

conviction that heathens are the beings doomed to hell-fire after death, and who, while in life, can do naught but tell lies. Do the men of white skin remember how long ago it was that they themselves came to utilize the hidden powers of nature? It was only as yesterday; but since that yesterday what marvellous changes have overtaken them as well as the world at large. And these changes, were they in any way less sudden, less complete, less wonderful, than what have been taking place in Japan? I love and honor Japan as my motherland, but I should not hesitate to say that, rationally speaking, she has nothing to be proud of or made much about, however great have been her recent changes. Why are our brothers of the west surprised at Japan's progress—unless they consider the Japanese an inferior race? Why are men of white skin so proud that they must look down upon their brothers of different climes, and insult them by excessive praising? Whatever the Japanese have achieved in recent years is nothing more, and is probably a great deal less, than what the Europeans and Americans have achieved in that yesterday. Nay, in this world of cosmic evolution, we are too humble to know what we have done. But the world is still progressing, and Japan, in order to keep her place in the comity of nations, must also keep up her pace. It is really unreasonable, if not extremely mean, to try to persuade Japan to remain her former self forever.

But the good friends of Japan still insist: "The numerous problems which are confronting the occidental nations are so ominous and grave, that they are likely to drive forever the lights of mirth and laughter from the face of their after generations. It will be, therefore, unwise, nay madness, for Japan to plunge out only to be disfigured in this coming disaster." In short, our kindly friends say to us: "You are such a pleasant lot of people, always smiling, always bowing, and

doing things so prettily and nimbly, that we would always like to have you by to please us in our moments of leisure. So don't think; don't knit your brows; we will do all that for you. But be always smiling, bowing!" Tut, tut; the Japanese have little ambition to enlist themselves for circus clowns. Besides, the clowns have to do the hardest thinking in the world.

Well, this way of arguing is unpleasant at the best. It is hoped, however, that the reader has already seen that the points discussed have hardly justified any other treatment. Yet it will be ingratitude to dismiss in this manner the well-meant praises and warnings of the well-wishing friends. Let me add a few words of explanation.

It is singular that those writers and others who regard the momentousness of the occidental problems, in all their profoundness should invariably evince such pathetic childishness, whenever they talk or write about Japan, that we are almost compelled to doubt the serious nature of those questions. With them our recent changes are no more, nor no less, than a mere outcome of a mimicking faculty abnormally developed. I can well sympathize with their shuddering anxiety when I understand that they know no other ground upon which the changes of Japan rest. Yet, on the face of it, it is absurd to think that a community of men and women, with dignity enough to be called a nation, could explain itself, its different phases, its various ups and downs, merely upon such a principle. It was only the other day that the gossips of the world were talking with serious apprehensions about the fearful criminalities of many leading Frenchmen; but all is over and well now. The stability and individuality of a nation, with its experience and time-grounded wisdom, is hardly a fit subject to prattle about. "But it is a poor hand that points to France for an example of the stability