

up a half or even more of their harvests as rent in kind to the landowners. In addition to the production of the staple diet, rice, the peasantry also carry out silk worm raising and cultivate the tobacco-plant and the tea-shrub. They grow wheat and other cereals, various kinds of vegetables, including potatoes, and fruits of many types, with oranges, persimmons, loquats, apples, pears, grapes, figs and peaches in comparative abundance, while mulberry trees, essent-

Kobe, Yokohama and Osaka, but from towns and fishing villages all round the long coast-line large fleets of tiny fishing vessels put out daily to ply their nets in the waters of the Sea of Japan, the Inland Sea and the Pacific. Even with the combined energies of the peasantry and the fisherfolk, however, a substantial proportion of Japan's foodstuffs, including a sixth of her consumption of rice, has in the past been coming from her empire, chiefly Korea and Formosa.



*A tea-bearing hillside and a plain chequered with rice fields*

ial to the breeding of silk worms, are of course numerous. Many also grow the lacquer tree which furnishes the celebrated lacquer of Japan. In seasons when the rice crop fails it is silk production which carries the peasantry through the lean period that results.

Since Japan has never been self-sufficient in the matter of foodstuffs a good deal of importance attaches to her fishing industry, in which upwards of six hundred thousand people were engaged before the war with China. Not only from the three great ports of

The top-heavy economic structure of Japan, with primitive small-scale agriculture as its foundation and its middle-class superstructure, is overshadowed by a financial oligarchy, generally referred to as the Zaibatsu, in which the four leading concerns are the great combines of Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo and Yasuda. How far the Allied High Command has moved in the direction of restricting the influence of these combines is not at present clear, but before Japan's downfall they controlled most of the country's paper, flour, sugar, coal, cotton and artificial silk industries, while Mitsui and Mitsubishi between them owned more than 90 per cent. of the nation's transport. Mitsui even controlled for years the Seiyukei, the more conservative of the two great Japanese political parties, while Mitsubishi asserted influence on another, the Minseito, and through these agencies they were able to ensure fiscal policies which suited them, subsidies when they were needed, and increasingly large government contracts as Japan made her preparations for war. Nowhere in the world are there greater concentrations in capital than in Japan, where such concerns as Mitsui and Mitsubishi dominate the entire economic life of the country.

At the pinnacle of the State is the Emperor Hirohito, "heaven-descended" and with a lineage which, it is claimed, traces back to "ages immemorial". Mythology has it that the Emperor is descended from the Sun Goddess, who, in the "divine ages" before the beginning