

### A Peaceful House; A Peaceful period

More than 200 "Feudatories" are spoken of as existing in Japan about 400 years ago. Many of them were small, but about a dozen were powerful. Some of the Feudal Lords had an income of more than 5 million bushels of rice.

After the battle of Sekigahara in which <sup>1</sup>Ieyasu of the Tokugawa House won the right to make Tokyo the center from which the country should be governed for the Emperor who still lived in Kyoto but lived such a quiet life that it almost amounted to living in retirement.

This period 1600-1868 A.D. was for Japan a great period of peace-a really remarkable period if it had happened anywhere in the world.

One phase of the plan played such an important part in keeping the peace and at the same time left such lasting marks on Tokyo, that a glance at it is necessary for an understanding of Tokyo.

By that plan many or most of the leading Feudal Lords were given estates or homes for their families in Tokyo. One can see them all about Tokyo to this day, and what great things that did for Japan and its unity as a nation and its strength in various ways cannot be fully known until the whole history is written.

When this period is studied one is reminded of our newspapers in 1961: more often than not, many of the big headlines have to do with foreign affairs or conditions in foreign nations.

After <sup>1</sup>Ieyasu brought about peace among his own people, he had to see what European nations were trying to do to Japan.

What is the purpose of the coming of Missionaries from European nations to Japan?

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The Tokugawa Shogunate had to take the responsibility of deciding what to do when the Roman Catholic Missionaries first appeared in Japan in 1549; what to do when a great host of native Christians appeared in the next half century; and finally what to do about 1620 when the European World was on the move politically and religiously and there seemed to be a connection between Missionary activity and political activity when Japan was faced with the whole problem.

The same Tokugawa Government decided to close its doors against Europeans and European religions and kept their own country thus closed for almost 300 years. This period and a study of its problems has kept many a historian busy for a long time and still repays study.

But the most we can do at this moment is to see how all this afflicted<sup>e</sup> Tokyo.

One of the last big problems faced by the Tokugawa Government was what to do when Perry appeared with American men of war in 1853 and 1854.

When we were learning the Japanese Language we had to read the same history books that Japanese school children had to read. They were told that Tokugawa had to give an answer to Perry and the other foreigners seeking to open Japan's doors. They felt compelled to give an answer that the Japanese people didn't like. They made such an answer, and then the Japanese people had to live up to it.

What recourse was left to the Japanese people? They could not fail to abide by what their own Government had agreed to.

The modern Japanese made a great practical decision. There are things to be gained by joining the ranks of modern nations. But how can they furnish the Government that had started them on a new course? There are other reasons for relieving Tokugawa of any further responsibility. Let them cease to be a Government and just become citizens of the New Japan!

Can anyone beat that?