

and America. The other concessions demanded of China were also fully as valuable for the United States and Europe as for Japan. Take the deepening of the river which leads to Shanghai. The ships of all the world will sail up that river, and the opening of the new ports will give the whole world access to the vast cities and to millions of people. The new territory opened to trade by this treaty is one of the richest of the Chinese empire. It comprises a number of cities and towns. It contains, it is said, a population of nearly two hundred million, and a vast trade ought to be developed from it. The Yangtse Kiang is opened up to Chun-king and foreigners will be able to go farther into China than they ever have before."

"Tell me something about our new treaty with Japan. Does it give the Americans any more advantages than they now have?"

"Yes, indeed," replied the minister. "By its citizens of the United States can go to any part of Japan and engage in business. They can establish manufactures and trade directly with the people. Heretofore they have been confined to the open ports, and the most of their business had to be done through the Japanese government. They can now lease property, and from now on Japan will be open to American manufacturers."

AMERICAN CAPITAL IN JAPAN.

"Is Japan a good field for the investment of American capital?"

"In some respects, I think, yes. Factories could be built by foreigners in Japan to use Japanese labor to make articles for export to America. The Japanese buy a great deal of machinery, and more American machinery should be shipped to Japan. What the United States needs is to do business with lower freight rates. As it is, we use millions of dollars' worth of your cotton every year. Our cotton mills are rapidly increasing, and our consumption of American cotton will increase, as it is of a special kind, and we need it to mix with the cheaper cottons which we get from China and India. At present, however, it comes to us via Liverpool. If the Pacific lines would make special rates it could be shipped by San Francisco. If the Nicaragua canal is opened the United States will probably ship direct through it. I am surprised that Americans do not study the Japanese market. The people here are so rich and they have a vast trade among themselves that they have not yet begun to consider the trade outside of their own boundaries. In order to do business with the Japanese your merchants and factories must study the Japanese people and their wants, and when they do they will probably supply them with many other things than machinery."

THE JAPANESE AS MACHINISTS.

"Can the Japanese use machinery equally well with the people of the United States?"

"Yes," was the reply. "The Japanese are a nation of mechanics. They take naturally to machinery and use it gladly. All over Japan foreign labor-saving inventions are creeping in. Silk is now reeled and woven by machinery. We make our own railroad cars, and we have made some locomotives. Nearly all the arms and munitions of war which were used during the recent campaigns with China were made in Japan, and we

are almost doubling our cotton machinery every year."

ASIATIC LABOR.

"What do you think of the future of the Asiatic labor market in competition with ours? Can we successfully compete with you?"

"On our own ground perhaps not," was the reply. "But I see nothing to alarm the American laborer in the possibilities of the future. You have been competing here for years with the cheapest labor of Europe. You have had the Belgians and the Germans to fight, and you have conquered again and again. The Americans are people of wonderful inventive brains. No matter how cheap the labor of the rest of the world in any line of work, the Americans get up a machine which will do it cheaper, and you have such vast aggregations of capital that you can organize undertakings on a scale which is practically beyond competition. Take your own iron works. Take the Carnegie works, for instance. They buy in vast quantities that they can cut all expenses outside those of labor to the minimum. I believe the Americans will always hold their own. They cannot work so cheaply nor live so cheaply as we do, but they can turn out a greater product. Another thing is that there is bound to be a great demand from Asia for American raw materials. Cotton is one of these and lumber is another. As to machinery, I doubt whether we will ever be a great machine-making nation. We have plenty of coal, and we ship vast quantities of it to China and India. We have not yet, however, discovered large enough deposits of iron to make up hope that we will manufacture much machinery. The iron we have is of a very fine quality, but so far it has not been discovered in large quantities. It may be that we will find mines of Yezo."

THE JAPANESE AS INVENTORS

"Speaking of invention, Mr. Kurino, it is often said that the Japanese are mere copiers, that they never invent nor improve anything, but merely copy. Is this so?"

"No, it is not. The Japanese are to a certain extent creative. The gun which is used by their soldiers today was invented by a Japanese. It is true that they can copy and imitate anything, but they are by no means slavish imitators. They take the best of modern inventions and combine them, and they form new products. You must remember that they knew nothing of this civilization which they have now adopted a generation ago. What you have been building up for centuries is all new to them. After they thoroughly understand it and your wants, you may then look out for such inventions as will supply them. The Japanese are a people of ideas, and they are always ready to adapt to their own wants what they find in others."

"What about the future civilization of Japan? Will it be purely occidental?"

"No, I think not. It will be a combination of the best of the occident and orient adapted to fit the Japanese character and needs. We find this in so many lines. There is a strong tendency in Japan to stick to the old things wherever they are best, and in some directions, I have no doubt but that the old is the better."

"How about religion in Japan? What are the missionaries doing, and is there

any prospect of Christianity ever becoming the religion of the Japanese people?"

"Who can tell?" replied the minister. "The Japanese are fanatically wedded to their old beliefs. Many of the better classes, and notably those who have traveled much in Christian countries, are practically agnostics as far as either Buddhism or Christianity is concerned. They might be called free thinkers."

"The missionaries have done a great work in Japan. They have made many converts, and it is a curious thing that the Japanese Christians prefer to have their own churches, and to be independent of the foreigners. They like to map out their own religious lines, and to pray and think for themselves. You remember the discussion of the Briggs question, which tore the Presbyterian churches of the United States almost asunder some time ago. This question found its way out to Japan, and the native Christian pastors got together and discussed it. They shook the dust out of the Thirty-nine Articles, and they were by far more rigid than the opponents of Dr. Briggs in their ideas of liberality. I think there is a possibility that the Christian religion may at some time so grow as to be one of the greatest religions of Japan. Already some of the Christian churches have been discussing the sending of native Japanese Christians missionaries to Corea and China."

THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

"By the way, your excellency, returning to the war question, how about the Sandwich Islands? Is it true that Japanese are seeking to acquire them?"

"No; emphatically no," replied Minister Kurino. "The Japanese never had a desire to own Hawaii. The Japanese who emigrated there did so on the special solicitation of the government and the people of the Sandwich Islands. They were accorded special privileges, were told they would have the right of citizens, and were assured that they would not be tried in the courts without an interpreter who understood their own language was there to speak for them. Japan wants nothing of the Sandwich Islands, except that they be protected in accordance with the treaty which was made at the time."

"How about the possibility of a union of the Asiatic nations as against the occidental ones?"

"There may be, but it depends entirely upon circumstances, the force of which cannot at present be accurately estimated, and concerning which, therefore, it cannot at present be safe to make any prediction."

G. Frank G. Carpenter

JENSON'S TRAVELS.

LETTER No. 2.

Tuesday, May 14th, at 9 p. m. I boarded a Northern Pacific train and left Portland, Oregon, for Seattle, state of Washington. Going down the left bank of the Willametta and the Columbia rivers for a distance of thirty-nine miles, we arrive at Goble, where our long train is backed out on three sections upon the immense ferry boat, 340 feet long, and we are taken across the great Columbia, which at this par-