

AMERICA.

The "Shamrock" has arrived in America in good time for the International Yacht Race, which takes place this month. It is believed by the Americans that she is in every way worthy of the encomiums which have been passed upon her by the English critics, and that there will be a truly great struggle between Sir Thomas Lipton's yacht and the American representative, the "Columbia." The Cup to be raced for was first won by America on August 22nd, 1851, and was presented by the owners of that yacht to the New York Yacht Club in 1857. The last great contest of the century appears to be causing more excitement, if possible, than any of its predecessors; but we may well believe that there will be a fair field and no favour, and that the result will be received by all in a generous and sportsmauslike way. Our sympathies must naturally be with the "Shamrock." May the Fates be propitious!

JAPAN.

On the 17th of July treaties were arranged between Japan and Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden and the United States, putting an end to the old system of Treaty Ports and separate jurisdiction for, and treatment of foreigners. Vast changes have taken place so far as Japan is concerned since 1854, the date of her first treaty. In 1871, the feudal system was abolished, and in 1889 parliamentary government was established, while the war of 1894 went far to manifest her supremacy in the East. For many years the brightest of her younger men have been sent

to Europe to study the arts both of peace and war. Neither money nor thought has been spared to develop and modernize the country so that it may stand on equal ground with its sister nations. That she has succeeded in a marvellous manner is unquestioned, that such success renders her a formidable rival even to older and richer countries, is a fact which the manufacturers of the West have even now to take into their most earnest consideration.

RUSSIA.

It is said that on January 1st, 1901, the Gregorian Calendar will be adopted by Russia, thus leaving the Greeks to the exclusive enjoyment of the Julian Calendar. This means the correction of an error which now amounts to twelve days, due to the fact that in the calculation of a year—that is, of the time it takes the earth to pass from one given spot in its journey around the sun, and return to it again, an error of five hours, forty-eight minutes and fifty seconds was made in Julius Cæsar's time. The Gregorian Calendar is due to Pope Gregory III., who, in the year 1582 ordained that ten days should be deducted from that year, the 5th of October thus becoming the 15th of October, and that every hundredth year should not be counted as leap year excepting every four-hundredth year, commencing with the year 2000. In this way the difference between the civil and the natural year will not amount to a day in 5,000 years. England adopted this calendar in 1751. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished that this step forward does not mark the finality of Russia's adoption of the methods of the majority of civilized nations.

