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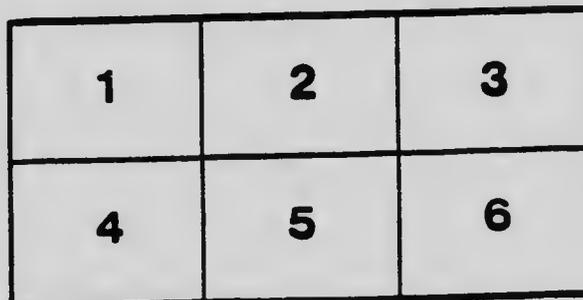
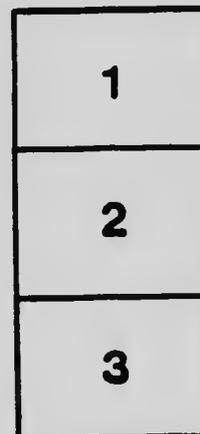
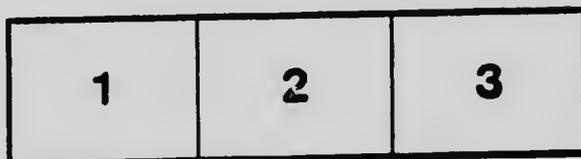
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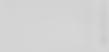
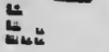
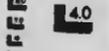
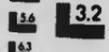
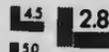
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AN ADDRESS

ON

"JAPAN, OUR ALLY IN THE FAR EAST,"

BY

W. T. R. PRESTON, Esq.

Commissioner of Commerce

FOR THE

Dominion of Canada,

DELIVERED IN THE

Y.M.C.A. HALL,

VICTORIA, HONGKONG,

MARCH 21st, 1908.

As reported by the "South China Morning Post"

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"JAPAN, THE ALLY OF BRITAIN."

LECTURE BY *Mr. W. T. R. PRESTON.*

A most interesting evening was spent on Saturday, under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. Literary and Debating Society, when Mr. W. T. R. Preston, Commissioner of Commerce for Canada, delivered a lecture upon "Japan, the Ally of Britain." Mr. R. A. Lowry acted as Chairman, and invited criticism at the close of the lecture. Mr. Preston's views were then criticised by two or three members of the Society. In replying to critics and to queries, Mr. Preston expressed his willingness, if he found it possible, to deliver another lecture on debateable points next Fall. A very hearty vote of thanks was accorded him. The lecture was as follows:—

The inclination or ability to criticise and judge is a birthright. From the earliest infancy the dis-

criminatory faculties are developed. Without the exercise of these qualities humanity would be wanting in intellectual vigour, and no reasonable conclusion could be reached on any subject. Criticism, in dividing the wheat from the chaff, the right from the wrong, is the basis of judgment. But in the complex character of human organization diverse judgments are arrived at by different individuals, who may be giving attention to identical subjects. They balance the same question upon different mental scales, and arrive at exactly opposite conclusions. Respecting their opinions one cannot say that either is right or wrong. We examine the characteristics of individuals and nations from entirely different standpoints and we cannot agree. There is only one phase that we should always be perfectly sure of—that is the facts about which there should always be absolute certainty.

I have little sympathy with the school of thought that believes the world is more likely to go wrong than right. On the contrary, I have

the most unbounded confidence in the correct judgment of the general community. That judgment rarely goes wrong, when an opportunity is afforded of seeing the facts of the case. "Vox Populi, Vox Dei," has a peculiar significance. And if it does go wrong on a misapprehension it will set itself right at an early opportunity. The inclination to base judgment on false premises is not common, nor is uncharitable judgment a ruling trait in human character. We would, on the whole, I am inclined to believe, judge charitably rather than otherwise. Undoubtedly there are exceptions to this general rule, and it sometimes happens that the exceptions are the ones from whom the most forcible expression of opinion are heard. An exhibition of that spirit may grow out of an imperfect acquaintance with all the circumstances bearing upon the question which for the moment engages attention, or it may be that prejudice, in some form or another, is allowed to rule our better judgment, or, possibly, some sinister motive may prompt a line of conduct that a more sensitive conscience would unhesitatingly condemn.

Nevertheless, individuals, communities and nations not infrequently become the object of such criticism, the consequences of which have serious and far-reaching influences. We are all subject, in a more or less degree, to national or racial prejudices. These usually become modified by mingling with the great world beyond our early narrow surroundings. But in com-

parison with the views that we may entertain about other lands, claim the right to believe that our own kindred, nation and race is "the salt of the earth." No one will question the fearless patriotism that prompts such a conviction. We are the possessors of a high standard of civilization that the centuries have evolved, and we have every possible reason to be proud of our national attainments. It is, therefore, perhaps, natural that we should assume the position of sitting in judgment on other races. But in doing so, it should not be forgotten that they have a civilization that they are just as proud of as we are of ours, and they believe that they just as much reason. In criticising them, therefore, care should be taken to avoid conclusions permeated by racial or national prejudices, because action of this nature may not only be seriously unjust to others, but it will also have a tendency to warp our own minds.

In the presentation of these general principles I may be permitted to preface my remarks in addressing you on "Japan our ally in the Far East." I am sure I need not add that I have no other end to serve than to frankly give expression to impressions formed on my mind by personal intercourse with the peoples of the Empire of Japan during a recent visit extending over several busy months. While I was there in an official capacity, I was not by any means confined to an intercourse with the official life of the nation. My enquiries led me into a much

broader field. In anything that I may have to say, I will not attempt to enter into competition with the, possibly, more observant visitors than myself, whose stay in the islands may have extended over as many days as mine did months; and whose personal experiences were possibly limited to a call at one or two ocean ports between the arrival and departure of steamships, with a few hours in Tokio thrown by way of variety.

An incident that can scarcely be avoided now is the fact that Japan has been for several months the subject of the most unrelenting criticism on the part of influential sections of the western world. The reading public might, possibly, have become tired of the accounts of the Nihilistic crimes in Russia: it may have been the off season in political interests between great contending factions; and perhaps it had not been forgotten by well known world-wide newspaper correspondents, that in the course of a recent war, a certain nation established a record in modern history by treating foreign journalists with the most marked courtesy at a point far-distant from the scene of active military operations, towards which they were continually casting longing and anxious aspirations. For these, and other unexplainable reasons, it may have been considered advisable to furnish the world, if not with authentic news, at least with exceedingly readable matter. Japan, it was believed, offered a suitable mark for criticism which might interest the

public eye. And as a result of this course, prejudices have been created on the one hand that may possibly never be dispelled, while, on the other, currents have been set in motion that might lead in the future to very troublesome complications.

Take a momentary glance at the recent history of Japan. Within little more than the lifetime of the youngest within sound of my voice, those millions of people were governed by a military autocracy possessing all the objectionable characteristics that had long since faded into antiquity before the European heroes of the middle ages appeared on the world's stage. Less than forty years ago the only protection that was afforded to certain classes of human life among the masses of the Japanese population was the whimsical disinclination of military martinetts to shed innocent blood. The line of cleavage between patrician and plebian was more distinct than in ancient Rome. The laws to which the people had to submit were the personal commands of those who for the time being were in absolute authority in the various Provinces, although it must be admitted that many of these were in the general interest of the public. The only notice that the people received of laws or regulations that were declared for their government, was in the form of proclamations that appeared from time to time on the official Bulletin boards.

Compare that period with the present situation. Now there is an enlightened Emperor as the ruling authority, responsible government

exists under a popular constitution, the Civil power is predominant; ample protection is afforded human life; the liberty of the Press is assured; the right of public meetings and freedom of discussion is allowed; an Imperial educational system as exists in no perfect form as any in the world, and the only laws in existence are those enacted by the people themselves. Need I say, there has been no such extraordinary romance in national development, of which there is any record in ancient or modern history.

Japan truly presents a picture unique in every particular. The nation with meteoric brilliancy burst upon the world as one of the acknowledged Great Powers. Almost before the civilization of the West was aware of the fact, a new claimant, with an unbroken dynastic lineage reaching back to the period of Babylon's zenith, demanded a not unimportant place in the deliberations of the controlling nations of the globe. The result of the war that Japan had with China was a foregone conclusion from its inception. At the conclusion of that sanguinary conflict, if a concert of western Powers had refrained from interfering, and by their action thus preventing Japan from securing the reasonable results of her victories, it is possible that half a century might have elapsed before the Land of the Rising Sun would have taken a particularly prominent place among the nations of the world. But western diplomacy stepped in, Russia was allowed to take temporary posses-

sion of Manchuria, under a promise to evacuate the great Chinese Province at the expiration of a stated period. It was a pledge which every western nation was convinced would never be voluntarily fulfilled. And when the time came for the retirement of the Czar's forces, no combination of western Powers could be effected, possessing either sufficient courage or interest to present an ultimatum to the Great Bear of Europe and Asia. But to one eastern nation the undisputed presence of Russia in Manchuria meant a constant and appalling menace to all hopes and aspirations for a glorious future.

You know the story, probably better than I do. Japanese kept their counsel for ten long years. Quietly and determinedly they prepared to stake everything on an effort to drive the Russian usurper back to his national boundaries at the appointed time. The nation was as one man. Such patriotic preparations and secrecy find no parallel in history. Only once in the war was the result of a battle in doubt, and that was for a while at Liaoyang. With that Rubicon crossed, the world calmly awaited the final result, believing that it was only a question of time when, from Port Arthur to the Siberian boundaries, the aggressor of ten years earlier would inevitably retire. But this time the West kept its hands off,—the blunder of ten years earlier, resulting in a second war, the continuous fighting of the largest armies the world had ever seen together, entailing a loss of half a million lives, the capture

of the most impregnable fortress military genius ever constructed, the destruction of one of the greatest war fleets that had ever been constructed, together with an expenditure of hundreds of millions of pounds, was not repeated. Japan came out of the conflict with a reputation for military genius that might have been envied by Napoleon Bonaparte, with the most stupendous collection of war trophies ever captured by a nation, and with a military supremacy that made the world wonder at the possibilities of the future, if this power failed to be controlled by the wise judgment of peaceful statesmen. Western diplomacy recognised in the result of the war the advent of a new force to be reckoned with in the councils of the nations, and especially an unwelcome addition to the complications of the Pacific Ocean.

Japan has reached a high place among the nations of the world. Whether the influence and importance of the Empire will increase, or otherwise, is looked upon as an unsolved problem. There are those who earnestly desire that it may be otherwise, and who cling to the hope that the solution of the future will be in the direction of the ambition of the Empire receiving an unquestionable check. I must admit that I neither entertain that view, or that hope. The greatest offence that Japan is guilty of according to the views of some, is that her statesmen are ambitious for the Empire's advancement. The world must acknowledge that na-

tional as well as personal ambition is a commendable quality. And that which is recognised as commendable in western nations should receive the same approval when it appears in Asia. I firmly believe, and I fervently hope, that the solution of the suggested problem will be in the direction of greater influence and importance on the part of Japan in the future. No check is likely to be given to the importance of the Empire in this generation. The national patriotism is evidently making all the necessary provisions so as to be fully prepared for undesirable contingencies, no matter from what quarter they may appear. It may also be said, in all fairness, that as the pioneer in the East in the adoption of western thought and civilization in the government of the Empire, anything that would tend to weaken the force of that example, with other Asiatic nations, might well be regarded as a world-wide calamity. The reasons for these conclusions are, I believe, obvious to every careful student of life and character in the East. It ought to be recognised that the West cannot always keep the East in the place of tutelage.

From the present outlook, the conclusion is imperative that nothing can retard the development and progress of Japan. There is no reason why the wheels of progress should revolve in any other direction. It is contrary to the recognised principles of national growth that there should be any turning back at this juncture. The history of nations in the dawn of their existence is always

one of progression, never of retrogression. Given a fair start and the movement can only be in one direction. National decadence never appears during the early centuries of growth. It is an undoubted fact that Japan has begun to grow.

The cultivatable portion of Japan is less than the square mileage of Holland, and upon that area in the Empire there is a population of forty-five millions. It may be true that the development of its agricultural resources has reached the fullest possibilities. One may almost say that it is not within the range of possibility that there shall be further development there, unless experimental science reveals other methods. Every available plot of land is cultivated most assiduously. The most casual observer is impressed with this immediately on his arrival in Japan. Inasmuch as there is an addition of not less than half a million souls annually to the population of the Empire, it naturally follows that there must be expansion in some direction, and that an avenue of huge possibilities must be discovered. The cultivation of the soil is only one of the great channels that are open for the growth of nations. In mining operations there is room for further development, but the requirements of the population will not be met in that direction. It does not require a very careful investigation in order to reach the conclusion that the only outlet for the natural requirements of the people is on industrial lines. It will be there that the foundation for the greatest changes in Japan

will be effected. No nation to-day, with the possible exception of China, and it will scarcely be a consideration within the first half of the present century, affords such an outlet for expansion in industrial life as Japan. Notwithstanding the heavy drain on the life of the nation by the recent war, it is likely that the average increase in the population in recent years will be maintained, owing to changes in the hitherto accustomed mode of life, and by the adoption of improved hygienic and sanitary measures. For this expansion of population some means must be afforded for the people to earn a living at home. Neither the United States or Germany after the great wars of the sixties and seventies offered such a field for natural expansion on industrial lines. In the case of Japan it is imperative. The interests of the population make it a necessity. This is the situation that the world at large will soon be forced to take note of.

Judging from what has already taken place in the Empire, the evidences of which are to be seen on every hand, it is fair to presume that a degree of industrial expansion will take place in Japan that will surprise the world. An exceedingly satisfactory phase of this new life in the Far East is the fact that so many of the manufacturing establishments are under the direction of Japanese who have been trained in industrial centres of Europe and America, and who therefore have a thoroughly practical acquaintance with every department. Not a few

of these establishments employ thousands and hundreds of hands. Then there are other enterprises of a smaller character which will be expanded to much greater proportions as soon as the necessary capital is available. With the introduction of western methods and labour saving machinery, a tremendous impetus has been given to individual and national life. This is certain to be accelerated to a much greater degree in the future than has been experienced in the past. Capitalists will soon become aware of these avenues for profitable investment.

In connection with this expansion of industrial life in Japan it might be as well to note that certain phases of restriction on labour, which characterise Labour Union organization in the West, are not likely, in the immediate future, to flourish in the Empire. The adoption of the general principle that all men should exercise the same capacity and earning power will not find favour in Japan. The Japanese have learned none of these things. It must not be forgotten that they are naturally very industrious. This inclination to labour, coupled with their intense ambition, will continue to prompt the fullest exercise of personal effort, and the widest possible range of personal ambition. The majority may not have heard the Divine injunction, that "man shall earn his bread by the sweat of his brow," but they live up to it. And they do not show a disposition to recognise any way, human or otherwise, than limits their capacity

at less than the best efforts that they are capable of putting forth. These are the conditions that are so singularly evident in the industrial life of Japan. With these national characteristics the products of western labour must compete, not only in the markets of the Empire, but, in course of time, throughout the entire East as well. It appears therefore to be the natural conclusion that, unless western labour interests are placed upon the highest possible productive level, grave doubts may well be entertained whether the West will hold its own in competition with this singularly evident expansion of industrial life in Japan.

With industrial and commercial expansion on sound business lines, there need be no limit to the aspirations of individual and national life in this Far Eastern Empire. The people are beginning to feel their capability. The business capacity of the nation is increasing by leaps and bounds. There are already extensive commercial enterprises, managed upon European methods, the individual members of which have accumulated large fortunes. I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the permanent industrial and financial stability of Japan is as certain as that which has already been secured in recent decades by Germany, the United States and Canada. The only noticeable feature that occurs to an observer in Japan, is that Japan is likely to reach the objective point of absolute success more expeditiously than was the case with

the countries that have been named. This conclusion is suggested in view of the fact that there is such an enormous supply of suitable labour immediately available. If the nation continues to be as industrious and sober as it is to-day, its pre-eminent future may be regarded as assured beyond the shadow of doubt. Japan has failed so far to adopt in its national life much that is not commendable in western customs, and it will be a reasonable subject of surprise if the nation does not make provision, by education or otherwise, to avoid the national pit-falls that are so painfully evident in the western world, and which might possibly destroy the sober character of the nation as it appears to-day.

To the Japanese responsibilities of life are always serious. From the time the pupil goes to his first school, until he passes out to engage in the activities of life, everything bears the impress of earnestness. Even the school and college amusements are calculated as much to promote physical development as to furnish relaxation for the mind. On all sides one cannot avoid observing the evidences of the natural capacity of the race for industry. Individually they are also intensely ambitious for their personal welfare. They possess a predominant characteristic to improve their condition. They are naturally thrifty and economical, and on account of the national prejudices about settling all accounts before the New Year, they are more likely than not to live within their incomes. All the world over, as at home, a Japanese will

accept conditions of employment to-day, with a view of qualifying for advancement to-morrow. There are always higher rungs on the ladder to which there is an unexpressed but determined aspiration. Consider this characteristic in connection with the natural adaptability of the race, with the singular intelligence that must be acknowledged, coupled with apparent soberness, morality and love of home—such a combination of qualities, even in a moderate degree, can bring about but one result, nationally as well as individually.

The passion for sport, so far, has not taken possession of the general public. The drinking cafes and beer gardens, which are looked upon as essentially necessary in the life of western nations, have taken no material hold in the national character of Japan. The great majority expend their energies on other pursuits. Idleness, I need not add, is far from being a national characteristic. It suits the Japanese character to be busy, even if it results in no direct profit, rather than in doing nothing. Add to this naturally industrious disposition, the inducement of earning, during sixteen hours a day, the same proportionate remuneration that is received for eight hours, and the Japanese will work for the longer period, and he will not fail in any particular to the full extent of mental and physical capacity. A reasonable idea of the competition that the West will have to meet in the not distant future may be entertained from this candid statement of the outlook.

The general effect of such characteristics in a nation, containing a population of forty or fifty millions, suddenly introduced into the competitive markets of the world, cannot be otherwise than that of being a disturbing factor in the great industrial centres of the West. It will undoubtedly create a demand for cheaper labour than is available under present conditions in Europe and America. In order to secure the advantages of cheaper production, Japan will become a favourite objective point for foreign capital in industrial enterprises. This aspect, which at first sight seems appalling in its magnitude, in view of its possible relation to western industrial life, has minimising and compensatory qualifications. The development of Japanese national life on the lines indicated will be accompanied by such domestic changes, that there will be a necessity for conditions that are now undreamed of. Markets will be opened in Japan for the world's commodities to an almost unlimited extent. These changes, great as they are, and disturbing as they must be in important particulars, to various interests in the West, will undoubtedly assist in promoting the highest type of civilization throughout the entire world.

Within the period that will elapse with the middle of the present century, there will not be room in Japan for its enormous population, unless every community becomes a veritable hive of industry. Even then the supply of labour will be practically inexhaustible. I have

already said that Japanese labour is adaptable, sober and intelligent. The Japanese character in these respects appears to be cast in a different mould from that which western civilization has so far come in contact with in its anxious search for new peoples anywhere else in the world. The mental enquiry is natural, as to whether the changed conditions and surroundings of life in Japan, incident to the mass of the population engaging in the strain of industrial life, to which they have not been accustomed, will not bring about mental and physical deterioration—such a condition of affairs as is unfortunately presented in many of the industrial centres of the western world. But apparently as a probable preventative against such a contingency, it should be remembered that, by the admirable compulsory educational system, intellectual development rather than deterioration, is likely to take place; while the physical training and discipline, which form such an important part of the national conscription, will have a pronounced tendency to preserve the physical stamina of the race.

I have said that the Japanese take the responsibilities of life seriously. You will find this permeating every class, from the highest official to the humble peasant. This spirit of serious responsibility is singularly evident in the Public Service. While official etiquette is built upon the most advanced models, yet the government departments are managed with more business routine than prevails in many

western countries, where government service is synonymous with the least degree of labour that is possible. In every quarter of the Japanese Service there is an intense anxiety for the advancement of the interests of the Empire. The officials appear to be imbued with the idea that everything depends upon their personal exertions. It is no exaggeration to say that this seems to be the controlling thought in every department of the Japanese Service. Governors and Chief Secretaries of Provinces and Prefectures do not consider it beneath their dignity to discuss the merest details of the various interests of their respective districts, in connection with the possibility of securing some share of the general trade expansion. This oneness of purpose is also evident in the military and naval life of the nation. The duties attached to their callings appear to be the central thought of their every day existence. Social distinction and its varied interests have no attraction whatever for any of them. In fact it is only at some great Imperial function that the military or naval leaders are ever to be seen, unless an opportunity is afforded of coming in contact with them at their various headquarters.

It should not be forgotten that the Japanese are a reading people. Perhaps it is not generally known that there are more than four hundred newspapers and periodicals published in the vernacular in Tokio alone. Add to this, the publications that are issued in other large towns, and a reasonable idea may be form-

ed of the means that are available for the circulation of information in the Empire. The appreciation of this fact may assist in dispelling the view, existing in some quarters, that Japan may possibly be "a hewer of wood and a drawer of water" of the western nations. The sooner that impression of the character of the Empire is dispelled the better. There could scarcely be a greater illusion. The actual situation should be frankly and fairly understood. It may startle some people to realise that the people of Japan regard themselves as the equal of any of the western nations. It is true that the nation has not gone through the refining process, out of which has evolved the civilization that western nations have such abundant reason to be proud. But Japan is beginning at the point that the West has now reached. The Empire has studied our systems and customs, as displayed in all the great national experiences, and it has adopted much in the political life and domestic economy of the nation, which cost Europe and America centuries of experience, rivers of blood and oceans of treasure.

Japan is prepared to contribute its share to the peaceful advancement of the world. That which its contribution may lack in some particulars, it is fair to believe, will be amply compensated for in others. Japanese claim that they have shown a disposition to treat all other nations fairly, and there is no secret that they are looking for corresponding generous treatment elsewhere. The Far East will not sub-

mit always, even inferentially, to have a stigma placed on the race. The resentment may not come in a declaratory manner, it may not be heralded with a blast of trumpets, but as sure as day follows night, its effects will be noticeable. The continual references in the West to the so-called "Yellow Peril," is certain to create a spirit of resentment in the masses which may possibly have far-reaching results in the not distant future. Statesmen may do their utmost to prevent possible complications of that nature, but there are ways in which an indignant populace can succeed in outwitting the controlling influences of the most astute political and official forces.

It may not be out of place here to refer to the somewhat singular position that Japan occupies on account of the unrestricted liberty that foreigners enjoy at the great shipping ports of the Empire. This is especially the case in respect to newspapers published in foreign languages. Some of these journals are controlled and edited by those who are notoriously anti-Japanese, having no sympathy with Japanese individual or national aspirations. They have no stake in the Empire but that of residence. Scarcely a week passes but readers of these periodicals find the most objectionable references to Japanese character, administration and authority. The government is ridiculed, the administration is pronounced incompetent, the public finances are alleged to be on the verge of bankruptcy, a slight deficit between re-

venue and expenditure is given as an illustration of the pending inability of the nation to meet current obligations, an excess of imports over exports shows a mythical balance of trade leading to a financial crisis, decisions of legal tribunals are called in question, and the authorities are accused of encouraging the spoliation of foreigners. Nothing whatever is left undone to weaken respect for authority at home, and to destroy public confidence abroad. Japanese are referred to as "Japs" and "natives," phrases which are just as objectionable to them as "Saurkraut," "Johnny Crapeau," or "Cockney" would be if applied to an educated German, Frenchman, or Englishman. The spirit with which many Japanese regard this situation is one of suppressed indignation. Others profess absolute indifference. The outside world read these papers that are published in English within the Empire, and on the basis of what is prepared for them on these lines, undertake to misjudge the character of the Japanese, as well as the financial, political and commercial situation of the nation.

What would take place in Berlin, I wonder, if a French journalist established a newspaper there, and followed such a line in respect to the Kaiser's government? Consider what would happen in Paris if a German had the indecency to court similar notoriety there; or in Russia if a Japanese should go to St. Petersburg with such an object in view, or of an Austrian undertook

such a mission to Genoa or Milan. Even in London, patience under such aggravating circumstances might reach the straining point in an unmistakable manner. The liberty that is allowed to foreigners in any country may unconsciously broaden into license. Then it becomes intolerable and leads to local resentment, the full consequences of which none can foretell. It seems to be forgotten by those who are referred to, that the Japanese are as sensitive in their national pride as the peoples of the West.

When Japan entered upon the war with Russia, there can be no question but that the public counted the stupendous financial strain that it would involve. No people under like circumstances ever met their obligations with a greater degree of patriotism. They are bearing their burdens with as much light-heartedness and determination as the United States, Germany, France, Austria, Italy and Great Britain have done in recent years under like circumstances. The Japanese who would take any other ground would be an anomaly. I do not know where he can be found. There is anything rather than unrest or dissatisfaction at the war taxes that have to be paid. If any other than the view which prevails in Japan was in evidence, the Empire would not be worthy of a place among the Great Powers. A share in the controlling influences of the world would certainly be an unsuitable authority for the Empire. The people of Japan realise that they have received full value for the cost

of the war with Russia, as nations compute value from war at any time. The world may rest assured that Japan will emerge from the responsibility of the war burden within a reasonable time, and with as high a credit for financial stability as any of the other nations to which reference has been made.

A careful enquiry into the commercial conditions of the Empire in view of a much desired expansion of Canadian trade with the Far East, revealed the gratifying fact that Japan is abundantly able to meet the obligations which the war with Russia entailed. The ability to stand such a financial weight might be regarded as an amazement, considering the short life of the nation under the new conditions of its recent development. But when one considers the marvellous progress of the nations as indicated in an increase of public revenue from ninety-eight million yen in 1894 to six hundred millions in 1907, some more reasonable idea of the resources of the country may be secured. The efforts that are made in certain quarters to prejudice a thoughtless public against the financial stability of Japan, in consequence of a failure to balance every year's expenditure with the ordinary revenue, is scarcely creditable to students of national history. The wealthiest nations of the world are frequently unable to confine their annual expenditure within the limits of public revenue, even when no abnormal demands growing out of costly wars have to be provided for. This has frequently been a

national occurrence to an extent far beyond anything that Japan, in the ordinary current of events, can possibly experience. As the result of a careful study of the economic conditions and possibilities of the Empire, the conclusion was forced upon me that Japan has all the potentialities of successful expansion that are possessed by the Great Powers of the West.

By an exhibition of valour and courage that will leave an indelible mark on the pages of history, the Empire of Japan now takes a leading place in the councils of the world. In a comparatively short period following the institution of responsible government, the Empire attained this front rank among powerful nations that only reached their present position through long centuries of anxiety and struggle. The national recognition that has been given to Japan as the result of the self-sacrifices attendant upon the awful carnage of war, may also be reached in the commercial world through the paths of peace. No country in modern times ever had a more favourable opportunity of occupying the highest point in national greatness as quickly and as speedily as is now open to Japan. All the elements for success, if properly guided, appear to be available. As the world judges greatness, a nation can only become powerful and influential (1) through the victories achieved on the field of battle, and (2) by the development of its natural resources and the individual capabilities of its people. The question is now about

the latter, and upon success in that particular depends the future of Japan, not only as to the position that the Empire may take in the realm of national greatness, but in respect to the retention of the influence that it now exerts in the East.

It is extremely difficult to evolve a suitable basis of statistical comparison between Japan and western nations with the object of reaching a well-defined conclusion about the exact situation of the respective countries on the great moral and vital questions. A similar statement might also be made in an effort to institute a comparison between western nations on the same questions. I should be very sorry to commit myself to the general principle, that the moral condition of an entire community can be gauged by the average number of crimes committed within its borders. It is not difficult to see that the adoption of that view might lead into an utterly indefensible position.

A careful examination of the subject must lead to general hesitancy in the acceptance of criminality on the part of a few as being a satisfactory standard of national character. On the question of suicides, for instance, the delightful city of Dresden, distinguished among the cities of Europe for culture, education, science and art, would have to be declared the worst in the world; while Lisbon, with no pretensions to the desirable standard acknowledged to exist in respect to the capital of Saxony,

would hold the first place in Europe on account of the absence of this awful crime. If the proportion of convicted criminals in a population shall be taken as the standard, then western civilization, as represented by half a dozen European nations, must be esteemed a failure. On all the phases of question of this import Japan presents a most favourable record in comparison with the nations of the West. The premises of arguing, however, on such lines, I claim to be absolutely unsound.

Individuals and nations must be judged by the larger good that is presented in their history, rather than by the lesser evil. It may be possible to agree on a standard, a zero mark, upon which a conclusion can be arrived at as to a nation's claims to respectable recognition on some other lines than by the consideration of armies, or navies or war. Has a nation an opportunity of expressing a healthy public opinion, are its statesmen politically honest and nationally honourable, is the general legislation and administration of public affairs calculated to improve the conditions of the great masses of the people, are the ideas of the public, as represented by the Press and the educational system, of such a nature as likely to appeal to the better classes of the people? Weighed in the scales by these balances, no one will question the statement that Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France and Canada, are not found wanting. And yet, one can say, without fear of successful contradiction, that in every one of these particulars,

Japan stands equal with all countries that have been named.

Time will not allow further reference to Japan's magnificent educational system, extending from the primary schools, at which there is a greater percentage of attendance of children of school age than in any other country in the world; nor to the Technical and Grammar schools and Imperial University, with their crowded lecture rooms,—to the statistics of crime, bearing favourable comparison with any western nation,—to the freedom from insult even of unattended women, in any part of Japan by day or night,—to the absence of offensive or objectionable conduct, drunkenness or quarrelling upon the public streets,—to the uniform respect with which foreigners are treated everywhere. This condition of public order is invariably in evidence, notwithstanding the natural exasperation that must have created by the insulting references to Japan that have appeared in so many western newspapers, and which were cabled to the Japanese Press from time to time.

But I hear a mental enquiry as to whether there is not an increasing anti-foreign sentiment in the Empire. This is an enquiry that is worthy of careful consideration. Upon the answer that might be given there are probably marked differences of opinion. Perhaps the failure to agree on the question might be caused by the manner in which the situation is studied. Scarcely a Japanese will acknowledge that there is the slightest

trace of an anti-foreign spirit in existence. I might go further, and add there is no evidence of anything of the kind in ordinary social, commercial or official life. The most persistent enquiries among Japanese will meet with the studiously polite suggestion, that perhaps the foreigner has mistaken the national self-assertiveness for an anti-foreign feeling.

A national self-assertiveness is undoubtedly evident. This may be described as a spirit of national pride, a national ambition to transact the business of the Empire, and a desire to manage all local and domestic affairs without the suggestiveness or control of foreigners. No reasonable critic will presume to say that this is not a commendable aspiration. Foreign firms have been in Japan for half a century. Huge fortunes have been accumulated by foreigners in the transaction of business between Japan and the outside world. But no reasonable contention can be advanced that an uninterrupted monopoly for a time shall extend to perpetuity. The Japanese are learning to engage successfully in the business of their own country. If they were not doing so probably there would be less of an anti-Japanese spirit among certain foreigners. It is not unlikely, however, that the expression, "Japan for the Japanese," is finding a place in the thought of all classes in the Empire. This is perfectly natural, in view of the fact that an identical shibboleth has been raised in other parts of the world, more especially in the discus-

sion of the Japanese question. The thoughtless demagogues who have raised such a national appeal in their own countries, must be prepared to accept the consequences that may overtake their fellow-countrymen attendant upon the adoption of the same principle elsewhere.

In view of the prejudices, which for all sorts of reasons, seem to be running riot just now, in respect to Japan it will be a just cause for thankfulness if a strong anti-foreign sentiment does not become a serious factor in the national life of the Empire. The unjust criticisms, the needless sneers and inuendoes, the absolutely unfounded statements, the determined efforts to place a stigma of inferiority on the race,—all these circumstances must surely sooner or later, having a serious influence on the minds of the masses of Japan. Those whose efforts are, possibly, calculated to bring into existence such a state of affairs, are incurring an awful responsibility. It is charitable to hope that they do not realise the force or effect of their agitation. Japan has done nothing to deserve such denunciation at the hands of any class in the world. The Empire has repudiated no obligations or Treaties with any other nation. The government of the country has committed no political crime. The only change that has occurred in the conditions that existed when the first Japanese Loan was issued, following the beginning of hostilities with Russia, is that the Empire has proved its ability to easily carry its war debt. Japanese statesmen, public representatives,

and the Press have all preserved a dignified attitude in the face of the campaign which has been so assiduously organized against the nation. They have gone along on the even tenor of their way, apparently unconscious of the efforts to destroy confidence in the honour of the nation. Some critics have objected to the alleged action of the government in assisting their own people to establish business relations with outside countries. In reply to that suggestion, I may say that I represent a government which is proud of the fact, that their first duty is to their own people, and they expend large amounts of money, cheerfully voted by the Canadian Parliament, for the purpose of assisting Canadians to find markets and transact business in all parts of the world. And if the Japanese Government is doing likewise I have no difficulty in defending their policy. I shall go further and say that I hope they will do it even to a greater extent in the future. Japan has within its own existence all the elements that are necessary to make the Empire one of the wealthiest nations in the world, and if the government can hasten the time when Japan shall reach that point its members would be traitors to the interests of their country if they did not do everything necessary to bring that about.

It will not be out of place to point out that the most serious wars that have ever taken place have been the outcome of exceedingly trifling circumstances. A study of the lives of the great statesmen who guided the

destinies of Europe in the last century, reveals the slender thread which has frequently held the balance between war and peace, more especially when national interests have become inflamed through aggravated prejudice. The individuals or communities, who assist in kindling the smouldering embers of national hatred into a lurid flame, might better pray for the mountains and the rocks to fall on them, than that they should continue to foment dangerous agitation. Fortunately in these times, no matter how loudly there may be a popular clamour, or how intense a national anger may become, statesmen clothed with responsibility shrink from adopting a course likely to lead to the appalling arbitration of the sword. It may suit the sensational news-mongers of the world to allege that Japan is inclined to a bellicose policy, but no one can enjoy an intimate acquaintance with the statesmen of the Empire, without being convinced that nothing but such extreme necessity as might justify the most peacefully inclined nation in the world to sound the tocsin, will ever prompt a departure from the policy to exhaust all the resources of civilization before engaging in another war.

But one can never tell when war clouds may appear on the horizon. The surest preventative in any case is to get ready for the storm in times of peace. Japan is doing this and so is every one of the other Great Powers. Japan dare not be any exception to all the other nations on this question. It is satisfactory to believe that there is not th

least danger of war between Japan and any western nation on the question of racial equality. Statesmen and diplomats will prevent that. But there are phases of national sentiment, which neither statesmanship or diplomacy can prevent. When one nation endeavours to place a stigma of inequality on another in an offensive way, a most unpleasant situation is likely to arise. One of the results is the creation of an anti-national spirit, growing out of an alleged unfair attitude by another people. In many ways this is a much more disturbing element than actual warfare. War lets loose rival passions, but the explosion is followed by less national bitterness than if the feelings had not been allowed expression. But a circumscribed antipathy that festers like a cancer in the public mind, only finding expression in commercial warfare, creates an aspect of such far-reaching magnitude in its indirect results, that it is almost as deplorable as war. Such a situation is not subject to the control of statesmanship or diplomacy, so long as the primal cause exists. That is a possibility which in the commercial interests of the world should be avoided.

The offensive and defensive alliance that has been made between Great Britain and Japan against the world is one of the most certain incidents of modern times to preserve peace in all directions. Neither of the great contracting parties could have entered into an alliance with any other nation that could have had the same important

bearing on that all-important question. It is an alliance which every loyal subject of King Edward has every reason to be proud. Japan possesses an army of experienced veterans that no nation desires to meet. It is safe to say that no people will wilfully seek an occasion to meet these soldiers on the field of battle. The Japanese have rightly earned a reputation for bravery and honour in warfare that will rank with the most renowned of the armies that were led in Europe by such great warriors as Marlborough, Frederick, Napoleon and Wellington. On the other hand the British Navy will always be supreme among the western nations. It would be impossible to make a combination of national strength having a force and power equal to the united naval and military forces of Great Britain and Japan. For that reason there is justification in the statement that the Anglo-Japanese alliance is essentially calculated to preserve the peace of the world, and at the same time it insures the rights of all nations being preserved against unjust aggression on the part of any other Power.

No proposition would be entertained by the public that would inferentially detract from the credit which is due to Lord Lansdowne for the Treaty with Japan. But it will be interesting for the future historian to delve into the secrets of diplomacy, so carefully guarded in the archives of State, and reveal the personality of those who first proposed this alliance to the British Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs. It will be subject of surprise if it does not appear that the extraordinary bravery shown by the small contingent of Japanese, when the British Legation at Peking was besieged, which impressed an observer, had not something to do with the present alliance. If so, this might furnish another practical illustration of how great events, a perhaps in this case, hang on an apparently trifling circumstance,—the performance of duty. For the same reason I appeal to those who hear my voice, to perform their duty on the subject growing out of this address. In my humble opinion we should have nothing undone to silence the many unjust prejudices that are being created against Great Britain's staunch ally in the Far East. It is certain that retribution in some signal form will overtake those who are so persistently endeavouring to create ill-will between the East and the West. There is a Nemesis that follows on the track of every wrong doing, whether the act is individual or national. No statesmanship can ward off the hour of the settlement of such a question in some unpleasant form or another. Let us as a people, brought up in

an atmosphere of British fair play be loyal to the highest principles in our attitude towards our Far Eastern ally. Until Japan abandons the high honour that so far has marked the Empire's dealings with the world, we should courageously perform our duty in opposing the concert of interested forces that are so persistently endeavouring to place Japan in a false light before the world.

From every standpoint, it seems to me, that our paramount duty lies in the direction of exhibiting a spirit of generosity and fair play to Japan. We will then justify the claim that our Christian civilization is founded on principles of kindness, justice and honour. While doing so we will be inferentially expressing the hope that the influence of this ancient nation, in its new conditions, may not decline, but rather increase and spread; and that the Empire in its progress to the highest form of national life, through the adoption of so much of western thought and customs, may prove a brilliant example which eastern Asia shall be prompted to accept as well worthy of early emulation.

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