garments not much is known, but they used for purposes of personal adornment quaintly shaped objects of jasper, rock crystal, steatite and other stones. Then, owing, probably, to the advent of a second wave of immigration from the continent, the civilization of the nation was suddenly raised and the country passed at once from the bronze to the iron age, with a corresponding development of industrial capacity in other directions, and with a novel method of sepulture, having no exact prototype except in western Europe. The newcomers seem to have been, not a race distinct from their predecessors, but a second outgrowth of colonists from the same parent stem. Where that stem had its roots there is no clear indication, but it is evident that, during the interval between the first and the second migrations, the mother country had far excelled its colony in material civilization, so that with the advent of the second band of wanderers the condition of the Japanese underwent marked change.

"They laid aside their bronze weapons, and began to use iron swords and spears and iron-tipped arrows." The swords, which were straight and one-edged, had blades that varied from two and a half feet to over three feet in length. Wood was the material used for hilt, as well as for scabbard, but it was generally enveloped with a thin sheet of copper plated with gold. Double barbs characterized the arrowheads, and, as these projected about four inches beyond the shaft, a bow of great strength must have been used. Armor does not seem to have been employed to protect any part of the body except the head and the breast. It consisted of thin bands of iron riveted together for casque and cuirass. Of shields no trace has been found, and it may be inferred that they were not used. Horses evidently played an important part in the lives of the second batch of immigrants, for horse furniture continually appears among the objects found in the dolmens. The iron bit is almost identical with the common "snaffle" of the Occident. The saddle was of wood, peaked before and behind, and braced with metal bands. Stirrups are seldom discovered in the dolmens, and the rare specimens exhumed bear no resemblance to the large, heavy, shoe-shaped stirrups of later ages. They are rather of the Occidental type.

The costume of the Japanese dolmen builders had little in common with that of their modern descendants. They wore an upper garment of woven stuff, fashioned after the manner of a loosely fitting tunic, and confined at the waist by a girdle, and they had loose trousers reaching nearly to the feet. For ornaments they used necklaces of beads or of rings, silver, stone or glass; finger rings, sometimes of silver or gold, sometimes of copper, bronze or iron, plated with one of the precious metals; ring-shaped buttons; metal armlets; bands or plates of gilt copper which were attached to the tunic; ear rings of gold and tiaras. Not one item in this catalogue, with the exception of the tiara, has appeared among the garments or personal ornaments of the Japanese since their history and habits began to be known to the outer world. No nation has undergone a more radical change of taste in the matter of habiliments and adornments.

As to the food of the early Japanese, it seems to have consisted of fish, flesh and cereals. They used wine of some kind, though of its nature there is no knowledge, and their household utensils were of pottery, graceful in outline, but ungraced and archaically decorated. Whether or not they possessed cattle cannot be ascertained, for it is known that means they employed to produce fire. That they believed in a future state is evident, since they buried with the dead whatever implements and weapons might be necessary in the life beyond the grave. That ancestor-worship constituted an important part of their religion is proved by the offerings periodically made at the tombs of the deceased. That Buddhism was not practised, and that superstition was not largely prevalent, may be deduced from the absence of charms or amulets among the remains found in the sepulchres.

IV.

In another chapter it is pointed out that the national polity of the Japanese in the earliest times had a patriarchal form. Public affairs were administered by a group of official families, at the head of which stood a lineal descendant of the divine ancestors, the degree of his sway varying from time to time according to the docility of his coadjutors. The occupants of administrative posts were not removable at the caprice of the sovereign, and they enjoyed the privilege of transmitting their offices to their sons. The system of hereditary officialism remained operative through many centuries. It does not appear, however, that there was anything like a fully organized administration until some thirteen hundred years after the date traditionally assigned for the conquest of Yamato by the Emperor Jimmu. The functions of government were divided, not with an eye to the convenient performance of them, but simply with reference to the claims of the persons undertaking them. The performance of religious rites constituted an essential part of statecraft in early times. In fact, the term for "worship" *matsuri* was identical with that for "government", and the identity continued until a very recent era. In the language of everyday life, no distinction was made between the sacred business of prayer and the secular business of ruling. Nothing could reveal more clearly the foundation upon which the national polity stood. The sovereign was the nation's high priest. Like the Jewish patriarchs, he interceded directly with heaven for his people, and ruled them by the authority he derived from the deity. His administrative assistants pursued the same course. They also invoked the aid of heaven for the discharge of all their duties, and its blessing on the fraction of the people under their control.

It was characteristic of the ancient Japanese that, eminent as was the position assigned to religion in their polity, no trace of a doctrinal creed in the sense that such words bear in the Occident is discoverable in their lives. We read on page 54 of Capt. Brinkley's first volume: "Their burial custom shows that they believed in an existence beyond the grave, but they seem to have troubled themselves little about the nature of that existence, or about transcendental speculations of any kind. The chief denizen of celestial space, according to their creed, was a tutelary deity, the Goddess of Light, and since her worship or the worship of some lesser spirit, had to preface every administrative act of importance, religious rites were placed, as has been already stated, at the head of all official functions. Yet special buildings for ceremonial purposes did not originally exist. The Emperor, as the nation's high-priest, worshipped in the palace, where were kept the insignia of sovereignty—the sword, the mirror and the jewel of divine origin. Not until the first century before Christ were shrines erected apart from the palace, and the immediate cause of the innovation was a restlessness which the soothsayers interpreted as a heavenly protest against the method of worship then pursued. The creed was not exclusive. Its pantheon, which, in the beginning included only the deities of high heaven, was soon enlarged by the admission of other powers controlling the forces of nature, as well as by the spirits of deceased heroes, and ultimately received even the supernatural beings supposed to preside over the destinies of the aboriginal tribes. In other words, the civilized colonists consented to worship the ancestors of the semi-savage autochthons against whom they perpetually waged war."

There seems to be no doubt that the early Japanese did not associate any idea of rewards and punishments with the future state. Their theory pointed to duality of the soul. They regarded it as consisting of two distinct elements: one the source of strength, courage and aggressiveness, the other the mainspring of refinement, magnanimity and benevolence. In the good man these elements were blended harmoniously during life, and they survived in like proportions after the death of his body. But, whatever had been the quality of the mortal tenement, the immortal tenant passed from the edge of the grave into the "sombre realm," which was separated from this world by a "broad slope," never recrossed by a spirit that had eaten anything cooked in the land of darkness. The purpose of the offerings made at the tombs of the deceased was to provide against the disaster of eternal banishment; from another point of view they were a mark of filial piety, the natural outcome of faith in the interest and interference of the departed in terrestrial affairs. We should add that besides the celestial and terrestrial deities, objects of worship were supplied by the animal and vegetable kingdoms. Monster snakes, supposed to destroy the crops, were propitiated by sacrifice, and giant trees, venerated as the abode of supernatural beings, were fenced off with ropes carrying sacred pendants.

Out of such beliefs a rudimentary form of the doctrine of metempsychosis emerged. Yamatake, the great hero of prehistoric Japan, was transformed into a white bird, and Tamichi, the generalissimo vanquished by the Ezo, became an enormous snake which devoured the desecrators of his tomb. Some ethnologists allege that the custom of human sacrifices existed in early days; but the theory is founded on a solitary legend of the Perseus-and-Andromeda type, which does not seem to justify any such inference. Everything, indeed, goes to show that while a sacrificial element undoubtedly entered largely into the rites of worship, it never involved the taking of human life, the objects offered to the gods being confined to the fruits of the earth, birds, animals and the products of labor. Auguries were obtained by burning the hoof of an ox or the shoulder-blade of a stag, and deciphering the lines in the calcined bone. But there is reason to believe that no such method of soothsaying had a place in the primæval superstitions of the Japanese; it probably came to them from Corea. A device more consistent with their own beliefs was to invoke a sign from heaven by music, when a deity descended and inspired the musician."

Of the prayers addressed to the Sun-Goddess, twenty-seven have been preserved. Not one of them contains a word suggesting that the primæval Japanese troubled themselves much about a future state after death, or about posthumous punishment for sins committed during life. Their idea of crime was that it polluted the person committing it, but that its commission was inevitable. Hence, purification services were performed twice in every year, the gods of the swift streams, the tumbling cataracts and the raging tides being invoked to wash away and dissipate all offences. It appears that "first among crimes was the removal of a neighbor's landmark, described as breaking down divisions between rice fields; then followed the damming of streams and the destruction of waterpipes, whence it may be inferred that the problem of irrigation for purposes of rice culture proved as perplexing to these ancient folk as it does to their modern descendants. On the same plane of heinousness stood the cruelty of flaying the living or the dead, and among lesser crimes were enumerated cutting and wounding, incest, and the practice of witchcraft. Every religious service was accompanied by offerings betokening gratitude for past favors or beseeching future blessings, and the things prayed for were good harvests, an abundance of food, security of dwelling houses against natural calamities and against the intrusion of reptiles or polluting birds, tranquil and efficient government and protection from tempests, conflagrations, pestilence, inundations and vengeful deities, in a word, prosperity and peace. It is to be noted that, among the evils from which deliverance was besought, earthquakes are nowhere mentioned, and that robbery is not included in the list of polluting crimes. Some have inferred that this commonest of all sins among all nations was unknown among the ancient Japanese. This is deemed a doubtful conclusion by the author of this history. It is not to be disputed, however, that the Japanese have no system of philosophy nor any code of ethics. India had Siddartha and China had Confucius, but neither in ancient, nor, as yet, in modern times has Japan produced a great teacher of morality.

Turning to the fundamental social relationships, we observe that the right of primogeniture was not recognized by the early Japanese. A father chose his heir at will among his children. Generally, the choice fell on his youngest son, for reasons which are obvious when the matrimonial customs of the time are considered. The conception of marriage was practically limited to cohabitation. A husband incurred no obligations or responsibilities toward his wife. To be married involved no change in the woman's life, except the liability to receive visits from her husband. As to the man, there was absolutely no duty of fidelity on his side. He might form as many different unions as fancy prompted. The children were brought up by the mother, and it was possible for one household to remain in entire ignorance of another's existence. The father's favor was naturally bestowed on the offspring of his latest matrimonial connection and the children of earlier wives frequently rebelled against such partiality. Capt. Brinkley points out that "another result of the system was marriages between half-brothers and half-sisters, or between uncles and nieces. These unions were not condemned by the moral code of the time. Indeed, the existence of any relationship was sometimes unknown to the parties themselves, a man's wives and families in different places not necessarily having any mutual acquaintance. The only restriction recognized was that children of the same mother must not intermarry. Under these circumstances the ties of consanguinity would not bind men very closely. To be son to the same father carried no obligation of friendship, or even sympathy. Often in the annals of the innumerable civil wars that disturbed Japan the reader is shocked by deeds of vengeance, treachery or ambitious truculence that violate all the dictates of natural affection."

In one respect, their habit of cleanliness, the early Japanese were distinguished from all other Oriental nations. Touching this point our author remarks: "Whether this propensity grew out of their religious observances, or was merely reflected in them, there is no means of determining. Knowledge is limited to the facts that they held every form of pollution to be offensive to the gods; that the chief *Shinto* service, the high mass of the cult, has for its purpose the purification of the believer's body as well as of his heart; that chastity and simplicity were fundamental features of all the rites and paraphernalia of the creed, and that the virtue of cleanliness received practical recognition, even among the lowest classes."

According to Chinese annalists, who wrote in the third century of our era, the Japanese tatooed their faces and bodies, the positions and size of the designs constituting indications of rank. Our author doubts whether tatooing was at any time prevalent among the Japanese proper. He suggests that the Chinese writers failed to distinguish between the people of Nippon and the inhabitants of the Riukiu archipelago where the habit of tattooing did prevail. Another plausible hypothesis is that tattooing was introduced among a limited section of the nation when Japan received the Malayan element of her population. At all events, in every era, it was confined to the lowest classes, namely, those who bared their bodies to perform the severe labor falling to their lot. The same Chinese annalists confirm the supposition suggested by the primæval rituals that crimes of larceny and burglary, though not probably unknown, were very rare in old Japan. They say, also, that Japanese women were neither sensual nor jealous, which is assuredly true in modern times, and seems to have been true in every age of the nation's existence.

V.

The accounts that the Chinese annalists of the third century A. D. give of contemporaneous Japan, indicate that a certain amount of intercourse existed between the two countries at that remote epoch. There is no doubt that China and Corea began at an early date to act a certain part in the civilization of Japan, and the Japanese themselves have always admitted frankly that they owe many of their refinements and accomplishments to their continental neighbors. Capt. Brinkley insists, however, that the common belief about this matter needs modification. Corea, although she fell under the direct influence of China as early as the twelfth century, B. C., never showed any strongly receptive and assimilative faculty. For marked improvements in her civilization Japan had to go directly to China, and that was an immense undertaking in days when the means of communication were primitive. The journey occupied six months even as late as 981 A. D., when Chonen, a Japanese Bonze, in company with five acolytes, travelled to the court of a Sung Emperor. How much more time and toil must the journey have involved a thousand years before. The Japanese seem to have essayed it only thrice during the three opening centuries of the Christian era: first, in the year 57 A. D., when envoys visiting the Chinese court received from the ruler of the Middle Kingdom a gold seal and a ribbon; secondly, in 107 A. D., when 160 slaves were presented for the Chinese monarch's acceptance; and thirdly, in 238 A. D.

These dates are furnished by Chinese historians. In Japanese annals, the third embassy takes the form of an armed invasion of Corea; a female chieftain, the Empress Jingo, is represented as having organized the expedition. Some modern critics have discovered discrepancies in the Japanese legend that have caused them to dismiss Jingo as a myth. Capt. Brinkley is inclined to regard their iconoclasm as excessive. He points out that at the very time when Jingo's figure is depicted in Japanese traditions (recorded some five centuries later), the Chinese annalists say that a female sovereign of Japan sent to the Court of China an embassy which had to beg permission from the ruler of Northwestern Corea to pass through his territory on its way westward. Thus, although the story of the Empress's conquest of Corea seems to be without foundation, her personality is recalled from the mythical regions to which some sinologues would relegate it. The fact that there are only three verifiable instances of direct official communication with China during the first thousand years of Japan's supposed national existence, indicates that the Japanese were practically cut off from the great fount of Far Eastern civilization. The explanation of the severance is that Corea proved a bad medium of transmission, and that China was almost inaccessible by direct means. Some special intermediary was needed to bring China within easier reach of Japanese observation. The intermediary was furnished in the fourth century of our era by an influx of Chinese colonists, who came to Japan in search of lucrative employment. Inasmuch as the Chinese had already exploited the northwestern, southwestern and eastern sections of the Corean peninsula, the fact that they subsequently pushed on to Japan is not surprising.

The Chinese emigrants brought with them a compilation destined to serve as a primer to Japanese students in all ages, "the thousand characters," that is to say, a book containing a selection of the ideographs most commonly used in daily life in China; they brought, also, the "Analects of Confucius," which soon became, and has ever since remained, the gospel of Japanese ethics. Capt. Brinkley, indeed, has no doubt that the existence of an ideographic script was known to the Japanese long before the fourth century of our era. To know about the ideograph and to use it, however, were two very different things. "An alphabet, or even a syllabary, being a purely phonetic vehicle, lends itself to the transcription of any language. But ideographs, having their own inflexible sounds and their own fixed significancies, cannot readily serve to transcribe the words of a foreign language which have different sounds and different significancies." It was an extremely difficult task that confronted the Japanese when they undertook to adapt the ideographs of China to the uses of their own language. They did not even think of making the endeavor until the Chinese ideograph had been known to them as a kind of distant acquaintance for many generations, and after the "Analects" had reached them their ambition was at first limited to deciphering the strange script. History has not recorded by whom the Chinese ideographs were first employed as a kind of syllabary for the purpose of writing Japanese. This is what had virtually happened, however, before the fifth century of our era. Very soon something else happened, also, namely, a radical modification of the Japanese language.

The more familiar became the knowledge that students obtained of the Chinese ideograph, the less could they reconcile themselves to use it in a purely phonetic manner. It conveyed to their eyes a significance quite unconnected with the meaning of the Japanese words which its sound conveyed to their ears. Therefore by degrees sense took precedence of sound, and Japanese words were transcribed by means of ideographs which corresponded with their *meaning*, but were *pronounced* in a new manner, divested of all the harshness and confusing tones of the Chinese tongue. Our author recognizes that, although the subject may be somewhat wearisome to the general reader, some knowledge of it is essential to any one desirous of understanding the genius of the Japanese language, and appreciating its unique excellence as a vehicle for translating new ideas. "Suppose," says Capt. Brinkley, "that a Japanese wants to write the compound word 'Western-jewel.' In his own original language the sounds would be *nishi-no-tama*. But he takes two ideographs which in China are pronounced *sai-gyoku*, and having written them down in their proper sense, he reads them either *sai-gyoku* or *nishi-no-tama*, calling the former the *on*, or Chinese pronunciation—though it is really a Japanese modification of the Chinese sounds—and the latter the *kun*, or pure Japanese sound. Hence one of the results of using the ideographs was that the Japanese language acquired an alternative pronunciation: it became a dual language as to sound without changing its construction. It acquired also an extraordinary capacity of expansion, becoming the most flexible vehicle for translating ideas that the world has ever possessed.

"For the Chinese language, which was thus grafted on the Japanese, is not so much a collection of words as a vast thesaurus of materials for constructing words. It is, in fact, a repertoire of 50,000 monosyllables, each of which has its exact significance. These syllables may be used singly, or combined, two, three, four or five at a time, so as to convey every conceivable idea, however complex, delicate or abstruse. The genius of man has never invented any machinery so perfect for converting thoughts into sounds." In other words, the paradoxical assertion is here made that the Japanese do not need an alphabet, for the reason that in their ideographic system as it has been adapted and simplified in the course of centuries, they possess a better instrument for recording facts and thoughts. Let us hear Capt. Brinkley once more upon this subject: "Possessors of an alphabet may denounce the ideograph as a clumsy, semi-civilized form of writing, and may accuse it of developing the mechanics of memory at the expense of the intellectual faculty. But the Chinese ideographist can oppose to such criticism the answer that, as a vehicle for rendering the products of the mind, the ideograph is without rival and that, while the Anglo-Saxon has to devise a vocabulary for his scientific and philosophic developments by the halting aid of dead languages, exact equivalents for every new conception can be coined readily by the unexhausted ideographic mint. The chronological sequence of this retrospect may be anticipated so far as to say that it was owing to the possession of such mechanism that the Japanese scholar found no serious difficulty in fitting an accurate terminology to the multitude of novel ideas presented to him by Western civilization in the nineteenth century, just as it would scarcely have been possible for him to assimilate the ethics of Confucianism and the civilization of China fifteen centuries earlier, had he not simultaneously made this great linguistic acquisition."

VI.

If the author has here somewhat anticipated the sequence of events, it is, as he says, for the sake of explaining the introduction of ideographic script into Japan, an event belonging to the second half of the sixth century. During the interval of some two hundred years, which separated that pregnant acquisition from the great wave of Chinese and Corean immigration that reached Japan in the beginning of the fourth century, marked progress had been made in many of the essentials of civilization. The science of canal-cutting, the art of fine embroidery, improved methods of sericulture and of silk-weaving were introduced by the immigrants, and the intelligent interest taken by the Government in encouraging progress may be inferred from the fact that it caused the newcomers to distribute themselves throughout the country so as to extend the range of their instruction. An idea of the magnitude of the part played by these immigrants is conveyed by the circumstance that in the second half of the fifth century, when it was deemed advisable to reassemble the foreign experts and organize them into separate departments, the families enrolled in the sericultural section alone aggregated nearly nineteen thousand members. By this time (450 A. D.) the policy of importing skilled aid directly from China had been inaugurated, and large bodies of female weavers and embroiderers were invited to settle in Japan. These newcomers taught the use of the loom so successfully that fine brocades for the palace were among the products of the period. At the same epoch the first two-storied house was constructed; up to the middle of the fifth century the Japanese had been content to live in log huts tied together with wild-vine ligatures. A little later, but still in the fifth century A. D., the art of tanning skins was imparted by Corean immigrants, and greatly developed under Chinese instructors.

We observe, finally, that in the domain of morals the fourth century had brought to Japan a knowledge of the Chinese classics. Her historians claim that she then learned the Golden Rule as well as the Confucian precepts of refraining from excess, of abhorring evil and of curbing the passions. They also assert that Japan quickly began to practise these ethical canons and they point to the career of the Emperor Nintoku (313-399 A. D.) as an example of their growing morality. Our author points out that, as a matter of fact, Nintoku was a type of extreme libertinism, and that some sixty years later the Nero of Japanese history appeared in the person of Yuraku, who perpetrated a wholesale slaughter of his own brothers, their children and other members of the imperial family. His successor (Seinei) carried out a similar massacre, and the imperial line would have become extinct had not a child been secreted and reduced to the position of a serf, in order to escape the quest of the official assassins. Buretsu, who reigned a few decades later (499-507 A. D.) ranks even below Yuraku as a fierce and merciless despot, and contemporaneously the great families which had become depositories of administrative power behaved with the utmost arrogance, despising the laws, defying the sovere