

The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Editor: DR. PAUL CARUS.

Associates: { E. C. HEGELER.
MARY CARUS.

VOL. XXI. (No. 6.)

JUNE, 1907.

NO. 613.

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THE MONIST

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Philosophy of Science

DR. PAUL CARUS
EDITOR



ASSOCIATES { E. C. HEGELER
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"The Monist" also Discusses the Fundamental Problems of Philosophy in their Relations to all the Practical Religious, Ethical, and Sociological Questions of the day.

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JURISPRUDENTIA.

From a mural painting by Prof. Gustav Graef in the University of Koenigsberg.

Frontispiece to The Open Court.

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THE MORAL CODE OF YUKICHI FUKUZAWA.

BY JOSEPH SALE.

THE marvelous evolution or rather revolution of the Japanese within the last three decades has been a never-ceasing wonder and curiosity to the Western world. That a race-nation, traveling the highway of Western civilization, made hard, smooth, and easy by a three thousand year journey, should suddenly wheel about and march unflinching, unceasingly, tenaciously along the road of Western civilization—a route as full of elephantine obstacles, as choked with Cyclopien barriers, and strewn with as many unseen pitfalls as ever was the road that led into the vitals of Port Arthur—is truly a phenomenon to elicit astonishment and deep study. A Niagara of books, magazine articles, and newspaper paragraphs, created by an insatiable curiosity of a new mysterious people, has come down upon us to saturate and satiate us with knowledge and fiction of the Japanese fights and fighters, until we speak as glibly and erroneously of Oyama, Kuroki, Nishi, Nogi, and Oku, as we ever did and do of Washington, Jackson, Grant, and Sheridan. We even have several works which endeavor to give an insight into the inner life of the Japanese, the most notable and successful being Lafcadio Hearn's last work, *Japan: An Interpretation*. But there is yet to come an historical and analytical account of the overthrow of a civilization in Nippon, which has made possible the Japan of Nanshan and Port Arthur, of Liaoyang and Saho. And when such a history is written, the hero who will be given the lion's share in that bloodless revolution of ideas, is Yukichi Fukuzawa, the Oyama who led in that crusade for the Westernization of Japan.

Of the romantic life history of Fukuzawa we shall say but little, leaving it as a delectable treat to be enjoyed through his intensely

interesting *Autobiography*, now in process of translation by Yasunosuke Fukukita. Nor do I intend to go into an extended account of the multifarious activities of Fukuzawa as educator, reformer, author of a hundred books, and the founder of modern Japanese journalism. An account inadequately and poorly written, but still of some value, is given in Asataro Miyamori's *Life of Yukichi Fukuzawa*, lately translated into English.

Ever since the restoration of the Meiji dynasty in 1867, the Japanese have followed to the letter the fifth and concluding command of the famous Imperial Rescript, issued by the reigning Mikado when he took his seat upon the throne vacated by the banished Tokugawa Shogunate. This clause, in all the naïveté and ingenuousness of the guilelessly honest, asserts simply that "We shall endeavor to raise the prestige and honor of our country by seeking knowledge throughout the world." Upon the command of their new and greatly beloved Mikado the Japanese began "to seek knowledge throughout the world." And the one man who was ever in the van, leading and pointing out the way—the long, dim, unknown, mysterious road of Western civilization—was Yukichi Fukuzawa.

Yukichi Fukuzawa was born in the city of Osaka in 1834. Of poor Samurai parents, young Fukuzawa was nevertheless educated by private tutors. His religious training came from his father, Hyakusuke, a pious devotee of Confucius. When eleven years of age the elder Fukuzawa died, leaving the boy the doubtful freedom from a father's guiding hand. Three years later the fatherless Yukichi entered Shirashi's private school at Osaka, where for five years he buried himself in the Chinese classics. The knock of Commodore Perry on the door of Japan re-echoed throughout Japan, and the murmur of it filtered into Shirashi's private school and reached the ever-open ears of the alert Yukichi. At once the ambitious scholar determined to help open the long closed door of his country in front of which the Americans were now thundering for admission. He saw that Japan—a recluse among the nations—could never hope to grow large and powerful without allowing the freedom of knowledge as well as the freedom of conscience and thought. But even if American knowledge was admitted into Japan there would be no one there to welcome her. So young Fukuzawa determined to master the English language. But between resolve and attainment there was a long and weary road. There were no Englishmen or Americans in the country, nor was there even a Japanese whose knowledge of the English tongue was sufficient to warrant his teaching it to others. There were of course no dictionaries of the

English and Japanese languages. But there were a few English-Dutch, and Japanese-Dutch dictionaries. Fukuzawa determined to study English through Dutch glasses. So he repaired to Nagasaki, the seat of the only Dutch colony in Japan, and there, fortified by indomitable pluck, tenacious persistence, and gigantic industry, the young enthusiast, after several years of unremitting siege, mastered the Dutch tongue. Then by the use of his Dutch-English dictionary the indomitable Fukuzawa, by several years more of prodigious labor, gained a working knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon language.

Dissatisfied with using the Dutch as a backdoor to enter the portals of American civilization, Fukuzawa, ablaze with desire to study at first hand, determined to visit the land of Perry. In 1859 he made his first visit to the United States as an attendant to the envoys sent here by the Tokugawa government. A second visit to this country in 1867 increased his knowledge of the economic, social, and religious conditions of Japan's foster mother. Upon his return from the first visit to the United States, Fukuzawa entered upon the Herculean task of substituting for the customs, beliefs, and ideas of old Japan the principles of Western civilization. With this object constantly in view, he lived a life of incessant industry for over forty years. He assiduously cultivated a style striking in its simplicity and lucidity; for his writings were to be for the understanding of the poor and uneducated and not for the delectation of the rich and educated. To Westernize the nation as a whole, to saturate with the new civilization every nook and corner of his country, required a medium which could be easily understood by all the people. His first fruits were a *Vocabulary of Phrases in English, Chinese, and Japanese* which appeared in 1860, and *Seiyo Jijo* or *Things Western* which first saw print in 1866. The later book became popular at once and three hundred thousand copies were sold within a few years of its appearance, and throughout the length and breadth of Japan *Things Western*, to use the words of Miyamori, "was, as it were, a pillar of fire illuminating the darkness of general ignorance." In the next four decades the irrepressible Fukuzawa poured forth a constant stream of books which irrigated the entire country and caused the desert of ignorance to bloom with the flowers of knowledge. The scope of Fukuzawa's versatility may be seen from the great diversity in the titles of his hundred book—*How to Handle a Rifle; Guide to Traveling in the Western Countries; The Eleven Treaty Powers; Clothes, Food and Utensils of the West; Elements of Physics; The Western Tactics; A Bird's-Eye View of the Nations of the World; The Intercourse Between China and England; The*

English Parliament; A World's Geography; Encouragement of Learning. Almost until the day of his death, January 25, 1901, Fukuzawa was prolific in dashing off book after book, the ammunition which was to destroy the already undermined and battered buttress of Oriental civilization in Japan.

Not satisfied with the enormous educational work which his books were accomplishing, Fukuzawa, to further his campaign of Westernization, started in 1882 what has since ever been the most influential daily paper in Japan, the *Jiji Shimpo*. Fukuzawa for the first fifteen years of the life of his paper wrote quite all of the editorials, which wrung from its rival, the *Japan Daily Advertiser*, the comment that "for vigor and clearness, as well as for the power of homely and telling illustration, the editorial columns of the *Jiji Shimpo*, of which Mr. Fukuzawa was the leading spirit, have been hardly matched by any other journal of any land, not even excepting the *New York Tribune* in the best days of Horace Greeley." The *Kobe Chronicle* in speaking of Fukuzawa's paper writes, "The *Jiji Shimpo* has been sometimes compared with the *London Times*. We venture to say that for impartiality, broad-mindedness, and a keen sense of right and justice the *Jiji Shimpo* under the editorship of the Sage of Mita (the popular title for Fukuzawa) is far and away the superior of the London journal, which is in some respects narrow in the extreme. It is to the honor of the *Jiji Shimpo* that it has never hesitated to take the unpopular side."

As a necessary adjunct to his books and his newspaper, Yukichi Fukuzawa saw that if the Westernization of Japan was to be complete, he must surround himself with disciples, who, freighted with his ideas, would settle down to become the local Fukuzawa of the village or town in which they settled. In 1860, the year of his first book, saw the ardent reformer instructing about fifty young Japanese in the principles of American civilization. In 1871 Fukuzawa founded the Keio Gijuku University at Mita, within striking distance of Tokyo. At present it is the largest and most influential private institution in Japan, with nearly two thousand students.

Having thus, through three powerful instruments of the book, newspaper, and university, substituted in three decades Occidentalism for Orientalism, Fukuzawa in his old age turned his energies in a direction which he could not foresee when he first entered upon his task of substituting civilizations. He had seen with intense satisfaction the marvelous and swift progress which his countrymen had made along the line of education, commerce, science, and the arts of Western civilization, but he had viewed with alarm and anxiety

the sagging of morals in the storm and stress of great change. With his characteristic energy and straightforwardness he went about to repair the breach which his campaign of change had helped to bring about. He determined to do for the moral and ethical life of his people what he had already accomplished for their educational and material welfare. He entered upon his new task on the same lines which were so successful in his first campaign. Surrounded by such leaders as Obata, Kodama, Kadono, Ishikawa, and Hibura, Fukuzawa set about to draw up a code of morals which could be understood and followed by the common people. He determined upon an appeal in sane, simple language for an elevated materialism which the people could understand, instead of attempting the hopeless task of leading them to a better moral life through what to them would be a desert of theoretical and idealistic ethics. So, Fukuzawa called a convention to draft a moral constitution.

The Moral Code of Yukichi Fukuzawa, given to the Japanese nation in 1900 as "a guide to life." This remarkable document with its twenty-nine precepts has been the greatest and strongest agency in the rebuilding and strengthening the sagging morality of Japan. As an attempt to guide the life of a nation by rule it is interesting; as an endeavor to give morality untinged by religion it is epochal; and finally as an insight into Japanese character, it is illuminating. Therefore, I give a complete translation of this remarkable manifesto of Moral Independence.

"All those who are living in Japan, irrespective of sex or age, must obey the Imperial Court of uninterrupted lineage, for there is none who has not participated in its unbounded benevolence. This is a point about which there is perfect unanimity of opinion throughout the realm. Coming to another question of how the men and women of to-day should behave themselves, I must say that diverse as have been from ancient times codes of morals, it is evident that a code must conform itself to the progress of the times, and that a society like the present, characterized as it is by ever-advancing civilization, there must be a code specially suited to it. Hence it follows that the tenets of personal morals and living must undergo more or less of a change.

"1. Everybody must make it his duty to act as a man, and must endeavor to elevate his dignity and to enhance his virtue. Men and women of our fraternity must regard the principles of independence and self-respect as the cardinal tenet of personal morals and living, and by inscribing it deeply on their hearts must strive to discharge the duties proper to man.

"2. He is called a man of independence and self-respect who preserves the independence of both mind and body, and who pays respect to his person in a way calculated to maintain the dignity proper to man.

"3. Working with an independent will and subsisting without the help of others, is the essence of the independence of life; hence it follows that a person of independence and self-respect must be an independent worker besides being his own bread-winner.

"4. Taking care of the body and keeping it healthy is a duty incumbent on us all by reason of the rules that govern human existence; both body and mind must be kept in activity and in health, and anything calculated to impair their health even in the least degree must be rigidly avoided.

"5. To complete the natural span of life is to discharge a duty incumbent upon man. Therefore, any person who, be the cause what it may, or be the circumstances what they may, deprives himself by violence of his own life, must be said to be guilty of an act inexcusable and cowardly, as well as mean, and entirely opposed to the principles of independence and self-respect.

"6. Unless pursued with a daring, active, and indomitable spirit, independence and self-respect cannot be secured; a man must have the courage of progress constantly.

"7. A person of independence and self-respect must not depend upon others in disposing of a question relating to his own personal affairs, but he must possess the ability with which to deliberate and decide upon it.

"8. The custom of regarding women as the inferior of men is a vicious relic of barbarism. Men and women of any enlightened country must treat and love each other on a basis of equality, so that each may develop his or her own independence and self-respect.

"9. Marriage being a most important affair in the life of man, the utmost care must be exercised in selecting a partner. It is the first essential of humanity for man and wife to cohabit till death separates them, and to entertain towards each other feelings of love and respect, in such a way that neither of them shall lose his or her independence and self-respect.

"10. Children born of man and wife know no other parents but their own, and in the same way the parents recognize no children besides their own. The affection existing between parents and their children is of the purest kind of affection and the preliminary of domestic felicity consists in not interfering with the free play of this sentiment.

"11. Children are also persons of independence and self-respect, but while in their infancy their parents must take care of their education. The children on their part must, in obedience to the instruction of their parents, diligently attend to their work, to the end that they may get well grounded in the knowledge of getting on in society, after they have grown up into men and women of independence and self-respect.

"12. In order to act up to the ideal of independence and self-respect, men and women must continue, even after they have grown up, to attend to their studies, and should not neglect to develop their knowledge and to cultivate their virtue.

"13. At first a single house appears, and then several others gradually cluster round it, and a human community is formed. The foundation of a sound society must, therefore, be said to consist in the independence and self-respect of a single person and a single family.

"14. The only way to preserve a social community consists in respecting and not violating, even in the least, the rights and the happiness of others, while maintaining at the same time one's own rights and one's own share of happiness.

"15. It is vulgar custom and unmanly practice, unworthy of civilized people, to entertain enmity towards others and to wreak vengeance upon them. In repairing one's honor and maintaining it, fair means must always be employed.

"16. Every person must be faithful to his business, and anybody who neglects his duties of his state in life, irrespective of the relative gravity and importance of such duties, cannot be regarded as a person of independence and self-respect.

"17. Every one must behave towards others with candor; for it is by reposing confidence in others that one renders it possible for them to confide in him, while it is only by means of this mutual confidence that the reality of independence and native dignity can be attained.

"18. Courtesy and etiquette being important social means for expressing the sense of respect, they should not be ignored even in the least degree; the only caution to be given in this connection that both an excess and a deficiency of courtesy and etiquette should be avoided.

"19. It is a philanthropic act which may be regarded as a beautiful virtue of man, to hold the sentiment of sympathy and affection towards others, and so to endeavor not only to alleviate their pains but also to further their welfare.

"20. The sentiment of kindness must not be confined to men alone and any practice that involves cruelty to animals or any wanton slaughter of them must be guarded against.

"21. Culture elevates man's character while it delights his mind, and as, taken in a wide sense, it promotes the peace of society and enhances human happiness, therefore it must be regarded as an essential requisite of man.

"22. Whenever a nation exists there is inevitably a government which attends to the business of enacting laws and organizing armaments, with the object of giving protection to the men and women of the country and of guarding their persons, property, honor, and freedom. In return for this, the people are under the obligation to undergo military service and to meet the national expenditures.

"23. It is a natural consequence that persons who undergo military service and pay the national expenditure, should enjoy the right of sitting in the national legislature, with the view of supervising the appropriation for the national expenditures. This may also be considered as their duty.

"24. The Japanese people of both sexes must ever keep in view their duty of fighting with an enemy even at the risk of their life and property, for the sake of maintaining the independence and dignity of their country.

"25. It is the duty of the people to obey the laws of the country. They should go further and should attend to the duty of helping to enforce the enactments, with the object of maintaining order and peace in the community.

"26. Many are the nations existing on the earth with different religions, languages, manners, and customs, the people constituting those nations are brethren, and hence no discrimination should be made in dealing with them. It is against the principles of independence and self-respect to bear oneself with arrogance and to look down on people of a different nationality.

"27. The people of our generation must fulfil the duty of handing down to posterity and in an ameliorated form the national civilization and welfare which we have inherited from our forefathers.

"28. There must be more or less difference in the ability and physical strength of men born into this world. It depends upon the power of education to minimize the number of the incompetent and the weak; for education, by teaching men the principles of independence and self-respect, enables them to find out and to develop the means to put those principles into practice and to act up to them.

"29. Men and women of our fraternity must not be contented

with inscribing upon their own hearts these moral tenets, but endeavor to diffuse them widely among the people at large, to the end that they may attain the greatest possible happiness—they with all their brethren all over the wide world.”

This Moral Code of Yukichi Fukuzawa was distributed throughout Japan through the media of newspaper, magazine, and pamphlet. Kodama, Kitagawa, and Ichitaro, the eldest son of Fukuzawa, entered upon an active campaign in the interests of the Code, very much on the same lines as we carry on one of our political campaigns. Despite the fact that the Code has been in existence but a few years it has been of incalculable good for the fast crumbling morality of new Japan.

The most striking feature of the Code is the absolute divorce of religion and morality. The appeal for right thinking and right living is based entirely upon one's own happiness. The fact that the Code did not hold out the reward of future things or of a future life did not prevent the widespread acceptance of the tenets of the Sage of Mita. Although Fukuzawa believed in no religion, he was the enemy of none, and declared that one of the purposes of his old age was to encourage the spread of Buddhism or Christianity and “thus to tranquilize the hearts of my countrymen.” In his *Book of a Hundred Essays*, Fukuzawa says, “In fine, gratitude being a sentiment which springs from piety, the proper course for wise men to pursue in the present uncultivated condition of the world is to foster virtue in the uneducated by leaving such piety undisturbed, whether its origin be superstition or emotion.” Fukuzawa even went as far as to recommend his disciples to profess Buddhism or Christianity for the benefit to be derived by the masses.

The adaptation by Fukuzawa of a system of ethics to an idealistic utilitarianism has not been thoroughly tested in Japan, but the few years of its existence has been successful where no theoretical philosophy would have had a hearing. Fukuzawa and the compilers of the *Shyushin Yoryo* (code of morality) appealed to the man in the street, and their appeal fell upon listening ears and understanding minds. Professor Denig, in reviewing the Moral Code, terminates with: “The Mita system (so called from the town in which Fukuzawa lived) is founded on the bed-rock of bare fact and hence has a stability not possessed by the aerial structures that pose as its rivals. Fukuzawa knows well what are the conscientious feelings of his fellow-countrymen. To these he has appealed, and in so doing he has adopted the course which moral reformers of all times and all countries have followed with success.”