At the main gate of the West Cemetery in Amherst, Massachusetts, is a sign alerting visitors to two names, Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) and William Smith Clark (1826–1886). They were almost exact contemporaries. Dickinson is surely the most famous person to have ever lived in Amherst. There are usually a number of visitors to the cemetery on any given day, and most are there to see her grave. Clark does not have such fame, not even in his native state of Massachusetts. Apart from historically minded people at Amherst College, from which Clark graduated in 1848 and where he taught chemistry from 1852 to 1867, and at the University of Massachusetts’ flagship campus, over which he presided as its third president for over a decade beginning in 1867, when the institution was still an agricultural college, his name is not widely recognized. His gravestone features the following words: “In memory of William Smith Clark, whose Life as a teacher, soldier, and citizen was Devoted to the service of God and His fellow man, Died March 9, 1886, aged 60.” There is no mention of his connection to Japan. In an eventful life that included service in the American Civil War in addition to teaching and leadership positions at two institutions of higher education, the brief time he spent in what was once called the Far East was probably not especially significant to his kin. Although Dickinson is also admired in Japan, with many books, academic groups, and even fan clubs devoted to her work, it may be the one place in the world in which the name of William Smith Clark is equally, if not better known than that of the poet.
As part of a larger project of building a modern educational infrastructure, the still inexperienced Meiji officialdom hired Clark in 1876 to advise them in their effort to establish an agricultural school in the archipelago. His innovations at what was to become the University of Massachusetts had given him an international reputation, and the Japanese government was eager to tap his expertise. Clark was on the country’s northernmost island for less than a year, where he helped found Sapporo Agricultural College, the forerunner of today’s Hokkaidō University. Before departing from Japan on April 6, 1877, to return to his duties in Massachusetts, he addressed a gathering of students of the new Japanese school, uttering, or so it is reported, the following immortal words: “Boys, be ambitious!” This exhortation is known in the original English to almost every college-educated Japanese I have ever met, and most also know the name of the man who spoke it. The words are inscribed in stone on the statue of Clark that stands in Sapporo to this day.

Clark’s admonition takes its place amidst a host of canonical utterances on worldly success that appeared in speech and in print throughout the 1870s. Nakamura Masanao’s (1832–1891) translation of Samuel Smiles’s worldwide bestseller *Self-Help* (1859) as *Saikoku risshi hen* (Stories of Lofty Purpose in the West, 1871) opens with words known to most Japanese even today: “Ten wa mizukara tasukuru mono o tasuku.” More than a few even know Smiles’s original English: “Heaven helps those who help themselves.” Within a year of its release, Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834–1901) began publishing *Gakumon no susume* (An Encouragement of Learning, 1872–1876), which would eventually amount to seventeen pamphlets. Its opening sentence can still be recited by most Japanese: “Ten wa hito no ue ni hito o tsukurazu, hito no shita ni hito o tsukurazu to ieri” (It is said Heaven makes no man above another and no man below another). Clark advocates ambition. Nakamura (translating the ideas of Smiles) urges self-reliance. Fukuzawa lays a claim for universal equality with regard to both education and opportunity. Together, the three can be taken as signifying different facets of a new discourse on social mobility, which became vital beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century and supported Japan’s modernization well into the twentieth century. Its vestiges can still be felt today, well over a century later.

The name for this discourse is *risshin shusse* (立身出世). This is a compound of two pairs of evocative ideographs formed from the common phrases *mi o tateru* (身を立てる to establish oneself), abbreviated to *ris-
shin (立身), and yo ni deru (世上に出る to go out into the world), abbreviated to shusse (出世). I will have occasion to detail the nuances of these terms later, but I would like to emphasize at the outset that risshin shusse is, despite the etymology of the term itself, a Japanese variant of a globally circulating discourse about social mobility and worldly success that was common in all the industrialized and industrializing countries around the world during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The ways in which this discourse intersects with modern Japanese literature is the subject of this book. I hope to show that risshin shusse and new ideas about social mobility, both of which are fundamentally linked to an emergent capitalist modernity, played a major role in shaping the modern Japanese novel as it emerged in the 1870s by mimicking features of European fiction, then grew to encompass a set of wide-ranging themes, and reached maturity at the turn of the twentieth century. But to see the influence of a social discourse on narrative form is to tell only half the story. Though more difficult to demonstrate, I also show the influence of literature on developing notions of worldly success so as to make the case that the novel is a bearer of ideas and takes part in the broader social debate within print capitalism and the public sphere regarding the meaning of social mobility, social boundaries, and the place of individual ambition within the larger polity. My book, then, is about the intertwining of social discourse and narrative form in the Meiji period (1868–1912), with lines of influence moving in both directions.

The claim that such narratives are preoccupied with social mobility is not itself a new one. Indeed, as I enumerate in the introduction, studies of Meiji fiction can hardly do without some acknowledgment of the novel’s upwardly aspiring characters, a theme that would continue well beyond the Meiji era and even extend to cinema and other narrative art forms. Though risshin shusse has been the topic of a number of essays and book-length historical and sociological studies, both in Japanese and English, the way worldly success is imbricated with the modern novel has not been treated in a monograph in any language, and there is no developed conceptual framework for understanding its role in shaping the fiction of modern Japan. This book does not pretend to offer either a complete conceptual vocabulary or a comprehensive survey of the topic. Its ambitions are rather more modest. Although Struggling Upward brings the Meiji period as a whole into its purview, it is concerned with creating a detailed picture of the variety of literature written in the final decade
of that era. Within this body of writing, I focus on the way *risshin shusse* helps create the spatial imagination of the modern novel. I believe this topic takes us to the heart of the way social mobility and the modern novel are intertwined, and late Meiji fiction explores the implications in rich and complex ways that deserve and require full explication.

The distinctiveness of the modern novel compared to the fiction that came before it is a point that I stress throughout *Struggling Upward*. One of the greatest challenges in the study of Meiji fiction is the double vision required to see both the influence of earlier domestic genres of fiction, especially those of the Tokugawa period (1600–1868), and the immense and undeniable influence of European literature, especially that of England, France, and Russia. It was common in the past to see a fairly decisive break between modern literature and what came before it. More recent studies have tended to stress the continuity between Edo and Meiji literature. My earlier work on Higuchi Ichiyō led me to place the emphasis on the influence of the past, whereas my research into the literature of worldly success will stress difference over continuity, and, drawing on historical and geographical studies, I will show that the spatial imagination of the modern novel is quite distinct from that of the literature of earlier eras. This conclusion does not invalidate studies that stress the afterlife of Edo or earlier Japanese literature in the Meiji era; rather, it simply acknowledges the complexity of the literary culture of this period of immense change and accepts the seeming paradox that whether one stresses continuity or difference depends very much on the vantage point from which one looks.

This book has been a long time in the making, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge at last those who contributed to its development. Its roots go all the way back to my discussions of Natsume Sōseki’s *Mon* (*The Gate*) with Komori Yōichi at the University of Tokyo, where I was a graduate student researching my doctoral dissertation on Higuchi Ichiyō at the end of the 1990s. I had delved into the literature on *risshin shusse* in my study of Ichiyō, but the immersion in *Mon*, and in Sōseki’s oeuvre more generally, was my first intimation of the centrality of the topic to modern Japanese literature as a whole rather than being just a local theme that engaged a handful of canonical writers. Since then, I have come to see *risshin shusse* as having significant implications for literary form, but many of the ideas about theme I developed during those discussions with Professor
Komori underlie this book in fundamental ways, most visibly in the third chapter and parts of the fifth.

I carried out the bulk of the literary research for the project during the 2007–2008 academic year at Waseda University, spending countless hours at its incomparable Central Library, which houses one of the finest collections of Meiji-era books and periodicals in the world. I was originally inspired to look closely at advertising for the second chapter because Waseda had much of the fiction and nonfiction being promoted in the advertisements, thereby allowing one to reconstruct a media field. The staff of the Central Library and that of the library at Waseda’s School of Education were invaluable in helping me gather obscure materials. Special thanks go to Richi Sakakibara, who hosted my stay at Waseda and who also commented on the first draft of the introduction. I had the privilege of doing research on Meiji intellectual history at rival Keiō University during the same period. I thank Professor Komuro Masamichi, then head of the Fukuzawa Research Center, for his time and generosity in hosting me. Examining the original pamphlets of* Gakumon no susume* and other texts, with Professor Komuro as my guide, was an unforgettable experience.

I carried out the remaining research during the autumn of 2009 at Dōshisha University in Kyoto. Here I made my first foray into a still relatively new frontier of research by making use of searchable electronic databases of periodicals. The fourth chapter would have been nearly impossible (or at least would have taken far longer) without this resource. I thank the library staff for their patience with a beginner. I hope I did not disappoint them too much, when, after locating articles in the database, I went to the stacks to find the original, in their fine collection of Meiji periodicals, rather than print them from the computer. For those who spend much of their time in library stacks, there is something reassuring about tactile contact with the original material. My stay at Dōshisha was made possible by Shindō Masahiro and facilitated by the staff of the Faculty of Literature there. Professor Shindō made all the resources of the institution available to me and generously welcomed me in his graduate seminar.

Academic books are made with two fundamental luxuries: time and money. Nine months of research in Tokyo during the 2007–2008 academic year was made possible by a Fulbright Scholars grant, which I gratefully
acknowledge. Amherst College, an institution that truly understands that teaching and research are intertwined, has been enormously generous ever since my arrival in the autumn of 2007. A semester leave in Japan in 2009 allowed me to finish the research for the book, and a full year of sabbatical leave under the Senior Sabbatical Fellowship program during the 2011–2012 academic year allowed me to complete the manuscript. I also received funding from Amherst for those periodic (and increasingly expensive) short trips to Japan, which are absolutely necessary for pinning down the unexpected details that proliferate during writing. The Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan, where I was a graduate student some years ago, provided a timely long-term research grant to use Michigan’s superlative Japanese collection when I unexpectedly found myself needing to learn about literary sketching for the first and fifth chapters.

I wrote the entire book surrounded by wonderful colleagues, friends, and students at Amherst and the Five Colleges Consortium, but I especially want to single out my compatriots on the Japan side of the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations—Trent Maxey, Samuel C. Morse, and Wako Tawa—for stimulating conversations over the years. Each of the chapters herein benefited from scrutiny and penetrating questions when they were given as talks at a variety of venues: as panel presentations in Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Wellesley College for the national and, for the last venue, regional meetings of the Association for Asian Studies; and as longer lectures at Keiō University, the Fulbright office in Tokyo, Yale University, the University of Maryland, and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I especially want to thank Ellen Shatt-schneider (Brandeis University), Keith Vincent (Boston University), and Tomiko Yoda (Harvard University) for inviting me, a neophyte in colonial studies, to present the fifth chapter at the Modern Japanese Literature and Culture Study Group at the Reischauer Institute at Harvard, where I was spoiled by a lively hour-and-a-half discussion of my work among twenty or so people, each of whom had read the draft chapter in advance. I thank Marnie Anderson, Alex Bates, Ken Ito, Trent Maxey, Richi Sakakibara, Amanda Seaman, Kristina Vassil, and Abbie Yamamoto for reading individual chapters and offering valuable comments for improvement. I am grateful to Sara Brenneis, my friend and colleague at Amherst, for making sure my most fundamental ideas made sense to those outside the field of Japanese literature. I thank the two anonymous
Preface

referees for their incisive and immensely helpful remarks and the editors at the Harvard University Asia Center for helping see this work through to publication. Despite all the generous assistance and wise counsel I have received in making this book, there are no doubt errors and infelicities. They are entirely my own responsibility.


Finally, a brief note on conventions: All names are given in Japanese style, surname first, given name last, and I refer to most people by their family name. Most Meiji-era authors, however, used pen names, and I follow convention in referring to authors by those pen names (for example, Tayama Katai is referred to as Katai, Natsume Sōseki as Sōseki). In the notes, however, I use the family name (thus, Tayama, Natsume) because the bibliography is alphabetically arranged by family name. I use macrons to indicate long vowels in Japanese, except for well-known place names, such as Tokyo or Osaka. Finally, all translations from the Japanese are mine unless otherwise noted.

May 2015
Amherst, Massachusetts