

into their country the products of science in which the foreigners so much excelled, and to substitute for a grinding feudalism a constitutional government under which all men should possess equal rights and all should be safe in the full and unrestricted enjoyment of life, liberty and property. Fortunately for the country, the counsels of these men prevailed. Even before the last acts of the Revolutionary War—when the scene of the fighting had been removed from the vicinity of the Emperor's capital in the south to the far north, where the last adherents of the Tycoon carried on a hopeless struggle—the young Emperor publicly gave his sanction to the treaties previously concluded by the usurper with Foreign Powers; the diplomatic representatives of these Powers in Japan were invited to an audience in the sacred capital; and to the people at large it was thus notified that the friendship of the once despised and hated foreigner was thenceforth to be cultivated as that of an equal. And as to the internal economy of the empire, not only did the young Sovereign preside in person over the meetings of the Daijokwan, the supreme council of the Government, but, in the presence of its assembled members, including the highest nobles in the land, he took a solemn oath to the effect that a deliberative assembly should be constituted; that merit should be sought for and officials chosen on account of its possession; that justice should be impartially and rightly administered; and that the evil customs of bygone days should be gradually but rigidly eliminated. Soon afterwards the capital was removed from its ancient seat in Kioto to Tokio, and the Emperor left the city which for over twenty centuries had been the abode of his ancestors, to take up his residence in another which was a mere mushroom in point of years as compared with the venerable and sacred Kioto. In this city, with occasional

absences on short visits to other parts of his dominions, he has since steadily remained, and here was celebrated, last March, the twenty-fifth anniversary of his wedding.

It is by no means an easy task for Europeans, especially for English and Americans, to form any idea of the immense change that the Revolution caused in the position of the Sovereign of Japan towards her people. In 660 B.C. the Emperor Jimmu ascended the throne. From that date down to the twelfth century of the Christian era the government was, at least nominally, entirely in the hands of his successors. But in the middle of that century all real power was wrested from them by military adventurers, by successive families of whom the Government was administered, nominally as the Emperor's vice-regents, but in reality with absolute independence, down to the year 1868. The last family of these usurpers was that of Tokugawas, whose founder was Iyeyasu, perhaps the greatest of all the Shoguns. By him Tokio was first established, and the whole empire reduced to a condition of peace and order that remained unbroken for over two centuries.

The Vice-regency of Iyeyasu lasted from 1603 to 1617, and in 1868, when the Revolution took place, the viceregal throne was occupied, for the fifteenth and last time, by a member of his family. In the meantime, the true and legitimate sovereigns were little more than names to their subjects, though names invested with a sanctity that was little short of divine. From the twelfth century down to the Revolution, forty-six sovereigns had in succession filled the throne, but the lives of each and all had been passed in absolute seclusion in their palaces in the sacred capital of Kioto. All were direct descendants of the Gods, and all were supposed to be direct and actual inheritors of all the virtues and holiness which the Gods themselves possessed. Their persons were too sacred to be allowed to touch the ground, to