



BUSINESS NOTICES.

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E. M. VAN REED, COMMISSION MERCHANT, KANAGAWA. E. F. ADAMS, AUCTIONEER & COMMISSION MERCHANT. C. S. BARTOW, AUCTIONEER. JOHN H. PATE, NOTARY PUBLIC and Commissioner of Deeds. WM. RYAN, VARIETY STORE No. 2. J. MONTGOMERY, CONTINUES TO PRACTICE AS A Solicitor, Attorney, and Prosecutor in the Supreme Court, in Law, Equity, Admiralty, Probate and Divorce. H. A. WIDEMANN, NOTARY PUBLIC. C. BREWER & CO., COMMISSION AND SHIPPING MERCHANTS. J. P. HUGHES, Importer and Manufacturer. SAMUEL K. WILDER, SUGAR PLANTER. NEVILLE & BARRETT, Planters & General Store Keepers. CHAUNCEY C. BENNETT, Dealer in Newspapers, Magazines, Periodicals, etc. M. S. CRINBAUM & CO., Importers and Wholesale Dealers in Fashionable Clothing. E. G. ADLERLEY, Importer and Maker of all kinds of SADDLERY, HARNESS, &c. J. H. THOMPSON, GENERAL BLACKSMITH. HAS CONSTANTLY on hand and for sale, a good assortment of BEST REFINED BAR IRON! Best Blacksmith's Coal, At the Lowest Market Prices. M. RAPLEE, SHIPPING AND COMMISSION AGENT. FOR SALE! RUINART, per & s/s Champagne. Pianos Tuned.

JAPAN POLITICS.

The political status of Japan has ever been an enigma to foreigners, whether statesmen or tradesmen. Lately, "the rest of mankind," outside the "land of the rising sun," have been more puzzled than ever to know how the revolution in progress is to end. Perhaps a better understanding of the matter can be had by a glance at the past history of that Government. From time immemorial, the few gleams of light upon the internal condition of Japan that have reached other nations, all went to show the Government thereof to be that of the Feudal system, in all its bearings. Foreign intercourse, opened up some fifteen years since, has proved the conclusion correct. The Daimios are, and have been, the feudal lords. In their own provinces, they have supreme authority over the lives and landed property of their vassals, tenants, soldiers and serfs. History has always told us, too, of an Emperor of Japan. Such there seems to have been, from what we can learn, for a thousand years. In fact, it has been a well organized government for as long a period as the present era. Some three hundred years ago, the Tycoon, who was *Generissimo* to the reigning Mikado, or Emperor, by the aid of family alliances among the Daimios, and through disaffection towards his master, the Mikado, usurped equal dictatorial powers with that potentate; and nearly all the executive power being already in his hands, he seems to have become the equal and co-ruler of Japan without much more of a revolution than has overturned his last successor. He made his office hereditary in his own family, and kept the Daimios in subjection to himself by strengthening the strong and suppressing the weak ones among them. Whether he gave them the right of representation, by a Council called the Gorogio, in the affairs of government, we can not learn, but as the Council seems not to be a part of the newly restored Mikado's scheme of government, we rather incline to believe that it was a creation of the Tycoonate, seeing it has probably perished with it. The first Tycoon, or as it is called in Japanese, Shogun, was of the Tokogawa family, which, in the course of time, became divided into three branches, the head of each becoming a Daimio in his own right—the Prince of Mito generally taking precedence in the vacancies occurring in the Tycoonate. By statesmanship; by overpowering numbers; and by the subtlety of which race is capable, the Tycoon so controlled the legislative acts of the Gorogio, that they made the Mikado to be a mere creature of their power and purposes. Leaving him his title of Emperor, and giving him the supreme spiritual authority, they managed through him, as a check upon the Tycoon, to keep up a Dual government, which, as I have said, has ever been a puzzle and annoyance to all foreign nations seeking intercourse. The Mikado's office has ever been hereditary, with a Regency attached in case of minority or vacancy. This Regency has also been hereditary in a Daimio's family attached to the interests of the Mikado. The same sort of arrangement pertained to the Tycoonate, so that in times of conflicting opinions or interests, there was always a way to get rid of the Mikado or Tycoon without abolishing the office. This has frequently happened when there has been no immediate heir to either throne, in which case, the House of Gorogio filled the vacancy by an election, confined, however, to one of the linear families. This system should become complicated, and work its own downfall, seemed inevitable. In fact, it was so thoroughly intricate, that had it not been supported by immense standing armies, kept by each of the Daimios at Yedo, it would long since have fallen to pieces. One year ago, or more, the Daimios were permitted to reside in their own provinces without restraint. Previous to that, they were compelled to remain with their quota of soldiers and all their families, for six months of the year at Yedo, near the Tycoon, and when absent their families were held as hostages for their return. Abolishing this restraint was simply removing the foundation of the whole Tycoonate, with all its privileges and authority. Such was the General Government, which, in its role, little affected the common people. Their direct welfare, or oppression, was, and is yet, in the hands of the several Daimios. These Princes of the land were its absolute owners. No man owns a foot of land in Japan, except the Daimios. They place a ground rent upon every six feet square of it, and if regularly paid, any family or individual may become the occupant of a certain portion, and his descendants after him, without the prospect of being removed by the landlord "raising the rent." This usage established the permanent class of agriculturists—the primitive and most useful class of all society. From father to son, the old homestead, with its ground rent to be paid in rice or other produce in specified quantity, has descended from earliest recollection: hence the attachment

Japanese have to their own lovely land.

Merchants, or, rather, shop-keepers, became a necessary outgrowth of increasing population, gathered as it is innumerable towns, cities and villages all over Japan. This class are lower in the social scale, or, rather, are so regarded by the ruling powers, who derive no direct income from them, but who make them the victims of extortion *ad libitum*, so that while they pay no taxes, they do pay an immense tribute. This class are very numerous, so much so that you get the impression that it is Japan instead of England that is the "nation of shop-keepers." The necessity each Daimio was under to furnish his quota of soldiers for the support of the Tycoonate, resulted in the establishment of an immense army of Yacoina or two sworded gentry; 600,000 of these were furnished the Tycoon, by the Daimios formerly resident in Yedo, the late Tycoon's capital. Beside this immense army, there were at least three times as many kept in reserve by the Daimios themselves for their own protection against the aggressions of their neighbors. This privilege of being Yacoin is also hereditary, and has entailed upon Japan an unmitigated burden of oppression, idleness and outlawry. Add to these the swarming troops of begging priests of their many religions; and the troops of professional beggars; with the millions of laborers from day to day, the blind by the thousand, and the vast hordes of daughters these lower classes who afford revenue to the government, and misery and crime to themselves and patrons,—take all these with a limited number of *literati*, teachers, &c., and my readers can have a fair estimate of the population of Japan. The lower classes are all serfs, and at the absolute disposal of their Princes. Their government, however, is not directly oppressive. There is no slavery in Japan, and as it teems with millions who must eat by their labor, and labor scarce, while food is never very scarce nor high, they manage to live; but when sickness comes, though kindly treated by their friends, they court death rather than suffering, and many die as grass that is cut down. It will be seen that the political status of that Empire directly but little affects the common people, and as the Yacoinis, Samourai and higher classes of government officials have each and all enough to do, to watch each other and take care of themselves, there is but little knowledge of governmental affairs among them and but little care who is Mikado or Tycoon. Whether or not Stotsbashi, the last Tycoon, purposely shaped events so as to end in the utter abolition of his office, we cannot tell; but that his schemes tended so to overturn his authority no one doubts. He may have brought about the downfall of the Tycoonate, that he might eventually reign sole Mikado or Emperor! This much we do know, that from the hour that foreign nations made treaties with the Tycoon as Emperor and called him His Majesty, to the complete overthrow of the Tycoonate and the establishment of a sole Emperor, was but a few short years. It came too as a legitimate result of foreign intercourse. In October last, Stotsbashi attempted to suppress a rebellion at Osaka, of several of the southern Daimios, headed by Satsuma. The Tycoon was deserted on the battle field by one of his principal Daimios, and after four hours fighting fled with all his forces. Satsuma had in the mean time, without the Tycoon's knowledge, taken possession of the boy Mikado, brought his banner on to the field: at which the Tycoon quailed, fled to Yedo, resigned his Tycoonate, yielded everything, and retired to a temple; there as a shorn penitent to seek absolution of the spiritual head of the Empire, the Mikado. All this sounds like a tale of Jack the Giant Killer's land; but in detail quite surpasses that fiction. The Mikado, or rather Satsuma, Chazusa and Toza in his name, quietly took possession of the "open ports" and Yedo, and demanded the war vessels, and ammunition of the forts, none of which had been delivered over at latest accounts by those of Stotsbashi's friend who still held them,—and their troops were marching to the northern provinces, to subdue the allies of Stotsbashi, the late Tycoon, who had not yet submitted to the new regime. The latest accounts we have are that a battle between Satsuma's soldiers and those of Sendai and Idzumi had taken place, north of Yedo, in which 200 of the former's troops were captured and slain. Whether the northern Daimios will, after this "thunder shower" (as the Japanese term it) submit or continue their warfare, remains to be seen. Yedo is in possession of the Mikado's troops and government. Their is no longer an army of the Tycoon, nor such an office. The last incumbent counsels submission to the Mikado, and he is now the only potentate with whom foreign representatives can hold relations. The English Minister has already presented his credentials, and others will follow. There is and has been peace at Yokohama and Nagasaki. Yedo has been said to be unsafe for foreigners, and Osaka known to be so. We shall next note the relations of this kingdom to Japan, and how the revolution may affect them. D. J. L.

Sir W. Thompson.

The discoveries of Sir Wm. Thompson in physical science have all been of a high order, and his profound knowledge of the laws which govern the universe. Of late years, since more of the laws of heat have become known to the scientific world, strong reasons have accumulated tending to show that the light and heat of the sun are not caused by common combustion. When a candle is lit, the flame is not the cause of the heat, but the heat is generated, and it is heat which is produced, principally by Professor Thompson, that if a shower of rocks and stones was constantly falling into the sun, the velocity of impact would be such that the heat generated from a sufficient quantity of such matter would fully equal the amount of heat and light known by experiment to be thrown out by the sun. He has calculated the quantity of heat which would be generated by each one of the planets should it fall into the sun, and proved that the impact of the whole of them would cause the sun to be heated to the same temperature as the surface of the sun at a comparatively short distance, and constantly falling upon its surface. One proof of this is the fact that the sun is in a certain position with respect to the sun and the earth, reflects more light than at other times. It also obeys the laws of planetary motion, and is seen to be in the orbit of a comet; moreover, especially the comet, when it is near the sun, and is seen to be there, therefore, eventually to fall into it. There is, therefore, reason to suppose that the heat and light of the sun may be caused by comets falling into the sun, and the luminous and Professor Thompson has given mathematical evidence that the supposed cause, should it exist, is competent to produce the effect. He has published many interesting papers upon the rigidity and probable interior construction of the sun, and has given a great impetus to electrical science by uniting many of the laws which govern the passage of electrical currents through long cables in his theory of the transmission of telegraphic messages. He has shown that the charge hangs in the cable for some little time, and in long cables this charge very sensibly retards the transmission of messages. Telegraphic messages can not be sent so rapidly through very long cables as through wires of the same length supported in the air. Sir W. Thompson also invented the reflecting galvanometer, an instrument much used in scientific research, and to receive messages sent by very weak currents through long cables. It consists of a little magnetic needle, usually only a grain or two in weight, suspended by a fine silk thread, and placed in a little airtight mirror of mica attached to it, and as the needle moves, so does the mirror, and the reflection of the needle is seen by the scarcely perceptible motions of the little magnet and mirror, so a ray of light passing through a hole is allowed to reflect in the mirror, and reflects a thin vertical line of light upon a horizontal ivory scale, about two feet off. Consequently, if the scientific research of the needle, which is only a few inches long, is moved a distance of light two feet off will move a great deal. The messages through the Atlantic cable are read off by watching the slight movements of the needle, which is attached to a small mirror, and reflects a thin vertical line of light upon a horizontal ivory scale, about two feet off. 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