

VIII.

THE INTRODUCTION OF CONTINENTAL CIVILIZATION.

IF Japan is to Asia what Great Britain is to Europe—according to the comparison so often made by the modern Japanese—then Corea was to Dai Nippon what Norman France was to Saxon England. Through this peninsula, and not directly from China, flowed the influences whose confluence with the elements of Japanese life produced the civilization which for twelve centuries has run its course in the island empire. The comparison is not perfect, inasmuch as Japan sent the conqueror to Corea, whereas Normandy sent William across the Channel. In the moral and æsthetic conquest of Rome by Greece, though vanquished by Roman arms, we may perhaps find a closer resemblance to the events of the second triad of the Christian centuries in the history of Japan.

Is it true among historic nations that anciently the position of woman was higher than in later times? It has been pointed out by more than one writer on Greece "that in the former and ruder period women had undoubtedly the higher place, and their type exhibited the highest perfection." This is certainly the case in Japan. The women of the early centuries were, according to Japanese history, possessed of more intellectual and physical vigor, filling the offices of state, religion, and household honors, and approaching more nearly the ideal cherished in those countries in which the relation of the sexes is that of professed or real equality. Certain it is that, whereas there are many instances of ancient Japanese women reaching a high plane of social dignity and public honor, in later ages the virtuous woman dwelt in seclusion; exemplars of ability were rare; and the courtesan became the most splendid type of womanhood. This must be more than the fancy of poets. As in the Greece of Homer and the tragedians, so in early Nippon, woman's abilities and possibilities far surpassed those that were hers in the later days of luxury and civilization. To a woman is awarded the glory of the conquest of Corea, whence came letters, religion, and civilization to Japan.

In all Japanese tradition or history, there is no greater female character than the empress Jingu (godlike exploit). Her name was Okinaga Tarashi himé, but she is better known by her posthumous title of Jingu Kōgō, or Jingu, the wife or spouse of the mikado. She was equally renowned for her beauty, piety, intelligence, energy, and martial valor. She was not only very obedient to the gods, but they delighted to honor her by their inspiration. She feared neither the waves of the sea, the arrows of the battle-field, nor the difficulties that wait on all great enterprises. Great as she was in her own person, she is greater in the Japanese eyes as the mother of the god of war.

In the year 193 a rebellion broke out at Kumaso, in Kiushiu. The mikado Chinai (191-200) headed his army, and marched to subdue the rebels. Jingu Kōgō, or Jingu, the empress, followed him by ship, embarking from Tsuruga, in Echizen—a port a few miles north-west of the head of Lake Biwa—meeting her husband at Toyo no ura, near the modern Shimonoséki, of indemnity fame. While worshiping on one of the islands of the Inland Sea, the god spoke to her, and said, “Why are you so deeply concerned to conquer Kumaso? It is but a poor, sparse region, not worth conquering with an army. There is a much larger and richer country, as sweet and lovely as the face of a fair virgin. It is dazzling bright with gold, silver, and fine colors, and every kind of rich treasures is to be found in Shiraki (in Corea). Worship me, and I will give you power to conquer the country without bloodshed; and by my help, and the glory of your conquest, Kumaso shall be straightway subdued.” The emperor, hearing this from his wife, which she declared was the message of the gods, doubted, and, climbing to the summit of a high mountain, looked over the sea, and seeing no land to the westward, answered her: “I looked everywhere and saw water, but no land. Is there a country in the sky? If not, you deceived me. My ancestors worshiped all the gods: is there any whom they did not worship?”

The gods, answering through the inspired empress, made reply: “If you believe only your doubts, and say there is no country when I have declared there is one, you blaspheme, and you shall not go thither; but the empress, your wife, has conceived, and the child within her shall conquer the country.” Nevertheless, the emperor doubted, and advanced against Kumaso, but was worsted by the rebels. While in camp, he took sick and died suddenly. According to another tradition, he was slain in battle by an arrow. His minister, Takénouchi, concealed his death from the soldiers, and carried the

"Give mercy to those who yield, but no quarter to the stubborn.

"Rewards shall be apportioned to the victors; punishments shall be meted to the deserters."

Then the words of the gods came, saying, "The Spirit of Peace will always guide you and protect your life. The Spirit of War will go before you and lead your ships."

Jingu again returned thanks for these fresh exhibitions of divine favor, and made her final preparations to start, when a new impediment threatened to delay hopelessly the expedition, or to rob it of its soul and leader, the Amazonian chief. She discovered that she was pregnant. Again the good favor of the gods enabled her to triumph over the obstacles which nature, or the fate of her sex, might throw in the path of her towering ambition. She found a stone which, being placed in her girdle, delayed her accouchement until her return from Corea.

It does not seem to have been perfectly clear in the minds of those ancient filibusters where Corea was, or for what particular point of the horizon they were to steer. They had no chart or compass. The sun, stars, and the flight of birds were their guides. In a storm they would be helpless. One fisherman had been sent to sail westward and report. He came back declaring there was no land to be seen. Another man was dispatched, and returned, having seen the mountains on the main-land. The fleet sailed in the Tenth month. Winds, waves, and currents were all favorable. The gods watched over the fleet, and sent shoals of huge fishes to urge on the waves that by their impact lifted the sterns and made the prows leap as though alive. The ships beached safely in Southern Corea, the Japanese army landed in the glory of sunlight and the grandeur of war in splendid array. The king of this part of Corea had heard from his messengers of the coming of a strange fleet from the East, and, terrified, exclaimed, "We never knew there was any country outside of us. Have our gods forsaken us?" The invaders had no fighting to do as they expected. It was a bloodless invasion. The Coreans came, holding white flags, and surrendered, offering to give up their treasures. They took an oath that they would be tributary to Japan, that they would never cause their conquerors to dispatch another expedition, and that they would send hostages to Japan. The rivers might flow backward, or the pebbles in their beds leap up to the stars, yet would they not break their oath. Jingu set up weapons before the gate of the king in token of peace. By his order eighty ships well laden with gold and silver, ar-

ticles of wealth, silk and precious goods of all kinds, and eighty hostages, men of high families, were put on board.

The stay of the Japanese army in Corea was very brief, and the troops returned in the Twelfth month. Jingu was, on her arrival, delivered of a son, who, in the popular estimation of gods and mortals, holds even a higher place of honor than his mother, who is believed to have conquered Southern Corea through the power of her yet unborn illustrious offspring. After leaving her couch, the queen-regent erected in Nagato (Chōshiu) a shrine, and in it dedicated the Spirit of War that had guided her army. She then attended to the funeral rites of her deceased husband, and returned to the capital.

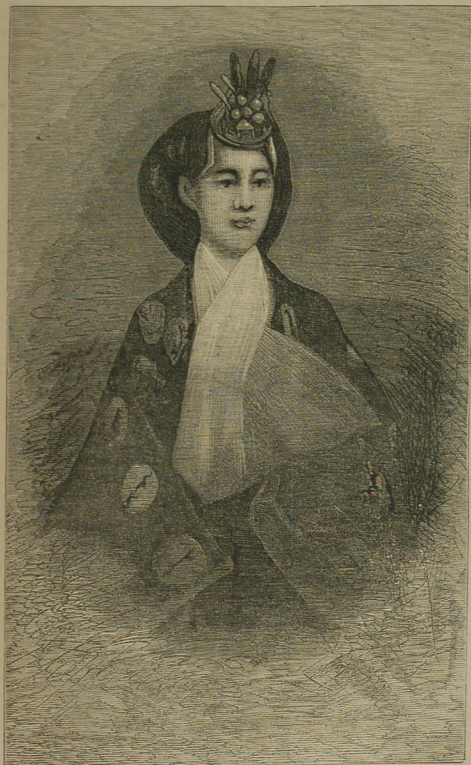
The conquest of Corea, more correctly a naval raid into one of the southern provinces, took place A.D. 203. The motive which induced the invasion seems to have been the same as that carried out by Hideyoshi in 1583, and contemplated in 1873—mere love of war and conquest. The Japanese refer with great pride to this their initial exploit on foreign soil. It was the first time they had ever gone in ships to a foreign country to fight. For the first time it gave them the opportunity of displaying their valor in making "the arms of Japan shine beyond the seas"—a pet phrase which occurs in many documents in Japan, even in this 2536th year of the Japanese empire, and of our Lord 1876. Nevertheless, the honor of the exploit is given to the unborn son on whom dwelt the Spirit of War, rather than to the mother who bore him.

The queen-mother is worshiped in many temples as Kashii dai miō jin. The son, Ōjin, afterward a great warrior, was, at his death, 313 A.D., deified as the god of war; and down through the centuries he has been worshiped by all classes of people, especially by soldiers, who offer their prayers, pay their vows, and raise their votive offerings to him. Many of the troops, before taking steamer for Formosa, in 1874, implored his protection. In his honor some of the most magnificent temples in Japan have been erected, and almost every town and village, as well as many a rural grove and hill, has its shrine erected to this Japanese Mars. He is usually represented in his images as of frightful, scowling countenance, holding, with arms akimbo, a broad two-edged sword. One of the favorite subjects of Japanese artists of all periods is the group of figures consisting of the snowy-bearded Takénouchi, in civil dress, holding the infant of Jingu Kōgō in his arms, the mother standing by in martial robes. Jingu is the heroine and model for boys, not of the girls. In the collection of pictures,

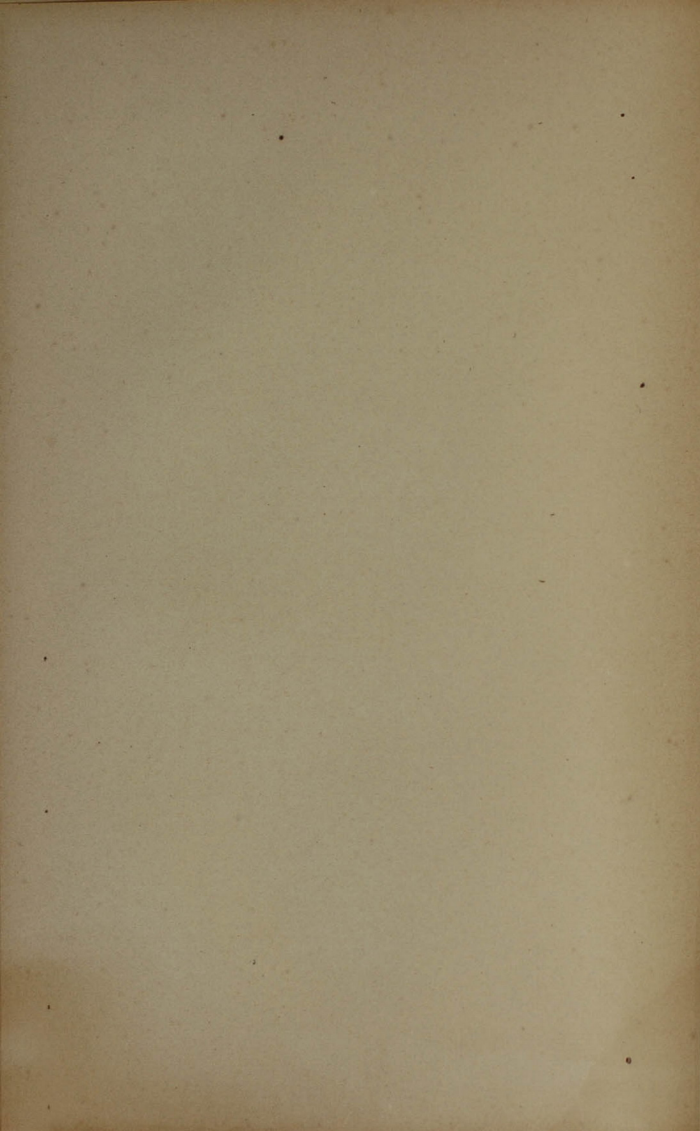
images, and dolls which in Japanese households on the 5th of May, every year, teach to the children the names and deeds of the national heroes, and instill the lessons taught by their example, this warrior-woman is placed among the male, and not among the female, groups.

Nine empresses in all have sat upon the throne of Japan as rulers, four of whom reigned at the capital, Nara. None have won such martial renown as Jingu. It is not probable, however, that military enterprise will ever again give the nation another ideal woman like the conqueror of Corea. It is now, in modern days, given to the Empress of Japan to elevate the condition of her female subjects by graciously encouraging the education of the girls, and setting a noble example, not only of womanly character and of active deeds of benevolence, but also in discarding the foolish and barbarous customs of past ages, notably that of blacking the teeth and shaving off the eyebrows. This the present empress, Haruko, has done. Already this chief lady of the empire has accomplished great reforms in social customs and fashions, and, both by the encouragement of her presence and by gifts from her private purse, has greatly stimulated the cause of the education and the elevation of woman in Japan. Haply, it may come to pass that this lady in peaceful life may do more for the good and glory of the empire than even the renowned queen-regent, Jingu Kōgō.

The early centuries of the Christian era, from the third to the eighth, mark that period in Japanese history during which the future development and character of the nation were mightily influenced by the introduction, from the continent of Asia, of the most potent factors in any civilization. They were letters, religion, philosophy, literature, laws, ethics, medicine, science, and art. Heretofore the first unfoldings of the Japanese intellect in the composition of sacred hymns, odes, poems, myths, and tradition had no prop upon which to train, and no shield against oblivion but the unassisted memory. The Japanese were now to have records. Heretofore religion was simply the rude offspring of human imagination, fear, and aspiration, without doctrinal systems, moral codes, elaborate temples, or sacerdotal caste. Henceforth the Japanese were to be led, guided, and developed in morals, intellect, and worship by a religion that had already brought the nations of Asia under its sway—a strong, overpowering, and aggressive faith, that was destined to add Japan to its conquests. Buddhism, bringing new and greater sanctions, penalties, motives, and a positive theology and code of morals, was to develop and broaden the whole nature of the individual man, and to lead the entire nation



Her Imperial Japanese Majesty, the Empress of Japan, Haruko, *née* Ichijō Haruko.
(From a photograph taken at Tōkiō, 1874.)



forward. Chinese philosophy and Confucian morals were to form the basis of the education and culture of the Japanese statesman, scholar, and noble, to modify Shintō, and with it to create new ideals of government, of codes, laws, personal honor, and household ordering. Under their influence, and that of circumstances, have been shaped the unique ideals of the *samurai*; and by it a healthy skepticism, amidst dense superstition, has been maintained. The coming of many immigrants brought new blood, ideas, opinions, methods, improvements in labor, husbandry, social organization. Japan received from China, through Corea, what she is now receiving from America and Europe—a new civilization.

For nearly a century after the birth of Ōjin, the record of events is blank. In 249 A.D. a Japanese general, Arata, was sent to assist one state of Corea against another. Occasional notices of tribute-bearers arriving from Corea occur. In 283 a number of tailors, in 284 excellent horses, were sent over to Japan. In 285, Wani, a Corean scholar, came over to Japan, and, residing some time at the court, gave the mikado's son instruction in writing. If the *Nihongi*—the authority for the date of Wani's arrival in Japan—could be trusted in its chronology, the introduction of Chinese writing, and probably of Buddhism, would date from this time; but the probabilities are against positive certainty on this point. If it be true, it shows that the first missionary conquest of this nation was the work of four centuries, instead of as many decades. Wani died in Japan, and his tomb stands near Ōzaka. In A.D. 403 a court annalist was chosen. Envoys and tribute-bearers came, and presents were exchanged. In 462 mulberry-trees were planted—evidently brought, together with the silk-worm, for whose sustenance they were intended—from China or Corea. Again, tailors in 471, and architects in 493, and learned men in 512, arrived. An envoy from China came in 522. The arrival of fresh immigrants and presents from Corea in 543 is noted. In 551, during a famine in Corea, several thousand bushels of barley were dispatched thither by Japan. In 552, a company of doctors, diviners, astronomers, and mathematicians from Corea came to live at the Japanese court. With them came Buddhist missionaries. This may be called the introduction of continental civilization. Beginning with Jingu, there seems to have poured into the island empire a stream of immigrants, skilled artisans, scholars, and teachers, bringing arts, sciences, letters and written literature, and the Buddhist religion. This was the first of three great waves of foreign civilization in Japan.

The first was from China, through Corea in the sixth; the second from Western Europe, in the fifteenth century; the third was from America, Europe, and the world, in the decade following the advent of Commodore Perry. These innovations were destined to leaven mightily the whole Japanese nation as a lump. Of these none was so powerful and far-reaching in effects as that in the sixth century, and no one element as Buddhism. This mighty force was destined to exert a resistless and unifying influence on the whole people. Nothing, among all the elements that make up Japanese civilization, has been so potent in forming the Japanese character as the religion of Buddha. That the work of these new civilizers may be fully appreciated, let us glance at life in Dai Nippon before their appearance.*

* The Empress Jingu, after her return, made a very important change in the divisions of the empire. Seimu Tennō (A.D. 131-190) had divided the empire into provinces, the number of which was thirty-two in all, the land above the thirty-eighth parallel being still unknown, and inhabited by the wild tribes of Ainōs. Jingu, imitating the Korean arrangement, divided the empire into five home provinces, and seven *dō*, or circuits, naming them in relation to their direction from the capital. These are analogous to our "Eastern," "Middle," "Southern," "Western," "Trans-Mississippi," and "Pacific-coast" divisions of States. The "five home provinces" (Go Kinai) are Yamashiro, Yamato, Kawachi, Idzumi, and Settsu. The Tōkaidō, or Eastern-sea Circuit, comprised the provinces skirting the Pacific Ocean from Iga to Hitachi, including Kai.

The Tōzandō, or Eastern-mountain Circuit, included those provinces from Ōmi to the end of the main island, not on the Sea of Japan, nor included within the Tōkaidō.

The Hokūrokudō, or Northern-land Circuit, comprised the provinces from Wakasa to Echigo inclusive, bordering on the Sea of Japan, and Sado Island.

The Sanindō, or Mountain-back Circuit, comprised with the Oki group of islands the provinces from Tamba to Iwami, bordering on the Sea of Japan.

The Sanyōdō, or Mountain-front Circuit, comprised the provinces from Harima to Nagato (or Chōshū) bordering the Inland Sea.

The Nankaidō, or Southern-sea Circuit, comprises the province of Kii, the four provinces of Iyo, Sanuki, Awa, and Tosa, in Shikokū (*shū*, four; *koku*, province), and the Island of Awaji.

The Saikaidō, or Western-sea Circuit, comprises nine provinces of Kiushū (*kiū*, nine; *shū*, province).

The "two islands" are Iki and Tsushima.

This division accords with the physical features of the country, and has ever since been retained, with slight modifications as to provinces. It is very probable that in the time of Jingu, the Japanese did not know that Hondo was an island. A foreigner looking at the map of the empire, or a globe representing the world, could hardly imagine that the Japanese have no special and universally used name for the main island. Yet such is the fact, that neither they nor their books popularly apply any particular name to the main island. It may be even doubted whether the people in general ever think of the main island as being a particular division requiring a name, as the foreigner conceives it, and thus