

3-
Asuta-jingu

1st month, 13th day.

noon.

Held near the West-gate called Chin-ko-mon
or Palace Protecting Gate.

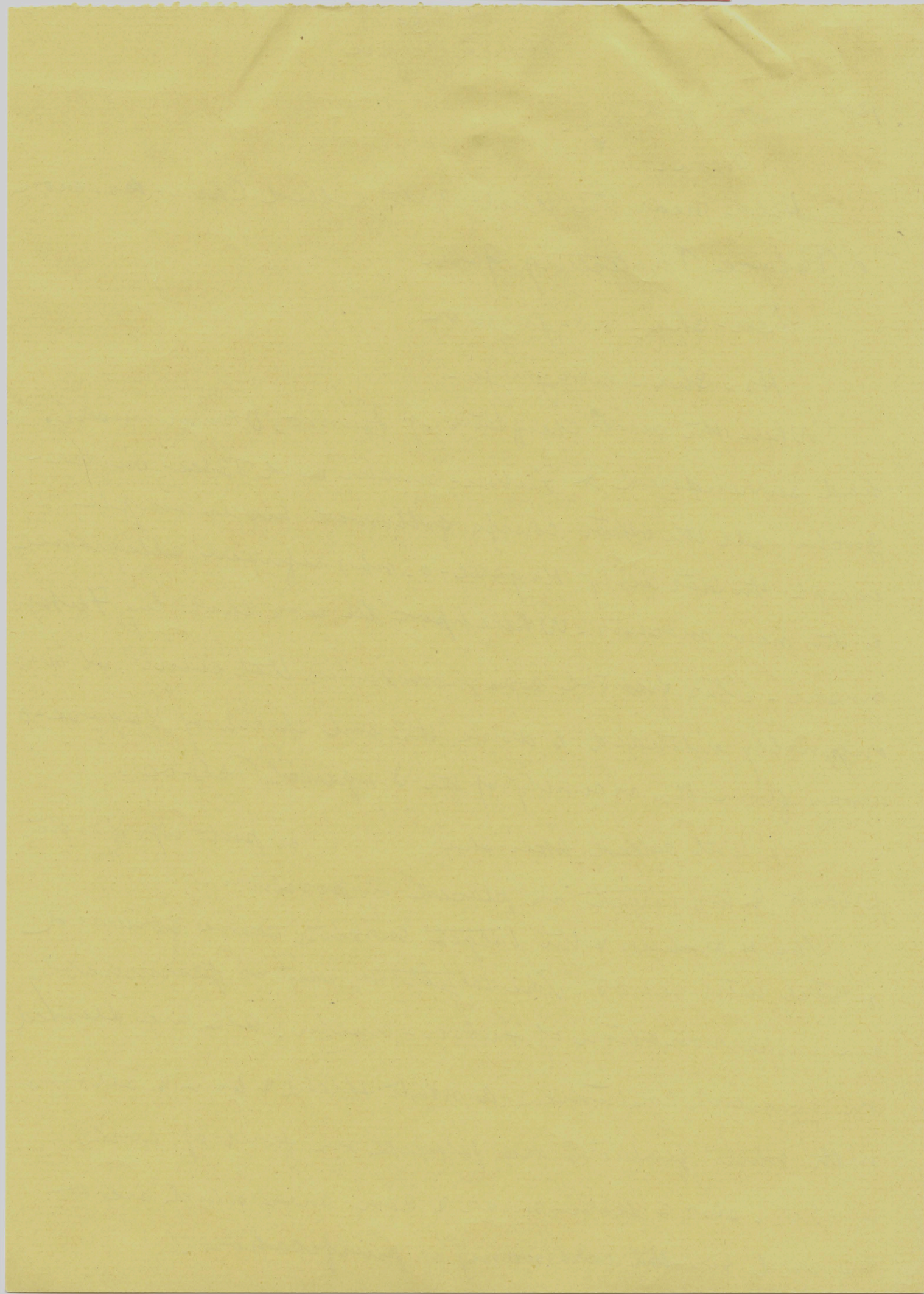
Ben-sha-no-jinji or

Ho-sha-no-jinji.

When the great chieftain of Yumoto, Otsuminushi,
had surrendered to Futsu-nushi and Take-mika-
guchi, all the other chiefs followed his example,
except the star deity Kagase-o, who refused allegiance
to the new masters. Whereupon he was shot by Futsu-
nushi. This festival commemorates that event. It was
originally intended to drive the evil spirit of Kagase-o
away from the vicinity of the Imperial Palace.

A tent called Aken-sha is put up for the
priests & the target is placed in position.

The 4 archers & the target master, come forward
& take their seats. The target master is presumably
an impersonation of Futsu-nushi. All are dressed
in ancient costume. A white shield & bow & arrows
with white feathers are placed in front of each
archer. also a kiri-nusa & San-mai which are to
be used for the ceremony of purification.



1st month, 15th day.

Asuta-jingu -

all are purified. Then each archer is given sanctified sake that had been offered to the gods.

The leader steps forward and points his white shield first toward the target, then to the right, then to the left, each time going thro' the ceremony of purification with the Kirinusa and San-mai. He turns toward the target & repeats a mystic word, ^{or prayer} & shoots an arrow toward Heaven, toward earth & toward the center, ^{where the target is} each time repeating the prayer. Then the archer steps forward and do the same thing. The one who has shot thro' the center of the target receives a prize.

This festival has lost its importance since the Emperor no longer resides in Kyoto, but it is still carried out according to the ancient ritual.

The ceremonies over the spectators try to get a piece of the target, to place upon the god shelf to keep evil spirits away from the home.

