

JAPAN'S FIRST CITIZEN.

A JAPANESE, Chokura Kadono, writes for *Harper's Weekly* an interesting sketch of the foremost commoner of his native land, called the Grand Old Man of Japan—Yukichi Fukuzawa. Though never a politician, this man played an important part in the restoration of imperialism a quarter of a century ago. He was the first to present to the people the social and political institutions of Western nations, together with their achievements and advancement in science and applied arts. His innumerable essays and larger works, in which his unparalleled power of judgment is manifested, circulated widely, and their influence was to lead the people to eager adoption of things foreign. By the presence of the Dutch, who had been permitted for three centuries to trade at one of the southern ports, and who had introduced some of their ideas, Mr Fukuzawa was led, a few years before the restoration, to establish a school for the teaching of their language and, later, of English. Started on a humble scale, it was destined to become the greatest institution of learning of the time in Japan. There he preached his progressive principles to thousands of his disciples, who afterward became the active and influential element in the Government and among the people. His untiring and energetic writing has taught the nation not only of the material advancement of the west, but also of the rights and privileges the people there enjoy, and of the freedom of press and speech. His school on the one hand, and his profuse writings on the other, propagated his advanced ideas throughout the country, the influence and result of which have formed the new Japan as we now see it. His relations with the Government became strained to some extent owing to his rather advanced theories, which the conservative element could not consider safe and sound. Thus, although he was respected by the Government party, they entertained a certain fear and dislike of him. True, on frequent occasions he had been the friendly adviser of influential Cabinet members, but in the writer's judgment, there never existed an amicable feeling between the Government party and the Grand Old Man.

The Japanese synonyms of the words 'liberty,' 'right,' and 'privilege,' 'duty' and 'obligation,' 'press,' and 'speech' are said to be productions of his. He introduced public speech, which, as exercised in Western countries, was unknown to Japan. Some twenty years ago Mr Fukuzawa and his followers used to gather in a small room to practise elocution and oratory. Although Mr Fukuzawa himself is not an orator of great fluency and eloquence, there is much convincing power and ease in his utterances, with the clearest of logic, and a kindly, or rather, fatherly, way which draws the attention and compels the respect of his listeners. Of his pupils some have become noted speakers, and there are no less than forty of them occupying seats in the Imperial Diet.

Journalistic work was undertaken by the great man later, and the *Jiji Times* stands foremost in reliability of news and in soundness of views. It has the largest circulation of all the important daily papers, and is independent in its politics, being neither of the Government nor of the Opposition. At present he expresses himself through this organ, which is managed by his younger colleagues, as an adviser and counsellor to the people and Government.

His influence in politics has been rather of an indirect nature, but none the less great for that. As has been said before, he has not sustained the friendliest relations with the Government, although not at any time or in any way has he occupied a hostile attitude toward it.

Being a great commoner, his views, however sound and wise from the standpoint of the progressive mind, are not always received with favour by the Government. High as he stands in the estimation of all parties, he has never been the recipient of favour, decoration or peerage

from the Crown or Government. It is his delight, judging from his acts and words, thus to stand above the ordinary level independent and unrestrained. He is an imperialist, as all the people of the country are, and in his essays on the Crown he expresses the healthiest and sincerest views, inclining to neither extreme. His school has been honoured by a donation from the Emperor, who has also appointed its principal, Professor Obata, a member in the House of Peers.

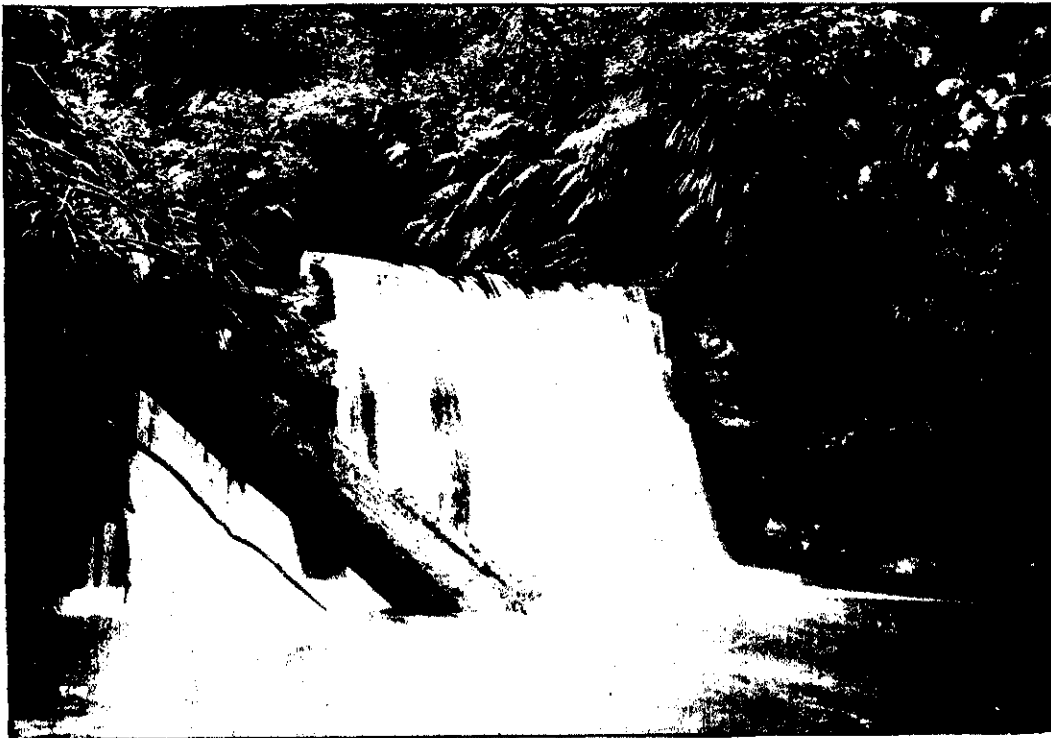
His school, Keiojijuku, is in the city of Tokyo. It consists of several departments—elementary and commercial training schools, academic and university departments. The organization in its present perfection is the result of years of energetic industry and perseverance on the part of Mr Fukuzawa, the president, and his corps of efficient assistants. The number of students at present exceeds 1,200. Native as well as foreign professors and instructors are employed. The school possesses a certain individuality, resulting perhaps from the influence of its president, and leaves its unmistakable stamp upon all who have learned at the foot of its great master. Notwithstanding the fact that there are now in the country other well-equipped institutions of learning, both public and private, this school still enjoys the prestige given it by its head, the great commoner.

A PERUSAL of the great journals of Boston would lead one to conclude that the finest erudition and the keenest wits of the country are occupied in the determination of the propriety or impropriety of leaving one's hat and cane on the hall-rack instead of taking them into the drawing-room. There seems to be a doubt as to whether the existing mode is the result of uneasiness lest those who leave early will select the best hats, or of a notion that holding a hat gives dignity to one's presence. In England there is a growing tendency to leave it in the hall. The advice of so experienced a rounder as Mr J. Ashby-Sterry is to not let it leave your hands if you do bring your hat into the drawing-room in case of accidents.



THE 70 FT. FALL NIHOTOPU, 188.

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