

THE GREAT JAPANESE EMBASSY OF 1860.

A FORGOTTEN CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL AMITY AND COMMERCE

BY PATTERSON DUBOIS.

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The American trader with Japan, the traveller or sojourner in Japan, and the national representative or envoy to Japan, all find their transactions with the Japanese greatly facilitated by certain American ideas, patterns and methods now firmly rooted in Japanese practise.

First and foremost, the money system corresponds closely to that of the United States and the coinage itself is convenient, exact and trustworthy. In close accord with this, the American feels himself comparatively at home with the banking, postal and telegraph facilities, in public school aspects, and finally, he takes comfort in the assurance of an up-to-date dentistry and surgery.

But the international American little realizes how all these essentials of modern western life came to be imported from his own country and adopted by the keen-eyed Japanese as indispensable models for the Meiji or "enlightened rule."

The historic fact has dropped into almost total oblivion. This practical Americanizing of Japan harks back to the well-nigh forgotten visit of the great Japanese Embassy to the United States in 1860.

After the first assurance of friendly relations or amity, the rock-bottom of a stable, thriving and reciprocal commerce between two nations is to be found—as already indicated—in a scientifically exact and trustworthy coinage and system of exchange. Of this, more later. But first, as to the historical setting of one of the most picturesque and potent of all international events.

Americans delight to shout themselves hoarse in the praise of

Perry. We rightly glorify the tactful, gallant and picturesque manner in which he punctured the screen which shut out the western world from the eye of the Rising Sun. We have a sufficient feeling that he took the initiative in securing friendly, to be followed by trade, relations in advance of all other nations—whatever slippery foothold the Portuguese, English and Dutch had at one time or another acquired only to lose again. We are sure enough that Japan's introduction to the circle of commercial nations was an American performance and that Perry took the initiative hand in it.

And there we stop. We know that American training goes back to Japan in the person of many a university graduate and we know of other influences, military, naval, industrial, commercial educational, professional, ethical, religious, which Japan has sought and obtained from both Europe and America. But we do not seem to realize that to certain impressions made upon the barbaric and wondering embassy of 1860 may be traced definite and continuous lines of development through the vitalizing of more or less latent Japanese powers and ideals. The work which Perry began in 1853-54 was only completed in the visit of the embassy of 1860 to this country. Indeed the embassy is the one signal factor in making the Perry incident permanently effective. Nor was it completed in the signing of the treaty in Washington, whatever might be officially held to the contrary. It is safe to say that the Japanese *learned more which has proved germinal in their re-making*, from their visit to the United States—but especially to Philadelphia, immediately following the diplomatic formalities in Washington, in 1860, than from any other one American source since Perry anchored in the Bay of Yeddo. Indeed I propose here to show such a historical continuity and persistence of certain formative elements of modern progress now accepted as the fixed order of things in Japan, and even incipiently in China, as can be traced to no other visible historical source than the embassy of 1860. And this, notwithstanding the complete revolution in the government and policy of Japan eight years later.

And yet, as I said at the outset, this embassy seems to have

passed almost into oblivion. The president of the American Asiatic Association in an article (1907, *The Outlook*) speaks of it as "one of several missions which about that time were sent by the Shogunate to other countries." In a general sense this is true, but more strictly the truth is that in Townsend Harris's negotiation of the commercial treaty in 1858 the Americans insisted that the first embassy to go out from Japan to any country should visit the United States first of all.

An English authority, Mr. J. Morris, in his able book, "Makers of Japan,"—to which I make acknowledgment—admits that "Modern Japan dates from the advent . . . of the American squadron under Commodore Perry in 1853;" and that the Perry compact was "the thin edge of the wedge." And yet he gives no indication of any knowledge of the embassy of 1860 for in noting the mission of the Marquis Ito abroad in 1871, he says that his was not the first embassy, "for a mission of two feudal barons had been sent to Europe in the early 'sixties."

Even admitting that this embassy was one "of courtesy" merely, as Dr. Griffis and others say, we shall see that something more vitalizing and lasting than courtesy grew out of it.

That the embassy of 1860 should have dropped so completely out of sight as an international event will doubtless lead many to conclude that at best it was but a spectacular fizzle entirely wanting in constructive elements or continuing effects. Others will remind us that from the invasion of Perry up to and after the first foreign embassy all intercourse was through the Shogun or "Tycoon" whose rule was becoming rapidly challenged and his authority in a large part of Japan denied. But the embassy was neither a mere courtesy, a spectacular fizzle nor was it of temporary import. Nor does the subsequent overthrow of the Shogun in any degree vitiate the contention that specific visible lines of Japanese progress emerge from the personal presence of the "princes" and their retinue in the United States in 1860.

On the part of Japan all international adjustments at this period were made by authority of the Shogun—better known at that time in the West as the "Tycoon." And who was the Shogun, or what

was the Shogunate? He was a military commander-in-chief, who had won his arbitrary power—or held it—as the strongest of the feudal barons. He was *de facto* ruler of Japan, his government being centered at Yeddo (now Tokio). The ruler *de jure* was the Mikado whose position was that of a sort of deified headship and an inert nominality.

The Shogunate began with the house of Tokugawa in 1603. It ended by the voluntary resignation of Prince Tokugawa Keiki in 1868 in the interest of national preservation and progress. For nearly two and a half centuries the Shogunate was the personification of a military supremacy in one of the most complete and exacting feudal systems known to history.

It was the Shogun Iyesada who became the treaty maker of 1854. It was the Ten-shi, or Mikado, the ruler *de jure*, Komei, who, under pressure from the Shogun's opposers, rallied his nerves to the extent of refusing to ratify these treaties even though he ultimately gave way. But he had a large official and popular backing. In fact the double-headed rulership had become a source of strife which threatened to disrupt the country. The opening of the door to the foreigner and the introduction of foreign methods were fast becoming the national dispute.

In spite of the expulsion of all foreigners, except a few severely restricted Hollanders, and the massacre of Christians in the seventeenth century, in spite of a universal espionage and lips sealed to foreigners, in spite of barbaric military standards and codes of honor—spears and swords outranking firearms—the scent of western enlightenment gradually penetrating the air quickened a new consciousness of unrealized power. Feudal rule had for some years given rise to murmurs and calls were heard for a full restoration of the Ten-shi, or Mikado, to real power. So Iyesada's treaties were made a plausible ground of opposition to the Shogunate even by the progressive clans who had introduced a number of foreign inventions. For the *purpose of getting rid of the Shogunate* the slogan of these very progressionists was *the expulsion of the alien*.

The Shogun adhered to his policy of admitting the alien (first forced by Perry) but as soon as the progressive clans succeeded in

overthrowing the Shogun's supporters they at once advocated the policy of opening the country to strangers, also. It is important to note this as it goes to show that although the embassy of 1860 was sent out by the boy Shogun, Iyemochi, yet the American impress which it carried back was in accord with that progression which ultimately triumphed even though the Shogunate was abolished.

Perry landed his men at the little village of Uraga in the Bay of Yeddo in July, 1853. For two hundred and thirty years no stranger had entered the feudal empire of the Rising Sun. Perry delivered, through messenger, President Fillmore's letter and sent word to the Shogun Iyeyoshi that he would return the next year for an answer. When Perry returned in February, 1854, Iyeyoshi was dead and Iyesada reigned in his stead, and the treaty of amity was signed, March 31, 1854, opening two ports to us, Shimoda and Hakodadi, for trade and all ports for ships in distress. As a matter of fact Shimoda was not opened but Kanazawa was selected as the first port to be opened to trade.

In 1858 the Shogun Iyesada died and was succeeded by a fifteen-year-old boy Shogun, Iyemochi, and his regent prince; and it was under this rule that the embassy of 1860 was sent to the United States. This period suffered from internecine strife on questions of alien influence, feudalism and dynastic ambition. Moreover, the Mikado was being pressed by certain feudal lords to close the ports, abrogate the treaties and expel the strangers. But the foreign powers were also pressing the regent to stand by the agreements. Then, just after he had sent out the embassy, the regent was assassinated. This was in March, 1860. The country was in a ferment but the great embassy was on its way across the Pacific.

The thin edge of the wedge inserted by the Perry compact in 1854 was chiefly one of amity and of hospitality to our seamen. Nevertheless it was to pave the way for closer commercial relations, through another treaty. This latter treaty was negotiated by our Consul-general Townsend Harris, July 29, 1858.

Mr. Harris had raised the United States flag over an ancient Buddhist temple at Shimoda September 44, 1856, and established our legation there, being "the first of the diplomatic representatives of

foreign powers," as Morris concedes, "to dwell in the newly awakened Land of Sunrise and the first to arrange a treaty of commerce." Harris had a hard time of it. President Pierce sent him out in 1855. He remained in seclusion for nearly two years at Shimoda—the tip end of the southeastern coast—before he could get an audience with the Shogun. Until he could do it in person he refused to deliver the President's letter. For about eighteen months he was without news from home—receiving neither letter nor newspaper. He entered Yeddo in November 1857, gained his long insisted-upon audience December 7, 1857, spent some months in parley and finally signed the treaty of commerce July 29, 1858. This treaty became the model for others between Japan and European nations. It is interesting, too, that when the British Earl of Elgin arrived for a similar purpose, Harris "lent" his secretary, Mr. Hewsken, to act as interpreter for the British envoys. Lord Elgin negotiated a treaty similar to Harris's and it was signed August 26, 1858. Thus the first British treaty was signed about six months after Perry's and the second one was signed one month after Harris's.

Now the agreement with Harris was that his treaty should be ratified in Washington. Under our treaties, however, no Japanese envoy was to go out until after America had been officially visited. After deferring the dreaded event as long as possible the Japanese finally applied to the United States for a man-of-war to transport the envoys.

It was on March 27, 1860, that the United States man-of-war *Powhatan* arrived at San Francisco, carrying the ambassadors and their immense retinue. After a few days of dining and sight-seeing the visitors reëmbarked for Washington by way of the isthmus—this being nine years before our east and west coasts were united by rail.

The United States man-of-war *Roanoke* awaited the orientals at Aspinwall (now Colon), a flourishing seaport and the Atlantic-side terminus of the forty-nine-mile railway connecting it with Panama, the entrepôt of the Pacific side. Aspinwall was on the *qui vive*. In anticipation the United States flag officer courteously invited the

British Rear-Admiral Sir Alexander Milne to come on board the *Roanoke* when the embassy should arrive. The invitation was declined, the rear-admiral subsequently remarking (so reported) that it was "a great farce, foolish and nonsensical." Nor would he raise his flag, though every other vessel did. His attitude gave the Japanese an unfavorable impression of the English nation—so reported later by one of the retinue.

Under command of Captain S. F. Dupont the ship *Philadelphia* left Washington, May 11, for Hampton Roads where the embassy was to be officially received. On May 12, at 9.30 p. m., the *Roanoke* arrived in the roadstead. She was boarded by Capt. Dupont; Capt. Taylor of the Marine Corps; Mr. Ledyard, son-in-law of the Secretary of State; Mr. Portman, the Dutch interpreter; Commander Lee (brother of Robert E. Lee and father of the late Fitzhugh Lee); Lieut. David D. Porter (later, commanded the expedition against Fort Fisher, later, Admiral); Mr. McDonald, invited guests, and reporters. After the formalities of presentation in the cabin of the *Roanoke* the treaty itself was exposed to view. Up to the present time it had been kept wrapped in a case of red cloth and sacredly secured in a superb lacquered chest about three feet long, eighteen inches wide, and twenty-six inches deep, never out of sight of a guard, and transported by poles resting on the shoulders of four men.

Two days later, May 14, the transfer of the entire company, box, bag and baggage, from the *Roanoke* to the *Philadelphia* was completed. The envoys and retinue of all grades numbered no less than seventy-six persons—the upper ranks gorgeously arrayed and plentifully begirt with swords. The luggage filled four cars on the Panama railroad. There were fifteen boxes of presents for President Buchanan and others. There was a beautiful "Sharpe's rifle" made by the Japanese as an improvement on the real American Sharpe presented to the Japanese by Commodore Perry six years earlier. The Japanese improvement consisted in an arrangement for cocking, priming and cutting off the cartridge, all at once. This has gone by now, but it was a forecast of Japanese aptitudes which we have seen illustrated in the late war. The money which

the orientals brought bulked immensely, too, for it consisted of Mexican silver and United States half-dollars.

Under command of Dupont the *Philadelphia* proceeded at once to Old Point Comfort, where for the first time Fort Monroe submitted to an almond-eyed inspection. There were no snap-shot cameras in those days, but the foresighted orientals had brought with them alert and skilled artists who immediately busied themselves making sketches of our boasted stronghold. And indeed these deft wielders of the brush were thus busy throughout the entire sojourn of the embassy among us. Who shall say that the many cartoons of things American which were thus officially carried back to Japan are not to be counted among the germs of a later expansion? Who knows but that these pictures helped to leaven the motif, eight years later, of the Emperor's edict at his crowning—"The bad customs of past ages shall be abolished and our government shall tread in the paths of civilization and enlightenment. We shall endeavor to raise the prestige and honor of our country by seeking knowledge throughout the world."

On the same day, May 14, the embassy was received at the Washington Navy Yard by the commandant, Capt. Franklin Buchanan—the man who, less than two years later, commanded the *Merrimac* in her destructive work, in which she was finally vanquished by the little *Monitor*.

The landing of the embassy at the Washington Navy Yard was a brilliant and imposing spectacle. From the navy yard the orientals were driven under military and civic escort to Willard's Hotel—then the center of Washington's social gravitation. It is not necessary to the argument to enlarge upon diplomatic details. Suffice it to note that the ambassadors and attaches, eight in all, on May 16, were driven to the Department of State, where letters were presented to Secretary Cass in Japanese, Dutch and English. All communication was done through two interpreters—Namoura-Gohajsiro, the Japanese who spoke Dutch, and Mr. Portman, the Hollander who spoke English.

The next day, May 17, the ambassadors presented the Tycoon's greeting to the President, of which the following was the published translation:

To His Majesty, the President of the United States of America. I express with respect: Lately the Governor of Shimoda, Insooye-Sinano-no-Kami and the Metske-Iwasi-Hego-no-Kami (Prince of Idzu), both Imperial Commissioners, had negotiated and decided with Townsend Harris, the Minister Plenipotentiary of your country, an affair of amity and commerce, and concluded previously the treaty in the city of Yeddo. And now the ratification of the treaty is sent with the Commissioners of Foreign Affairs, Simme-Buzen-no-Kami, and Minagake-Awzi-no-Kami to exchange the mutual treaty. It proceeds from a particular importance of affairs and a perfectly amicable feeling. Henceforth the intercourse of friendship shall be held between both countries and benevolent feeling shall be cultivated more and more and never altered. Because the now deputed three subjects are those whom I have chosen and confided in for the present post, I desire you to grant them your consideration, charity and respect. Herewith I desire you to spread my sincere wish for friendly relations and I also have the honor to congratulate you on the security and welfare of your country."

(It would be easy to improve the English of this translation, but I give it as it was rendered at the time.)

The third envoy, unnamed in this letter, was Oguri-Bungo-no-Kami, and was known as the censor (or spy); following in order were the treasury officer who had full authority over the finances of the embassy, the governor (or executive manager), aids, interpreters, doctors, guards of the treaty box, and servants including "spies"—in all, seventy-six. The three "princes" who head the list as ambassadors were of equal rank with those who negotiated the treaties with Perry and Harris. They were not hereditary princes of the blood but Samurai members of the Tycoon's foreign affairs council.

It will be remembered that when Harris signed the treaty of commerce in 1858 it was stipulated that the ratifications should be interchanged in Washington. The formalities of the ratification of Harris's treaty were now in order. That this was a matter of moment to both nations and regarded as more than a picturesque affair of good feeling will become apparent. This is what President Buchanan said about it in his annual message to Congress seven months later (1860):

The ratifications of the treaty with Japan concluded at Yeddo on the 29th July, 1858, were exchanged at Washington on the 22nd May last and the treaty itself was proclaimed on the succeeding day. There is good reason to expect that under its protection and influence our trade and intercourse with that interesting people will rapidly increase.

The ratifications of the treaty were exchanged with unusual solemnity. For this purpose the Tycoon had accredited three of his most distinguished subjects as envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary who were received and treated with marked distinction and kindness both by the government and people of the United States. There is every reason to believe that they have returned to their native land entirely satisfied with their visit and inspired by the most friendly feelings for our country. Let us ardently hope, in the language of the treaty itself, that "there shall henceforward be perpetual peace and friendship between the United States of America and His Majesty the Tycoon of Japan and his successors."

Three weeks of state formalities, sight-seeing, and social functions—including the President's dinner on May 25, brought this first stage of the embassy to a close by a formal leave-taking in the blue room of the White House, June 5, at which a large gold medal was presented to each of the princes. But is this all? Is there enough in these three weeks of state and social function to generate definite lines of development and to vitalize latent powers and ideals such as we wonderingly view in these latter days? No. The embassy had one other official commission which could be fulfilled only in Philadelphia. *It was in the matter of money and exchange.*

After a brief stop in Baltimore the orientals arrived Saturday, June 9, in Philadelphia. For weeks the city had been stirred to its depths planning and making arrangements for the unprecedented event. The industrial metropolis had much to show to a nation so skilled in artizanship as the Japanese. Best of all, here was the mint, which, after treaty formalities, was *the* chief focal point of the visit to the United States.

The train drawn by an engine wrapped in the Japanese and United States flags, arrived in the afternoon at the old "Baltimore Depot" at Broad and Prime Streets (now Washington Avenue). Here the envoys with Captain Dupont and Lieutenant Porter, were met by Mayor Henry, members of council, judges and other public men numbering about two hundred—and dense crowds of the populace. The long procession of nearly a hundred carriages filed up Broad Street under an imposing escort of about two thousand cavalry and infantry led by General Robert E. Patterson and staff, and greeted by the din of popular huzzahs. Thousands of eyes were strained to glimpse the novel type of physiognomy peering

curiously out from the carriages. The Japanese artists were busily sketching as they rode our streets. Extraordinary curiosity arose from the closely drawn shades of one of the carriages, which eventually gave rise to a rumor that the occupant was in disgrace because he had "stopped watching the treaty box"—its sacred import having been already heralded by the newspapers. The procession brought up at the Continental Hotel where the embassy was regally entertained. The police carried the treaty chest into the hotel and guarded it under lock and key. During the week's sojourn in Philadelphia, crowds surrounded the hotel straining for a vision of the orientals as they appeared at their windows, but, said the reporters, the people "couldn't see a mite of difference between them and negroes!"

The Japanese were not unaware of the unique reputation of the Philadelphia Mint. All its early officers had been scientific men or high mechanists and not politicians. Politics had but recently invaded the management but the assayer and his assistant in a peculiar sense had given the mint a world-wide reputation for specialized accuracy. Their published works and the unvarying maintenance of the standard fineness of the coinage, for over a quarter-century of their incumbency, together with their comprehensive knowledge of the whole intricate operation of minting, had been a highly important although a popularly unapprehended factor in the national credit. For a nation, then, that had in itself the seeds of progress, a rising curiosity as to western methods, a tendency to catholicity, a receptivity to impressions, and an adaptive originality—as the Japanese had, notwithstanding a long isolation followed by internal strife—for a nation of this sort, America, and more particularly Philadelphia and especially the Mint, was the place to come.

On the morning of June 13 the envoys were received at the mint. In his address of greeting the director said that an international coinage was not likely to be realized, but he advised the foreigners to adopt the American standard. A mutual knowledge of the currency of both nations would promote commerce as well as friendly relations.

Preliminary formalities being over the occasion was so extra-

ordinary that a messenger was quietly despatched with orders to go to a nearby grammar school and procure a release for the day of three pupils, sons of the assayer and his assistants, bring them to the laboratory where their education might take a rare turn in a leisurely and close contact with the ambassadors and their attendants. I was the youngest of those three boys, and I am now drawing on memory which is both stimulated and held in leash by certain mementos, personal notes of the assistant assayer, various public prints and official documentary memoranda.

Entering the little "weigh room" attached to the laboratory the astonished youths saw the first and third ambassadors (the latter known as the censor), a stout functionary known as the governor, two interpreters—one Dutch and one Japanese—and perhaps one or two attachés, and a "prince" travelling unofficially for pleasure but in company with the embassy.

The high dignitaries were superbly dressed in silk brocaded, or inwoven, with gold, the pajamas or trousers being figured in exquisite patterns and as wide as skirts; the body-covering a loosely crossed waistcoat over which was a kimono or long loose coat. The paper handkerchiefs were carried in the crosswrap of the waistcoat. The fore part of the head was shaved while down the center of the crown a tightly twisted lock or short braid lay glued stiff and tied with white cord. The sandals were held in place with white silk cords. The ambassadors wore three swords, the lesser officers two—a sign of the Samurai or ruling military caste and a badge of honor now abolished.

As the boys entered, one of the expert under-assayers was seated at the delicate balance explaining the process. This was addressed to the Hollander, Mr. Portman, who in turn addressed the Japanese interpreter, Namoura, in Dutch. Namoura, in turn, translated the Dutch into Japanese and addressed the third ambassador who, in turn, communicated the information to the first ambassador—who received it with the utmost imperturbable and silent gravity. Whether he took it all in or not we boys could not tell.

The censor or third ambassador, Oguri, and the governor, Narousa, fat and spectacled with heavily rimmed glasses, were the

active investigators. Oguri produced a sort of steelyard of ivory with which he proceeded to test our weights against his own. The censor also brought forth an *abacus* or counting machine consisting of fifteen rows of wooden buttons sliding by five on parallel wires. Quite in accord with these crude and antiquated methods was the demand that the gold *cobang* (about as big as the palm of the hand) should be assayed not by a sample cut from it, but by consuming the entire piece. The chief assayer, Jacob R. Eckfeldt, and his assistant, William E. DuBois, were for the moment nonplussed by so extraordinary a request. High accuracy demanded very small samples and their department was nothing if not scientifically precise. But the heathenish proposition was uncompromising and the whole *cobang* it must be. When, after two or three hours, the gold had been separated and weighed and its fineness thus ascertained the envoys were not satisfied. They must next know exactly of what the alloy was made up. Sure enough, we see in this very demand an indication of what we have seen since—thoroughness.

Three *cobangs* were thus tested and to satisfy the strangers, also a United States gold dollar. Notwithstanding the cumbrous method of using an entire piece the results were exceedingly satisfactory—the *cobangs* running about 572 parts fine in 1,000. (It should be stated that while the embassy was yet in Washington a number of their coins were forwarded to Philadelphia to be tested in advance of the embassy's inspection. There were about twenty-five pieces in all, gold and silver *itzebus* and gold *cobangs*. They ran with a fair approach to uniformity.) At intervals, during the long operations the orientals took a short squat on their heels to smoke their tiny pipes. A luncheon was served to them in the mint when the display of chop-stick skill—picking up one pea at a time at high speed with two sticks, for instance—was recreating to observant America.

After this the envoys requested the mint officers to meet them at the Continental Hotel and hold a conference on matters relative to a comparison of Japanese and American coinage and means of exchange. Accordingly, Director Snowden and his clerk Linderman; the assayer, Eckfeldt, and his assistant, DuBois; and the

Melter and Refiner, Booth, repaired thither in the afternoon. Exactly what took place there we do not know. But the indications are that it was a "campaign of education" and that it was a spoke in the wheel of closer and fairer monetary relations, including the possibility of international coinage—in which movement Assayers Eckfeldt and DuBois were conspicuous promoters. The next day the embassy was at the mint again and the work continued.

A carefully written account at the time said:

The very intricate business connected with the currency question between the United States and the Empire of Japan (the adjustment of which is one of the principal objects of the embassy) and which had been theoretically explained by the officers of the Treasury Department at Washington has been *solved to the satisfaction of the envoys by the assays performed in their presence at the mint*. The importance and value of this very desirable result cannot be overestimated and the thanks of the country are due to the officers of that institution for the very skilful manner in which they have discharged the duties imposed upon them by the government at Washington in connection with this business.

The tests having been concluded on the second day the envoys were again formally addressed by the director, who presented to them a certified copy of the results and also a full set of the current United States coins handsomely cased. The censor replied, thanking the officers of the mint for their courteous attention, expressing satisfaction with the results, and promising to lay the whole matter before his government *so that a system of exchange could be arranged between the two countries*.

A slight digression may be permitted just here to illustrate the need for such adjustment of exchange if commerce was to be encouraged by the treaties. I quote from the private note book of my father, then the assistant assayer of the mint. It was written the next year—1861.

Before the Japanese Embassy started for this country a silver *itzebu* was coined, which was intrinsically one third of the Mexican dollar. (The *itzebu* was the monetary unit of the empire.) About the same time, for Hakodadi only, a northern port where American trade chiefly centered, they coined a *half itzebu* (so stamped on its face) whose weight was equal to half a Mexican dollar (a little over in fact) and the alleged fineness the same. The object of this was to meet a treaty provision which made Mexican dollars interchangeable with silver *itzebus*, weight for weight. By

this rule they would take from Americans a thousand dollars, and give in exchange two thousand of these new coins, being the equivalent in weight. But when the Americans came to buy goods with the coins they were informed that their current value was only a *half-itzebu*, according to the stamp. That is to say, a Japanese could *pay* them to an American, at the rate of two to the dollar; but could only *receive* them at the rate of six to the dollar. And if offered their *itzebu* (one-third dollar) they did not want it—had enough of them! Thus, there was a *half-itzebu* worth fifty per cent. over the whole *itzebu* for the sake of a shallow artifice. The embassy did not bring the former piece (the *half-itzebu*) with them but only the latter (the whole *itzebu*).

The *half-itzebus* were not equivalent in fineness although they were over-full in weight. They assayed 846 thousandths fine as against 900, and weighed 210.0 grains as against, say two tenths of a grain, over a half-Mexican dollar.

Thus, there was need for a basis of exchange. Moreover, the coinage had become debased, the feudal lords had secretly issued money, and the country was flooded with counterfeits. Paper money had depreciated and finance was unsound.

It has been shown in the earlier portion of this paper that at the time of the embassy Japan was in a state of internecine strife, that the Shogunate had been undergoing changes, and that a few years later (1867-8) the crisis came in which the real government was restored to the Mikado and the feudal Shogunate abolished. Just prior to this, however, in 1866, the Mikado, or Emperor, had ratified all foreign treaties of the Shogunate, and they continued in force. In 1870 the distinguished statesman, the Marquis Ito, was sent to the United States to study monetary methods and coinage standards. While here he wrote a memorandum on "Reasons for Basing the Japanese New Coinage on the Metric system." During Ito's absence from Japan the Hongkong mint was purchased and with British aid carried over to Osaka. Ito wrote home recommending the ultimate adoption of the gold standard although not yet quite feasible. However, the metric or decimal system was adopted and the currency closely conformed to that of the United States, the *yen* being the equivalent of our dollar and the *sen* the equivalent of our cent. It cannot be doubted that the first experience of the Japanese with the working of the metric system was obtained in our mint, as

the assay process is based on it and the money scheme is decimal, while the British scheme is not. Neither can it be doubted that the impressions carried back by the envoys in 1860 were factors in Ito's mission ten and eleven years later under a new government.

Ito was one of the progressives from Perry days, who (as previously explained) assumed an anti-occidental complexion merely for the sake of opposing the Shogunate. Prince Iwakura who headed the embassy of 1872, was another of those connecting links. He had not been favorable to foreigners but yet he had incurred the enmity of the Shogun's opposers. Under the empire he became one of the ablest of the emperor's advisers and was especially interested in the revision of the old treaties, which it took years to accomplish. Another was Matsukata, the father of the gold standard in Japan and the introducer of the metric system; and still another was Shibusawa, the father of the national banking system.

In 1872 Ito was here again, this time on a mission of which Prince Iwakura was the head. In an eloquent address in San Francisco, Ito said: "A year ago I examined minutely the financial system of the United States and every detail was reported to my government. The suggestions then made have been adopted and some of them are already in practical operation." The result was as already noted. Banking and even a postal system on American models also followed in this year.

That the lessons of 1860 were active forces in this later day is further evidenced in a private letter to the heads of the Assay Department from Dr. H. R. Linderman, previously the chief clerk of the mint in the days of the embassy and later a treasury agent in Washington versed in mint matters. This letter requested that the two under-assayers do him the favor to prepare as early as convenient a brief description of the processes in use at the mint. "I desire this information," said the letter, "to incorporate in a paper which I am preparing for the Japanese at the request of the department. They shall have due credit for their work and will place me under obligations." This was in March, 1871—the very year of the enactment of Japan's new coinage law under the pressure of Ito and Matsukata.

The two young under-assayers were the schoolboys of 1860, Jacob B. Eckfeldt (the present chief assayer) and the present writer, whose recollections of the envoys of the Shogunate were still vivid in their memories.

In a very real sense, then, Ito had become the connecting link and the effectuating successor of the envoys of 1860, anti-Shogunate as he had been, and now under the new Imperial regime, as he was. Notwithstanding the great break with the past on the incoming of the Meiji or "Enlightened Rule," the restoration to power of the Mikado-Emperor, there was an efficient continuity of the westernism inaugurated officially by the Shogun. The treaties of Perry and Harris and the Washington ratification still held in spite of various attempts to discredit and revise them, even in the seventies. Not until 1894 did such revision take place. To the credit of the Shogunate in its later days of the sixties be it said, the degenerated condition of its antiquated and heterogeneous monetary system and coinage was realized. It was seen with alarm that western commerce under the treaties was suffering and would suffer unless there was reform in the coinage. Hence the capital importance of the visit of the embassy of 1860 to the mint at Philadelphia.

The story revealed in these last few paragraphs, however, shows that the spirit of the Shogun and the impressions carried home by his now almost forgotten embassy remained as a wholesome and permanent leaven. Under Ito, Matsukata, Iwakura and others, the impressions carried home by the first embassy came to fruition not only in an Americanized monetary and coinage system but in what lies deeper than these—the moral standard of a trustworthy precision in the manufacture of coin in which the Philadelphia mint has led the world. That this principle and achievement had become an ambitious scientific and commercial *motif* in new Japan is further evidenced in other ways. For instance, in 1875 sample coins were sent from the imperial mint at Osaka to our Department of State with the request from the Japanese government that these coins be carefully tested at the Philadelphia mint. The result of the test (in which I myself had an active part) was very satisfactory.

Similarly, we received for assay through the Japanese legation gold and silver coins in 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880. These were what are known as pyx coins, which are selected at random through the year for an annual test. They were invariably close to the standard, tending somewhat to run over rather than under it. Thus the pace set before the embassy of 1860 was the pace which the mint at Osaka under our stimulus was setting for itself. The Enlightened Rule recognized that a nation's position among commercial nations rests in very large degree on the confidence to be placed in the scientific precision of its coinage.

Leaving now this great essential result of the first embassy, let us look for other indications of its influence in the making of a new Japan.

While in Philadelphia the two physicians attached to the embassy, Measaki and Moryama, together with the governor Narousa-Genosiro, and the interpreter, attended an operation for lithotomy performed by the distinguished Dr. Samuel B. Gross, at the patient's residence. The anaesthetic was administered by the famous Morton himself, the discoverer of sulphuric ether for this use. The whole performance was a revelation to the orientals. They smelt and poured the ether on their hands, astonished at the coldness resulting from its evaporation. After the operation they carefully examined the instruments and showed so much interest in the whole subject that they were invited to attend the Jefferson Medical College, in which Dr. Gross was a professor.

In an address delivered before the students of the Jefferson in February, 1906, Baron Takaki, Surgeon General of the Japanese Navy, said:

Japanese surgery is founded on the teachings of Dr. Samuel D. Gross for so many years surgeon in the splendid medical college in which we are gathered. Dr. Gross' "System of Surgery" translated into German was taken by my countrymen and retranslated into Japanese and upon that has been built up Japanese surgery as practiced to-day.

The Baron said that the thanks of the Japanese nation are due to the medical profession in this country, and added,

The United States has been our teacher. We have tried our best to prove our faith in your teachings and doctrines by effective applications of your principles in safeguarding the health of our people.

In view of the impression made upon the doctors of the first embassy by Dr. Gross himself it is hardly possible that his name was unknown in Japan until his book was carried there from Germany. Undoubtedly this is another one of those cases of the long slow-but-sure working of American leaven through many political vicissitudes.

It is inadvisable to prolong this paper for many further details of the doings of the embassy during the week in Philadelphia. Suffice it to note, in brief, that among the places visited were Johnson's type foundry—where the orientals were presented with a book of specimen types and cuts and a silver mounted case of type; M'Allister's optical and philosophical instrument establishment where they witnessed experiments with air pumps, electrical machines, etc., and a lantern exhibition in which the Drummond light excited great curiosity; to the great foundries of the Merricks and of Morris, Tasker & Co.; to the gas works, where "grand stands" had been erected and were filled with hundreds of invited Philadelphians of both sexes—chiefly to witness the ascension of two great balloons (or rather to see Japanese for the first time behold aerial travel); to Bailey's jewelry establishment where, after examining with magnifiers the works of watches, they ordered a lot of them to be sent to their rooms, and where they showed judgment in the purchase of opera glasses, appreciating the chromatic lens, and caring little for such merely ornamental work as their own artificers could equal or excell. They chose the plain and the useful, displaying a keen selective sense. Here, too, the envoys were presented with a medal especially designed and struck by the Bailey house to commemorate the occasion. In addition to these places visits were paid to Baldwin's locomotive works, Sellers's machine works, the water works, and Girard College.

The Japanese were loaded with all manner of specimens of tools, instruments and products of our skilled workers—including pictures of the Baldwin engines, stereoscopes and views, a superb Sloat sewing machine encased in wood from Mount Vernon and (so said) the Treaty Elm; a Disston saw, level, gauge and square; a set of teeth on a gold plate, and many other samples of American originality, skill and enterprise.

The mention of the set of artificial teeth on a gold plate suggests a pendant to Gross' surgery. The modern development of Japanese dentistry is wholly American. According to Dr. Chiwaki, the president of the Tokio Dental College,¹ dentistry, as an art, is about two centuries old in Japan. In some respects the old dentistry was barbarous and crude but artificial dentures were made of carved wood—also of alabaster or ivory riveted to a base of hard wood. But on the whole the art was clumsy and its pursuit became disreputable.

"Perry's feat, however," says Dr. Chiwaki, "brought about a many-sided change in the political, social and educational institutions of Japan; and, in consequence, the old system of dentistry could not remain unaffected." Two American dentists, Dr. Eastlake and Dr. W. St. George Elliott, opened offices at the beginning of the Meiji era. This was "the first direct cause of the development of our dentistry in the true sense of the word." Others followed, and the Japanese came to the United States for dental education. Japan now manufactures dentist's appliances and supports at least two dental colleges.

The introduction of American dentistry to Japan is not directly traceable to the embassy of 1860 but its acceptance is one of those forms of Japanese confidence in American models first gained as a national leaven in the days of the Shogun.

For the sake of completeness and also to note two or three incidents or facts of contributory import in estimating results this study must follow the embassy out of Philadelphia to New York, Saturday, June 18, where there was repetition of street procession and general ovation as in Philadelphia. (On this very day the news of the assassination of the regent arrived by letter to the New York *Tribune*.)

According to an account in the *Tribune* the street scenes on the route of entry from the Battery to the Metropolitan Hotel on Broadway, were free from those "riotous excesses" which characterized the multitude at Philadelphia. Never, said the *Tribune*, had more human beings been congregated at and below the Battery

¹ *Dental Cosmos*, October, 1905.

than the envoys found awaiting them as the boat from South Amboy arrived. But the Metropolitan Hotel was at no time so riotously besieged as was the Continental in Philadelphia.

Barring the visits to two or three manufacturing establishments, the time was chiefly occupied with social functions, shopping, boat excursions, theaters and in packing the mountainous wares which they had bought and which had also been lavishly bestowed upon them largely for advertising purposes. In time, the envoys and lesser officers acutely discerned that they were being exploited. Many invitations were declined. Finally, so indecorous a pressure was put upon them to visit the opera in spite of their resolute declination that a serious affray was narrowly averted.

The embassy, having grown weary of their spectacular exploitation in New York, resolved to cut Boston and Niagara out of their program and set sail for Japan as soon as possible. They accordingly departed by the largest of our naval fleet, the *Niagara*, on Saturday, June 30, first steaming around the world's wonder, the *Great Eastern*, which had arrived only two days before and which now succeeded the Japanese as a popular ferment.

In the retrospect: Those were stirring times. The greatest ship in the world had crossed the Atlantic, Garibaldi had just taken Palermo, Lincoln had been nominated, and the Democratic Party had split into the Douglass and Breckenridge factions. The ocean cable itself was only two years old; the John Brown insurrection had occurred only nine months before; Mr. Lowe, the aëronaut, was planning a balloon voyage across the Atlantic; and the Prince of Wales was soon to be entertained.

The New York *Tribune* gave up two pages of small type to a description of the voyage of the *Great Eastern*, and Mr. Greeley editorially declared her to be a wonder without much maritime significance for the simple reason that only three or four harbors in the world could receive so huge a ship. The same big-brained, generally level-headed editor was unable to attach any practical importance to the visit of the Japanese. He saw through New York eyes and thus rhetorically delivered himself:

If they [the Japanese] have the acuteness to see, as possibly they have, the uses to which they have been put, to gratify the inordinate vanity, the

inordinate greed, and the inordinate folly of those with whom they have come chiefly in contact, and if they believe that in these they see reflected the character of the whole people, then heaven help our reputation in Japan when these sons of hers go home. But let us hope they did not understand. In the simplicity of their natures and manners let us trust that they have gone back to their own country impressed not only with our material superiority but believing also that in all Christian graces, in the amenities of social life, in the refinements of personal good breeding we are unmeasurably their masters. . . . Of almost all that an intelligent traveller would like to be informed they have gone away as ignorant as they came. . . . Against the acquirement of all useful knowledge except in a few rare instances which make the rule more apparent, they have been sedulously guarded and the opportunity lost which will never recur again of impressing a people eager in the attainment of the arts of peace, with the true source of the wealth and power of Christian civilization.

Another New York paper thus commented:

They are small of stature, tawny of complexion, sleepy and feeble in their physical appearance and habits, and with only those characteristics calculated to excite a momentary curiosity.

The Philadelphia view was different. *The Inquirer* said:

They saw the triumphs of science and art made subservient to the comfort and happiness not to special classes merely, but to all. They cannot separate these things from the effects of our political institutions and it will be extraordinary indeed if they disconnect them from the benign influence of Christianity.

This is the true note—the note which this paper has essayed to demonstrate as proved by time. Mr. Greeley in the case of the Japanese, as in that of monster ships like the *Great Eastern*, was a bad prophet. He argued that the embassy avowed before arrival that it had no ministerial powers except those of signing the treaty and collecting information concerning our currency with a view to better ultimate international adjustment.

But Mr. Greeley saw nothing in this. He referred to the conferences at the mint but was unable to figure out anything feasible. The relations which gold bore to silver in Japan and their artificial value in coinage forbade any basis of equitable exchange. Indeed, he believed, if through their labors at the mint, the Japanese were to adopt the new standards for estimating the values of the precious metals, "it is easy to see that the monetary affairs of the empire might be thrown into great confusion."

But we in this day know that the Japanese were not so simple in their natures, not so sleepy and feeble, as the New York editors supposed. Neither did they go away as ignorant as they came. Nor were they so ignorant when they came. Long before Perry's day Japan had had her martyrs to progress and reform. News from the outside leaked in and shadows of western mechanism and methods fell on the isolated empire. Men like Fujita Toko and Sakuma Shuri had telescopic vision and sensitive hearing. So the envoys of the Tycoon knew that there were advantages to be improved in going to the United States over and above that of signing the Harris treaty. They had the penetration to see that a sound currency and facilities of finance were the pivot of international commercial relations. They were impressed with the fact that international confidence rested chiefly on that scientific accuracy which they saw in the operations of coinage and especially those that guarded the integrity of the standards of fineness. The problem which Mr. Greeley saw as insoluble, was gradually worked out by Ito and Matsukata until Japan possessed a system of coinage modeled on and comparable with that of the United States, and resting on a gold basis.

A letter written to President David Starr Jordan by the distinguished Japanese scientist, Dr. Mitsukuri, in 1900, confirms the trend of this paper as a contention for an unbroken continuity of influence on the development of Japan—in spite of the dismal deliverances of these American prophets of 1860.

Dr. Mitsukuri says:

The history of the international relations between the United States and Japan is full of episodes which evince an unusually strong and almost romantic friendship existing between the two nations. In the first place, Japan has never forgotten that it was America who first roused her from the lethargy of centuries of secluded life. It was through the earnest representations of America that she concluded the first treaty with a foreign nation in modern times, and opened her country to the outside world. Then, all through the early struggles of Japan to obtain a standing among the civilized nations of the world, America always stood by Japan as an elder brother by a younger sister. It was always America who first recognized the rights of Japan in any of her attempts to retain autonomy within her own territory. A large percentage of foreign teachers working earnestly in schools was Americans, and many a Japanese recalls with gratitude the great efforts his American teachers made on his behalf.

Then, kindness and hospitality shown thousands of youths who went over to America to obtain their education have gone deep into the heart of the nation, and, what is more, many of these students themselves are now holding important positions in the country, and they always look back with affectionate feelings to their stay in America.

In conclusion, it is immensely interesting to see that what Japan came to America for on her first embassy is precisely *that which she has retained as the essential element of her international development*. She afterward went to Germany for army organization and got it; she went to Great Britain for naval ideas and got them; she came here for coinage, exchange, and got them. Moreover, her friendship with the United States has been practically continuous while from 1861 to 1863 she was in hot water with England and France. Incidentally, she carried away our surgery, and no one knows how many minor constructive principles; later she borrowed our banking and postal systems, transplanted our dentistry, and made obeisance to American invention by overspreading the empire with our telegraph.

The embassy of 1860, as was said at the outset, was but the completing touch of the treaties of Perry and Harris. All these constitute a single event but an event that is a gigantic factor in the world's progress. Why the most practical part of it—the embassy—has dropped into such profound oblivion is beyond comprehension. Perhaps it was one of those events which are too broad and too potent to be discerned in less than a half century as the mark of a world-moving era.



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