

Nemoto Shō, Tobacco, and the Regulation of Youth in Meiji Japan¹

Elizabeth D. Lublin
Wayne State University

Within just a few decades, Japan became the first non-Western country to undergo an industrial revolution. Beginning in the late 1860s, the Meiji state orchestrated that transformation through the promotion of select industries, strategic allocation of technology and raw materials, the hiring of foreign experts, and investment in transportation and communication infrastructure, among other steps. Together with this top-down economic stimulus, a spate of reforms added to the tools and experiences that individual Japanese had to contribute to industrial development whether as shipyard hands, miners, mill workers, business owners of enterprises big and small, and the list goes on. These included the creation of a system of compulsory education with a hierarchy of schools for those eager and able to continue and the removal of restrictions on occupation and residency based on status group. Since the 1960s, scholars have produced a wealth of studies in English exploring this history.² Noticeably absent are publications on the tobacco industry apart from a monograph on the history of Japan Tobacco, translated from the original Japanese.³

That gap exists despite a plethora of Japanese primary source material and scholarly publications on the tobacco industry and despite the value that tobacco added to the economy and the place that it occupied in daily life as a commodity. This article sheds light on tobacco and its industry through the lens of a bill that Nemoto Shō introduced to the Diet, Japan's national assembly, in 1899 to ban smoking by minors. During the first decades of the Meiji period, childhood had come to be seen as a distinct experience that united all Japanese, and children represented a cohort who needed to be educated and disciplined in how to act as citizens for the nation-state to progress.⁴ These years also saw much public discussion about what constituted masculinity, angst that adolescent males were susceptible to dissipation, and concern with health and hygiene as integral to Japan's wealth, power, and global standing.⁵ While contributing to

¹I would like to express great thanks to the members of the Midwest Japan Seminar who provided feedback on an early version of this article and to two anonymous reviewers who offered comments on the manuscript. I am grateful as well to the Department of History and the Provost's Office at Wayne State University, the Northeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies, and the Triangle Center for Japanese Studies for funds to conduct research for this piece.

²A small selection includes: Hazel J. Jones, *Live Machines: Hired Foreigners and Meiji Japan* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); Steven J. Ericson, *The Sound of the Whistle: Railroads and the State in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1996); Naofumi Nakamura, "Reconsidering the Japanese Industrial Revolution: Local Entrepreneurs in the Cotton Textile Industry during the Meiji Period," *Social Science Journal Japan* 18, no. 1 (2015): 23-44; Johannes Hirschmeier, *The Origins of Entrepreneurship in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964); F.G. Notchelder, "Japan's First Pollution Incident," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 1, no. 2 (Spring 1975): 351-83.

³Miwa Ryōichi and Suzuki Toshio, *The First Century of Japan Tobacco Inc.: Origins and Evolution, 1904-2008* (Tokyo: Japan Tobacco, 2009; translation of *Nihon tabako sangyō: Hyakunen no ayumi*, by Thomas I. Elliott [Tokyo: Nihon Tabako Sangyō, 2009]). Although Japan Tobacco published this book, it is a scholarly work. Miwa and Suzuki conducted extensive research and incorporated archival material as well as other primary sources.

⁴Stefan Tanaka, "Childhood: Naturalization of Development into a Japanese Space," in *Cultures of Scholarship*, ed. S.C. Humphreys (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), 37-45.

⁵For more on these topics, see: Jason G. Karlin, "The Gender of Nationalism: Competing Masculinities in Meiji Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 41-77; David R. Ambaras, *Bad Youth: Juvenile*

literature on those topics, this article more specifically addresses direct catalysts for the bill, reactions to it, and its efficacy. In so doing, it highlights how reformers sought to use legislation, one tool that the state adopted as foundational to building a modern nation, to shape behavior and achieve their vision for a “better” Japan.⁶ Moreover, it argues that Nemoto astutely played to the nationalist sentiments and fears of his Diet colleagues to win supporters for his bill. While he succeeded in gathering the support of the majority and seeing the ban on smoking by minors become a law of the land, nationalist sentiments and fears also informed state support for the tobacco industry, which in the end undercut what Nemoto thought he had accomplished.

Tobacco in Japanese History

The history of tobacco in Japan dates from the late 1500s, less than a century after Europeans took up the custom of smoking it. Though the exact year of origin is unknown, reference to the existence of a dealer in tobacco in a 1576 land tax register from the village of Izumosaki in Echigo Province, now part of Niigata Prefecture, reveals that the leaves had become a commodity at least by then. That timing makes the Portuguese the most probable introducers as the Spanish did not reach Japan until the 1580s with the English and the Dutch arriving later.⁷ Consumption likely took the form of cigars and initially was limited. Supply played a role, but more significant was the cost. At 3 *monme* or roughly 11 grams of silver per single leaf, the price was prohibitive for many.⁸ That changed in the first years of the Tokugawa period when domestic cultivation of the tobacco plant began. So much fertile land was reallocated for growing tobacco plants that the shogunate outlawed their cultivation as well as the act of smoking and the sale of leaves in 1612. The central objective behind this prohibition was to maintain adequate food production and guarantee continued payment of taxes, but the penalties the shogunate stipulated, namely confiscation of the tobacco and its bestowal on the individual who caught the perpetrator, did little to curtail production and consumption.⁹ Over the next decade, the shogunate issued several

Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Susan L. Burns, “Constructing the National Body: Public Health and the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Japan,” in *Nation Work: Asian Elites and National Identities*, eds. Timothy Brook and Andre Schmid (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000), 17-49; and, Kerry Shannon, “Reinventing ‘Hygiene’: The Sanitary Society of Japan and Public Health Reform During the Mid-Meiji Period,” *East Asian Science, Technology, and Society: An International Journal* 17, no. 3 (2023): 285-306.

⁶Béatrice Jaluzot has analyzed the role of law in “The Meiji Era: When Japanese Law Became Positivized,” in *State Law and Legal Positivism: The Global Rise of a New Paradigm*, eds. Badouin Dupret and Jean-Louis Dalpérin (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 215-49.

⁷For discussions of primary sources that give different dates for the introduction of tobacco and explication of why the Portuguese were the most likely importers, see: Ernest M. Satow, “The Introduction of Tobacco into Japan,” *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 6, no. 1 (1878): 68-70 [reprinted in *Drugs and Alcohol in the Pacific: New Consumption Trends and their Consequences*, ed. Juan F. Gamella (Hampshire, Great Britain: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 57-79; Barnabas Tatsuya Suzuki, “Tobacco Culture in Japan,” in *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, eds. Sander L. Gilman and Zhou Xun (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), 76-78.

⁸Suzuki, “Tobacco Culture in Japan,” 373. To put this price in some perspective, in 1600, a visit to a bathhouse in Kyoto cost about eight copper coins. With one *monme* equaling approximately eighty copper coins, one leaf of tobacco equated to close to thirty baths. William Wayne Farris, *Japan to 1600: A Social and Economic History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 188.

⁹The shogunate’s 1643 “Regulations for Villagers” made clear the concern about fields, including those newly reclaimed, being used for growing tobacco instead of foodstuffs by asserting that the cultivation of tobacco “wastes the lands that can be used to grow the five grains.” David J. Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 214.

additional bans, all with the same minimal effect. Ordinances from late in the 17th century show that Tokugawa officialdom shifted from the early attempt at eradication to oversight, stipulating that smoking could only be done inside homes and that tobacco could only be grown on specially reclaimed land. With the enforcement of the latter limited, tobacco production grew significantly in response to the flourishing habit of Japanese of all classes to light up. Throughout the Tokugawa period, they typically did so using a *kiseru*, a pipe with a bowl and mouthpiece usually made of metal or clay with a long bamboo stem in between. Other paraphernalia used for smoking, such as pouches for carrying tobacco and trays for burners and ash pots, developed as well, with the quality of manufacturing and the extent of ornamentation reflective of class and wealth. Again, though, irrespective of political and economic standing, as well as gender and age, the Japanese became regular consumers of tobacco in the Tokugawa period.¹⁰

Smoking became even more prevalent during the Meiji period following the introduction of cigarettes. Initially imported, cigarettes carried with them the aura of Western civilization and appealed to many who wanted to appear more enlightened. The quantity of tobacco that people consumed reached such heights that the new Meiji government, ever mindful of the need for revenue to finance modernizing projects, instituted a system for taxing it in 1876. Early attempts to manufacture Japanese cigarette brands were made around the same time, though they produced goods far inferior to imported ones. By the mid-1880s, however, a handful of Japanese companies in Tokyo and Kyoto had opened factories and were beginning to acquire some market share. The choice of names such as *Sunrise* and *Hero*, written in *katakana*, reflected the desire to take advantage of the craze for all things Western and certainly helped these native firms. So did intense advertising campaigns, improved technology for mass production, and the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, when it became common to give departing servicemen cigarettes to ease battle tension. Japanese continued to smoke mostly shredded tobacco in *kiseru*, and the majority of the 363 tobacco factories in operation in 1902 manufactured it. Cigarettes, though, came to play a significant role in the industry by the turn of the century. Among the thirty-eight factories making cigarettes that same year, those run by Murai Brothers alone sold an estimated 3.26 billion.¹¹ That output provided a daily smoke for close to one-fifth of the population.¹²

The near explosion in consumption of cigarettes did not go unnoticed, and particularly unsettling to social commentators, physicians, educators, and reformers was the increasingly common sight of students in their uniforms puffing away while commuting to school. They collectively voiced concern about the impact of tobacco consumption on growing bodies and minds and saw the negative consequences extending from individuals to the nation as a whole.¹³ In their minds, minors who smoked were putting not just themselves but all their fellow Japanese

¹⁰Satow, 70-72; Timon Screech, "Tobacco in Edo Period Japan," in *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, ed. Sander L. Gilman and Zhou Xun (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), 92. For further information on smoking paraphernalia and customs, see: Satow, 74-78; Suzuki, "Tobacco Culture in Japan," 79-82; Tobacco and Salt Museum, Tokyo, Japan, <https://www.tabashio.jp/en/index.html>, <https://www.tabashio.jp/index.html>.

¹¹Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., *Kin'en undō no rekishi* [A history of the movement to abolish smoking] (N.p.: Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, 1980), 2; Miwa and Suzuki, 13-26, 50.

¹²According to the Statistics Bureau, Japan's population in 1902 totaled 44.964 million. Naikaku Tōkeikyoku, *Chōsa shiryō, daisanshū: Meiji gonen ikō wagakuni no jinkō* [Survey data, 3rd compilation: Our country's population since 1872] (Tokyo: Tōkyō Tōkei Kyōkai, 1930), 4.

¹³For two Christian commentaries in this vein, see: "Jidō no kitsuen ni tsuite" [Concerning smoking by children], *Fujin shimpō* 14 [Woman's herald] (March 1896): 32; *Japan Evangelist* 5, no. 4 (April 1898): 118-19.

on the train “from Cigaretville to Ruin.”¹⁴ One of the most noted reformers who attempted to get the younger generation off that train was Nemoto Shō who successfully proposed a legislative ban on their smoking.¹⁵

Nemoto Shō

Born in 1851 in the Tokugawa domain of Hitachi, present-day Ibaraki Prefecture, Nemoto was the second son of a village headman. Nemoto’s father had established such a reputation for “justice and impartiality” in carrying out his local duties that the domain leadership had granted him the right to carry a sword and on occasion ordered him to accompany the daimyo on trips to Kyoto.¹⁶ These privileges and family ties with Toyoda Tenkō, head of Mito domain’s renowned historical studies institute, helped infuse the household with aspirations for further upward mobility. A beneficiary of that mentality, Nemoto began formal study of the Confucian classics with his grandfather and another neighborhood scholar around the age of five. He moved to Mito in his early teens to continue his education under Toyoda, joining this relative’s household as a servant to cover expenses. He successfully parlayed the connections he established during the next four years into appointment as a district official for the Mito domain. Although he remained in that job for only a few years, his work had a dramatic impact on his future path. It was during this period of employment that he first had the opportunity to see some of the technological novelties domain dignitaries had brought home from travel to the West. Including matches and a clock, these goods so impressed him that he decided he had to learn more about their countries of origin.¹⁷

That determination led Nemoto to relocate to Tokyo in 1871. Soon thereafter he enrolled at schools established by two founders of the Meirokusha (Meiji Six Society), first Mitsukuri Shūhei’s Sansha Gakusha and then Nakamura Masanao’s (Keiu’s) Dōjinsha.¹⁸ While Mitsukuri provided Nemoto with initial instruction in the English language, Nakamura purposefully aimed to provide a much broader “civilizing” influence. To that end, he introduced Nemoto to notions of liberal democracy and the ability of individuals to make their own fortune through such classic Western texts as John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* and Samuel Smiles’ *Self Help*, which he had translated. He also infused the schooling he provided with Christianity, having students read religious texts, requiring them to attend daily prayer meetings and weekly services, and hiring American Protestant missionaries as teachers who, like Nakamura, provided regular witness to

¹⁴I have appropriated this phrase from a description of a tract the Anti-Narcotics Department of the Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai (Japan Woman’s Christian Temperance Union/JWCTU) produced for recitation contests among youth. *Japan Evangelist* 12, no. 12 (December 1905): 424.

¹⁵Shō and Tadashi both appear as transliterations for Nemoto’s name.

¹⁶Quoted from “Hon. Sho Nemoto,” *Japan Evangelist* 7, no. 10 (October 1900): 309.

¹⁷“Hon. Sho Nemoto,” 309; Hayashi Masayo, “Miseinensha kitsuen kinshihō no seitei to ‘Seishōnen’ kan: Nemoto Shō to Yamamoto Takinosuke no shishō ni chūmoku shite” [The enactment of the law to ban smoking by minors and views on “youth”: A look at the thoughts of Nemoto Shō and Yamamoto Takinosuke], *Nagoya Daigaku Kyōiku Gakubu kiyō (kyōiku gakkā)* 42, no. 1 (1995): 118. For more on Nemoto’s early years, see: Katō Junji, *Nemoto Shō den: Miseinensha inshu kinshihō o tsukutta hito* [A biography of Nemoto Shō; The person who made the law to ban drinking by minors] (Nagano: Ginga shobō, 1995), 11-34.

¹⁸Mitsukuri came from a noted family of Dutch scholars, while Nakamura had clandestinely begun Dutch studies after China was humiliated by the British in the first Opium War. William Reynolds Braisted, trans. and with an intro., *Meiroku Zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, assisted by Adachi Yasushi and Kikuchi Yūji (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), xxx, xxxii.

their beliefs.¹⁹ This exposure to things Western deepened in Nemoto a desire to learn about the West firsthand and awakened in him a growing interest in Christianity. Determined to accumulate the funds necessary to journey overseas, he took up a variety of low-level jobs, including as a rickshaw puller, a patrolman, and a post office clerk. He left Dōjinsha in 1874 to focus on preparations for his departure. Those included months spent studying the Bible with Orramel Gulick of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Kobe in 1876, followed by a period of religious tutelage under James Ballagh of the Dutch Reformed Church in Yokohama. Just how influential these two foreign missionaries were in nurturing the seeds of faith that Nakamura had planted became apparent in 1878 when Nemoto was baptized at Yokohama's Sumiyoshi-chō Church. Just one year later, he achieved his dream of studying abroad when he set sail for California.²⁰

Despite his efforts to build up a purse, Nemoto arrived in San Francisco with insufficient funds to support himself. His missionary connections proved invaluable as they paved the way for his almost immediate acquaintance with Alfred Barstow, a lawyer, secretary of the Society of California Pioneers, and member of a Methodist church in Oakland. Barstow opened his home to Nemoto and provided room and board for two years in exchange for several hours of labor a day as a stable hand. During those same two years, Nemoto attended a local elementary school. These initial studies were followed by four years at the private Hopkins Academy in Oakland, where he lived in the dormitory and worked at least one summer at a hotel to earn money. That Nemoto spent these six years in elementary and secondary classrooms when he was already in his late twenties and early thirties speaks to the depth of his dedication to acquiring an education in English.²¹ That he devoted what little free time he had to active engagement with Christians points to the seriousness of the religious convictions he had as well. The ties he established with believers were especially strong among his fellow Japanese immigrants. In particular, he became prominent within the community as an early member of the Fukuinsha (Gospel Society), an interdenominational organization of Japanese nationals formed to facilitate relocation by themselves and others to the San Francisco Bay area. Such involvement did more than rejuvenate his soul and help him weather the challenges of living, studying, and working so far from home. Many others in and connected to the Fukuinsha were proponents of abstinence from alcohol and tobacco. Nemoto had undoubtedly been prodded to give up these “evils” by Gulick and Ballagh, as both shared the belief, common among American Protestant missionaries, that temperance was a core component of a civilized and Christian life. Though he had not heeded their recommendation in Japan, according to Rumi Yasutake, the push to do so in California was convincing enough that he did commit himself to a life of abstinence while a member of the Fukuinsha.²²

¹⁹Braisted, xxx-xxx; Elizabeth Dorn Lublin, *Reforming Japan: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in the Meiji Period* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), 27, 49.

²⁰“Hon. Sho Nemoto,” 309; Hayashi, 118; Katō, 35-48; Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Inkaï, ed., *Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten* [A historical dictionary of Christianity in Japan] (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1988), 1085; Nemoto Tadashi Kenshōkai Hensan Inkaï, ed., *Fukutsu no seijika Nemoto Tadashi den: Ima koso ikiru ningen o taisetsu ni suru kokoro* [A biography of the indomitable politician Nemoto Tadashi: The spirit that values people living even today] (Naka, Ibaraki: Nemoto Tadashi Kenshōkai, 2008), 18-26.

²¹“Hon. Sho Nemoto,” 309-10; Hayashi, 118; Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Inkaï, ed., 1085; Betty Bandel, “The World is Becoming a Single Room: Sho Nemoto's Years in Vermont and Japan,” *The Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society* xxxix, no. 1 (Winter 1971): 73; Nemoto Tadashi Kenshōkai Hensan Inkaï, ed., 26-28.

²²Rumi Yasutake, *Transnational Women's Activism: The United States, Japan, and Japanese Immigrant Communities in California, 1859-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 105-106.

One primary stimulus for Nemoto to go beyond giving up drinking and smoking in his personal life to become a vocal and active proponent of abstinence was Frederick Billings, who made it possible for Nemoto to continue his education at the collegiate level and encouraged him to serve his country. The epitome of Smiles' self-made man himself, Billings had risen from respectable but humble origins to become a successful lawyer, tycoon of the Northern Pacific Railway, and one-time candidate for the governorship of Vermont. He was also a teetotaler and generous philanthropist whose wife apparently "would chide him that he never seemed to be able to say no to any good cause."²³ He did, however, concentrate his giving to religious and educational institutions, with his most significant donations funding the construction of a church in Billings, Montana (named after him), and a library at his alma mater, the University of Vermont. When Nemoto wanted to go to college after graduating from Hopkins Academy, Barstow, with whom he had retained a close relationship, turned to Billings, a long-time friend, for assistance. Billings responded by not only helping Nemoto gain acceptance to the University of Vermont but also paying his tuition.²⁴

The connection that Nemoto developed with Billings during his four years at the University of Vermont was much closer than that simply between a beneficiary and a donor. Billings was both a mentor and a surrogate father. He welcomed Nemoto into his home each summer vacation and included the younger man in Thanksgiving celebrations at the family's New York residence. Billings also supported Nemoto's burgeoning career as a translator of Western texts and public speaker in Protestant churches. In addition, he encouraged Nemoto's growing ties with members of the temperance movement in the United States, including Frances Willard, then president of the American and World Woman's Christian Temperance Unions [WCTU].²⁵ In 1889, Billings did as any well-off New England father would do for his son and rewarded the just-graduated Nemoto with a trip around the world. The end of this trip returned Nemoto to Japan in 1890, but distance did not sever his ties with Billings. To the contrary, he remained close enough to feel compelled to ask Billings for permission to marry, and, even after Billings' death later that year, he maintained regular correspondence with Billings' widow and visited her on several occasions before her passing. Moreover, as a permanent symbol of his appreciation for Billings' financial help and friendship, he donated a bronze bust of Billings, which he commissioned to a famous Japanese artist in 1895, to the University of Vermont. Billings' approach to life was also influential to the work that Nemoto undertook back home, where he never forgot Billings' injunction "to be useful in Japan."²⁶

After returning to Japan, Nemoto quickly set out to fulfill Billings' charge, and Billings' 1890 monetary gift provided an immediate means to do so. Nemoto wasted little time developing a series titled "The Parnly Billings Leaflets for World Temperance," which made temperance literature available in Japanese. By 1893, he had already issued at least seventeen volumes,

²³Quoted from Robin W. Winks, *Frederick Billings: A Life: From Gold Rush Lawyer to Railroad Builder to Conservationist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 85.

²⁴Winks, 5-6, 307; Bandel, 73; "Hon. Sho Nemoto," 310; Nemoto Tadashi Kenshōkai Hensan Inkkai, ed., 28-42.

²⁵By 1888, Nemoto knew Willard well enough to visit her at her home in Evanston, Illinois, and introduce her there to his traveling companions, fellow temperance reformer Shimada Saburō and Shimada's wife. Yasutake, 158.

²⁶Bandel, quoted from 73, 75; Winks, 307, 311.

including one with a lecture by World WCTU missionary Mary Allen West.²⁷ West had toured Japan in the fall of 1892 during which time Nemoto had established close connections with her, in part through his help in planning her engagements. She was so impressed by his “executive ability, genius for detail, self-sacrifice, and willingness to do hard, unseen, but necessary work” that she called him her “good genius in all this Japan work.”²⁸ Nemoto’s relationship with West built on the ties he had developed with WCTU activists in the United States. He maintained those through correspondence and developed them further by befriending WCTU missionaries who visited Japan. Moreover, he became an ardent supporter of the Fujin Kyōfūkai (Woman’s Moral Reform Society/WCTU, est. 1886) and collaborated with many of its campaigns. He did so not just as a private citizen but also as an officer in several reform organizations. Prominent among them were the Tokyo Kinshukai (Tokyo Temperance Society, est. 1890), Zenkoku Haishō Dōmeikai (National Federation to Abolish Licensed Prostitution, est. 1890), and the Nihon Kinshu Dōmeikai (Japan Temperance League, est. 1898). Nemoto played a leading role in the formation of each and held executive positions in all as well.²⁹

From that vantage point, Nemoto could not escape the challenges that moral and social reformers faced in trying to convince the public to abandon the licensed quarters and to give up drinking and smoking. He was also acutely aware of the difficulty of shaping government policies and legislation from outside the National Diet and bureaucratic offices. Political activism and public service represented another path to fulfill Billings’ calling, and Nemoto embarked on it shortly after his return home.

Itagaki Taisuke, a former leader in the movement for freedom and people’s rights and a staunch advocate for inclusive government, provided Nemoto with an entry into the world of politics when he asked Nemoto to help reorganize and revive the Aikoku Kōtō (Patriotic Public Party). Itagaki had established this party in 1874 after having left the government in protest over the decision not to invade Korea. The society was largely defunct in 1890 due to poor organization and limited mass support. Nemoto worked as one of Itagaki’s most trusted advisors in reviving the party that spring, immediately after returning to Japan and just before the Diet’s first election.³⁰ That same year he also collaborated with people formerly active in the movement for freedom and people’s rights to petition the inaugural Diet to cut the government’s budget. Nemoto’s early ambitions to join the national legislature ended in two electoral defeats; so, he turned to official appointment as an alternate way to serve. He accepted commissions from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Agriculture and Commerce to study Japanese emigration to as well as industrial conditions in North, Central, and South America. In 1898, his third attempt at elected office proved successful when he won a seat in the House of Representatives.³¹

²⁷The series was named after Billings’ eldest son, Parmly, who had died in 1888. Winks, 148; Mary A. West, “Citizenship,” *Parmly Billings Leaflets for World Temperance*, trans. and ed. Shō Nemoto, no. 17 (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1893): 29-41 [cited in Yasutake, 157].

²⁸Mary Allen West, “Work in Japan,” *Union Signal*, 29 December 1892, 5. As a testament to just how strong his ties were with West, Nemoto took her body back to the United States following her unexpected death in December 1892. Yasutake, 75.

²⁹Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Iinkai, ed., 1085; Yasutake, 64, 71, 86.

³⁰For brief introductions to the Aikoku Kōtō and Itagaki, see Janet E. Hunter, comp., *Concise Dictionary of Modern Japanese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 4, 74.

³¹Nemoto Tadashi Kenshōkai Hensan Iinkai, ed., 50-52, 73; “Hon. Sho Nemoto,” 310; Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Iinkai, ed., 1085.

Though Nemoto stayed in that role until 1923, he made his mark most notably during his first few years. In 1899, he wrote two hallmark pieces of legislation, the first to ensure government funding for compulsory public education and the second to prohibit smoking by minors. He followed those in short order with a proposal to outlaw juvenile drinking. Hayashi Masayo has attributed Nemoto's interest in government financing for education to his twin convictions, formed by personal experience, that public education was key to individual success and that even those who grew up in poverty could make a name for themselves.³² Reflecting in 1930, Nemoto provided a different reason. According to him, at the turn of the century, roughly one-third of all children of eligible age were not attending school for economic reasons, and the injustice of that was thwarting a "perfect union" of all Japanese.³³ In that same publication, he justified the bans on drinking and smoking by linking them to the school funding legislation. He argued that it was unfair to ask taxpayers without children to pay to educate youth who were profligate because of tobacco or alcohol.³⁴ Of these three bills, the first two quickly made their way through both houses of the Diet and became law in 1900, while the prohibition on drinking by minors took until 1922 to go into effect.

All three of these bills aimed at molding minors and restricting their behavior and represent the second path that Nemoto took to fulfill Billings' call. The latter two cemented his place as one of the most influential Christian reformers during the Meiji period. In sum, in the decade following his return to Japan, he established himself as a politician eager to use his seat to advance specific kinds of legislation and as a leader in a vibrant movement to "correct" behavior. For his collective contributions and distinguished service to the nation, in other words, for being "useful in Japan," he was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, the second highest honor given by the government.³⁵

The 1900 Bill against Smoking by Minors and Its Passage

Nemoto introduced the bill to ban smoking by minors to the Diet's House of Representatives on December 6, 1899. This same legislative session also considered a petition to revise the civil and criminal codes to establish monogamy as the legal norm.³⁶ The codes then in effect set forth the rights of a concubine and her children vis-à-vis a wife and her offspring and excluded men who frequented prostitutes or maintained concubines from punishment as adulterers. In other words, the codes provided legal protection for polygamy. Christian reformers had long

³²Hayashi, 118.

³³Nemoto Shō, *Kyōiku to kinshu: Shōnen kinshugun kōenkai ni te* [Education and temperance: From a lecture meeting of the Loyal Temperance Legion] (Tokyo: Nemoto Shō, 1930), 10-12, quoted from 10. For further discussion of Nemoto and his proposal for public funding of education, see: Ishitsuke Minoru, "Kōkyōiku to miseinensha kinshu, kin'en hō: Shūin giin Nemoto Shō no gikai katsudō kara" [The laws regarding public education and no drinking or smoking by minors: From the assembly activities of House of Representatives legislator Nemoto Shō], in *Teikoku gikai to kyōiku seisaku*, ed. Motoyama Yukihiko (Kyoto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 1981), 421-44.

³⁴Nemoto, *Kyōiku to kinshu*, 13.

³⁵Bandel, 74.

³⁶Sho Nemoto, "The anti-smoking bill: Its passage through the Imperial Diet of Japan," trans. by Takeshi Ukai (Tokyo: Methodist Publishing House, 1900), i-ii. The same year Nemoto published his discussion of the bill's passage in English he issued what reads as a complete transcript of deliberations about the bill in Japanese. Nemoto Shō, ed., *Dai-jūyonkai teikoku gikai hōkoku* [Report of the 14th session of the National Diet] (Tokyo: Nemoto Shō, 1900), 8-63.

sought to remove this official support for behavior they deemed both immoral and uncivilized. Leading the drive were the middle-class members of Japan's WCTU. Just after the opening of the Diet, the WCTU submitted a petition for revision to the lower house with eight hundred signatures. This appeal made little headway in that first presentation. Undeterred, unionists annually took to calling on the Diet for change to the codes, continuing this campaign until rising militarism and wartime restraints prevented such political activism. It was not until the immediate post-WWII period that revision was finally achieved through U.S. Occupation directives.³⁷

In marked contrast to this repeated petition for monogamy and Nemoto's later proposal for a ban on drinking by minors, his bill to prohibit juvenile smoking virtually sailed through the Diet. On the afternoon it was introduced, he was given several minutes to outline the proposal's rationale on the floor of the House of Representatives. His proposal was met with loud applause, and a motion that the bill be forwarded to a lower house committee for study immediately followed. The majority approved, and, possibly due to a recommendation that it be fast-tracked, the nine members appointed to examine it met just eight days later.

During that committee meeting several members asked Nemoto to clarify wording in the draft's four articles. They also questioned how offenders would be caught and punished and why the age limit was set at eighteen. A discussion ensued about raising the age and extending the prohibition to students regardless of how old they were. A representative of the Ministry of Education joined to express government support for the bill, and, while he favored the age change, he argued persuasively against a blanket ban on students. The session concluded with the committee members voting to revise the first article to increase the age to twenty and accept without change the second article about the penalty for minors caught smoking.³⁸ Further deliberations on the final two articles were postponed until the next afternoon.

Among the proposed revisions at that second meeting were an increase in the maximum fine for those who sold tobacco or smoking paraphernalia to minors, tighter wording to identify who was responsible for preventing minors from smoking, and the elimination of an addendum that set a specific date for when the bill would go into effect. In the end, only the second change in this list was approved, along with the removal of lower limits to fines and the replacement of "children" (*yōsha*) with "minors" (*miseinensha*). So amended the bill passed the committee with unanimous support and was taken up by the entire House of Representatives four days later.

On that occasion, the president of the house, Kataoka Kenkichi, essentially rammed the bill through. He tolerated one further query about the age limit and a question-answer exchange

³⁷For an examination of commentary on concubinage and the efforts of the WCTU to legally proscribe it, see: Elizabeth D. Lublin, "Defining Modern Japan and the Modern Woman: The Fight for Monogamy in the Meiji Period," in *Christianity and the Modern Woman in East Asia*, ed. Garrett L. Washington (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 109-33.

³⁸Nemoto said that he initially proposed eighteen as the age for the ban because that was the age set in similar laws in Virginia and Iowa. While Japan's Civil Code, which went into effect in 1898, designated twenty as the "full age" or age of adulthood for Japanese, the decision to raise the ban's age to that higher number was influenced instead by an argument about soldiers. With the age of conscription set at twenty, there was concern that a soldier who had picked up the vice of smoking in his late teens and did not have access to tobacco while in uniform might lose his courage. Nemoto, ed., *Dai-jūyonkai teikoku gikai hōkoku*, 16, 28; Ludwig Lönholm, trans., *The Civil Code of Japan* (Tokyo: Kokubunsha, 1898), 1.

between a Dietman and a representative of the Home Ministry regarding the feasibility of enforcing the ban. Then, over numerous verbal requests by members wanting to pose additional questions and competing shouts to vote to adopt the bill, he took up a motion to forego further discussion. Diet rules required that at least two-thirds of those present vote in favor for a motion to pass. More than that minimum did after which Kataoka asked if any objected to passage of the bill. In the absence of any stated opposition, he declared the bill approved. Thus, on December 19, 1899, less than two weeks after its submission, Nemoto's draft legislation to prohibit smoking by minors passed the lower house.³⁹

Two months to the day later, the House of Peers seconded the lower house's vote. It had taken up the amended draft earlier and sent it to committee for study. That smaller body had in turn decided against a recommendation to adopt. In submitting its report to the full upper house on February 19, the chair gave a list of reasons for that resolution. One was the prevailing opinion that schools and parents were the proper agents for imposing any prohibition on smoking, not the state. Another objection was that the bill focused on only one narcotic. The principal factor that undermined the bill in committee, however, proved to be doubt about its enforceability. Upon the conclusion of the chair's report, numerous members of the House of Peers voiced strong opposition. Several countered the negative assessment of the application with reminders that ministerial representatives had already offered assurances that the appropriate agencies would do all in their power to impose the ban. Another argued against leaving the matter up to schools, pointing out that, even with bans on smoking on school grounds, educational institutions had proven unable to regulate student behavior outside the classroom and thus needed help. He went so far as to liken opponents to the bill to "traitors" and claimed that the "honor and the wisdom of this House" depended on legalizing the prohibition.⁴⁰ As his rhetoric reveals, the debate in the House of Peers was much more heated than that in the House of Representatives. In the hands of the body's president, Prince Konoë Atsumaro, however, it was wrapped up in short order. He quickly moved through the required second and third readings of the bill before asking those in favor of adoption to stand. A majority of them did.⁴¹

The bill became law on March 6, 1900, and went into effect just weeks later on the first of April. It read as follows:

Article I.

The smoking of tobacco by *minors under the age of twenty* is prohibited.

Article II.

The tobacco and smoking materials of offenders against the preceding regulation shall be confiscated by those having executive authority in such matters.

Article III.

Those who exercise paternal authority over *minors under the age of twenty* and fail to prevent their smoking, being cognizant of the fact, shall be liable to a fine of not more than *one yen*. Those who have charge of minors and exercise authority as presentative of parents are included in this regulation.

³⁹Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, 3-18; Nemoto, ed., *Dai-jūyonkai teikoku gikai hōkoku*, 44-45. Neither of these sources provides specific numbers about how many stood in favor of the motion to suspend discussion. Nor do they include such details about the final vote in the House of Peers discussed in the next paragraph.

⁴⁰Quoted from Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, 22.

⁴¹Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, 19-23.

Article IV.

Anyone who sells tobacco to *minors under the age of twenty* shall be liable to a fine of not more than *ten yen*.⁴²

Reception of the bill's introduction and passage was understandably mixed, with tobacco interests responding with criticism and reformers celebrating. What kind of pressure manufacturers and distributors of tobacco products tried to exert during the Diet deliberations remains elusive given available primary sources, although rumors circulated of protests by tobacco shop owners. Mention of several politicians demanding bribes for negative votes in *Nippon tabako zasshi* suggests that payoffs may also have happened.⁴³ Other articles in this periodical, one of two leading tobacco industry monthlies at the time, offer insights into the kinds of arguments and coverage that circulated among that constituency.⁴⁴ One article in the February 1900 issue noted that regulations governing brothels banned visits by those under the age of fifteen. The author deferred any discussion of the comparative harm caused by visiting a sex worker versus smoking, although with a clear inference that the former far outweighed the latter. He focused instead on the higher age limit in the proposed smoking ban and argued that, in enforcing the ban, the police would be treating those between fifteen and nineteen like elementary school children.⁴⁵ The March edition used the opening editorial to raise objections to each clause. Focusing on perceived flaws, it stressed that determining a person's age by sight alone was impossible, as was knowing if a person carrying a pack of cigarettes intended to smoke them himself or give them to someone else.

⁴²Quoted from Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, 16-17, with the italics in the original text. Note: Nemoto's English translation of Article IV differs from the original Japanese, which made liable for the steeper fine not only those who sold tobacco but also those who sold tobacco paraphernalia. *Nippon tabako zasshi* 4, no. 11 [Japan tobacco journal] (April 15, 1900): 12; Nemoto, *Kyōiku to kinshu*, 14. In April 2022, revisions to the Civil Code went into effect lowering the age of adulthood to eighteen. That change was prompted by the similar dropping of the voting age in 2016. Eighteen and nineteen-year-olds are also now permitted to rent an apartment, take out a credit card, and get a loan for a car without parental approval. Twenty, however, remains the legal age to smoke, drink, and gamble. According to a government-issued booklet explaining the revisions, the decision not to lower the age for these three activities stemmed from a desire to protect the health of youth and prevent them from "immoral acts" (*hikō bōshi*). Hōmushō, "Minpō kaisei: Seinen nenrei no hikisage: Wakamono ga ikiiki to katsuyaku suru shakai e" [Revision of the Civil Code: The lowering of the age of adulthood: Towards a society in which young people are actively participating], n.p., n.d., <https://www.moj.go.jp/content/001300586.pdf>.

⁴³"Yōsha kitsuen kinshi hōan" [The bill to ban smoking by children], *Fujin shimpō* 34 (February 25, 1900): 4; *Nippon tabako zasshi* 4, no. 10 (March 12, 1900): 1.

⁴⁴*Nippon tabako zasshi* was in circulation from October 1896 through April 1905, with the shuttering of its presses due to the government's extension of a monopoly on leaf tobacco to include all tobacco-related business and products. The Diet Library has most issues in its collection, but those missing include the ones published in December 1899 and January 1900, the very months during which politicians debated and voted on the bill.

⁴⁵"Kin'en hōan to shimbunshi" [The bill to ban smoking and a newspaper], *Nippon tabako zasshi* 4, no. 9 (February 20, 1900): 10. An article published two months later similarly addressed an age discrepancy although this time between minors banned from smoking and women eligible to receive a license for sex work. The latter was sixteen, and the author argued that it should be raised to twenty, also for the sake of the young women's health. "Kitsuen to shōgi no nenrei" [The ages for smoking and prostitutes], *Nippon tabako zasshi* 4, no. 11 (April 15, 1900): 15. As this discussion points out, the ages at which activities were permitted varied. During the Tokugawa period, fifteen was typically seen as the age of adulthood, and that may simply have carried over into the Meiji period with respect to visitors to brothels. I have yet to locate an explanation for why licensed sex workers had to be sixteen, an age that was included in regulations for brothels in Tokyo in 1889. J.E. de Becker, *The Nightless City or the History of the Yoshiwara Yūkwanu*, with a foreword by Donald Ritchie (1899; reprint, New York: ICG Muse, 2000), 365.

Its author concluded that the policy would undoubtedly cause trouble to the public, and parents, guardians, and sellers of tobacco and related paraphernalia would be unfairly fined.⁴⁶

In April, the month the ban went into effect, *Nippon tabako zasshi* allocated the most space to date to the subject with a special section titled “Views on the prohibition of smoking.” Included were the text of the law and opinions expressed in such dailies as *Yorozu chōhō* [Complete morning report] and from leading manufacturers. Murai Brothers’ response was rather muted in that it simply acknowledged that the ban would have a negative economic impact on those in the industry. Its management also asked why tobacco should be singled out if the goal of the Diet was really to raise temperate youth. Taking a more combative stance, Iwaya Shōkai postulated that enforcement of the ban would lead youth to rebel against it and in time develop a habit far worse than smoking, namely a natural inclination to hold the law in contempt. In turn, Kimura Shōten called the ban a “titular” piece of legislation in that it would do nothing to prevent minors from puffing away in secret.⁴⁷

Reformers and especially Christian reformers, however, joyously celebrated news of the bill’s passage. The WCTU included a feature on the bill on the second page of the April edition of its monthly *Fujin shimpō* [Women’s herald] in which the author speculated that the ban’s impact would be big and projected a promising future for social reform work.⁴⁸ Andō Tarō, then president of the Nihon Kinshu Dōmeikai, attributed Nemoto’s success in shepherding the bill through the Diet to the “indirect influence of Christianity over all classes of society,” while Quaker missionary Joseph Cosand labeled the ban going into effect as a “victory for Christianity.” For his part, Nemoto humbly thanked his Vermont benefactor Billings, saying, “His loving spirit is always working in me.”⁴⁹

If these assessments were accurate, then Christians theoretically should have also won rapid revision of the civil and criminal codes to legally privilege monogamy and speedy adoption of Nemoto’s bill to prohibit drinking by minors. Several possible reasons come to mind as to why they did not. The call for revision of the civil and criminal codes originated outside of the Diet. As mentioned earlier, the WCTU submitted a petition to have the House of Representatives take up discussion of revision. This appeal received extensive press coverage, including in *Jogaku zasshi* [Women’s education], a periodical with a circulation of 13,000 an issue, and such regional newspapers as Osaka’s *Shinonome shimbun* [Newspaper of the dawn]. It also included among the signatures a veritable who’s who list of prominent Christians. However, those on the lower house committee charged with deciding whether to put a proposal before the House of Representatives

⁴⁶“Kin’en hōan to tsūka” [The bill to ban smoking and its passage], *Nippon tabako zasshi* 4, no. 10 (March 12, 1900): 1-2.

⁴⁷“Kitsuen kinshi kan” [Views on the prohibition of smoking], *Nippon tabako zasshi* 4, no. 11 (April 15, 1900): 12-15. Suzuki Fujio gained access to the other industry periodical, *Tabako zasshi* [Tobacco journal], and its pages mirrored those of *Nippon tabako zasshi* in doubting the enforceability of the ban, with one writer criticizing the Diet for passing legislation that would do nothing but inconvenience the people. Suzuki, “Meiji sanjūsannen no miseinsha kitsuen kinshihō to tabako gyōkai,” [The 1900 law to ban smoking by minors and the tobacco industry], *Shakai bunka shigaku* 50 (March 2008): 98-100.

⁴⁸“Kitsuen kinshihō no eikyō” [The impact of the ban on smoking], *Fujin shimpō* 36 (April 25, 1900): 2.

⁴⁹The first quotation comes from Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, i, and the second and third from ii. For more on Andō and Cosand, see: Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Iinkai, ed., 75-76, 520-21.

barely looked at it.⁵⁰ That dismissal likely related to the fact that the appeal came from a group of women looking to dictate “proper” conduct for men, including the Dietmen themselves. It occurred shortly after women had been excluded from the electorate, barred from attendance at political meetings, and prohibited from membership in political organizations. These restrictions reflected the opinion that women had no place in politics, and that line of thinking undoubtedly contributed to the committee’s rejection of the appeal.⁵¹ As for the bill to ban drinking by minors, Nemoto submitted it with six co-presenters and seventy-eight sponsors, in total twenty-three more backers than the anti-smoking proposal, and with a guaranteed twenty-eight percent of the lower house represented. A transcript of the early deliberations reveals that opponents again questioned the bill’s enforceability. They also stressed that drinking was essential to interpersonal relationships and a key component of celebrations, including weddings. Both these concerns suggest that, unlike smoking, drinking was viewed as integral to Japanese life and that its importance far outweighed any negative impact it might have on minors.⁵² Why, then, did the smoking ban sail through the Diet, and what impact did it have?

Evaluating Reasons for the Bill’s Passage

First and most obviously, many members of the Diet were predisposed in favor of the bill. Rules stipulated that proposed legislation had to have a minimum of thirty sponsors to be introduced. Four others joined Nemoto in presenting the bill, and Nemoto listed fifty-seven more sponsors.⁵³ That support was critical, especially since Nemoto had only been elected in 1898 and was thus a very junior member of the House of Representatives. More important than the number of supporters, however, was the fact that the president of the lower house, Kataoka, favored a prohibition. His forceful ushering of the bill through the body makes this clear. An experienced and highly esteemed politician, Kataoka had been active in the movement for freedom and people’s rights and had collaborated in submitting numerous petitions to the government calling for the establishment of a national legislature. He joined the Kōchi Prefectural Assembly in 1879 and served as its first president. He subsequently gained membership in the House of Representatives following its inaugural general election and, from there, steadily ascended in rank, becoming first vice president in 1894 and then president in 1898. He was also a devout Christian who had been baptized in 1885. His religious career rivaled his political one with the various positions he held. These included church elder, president of the evangelistic board of the Nihon Kirisuto Kyōkai (United Church of Christ in Japan), chairman of the Tokyo Kirisutokyō Seinenkai (Young Men’s Christian Association/YMCA), and, from 1902, president of Dōshisha, one of the earliest institutions of higher education established by a Japanese Christian.⁵⁴ Moreover, he had no inhibitions about proselytizing his beliefs and values to his Diet colleagues. Indeed, he reportedly

⁵⁰Lublin, “The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Monogamy, and Defining ‘Modern’ for Women and Japan,” 118-21.

⁵¹Sharon H. Nolte and Sally Ann Hastings, “The Meiji State’s Policy Toward Women, 1890-1910,” in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 154-55.

⁵²Nemoto Shō, ed., *Dai-jūgokai teikoku gikai hōkoku* [Report of the 15th session of the National Diet] (Tokyo: Nemoto Shō, 1901), 36-39, 51-53.

⁵³*Japan Evangelist* 7, no. 1 (January 1900): 18. For a complete listing of the sixty-one other legislators who had assured Nemoto of their support before the bill’s introduction, see: Nemoto, ed., *Dai-jūyonkai teikoku gikai hōkoku*, 8-9.

⁵⁴Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Iinkai, ed., 295.

hosted a group once a week to “read and expound to them the word of the ever-living God.”⁵⁵ Whether he swayed or cowered Diet members to support Nemoto’s bill, he helped generate the votes needed for approval by the House of Representatives.

However, such evidence of predisposition and influence within the House of Representatives does not explain why members of the House of Peers, known for being staid and more conservative, passed the bill as well.⁵⁶ One possible reason is that the government had already moved to restrict tobacco consumption among youth. More specifically, the Ministry of Education had in 1894 issued instructions that students in elementary schools were strictly forbidden from smoking and possessing any smoking paraphernalia. This dictate had little effect, but the government had set a precedent with this move to regulate smoking among youth. And, that example may have made imposing a legislative ban if not preferable at least tolerable in the minds of Diet members in both houses.⁵⁷ A second possible reason relates to Konoe Atsumaro, president of the House of Peers. Concurrently president of Gakushūin, he oversaw enforcement of an internal 1893 directive prohibiting tobacco use by the children of the nobility who attended this school, and he may very well have come to see a connection between smoking and poor academic progress, which may have shaped his handling of the bill in the upper house.⁵⁸

Increasing nationalistic sentiment is the most compelling explanation for the bill’s swift passage through the Diet and enactment into law. Nemoto certainly used this way of thinking to his advantage with his opening remarks about the reasons behind the bill’s introduction. For example, he claimed that continued smoking by youth could “bring our country down to the miserable condition of countries like China and India.”⁵⁹ Japan had just four years prior humbled China during the first Sino-Japanese War, and that demonstration of military and technological advantage, combined with the various war spoils Japan acquired through the Treaty of Shimonoseki, had infused the Japanese with a sense of superiority. The suggestion that Japan might return to such a state of backwardness was certainly alarmist. Still, it tapped into a lingering feeling of inferiority vis-à-vis the Western world by implying that the country had neither advanced as far as most thought nor stabilized its new position. Nemoto likewise took advantage of the propensity of elite Japanese to compare their country to Western nations by highlighting which “civilized” countries had already adopted bans on smoking by minors. As he pointed out, German youth under the age of sixteen were prohibited from using tobacco, and various state legislatures in the United States had issued ordinances for those seventeen and younger. The

⁵⁵Arthur Judson Brown, “The Unprecedented Opportunity in the Far East,” in *Students and the Modern Missionary Crusade: Addresses Delivered before the Fifth International Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, Nashville, Tennessee, February 28-March 4, 1906* (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1906), 212.

⁵⁶Revealing of the different attitudes between the two houses is the fact that, while the House of Representatives began passing Nemoto’s bill to prohibit drinking by minors in 1908, the House of Peers did not vote in favor until 1922. Sumiko Otsubo, “The Female Body and Eugenic Thought in Meiji Japan,” in *Building a Modern Japan: Science, Technology, and Medicine in the Meiji Era and Beyond*, ed. Morris Low (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 74.

⁵⁷Suzuki, “Meiji sanjūsannen no miseinensha kitsuen kinshihō to tabako gyōkai,” 96; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., 5.

⁵⁸<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gakushūin>; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., 3-4. The latter page includes a copy of the school’s ordinance. Political party affiliation in the House of Representatives and the party positions on the bill could have been another influence, although sources make that statement purely speculative.

⁵⁹Quoted from Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, 3.

between-the-lines inference was that Japan could join the ranks of these imperial powers by following suit. Nemoto also repeatedly made the argument that smoking weakened the nation in terms of its military capabilities. To validate this point, he referred to a report that nine out of every ten young men who had volunteered to fight in the 1898 Spanish-American War and been rejected for medical reasons were almost lifelong smokers. He did not make a direct link between their smoking and ineligibility to serve, but the implication was clear. He also noted that the German ban was specifically intended to maintain a population fit to fight and that West Point and Annapolis, the premier training grounds for soldiers in the United States, forbade smoking by cadets.⁶⁰

With his stress on the negative consequences of smoking for the nation, Nemoto placed himself squarely within the discursive practice of the larger moral and social reform movement. Although Christians made up a tiny percentage of the population at the time, they played an outsized role in shaping the specific objectives and tactics of reformers who aimed at improving public morals (*fūzoku*). As was true with Nemoto, contact with missionaries had cultivated in them a deep sense of social responsibility and a conviction that serving Japan and their fellow Japanese represented the best way to express their faith. That service led some to work in education, some in medicine, others in journalism, and still others in government. As I have argued elsewhere, they regularly couched their calls for reform in the language of national advancement and health because they knew that, unlike religious rhetoric, such wording would resonate with the general public. They also relied heavily on statistics to lend the weight of scientific proof to their aims.⁶¹ Nemoto also did this with his references to first the physician's report from the Spanish-American War and then to another from Yale University, from which he cited numbers and percentages that compared the height, chest size, and lung capacity of student smokers and non-smokers.⁶² This second technique took advantage of the growing interest in the social sciences and the almost unqualified faith Japanese elites had in the value of statistics.⁶³ Nemoto was clearly being deliberate and tactical in using these strategies to persuade Diet colleagues to support his bill. He wanted, after all, to see the ban on smoking by minors become the law of the land. This is not to imply that he did not share the same sentiments as his legislative colleagues; indeed, he was very

⁶⁰Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, 3-4; Lublin, *Reforming Japan*, 135. In the 1880s, organized opposition to tobacco had emerged in the United States. This decade saw a massive increase in smoking as the creation of the Bonsack machine allowed for the mass production of cigarettes, and both its use and a lowering of the federal tax on cigarettes greatly reduced their price. The WCTU among others focused its efforts on youth, seeing smoking as a gateway to other bad habits like drinking, gambling, truancy, and even criminal activity. Having become acquainted with the WCTU while studying in the United States, Nemoto was influenced by its efforts and arguments and found supporters of the bill among members of the WCTU in Japan. For more on angst about juvenile smoking in the United States around the turn of the century, see: John C. Burnham, *Bad Habits: Drinking, Smoking, Taking Drugs, Gambling, Sexual Misbehavior, and Swearing in American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 89-91; Gregory Wood, *Clearing the Air: The Rise and Fall of Smoking in the Workplace* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 12-18.

⁶¹Lublin, *Reforming Japan*.

⁶²Nemoto, *The anti-smoking bill*, 3. Nemoto did not, however, reference two works in Japanese that addressed the dangers of tobacco. The first, published in 1885 and based on research studies conducted overseas, asserted that smoking caused heart disease and stomach trouble and damaged the throat. The second, which appeared in 1897, decried the nicotine in tobacco as poisonous and especially harmful to elementary-aged youngsters. That Nemoto did not rely on these sources or elaborate on the physiological impact of smoking may well speak to their limited release and, more importantly, limited public awareness of that impact. Suzuki, "Meiji sanjūsannen no miseinsha kitsuen kinshihō to tabako gyōkai," 100.

⁶³For more on this topic, see: David R. Ambaras, "Social Knowledge, Cultural Capital, and the New Middle Class in Modern Japan, 1895-1912," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 24, no. 1 (1998): 1-33.

much a nationalist himself. Nevertheless, he was cognizant of what approach would likely be most successful, and the swift passage of his bill through both houses of the Diet shows that he was right.

The Bill's Impact in the Early 20th Century

The bill's enforceability was challenged as soon as it became law, and early statistics pleased reformers. Reports indicated that within Tokyo alone police came across 158 violators just in the first few weeks the ban was in effect and responded by confiscating the tobacco and smoking paraphernalia of 64 and issuing reprimands to the remainder. Moreover, the crackdown appeared to gain steam between 1901 and 1902 with a 38% increase in the number caught, for a total of 22,362 violators in 1902.⁶⁴ Not even foreigners were exempt from the law. Case in point, in 1900 a seventeen-year-old ship hand on a British vessel was briefly arrested in Tokyo and forced to hand over his tobacco and carrying case before being released.⁶⁵ Citing reports from the Statistics Bureau of the Home Department, Nemoto noted in a 1930 publication that, between 1900 and 1929, a total of 1,336,832 offenders had been taken into custody, making the annual average over 44,000.⁶⁶ While that average, approximately double the number from 1902, could indicate that the police had grown much more diligent in carrying out their duties, it is much more likely that smoking, particularly smoking in public places, had become commonplace among minors. The plethora of brands catering to a variety of tastes and pocketbooks meant that even a shop hand, delivery boy, or middle school student could indulge on occasion.⁶⁷

It is difficult to determine how prevalent smoking among minors actually was in 1900 and how Nemoto's bill affected that percentage in the following years and decades. The same is true of quantifying the ban's impact on the tobacco industry. A brief article in the April 1900 issue of *Nippon tabako zasshi* noted a slight drop in sales at small stores, while a piece in *Fujin shimpō* that same month identified a tobacco shop in Sendai that had recently announced its closing with a sticker on the front saying that the cause was the ban.⁶⁸ The papers of Edward J. Parrish confirm that there was at least a short-term impact. Parrish, first vice-president of Murai Brothers and Co.,

⁶⁴Based on the number for 1900, either police devoted most of their time to sniffing out offenders in 1902 or this figure represents a nationwide total.

⁶⁵Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., 12.

⁶⁶In *Kyōiku to kinshu*, Nemoto provided this total number in Japanese and a figure 200,000 lower in the English appendix. Even using the smaller number, the annual average still exceeded 37,000. The text in neither language specifies how many of those arrested were minors compared to parents, guardians, or sellers of tobacco and smoking paraphernalia and were linked to cigarettes versus cut tobacco and pipes. Nemoto, *Kyōiku to kinshu*, 14, appendix 4.

⁶⁷According to Edward J. Parrish, most cigarette smokers in Japan were "poor people" and represented a prime market for makers of cheap brands produced with Japanese leaf. Edward James Parrish, letter to W.R. Harris, August 25, 1900, p. 4, Edward James Parrish papers, L:5686, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University. One such major manufacturer that catered to that market was Iwaya Shōkai. An undated [likely 1890s] signboard for Iwaya listed eighteen brands, and the cheapest included *Rikugun Tengu* [Army goblin] for 1 *sen* [1/100th of a yen] for a pack of ten and *Aka Tengu* [Red goblin] for five *sen* for a pack of fifty. Tabako to Shio no Hakubutsukan, ed., *Meiji min'eiki no tabako dezain* [Tobacco designs during the Meiji-era period of private industry] (Tokyo: Tabako to Shio no Hakubutsukan, 2004), 231. Advertisements published in *Nippon tabako zasshi* between 1900 and 1902 gave prices ranging from four *sen* for thirty Takai and Co. *Garden* cigarettes to ten *sen* for ten *Straight Cut*, made by the Osaka Tobacco Co. from "extra special" "finest" "golden leaf." *Nippon tabako zasshi* 5, no. 4 (January 7, 1901): 55; vol. 5, no. 5 (February 5, 1901): 23.

⁶⁸"Kin'enhō jisshi no eikyō" [The impact of the enactment of the law to ban smoking], *Nippon tabako zasshi* 4, no. 11 (April 15, 1900): 20; "Honjitsu yori heiten" [Closed from today], *Fujin shimpō* 36 (April 25, 1900): 7.

Ltd. following its creation in 1899 as a joint venture between Murai Brothers and the American Tobacco Co. [ATC], regularly sent business updates to ATC headquarters. In a letter from late summer 1900, he included reports on the Osaka Tobacco Co. and the Tonoï Tobacco Co., another Osaka-based manufacturer, a distributor of Murai products, and a business that Murai was looking to purchase. According to the letter, overall sales in the western part of Japan had been “dull.” The Osaka Tobacco Co. had suffered significant losses in the previous year. While a poor decision about the timing of leaf purchases, overspending on advertising, and damage to scores of cigarettes because of humidity played a role, the “Prohibition Law for young men under age” contributed to these losses. Tonoï was similarly in dire straits. The company had gone several months without paying at least six creditors, and its founder had mortgaged property, including a factory, in an effort to stay afloat. Parrish attributed Tonoï’s drop in sales to “the recent depressed state of business, the trouble in China, and the Minor’s Prohibitive Law.”⁶⁹

In the longer term, Nemoto’s bill appears to have had little effect on the tobacco industry. One needs only to look at the presence of this commodity at the 1903 Fifth National Industrial Exposition in Osaka to see how prominent a place it occupied in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy and how influential it was with respect to technological developments, consumption habits, and the urban landscape. Take for example the Machinery Building. Those who strolled through it could examine machines used in the processing of leaf and the rolling of cigarettes, including one that, employing the newest in technology, enabled a single factory worker to make over fifty thousand cigarettes in a single day.⁷⁰ Home to most tobacco-related exhibits, the Agriculture Building, located to the right of the exposition’s main gate, displayed long rows of leaf, shredded tobacco, cigarettes, and cigars from producers and manufacturers big and small from around the country and Taiwan. Growers from Hyogo Prefecture alone showcased over one hundred kinds of leaf.⁷¹ Outside of the designated display buildings, the presence of tobacco was impossible to miss.⁷² Murai Brothers set up a smoking stand near the Formosan Building, and salesgirls stationed there wearing aprons decorated with its *Old Gold* labels encouraged passersby to buy a pack. Iwaya Shōkai operated a rest house (*kyūsokujo*) in the fairground’s eastern section amidst rows of drinking and eating stalls where Japanese and foreign visitors could relax and sample its brands for free. Cigarettes were available for sale as well. Far from being a nondescript set-up, this resting place sat under a multistory, five or six-sided tower with big characters spelling out “Iwaya Shōkai kyūsokujo” decorating each of its sides. The names of Iwaya brands including *Hinode* (Sunrise), *Fuji*, and *Onshi Kinen* (Imperial Commemoration) appeared on the turret and on flags attached to the main body of the tower. Even more of an attraction was the Murai Brothers’ tower. Situated right next to the expo’s main entrance and close to a fountain, this 125-foot structure not only was silhouetted with 15,000 lights but also had a large blue globe featuring white

⁶⁹Parrish, letter to W.R. Harris, August 25, 1900, appended reports on the Osaka Tobacco Kaisha, quoted from 2, and the Tonoï Tobacco Merchant, quoted from the single page.

⁷⁰*Nippon tabako zasshi* 7, no. 8 (May 5, 1903): 36.

⁷¹For details on the exposition ground’s layout and lengthy descriptions of tobacco-related displays, organized by prefecture, see: *Nippon tabako zasshi* 7, no. 7 (April 4, 1903): 9-10; no. 8 (May 5, 1903): 6-11; no. 9 (June 5, 1903): 4-8; no. 10 (July 7, 1903): 4-7.

⁷²Reformers bemoaned just how ubiquitous tobacco as well as alcohol were at the expo. For example, the World WCTU’s Kara Smart lamented that their presence did nothing to help “raise dignity and cultivate character,” while the Salvation Army’s Henry Bullard decried what he saw as evidence that these “evils” were gaining ground in Japan. Kara Smart, “Hakurankai ni okeru kyōfū jigyo” [Temperance work at the exposition], *Fujin shimpō* no. 73 (May 25, 1903): 12; *Japan Evangelist* 10, no. 3 (March 1903): 86-87.

cigarettes on top and an observation deck from which visitors could enjoy breathtaking views of the fairgrounds and nearby neighborhoods day and night.⁷³

The addictive nature of nicotine, the ease of lighting a cigarette, relatively low prices, increasingly skillful advertising gimmicks, and expanding markets for Japanese tobacco products overseas fueled demand, and manufacturers responded with investments in cutting-edge technology and factories, the creation of new brands, and expanded production. Yet, the tobacco industry was not alone in encouraging growth in this sector. So was the state. Under its auspices, the Osaka exposition recognized a total of 574 exhibitors of tobacco products, including two with silver medals, three with blue ribbons or as first class, thirteen as second class, fifty-six as third class, and 500 as honorable mention. In addition, two cigarette-making machines ranked as second class.⁷⁴

The Meiji state's interest in the tobacco industry and its development had evolved over the previous three decades and was largely financial. As mentioned previously, the government had begun to tax tobacco wholesalers, retailers, and sales in 1876 to acquire funds for state-building projects. The initial Tobacco Regulations Tax Law was subsequently revised in 1883 and then again in 1888 to eliminate several loopholes and to generate more revenue. The changes accomplished both, with taxes collected from tobacco reaching almost three million yen in 1896, an increase of nearly fifty percent since 1883. Those millions represented only about two percent of the state's revenue. Eager to reap more from the tobacco industry, in dire need of funds to recoup expenses from the Sino-Japanese War, and determined to halt the outflow of currency for purchases of imported leaf, the government instituted a monopoly on all leaf sales in 1898. Between 1899 and 1903, due to the large difference between what the Monopoly Bureau purchased and sold leaf for, profits from leaf sales doubled to almost fifteen million yen. In total, tobacco-related revenue for fiscal 1903 accounted for 5.7 percent of the state's income. In 1904, anticipated war costs associated with impending hostilities with Russia influenced the state's extension of its monopoly to include all tobacco-related business. While it paid the steep price of 24.5 million yen to compensate manufacturers for their land, machines, inventories, and patents, the tobacco industry generated over eight percent of the general account in 1904, and the monopoly garnered a profit of 33.6 million yen in fiscal 1905. As of fiscal 1926, that windfall had reached 165.95 million yen.⁷⁵ As these numbers highlight, during the second half of the Meiji period, the state came to see tobacco as a crucial source of revenue. This was true not just domestically; control of

⁷³Box 3 of the Parrish papers includes looseleaf photographs of Murai Brothers' display in the Agriculture Building and of the salesgirls in front of the stand. For published photos and illustrations of the Iwaya and Murai towers, see: *Nippon tabako zasshi* 7, no. 8 (May 5, 1903): 5; Tabako to Shio no Hakubutsukan, ed., *Kōkoku no oyadama, aka tengu sanjō: Meiji no tabako ō, Iwaya Matsuhei* [Here comes the red long-nosed goblin! The tobacco tycoon Matsuhei Iwaya and his publicity campaign in Meiji Japan], catalog for a special exhibit from January 28 to March 12, 2006 (Tokyo: Tabako to Shio no Hakubutsukan, 2006), 63-64; Tabako to Shio no Hakubutsukan, ed., *Murai Kichibe: Meiji no tabako ō* [Murai Kichibe: A tobacco baron in Meiji Japan] (Tokyo: Tabako to Shio no Hakubutsukan, 2020), 56-58.

⁷⁴*Nippon tabako zasshi* 7, no. 10 (July 7, 1903): 23-28; no. 11 (August 5, 1903): 11.

⁷⁵Miwa and Suzuki, 54-69, 112.

this commodity and its cultivation, manufacturing, and sale also became an important part of colonial policy and Japanese efforts to expand the country's influence around Asia.⁷⁶

Distribution of cigarettes to servicemen on the front lines of that expansion was a key component of military policy and one that was both a catalyst to smoking and a reaction to how widespread the habit was. It stemmed from the belief that smoking could enhance a fighting force's readiness by easing battle weariness and angst as well as from the need to enhance the appeal of military service. Service and more specifically the system of conscription that was first instituted in 1873 were highly unpopular for much of the Meiji period. In 1873 and 1874 alone, hundreds of thousands protested, often violently, and scores more took advantage of exemptions to avoid being called up, including 89.3 percent of men of eligible age in 1879. Through a series of revisions, the government removed reasons for exclusion, while failing to compensate for the enormous economic burden that service placed on most conscripts and their families.⁷⁷ As tensions with China escalated in the early 1890s, "gloom and despondency increased [among troops]; one manifestation of this was the rising incidence of soldiers on leave days found drunk and disorderly in public."⁷⁸ Japan's resounding victory in the Sino-Japanese War and the spoils that Japan received in the concluding Treaty of Shimonoseki contributed to the conflict's popularity on the home front.⁷⁹ Yet, resistance to military service continued to plague the army and navy. Each year in the 1890s close to 6000 men twenty and over left their homes to avoid conscription, and in 1897 alone eight times that number were on the lam from the military. As Simon Partner has noted, such "outright evasion" tapered off in the early 1900s, although scams to fail the mandatory physical were not uncommon. They included a self-inflicted injury to an index finger so that the individual could not shoot a gun, "rub[bing] tobacco juice in ... eyes to imitate trachoma or [drinking] soy sauce to imitate a weak heart."⁸⁰

While cigarettes were certainly not a panacea for the popularity woes of the military, they served as a tool to show support for service and as a provision intended to mitigate conscript unhappiness, fatigue, and anxiety. During the Sino-Japanese War, the Imperial Household Department commissioned Iwaya Shōkai to make a special cigarette called *Goshi* (Imperial Gift) for distribution among deployed soldiers.⁸¹ Given that the war was waged in the emperor's name, designating this brand as a token of his appreciation was certainly strategic. That the military

⁷⁶For an in-depth examination of tobacco and its importance to the Japanese state and colonial policy with respect to Korea, see: Michael Kim, "Smoking for Empire: The Production and Consumption of Tobacco in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 29, no. 2 (December 2016): 305-26.

⁷⁷Hiroko Rokuhara, "Local Officials and the Meiji Conscription Campaign," *Monumenta Nipponica* 60, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 84-88, 105.

⁷⁸Stewart Lone, *Japan's First Modern War: Army and Society in the Conflict with China, 1894-1895* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 18.

⁷⁹Per the treaty, Japan gained control of Taiwan and the Pescadore Islands and an indemnity totaling 360 million yen, plus China's declaration that it no longer possessed any claims to Korea. As Andrew Gordon has pointed out, that monetary spoil of the war exceeded fourfold Japan's national budget. Although much of that money was funneled into military-related industries, it created jobs, and those, combined with pride in Japan's victory, contributed to positive public feelings. Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 121.

⁸⁰Simon Partner, "Peasants into Citizens?: The Meiji Village in the Russo-Japanese War," *Monumenta Nipponica* 62, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 202.

⁸¹I am uncertain about the correct transliteration of the name of this brand; it could also be *Gyoshi*. Tabako to Shio no Hakubutsukan, ed., *Kōkoku no oyadama, aka tengu sanjō*, 29, 31.

included cigarettes and cut tobacco in provisions, though, speaks even more pointedly to the importance of tobacco in the eyes of the state. During the Russo-Japanese War, regulations called for each soldier to receive 200 cigarettes a month, the equivalent of seven per day. That daily ration was in addition to 1.26 liters of alcohol, four grams of tea, six grams each of sugar and salt, nineteen grams of soy sauce extract, another nineteen grams of *umeboshi* (pickled plums), fifty-six grams of canned meat or dried fish, 113 grams of dried vegetables, and 10.8 liters of rice. During the war, the army purchased over 1.7 billion cigarettes. While only forty-two percent were distributed and soldiers received the equivalent of only 2.8 per day, the total number of cigarettes the army supplied exceeded 691 million.⁸² Conscription laws at the time allowed men as young as seventeen to be called up for national emergencies.⁸³ Given the nature of life on the front during the Russo-Japanese War and the number of troops deployed, it is highly likely that minors received their portion of those millions of cigarettes as well.⁸⁴ Thus, in the early 1900s, not only did the Japanese government play a seminal role in encouraging the consumption of tobacco and stimulating growth in the industry, but the military also undoubtedly violated the law in the name of national defense and as part of the imperialist project.

Conclusion

In the early 1900s, reformers faced an uphill battle. They had to deal with a thriving tobacco culture and a Japanese state squarely behind the businesses of leaf cultivation and cigarette and cigar manufacturing, as well as a national legislature that, except for Nemoto's bill to ban smoking by minors, had shown itself supportive of tobacco and the government's desire to exploit this commodity for revenue purposes. The two most important examples of that support are the monopoly bills. Introduced to the House of Representatives in early 1896, the Leaf Tobacco Monopoly Law proposal represented one of the Diet's first encounters with legislation related to the tobacco industry. It failed to make its way out of committee, by one vote, in the face of serious concerns about the impact on growers and disbelief that the monopoly would generate as much revenue as projected. Financial questions were similarly at the forefront of Diet deliberations eight years later when the government submitted a bill for a total monopoly on all tobacco-related production and sales. The focus then was on compensation for private businesses and subsidies to manufacturers to take up other work. Despite pushback, the leaf monopoly bill was approved by the Diet within two months of its submission and the monopoly bill within one. As this Diet support of government initiatives suggests, the legislature typically followed the government's lead concerning the tobacco industry. Though it did win revisions to the initial proposals, those changes were relatively minor and involved financial details. Considering this background, the Diet's passage of Nemoto's bill should not be seen as a serious effort by the assembly to assert its authority over the government with respect to tobacco. Rather, it was an anomaly.⁸⁵

⁸²Hieda Chūji, "Nichi-Ro sensō ni okeru tabako" [Tobacco during the Russo-Japanese War], *Tabako-shi kenkyū* 79 (March 2002): 27-30.

⁸³Rokuhara, 84.

⁸⁴*Nichi-Ro sensō tōkeishū* [Collection of statistics from the Russo-Japanese War] may include specific numbers of those deployed who were minors. I was unable to check this source prior to publication of this article. Rikugunshō, ed., *Nichi-Ro sensō tōkeishū*, 15 volumes (Tokyo: Tōyō shorin, 1994).

⁸⁵Miwa and Suzuki, 59-60, 78-80. Since the convening of the first Diet session in late 1890, the relationship between those elected and appointed to the legislature and the government, inclusive of the oligarchs, cabinets, and the bureaucracy, had been contentious. The former had repeatedly refused to vote proposals into law and to approve government requests for increases in taxes and government spending and on numerous occasions had seen the

Reformers nonetheless took inspiration from the fact that Nemoto had succeeded in having the Diet, Japan's highest legislative body, adopt a ban on smoking by minors after just two months of deliberation. As a result, the remainder of the Meiji period saw a significant increase in the activities they undertook to curtail the practice of smoking. Many of these were specifically directed at youth and included recitation and essay medal contests held by the WCTU. In these, students either recited provided texts or presented original writings in which they espoused abstinence from tobacco or alcohol. While one objective was to ensure adherence to such behavior by the contestants, another was to use children's words to influence the actions of adults in the audience.⁸⁶ Reformers also petitioned the railroad bureau and presidents of railroad companies to designate specific cars as smoke-free, published and distributed tracts and posters decrying the "evils" of tobacco, lectured at schools, appealed to the Diet for a prohibition on smoking in public places, and replaced cigarettes with *umeboshi* in care packages sent to soldiers and sailors fighting in the Russo-Japanese War.

Nemoto's bill was not the only catalyst for this increase in activism. The even greater popularity of cigarettes during the last decade of the Meiji period also played a role. Nemoto did, however, attract attention to the issue and not just among reformers. Major newspapers such as the *Yomiuri shimbun* reported on the bill's passage through the Diet and made the reading public aware of the reasons for its introduction.⁸⁷ With the bill's adoption, Nemoto also tried to make the government an agent in promoting reform. Put another way, he sought to appropriate the authority of the Diet to advance his agenda. While that path was one that reformers continued to pursue, they could not escape the fact that passage of a law did not necessarily mean success. As was the case with the ban on smoking, the state had its own agenda, one that was in large measure at odds with that of Nemoto and one that backed tobacco.

government retaliate by dissolving the Diet. The legislature's support for the two monopoly bills stands out in relation and highlights just how basic financial considerations were to Diet decision-making. Gordon, 129-131. For a detailed look at the relationship between the Diet and the government between the end of the Sino-Japanese War and the passage of the smoking bill, see: Walter Wallace McLaren, *A Political History of Japan During the Meiji Era, 1867-1912* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), 246-73.

⁸⁶For more on these contests, see: Lublin, *Reforming Japan*, 135-38.

⁸⁷*Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai*, ed., 8.