

Marvellous Progress in Japan.

Forty years ago Japan was the hermit kingdom — completely closed to western trade, ideas and civilization. What Japan is now is thus stated by a special correspondent of New York Post: "At several places I have had the privilege of meeting the leading educators, officials, and philanthropists of the Japanese Empire, and am deeply impressed with the strength and depth of the movement which is lifting Japan to the level of Western civilization. The civilization which they have borrowed from the West is not veneer, as many have represented. The Japanese are building warships and fortifying their harbors after the most approved style, and are seeing to the organization and equipment of their army and navy (as their late war with China demonstrated) with all the thoroughness of Germany, and they are doing this with little aid from foreign engineers. The few foreign consulting engineers complain that they are consulted so little that life is a burden. In the interior extensive works are planned and executed everywhere by native engineers to protect the fields from the devastating floods which descend with terrific force from the mountain slopes. Some of their mistakes have been serious, but they prefer to trust to their own ability, and experience proves a good teacher. One is everywhere impressed with the vast amount of labor and engineering skill that was bestowed in former times upon fortifications and irrigating enterprises. The more than one hundred fortresses surrounding as many castles where the leading Daimios lived represent an enormous amount of labor and an equal amount of skill in adaptation to the defensive warfare of the time. In the aggregate the walls and moats exceed in amount that of the Chinese wall. All their national energy is now turned towards the accomplishment of more beneficent purposes. In the olden times the family life was so strong that there were no orphans. Some relative was found to adopt each waif. But now this production of Western civilization is appearing in increasing numbers. An orphan asylum, under Japanese management, with all the natural paraphernalia of such an institution, was an interesting object of inspection in Okayama. There were here nearly two hundred children, under the best of discipline, receiving instruction in industrial as well as intellectual branches. They are also following our example in the establishment of reform schools for juvenile criminals, and in all other prison reforms. I found in Tokio two Japanese who have devoted all their energies to the work of caring for ex-convicts. In this they received the generous support of many noble Japanese families. More than eight hundred prisoners have been helped to independent means of employment, and nearly all have become respected members of society."

Payment of Campaign Speakers in the United States.

"Campaign orators in the service of the national committees in the United States are," says L. A. Coolidge in Ainslee's, "well paid for their work. This is not generally understood, and it was not the case until comparatively recent years. In the earlier days they usually rendered volunteer service. So universal was the custom that discredit attached in the public mind to a political speaker who received compensation. In the campaign of 1872 Carl Schurz, then a senator from Missouri, was charged with having been paid \$200 a speech for his advocacy of the election of Horace Greeley. The charge made something of a scandal at the time, and, although Schurz denied the payment of this specific sum, he was never able wholly to clear himself of the taint which was supposed to attach to receiving any pay whatever. He had a bitter controversy with Roscoe Conkling in the Senate about it, during which Conkling, in his supercilious way expressed his contempt of the practice of which he thought Schurz had been guilty. Nowadays campaign speaking has become a matter of regular employment, although, of course, payment is by no means universal, and the most conspicuous orators — especially those who hold a high place in the party — rendered volunteer service and will accept nothing beyond their traveling hotel expenses. The men in charge of a presidential campaign prefer to pay on the spot for what they get. This is far better than to leave obligations outstanding to be satisfied in the distribution of offices after the election. The ordinary campaign speaker receives \$50 a speech and his expenses. It is said that in the campaign of 1896 one very effective and brilliant gold-Democratic orator was paid \$300 a speech by the Republican National Committee. This represents the high-water mark in payments of this kind. In some cases those who do not receive a stipulated price expect honorariums, which really amount to the same thing, and which sometimes reach high figures. The day of volunteer work for national committees seems to have passed. The men employed at headquarters of any party are paid as regularly and as generally as if they were in any other employment."

Pointers for Smokers.

Dr. Scholer publishes in a German paper a collection of "hints for smokers" founded upon his professional observations for many

years of the mouth, teeth, stomach, lungs, heart and skin of the devotees of tobacco. The first and foremost rule is never to smoke before breakfast, nor, as a rule, when the stomach is empty; this custom is the worst possible foe of digestion. Never smoke during any exertion of great physical energy, as dancing, running, cycling, mounting climbing or rowing, and especially if in a contest. Never follow "the bad custom of the French and Russians" by allowing the smoke to pass through the nose; never inhale it through the nose. Keep the smoke as far as possible from the eyes and nose; the longer the pipe the better; the use of short pipe during work is to be avoided. A didd A is the most whole. Some form of smoking, a cigar the next, a cigarette the worst. Always throw away your cigar as soon as you have smoked four-fifths; the last end of it is the most hurtful — the poison lurks in the tail.

Silk From a Spider's Web.

One of the most novel exhibits at the Paris Exposition is a complete set of bed hangings manufactured in Madagascar from an enormous spider known as the halabe, that is found in great numbers in certain parts of the island. The French have been investigating the value of this fibre at their technical school at Antananarivo and have reached the conclusion that the production of silk from this spider is worthy to become an important industry. Mr. Nogue, the head of the school, says that each spider yields from 300 to 400 yards of silk thread. After the the has been taken from the spider it is set free and ten days later is ready to furnish another supply. The silk is of a brilliant, golden colour and is finer than that of the silk worm, but its tenacity is remarkable. It can be woven with the least difficulty.

Story About Wolseley.

The following story regarding Lord Wolseley is interesting at the present time, when the British Commander-in-chief is so prominently before the public in connection with the arrangements for the South African war. At the time of the expedition to relieve General Gordon a number of boats for transport on the Nile were built by the Fairfield Shipbuilding Company. One of the company's managers went out to Egypt to look after matters on its behalf. Lord Wolseley was so well pleased with the expeditious and thorough work done by this manager that he told him to write him in the event of their ever being near one another again, so that he (Lord Wolseley) could look him up. In the course of time the manager went to reside at Greenock. While there he learned that Lord Wolseley was to pass through that city on his way to Dublin. He communicated with him and Lord Wolseley looked him up. He conducted his visitor to the club, and throwing open the door of the smoking room, announced, "Gentlemen, Lord Wolseley." But the gentlemen present had no idea that his lordship was in the vicinity and treated the matter as a joke. The introducer protested his seriousness, but all to no purpose, and eventually, to his intense chagrin, he had to conduct Lord Wolseley out of the club.

Safe to Trust the People.

A proof of the success of the growing library practice of trusting to the honesty of the readers is furnished in a recent report of the John Crerar Library of Chicago. This library admits anyone on registration to its stacks, where he may help himself to what books he chooses to consult, and there is no obnoxious surveillance. In the reading room books most consulted are placed where they can be handled without even the formality of registration. Five volumes only were lost last year, one from the reading room and four from the stack room, while two reported as missing the year before were returned to the reading room by people who had carried them off by mistake, and five other books supposed to have been stolen turned out to have been misplaced. The total loss since the opening of the library has been only 13 volumes. The policy followed is regarded as partly responsible for the popularity of the library. Although intended for students and containing no fiction or general literature, there were 34,827 visitors during 1899, an average of 118 a day. The evening attendance was decidedly greater than in previous years.

Late Suppers All Right.

A well-known doctor in an interview recently spoke strongly against the theory that late suppers are injurious. He declares, in fact, that many persons who remain thin and weakly, in spite of all precautions in regard to diet, etc., owe the fact largely to habitual abstemiousness at night. He says, very truly, that physiology teaches us that, in sleeping, as in waking, there is a perpetual waste going on in the tissues of the body, and it seems but logical that nourishment should be continuous as well. The digestion of the food taken at dinner time or in the early evening is finished, as a usual thing, before or by bedtime; yet the activity of the processes of assimilation, etc., progresses for hours afterwards. And when one retires with an empty stomach the result of this activity is sleeplessness and an undue wasting of the system.

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Japan as an Industrial Menace.

Russia will not reap the first fruits of her railway invasion of Asia. She is not the rival in the construction of her railways to be feared by the Anglo-Saxons. A new power has risen at the very doors of Asia. Forty million progressive, irrepressible Japanese stand ready, by force of arms, if necessary, to open the door of new Asia to their manufacturers. It is the only hope of salvation for the overcrowded Island Kingdom, and its people will fight for this last chance with desperation. Already Japan is beginning to undersell other nations in supplying material for the Siberian railway, and Russia will buy in the cheapest market.

Last July Japan entered the family of civilized nations, becoming by treaty everywhere open to foreigners. She will multiply her machine shops and factories, besides inviting capitalists of all other nations to enter Japan and erect plants where coolie labor is cheapest. Even now Japanese ships convey freight at almost a nominal tariff, and with the open door policy enforced in Asia, Japan will doubtless be the greatest gainer.—Engineering Magazine.

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