

WILEY



Notes of a Journey in the Island of Yezo in 1873, and on Progress of Geography in Japan

Author(s): R. G. Watson

Source: *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (1873 - 1874), pp. 226-241

Published by: [Wiley](#) on behalf of [The Royal Geographical Society \(with the Institute of British Geographers\)](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1799784>

Accessed: 03/01/2014 23:00

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Wiley and *The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers)* are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

go, as we were to present ourselves in a friendly manner before him, leaving the ceremonious reception for another day. So we tumbled into uniform as fast as possible, and, mounting once more, rode into the Fort. We found soldiers ranged outside the gate of the palace, where we dismounted, and, passing through two large quadrangles filled with soldiers, who were seated all round the four sides in perfect silence and motionless, we entered the third court, which was quite deserted. At the end was a long hall, the private apartment of the Atalik. I was taken in alone, and found the Atalik standing unattended. He received me very cordially and seated me by his side, asked after the Queen's health, the Viceroy's, hoped we had been properly treated by his servants on the road, &c. Then he called in the other officers one by one, shook them by the hand, and made them sit down. There was a little conversation, but chiefly he sat silent eyeing in all most keenly. Tea and fruit, &c., were brought in, and then we rose to depart, he wishing us welcome in a very hearty manner. The Atalik is a thick set man, about 5 feet 10 inches, with a broad good-humoured face. He has now formally assumed the title of *Ameer*, and is *Ameer Yakoob Khan*, instead of Yakoob Beg as heretofore, so that the title of Atalik Ghazee may be dropped by us. As I was taking my seat by his side a salute of 15 guns was fired in honour of the British Envoy. This is quite an innovation, and is the first salute that has been fired for anyone but the Ruler himself, so that the Ameer has done due honour to our Government. To-day I presented the letters from Her Majesty and the Viceroy with all due ceremony, and the Ameer expressed the utmost gratitude for the kindness and favour shown him.

"But I will not inflict a crossed letter on you. So, wishing you and Lady Montgomery all the compliments of the season,

"Believe me, yours very sincerely,

"T. D. FORSYTH."

The paper of the evening was as follows:—

Notes of a Journey in the Island of Yezo in 1873, and on Progress of Geography in Japan. By R. G. WATSON, late *Chargé d'Affaires* in Japan.

In the course of last summer I had an opportunity of passing six weeks in the island of Yezo, the most northerly of the three chief islands of Japan, and of making a journey of about 300 miles in the interior. As the route I passed over is included in that of Captain Blakiston, a detailed description of which was read before this Society in 1872, I should not have thought of inviting your attention so soon again to Yezo, but for the marked changes which have occurred in that island, and the discoveries which have been made there since the date of Captain Blakiston's journey. To an account of these changes and discoveries I shall mainly confine my remarks. Yezo, though one of the three main islands of Japan, is placed on a different footing from that of all the other portions of the Mikado's dominions which lie to the south of it. It is considered rather to be a colonial possession, and its entire administration is placed in the hands of a distinct office, called the Yezo Colonization Depart-

ment, which has its head-quarters at Tokei or Yedo, and the Chief of which is likewise the Governor-General of Yezo. Although the island of Yezo may perhaps be somewhat larger than Ireland, the number of its inhabitants, as estimated by the Japanese authorities, does not exceed 124,000, of which number about 16,000 is assigned to the Ainos or aboriginal population of Yezo and the islands adjoining it to the north. Of these islands, that of Saghalien has of late years been to some degree colonised by Russia, as being to a great extent uninhabited land, although a portion of that island has been always claimed by Japan and is still occupied by Japanese. It was probably the colonisation of a part of Saghalien by a foreign Power, and the fear of the plea of non-occupation being likewise set up in favour of the occupation of a portion of Yezo, which induced the Japanese Government some three years ago to concert an extensive scheme, with the object of opening up this island and colonising it from the central and southern districts of Japan. Accordingly the Japanese representative in the United States was instructed to enter into engagements with a number of American scientific officers, who arrived in Japan two years ago and were placed at the disposal of the Yezo Colonisation Department. The chief of this mission, General Capron, at once set about the task of developing the resources of that island. He established at Yedo three model farms, and took measures for obtaining stock, seeds, grasses and plants from America, with the object of their being introduced into the northern island of Japan.

In the spring of 1872 he and the gentlemen with him proceeded to Hakodate and began to explore the island which was to be the scene of their operations. Previously to their arrival the Japanese authorities had established the future seat of government of Yezo at a locality called Saporu, distant about 140 miles from Hakodate, and about 20 from Utarunai, the nearest port on the Western coast. At this spot a town, covering about a mile square, has sprung up within the last three years, and an excellent road has been constructed by American engineers connecting it with either coast.

The first section of this road extends from Hakodate to Mori, on Volcano Ray, and is 30 miles in length. There then occurs a break in the continuity of the road, and at Mori one has the choice of going round the bay to Endermo, some 60 miles, by the old Japanese mountain-path, or of crossing the bay in a junk or open boat, or by the steamer which plies twice a month either way across. Of the country between Hakodate and Mori I need not give a detailed description, as I find it has already been described in the 'Journal' of this Society by Captain Forbes, R.N. I would only remark that the

cuttings which have been necessitated for the construction of the new road have afforded much insight into the geological formation of the region. The country for many miles is overlaid with several ranges of pumice which has been from time to time thrown out by the overhanging volcano of Homogataki. The relative depth of the layers of pumice affords the means of arriving approximately at the respective dates of the successive eruptions of the volcano. At some points of the cutting there are from five to six inches of mould above the latest stratum of pumice, below which again there are some 18 inches of mould, and then another substratum of pumice.

The last eruption of the volcano is said to have occurred eighteen years since, and therefore it may be inferred, assuming the correctness of this date, that there was a previous eruption about sixty years before. From this it will be perceived that Yezo enjoys no exemption from the volcanic influences which make themselves so often and so markedly felt in other regions of Japan.

Opposite to the village of Mori, on the further side of Volcano Bay (which is about 20 miles in breadth), is situated the admirable harbour of Edomo, or Endermo, or Moraran, one of the finest natural harbours which could be anywhere met with. From the entrance to the innermost point is a distance of about 7 miles, and in the middle of the entrance is a small island, which, were it fortified, would completely command the approach to the harbour. As Endermo possesses such manifest natural advantages, and is, moreover, situated on the mainland of Yezo (Hakodate being on a tongue), it seems somewhat singular that the Japanese Government, in framing their scheme for opening up the island, should have overlooked the facilities which would be afforded towards the realisation of that scheme, by transferring to Endermo the seat of the local government, which is now at Hakodate, and by opening the former port to foreign commerce. Endermo is equally accessible with Hakodate from Yedo and Yokohama, and were shipping to go there direct a manifest economy would be effected to persons engaged in trading transactions, in the saving of the 30 miles of land passage from Hakodate to Mori, and in avoiding the conveyance of goods across Volcano Bay. These considerations are so manifest that, should Yezo ever become settled to any considerable extent, Endermo must of necessity supersede Hakodate. At Endermo the road to Sapore recommences, and continues to that place, first along the coast for 45 miles, and then in an almost direct line through the forest which covers the hills for a similar distance. The entire distance lies through a region clothed with the richest vegetation, the neighbouring hills being covered with

splendid forests containing trees of the most serviceable varieties — the oak, maple, walnut, birch, and pine being prominent amongst them, whilst the geniality of the climate is attested by the presence of the magnolia and other trees, natives of southern or tropical countries. This contrast of trees forms, indeed, one of the most marked features in Japanese scenery. Every one who has passed through the inland sea must have been struck by the unusual combination of pines and cedars on the one hand, with palm-trees and bamboos on the other. To the right of the first half of this road from Endermo, and lying between it and the Pacific Ocean, are a number of the Ainos' villages, all more or less counterparts of each other. The houses or huts, which are covered over with straw on the walls as well as on the roofs, are ranged round a square, on one side of which there is a large oil-pressing house, from which the dried fish is taken to be exposed in the adjoining square when the oil has been extracted. The fish (sardines), after having been dried in the sun, is exported to serve as manure. An Aino village is almost invariably built on the sea-shore, and in each village there is an elevated look-out post perched on strong poles, from which the approach of a shoal of fish may be discerned. There is also another lower look-out in the village, from which warning may be given of the approach of bears. Each Aino hut has but one outer door and no windows, but there is a hole in the roof to admit of the escape of smoke. The hut is divided into two compartments, the inner being larger than the outer one, and being piled round with fuel, dried fish, and utensils for cooking, &c. The Ainos' food is fish, roots, and venison. There is in each hut a loom, and on the whole the interior presents more appearance of comfort than one would expect from the rough appearance of the Ainos themselves. The women carry the children strapped on their backs, the front of the strap passing over the mother's forehead. The women wear their hair cut short at the back of the neck, and their upper and lower lips are tattooed and stained in imitation of moustaches. The married women do not adopt the Japanese married women's custom of blackening the teeth. The Ainos have a very peculiar mode of equitation, balancing themselves on the horse's bare back, their legs dangling on a level with his neck. They are well-grown men, with good features, and an immense quantity of coarse black hair covering nearly all parts of the person. The men wear coats of bark. . . .

The origin of the Aino race, which, like other wild races, is said to be fast disappearing, is a disputed question. Japanese records prove them to have at one time inhabited districts as far south-

wards as Yedo, and they are known to have even recently existed in considerable numbers in the province of Sendai; but now they are confined to Yezo, Saghalien, and the Kurile Islands. M. Goskavitch, formerly Russian Consul-General at Hakodate, the Abbé Mermet, and M. Sindau, have devoted much attention to this subject, but the absence of any Aino written language reduces its investigation almost to conjecture. They are a remarkably strong race and are individually very courageous, though collectively in abject terror of the Japanese. Their language is mellifluous, and their manners are gentle towards strangers, abject to Japanese officials. Though formerly oppressed, they have been better treated since the revolution of 1868. They worship the sun and the idea of a Japanese power which means merely force: they likewise adore their ancestors. They have no idea of computation, and refer dates to certain events, such as the catching of a whale or the advent of a great shoal of fish.

The Ainos have not escaped the attention of the Japanese Government in their efforts towards the reconstruction of all things throughout the empire. The scheme as affecting the Ainos is said to provide that they shall be civilised by Japanese wives. There is in the Yezo Colonisation Department a school at which 50 Japanese girls (daughters of officials) are being educated at the public expense by Dutch instructresses. These girls are, I was told at the school, destined to be the wives of Ainos. This is—supposing the scheme to be carried out—as if a number of girls were to be taken from a London ladies' school, and sent to be married to Gaelic-speaking Celts of Connemara. It is to be regretted that up to the present time no foreigner should have undertaken the task of mastering the Ainos' language, but it may be hoped that ere long one or other of our Japanese scholars will turn his attention to a study which could not fail to throw much light on the comparative philology of that region of the world.

The road from Endermo to Saporu leads over several considerable streams, at which one may have excellent fly-fishing, and some idea of the amount of game which sportsmen would find in Yezo may be gathered from the fact that 30,000 pairs of deers' horns are each year exported from Hakodate. From the point at which the road leaves the sea-coast it leads, through continuous vegetation, to Saporu, the traveller at one time passing through miles clothed with lily-of-the-valley, and at another through fields of wild roses in bloom. The town of Saporu, being built entirely of wood, presents a much more finished appearance than a town of such recent date could present under other circumstances. It is

connected by a small canal with the Ishikari River, which is 15 miles distant.

The main industry now apparent in Saporu is the preparation of wood, two steam sawmills being constantly in operation under American superintendence. The forests of Yezo constitute one of the chief sources of the wealth which might be obtained from the island. It is estimated that, by a total outlay on setting up machinery of about 5000*l.*, there might be prepared daily in these forests a quantity of timber worth about 250*l.*, or 78,000*l.* worth in the working year of 312 days, less the cost of working the machinery for ten hours daily, and the above figures might be doubled were the machinery worked by two relays of men in the twenty-four hours. According to the estimates which result from enquiries instituted by General Capron, one average acre of Yezo forest may contain about 42,500 feet of planking. It will thus be seen that a grant, say of 1000 acres, would afford the elements of very considerable profits; and when it is considered that these forests extend over an area perhaps equivalent to nearly that of Ireland, it will be seen what an extensive resource the Japanese Government possess at their command in the forests of Yezo alone. I may add that, whilst this source of wealth continues undeveloped, timber of qualities similar to that found in Yezo is being each year imported into Japan from Oregon and elsewhere in the United States over a distance of between 5000 and 6000 miles. Timber, of qualities which might be procured in Yezo, is likewise being constantly brought from the United States to Hong-kong. The natural development of its forests is perhaps the most obvious, but it is by no means the sole, source of the wealth which might be produced in Yezo. I travelled for some short distance up the Ishikari River, and then proceeded down the river to its mouth, where I had an opportunity of seeing the establishments there, connected with the salmon and other fisheries. Salmon and other fish are caught in the rivers and on the coasts of Yezo in enormous abundance. Salmon is there so cheap as scarcely to have a price, according to our idea of the word; and I was told by an English merchant of Hakodate that, were the fisheries of Yezo open to foreign enterprise, tins of prepared salmon, which would now sell in London for about 9*d.* might be placed in London for 2½*d.* per tin. As it is, the fisheries of Yezo, as at present managed on behalf of the Japanese Government, although they even now supply a great portion of the revenue derived from the island, afford but a very small proportion of the revenue which under better management ought to be extracted from them. The revenue system adopted is that the

Government receive one fish in so many, and, in order to ensure that the Government should receive its due proportion of fish, there is employed at the fisheries a host of Government officials. As one of the American officers expressed it to me, in answer to my inquiries, "Sir, there's an official for every fish caught."

In addition to its forests and fisheries, Yezo possesses a source of future wealth in its mineral productions. I had an opportunity of travelling on the Ishikari River with Mr. Lyman, the geologist of General Capron's Mission, and who was formerly employed by the Government of India in surveying the Punjaub in search of petroleum. He informed me that he had found in different parts of Yezo traces of silver and lead, manganese, iron-pyrites, ironsand, copper, zinc, rock-oil, and gypsum, as well as sulphur in abundance. By far the most important mineral production of Yezo, however, consists in its fields of coal. As the mines of Iwanai have been described by Captain Blakiston, I need not go over the same ground. Mr. Lyman, at the time I met him (in July last), seemed to think it probable that these coal-fields might be found to contain, perhaps, 3,000,000 tons in each layer, there being six transverse layers. I was also informed, subsequently to my leaving Yezo, that Mr. Lyman had lately discovered vast fields of coal on or near the Ishikari River. The Yezo coal, though not of the finest description, is perfectly serviceable for steaming purposes, and were these coal-fields thrown open to the general markets of the world, there can be little doubt that, from their accessible situation, their produce would be in great request, and would, whilst affording large returns to Japan, greatly cheapen the price of coal on Eastern seas.

It may naturally be asked why, if such be the resources of Yezo, are they not turned to immediate practical account? I shall endeavour to explain the political conditions which over-rule the commercial interests of the island. Yezo is, in common with the rest of Japan, a closed land to all foreigners beyond what are known as the Treaty Limits, that is to say, beyond a distance of 30 miles from Hakodate, which is the only open port in Yezo, so that, until the restriction on the free admission of foreigners into the interior be removed, foreign independent enterprise and capital must alike be excluded from everywhere but the one open port—a state of things which is the more to be regretted on account of the existing management of the island. It would be easy to cite numerous instances which came under my own observation, as well as many more which were repeated to me, showing how money may be thrown away; but one instance will

serve as a sample of many. The Japanese administrators in Yezo, with other branches of the foreign civilization which they have adopted, have not overlooked the custom of giving out contracts to persons who may have the means of making themselves believed in by men in power. It is on this hypothesis alone that I can explain the existence of four admirable breakwaters which I saw: one at Mori, on Volcano Bay; and three near the mouth of the Ishikari River. The one at Mori, which I paced, is 500 yards in length, and is said to have cost the Government 80,000 dollars, yet at the extreme end of this pier the depth of water is only 7 feet, so that not even a junk, far less a steamer, can, even in the most favourable state of the tide, be brought alongside it to be loaded. For all practical purposes the pier might as well have been constructed in the interior of the country. The three piers on the Ishikari River afford even a more striking example of mismanagement, to say the least. Near the mouth of the river in question there is on one side of the stream a depth of from 70 to 80 feet of water, whilst at the other side the depth for some distance from the shore does not exceed from 7 to 10 feet, yet the piers are on the shallow side of the stream. The restrictive policy of the Japanese Government with regard to foreigners—which is applicable to Yezo as to the rest of Japan—is not now, at any rate, dictated by any antipathy to foreigners, but solely by the reluctance of the Japanese Government to extend beyond its present limits the extra-territorial jurisdiction which treaty powers exercise over their respective subjects or citizens throughout the dominions of the Mikado. The Japanese Government has announced its willingness to admit foreigners freely into all parts of Japan on the sole condition that, whilst beyond the present treaty limits, they are to be subject to Japanese jurisdiction; but this condition the Treaty Powers have not accepted. It may reasonably be hoped, however, that ere long some compromise will be arrived at which, while it will save the susceptibilities of the Japanese Government, will at the same time afford the Treaty Powers a sufficient guarantee for the full protection of the persons and property of their respective subjects throughout the interior of Japan. Whenever the period arrives that shall see Yezo opened to foreign colonisation, I should imagine that its excellent climate and great resources would attract to it a fair share of European immigration. Its climate, though considered by the Japanese to be too rigorous, is admitted by Europeans to be excellent. Throughout the month of June last, and up to the 4th of July, I was glad to sit over a fire even at noon, and to sleep under a thick quilt at night. The Japanese

are so averse to subjecting themselves to what they call the rigour of the Yezo winter, that many thousands of fishermen, labourers, and others, who come to Yezo from other islands for the summer months, quit it for their homes on the approach of winter; but winter, in an island which produces rice, hemp, and maize, would scarcely seem formidable to Europeans.

The entire island of Yezo is now being surveyed under the direction of Mr. Wasson, one of General Capron's officers. I visited his field establishment at Yubutz, and he informed me that he hoped that by the end of the present year, 1874, his operations would be so far advanced as to admit of his laying down accurately the more prominent points of Yezo, and framing for the first time a correct outline map of the island. His labours will, no doubt, in due time be appreciated by this Society.

I returned from Saporu, or rather from the mouth of the Ishikari River, to Hakodate by the western coast, passing several considerable ports, in one of which, Utarunai, I counted 162 junks. The coast for a great distance is faced with abrupt rocky cliffs, and nothing could be more delightful than the scenery. The road above the cliffs winds over undulating grassy ground, the forest being everywhere visible at a short distance in the interior, and the villages are so numerous as to make it difficult to believe that the Japanese authorities do not greatly under-estimate the population of the island. I presume that the explanation of the low figure at which it is stated is, that the inhabitants of these villages quit them for the adjoining island on the approach of winter, and are not included in the census of Yezo.

The coast of the island of Yezo has within the last three years been surveyed by Captain St. John, of Her Majesty's ship *Sylvia*. The western coast of Yezo, and more particularly the neighbourhood of Matsumai, has an interest of its own, as having been the scene of the captivity and wanderings of Captain Golownin, of the Russian navy, whose narrative of his captivity in Japan during the years 1811, 1812, 1813, affords, I think, in a greater degree than almost any other work a comprehensive insight into the manners of the Japanese and into their former governmental system. The work of Captain Golownin is unique of its kind, owing to the very peculiar circumstances under which it was written, in affording information drawn at first hand, and not by hearsay, of Japanese manners and customs. Captain Golownin, whilst on a surveying cruise in the Northern Japanese waters, was treacherously taken prisoner by the Governor of Kunashier, on account of some depredations which had previously been committed on Japanese soil by another Russian

naval officer. Captain Golownin and the three officers who had been seized along with him were detained for twenty-six months at various places in captivity, and it is most surprising that, under the very strict and constant surveillance to which he was subjected, he should have found the means of registering the notes forming the basis of his highly-interesting narrative. It affords alike an evidence of the amiability inherent in the Japanese character and of the candid disposition of Captain Golownin in that, notwithstanding the treacherous circumstances which attended his capture, he should express himself in terms of so much admiration of the Japanese and of their institutions.

Having now concluded my remarks on the island of Yezo, I would beg to direct your attention for a few minutes to the subject of geographical progress in the empire of Japan in general. The Japanese Government are fully alive to the utility of having the whole of the Mikado's dominions accurately surveyed by duly qualified scientific officers, and for this purpose they last year sent to England their chief surveyor, Mr. Macvean, who was instructed to engage the necessary officers and to procure the necessary instruments. How far Mr. Macvean may have proceeded in his arrangements I have no means of knowing, as he had not returned to Japan at the date of my departure in December last. Previously to his leaving Yedo he had been engaged in preparing a survey of that city, which work, in his absence, is now being carried on by the subordinate English officers of the same department.

I have already mentioned that the coasts of Yezo have been surveyed by Her Majesty's ship *Sylvia*, and I should add that other portions of the Japanese waters, more particularly of the Inland Sea, have likewise been surveyed by British or French surveying vessels. As the Japanese Government have recently engaged the services of Commander Douglas, R.N., with forty-one other officers, petty officers, and seamen of the Royal Navy, as instructors in the Naval College at Yedo, and have established at that place a hydrographical department, it may be hoped that, ere long, the Japanese will be perfectly competent themselves to undertake the survey of such portions of their coasts as may not have already been accurately laid down on charts.

Apart from scientific geographical explorations properly so called, there has of late years been in Japan an immense progress in general acquaintance on the part of foreigners with all regions of the country. Although the rule as originally framed is still in operation, by which no foreigners, with the exception of ministers and their suites, are

permitted to travel in any part of Japan outside of the Treaty limits, yet, owing to a variety of circumstances, foreigners of one or other nationality have in fact visited nearly every province of the Mikado's dominions.

Her Majesty's first minister in Japan, Sir Rutherford Alcock, whose valuable notes of travel throughout a very large portion of the country are included in the 'Journals' of this Society, was the pioneer amongst modern explorers of that empire. Her Majesty's present minister, Sir Harry Parkes, has likewise travelled across the country, and visited all the most important localities in it. The late minister of the United States, Mr. De Long, travelled from a point on the main island opposite to Hakodate, overland to Yedo, a distance of some 500 miles.

In August 1867, Messrs. Mitford and Satow travelled across country from Nanao, a harbour of the Prince of Kaga, on the western coast, to Osaka, on the eastern. They passed through the rich provinces of Kaga, Echizen—famous for silk and cutlery, the province of Ii Kamon no Kami, and the country about Kioto. This journey was performed without any escort, these gentlemen throwing themselves on the hospitality of the Daimios through whose dominions they passed, written receipts for their persons being required and delivered at each frontier post.

Probably no one has travelled more in the interior of Japan than Dr. Willis, formerly physician to her Majesty's Legation, and whose journeys have always been undertaken from motives of charity. In the years 1868-69, he made a journey under peculiarly difficult circumstances, in the depth of winter, in order to attend the wounded troops at Wakamatsu, the capital of the rebel Prince of Aidzu, in the north of the main island, which was then being besieged by the imperial troops. Amongst other foremost Japanese travellers should be named Mr. Aston and Mr. Wirgman.

The journeys of Mr. Adams are included in the records of this Society, and two gentlemen of her Majesty's Legation, Messrs. Lawrence and Satow, have been the first Europeans to travel over and describe the mountain-road (the *Nakasendo*) between Yedo and Kioto, the southern capital; the *Tokaido*, or sea-coast road between the two capitals, having been previously explored. Mr. Lawrence's description of the *Nakasendo* route is likewise in the possession of this Society.

The most famous mountains of the country have been, one after the other, ascended by our countrymen: the peak, second in fame to Fuzi Yama alone having been last year climbed and measured by Mr. Lawrence. The results of many of these expeditions are

now chronicled in the 'Journal of the Asiatic Society of Japan,' which Society was founded about twenty months ago, and their comparison will no doubt in due time lead to the furtherance of the knowledge of the geography of the country. The Japanese Government have in their employment a very considerable number of foreigners, and an exception is made in the case of these gentlemen to the rule which prohibits foreigners in general from travelling in the interior of the country. The result is, that a large amount of scientific and general information has been acquired through them respecting the interior of Japan. A survey, for instance, has been made of the line of country lying between Osaka and Kioto, and of that between Lake Bewa and Tsuruga, on the western coast, and likewise an inspection by Mr. Boyle, c.s.i., the chief engineer, of the route from Kioto to Yedo; all of these being with a view to the construction of railways between these places, respectively. From what I have said, I think it may be inferred, that even should the present policy of confining foreigners in general within the Treaty limits be persisted in, there are fair grounds for hoping that ere long the scientific world will be in possession of the fullest geographical information of the Islands of Japan—an empire which so recent a writer as Dean Swift coupled with the visionary regions of Lilliput and Brobdingnag. There can be no doubt, however, that geographical discovery in Japan would be greatly accelerated were the country freely thrown open to foreign travellers, and the date at which it will be so is, I think I may say, merely a question of a few months more or less.

Meanwhile, such foreigners as may have the privilege of travelling in any part of the interior of the country meet with the utmost possible cordiality and good-will. All obstruction in the way of the circulation of foreigners throughout the country proceeds from the Government, and by no means from the Japanese people. The state of things which I describe with reference to the mutual relations between Japanese and foreigners, is so opposite to that which notoriously existed between them but a very few years ago, that persons whose experience of Japan may not be of so recent a date as my own, may have some difficulty in realising that my description is not over-coloured.

Facts, however, speak for themselves, and from one or two which I may mention, I think you will draw but one conclusion. When I arrived at Yedo, in May 1872, I found at Her Majesty's Legation a Japanese mounted escort for our protection, of forty-three men; and wherever any of us went, on foot or on horseback, in the city of Yedo, or within a distance of many miles around it, we could never,

unless when in-doors, escape the surveillance of these guards, whose lives, had anything happened to us, would have been forfeit for ours.

Being convinced that the anti-foreign feeling which had called for such measures of precaution in the case of members of a foreign Legation had almost entirely passed away, I readily met the Japanese Government in a proposal that these guards should be withdrawn; and within two months of my arrival at Yedo they were so. From that time onwards I was in the habit of going about Yedo in all directions, at any hour from dawn till midnight, having no person whatsoever with me, excepting a groom to hold my horse or to carry a lantern, if at night. I slept, in summer, in a room with windows and doors open. I never carried a stick or whip for defence, and never once had my revolver loaded.

I have visited all of the seven Treaty ports, viz.: Yedo, Yokohama, Hiogo, Osaka, Nagasaki, Niigata, and Hakodate; and have further visited the southern capital, Kioto, and likewise made a journey to the Tombs of the Tycoons at Nikko, in addition to excursions in the neighbourhood of Yedo, and I may say that in no country in the world in which I have travelled—in Asia, Europe, or America—have I, wherever I went, been received with such unmistakable and invariable welcome; whilst I never, under any circumstances, was subjected to a single unpleasant look or word.

Nor is this experience my own alone. I had ample opportunities whilst in Japan of conversing with, or hearing from, or of, such foreigners as were permitted to travel in the interior of the country; and so far as I know, the experience of one and all, during the last two years, entirely coincided with my own. Nor, I apprehend, is it in the least degree probable that the present existing feeling of cordiality towards foreigners is of a transient or ephemeral character. Such a supposition may be at once rebutted by a reference to the statistical fact that there are now under instruction some 430,000 Japanese on the Western system of education, whilst the number of youths who are receiving instruction on the formerly adopted Chinese system number only some 300 in the entire city of Yedo.

The rising generation are being taught to sit on chairs, to write at benches, thoroughly to understand English, and to master the various branches of Western education.

Such being the case, it may, I think, fairly be assumed that the interior of Japan will not long remain a region into which foreigners are forbidden to enter. Many persons seem to consider that the progress of new ideas and the adoption of Western customs amongst the Japanese has been so unprecedentedly rapid, that it therefore

cannot be lasting; but, whilst it must be admitted that the history of the world furnishes no parallel to the recent civil revolution in Japan, it should, I think, be at the same time allowed that it would be contrary to the lessons of history to expect that an empire, which has adopted such institutions as those which Japan now possesses under a central government, should revert to the feudal system.

For my own part, in so far as I may be capable of forming an opinion, I entertain no apprehension whatsoever regarding the stability of the present order of things in Japan. However rapid may have been the progress onwards, that progress has been continuous. Although the manners and customs, the laws and institutions, of an ancient people may not be changed in a year, or in a decade, there has still, since the adoption of Western civilisation was decided on, been a continuous advance towards the goal in view; and popular sentiment seems to go hand-in-hand with the progressive statesmen of the country,—with one instance of which feeling I may bring this paper to a conclusion. As is well known, it has during many centuries been the custom that Japanese nobles and gentlemen should, whilst beyond the precincts of their houses, carry on their persons the two swords which were the badges of their rank. This custom, indeed, on the part of these privileged classes, had become so ingrained in the ideas of the entire inhabitants, that the Government, at a very recent period, expressed themselves as believing, that were any order to be issued which should prohibit the carrying of swords, such an order might cause a revolution. Accordingly no order on the subject was issued, but the compromise was subsequently tried of issuing a Government notification to the effect that for the future the nobles and the *Samurai* need not, unless by their own preference, continue to wear their swords.

The result was that in an almost inconceivably short space of time the usage of wearing swords was abandoned, and it is now almost as unusual to meet in Yedo a Japanese wearing the old two swords, as it is to meet a gentleman in London attired in the Highland costume. Indeed, last year when the senior Prince of Satsuma, who is at the head of the small anti-foreign party in Japan, visited Yedo, with a large retinue of followers, their now almost obsolete custom of carrying swords afforded so constant a source of ridicule, as these Satsuma men passed through the streets, that they soon found it convenient to keep within doors. Their Prince, though still preserving his antipathy to the intruders from the West, has established, at Kagoshima, a medical school for the instruction of Japanese youths by two foreign doctors, engaged by the Prince of Satsuma; thus showing that even the head of the anti-foreign party himself

recognises the fact that, however unwelcome to the ex-Daimos, of which he is the representative, the new order of things in Japar. must be accepted as being inevitable.

The PRESIDENT, after returning the thanks of the Meeting to Mr. Watson for his paper, remarked that they were honoured by the presence of M. Motoni Morimichi, the Japanese *chargé d'affaires*, and of M. Luzuki Kinsou, Secretary of the Legation. The former gentleman had been asked to address the meeting, and had written the following answer:—"The Japanese *chargé d'affaires*, now present, wishes to express his thanks, in the name of his nation, to the meeting for the attention they have shown to this paper treating of the geography of a part of Japan. He regrets that his knowledge of the English language is not sufficient to enable him to address them."

Sir RUTHERFORD ALCOCK said it was a great pleasure to him, as the first Minister to Japan, to find that those who had succeeded him were following so truly in the course which he had been anxious to indicate when he was there, namely, that of studying the people and the country, not only with a desire to obtain the utmost possible information, but with that benevolent and hearty spirit which should always animate those who held diplomatic positions in any country, and more especially in an Oriental country, where there was a totally different civilisation, and where there was large room, not only for sympathy, but for moderation and breadth of view. He had resided in Japan more than five years, under rather trying circumstances, for, though one might get accustomed to carrying one's life in one's hand, it got irksome at times, but he never ceased to feel the greatest confidence in the ultimate power and development of the nation. One of the first traits which struck him was their strong patriotism. With that, of course, an Englishman could not but sympathise. Another trait was their readiness to lay down their lives rather than sacrifice what they felt to be the true aim and object of life. Wherever those two feelings were in any degree prevalent, the nation must certainly, sooner or later, work its way to the foremost rank of civilisation. They saw that their independence was menaced, that they had a powerful neighbour on the north, to whom Yezo offered a beautiful harbour, and that other Treaty Powers, &c., were not always as reasonable as they might be, and they set about adapting themselves to the new state of things with a promptitude which was quite marvellous. Even when he was in Japan, while there was much of fear and animosity, and the natural feeling of hatred that a population would have who felt in danger of being subjugated, they still appreciated that it was necessary that they should put themselves in the comity of nations, and, by assimilating themselves to European customs and habits, enter into international relations which would be their best protection from the oppression of any one power. This was a reach of intellect and of appreciative power which no other Oriental nation had shown itself capable of. The Island of Yezo was inhabited by Japanese only along the coasts, the interior being occupied by the aborigines. Where these aborigines came from was a great mystery. They lived in a semi-savage state, and appeared to have been driven into the mountain fastnesses, as the Welsh and Scotch were when the Romans invaded Britain. They had there preserved a language, and customs and costumes of their own. With reference to the statement that 50 Japanese young ladies were being educated in order that they might marry natives of Yezo, he felt rather sorry for the young ladies. Prince Florestan, who had lately published some charming lucubrations on the subject of new theories of government, said that no Government could be successful, or stable, if the female population were opposed to it and not half the men were willing to support it; and there could be no doubt that, whenever the whole of the women of a country were

opposed to the legislature, there would never be half the men to support it. However, he wished the 50 young ladies every success and happiness. The resources of Japan, considering the size of the islands, were almost unlimited in lead, copper, tin, gold, silver; and the vast forests of Yezo would alone make the fortunes of 50,000 colonists if they could only settle in the country. The chief difficulty to be overcome, however, was that connected with the question of extra-territoriality. No Government with any sense of independence, or self-respect, would ever consent to admit into the interior of the country indiscriminately foreigners who were perfectly independent of the law of the country; but until some compromise was come to on this point, that free access, which was essential for the commercial development of Japan, would never be attained. The mixed courts which had lately been established in Egypt might, however, afford a solution of the difficulty.

Mr. MITFORD remarked that since Mr. Watson left Japan an official contradiction had been given to the statement that those 50 young ladies were destined to be married to Ainos, and their friends must be very glad to hear of the contradiction. It was not a probable thing that the Japanese should encourage that kind of union, for they looked upon the Ainos with a great deal of contempt, regarding them entirely as an inferior race, and justly so; for, although the Ainos were an interesting and harmless people, they had never shown any capability for development. Many of them had entered the houses of foreigners as servants, and been honest and faithful, but had not evinced any of the cleverness or ingenuity of the Japanese, or any talent for adapting themselves to a higher order of things than that to which they had been accustomed. He had resided for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years in Japan under the old state of things, when he had to sleep with revolvers as bedfellows, but when he went again last summer he was perfectly astonished at the change. On the previous occasion wherever he went he was obliged to take an escort, who were responsible to the Government for his safety; but last year he rode alone from one end of Yedo to the other. A traveller might now travel anywhere in Japan without being subject to the least insult. The Japanese deserved the highest possible credit for the genuine good feeling they had shown to foreigners. The question in extra-territoriality would always be a difficult one. Although it was perfectly intelligible that the Japanese should view with jealousy any wholesale entry into the interior of their country by persons who did not come under their law, and who, not coming under their law, would probably come under no law at all, it was equally intelligible that foreigners should object to submitting to Japanese law as it was at present. Europeans could not approve of the Japanese methods of punishment and torture. The Japanese *chargé d'affaires* would do good service to his State if he would, so far as in him lay, encourage the study of law by those students who visited this country. If a system of European law could be introduced into Japan, the difficulty with regard to the question of extra-territoriality would soon be overcome.

Sir HARRY VERNEY reminded the meeting that it was owing to Mr. Watson's representations that a severe blow had been given to the kidnapping of coolies, who were formerly taken to the harbour of Hakodade.