

thread, and the imperial palace will contain the finest treasures of modern Japanese art.

The woods are especially fine. They are in their natural grain, and the pillars of many of the rooms are massive square posts of that velvet-like satin wood found in Japan. In the whole palace there is no paint; but the coloured decoration is made up entirely of gilding, lacquer, and fine cloths. The ceilings are works of fine art. They are divided by lacquered ribs into many panels, each of which contains a different design, painted, embroidered, or embossed. No nails show in the woodwork, and the metal work is a wonder of damascene and carved brass. The crest of the Mikado, the chrysanthemum flower, appears everywhere, and many of the ceilings are finished in gold and colours.

The rooms are in many cases very large, and the banquetting hall requires five hundred and forty square yards of matting to cover its floor. Its walls are hung with the costliest of silks, and the ceiling is furnished in gold. The throne room is equally fine, and the whole palace as far as the Japanese part of the workmanship is concerned, is worthy of an emperor. It is furnished, however, with foreign furniture, and this was bought in Germany. It is curious that the Japanese should go to Germany for the furniture for their palace, and there is no lack of criticism among the foreigners in Japan as to the poverty of the selection which they have made. The furniture is of old patterns and of a style by no means fitted to the establishment of a great ruler. The tables have thin tops, the chairs are uncomfortable, and the mantles of some of the rooms are cheaper than those of many an ordinary seaside cottage. Had the Japanese taken competitive bids for this furniture, the leading establishments of New York, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and other American cities would

noble Japanese ladies as his most intimate companions. This is the Japanese law, and it has been so from that time when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.

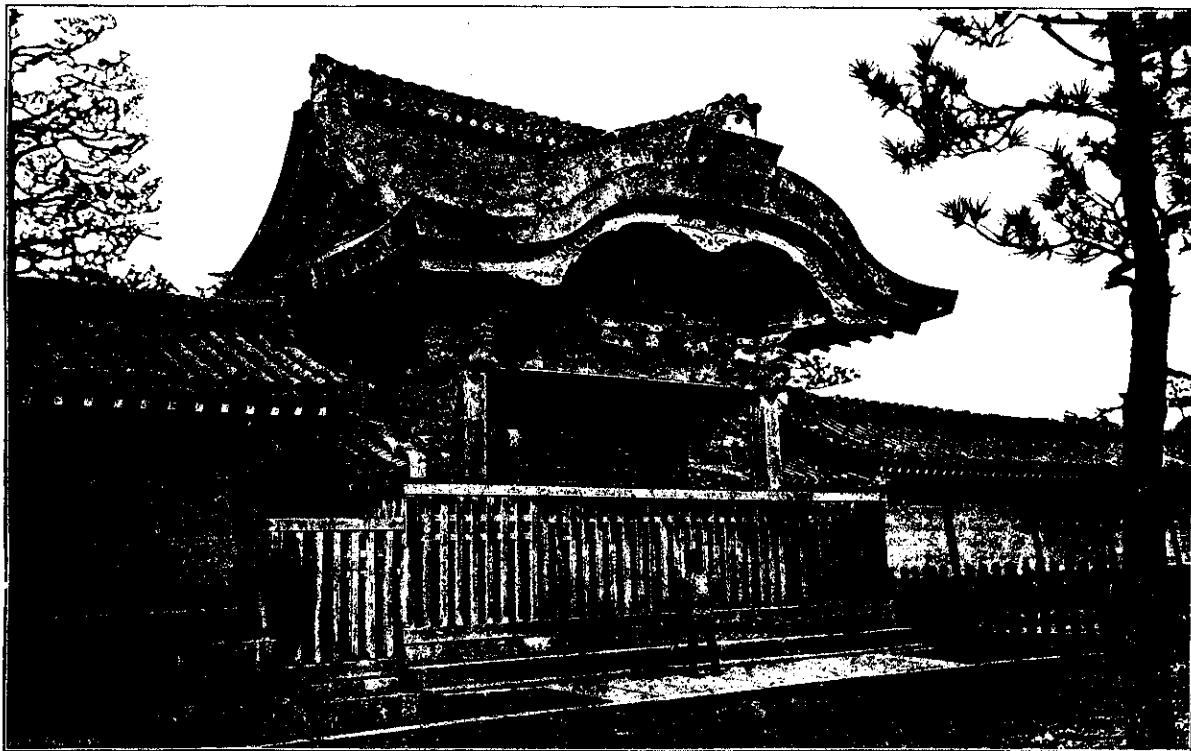
The young prince is said to be fond of military affairs, and the Japanese predict a great future for him. It may be, however, that he will drop into the groove of his father, which, it is whispered by the best posted men at the capital, is more that of a figure-head than that of a ruler. The Mikado of Japan is, it is said, on most occasions like wax in the hands of his Cabinet, and though those about the Court would hardly acknowledge it, the men who really rule Japan to day are the chief officers of the various departments and their friends. These men are the young Japan, and it is through them that these reforms have been inaugurated to such an extent that whatever might be the change of rulers they cannot be stopped. There are many remarkable men among them, and the almond-eyed statesman of Tokio will compare favourably with those of the other capitals of the world.

The Premier of the empire is Count Kurodo, a man of strong will, sterling integrity, and great force of character. The head of the office of the foreign affairs of the empire is Count Okuma, who succeeds Count Inouye, the latter having resigned after the failure of the treaty conference this year. Kurodo is also a new officer and takes the place of Count Ito. Count Ito and Count Inouye are among the most remarkable men of the new empire, and the story of their struggle for Japan reads like a romance. It was told me by an English officer connected with the Japanese Government, and I give it as nearly as possible in his own words.

Before the restoration, when the Tycoon governed at Tokio and the Mikado was still kept inside the walls of his palace at Kioto, there were foreign and anti-foreign parties

to a good naval school, they shipped them as common sailors on a sailing ship which went around the Cape of Good Hope for London. They left Shanghai with forty dollars in their pockets, and they were kicked and cuffed around during the voyage until they became able seamen. The sailors learned that they had money with them, and they did not let them rest until the most of their forty dollars had been gambled from them.

The moment the vessel reached London the officers and crew left the ship, and the two Japanese runaways found themselves alone. They were dazed with the din and the sights and the confusion of the great city. In the centre of millions of people, they did not know which way to turn nor where to go. The fire in the ship was out, the cook was gone, and there was not a bit of food to be had. They expected someone would come for them, but after waiting a long time they grew so hungry that they decided to go out and buy something to eat. They had three dollars left, but they did not know the value of money in England. They thought, however, that this would buy them some boiled rice, a bowl of soup, or a bit of raw fish. Taking a paper with them, they marked on this a diagram of the route they took in order that they might get back to the ship, and after devious wanderings came at length to a baker's shop. There were loaves of bread on the counter, and in, not knowing the price, laid down the whole of his three dollars and picked up a loaf. He had no idea how much it was worth, and he supposed that if it was less than three dollars the baker would give him the change. The baker saw that he was a foreigner, and swept the whole of the three dollars into the till. The two boys then started to go back to the ship, but they found they had lost their diagram. They walked the streets of London for hours, and it was dusk before they returned. They ate their bread, however, and



GATE OF THE MIKADO'S PALACE.

have filled the contract with credit to the United States. The palace is lighted with seventeen hundred electric lights. These are of the Edison pattern, and they are put in by an American. They are universally praised, and the contrast between them and the cheap German furniture is sharply drawn. The heating power of the palace is steam, and it is a question as to the effect that steam heat will have on Japanese cabinet making. In a country where the houses are warmed by boxes of charcoal, and in which the cooking stove and the base-burner have yet to appear, the bringing of steam heat into rooms made, as I am told, largely of green timber, may cause more cracks than Japanese embroidery can cover.

The Japanese Court is now practically the same as that of a European ruler. Japan has its princes, its marquises, its counts, its vicounts and its barons. It has its imperial houses made up of the descendants of the younger sons of former Mikados, and many of these houses are centuries old. The house of Arisugawa was founded two hundred and eighty-six years ago, that of Fushimi is five hundred and thirty-seven years old, and there are eight other imperial houses, through the veins of each of which flows the blue blood of royalty. The young prince, who is now nine years old, when he comes to marry, will, I am told, have a list of all the eligible daughters of these families handed to him, and from them he must choose a wife. If, however, there are no eligible daughters, there is a list of five other noble families whose daughters are brought forth. These are the families who were the noblest in Japan before the restoration, and from whom the present Empress came. If in this list no daughters appear, then the choice goes to the five families of created princes, and out of the daughters of these must come the next Empress of Japan. In the meantime the young prince has eight more years to live before he attains to the age of his father at the date of his marriage, and his relations to the future Empress will be such that he need not worry whether she be beautiful or homely, good tempered or the reverse. He will have, like the present Emperor, the right of twelve of the fairest of

in Japan. The Tycoon was treating with the foreigners and there was a foreign settlement at Yokohama. At this time about a hundred hot-headed *samurai* boys conspired together at Tokio to go to Yokohama and to clean the foreigners from the face of Japan. They started one dark night, and had gotten half-way on their journey when they found themselves surrounded by soldiers. They fought their way out and returned to Tokio. Among these boys were Ito and Inouye, then about twenty years of age. They were under the Prince of Chosin, and this prince was the chief of the anti-foreign faction. After this failure they concluded that the killing of the foreigners at Yokohama would be only the beginning of war with them. They had seen their great warships, and they knew that Japan could not successfully fight them on the sea. They talked over the situation, and concluded that the only safety for Japan was in her having as good ships and as good guns as the foreigners. They went to their prince and told him that they wanted to go to England with three other picked youth of their band. They wanted to study English customs, to master the great secret of naval supremacy and bring it back to Japan. The Japanese could then build ships and they could wage a successful war. The prince was pleased with the idea. He gave them five thousand dollars, and Inouye went to Yokohama and arranged with the consul to ship them as common sailors to Shanghai. There were five boys in the party, and they were taken on board the ship in the Yokohama Harbour one dark and rainy night. They thus got away from Japan without the knowledge of the Tycoon.

The money in the meanwhile had been sent on to one of the noted English trading houses at Shanghai, and when they arrived there the house was ready to ship them to England as passengers. Ito and Inouye were full of their mission, and kept saying over again and again to the members of the firm the only English word they knew, which was navigation. The merchants took it for granted they wanted to be sailors, and instead of sending them on to London as passengers, with instructions that they be sent

the next day a messenger from the merchant came for them and gave them good lodgings and plenty of money. They spent some time in England, and their bright minds soon grasped the fact that Japan could never make a successful struggle against such wealth and such a mighty nation as that about them. They considered it their duty to go back and tell their prince what they had learned. The merchants told them that they had received no orders from Japan, and they could not ship them without orders. Ito and Inouye then shipped before the mast as common seamen. They went again around the Cape of Good Hope and finally reached their prince. He was fighting the foreigners at the time, and their news was received with anything but joy. Inouye was set upon by a band of angry soldiers, and slashed, backed, and left for dead by the roadside. He recovered consciousness, and was able to crawl to his mother's house, where by careful nursing he was brought back to life. He bears on his face to-day the scars of the wounds he received then. In the struggle that ensued between the Tycoon and the forces of the revolutionists both he and Ito came again to the front. They have been in the front ever since. They have aided Japan in the establishment of her railways, her telegraphs, and her post-offices, and it has been by the aid of their influence that she has now one of the best navies of the East.

It is through the efforts of such men as these that Japan is opening her doors to the world. Inouye is anxious to have the citizens of all nations do business in all parts of Japan, provided they will submit to Japanese laws. He would like to see foreign capital introduced, and he thinks that a revision of the treaties would increase the Japanese foreign trade. Under such ideas the ways of Japanese business are rapidly changing. The Japanese merchant still wears his long gown, and calculates his profits and losses with a box of buttons strung on wires. He still sits on his heels in his little store open to the street, and the floor still forms his counter. His mind, however, is wonderfully bright, and he is not backward to grasp at new goods as fast as he finds a demand for them. He is learning