

A CARTHUSIAN MONK IN HIS CELL.

The shutters are closed, and the bars
Let the light through in such quaint angles
That it seems like the twinkling of golden stars,
And the jingling of silver bangles.

'Tis a quiet place although
I can hear the blackbirds chatter
In the tower above, in the garden below
The old Monk repeating his pater ;

But these are but parcel and part
Of the atmosphere of the cloister,
Long ago gotten by heart,
And pat as his shell to the oyster.

I've watched the sun, sly conjuror !
At his tricks and quips and crinkles,
Paint rainbows and gems on the dingy stone floor
Out of holy water sprinkles ;

And the Father to bless or to ban,
Being both priest and logician,
May banish the tricky elves if he can,
So he leaves me my magician.

But I lie in my pallet bed,
And muse and ponder the problem,
Why the very jackdaws talk overhead,
And I walk mute as a goblin.

When even the beasts are blithe and glad,
And the butterflies sport and are merry,
Man hides from the sun in a cell of stone,
As if his soul he could bury

From God's pure sight who made the light
To gladden all creatures living,
And who is so good that he must delight
In mercy and in forgiving.

The good Saint Anthony shrive my soul !
I doubt my wandering fancies
Come into my head as I lie in my bed
With the sunbeams frolicsome glances.

For still the devil who tempted the saint
Knows how to bait for a sinner
Who is only a poor monk sick and faint,
And in want of his lentil dinner.

Confession will make all right no doubt,
And Father Antoine will truly
Parcel all the sinfulness out,
And apportion the penances duly ;

But after the fasting and sorrow—
Absolving that's purchased with pain
Would the Father could shrive me to-morrow
From sinning and penance again !

—Kate Seymour MacLean, in *The Week*.

ENGINEERING FEATS AND THEIR COST TO LIFE.

The opening of the Forth Bridge is certainly an engineering achievement of which we may legitimately be proud, but the piteous appeal to the Prince of Wales on behalf of the widows and orphans is evidence of the cost to life involved by these gigantic enterprises. In the present instance every conceivable precaution seems to have been taken to prevent accident, but in spite of these some fifty lives have been immolated to the steel Juggernaut. Large as this number appears when viewed in the aggregate, it is in reality a small relative mortality for an undertaking which has taken seven years to carry out, and on which as many as four thousand men have been at work at the same time. Indeed, if one inquires into the conditions under which the work was carried on, the ultimate feeling is less one of surprise at the number than of satisfaction that no more were sacrificed. Apart, however, from direct danger to life, the damage to health must be considerable, though as to this we are not in possession of any accurate data. It would be interesting to know, for instance, something of the history of the men who work in the caissons—those gigantic representatives of the diving bell of our immediate predecessors. It seems that no great inconvenience was experienced until the pressure exceeded thirty tons to the square inch, but above that pressure the men all fell ill, sooner or later, some lightly, others more seriously. In fact, the men engaged in this hazardous work had to be replaced three times—a telling proof of the insalubrious nature of their occupation. The ill effects were not due in their entirety to the high pressure, which never exceeded three atmospheres, but to the emanations from the soil which formed the river bed. We are in ignorance of the chemical constitution of these gases, which are said to have been inflammable, though they did not give rise to anything in the nature of an explosion. The curious reticence of the French authorities in such matters prevents any comparison being instituted between the mortality attending the construction of the Forth Bridge and that entailed in the construction of the rival giant the Eiffel Tower. We are quite in the dark as to the blood tax levied by the latter, but ugly rumours were afloat while the building was going on. The surgical and medical history of these two undertakings would constitute a text-book of these two departments by itself, and it is to be regretted that no one has been found with the necessary enterprise and ability to place this information at our disposal.—*Medical Press*.

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

THE UNEXPECTED IN JAPAN.

The Rev. H. Loomis, of Yokohama, writes as follows to the *Missionary Review* :

I.

There has been no time since the modern revolution of Japan began, thirty years ago, when the best students of the history and the characteristics of her people have not borne in mind that this people are sensitive, proud, and, as compared with their neighbours, the Chinese at least, fickle. They have been frequently called the French of Asia. We have seen them, however, progress with marvellous quickstep through the following stages : (1) The abolition of the office of the Shogun, the charter oath of the Emperor, and a deliberative Assembly in 1866. (2) In 1869 the surrender by the feudal chiefs, or Daimios, of their hereditary fiefs ; and in 1871 these fiefs, or clans, turned into provinces, with governors appointed by the Emperor. (3) In 1876 the Daimios and the Sumarai were deprived of their swords and their hereditary income, all by compulsory commutation, which plunged the Government an additional one hundred and seventy-five million dollars in debt, and precipitated the Satsuma rebellion of 1877, to suppress which 60,000 troops were called into the field. (4) The Supreme Council, *Dai Jo Kuwan*, with its thirteen members, was formed in 1875, and the Senate, with forty members nominated by the Crown, also a Supreme Judicial Tribune, an assembly of Provincial Governors, and ten Ministers of Departments. (5) The general reforms in the social and civil life of the people after models from various countries : from France she learned how to organize her army and police ; from England the construction and management of her telegraphs, railways and pre-eminently, her navy ; from America and England, educational and agricultural development ; and from these, with Germany, machinery and manufactures. Her postal system has grown to importance and precision. Two cables connect her with the rest of the world, and her own sons make her telegraphic apparatus. The newspaper has been rapidly and influentially developed. To cap the climax, the Emperor kept his contract in 1890, and handed the country a constitution !

These are very rapid changes for any country to make during one generation, and there have been frequent expressions of misgivings whether they were not all too rapid to be permanent. But thus far Japan has stood the strain.

There were, however, some existing treaties with foreign nations which certainly needed revision. Take the matter of the tariff, for instance, which was cruelly against Japan's interests and opposed to all justice. Now that the time for this revision of treaties has arrived, the Japanese have become very excited in the discussion of it. They are sensitive, proud and inexperienced in foreign diplomacy, a third of a century practically comprising all their experience with other nations than the Chinese. The most objectionable feature of the proposed treaty provides that foreigners may go anywhere, reside anywhere, own land, and engage in business anywhere. The larger part of the empire is opposed to any such intrusion, and the commercial part of the population doubt their ability to hold their own against foreign business combinations, if this be granted. Then there is the chance of Chinese immigration, which has scared bigger nations than Japan, and nations with much greater territorial extension.

The proposed treaties look, however, to the improved tariff on imports, and the result will be the restoration of many industries now supposed to be dead. Another gain to Japan is the proposal to terminate, after five years, the extra territorial jurisdiction over foreigners. The assumption by foreign nations of the right to exercise jurisdiction over their own subjects, is grounded in the diverse standards, civil and moral, of these Oriental countries and those of the west. But Japan has objected to the Consular Court, and it doubtless has yielded anything but justice to the Japanese in the cases past count. A cold-blooded murder of a Japanese by an Englishman has been punished only by five years' imprisonment. The proposal now is for a mixed court of Japanese and foreign judges, to whom cases of conflict between Japanese and foreigners shall be referred. But the Consular jurisdiction has rendered the Japanese distrustful of foreign justice toward the Japanese, and they antagonize the suggested provision. We are pleased to be able to present the following about the situation, from an observant and thoughtful resident of Japan, who is not out of sympathy with the patriotic ambitions of the Japanese, though probably not in sympathy with the Japanese politician of low grade and stubborn prejudices.

II.

It is with feelings of the deepest sadness and regret that I must say the position of Japan to-day is more perilous than at any time since the revolution of 1868.

But a few months ago there was a prospect of the revision of the treaties and the opening of the country, so that foreigners could travel or reside in any place and conduct business freely. This seemed at that time to be the sincere desire of nearly all of the people of Japan, and the only question was as to the terms. The foreigners were very reluctant to place themselves under native jurisdiction, unless there was an assurance of a just and equitable administration of the laws.

It was proposed that this should be arranged by employing a certain number of foreign judges, who should sit with the natives in cases where foreigners were involved. It was thought that this arrangement would meet with general satis-

faction, and, as a temporary arrangement, would prepare the way for Japan to take her place on an equal footing with the enlightened nations of the earth.

But, to the surprise and regret of the true friends of the country, there has recently appeared a strong anti-foreign feeling that has put a check upon all revision of the treaties and thrown matters here into utter confusion. The cry now is, Japan for the Japanese, and no foreigners whatever. The ground for this opposition is that foreigners are dishonest and overreaching in business matters, and with their more extensive experience and energy will leave no chance for competition. But it is plain that at the bottom of this there is still lingering in Japan some of that old feeling of hatred of other nations that was almost universal when Com. Perry came here. It was not a matter of choice, but they were compelled then to make a treaty that was quite against their will.

The leader of this anti-foreign crusade is a General Torio, who is gathering about him some of the discontented factions who are not in sympathy with the past course of the Government, and who are ready for anything that will bring a change. He tried to get the sympathy and operation of the Buddhist priests, on the ground that in this way they could keep out the Christian missionaries, who have become such an active force in the land. But the priests have not been so foolish as to enter into any political affiliation that would surely bring them trouble and division in their own ranks.

The worst feature of all this is that the men who have stood at the head thus far, and to whom the credit of Japan's position to-day is due, have resigned their places, and left matters to drift.

The state of things here now is well stated in a recent number of the *Japan Mail*, which is practically an organ of the Government, and of course is disposed to treat all questions of this nature in the most favourable light. It says : We need scarcely dwell upon the magnitude of the loss that the Cabinet will suffer by the retirement of the two men (Count Ito and Inouye) who have hitherto supplied such a large share of that body's talent and experience. It has come to be difficult to imagine a really efficient Japanese administration from which the names of the two brilliant Choshu leaders are absent ; and the removal of their guiding hands from the helm of State at a time when the nation is about to enter upon the novel routes of local government, autonomy and constitutional institutions cannot be viewed without grave uneasiness.

To these two men more than any others does the country look for guidance. No others have had so much experience or shown the same abilities. Count Ito was the compiler of the Constitution, and is, therefore, especially fitted to introduce and defend it. Count Inouye has filled both the foreign and domestic bureaus with credit to himself and advantage to the country, and seems especially fitted to direct the future political affairs of the country into a stable and prosperous shape.

In this crisis of affairs the Emperor has summoned to his aid the old Prime Minister, Prince Sanjo, but it is apparently only a temporary expedient. It seems hardly possible that the nation will be content to go back to the old and conservative leaders of the past and inaugurate a new and anti-progressive policy. Just at present the country is like a ship at sea, with no one to take the helm or man the ropes.

Nothing more is attempted in the way of treaty revision, and present indications are that efforts will be made to discard all recent efforts in that direction, and instead of looking for concessions on the part of other nations, as heretofore, such terms will be demanded as will make revision entirely out of the question, and the residence of foreigners here as uncomfortable as possible.

It is only about two months before the proposed opening of the Japanese Parliament. In this condition of things such an institution would be a most unfortunate addition to the present complications. With so many wild schemes as are now being discussed, it would be impossible to effect any legislation that would be a benefit to the country. Until there is some change for the better in the political status, the whole project of a parliament had better be given up. It is plain now that the country is not ripe for a change in the administration ; but two things are possible—a strong monarchy or hopeless anarchy. Men full of all sorts of schemes are coming to the front, and forming parties to sustain their crude and impracticable ideas. And they are not content with simple suasion to carry out their policy either. The assassination of Count Okuma and others are indications of what desperate measures may be resorted to in order to secure success.

At a recent political meeting in Hiroshima, the speakers were hooted down by the mob, and given no chance to speak at all. One of the speakers was dragged from the stage and beaten by his opponents, who, it is reported, hired a body of men to take possession of the building, and prevent any hearing on the part of those who came to listen and learn.

At Kumamoto also a band of men hid themselves by the roadside at night until some members of another political party came along, and then rushed upon them with swords and clubs, and nearly killed them. The Government has ordered both of the parties to be dissolved. It will be sad, indeed, if all these past years of such marvellous progress are to be followed by a revolution, in which the ruling spirit will be that of isolation, and the old idea of barbarian expulsion will have full sway. We have better hopes for Japan, and yet time alone can tell where all this is going to end.