

(February 17, 1930)

Japan and the Japanese

BY THE RIGHT HON. IYEMASA TOKUGAWA,
Minister Plenipotentiary of Japan to Canada

THE PRESIDENT:—Mr. Prime Minister and gentlemen, we are very happy today to welcome to the Canadian Club of Toronto the first Japanese Minister to Canada, the Hon. Iyemasa Tokugawa. In sending Mr. Tokugawa out to Ottawa the Government of Japan has attached great importance to its legation in Canada. Mr. Tokugawa has served his country with great distinction for twenty years in the foreign office in Tokio and in the embassies abroad. He is a member of one of the great historical families of Japan. His ancestors were for nearly three hundred years Shoguns and as such administered the Japanese Empire. His father, who now presides in the House of Lords in Japan, is one of the most revered statesmen in the Japanese Empire. In sending us so able a diplomat from so great a house, Japan has paid Canada a great compliment. Gentlemen, the British Empire and Japan have long been close friends in peace and war. Naturally Mr. Tokugawa will find in Canada a very friendly atmosphere. He may find, one must confess, not very great knowledge of his country, a country which with the traditions, the discipline, the culture of the old regime, has, in a short time, created a great modern industrial nation. And therefore we are particularly happy to hear him today on the subject of Japan and the Japanese. It is for me a very great honor to have this privilege of introducing Mr. Tokugawa.

HON. MR. TOKUGAWA:—Mr. Chairman, Mr. Prime Minister and gentlemen, it gives me indeed very great pleasure to have the privilege of being a guest of the Canadian Club of Toronto and to be called upon to speak to such

a representative and large gathering today. I am sure this is the largest gathering I have ever addressed in Canada. The nice things that have been said about my country my family and myself, so far as I am concerned, I am far from deserving. Something has been said about my experiences. The other night here in Toronto I said something about them at a dinner (probably there were some gentlemen here today who were present on that occasion) but if you do not mind repetition on my part I would like to tell you this about my experiences, which in fact are very limited. When I first went to our London embassy and then to our legation in Pekin, a friend of mine in Tokio told me that I was not starting the A B C of my career in the right order. I was in London and then in China, and, after another few years service, went out to Australia to complete the A B C or B C A. But here I am again in C and yet, however slow my progress may appear, this time I would rather stick to the C.

I am expected to speak to you today on Japan and the Japanese, a very broad and vague subject. Well, as far as I have time, I shall say something on that subject. But before proceeding to that, may I say that I think that good understanding, or rather, happy relations between nations, must depend on the mutual accurate understanding of each other. Very often lack of knowledge or understanding is the cause of trouble between nations. Certainly when I say that, I expect no possibility of misunderstanding between us; but in order to make our relations still closer I may be allowed to say that more accurate understanding with each other is necessary, and from that point of view in particular I welcome this opportunity of telling you something about my country and our people.

Misunderstanding may arise perhaps from inaccurate knowledge of fundamental facts, so first of all let me examine the geographical situation of the Japanese Empire. I may say something very simple which some of you already know but I cannot go on without doing so. As you all know the name of Japan is foreign to us just as *Angleterre* is to English. We call our country Nikon, or sometimes Nippon, but Chipangu was the name given by Marco Polo to our country. This "gu" of Chipangu is undoubtedly the

same as "qua" in Chinese which means country. So Chipangu certainly means the country of Japan and Japan in English, Japon in French, may be derived either from this Chipan or some other rendering of Nikon, and some of the renderings in foreign languages are all foreign to us. We call our country Nikon. But I am not objecting for a moment to this usage nor am I asking you to change it. Japan is quite all right. I merely wish to point out in passing how the name seems to have come about.

The Empire of Japan consists of a long series of islands, large and small, extending along the northern part of the east coast of the continent of Asia and also of the peninsula of Korea on the Asiatic mainland. These islands are situated between about 21° and 50° north latitude and between 119° and 156° east longitude. Of this long chain of islands just one in the center is called Honshiu, which means main island. The one next in size which lies north of this main island is Hokaido, better known in Europe and marked by its old name of Yezo. To the southwest of Honshiu there is Kiu-Siu third in size. Then between Honshiu and Kiu-Siu there is Shikoku. These four islands with their dozen small isles are commonly called Japan proper. Now to the northeast of the north Island lies the peninsula commonly known as Korea, and to the north again there is the island of Sakhalin, of which the southern half is Japanese, the northern being Russian. Again to the south of Kiusiu there is the Lu-Chu group and at the southmost point of these islands there is the island of Formosa. That is a very rough description of the islands which compose the Japanese Empire, with Korea on the Asiatic mainland.

The distance from one end of this long chain of islands to the other end of it is about 2,100 miles. Or, in other words, not very much less than a straight line drawn from the City of Quebec to somewhere near the western coast. This of course includes the water between the islands. On the other hand, the width of the country at the widest part is only about two hundred miles, something like between Toronto and Windsor. The total area covered by these islands is about 176,000 square miles. I think it is a little less than half the area of Ontario. The whole Japanese Empire including Korea is about 260,000 square miles, a

little larger, I think, than the whole province of Alberta. I don't think the Prime Minister of Alberta is here. Among the four islands which constitute Japan proper, Honshiu, the main island, is about the same in size as Great Britain. The northern island is somewhat smaller than Scotland. Kiusiu is equal to one-half of Ireland and Shikoku to Wales. In addition to the territories I have mentioned Japan exercises her administration in accordance with the League of Nations mandate over the former German possessions in the Pacific to the north of the Equator. Japan also has territory in South Manchuria. A long stretch of territory along the south Manchuria Railway is under Japanese administration. These dry descriptions of the Japanese territories may seem uninteresting but they add some historical and other tints to the picture. However with the time at my disposal I must confine my attention to Japan proper.

For that purpose I will take Kiusiu, the first and south Island. I shall not tell you today how, according to Japanese mythology, our ancestors came down from heaven and how a little drop of sea water from a point of a spear crystallized into a small island which was the beginning of the Islands of Japan, but history tells us that the first Emperor of Japan had his first headquarters on Mount Kinoshum in Kiusiu, a volcano, now no longer active. He also established his palace at Koshaw near the present site of Kyoto and declared himself emperor of Japan. This occurred 660 B.C. I thought it was very long ago but I went to the Museum here yesterday and saw a great historical man who was buried in Egypt in B.C. 5,000, so this 660 B.C. seems to be nothing. And this 660 B.C. is the beginning of the Japanese Empire, which has been under the rule of the Imperial House, one and the same dynasty, down to this day.

Kiusiu is the nearest to China of the four islands of Japan proper. It was for a long time a center of external intercourse, though indeed communication between Japan and Korea was frequent and the first introduction of Chinese civilization and Buddhism into Japan was through Korea. The only invasion which the Japanese Empire has ever been compelled to encounter came to Kiusiu in the

thirteenth century. The kingdom of Wan in China had just been established and in 1281 A.D. over 100,000 warriors were sent out in a fleet of 3,500 ships for the purpose of conquering Japan. The west coast of Kiusiu was exposed to imminent peril. On August 14, however, a strong gale came up and the enemy ships all floated adrift and were torn to pieces. This is looked back to in Japan as the destruction of the Spanish Armada is in England. About the middle of the west coast there is the well-known port of Nagasaki. At one time it was an important center of Japanese foreign trade. Already in the sixteenth century not only the Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch ships frequented the harbor but many Japanese ships sailed from there to visit Formosa, the Philippines, Siam, etc. When, however, the prohibition of foreign trade came in the seventeenth century the importance of Nagasaki as a port naturally dwindled, but the Dutch and the Japanese were still allowed to stay and Nagasaki remained through the subsequent centuries almost the only place in Japan where western influence was present until, in the middle of the nineteenth century, other ports were opened to foreign trade. Nagasaki is connected by railway with Imari, at the northern end of Kiusiu. It is on the other side of the strait which is noted for the conclusion of the peace treaty between Japan and China in 1895. Kiusiu is comparatively rich with its coal mines providing about 10 per cent of the coal obtained in Japan proper. And there are some gold and silver mines, but the island is not wholly agricultural.

I must not stay in Kiusiu, and I go on to Shikoku, the smallest of the four islands. That island is not of any very special historical interest except in connection with some sea battles which were fought along the north coast of the island in 1184 and 1185 between two of the strongest military clans of the day. The north coast, with the main island which is opposite, forms a long expanse of water commonly called in English the Inland sea, the Mediterranean of Japan. This inland sea has innumerable small islands of different sizes and ships of all sorts cruise through. That inland trip is one of the most enjoyable in Japan. Shikoku provides a considerable amount of gold, silver and copper and about 44 per cent of all the salt pro-

duced in Japan proper. The island is generally agricultural.

Honshiu, the main island, is properly called main island not only from the geographical point of view but in its political, historical and economic significance. Japan as a whole is a mountainous country and a chain of mountain ranges runs through each of the islands. In Honshiu the range forms its backbone through the center following the shape of the island. The side of this range facing the sea of Japan in the north, especially in the central part of the island, is generally more wooded than the other side of the range facing the Pacific. The side facing the Pacific, especially in the central part, has a long time been the center of Japan's national development.

At the eastern end of the inland sea there is the Bay of Osaki. Near the entrance of that bay on the main Island there is Kobe, one of the two largest seaports of Japan. Kobe is on the real lane from Tokio to Nagasaki. In the latest returns at my disposal the total tonnage of steamships which entered this port in a year is nearly twenty-two millions, but only about six years ago it was merely a group of small fishing villages. The City of Kobe holds a population of about 650,000 but I shall dwell upon the trade conducted by Kobe later. Osaka harbor situated at the north end of the Bay of Osaka has a longer history than Kobe as a port. But since the advent of Kobe Osaka has become a harbor chiefly for coastal shipping. Osaka is more noted as the greatest industrial center of Japan, holding a population of over two million. The industrial progress of Japan through the last ten or fifteen years has been especially rapid and the growth of Osaka in that direction has been remarkable.

Now, leaving the sea coast there is Kioto, within an hour's railway journey inland from Osaka. I have already told you the first Emperor established his capital not very far from the present Kioto. In those days, however, each Emperor chose his own capital and it was as a rule in the neighborhood of Kioto, or a little further south. It was in the beginning of the eighth century that Nara, about twenty-six miles south was made a suitable capital for about three quarters of a century. The Chinese culture which was already in a very advanced state with the religion of

Buddhism had strengthened the hold of the Chinese influence in many phases of life in Japan and it was only in the eighth century that the Japanese civilization began gradually to assume independent national character. However, Kioto was chosen as capital in 1794 and from then until 1867 it continued to be the seat of the Empire. Historically Kioto is therefore one of the places of the greatest interest, full of old palaces, temples and shrines erected in different times and its literature noted.

In 1868 the capital was transferred to Yedo, now Tokio, when Japan entered a new era. A feudal system had existed in Japan for several centuries and an extensive power of administration had been in the hands of the hereditary Shoguns. Yedo had been the city of those Shoguns. Sometimes it is pronounced "Shogūn" but that is wrong. The *u* is always pronounced, as in German, *oo*. Yedo had been the city of these Shoguns since the beginning of the seventeenth Century. In 1867 the Shogun then in power decided first to restore his entire power of administration to the Emperor and secondly to abolish the feudal system. This was when Emperor Majo, grandfather of the present Emperor, ascended the throne. Thirty to forty years following this change in the system of Government, and the removal of the capital to Yedo, then renamed Tokio, were a period of successful advance. The first telegraph line was opened in 1870 and the railway was built between Tokio and Yokohama in 1872. These were the beginnings of more than 3,000 miles of telegraph lines and more than 10,000 miles of railway lines now under construction. The postal system was established in 1870 and postal communication with other countries opened next year. It is not good taste to enumerate all these reforms one after another. It will suffice to say, it was amid general rejoicing throughout the Empire that the Japanese Emperor established a true democratic system of government, which was formally proclaimed in 1887, and the first Japanese Parliament met the next year.

Talking about Tokio, according to the census of 1925 the population of that city was a little less than two million, only second to Osaka. I have told you about the first telegraph and railway lines in Japan. It may not be in-

appropriate to tell you something about Yokohama at this point. Yokohama is situated on the west coast of the Bay of Tokio about twenty miles from Tokio. Before it was opened as a commercial port it was a mere fishing village. Now it is with Kobe one of the most important ports of Japan, especially in connection with Japan's trade with the American continent. The total tonnage of steamships which enter this port in a year according to the latest returns are about 13,000,000 tons. It is far less than Kobe but the Kobe figure includes a far greater number of coastal ships. Now in the amount of trade Yokohama always leads the rest in exports while Kobe leads in imports. In 1928 the export trade through Yokohama and Kobe amounted to a little more than 37 per cent and 32 per cent respectively of Japan's whole export trade and the import trade nearly 28 per cent and 40 per cent respectively of Japan's whole import trade. These differences between Yokohama and Kobe can be explained by the fact that the total export to the United States, which is mainly dealt with through Yokohama, represents more than 40 per cent of the export trade of Japan. Of that amount no less than 83 per cent represents raw silk. Silk is one of the oldest and most important industries in Japan, and Honshiu, main island, is the principal producing country. Silk weaving in particular has several important centers in Honshiu. In weaving, however, cotton weaving is by no means less in importance than silk. The annual production of cotton tissues exceeds that of silk tissues by about \$150,000,000. I have many other things to say about Honshiu, but I am afraid I have not much time remaining. It may only be said in passing that tea and oranges which comprise part of Japan's exports to Canada are nearly all produced in this island.

Hokaido the north island is in many ways a very interesting island for it is not a little different in its climatic and other conditions from any other part of Japan proper. Moreover in it lives a small tribe of Ainos. These are black curly haired people with thick moustaches, whiskers and beards. They are a very gentle and loveable people but their general state is backward and their way of living very simple. The first reliable record of Hokaido begins with an expedition from the main island in the seventh century, but the real

importance of this island only dates from fifty or sixty years ago. The population is still comparatively small. The density of population there was in the last census of 1925 about 13 per cent of even the most thinly populated part of Japan proper. The Central Government is encouraging systematic settlement in Hokaido as well as in Korea. About 25 per cent of the forests of Japan proper are in Hokaido; again, 25 per cent in value of the fisheries of the whole of Japan proper is credited to Hokaido. Hokaido also leads in the dairy industry which is far from flourishing in other parts of Japan. But our production in Japan proper as a whole amounts to 2,370,000 pounds and of that amount no less than 1,747,000 pounds comes from Hokaido.

Well, I have scarcely told you anything about the Japanese people but I think I have spoken already too long. My time is up and, although even my description of Japan itself has been very imperfect, I think I may be allowed to conclude this address at this point. But in doing so I would like to thank you gentlemen one and all for the very kind and patient attention you have given me and at the same time let me express to you my best wishes for the continued success and prosperity of this club.