

pire. Assemblies were convoked to ascertain the people's views on live questions of the day, and to bring about a general harmony between the head and members of the state. A hearty response was given to this generous call, and before long a system of self-government was established in towns, cities and provinces. Indeed by 1889, Japan had a constitution of her own and was flourishing as a Constitutional Monarchy. She seems to have been peculiarly adapted to receive western civilization. She had developed certain characteristics that gave her the capacity to absorb new ideas and the aptitude to put them to the greatest possible advantage. She had not passed from barbarism to civilization in a day, but had, by a series of evolutions, advanced in power and knowledge.

The war with China in 1894-5 awakened Japan to a sense of her possibilities. It also determined her relative position among the powers and revealed her true friends. Russia, from all appearances, was to be her great rival, and Britain her close ally. The interests of the Japanese seemed to coincide with those of the British, and their common cause gave birth to a mutual alliance. There was another power, however, whose very nature made her relations with both those countries necessarily friendly; and, finally, led them to form a trio to preserve peace and to foster trade in the East. This was the United States. Indeed, away back in 1853-4 a certain amount of intercourse existed between the American and the Japanese. Commodore Perry was the first to create a feeling of amity between his countrymen and the subjects of the Mikado; and, as years elapsed, the connections of the two countries became more and more of a friendly nature. Thus, to-day, we find Japan, Britain and United States standing side by side in the East.

With her constitution in good working order, Japan set out on an era of progress without parallel in the history of nations. She advanced by leaps and bounds during the ten years following the struggle with China; and, then, a great war created a stampede in every line of trade and commerce and in every sphere of social and national prosperity. The Boxer Rising, of 1900, brought all the Powers together in order to quell the revolt that threatened to grow to vast proportions, and that endangered the lives of foreigners in the confines of the Celestial Empire. The science of the Europeans soon overcame the might of China; though, had the movement embraced a greater area and had the Chinese, with all their courage and endurance as soldiers, been trained into a proper fighting machine, nothing could have overcome their numbers. However, peace was established and terms of compensation were arranged with the Court at Peking. Russia, after the excitement had passed