

Newly Are Selling Titles In Old Japan

BY ROBERT DUNN.
OKIO, May 19.—(Special Correspondence.)—The most recent and in some ways remarkable of social developments in Japan is the manner in which its peerage, once certainly the most exclusive and probably the oldest in the world, has in the past few years become entirely modernized.

Up to 19 or 12 years ago the feudal aristocracy of Japan was an absolutely and entirely distinct class infinitely more distinct and exclusive than the English titled aristocracy even in feudal times. Their titles, privileges and ownership of land dates from the remotest period, and to the masses this aristocracy was like the sun—it always had been and would always continue to exist.

Up to 1871 there was not a peer in Japan whose house had not been ennobled from time immemorial. Peers were, it is true, raised from one degree of the peerage to another, but the first ennoblement went back to practically prehistoric times. And then suddenly in 1871 Japan awoke to the fact that this titled class had become an anomaly in a country that had been so rapidly developing along western lines.

A royal edict was issued that subjects who had served their country with distinction should be admitted to the peerage, and at the same time certain ancient privileges of the feudal aristocracy, more especially those in regard to their ownership of land which were interfering with industrial developments, were declared to be at an end.

The first of the new aristocracy were selected from army and navy officers and diplomats, all of them of ancient birth and connected with noble houses. The late Viscount Hayashi, who was Ambassador in England, was one of these. The commercial classes were rigidly debarred, however, from admission to the titled class.

But not for long. There were bankers, merchants and captains of industry who were influencing the government of the country in no little degree, and they were beginning to aspire to be admitted to the privileges, both social and political, which the titled class in Japan possesses. Curiously, an English merchant and banker had much to do with the admission of the commercial classes in Japan to the peerage. This was Sir Marcus Samuel. Sir Marcus visited Japan in his early youth, and subsequently became financially interested in many enterprises there. He helped to negotiate the first Japanese loan of \$20,000,000, and for this service the Order of the Rising Sun was bestowed on him.

This order is the most ancient and highest of distinctions in the Mikado can confer, and practically hitherto had never been given to one not of noble rank. The bestowal of this order on a merchant, wealthy and influential though he was, proved the signal for the admission of the Japanese commercial class to the peerage, and it was probably intended to be so, for Sir Marcus had indicated to certain

officials how the royal coffers might be filled, as is the purse of the political party in England who happens to be in office, by the sale of titles. Since then many leading personalities in the Japanese world of commerce have been admitted to the titled class and most of them have purchased their titles. The purchase of titles in Japan is not openly recognized. It is not mentioned in the press, but it has become obvious that any successful merchant, financier or man of business can, if he chooses to pay for the dignity, become ennobled and admitted to all the privileges of the ancient titled class. There is a custom in Japan which makes the purchase of a title an easy and simple matter.

From time immemorial it was the custom in Japan for the head of a noble house to adopt a son if he so desired and make him not only heir to his fortune and estates, but of his titles. The disinherited heir in such a case occupied the position of a younger son, but often he was adopted by some nobleman, perhaps by a relative. The adopted son of a noble house was, however, always the son of some other noble house.

The commercial classes in Japan saw in this custom a ready method of ennobling their family. All that a wealthy merchant, banker or business man had to do was to pay some poor but ancient Japanese feudal Lord a sufficiently large sum of money to adopt his son, and the latter became at once the prospective head of a noble house. Under a royal edict made in 1906 the parents and immediate blood relatives of the adopted heir to a noble house became themselves of noble rank corresponding exactly to that held by the brothers and sisters of an English nobleman.

The Japanese nobleman who adopts a son for a money payment has, however, to part with a certain percentage of it to the royal coffers. The royal consent is necessary to all adoptions, and though in bygone ages it was never refused, modern developments have suggested to the Minister of Finance at the Japanese court the wisdom of making the person who wants the royal consent to an adoption (in certain circumstances) pay for it.

There are four degrees in the Japanese peerage—Marquis, Count, Viscount and Baron. Admission to the second degree at the present time costs about \$500,000, and to the next another \$250,000. Only the son of a Baron or

Dollar Invades The Oldest Peerage Of The World And Sets Up New Commercial Aristocracy.



Viscount Hayashi And His Staff.

Viscount can be raised to the higher degree of the peerage. A commercial aristocracy has thus arisen in Japan. By many of the old feudal Lords the new aristocracy is detested, but the commercial aristocracy in Japan have become economically the dominant class, and with their development the old aristocracy are ultimately bound to disappear. Indeed, some of the oldest families have accepted their inevitable destruction with Eastern stoicism. They have disinherited their heirs, have resolutely refused to adopt one from the class they detest and have openly

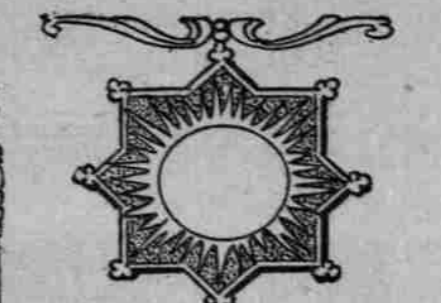
avowed themselves the last of their avowed themselves the last of their wealth. As a remedy for this disastrous and impossible situation, he suggests the use of vitrified brick, made by prison labor. This he estimates would result in a saving of \$145,000,000 in the next 20 years on the 7300 miles of road yet to be constructed. The message says in part:

New York is engaged in building 12,000 miles of road, which will wear out 40 years before they are paid for. One hundred million dollars has been voted for the construction of New York's highways. If the roads we build in the future cost as much as those we

The Cost of Good Roads.

(Wall Street Journal.)

Governor Glynn has sent to the Legislature a special message, calling attention to the fact that at the rate New York State is now paying for roads that are not durable, and are utterly unsuited to the traffic that is carried on over them, it will be only a few years before the annual tax for upkeep will amount to \$2 for each man, woman, and child in the common-



completion of the state will have little to show for an expenditure of \$250,000,000.

Britain Firm in Protecting Citizens Abroad

N MORE warlike times than our own, unprovoked murders of British subjects in foreign lands seldom went long unpunished.

When, for instance, Chinese officials boarded the British vessel Arrow, hauled down the national flag, and killed her Captain for daring to protest, Sir J. Bowring, Governor of Hongkong, declared war there and then, practically on his own initiative, and within a few weeks the Chinese fleet had been destroyed and Canton bombarded and burned. This happened in 1856.

In 1857, a gain, similar swift retribution overtook the murderer of Mr. Richardson, an English merchant living in Japan. Because he refused to prostrate himself in a street in Yokohama when the Prince of Satsuma happened to be passing with his suite he was brutally beaten to death by the Prince's armed retainers. Whereupon our warships bombarded Satsuma's town of Kagoshima, burned his palace, and sunk his steamers.

It is only fair to add that in after years the Japanese voluntarily expressed regret for Mr. Richardson's murder, and in 1884 a Japanese gentleman, Mr. Kurokawa, erected a monument to his memory on the site where he was killed.

If we care to go back a little further many similar instances might be cited. Britons were quick to draw the sword when the British Empire was a-building, and in the course of a scimitar's edge short of the actual taking of human life, have been followed by hostilities.

There was, for instance, the conflict which was known in nomenclature as the "War of Jenkins' Ear."

Jenkins was a merchant Captain whose vessel was boarded by a Spanish guardship, and in the course of a scuffle that ensued Jenkins' ear was cut off. "You'll hear more of this!" yelled the angry master mariner, and he which was known in nomenclature as the "War of Jenkins' Ear."

In this state it was exhibited to the members of the House of Commons who passed it from hand to hand with a great show of gravity, and many expressions of sympathy. Afterward an apology and a money indemnity were demanded, and, neither being forthcoming, war ensued.

Not infrequently, however, "money talks" in these international disputes, as in private ones. When, during one of Guatemala's periodical revolutions, John Magee, our Consul at San Jose, was seized and brutally flogged by order of the commandant, Colonel Gonzalez, we sent a warship there and threatened to lay the town to ashes unless, within 24 hours, an indemnity of 50,000 pounds sterling was paid, being at the rate of 1000 pounds for each lash inflicted.

The Guatemalan Government was unable at such short notice to raise the money, but offered, instead, to grant Magee certain concessions, including the right to establish a bank and build wharves at San Jose. This offer was accepted, and Magee, by virtue of his monopoly, became in time enormously wealthy. He died in 1906, leaving behind him a fortune of 10,000,000 pounds.

Then, again, there was the case of Major Lothaire at Mr. Stokes, which created such tremendous excitement in the Spring of 1896. Stokes was an Englishman engaged in trading for ivory in the Congo Free State, and he was arrested by Major Lothaire, a Belgian officer, on a charge of gun-running and inciting the natives to rebel, and, after a summary trial by drum-head Court-martial, was hanged.

The British Government insisted on Lothaire being brought to trial, and this was done. In fact, he was tried twice, once at Boma, and again at Brussels, and each time he was acquitted. Whereat public indignation in this country blazed up afresh, and with tenfold force.

However, a war with Belgium being unthinkable, it would have set all Europe by the ears—we compromised matters on the usual money indemnity basis, the sum of \$50,000 being handed over by the Belgium government to the next kin of the dead man.

HER HUSBAND'S SHADOW... by William Hamilton Osborne

How a Face on the Screen Upset Bellport, and What Old Bill Tewlesger Discovered on His Own Account.

THERE was an almost unheard tin-kle from an altogether unseen bell. Immediately the audience of the Bellport Opera House was plunged into semi-total darkness. There was a rustle of expectation, which deepened into a hush, as a curtain gradually lowered itself upon the stage bearing in its center a mammoth square of snowy white.

side—in their midst, as it were—there was a young girl who had sought this vagabond; and who, at last, had found his face.



watched—until at last he saw the face. Then suddenly in the center of the house there arose a muffled scream. The scream he came from a beautiful young girl in shabby genteel garb, who wailed: "The face—the face!"

Such receivers should be fitted up in the luggage van immediately following the engine. Special transmission appliances are not necessary, as the telephone wires along the line will serve for this purpose.

How It Feels to Pass Into the Hereafter

PROBABLY most people will read the above title with something like a shudder, for if there is one thing certain in this world it is that the vast majority of sane men and women regard the very word "death" with the greatest possible aversion.

One thing is absolutely sure, however, and that is that we have, all of us, got to die at some time or other; and it is foolish to blind ourselves to the fact by putting the idea altogether into the background.

Not long ago a man who had been certified as dead astonished all his relations by sitting bolt upright in his coffin. He had not actually died at all, but he had been so near death that the medical men who attended him were completely deceived.

When questioned as to his experiences he replied that some time before he became unconscious he had felt sure that he was about to die. Although he had been in great pain for many days, as soon as he felt that death was upon him, all the suffering left him, and he experienced a delicious kind of ecstasy that made him completely happy.

Many nurses and doctors who have seen numerous people actually die have declared that the end was always quite painless, no matter what the pain might have been just beforehand.

One Line of Physical Culture. Exchange. "Your boy has all sorts of athletic training," "Yes," replied Farmer Corn-tassel. "But there's one line of physical culture he has missed. I wish I could send him to some gymnasium where he could learn to swing a scythe without looking like he was going to cut off both his feet."