

A Magnificent Career

Some Incidents in the Life of Prince Ito, the Grand Old Man of Japan

All Japan went into mourning when the famous Japanese statesman Prince Ito was assassinated at Harbin, Korea. He was known as the Grand Old Man of the East, even as Gladstone was known as the Grand Old Man of Britain. He had just left his carriage at 9 o'clock in the morning, when five shots were fired at him from behind. The murderer, who described himself as a Korean, was arrested and said he wanted to avenge his country, as Prince Ito had had several persons closely related to him executed. Prince Ito was in Korea to meet the Russian minister of finance and discuss the future of the Manchurian railway.

The biography of Ito Hirobumi is the story of the formation of a nation—the transition of forty millions of people from an antique feudalism to modern civilization, and a militant strength that has lifted the country into the foremost rank.

Ito, born in 1838, was the only child of a petty samurai of the Choshu clan. As a boy he went to the school of Yoshida Torajiro, of whom Robert Louis Stevenson wrote in his "Men and Books." Ito began life as a retainer of the Lord Choshu, one of the most powerful of Japanese nobles. The Shoguns or Tycoons, in those days overshadowed the ancient throne of the Mikados, though it had stood for twenty-seven centuries. Against the supremacy of this military caste of the samurai many of the nobles rebelled. Ito was commissioned by Choshu to inquire into matters, and he reported to his chief that the "barbarians"—in other words the Europeans, then much discussed and disliked in Japan—were much more powerful than the Japanese, and that the only way to fight them was to imitate their methods.

Choshu took his retainer's advice; bows and arrows, spears and armour were discarded for the rifle in his army, and, for the first time in the history of Japan, the right to bear arms was opened to others than those qualified by birth. This was not enough for young Ito. "Let us," he said, "study the ways of these foreigners in their homes."

His chief consented, and Ito, with four other youths, left Japan for Europe. The others were Inouye Kaoru, Yamao Yozo, Yendo Keisuke and Inouye Masaru. These five young men all rose to distinction.

There were at the time two pre-eminent capital offences in the Land of the Rising Sun: one was to let in foreigners, the other for a native to leave Japan for a foreign land. An English merchant, Mr. Keswick, helped them to break the law of their country. Here is Ito's own account of it:—

We hid in the outer yard while Mr. Keswick completed arrangements for us, and there we disguised ourselves by cutting off our queues, and putting on coarse clothes, such as sailors wear. Once Mr. Keswick became alarmed, and told us he could not put us aboard the ship, as it was contrary to law. We threatened to commit suicide, and then he consented to get us aboard.

Before the Mast

This vessel only took them, however, as far as Shanghai, and a strange blunder brought it about that the Japanese emissaries destined to have such great influence on their country's future reached England as sailors before the mast. Ito and his companion were furnished with a letter of introduction to a person of influence in London, but when they presented themselves at the offices of a British shipping firm at Shanghai they knew but one word of English, which was "navigation." By dint of repeating it many times the pair contrived to make it understood that they wished to go to England but the agent, ignorant of their identity, imagined that they desired to work their passage, and shipped them as seamen on a sailing vessel, which doubled the Cape of Good Hope and took some five months on the journey.

So it fell out that the future Prime Minister of Japan saw London first on a wet night, and crouched hungry in a shelter by the docks while his companion

went out on the great adventure of buying a loaf of bread.

This was in 1862. The two were in London about a year, learning, above all things, the lesson that Japan could no longer keep the world at arm's length. The lesson was strongly enforced by the fact that war had broken out with Britain, France, the United States, Russia and Holland. The brave Japanese had no chance against modern arms. Ito strongly counselled reforms, and was suspected of treachery in consequence.

Attempts were made to assassinate Ito and Inouye. The latter, afterwards Count Inouye, was cut down in the streets and left for dead. In pursuit of Ito a number of armed men entered at night the hotel in which he was staying, but he was successfully hidden from them by a young girl, hardly in her teens, who happened also to be a guest in the hotel.



The Late Prince Ito of Japan

and escaped uninjured. The young girl subsequently became his wife, and has, with all the charms and dignity that are so eminently characteristic of Japanese ladies of rank, been a worthy partner of his greatness.

Three years of bitter civil war followed the bombardment and treaty of Shimonoeki, the net outcome of which was that feudalism and caste perished, Japan was united under the Mikado, and the ideas of Ito and his friends gained ground in the country. It is common to say that New Japan dates from 1868—in that single generation greater progress has been made than by any other people in the world—a transformation effected without parallel in the history of nations.

Ito gained the confidence of the Emperor. In 1868 he was made Governor of Hiogo, but his first duties were practically those of interpreter to the boy Emperor when the latter first saw the foreign representatives. In 1870, he was sent abroad to study the question of banking. This mission resulted in the adoption of banking regulations which form the basis of the present Japanese laws. Ito also took part in an unsuccessful mission to persuade the foreign governments to relinquish their extra-territorial rights in Japan.

Four Times Premier

In 1881 the Emperor issued a proclamation declaring that ten years later he would grant a Constitution to the people of Japan, and Ito was sent to America and Europe to study the written and unwritten constitutional law of the leading countries. He reported in favor of a form of government which was practically adopted. He himself became the first president of the Japanese House of Peers, and at the age of forty-four he was appointed Premier, afterwards resigning that office in order to become president of the newly formed Privy Council.

Prince Ito was four times Premier, and

was at the head of the government during the war with China. He had less to do with the much greater war with Russia. He was in St. Petersburg when the crisis came, and was understood to disapprove of a warlike policy.

After the war which ended so disastrously for Russia, he refused to act as peace plenipotentiary, but both during and after the war he served as Resident General in Korea. He negotiated a treaty with the Emperor which turned over all Korea's external relations to Japan.

As resident general he "advised" the Korean Government and when the Emperor of Korea became impossible he brought about a revolution, which unseated the monarch, and for a time threw the country into a state of chaos.

Seeing that both Russia and China coveted Korea, his work in that country showed him to be Japan's strong man, and, as he was always on friendly terms with the Mikado, his success was assured. Several attempts were made upon the prince's life while he was in Korea, but he was always closely guarded by Japanese police, and he escaped unscathed.

Fifteen months ago Prince Ito vacated the post he had held with so much success, and returned to Tokyo, where he assumed the office of President of the Privy Council.

Chinese statesmen may be surprised to know that the man who directed the finances of Japan died without having enriched himself with any greater possession than a little seaside villa, whose windows looked out on a garden. The pretty place, however, had a fame of its own. Here he made foreign, and especially English, visitors welcome. Our language he spoke fluently. Like Edmund Burke, he seems to have impressed all who came in contact with him with an idea of his natural greatness of character. He was rather short in stature, but wiry and sturdy. He dressed in European style, wearing a "frockcoat which would do credit to a West End tailor." His villa was as European as a house at Twickenham, and his table was generally covered with English newspapers and reviews.

MAXIMS AND EPIGRAMS

By E. H. Harriman

The Master Builder of Railroads
(1848-1909).

Grasp an idea and work it out to a successful conclusion. That is about all there is in life for any of us.

People seem to take more stock in a man who talks than in a man who acts. But this is a day devoted to isms, and it will pass.

Every tide has its rise and fall, and one would be living in a fool's paradise not to take the ebb into consideration in figuring out his future requirements.

The first law of all our civilization is the co-operation of all individuals to improve the conditions of life.

To achieve what the world calls success, a man must attend strictly to business and keep a little in advance of the times.

There are two things that menace the prosperity of this country—idle money and idle labor. The one is as mischievous as the other.

It has always seemed wiser to me to sleep on the roof than in the basement.

"Pull" can never carry a man far. It is hard work and application that count.

Fifty years from now five per cent. return on capital will be considered as good as ten per cent. now. But that need not worry you or me.

We have had monkey-dinners, and the idle and foolish vapors and routs of society. Now is the time for less champagne and truffles and more roast beef and milk.

Matrimony is not essentially a business proposition. In fact, it never should be regarded as such. But, nevertheless, marriage often plays an important part in the race for what is commonly called success.

Success is the accomplishment of any one task as well or better than the same task can be accomplished by another.

To the young man who would be a success in life I would give these hints: Always be courteous, always be friendly and do the best you can under all circumstances. When you marry, choose a good woman, a co-operative woman, one who will interest herself in whatever work it may be incumbent upon you to do.

The people have the get-rich-quick bacillus. It's a fearful disease. It's the only menace to this country.



LEARN
TO BE
AN
ENGINEER

Complete Course of Instruction in Stationary Engineering given you by Mail at your own home. Learn in your spare time. Special instruction also in Traction Engineering, Gas and Gasoline, Marine and Locomotive Engineering. We guarantee to fit you for any examination for Government license. Free circular on request. Write today.

Canadian Correspondence
College, Limited
Dept. G TORONTO, Canada

\$200 Profit in Five Days

Sounds big, but we have the figures to show for it. It was the result of a man investing \$50.00 in South Melville Addition. There are just as good opportunities open for you in this live Saskatchewan town. Two years ago there was not a 2nd broken in Melville; today it is a prosperous divisional point of the G.T.F. Write for free booklet, maps, etc.

Melville Land Co. Ltd.
Union Bank Building - WINNIPEG

Genuine DISC Graphophone

Columbia

In beautiful oak cabinet with latest song box, latest aluminium scientific tone arm and revolving horn, exactly as shown. No crane, stand nor rubber tubing required. So simple, no attachments.

\$35 ONLY
including 18 large selections of your own choice.



Pay \$6.50 Down and \$4 Monthly
We are the only firm in the west selling on easy terms at this price. We sell all makes of Talking Machines and Records. Satisfaction guaranteed. Lowest prices. Easy payments, from \$6.50 monthly. No C.O.D. No objectionable rules nor references required. Return if not as represented, and we pay the freight.

OUR SPECIALS:

Columbia 10 inch Double Discs (8 different selections) \$26. new velvet sails, \$1 any machine, last for ever. Foreign records now ready.

Gold Moulded Cylinder Records, Edison Bell and Columbia, brand new, 25 cents, worth 40 cents.

Columbia Indestructible Cylinder Records, 45c, beautiful tone, cannot break, \$1 any machine.

Four and Five Minute cylinder records, 50c, choice selections.

Columbia Indestructible 4-minute Records now arrived, 65 cents. The only 4-minute Record that's right.

Edison Gem Graphophone and 18 selections, \$19.50.

Columbia Improved Cylinder Graphophone and 18 selections, \$21.00.

Columbia and Victor Disc Machines, with 18 large selections \$27.50. The disc style reigns supreme.

Second-hand machines at bargain prices. Old machines taken in trade; 40 styles of talking machines; 10,000 records; 40 styles of pianos.

Biggest Piano and Phonograph house in Canada. Wholesale and retail.

WINNIPEG PIANO CO.

295 PORTAGE AVE., WINNIPEG

Columbia, Berliner, Victor and Edison experts. Get Free Booklet, No. 81.