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dhism), and the diffusion of the Pure Land Sect of Buddhism 淨土宗 which taught men how to cope with these pessimistic teachings. Due to the diffusion of the Pure Land Sect many halls which were dedicated to Amida were built throughout the country.

The Tōhoku district (the north-eastern section of Japan) was by no means an exception.

Even now, some Buddhist Halls and Images enshrined in them built in that period remain in the Tōhoku district. They are: the Konjiki-dō of Chūson-ji 中尊寺金色堂 the Amida Hall in Shiramizu 白水, the Amida Hall of Kozō-ji 高藏寺, and the Yakushi (Bheṣajaguru) Hall in Kanagō 金郷. These Halls and Images in the Tōhoku district have a common character distinct in style from those Buddhist Halls and Images in other districts of this country.

The writer of this article would call the district where the Buddhist Halls and Images of the Tōhoku style are distributed the "Hiraizumi Culture Range" and studies the artistic style common in the Amida Halls and Images remaining in the Tōhoku district.

### Some Comments on the Description of Wells in the Hitachi-no-Kuni-Fudoki

Etsuo IGUCHI

Various descriptions of wells 井泉 are seen in the Hitachi-no-Kuni-Fudoki 常陸風土記 or the Topography of the Province of Hitachi compiled in 713. These wells were introduced as fountains in the topography in question. Hitherto those wells that appear in the topography have been recognized by many of our historians as the sources of drinking water of the people in that province.

However, it is apparent, in the writer's opinion, that these wells were also very important irrigation sources for the rice fields, and accordingly they were indispensable to the daily life of the provincial people. The wells in

question were connected with the tales of legendary heroes that were told among the people. The writer of this article believes that the tales introduced in the Hitachi-no-Kuni-Fudoki were those which symbolized the stabilized living conditions of the pioneers in that province and stabilized circumstances under the reigns of Mikados of the Yamato Court.

It is also believed that the names of the local heroes in the ancient tales were (gradually) replaced by those of national heroes along with the changing political conditions. Such progress is well traced in the tales of wells. For example, the name of Yamato-Takeru-no-Sumeramikoto 倭武天皇 who was believed at first to be the greatest hero in the Province of Hitachi, was mentioned afterwards as the surname of Yamato-Takeru-no-Mikoto, one of the heroes introduced in the Kojiki (the "Ancient Chronicle" compiled in 712) and Nihon Shoki (the "Chronicle of Japan" compiled in 720) or believed to be the name of a hero of the Province of Hitachi, whose story came from that of Yūryaku-Tenno 雄略天皇.

But these explanatory legends are not reliable.

The change of the hero's name in a tale only proves the fact that the power of the Yamato Court was increasing in the period in question.

## On the Problems of the Land System of Ancient Japan

By Shin IMAMIYA

The writer treats in this article a few problems of the "Handen-Shūju-no-Hō" or the System of Distribution of Farmland. The first problem is that we can hardly learn the details of the system from the description in the Nihon Shoki. The second is that there was a difference between the rate of land tax prescribed at the time of the Taika Restoration (646) and that exercised in the