

OLD AND NEW JAPAN.

NO. 1.

SINCE the beginning of the last half of the present century there have been two Japans—one which we never knew and another with which we are but just becoming acquainted. The one unearthed by Commodore Perry and his floating forts of wood has passed away, and in its stead has arisen another, thoroughly imbued with the progressive spirit of the nineteenth century. That stagnant and almost dead empire, buried under the deep crust of its own exclusiveness, has sprung into new life under the progressive influences which were at first forced upon it at the muzzle of shotted cannon, even as the grains of wheat which had been buried for four thousand years in the tomb of an Egyptian mummy sprouted and grew when planted in the warm, moist soil of a country thousands of miles distant from their native land. The germ, the living principle, was there, and it needed only the proper influences to quicken it into life. The entering wedge that split the shell of exclusiveness with which the Mikado's empire had encrusted itself was driven by the United States, and recognizing the great benefits to their nation which have followed, the Japanese keep a warm place in their hearts for America, and our countrymen are held by them in higher esteem than the subjects of any other Power.

Ever since the time the Spaniards from the east and the Portuguese from the west began their search for Marco Polo's Kingdom of Cathay and Island of Zipangu, great interest has been centred in those old civilizations of Southeastern Asia, and the extravagant ideas of their richness which have been handed down through the centuries have only been dispelled by the better knowledge of them that has gradually been acquired, chiefly during the last half century. Historians have generally accredited Japan with being the original Island of Zipangu, with a description of whose wonders the great Venetian traveler astonished his countrymen in the fourteenth century, and which, more than anything else, gave rise to those extravagant ideas and romances which filled the Pacific and other unknown regions of the East with nations of strange civilizations and amazing wealth; made them the repository of gold, pearls and precious gems in

NOTE.—The data for these articles, especially in regard to the official, social and business customs, and the progress made during the last quarter century, are supplied by Rev. Jonathan Goble, of Sumner, W. T., whose qualifications for being an authority on the subject he thus sets forth: "I first visited that country in 1853, entering Yedo Bay and steaming up to Yokohama early in July of that year. The greater portion of my life from that time up to December, 1883, was spent in that country. I made my home in Yokohama, and in pursuance of my work as a missionary traveled over a great portion of that island empire. I became so much a citizen of that country that its language is now more my own than my mother tongue, as I learned it first in my native home in New York. I became conversant with all classes of people, from the lowest coolie, or day laborer, to the members of the Imperial Court. I have lived with the people of that country in the humble homes of the poor, in the mansions of wealthy merchants, in the comfortable homes of various grades of officials and in the palaces of nobility. I have acted as adviser to the Chief Council of State, the Dai Jo Kwang, have served as interpreter and attorney in their native law courts, and have been admitted to the imperial palaces on state occasions." From the above it will be seen that Mr. Goble has had unusual opportunities for becoming acquainted with the inner life of that nation, and that his statements are entitled to credence wherever they in the least conflict with those made by travelers who, after a visit to Yokohama and a hasty jaunt of a few days into the interior, undertake to tell us all about Japan.

such fabulous quantity that the greatest riches of the known world seemed but the veriest dross in comparison; gave into their keeping the mystical fountain of youth, endowed them with all the beauties and wonders of earth, air and water the mind could conceive, and even located within their confines the Terrestrial Paradise from whose gates the angel of the Almighty had driven the progenitors of mankind with a flaming sword of fire. Under the progress of geographical knowledge these mystical regions became gradually revealed in their true light, so far, at least, as to disclose the lack of any real foundation for the romantic ideas entertained by the adventurers who first penetrated them for the purpose of gaining riches by the sword. At the behests of commerce the fleets of Europe and America penetrated these regions, and by the middle of the present century had gained the right of entrance to the ports of every nation in the world except Japan. She alone hedged herself in with a wall of exclusiveness and refused to have anything to do with her neighbors of Asia or the greater Powers bordering upon the Atlantic. The desire to break down this wall of prejudice and establish commercial relations with a nation whose people were known to be industrious and intelligent and were supposed to be extremely wealthy, for thus much of the ideas of the early adventurers still lingered in the popular mind, became strongly engrafted upon the maritime nations of Europe and America. Especially was this the case in the United States, whose recent acquisition of California and Oregon had given her a commanding position on the Pacific and made her the advance guard of Caucasian progress. For many years the best means of establishing commercial relations with the Mikado's empire were discussed. Many were in favor of the opening of the sealed ports by force, advocates of the doctrine of Sydney Smith, who said: "I am for bombarding all the exclusive Asiatics, who shut up the earth, and will not let me walk civilly and quietly through it, doing no harm, and paying for all I want." But a natural reluctance to use such harsh measures prevented any of the interested nations from taking summary measures for the accomplishment of their desires. In the United States the feeling became very strong in commercial circles, and the Government was urged to send a commission to Japan, backed by a sufficient naval force to compel a respectful reception from the Imperial Court. Commodore M. C. Perry was an earnest advocate of this idea, and when the Government determined upon the expedition, he was selected for the dual position of ambassador and commander of the fleet.

Commodore Perry steamed out from Norfolk in the flagship *Mississippi* on the 24th of November, 1852, expecting to meet the steamer *Susquehanna* and the sloops *Plymouth* and *Saratoga* and other vessels and storeships in Eastern waters. It was not until the 4th of the following May that the *Mississippi* dropped anchor in the Chinese port of Shanghai, where she found the *Susquehanna* and *Plymouth* awaiting her. Leaving the latter to guard American interests during the Chinese rebellion then in progress, he soon sailed with the two