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## Japan

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# THE SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE.

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J A P A N.

BY RUSSELL ROBERTSON, H.B.M. CONSUL AT YOKOHAMA.

*(Read before the Society, April 1887.)*

THE word *Japan* is perhaps a somewhat ambitious title for this paper as, naturally, it is impossible to compress into half an hour's reading all that one could say of that country. I have thought it better, however, to use this one comprehensive word, as it leaves me free range for my subject, and will enable me to touch on matters which, if not perhaps coming quite within the scope of a Geographical paper, will doubtless be equally of interest as if these sheets treated simply of the physical geography of Japan.

There are possibly amongst my audience here to-night some who have visited Japan; but I doubt if there is one who has resided there, as I have, for upwards of twenty-five years. I do not, however, wish to dwell on this fact of lengthened residence as giving me exceptional claims to write or speak with particular authority. I fully recognise that visitors who spend a few months in Japan, who have good powers of observation, and who use those powers, may commit to paper an excellent picture of what they see, and a good account of what they hear; but there is frequently a tendency with such writers to impart a high local colouring to their word-pictures, and to regard in too enthusiastic and too poetic a light what is really somewhat dry prose to the permanent resident. Japan has, perhaps, suffered more than any other country from being painted in too bright colours by travellers, with the result that those who come after them have experienced some disappointment on finding that everything did not come up to the expectations they had permitted themselves to form.

My object in this paper will be, so far as circumstances admit, to present to you a truthful picture, neither coloured with romance on the one hand, nor on the other darkened with too sombre views.

In the first place, I will ask your attention for a few moments to consider what the word "Japan" is. The Japanese do not call their country by that name, any more than the Germans speak of their country as Germany, or the Belgians of Belgium. The word *Japan* is obtained in the following manner. As you may readily understand, our knowledge of China dates from a period anterior to the time of our knowing much of Japan, but to China herself Japan has for centuries been no *terra incognita* in the sense she has been to us. To the Chinese "Japan" is known as "Ji pun," words signifying "origin of day;" the same characters or ideographs mean in Japanese "Nichi" "Hon," contracted into "Nipon," or "Nippon." We have been long familiarised with the "Jipun" of the Chinese, and it will be readily conceived how the "Jipun" slipped into the "Japan" of the present daily use. From the meaning of the ideographs "origin of day," we obtain that appellation of Japan which is so familiar to our ears, "the Land of the Rising Sun," or, in other words, the "Land of the Origin of Day." You are, of course, aware that the national flag of Japan is a red ball on a white ground—in fact, the full and brilliant sun orb. A singular error prevails in attaching the name "Nippon" to the large main island of the group, whereas the word is applied to the whole empire, which consists of the four main islands, the Kuriles, the Riukiu group, Iki, Tsushima, the Oki group, and many other islands and islets.

One of the principal features in connection with Japan, that I am anxious you should be acquainted with, is the conditions under which foreigners live in that country; and by foreigners I mean English, French, Germans, Americans, and in fact members of all other nationalities than the Japanese. There seems to be here a very general, and, I admit, a pardonable ignorance of those conditions which a few words will suffice to explain. Japan is, as you know, opened to trade with foreign countries, but still only in a limited sense; as, for commercial purposes, all foreigners are compelled to reside at the ports of Yokohama, Hiogo or Kobe as it is equally styled, Osaka, Nagasaki, Hakodate, Niigata, and the city of Tokyo, formerly called Yedo, excepting those foreigners employed in the interior, in the service of the Government of Japan. In order not to overburden your minds with names, that in some cases must necessarily be strange to your ears, you may dismiss that of Niigata in connection with the open ports, as it has been found to be comparatively valueless for purposes of foreign trade, due principally to its exposed situation, and its inconvenient, if not indeed dangerous, anchorage. It lies on the west coast, and knowing thus much about it, it need give you no further concern. In order the better to appreciate the situation and the conditions of our residence in Japan, you should know that foreigners are only there by virtue of express treaties with the different foreign Powers; and the

countries that have concluded such treaties are England, France, the United States, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Peru, China, Hawaii, and Corea. I have not named them in any particular order or sequence, and it is sufficient to note that the treaties which govern our residence there now mostly date from 1858, and subsequently. Treaties existed with different countries before that date, notably that with the United States, of 1856; but I am referring more particularly to the actual conditions of trade and residence which now exist, and which may be said to date from 1858, although some of the ports I have named were not thrown open to our commerce until a few years later. The treaties of 1858 were not ratified until 1859, so that the history of recent Japanese progress, more particularly as affected by foreign intercourse, dates really only from that time. I am not going to inflict on you a historical paper—far from it; but it is essential to an intelligent understanding of our position in Japan, to glance briefly at these few points. The treaties provide, not only that commerce and residence shall be restricted to the places I have mentioned, but further, that the particular location of foreigners within most of those places or ports should be accurately defined. These locations are called “settlements,” and therefore one of the first things that strikes on the ear of the visitor arriving at Yokohama, Tokyo, Hiogo, or Osaka, as the case may be, is this word “settlement” or “concession,” as it is sometimes termed, as applied to the particular locality where foreigners reside, and as distinct from the Japanese quarter of the town. At some of the ports these settlements have particular appellations, as for instance at Tokyo, where it is known as “Tskiji,” or “made ground,” the ground having been actually filled in, drained, and laid out for the purposes of foreign residence. These settlements are divided into lots, differing in area, and on these the foreigner, having first acquired his lot by purchase, and having stipulated to pay a somewhat heavy annual ground-rent, erects his dwelling, his office, and his warehouses. These strict conditions of residence have been considerably relaxed as years have passed, and more enlightened views have obtained; lots of land for suburban or country residences were sooner or later acquired in the neighbourhood of the settlements, and thus pleasant little country dwellings have sprung up, which have considerably enhanced the pleasures of a residence in Japan. I should mention, too, that these same treaties I have referred to all stipulated that foreigners should not travel beyond certain limits from the settlements, these limits being generally fixed at from 25 to 30 miles, so that, as you can well understand, for some years the interior of Japan was very little known to us; but this exclusive state of things has long since yielded to a system of passports, that are now easily obtained, and by means of which the holder can travel from one part of the empire to the other.

There is a phrase that I find frequently puzzles English ears, and it is natural that it should be somewhat unintelligible to those who are

unacquainted with it. I refer to the words "ex-territorial jurisdiction." There is nothing, however, in them to frighten or puzzle the meanest capacity; they signify simply that in certain countries, where this form of jurisdiction obtains, foreigners in those countries are subject, not to the laws of those particular countries, but to their own laws administered through their own consular tribunals. The system prevails in a greater or less degree in Turkey, Egypt, China, Japan, and Siam. I will not particularise, but you can well understand that in some of the countries I have mentioned it would not be consistent with our ideas to submit to the system of law that might be administered by the native tribunals; decapitation might be the penalty for a comparatively light crime, not to mention torture as a mode of extracting confessions of guilt. It is only fair to mention that, in the case of Japan, torture has now no place in her criminal code or procedure. It has followed, therefore, that in the treaties with Japan, negotiated on the lines of treaties concluded with China and other of the countries I have named, it has been stipulated that foreigners are to be tried by their own consular or judicial authorities both in respect of civil and criminal actions. A Japanese having reason to complain of a British subject would have to sue him before a British court in Japan; whereas the British subject would in the converse case have to appear as plaintiff in the Japanese court, before which the Japanese subject would appear as defendant.

You will now understand that, with something like seventeen different countries with which Japan has treaties, you have the same number of consular tribunals, and that accordingly, as a Japanese may be aggrieved by an Englishman, Frenchman, German, or American, as the case may be, so will he appeal to the consul of one or other of those countries for relief.

This is briefly the ex-territorial jurisdiction—a state of things which bristles with many difficulties, but which appears to be the system best adapted for the protection of Europeans in countries where the judicial system is one that they could not well be made to submit to. Japan has, however, made such strides in judicial reform that before many years are passed it is possible—nay, probable—that the ex-territorial jurisdiction will be done away with in that country, and that we shall be residing there under Japanese law, which will, it is to be hoped, entail no more risk than does a residence in many European countries.

**GEOGRAPHY.**—I now pass to the geographical features of Japan. The earliest division of the country into provinces was made between 131 and 190 A.D., their number being thirty-two.

In the third century, after Japan had been victorious in Corea, and in imitation of the geographical division in that country, it was marked out into seven circuits, and what were styled five home provinces. Subsequently, about the beginning of the eighth century, some of the provinces were subdivided, the number being increased to sixty-six, which

I proceed to name. Taking first the five home provinces, comprised under the name "Gokinai," we have Yamashiro, Yamato, Kawachi, Idzumi, and Setsu. Then taking the circuits, we have the "Tokaido," or "Eastern Sea Circuit," in which are contained the following fifteen provinces:—Iga, Ise, Shima, Owari, Mikawa, Totomi, Suruga, Idzu, Kai Sagami, Musashi, Awa, Kadzusa, Shimôsa, and Hitachi.

Then the "Tozando," or "Eastern Mountain Circuit," comprising eight provinces:—Omi, Mino, Hida, Shinano, Kodzuke, Shimotsuke, Mutsu, and Dewa.

The "Hokurikudo," or "Northern Land Circuit," with seven provinces:—Wasaka, Echizen, Kaga, Noto, Etchui, Echigo, and the island of Sado.

The "Sanindo," or "Mountain Back Circuit," containing eight provinces:—Tamba, Tango, Tajima, Inaba, Hoki, Idzumo, Iwami, and the Oki group of islands.

The "Sanyodo," or "Mountain Front Circuit," having also eight provinces:—Harima, Mimasaka, Bizen, Bichiu, Bingo, Aki, Suwo, and Nagato.

The "Nankaido," or "Southern Sea Circuit," comprising six provinces, namely Ki-i, Awaji, Awa, Sanuki, Iyo, and Tosa.

I would ask your attention here to the province of Ki-i, or Kishiu, as it is more familiarly called, in order that it may not be confounded with the large island of Kiushiu. To the uninitiated ear the similarity of sound between Kishiu and Kiushiu tends to great confusion. Kishiu is simply one province of the Nan-kai-do circuit, whereas Kiushiu means really the "nine provinces," and is co-extensive with the last of the circuits, the "Sai-kai-do," or "Western Sea Circuit," which is divided into nine provinces, namely, Chikuzen, Chikugo, Buzen, Bungo, Hizen, Higo, Hiuga, Osumi, and Satsuma. The islands of Iki and Tsushima, dealt with as separate provinces, would, with the sixty-six provinces already named, making in all sixty-eight, complete the geographical divisions of Japan which existed from comparatively remote times until a recent date. This division of the country continued until 1868, when, as the result in great part of the revolution which marked that year, the northern island of Yezo was constituted a circuit under the name of the "Hokkaido," or "Northern Sea Circuit," comprising the eleven provinces of Oshima, Shiribeshi, Ishikari, Teshiwo, Kitami, Ifuri, Hitaka, Tokachi, Kushiro, Nemuro, and Chijima, the last named being that portion of the Kuriles then belonging to Japan. Since that date the whole of the Kuriles have passed into the possession of Japan by arrangement with Russia, to which country the exclusive possession of Saghalien was surrendered—the southern half of that island having been previously claimed by Japan. In 1868 there was, in addition to the Hokkaido just mentioned, a subdivision of the two large provinces of Oshiu and Dewa, the former into the provinces of Iwaki, Iwashiro, Rikuzen, Rikuchiu, and Michinoku; the latter into Uzen and Ugo.

In order to a thorough comprehension of the geographical divisions of

Japan, it is essential to bear in mind that in early times, when the country was divided into thirty-two provinces, the authority of the Mikado or Emperor of Japan was bounded on the north by a line which might be drawn from the Bay of Sendai on the east to Niigata on the west, the northern portion of the main island as well as the island of Yezo being then occupied by barbarous tribes, the descendants of which may be traced in the Ainos now settled in Yezo. It should also be remembered that the territories of the Lord or Daimio of Matsmae in Yezo were at one time included in the northern provinces of Dewa and Mutsu, but this division no longer exists, the northern island and adjacent Kuriles having, as already mentioned, been divided into eleven provinces. This island of Yezo has of late years been treated in the matter of administration as a colonial dependency of the empire, a special department or bureau existing at Tokyo, the capital of Japan, which is charged with the affairs of Yezo. The island is interesting not only by reason of the aborigines, the Ainos, that inhabit it, but because laudable agricultural experiments have been carried on there at the expense of the Japanese Government, and great and successful endeavours have been made to acclimatise foreign fruits. Valuable coal deposits have also been discovered on the island, and magnificent fisheries exist in its waters. I have myself lived in Yezo for two years, and although I have never visited Vancouver in British Columbia, I can well believe what is currently reported, that Yezo resembles it in many respects in regard to scenery and conditions of climate and soil.

In 1872 we find Japan divided for purely administrative purposes into three *fu*, or cities—namely, Kyoto, Tokyo, and Ozaka, and into seventy-two *ken* or prefectures; and this without necessarily following the boundaries of provinces. Since that date—1872—the prefectures have been recast and brought down to thirty-seven in number. To complete this particular portion of the paper, I should state that the Riukiu group of islands, generally called by foreigners the Loochoos, was constituted a prefecture of Japan in 1878, under the name of the Okinawa Ken; the so-called King of Loochoo then losing his sovereignty, and taking a position amongst the nobility of Japan. This full assertion by Japan over the Loochoos was not without its troublous side, in consequence of China's claim of suzerainty over the islands, and it is still from time to time the subject of some little friction between the two Powers.

The Bonins, or Ogasawara Islands, as they are termed by the Japanese, and over which Japan now exercises complete sovereignty, are deserving of mention; they consist of two main islands separated by 50 miles of sea, and of several smaller islands and islets. The whole group is situated about 500 miles due south from Yokohama. It is interesting to remember that these islands were, so far as the unsupported act of an English naval officer could make them so, the property of Great Britain; for in 1824 Captain Beechey of H.M.S. *Blossom* visited them, and took formal possession in the name of His Majesty King George IV. A copper



plate, affixed to a board which had been nailed to a tree, recorded the fact; and I may mention that this board was found in 1875, when I visited the islands, and is now, I believe, to be seen at Greenwich College. It is perhaps needless to say that the British Government never gave effect to Captain Beechey's act; and in 1875, in consequence of the island having become the scene of some crimes, owing to quarrels amongst the settlers, the Japanese Government was moved to occupy the islands, and establish in them the machinery of government. They are now an integral part of the empire, regular communication being kept up by steamer from Yokohama and Tokyo.

The population of the islands consists not solely of Japanese, but, in addition, of a few Sandwich Islanders and others who have been left behind, or have deserted from the whalers that used to touch at the group. At the time of my visit, an Englishman, Webb by name, resided on the islands, and was regarded as the patriarch of the curious mixed settlement of foreigners. It is now some years since he died.

I was reading, some time ago, an old volume of correspondence between the East India Company's factor at Canton and the directors in London, and in the course of the correspondence I came across a letter dated, I think, in 1830, strongly urging that the British Government should occupy the Bonins as an important base of trade. As a fact, there is very little trade even now between them and the mainland of Japan, the soil barely supporting the small colony established there.

To revert to my subject, I shall be glad to clear the ground of all sources of confusion in respect of the names of the different provinces I have given. They mostly have two names, one of Japanese derivation, the other Chinese, made up of the word "shiu," a province, and the Chinese pronunciation of one of the ideographs with which the purely Japanese name is written. I have not mentioned these in the body of my paper, so as to avoid perplexity; but I can illustrate my meaning by the following examples. Take, for instance, the Gokinai, or five home provinces, which, as I have stated, are Yamashiro, Yamato, Kawachi, Idzumi, and Setsu. Each of these has an alternative appellation derived from the Chinese, as, for example, Yamashiro is called Joshui; Yamato, Washiu; Kawachi, Kashiui; Idzumi, Senshiu; and Setsu, Sesshiu; it being essential you should bear in mind that "shiu," which you hear so often repeated, is the Chinese word for "province," and the monosyllable prefixed, such as Jo-, Wa-, Ka-, and Sen-, is simply the Chinese pronunciation of one of the Japanese characters with which the purely Japanese word is written. What makes the subject a little more complex is that the Japanese, in some cases, use the one appellation, and in some cases the other. Thus, for instance, still keeping to the five provinces I have named as furnishing an illustration, while the names Yamashiro, Yamato, Kawachi, and Setsu, being Japanese words, are in more frequent use than their Chinese equivalents of Joshui, Washiu, Kashiui, and Sesshiu, in one case, that of Idzumi, the Chinese equivalent of Senshiu is much more popular.

Mention should not be omitted of a somewhat quaint division of Japan that at one time existed into the country lying "east of the barrier" and that lying "west of the barrier," called respectively "Kwantô" and "Kwansei," the barrier being taken to mean the old barrier of Ozaka, on the frontier of the provinces of Omi and Yamashiro; and the peculiar appellation I have above noted being given to the provinces lying east and west of this boundary. The term Kwantô is now, however, applied to eight, or at most twelve provinces only, instead of to thirty-six as formerly.

ISLANDS.—I will now glance rapidly at the islands, rivers, mountains, harbours, bays, and straits in Japan. Commencing with the islands, it will perhaps surprise you to learn that these number over 3000, exclusive of the four main islands; many are, of course, but the merest islets. I would first ask your attention to the chain of islands that extends due south from my own port of residence, Yokohama, consisting of Oshima or Vries Island, Rishima, Ni-i-jima, Shikini-jima, Kantsu-jima, Miyaki-jima, and Mikura-jima. Oshima is usually sighted by vessels making for the Bay of Yedo, and is conspicuous by its active volcano. South of this chain of islands is the island of Hachijô, at one time, if not still, used as a penal settlement, and then, some 350 miles further south, lie the Bonins already mentioned. Another island, also named Oshima, lies close to the province of Kishiu. The neighbourhood of this island has been the scene of many shipping disasters, owing to the peculiar indraft of the current. An excellent light is exhibited at Oshima for the convenience of shipping. North of this is the large island of Awaji. A prominent group of islands is that to the south of Kiushiu, which, beginning with Tanegashima, takes in the Riukiu group, and ends with Haterushima. To the westward of the province of Satsuma we have the Koshigi-jima, and north of these the islands of Amakusa and Togi. Following north, we have the island of Hirado, so frequently spelt on English maps as Firando; this island is specially noteworthy as being the seat of the first English factory in Japan, founded in 1613, and mentioned in Will Adams' letters from Japan. The Goto group, to the westward of the treaty port of Nagasaki, should also be mentioned, and then we have the islands of Tsushima and Iki, constituting each a separate province. Following along the coast-line of the Sanindo, we have the Oki group of islands, forming the province of Oki, and to the north and eastward of these the large island of Sado.

A glance at any chart of the Inland Sea, the name popularly applied to the waters that lie between the Straits of Akashi and those of Shimonoseki, will show numberless islands or islets. The beauties of the Inland Sea have been described in no measured terms by tourists, and although the language used is sometimes too glowing, there are perhaps not many lovelier scenes than those to be witnessed in the day's journey that lies between Hiogo and Shimonoseki. Mention has already been made of

the Riukiu group, and it now only remains to note the Kuriles, all belonging to Japan.

**RIVERS.**—There are no rivers in Japan that attain to great length, a circumstance which may in great measure be explained, so far as the mainland is concerned, by its comparative narrowness, and even the more important would not be navigable throughout their length for other than boats of very light draught. They, of course, play their part in the transmission of produce, but their agency in this direction must in great degree yield to the more active one of railways, the construction of which is now being actively prosecuted in Japan. The principal rivers are the Tonegawa, the Shinanogawa, Kisogawa, Oigawa, Fujigawa, Tenriugawa, Sakatagawa, Abukumagawa, and the Ishikari. The Yodogawa, on which the town of Ozaka is situated, and the Sumidagawa, which passes through the capital of Tokyo, may also be noticed. The Tonegawa is the longest river, and has a length of about 172 miles. I may here remark that many of the Japanese rivers change their names in their course, but to state these changes in detail would only be to burden you unnecessarily with names. I will content myself with giving the sources of the rivers I have mentioned, and their course. The Tonegawa rises in the province of Kôdzuke, passes close to Maebashi, a town familiar as one of the principal emporiums of the silk trade in the centre of a rich silk district, here it distributes itself in a network of streams, uniting again close to where the Karasugawa is met; lower down, the river separates into two branches, the southern branch falling into the Bay of Yedo, at Horiye, the main stream continuing its course, receiving the waters of two rivers, and falling into the sea at Chôshi, on the Pacific coast. The Shinanogawa, a name not difficult to remember, as we are already familiar with the province of Shinano, rises in that province, flows first in a north-westerly and then in a northerly direction, passes through the province of Echigo in a north-easterly course, and meets the sea at Niigata. The Kisogawa also has its source in Shinano, traverses the provinces of Mino and Owari, in which latter it throws off several branches, and thence passes to the sea. The Tenriugawa, also rising in Shinano, flows into the province of Totomi, and thence to the sea. The Oigawa takes its rise in the province of Kai, and also passes through Totomi to the sea. The Fujikawa rises in the same province Kai, and thence flows through Suruga. The Sakatagawa has its origin in the north, between Uzen and Rikuzen, flows due west, and falls into the Japan Sea at Sakata. The Abukumagawa rises in Iwaki, constituting in its course the boundary between that province and Rikuzen, and flows into the Pacific Ocean. Heavy floods frequently occur in Japan, the rivers at certain seasons flow with great rapidity, and the strength of the currents has much taxed the ingenuity of bridge-builders, both native and foreign. A peculiar feature on the railway between Hiogo and Ozaka is the tunnelling of the river-beds, which are in some cases higher than the surrounding level country.

**LAKES.**—The principal lake in Japan is that of Biwa, in the province of Omi. It is some 50 miles in length, with an extreme breadth of 20. It is familiar to most visitors to Japan, owing to its proximity to Kyoto, the ancient capital of the Mikado, a city that few tourists miss. According to an old Japanese legend, Lake Biwa was the result of an earthquake in 286 B.C., when the lake was formed, and simultaneously the celebrated mountain of Fuji was called into existence. The other lakes are those of Hakone, from which the mountain of Fuji is easily accessible; Lake Suwa, in Shinano; Lake Chiuzenji, in the neighbourhood of Nikko; and Lake Inawashiro, in Iwashiro.

**MOUNTAINS.**—Japan may be described as a mountainous country, marked here and there by large alluvial plains and table-lands. The principal mountain is Fujisan, situated some 60 miles from Yokohama, on the boundary-line of three provinces, Kai, Suruga, and Sagami, and is visible from no less than thirteen provinces of the empire. Its height has been variously estimated, but may be set down with fair accuracy at 12,500 feet. It is an object of great veneration to Japanese, pilgrimages being made to it, and it commands the admiration of all by its singularly beautiful formation, rising as it does to a most perfect cone, and moreover being situated amongst very lovely scenery. The ascent is made without much difficulty, the best time for the undertaking being in July and August, though snow is met with even then. The cone is an extinct crater; the last eruption is recorded as having taken place in 1707, the ashes falling as far as the capital Tokyo, 70 miles distant. The Japanese still believe in its latent active qualities, and even as recently as last year some considerable alarm was excited in the minds of Japanese in my own neighbourhood by the exceptionally early and rapid clearing of the snow from the mountain summits, which they attributed to excessive heat from within, portending eruption. Nothing of the kind, however, took place. The mountains that take rank next after Fujisan are Gassan, in the province of Uzen; Mitake and Asamayama, in Shinano; the Nikko range in Shimotsuke, the highest peak of which, Nantaizan, is 7850 feet; Omine, in Yamato; Hakusan, in Kaga; Tateyama, in Echii; Kirishimayama, in Hiuga; Asosan, in Higo; Tsukubasan, in Hitachi, 5000 feet; Onsengatake, in Hizen, 4100 feet; Chôkaizan, in Ugo; and Iwakisan, in Michinoku. Asamayama, 8500 feet, a violent eruption of which took place in 1783, and Asosan are amongst the best known volcanoes.

**HARBOURS.**—Japan possesses many harbours affording excellent shelter to the numerous small craft that ply in Japanese waters. The best known to foreigners are those which exist in the treaty ports of Yokohama, Hiogo, Nagasaki, and Hakodate. At Niigata the anchorage, as already mentioned, is indifferent, and that at Ozaka is somewhat exposed. Other harbours little less known than those at the treaty ports, and either presenting natural advantages, or capable of being converted into safe and

convenient anchorages by a judicious outlay of money, are Oginohama, on the east coast; Shimoda, near the entrance to Yedo Bay; Toba and Matoya, in the province of Shima; Mitarai, in the Inland Sea; Takamatsu, in the north of Shikoku; Kagoshima, in Satsuma; Matsumae, in Yezo; and not a few others. While on the subject of harbours, I may mention that Japan has an excellent lighthouse system, and the danger of navigation round its coasts is thus considerably minimised. In addition to lighthouses, all well-known submarine dangers are buoyed or marked with beacons. Regular visits are made by the Japanese lighthouse tender to the different lighthouses, buoys, and beacons, and the service is well and efficiently maintained.

**BAYS AND STRAITS.**—The best known are those of Yedo, Sendai on the east coast, the Bay of Ozaka, Owari Bay, and the Bay of Kagoshima; and under the heading of straits, if I name those of Tsugaru, separating the main island from Yezo, Shimonoseki, at the western entrance of the Inland Sea, Idzumi and Okashi at the eastern entrance, I have named those most deserving of notice.

**CLIMATE.**—A few words on the climate of Japan. I find it difficult to make friends at home understand that Japan is not a country where tropical heat prevails. A glance at the map, showing that the islands trend from north to south, and that they are comprised within  $24^{\circ}$  and  $50^{\circ} 40'$  north latitude, is sufficient to convey the knowledge that Japan enjoys much diversity of climate, the temperature ranging from an almost Arctic clime in the north to something approaching a tropical one in the extreme south. In the island of Yezo, where, as already stated, I have passed two years, winter comes upon us in October, and continues to April. The season is marked by heavy snowstorms and somewhat severe frosts; the harbour is, however, generally free from ice, and is open to vessels all the year round. The spring and early summer are genial and pleasant, but the close of July and the month of August are sometimes marked by a high range of temperature. In Yokohama the winters are bright, but cold, the temperature being frequently as low as that experienced in an English winter, though with a brighter sky, and the abundance of ever-green foliage saves us from that severe wintry aspect that marks our own climes. Throughout October, November, December, and January, the season gradually passes from autumn coolness to winter cold, and the months are pleasant enough. February brings with it much the same weather as here—cold winds, snow, sleet, and the usual signs of the break-up of winter. Spring comes upon us earlier than here, and throughout April, May, and June we are led by degrees to full summer.

Excessive heat is rarely experienced before July, but from that month till the close of September we are subjected to a very high range, the thermometer for days together standing at  $95^{\circ}$  and upwards, within doors, in the shadiest corner of a room. In September we are usually visited

with an annual typhoon or cyclone, and, when this has burst over us, we pass suddenly from summer to cool autumn.

In Nagasaki, the most southern port where foreigners reside, the summer heat is of longer duration than with us at Yokohama, and the winters, though cool and pleasant, are marked by considerably less cold weather. My remarks as to Yokohama would apply equally to Tokyo, the capital, from which we are separated by only 18 miles of rail; while at Hiogo, about 350 miles distant, the conditions of climate do not appreciably differ, except that, owing to its sandy soil, it enjoys a somewhat better reputation for general healthiness than Tokyo, Yokohama, or Nagasaki.

A better illustration of the extremes of temperature in Japan is afforded by the Kuriles in the north, and the Riukiu and Bonin groups of islands in the south. In the first mentioned you have an Arctic winter, while in the latter you have nothing approaching to cold weather.

In most of the ports in Japan where foreigners reside, very sudden changes of temperature occur in the twenty-four hours, thus causing a good deal of sickness.

**EARTHQUAKES.**—This paper would not be complete without mention of the earthquakes that are of such frequent occurrence in Japan. We are fortunate in having in that country Professor Milne, who has made a special study of seismology, and than whom there probably does not exist a better authority on that particular subject. It is a curious circumstance that while earthquakes are of frequent occurrence in Yezo and on the east coast of the main island, they gradually lose in intensity to the southward and westward of Yokohama, while on the west coast of Japan they are either unknown or exceptionally rare. The information that has been collected, after years of patient research, under Professor Milne's directions, have resulted, I believe, in establishing the fact that, so far as Japan is concerned, the two great earthquake centres which affect that country are to be found, the one in the north, in the bed of the Pacific to the east of the island of Yezo, the other in the Bay of Yedo, in close proximity to the capital Tokyo and the port of Yokohama. I am happy to say that during my term of residence, although earthquake shocks have been numerous, and some of alarming intensity, no great destruction of life or property has followed; but that disastrous earthquakes have occurred in Japan is evidenced from the fact that in 1855 nearly 15,000 houses were overthrown in Tokyo, and with accompanying very great loss of life; the latter, however, being due to the conflagration that ensued rather than to falling houses or other attendant dangers. The dwellings, being constructed for the most part of wood, are very inflammable; and the system of open charcoal braziers, then and still so much in use in Japanese houses, would explain the rapidity with which the conflagration spread. Earthquakes, so far as Yokohama is concerned, are believed to be more prevalent in May and in early autumn; it is within my own recollection, in

May 1870, that in one day no less than seventeen shocks were experienced, culminating at midnight in one of great violence. Many out of these seventeen were of course of very slight character, but yet distinctly perceptible.

The Japanese chronicle certain years as having been marked by very violent earthquakes—namely, A.D. 416, 599, 679, 745, 829, 977, amongst many others. In the year 1702, Tokyo, then known as Yedo, was visited by a very severe earthquake, and violent shocks again took place in 1854 and 1855. I may mention that recent letters from Japan advise me of a severe shock that occurred in Yokohama on the 15th January last, happily attended by no loss of life, but involving much damage to houses and their contents.

PRODUCTS.—I pass on to the products of Japan, and first as to those of agriculture.

Rice is largely grown in the country, and it enjoys the reputation of being of a high standard of excellence, the finest qualities comparing, I believe, favourably with the best Carolina rice. Not only is sufficient grown for native consumption, but there is a considerable balance for export. The grain has several varieties, but it would be out of place in this paper to detail them.

The cultivation of rice in immediate proximity to Japanese towns is an evil, and is, I think, a source of great unhealthiness, not alone to the foreign residents, but to the Japanese themselves. The land is extensively irrigated, and thus large quantities of water lie on the soil for a considerable period, in itself an unhealthy feature; then, too, the turning of the soil and the use of strong fertilisers all tend to make the preparation of rice ground not only a nuisance but a positive danger. It results, therefore, that malaria, in some form or other, is prevalent amongst foreigners in the spring and early summer; and, as regards the Japanese themselves, one cannot but be struck with the poor physique and wan look of the majority of those engaged in rice cultivation. It is possible that at no very distant date the growth of rice in the immediate neighbourhood of towns and populous centres in Japan will be prohibited, a course which is, I understand, followed in some rice-growing countries. Already the Japanese are becoming large consumers of butcher meat, and foreign bread also finds favour with them.

Rice will, of course, for a long time to come, be the staple food of the bulk of the population, but a certain number now live in foreign style, and rice is to these—not much more than it is to us—a mere table adjunct. It is as well to mention by the way that “saké,” the popular native beverage, is brewed from rice; it is generally drunk warm, is of many different qualities, and the best kind is not unpalatable.

Many other cereals are grown in Japan, as wheat, barley, and millet; the soil is very rich, and there are probably no people in the world who know how to turn their land to better account than the Japanese. To

enumerate in detail all that ordinary farm lands or market gardens in Japan produce would be to give a very portentous list, but I may name, in addition to those already given, beans, pease, rape-seed, radishes, turnips, onions, carrots, spinach, beetroot, potatoes, yams, cabbages, cauliflower, asparagus, lettuce, parsnips, egg-plant or Brinjals, tomatoes, cucumbers, vegetable marrow, artichokes, and pumpkins.

Tea is, as you are aware, largely grown in Japan. The cultivation has been enormously stimulated by the advent of foreigners. There was an export in 1886 of nearly 28,000,000 lbs. The bulk of the annual export goes to the United States, where Japan tea has always been held in high favour; about 2,000,000 lbs. find their way to Canada. It is curious that Japan tea is not in demand in England, perhaps in great degree owing to the pale colour of the tea after infusion, the popular but erroneous idea in this country being that tea is not of good quality unless developing a strong dark colour. Amongst other products of the soil I should mention tobacco and cotton. The leaf of the former exhibits many different grades, and the finest is well adapted to cigarettes. Most, if not all, the cotton grown is consumed in the country. Vegetable wax, expressed from the berries of a tree, is also a considerable product, and amongst other products not confined to agriculture I may mention camphor, drugs of different kinds, dried fish, fish oil, lacquered ware, porcelain and earthenware, copper, and coal. I might mention others, but I avoid doing so, as I do not seek to make this a commercial paper, embodying full information on Japan trade. I have reserved silk for special mention. This is the most important of Japanese products, meeting not only the wants of the Japanese population as large consumers of silk, but allowing of a considerable quantity for export to foreign countries. It is of course exported in the raw state, usually made up into hanks and bales, and finds its way mostly to Lyons, to other European silk emporiums, and to the United States, that country having of late years become a large purchaser of Japan silk. The latest return—that for the past year 1886—shows an export of 27,000 bales, representing a value of over £3,000,000.

**MINERALS.**—Minerals may now find a place, prominent amongst which are copper, lead, iron, antimony, and sulphur; gold and silver are also found, though not to a very great extent. Coal merits special notice, the annual output being considerably over 1,000,000 tons. It is found extensively at Takashima, near Nagasaki, and also at places on the west coast of Kiushiu. There are also large coal-beds in the northern island of Yezo.

**FLORA.**—Japan is rich in forests, and the vegetation that greets the eye is luxurious in the extreme. Amongst the principal trees, I should name the Japanese cedar, pine, maple, camphor, and many others not having their exact counterpart in this country. Many yield not only



very durable wood, but wood of the most beautiful kind, taking a fine polish, and used extensively in cabinet work. Bamboos abound, as do also camellias of the single and double variety. There is probably no more beautiful sight in early spring in Japan—say, in the beginning of March—than the clusters of camellia shrubs and trees laden with their blossoms of red and white.

The presence of the cryptomeria, pine, and many other non-deciduous trees, gives to the country, even in mid-winter, an appearance of summer, so far as vegetation is concerned.

Of fruits there are several varieties—strawberries, melons, plums, peaches, apples, pears, grapes, persimmons, figs, loquats, oranges, cherries, walnuts, and chestnuts. This seems a goodly list, but some of them scarcely deserve the names given them. To make a selection of good fruit I should name strawberries, melons, plums, grapes, persimmons, figs, loquats, and oranges. Very earnest efforts have been made by the Japanese to acclimatise foreign fruits, and good apples and pears have been grown on an experimental Government farm in Yezo. The absence of good orchard fruit generally in Japan hitherto is due, I am told by those who have knowledge on the subject, to the heavy autumnal rains, at a time when the fruit requires a dry temperature and a full ripening sun.

Of flowers and flowering shrubs that are indigenous I should name the camellia, already spoken of, azalea, hydrangea, lilies, peonies, the chrysanthemum, daphne, and westeria, while wild roses and lilies-of-the-valley flourish in Yezo.

The Japanese are excellent gardeners, and enjoy a high reputation for their skill in dwarfing trees; they have, too, with foreign aid, been successful in acclimatising many of our own flowers, more particularly roses, tulips, geraniums, orchids, and fuchsias, all of which flourish well in Japan. Of the chrysanthemum the Japanese are ardent admirers; I have seen no more rare sight of its kind than the autumnal chrysanthemum display at the Imperial Gardens in the capital, or at the native flower-shows in and about Yokohama. Our own displays in London are insignificant when compared to them.

FAUNA.—In animal life, and first, as to domestic animals, I should name the horse, ox, dog, and cat, which abound in the country. Oxen are largely used for draught purposes, but the increasing taste for animal food amongst the Japanese, and the large demands by foreign residents and foreign shipping, have probably tended to the diminution of the number of animals for draught. Deer are numerous, more particularly in the north, and bears exist in great numbers in Yezo. Wild boar are also plentiful, and my list is about complete with badger, fox, monkey, hares, and a species of wild goat.

The Japanese coasts teem with fish, the principal of which are salmon, cod, herring, sole, mullet, and many others. A very excellent fish in great demand is the tai. Crabs, oysters, prawns, and crayfish are

secured in great quantities, and carp and trout abound in some of the lakes and rivers. I have myself had excellent fishing in the north, securing with the fly large salmon-trout of five or six pounds weight, also innumerable small speckled trout and dace. Eels, of which the Japanese are very fond, are taken in great quantities.

Japan is not remarkable for birds of song or of beautiful plumage, unless I except the copper pheasant and the gold and silver variety of the same bird. The common pheasant is often met with, as are also quail, snipe, woodcock, pigeon, and many varieties of waterfowl. Small hedge birds are not numerous, the sparrow excepted. Larks are fairly common, and a bird known as the Japanese nightingale has a very melodious note. The Japanese are fond of cage-birds, and canaries are plentiful and cheap. Domestic poultry are raised in great quantities, and the small Japanese bantams are well known to fanciers.

I have now, I think, led you through much that appertains to a paper proper to be read before a Geographical Society; but before concluding, I would ask you to turn your eyes from the Japan of the past to the Japan of the present. I fear that to many here at home Japan is little more than a name, associated with a quaint civilisation, with some hazy notions about the Mikado and the Taikun, accompanied with a knowledge more or less sound of Japanese wares, comprised under porcelain, bronzes, and lacquer ware. Japan should be a great deal more than this to you, destined, as I think the country is, to play no small part in the world's history; and its laudable efforts to emerge from the position we are prone to assign to Eastern nations, and to take its place in the family of nations, should, I think, receive hearty recognition from the English in general and from the Scotch in particular. I will close my paper, therefore, with brief mention of what Japan has secured for herself at the present day.

The country has now 458½ miles of railway open to traffic, 398 miles in course of construction, and 290 miles in contemplation. Those actually constructed are from Yokohama to Tokyo, 18 miles; Hiogo to Ozaka, 22 miles; Ozaka to Kyoto, 27 miles; Kyoto to Otsu, 11½ miles; Tsuruga to Ogaki, 49 miles; Tokyo to Maebashi, 68½ miles; Takazaki to Yokogawa, 18 miles; Taketozo to Kisogawa, 40 miles; Shinagawa to Akabane, 13 miles; Navotsu to Sekigawa, 18 miles; Kisogawa to Ogaki, 12½ miles; Omiya to Utsunomiya, 49 miles; Utsunomiya to Shirakawa, 48 miles; the Temiya-Sapporo and Poronai line, the only one in Yezo, 56½ miles; and Ozaka to Sakai, 8 miles: those in course of construction, Sakegawa to Ueda, 52 miles; Shirakawa to Fukushima, 55 miles; Fukushima to Shiogawa, 58 miles; Yokohama to Nagoya, 215 miles: those in contemplation are Sendai to Awomori, 240 miles; Oyama to Kirui, 32 miles; and Kirui to Maebashi, 18 miles. The Japanese fully appreciate the advantage of railroads, and very few days pass in Japan without some notice appearing in the press of a projected railway scheme.

I have, however, confined myself to actual facts of accomplishment, or of what is really likely to be carried out in the near future. All the lines named tap important centres of production, or connect—as, for example, in the cases of Yokohama and Tokyo, Kobe and Ozaka—large business emporiums.

Telegraphy is much used and well understood in Japan. Not only is the country in communication with Europe by means of two lines, the one by way of Shanghai and Hong-Kong, the other by Vladivostok and Siberia, the connecting cables being laid from Nagasaki; but there are in the Japanese empire itself close on 7000 miles of telegraph line, with 16,000 miles of wire, also eight submarine cables, not counting that from Nagasaki, with a total length of 51½ miles.

While the first railway in Japan, that connecting Tokyo and Yokohama, was begun in 1870, and completed in 1872, the first telegraph, also between Yokohama and Tokyo, was erected in 1869. The Japanese were, of course, indebted to foreign aid in the early construction of railways and telegraphs, but they are now in great measure independent of such assistance.

The postal system in Japan is excellent, and it should not be forgotten that the country is a member of the Postal Union. The foreign mails are delivered with regularity and despatch, and the domestic postal service is admirably worked. Japan sent an officer of rank to the recent Postal Conference at Lisbon, and, indeed, there is scarcely a non-political conference of international importance to which Japan does not send a delegate.

In educational matters the Japanese take a high place. When I first arrived in Japan in 1860, it was an uncommon thing to meet with a Japanese who could not read or write to some extent, and education has taken rapid strides since then. It is compulsory throughout the land, special rates being levied for the purpose. Every child is regarded as of school age from its sixth to its fourteenth year, and the course at primary schools must not be less than three or more than eight years. At least thirty-two weeks in each year must be given to instruction, and the hours not less than three or more than six daily. There is a university at Tokyo, with its affiliated colleges, affording opportunities for pursuing most branches of learning, and it must also be borne in mind that many Japanese students come to the United Kingdom to obtain that scientific or expert knowledge which can in some cases be more easily commanded here than in Japan. There are at the present moment about 100 Japanese students in England and Scotland, and about 150 in Germany. This is not a paper I wish to burden with statistical figures, but I may mention that there are in Japan close on 31,000 schools, in which number is included 1 university, 142 colleges, and 65 normal schools. The number of teachers is about 102,000, and of pupils about 3,325,000. English is now pretty generally taught throughout the empire; and, as giving an idea of what is taught in special schools, I may mention what came under

my notice shortly before I left Japan. There had recently been established in the capital, Tokyo, a peeress's school, under the special patronage of the empress, and under the supervision of the imperial household department. Two courses of instruction, primary and middle, are prescribed, and I give in detail the subjects of both. The lower grade of the primary course includes writing, arithmetic, geography, drawing, music, needlework, gymnastics, and physics. The higher grade of the primary course includes all the above, with the addition of political geography, history, and natural history. The lower grade of the middle course takes in Japanese literature, European languages, chemistry, and mineralogy; the higher grade, algebra, geometry, history, physiology, zoology, botany, domestic and political economy. The courses extend over twelve years—six for the primary, and six for the middle.

To pass to Japan's war strength. The army is one of significant proportions: conscription is the rule, and every male of certain age is, with certain exemptions, liable to service.

The peace footing of the Japanese army numbers 60,000 men, expanding to a war establishment of 185,000, and these not levies of raw, undisciplined men, but men who have gone through a regular course with the colours. The troops are armed with the most modern weapons, and any improvements in arms that may be adopted by European nations the Japanese are not slow to adopt for themselves.

The navy of Japan numbers about thirty-five vessels, exclusive of torpedo boats. The number is small, but the Government is giving great attention to the increase of its naval strength. Already in this small fleet there are vessels of the highest type, both in respect of speed and armament; and I need only mention the two celebrated Armstrong cruisers, the *Takachiho* and the *Naniwa*, which arrived out shortly before I left, to show that I am not speaking without a knowledge of the facts. The *personnel* of the navy number 8500 officers and men. They make excellent sailors; and the number of deep-sea fishermen engaged on the coast constitutes alone a never-failing source of supply of men, not to mention the lads that are drilled on the training vessels of the Japanese navy. There is a naval dockyard close to Yokohama, at which vessels are not only efficiently repaired, but where men-of-war are built and engined throughout. Three good docks exist at the yard, the largest being 502 feet over all in length, the smallest 308 feet.

From the navy I pass to the mercantile marine. The junk is still a familiar feature in Japanese waters, but is destined, so far as the larger crafts are concerned, soon to disappear, a Government order having gone forth that no more junks over a certain tonnage are to be built. A Government edict was, however, scarcely necessary to this end, as there is a strong predilection in the Japanese mind for vessels of foreign build. Small schooners for the coasting trade, built by Japanese shipwrights, are now a favourite style of craft; and the country possesses an imposing mercantile marine in the fleet of steamers that belong to the Nippon

Yusen Kaisha, and which run not only to all the more important coast ports, but regularly to Shanghai, in China; to Corean ports, and at times to Vladivostok, in Russian territory.

I should not fail to notice the judicial system of the country, which will sooner or later largely affect foreigners in Japan, when the ex-territorial jurisdiction of which I have made mention comes to be abolished. The system that exists is modelled rather on the French or Continental plan than on ours: there are courts of first instance, from which an appeal lies to the Superior, and from that to the Supreme Court, together with courts of simple police and correctional courts. These are all presided over by Japanese judges, some of whom have been called to the bar in England, or have successfully prosecuted their legal studies elsewhere. All these courts exercise jurisdiction over Japanese alone. In the opening part of this paper I explained the system of ex-territoriality under which foreigners are subject only to their own consular tribunals.

I find I have not mentioned the press, which is singularly active in Japan. Amongst the leading Japanese newspapers are the *Yomiuri Shimbun* or *Crier*, which has an annual sale of about 4,600,000 copies; the *Jiji Shimbun* or *Times*, with a sale of about 2,300,000; the *Hochi Shimbun* or *Intelligencer*, with a sale of 1,700,000; the *Choya Shimbun*, or *Court and Country Gazette*, with a sale of 1,500,000; the *Nichi-nichi Shimbun* or *Daily Recorder*, with a sale of 1,300,000; and the *Mainichi Shimbun* or *Daily News*, with a sale of about 1,000,000. All these papers are printed in the Japanese character; they are for the most part conducted with singular ability, and are a potent factor in the education of the people. There are, in addition to these, English papers published at the open ports under the responsibility of English proprietors and editors—such as the *Japan Herald*, *Japan Mail*, and *Japan Gazette* at Yokohama; the *Independent*, under American editorship, at Tokyo; the *Hiogo News* at Hiogo; and the *Nagasaki Express* at Nagasaki. I should not omit the *Japan Punch*, which has been in existence for many years at Yokohama under English editorship.

The Japanese are omnivorous newspaper readers, and it is a common sight to see your domestic servant, male or female, with his or her own particular daily journal.

I have left untouched to the last the subject of area and population. The former is computed at 146,566 square miles. Of this, about 31,500,000 acres are actually under taxation, and about 11,176,000 under cultivation. The latest census returns, prior to my leaving in November last, gave a population of 37,868,987, of whom 19,157,877 were males and 18,711,110 were females. The population is made up as follows:—Imperial family, 38; peers, 3350; gentry, 1,938,204; agricultural and industrial classes, 35,927,395. The European and American residents in Japan number about 2300, of whom about 1070 are British; 450 Americans; 270 German; 200 French; and the balance of other nationalities, excepting Chinese, of whom there are about 4000 in Japan.

A last word as to revenue and expenditure, which I find, according to late returns, to be, as to revenue, £12,449,236, and expenditure £12,448,169.

The national debt is computed at £40,904,555, and the amount of paper money in circulation is estimated at £11,441,535. The principal sources of revenue are the land tax, the tax on the native liquor *saké*, that on tobacco, the Custom duties, and postal receipts.

## ZEMO-KARTLI, OR UPPER GEORGIA.

By D. R. PEACOCK, H.B.M. VICE-CONSUL, BATUM.

THE territory comprising the districts of Kars and Batum was for some time, upon its annexation to Russia, looked upon as a naturally rich and promising field of colonisation and enterprise, and even now is partly so considered, without any apparent reason, excepting the prestige of novelty. It is not my present object to give an account of its natural resources and local economic conditions, nor do I venture to assert that the potential capacities of the territory are unworthy of consideration. But I certainly feel no hesitation in stating that the land, and the people who have been occupying it for over one thousand years, if compared with any more or less prosperous locality of the world, are under present circumstances and conditions, from a purely economic point of view, both unproductive and poor.

With an area of about 10,000 square miles, and a population of 260,000 souls, it yields to its present rulers an average yearly revenue of about £34,000, which sum, it need scarcely be added, does not by far cover the various items of annual expenditure incurred by the Government in the two districts. As an important limb of a vast political body, it might, perhaps, in a certain sense, notwithstanding its financial deficiency, be considered a profitable acquisition; but as a market or a field of investment it offers but very little encouragement.

The topographical features and the climate of the country, the very character, habits, and tastes of the population, practically preclude the possibility of profitable co-operative agricultural or industrial life. Local production, as well as local consumption, are not only, in regard to the degree of development, confined to limits fixed, as it were, by immovable natural barriers and long-standing, deep-rooted social causes; the very methods of production, and the kind and nature of the articles locally produced or consumed, have been fixed with precision and uniformity by preceding generations, which it is not so easy to counterfeit or infringe upon as in the case of our ever-varying modern trade-marks.

The notion that this territory is, economically speaking, a new one, waiting only to be tapped, and that the native population has not yet had the requisite opportunities for displaying much vigour and energy in their