

be exposed to the same air that was breathed by ordinary mortals, or to the sun. No subjects dare gaze on them except their immediate personal attendants, nor touch nor handle the dishes from which they had eaten, nor the clothing they had worn. Their palace in Kioto was large enough to form a small town of itself, in the very centre of which was the sacred dwelling of the sovereign, the whole being carefully guarded by soldiers in the employment and pay of the Shogun. The duty of these soldiers was nominally to secure the safety of the sovereign for the time being, and his family, but in reality to see, on their master's behalf, that no attempt was made by the sovereign to recover the active government of the empire, which had been wrested from him. From such a life the present Emperor was rescued by the Revolution of 1868, and since that year few sovereigns in Europe could have taken a more active part in their government than His present Majesty of Japan has done in that of his empire, nor show more effectively than he has done, in every way that it is possible for a sovereign to take, a warm and intelligent interest in every measure that is calculated to promote the happiness, the prosperity, and the advancement of his people. It is not possible in this article to detail even a fraction of the changes which he has seen take place in his empire, nor of the active part which he himself has taken in their promotion and encouragement. But three great functions stand out, perhaps, in prominence among all those which he has from time to time performed.

The first of these three was the inauguration in 1872 of the first railway constructed in Japan; the second, in 1890, when the first Parliament, elected by the suffrages of people, under a constitution granted by himself, was opened by him in the presence of Peers and Commoners, and all the great dignitaries of court and state; and the

third and last was that which has just been celebrated, one more immediately personal to His Majesty and his Consort, but honored with no less acclamation and rejoicing on the part of all his subjects than were accorded to the other two.

The day fixed for this celebration, a month later than the date of the actual anniversary, had been eagerly looked forward to, and every preparation that was possible had been made to ensure its entire success. Excursion trains brought into the capital from all parts a huge influx of country visitors. Japanese art and foreign science had both been called upon to contribute to the decoration of the streets by day and their illumination by night. Triumphal arches had been erected in many parts of the city, especially in those through which their Majesties were to pass during the day, and streets, already gay with countless flags and lanterns, should have presented a brilliant sight, densely thronged as they would have been, and indeed actually were, with gaily dressed crowds of enthusiastic holiday makers.

All that was required was fine weather, and that unfortunately failed. Heavy rains fell during the previous night and through the whole of the evening and night of the day itself, spoiling the illuminations, and covering the streets with mud so as to make passage through them the reverse of easy or agreeable. But nothing dampened the ardour of the people. All day long they thronged every leading thoroughfare, and in tens of thousands they lined in dense crowds both sides of the long routes of two or three miles along which their Majesties were to pass while on the way to the review of the troops on the Aoyama parade ground. The day, as is usual in the Japanese court, began early for their Majesties. At eight in the morning, a religious service was celebrated in the chapel of the palace, in the presence of all the members of the Im-