

**A TRAGEDY IN STONE
AND OTHER PAPERS**

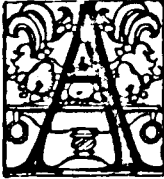
BY THE SAME AUTHOR

TALES OF OLD JAPAN

THE BAMBOO GARDEN

THE ATTACHÉ AT PEKING

THE GARTER MISSION TO JAPAN



TRAGEDY IN
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OTHER PAPERS
BY LORD REDESDALE

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INTRODUCTION

CUSTOM and the publisher demand an introduction to this little book : modesty and the author would prefer to let it go forth and take its chance unheralded. And yet he who has wares to offer must not lack the boldness to cry their quality, and I have been encouraged by high authority to hope that these papers may yet have an interest for a generation that was not born when some of them first appeared. Moreover, even the authorities which I have consulted are not all of them easily accessible. Stow's "Survey," Bailey's "History of the Tower of London," and Doyne Bell's masterly monograph on the Chapel of St. Peter are books already scarcely to be found except in some few public libraries and on the shelves of professed antiquaries. On the other hand the discovery of the remains of Queen Anne Boleyn, and of the other victims of the block, is an episode of which the interest can never die. Pregnant with pathos, the story is one which should be recorded. I have added it to a portion of a general, perhaps rather dryas dust, article on the Tower, which I wrote in 1882 at the request of the late Sir James Knowles.

The character of Leonardo da Vinci was like a precious stone with many facets. That most of these should remain dark to the multitude is no matter of surprise. Had he lived to gather together, as he was minded to, all his discoveries, all his philosophy, and all his prophecies into one encyclopædic volume, the world would have been

INTRODUCTION

compelled to hail him as the most universal genius of any age, and science would have been advanced by some decades—I had almost written centuries! As it is, of all the workings of his mighty brain there remain only scattered parcels, mere interruptions jotted down as they occurred among the schemes and sketches of his artistic work. There they lie in cryptic form, only revealed by the microscopic labour of a few keen scholars such as Ravaisson, Mollien, Govio, Uzielli, Richter, and others. To place before the reader some account of thoughts which excited awe and admiration in a Goethe is surely a pious endeavour. Here again is a case where we have to delve in books which are not ready to every man's hand.

The learned works of the two great Viennese professors as to the history of paper deal with matter so interesting both as regards the past and the present that I feel justified in serving up their results for English consumption.

The papers on Japanese subjects, memories of a great time now vanished like a dream, are, perhaps, worth repetition. Some, indeed, have not before been published. The nineteenth century has been called "the Century of Inventions"; it seems to me as if the twentieth were bidding fair to be known as "the Century of Surprises." It is hardly twelve years old and it has seen Japan annihilate a Russian fleet, wrest a whole province from the Russian army, and capture a fortress which, manned by European troops, was held to be impregnable. Within the last twelve months it has seen the oldest and most august senate in the world shorn

vi

INTRODUCTION

of its powers—the oldest Empire in the world converted into a Republic. It has seen trial by jury instituted in China (what, by the by, must the old mandarins of the *Hsing-Pu Ya-Mén*, the Board of Punishments at Peking, think of that?). It has seen Corea wiped out, and an army of Chinese women at Nanking demanding the suffrage and breaking windows with all the enthusiasm of Regent Street. These are surprises. But none of them is greater than the deeds of chivalry and self-sacrifice by which Japan has earned her laurels.

As the *Spectator* of to-day (March 23, 1912) puts it: "History has no parallel to the rise of Japan in scarcely more than fifty years from a hermit kingdom, whose secrets were known only to a few Dutch sailors, to the position of conqueror of one of the greatest military powers in the world." Already the Japanese themselves talk of the days previous to 1878 as *mukashi*, "the olden time," and they speak dubiously of what took place then, much as we might talk of the events of the period of the Heptarchy. It was strange indeed, when I returned to Japan six years ago with Prince Arthur's Garter Mission, to be more than once cross-examined as to what did or did not take place *mukashi*. When the Mayor of Tōkyō got up a representation of one of the old Daimyō processions for the Prince's benefit, one of the Princesses turned round to me, a foreigner, and said: "You must often have seen such sights *mukashi*; is all this correct?"* Many books are being written about Japan old and new:

* See my "Garter Mission to Japan" (Macmillan, 1906).

INTRODUCTION

every tourist writes his impressions or those of his native guide, mostly illiterate and uninformed ; and so I have felt the less hesitation in endeavouring to crystallise some particles of truth as a set-off against all this *Dolmetscheres*—interpreter's fribble. Even a trip among the fairy-haunted mountains of Hakoné, in days when there were no railroads, no telegraphs, no hotels, and when we travelled with an armed escort—for there were not a few *ronin* about, desperadoes whose blades were athirst to drink the blood of the hated foreigner—may be of some amusement to the myriad journeyers who now have at their command all the comforts and something more than the security of the West. But for these I must say that they pay a price in the sacrifice of much that was original, much that was picturesque, and old-world, and unforeseen.

I feel that I need hardly make excuses for telling once more the story of Will Adams ; surely one of the most romantic and curious episodes in the relations between East and West—a Kentish seadog of Queen Elizabeth's time transformed into a petty Japanese Daimyō !

I have been much criticised of late years—very kindly I must gratefully admit—in regard to my views on landscape gardening, which has been with me a passion. I have been told that I have made a Japanese garden—indeed, more than one—whereas I have no such claim, no such ambition. A Japanese garden can only be planned by a native artist, who must be a master of his craft, and in obedience to rules which are sacrosanct, canons quite beyond the comprehension of the Western
viii

INTRODUCTION

mind. I have simply followed certain ideas which have forced themselves upon me in the course of travels through many countries, and have endeavoured to apply them as fittingly as I could to the surroundings of an English country home. Hence the reproduction of my chapter on that subject.

My thanks are due to Mr. Guy Laking, the distinguished and learned Keeper of the King's Armour, for his most interesting note on the Tower armoury; and to the editors of the *Nineteenth Century* and the *Cornhill Magazine* for permission to reprint portions of articles from those periodicals.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
A TRAGEDY IN STONE	3
ART AND THE EXACT SCIENCES : LEONARDO DA VINCI	45
APOLOGÍA PRO HORTO MEO	79
THE HISTORY OF PAPER	105
AN ADDRESS AT THE CAMPDEN SCHOOL OF ART	125
A SECOND ADDRESS AT THE CAMPDEN SCHOOL OF ART	137
A TALE OF OLD AND NEW JAPAN	151
THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO	189
FEUDALISM IN JAPAN	217
A HOLIDAY IN JAPAN NEARLY FIFTY YEARS AGO PART I	237
A HOLIDAY IN JAPAN NEARLY FIFTY YEARS AGO PART II	275

INDEX

INDEX

- ABBASIDE** Dynasty, the, 119
Abu Ali Muhammed el Ghazali, 116
Acapulca, 202
Acolinillus, Constable of the Tower, 9
Adams, Mr., his *History of Japan*, 167
Adams, Susan, daughter of Will Adams, 199, 208, 210, 211
Adams, William, Captain Cocks's estimate of, 204, 208-211
 endowment of tomb of, 189, 190, 213
 his account of Japan, 211-213
 his dislike of Saris, 203-208
 his estate at Hemin, 202, 205, 207, 213
 his influence with the Shōgun, 198-211
 his Japanese marriage, 199
 his letter to his wife, 196
 his reception by the Shōgun, 195-198
 his relations with the Dutch traders, 200, 203, 204, 208-210
 his relations with the East India Company, 207-211
 his tribute to the Shōguns, 202
 his voyage to Japan, 191-194
 his will, 210
 his wish to return to England, 200-203, 206-208
Adams, William, honoured in Tōkyō, 199, 200, 210
Æneas of Troy, 81
Agincourt, battle of, 177, 228
Aidzu, 186
Ainsworth, Harrison, *The Tower of London*, 3
Aix-la-Chapelle, 302
Akhbar the Great, 51
Aladdin, 111
Albert, Prince, 4
Albino horses at Kamakura, 246
Alchemy, Leonardo da Vinci investigates, 70
Alcock, Sir Rutherford, censures his countrymen in Japan, 173, 174
 on old Japan, 179
Aldgate, Priory of the Holy Trinity within, 9, 10
Alexander the Great, 145
Alexia, 3
Alfieri, his mathematical shortcomings, 48
Ali Ibn Muhammed el Farifi, 116
Allsopp's ale in Japan, 300
Almain Armouries at Greenwich, 38, 39
Alps, the edelweiss, 93
 tunnelling of, 145
Alternantheras, 84
Amboise, 71, 231
American Civil War, 128
 treaty with Japan, 169
Amru, Yusuf, son of, 116
Anatomy, Leonardo da Vinci's discoveries in, 69
Anchises, 81

INDEX

- Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 200
 Exhibition, 219
- Anne, Queen, 96
- Anne of Cleves, Holbein's portrait of, 232
- Anselm, friend of Gundulf, 6
- Antiochus, fresco of, in the Tower, 14
- Antiquaries, Royal Society of, 38
- Antoku, Emperor, his death and his ghost, 280, 281
- Aoto Sayémon Fujitsuna, recovers ten cash, 256
- Apennines, Etruscan, 52
- Aqua Tofana, the, 234
- Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, 111
- Arabian paper, Professor Karabacek's examination of, 115, 117, 120
- Arabs as citizens, 112, 113
- Archimedes, 59
- Architectural school of gardening condemned, 83-86
- Architecture, Da Vinci's skill in, 62
- Ariosto, 51
- Aristophanes, frogs and, 277
- Armenia, Da Vinci in, 57
- Armoury at the Tower, 38-41
- Armstrong, Messrs., 178
- Arno, the, Da Vinci's plans to make navigable, 57
 valley of, 52
- Arthur of Connaught, Prince, his reception in Japan, 151, 177, 179, 200
- Artists, Da Vinci's advice to, 74
 to consider utility, 141
- Aryan races, their improvements in paper-making, 110
 their kings as priests, 223
- Ascham, Roger, on Lady Jane Grey, 27
- Ashbee, Mr., founder of Art School at Chipping Campden, 125, 132, 133, 147, 148
- Ashikaga dynasty, the, palaces of, 255
 Yoshimasa, Shōgun, 289, 290
- Ashi-no-yu, sulphur-springs of, 301, 302
- Asphodel starch, 120
- Assyrian method of letter writing, 106, 107
- Aston, W. G., his version of the Nihongi, 172, 173
 on the literature of Japan, 230, 231
Shintō, The Way of the Gods, quoted, 221, 222
- Astrology, 234
- Astronomy, advance of, 142
 discoveries by Leonardo da Vinci in, 67
- Athlah, battle of, 117
- Atlantic liners, 142
- Authors' Club, the, paper read before, 217
- Autolycus, 45
- Aviation, Da Vinci's experiment in, 59, 60
- Avignon, 106
- Awa, province of, 243 note
- Aylmer, Bishop of London, tutor to Lady Jane Grey, 27
- BABYLON, Sultan of, 57
- Bacon, Francis, on gardens, 80, 100, 310
- Bagdad, Caliphs of, their sway, 109
 paper manufactory in, 111, 118-120

INDEX

- Bakufu, the, loses its prestige, 166-169, 175
- Balzac, Honoré de, on Tasso and Virgil, 51
- Bamberg, 106
- Bamboo Garden*, 79 note
- Bamboos, exotic beauty of, 80, 84, 86, 96, 102
paper made from, 108
- Banin-gawa, story of the river, 280
- Bantam, English traders at, 203
- Barbary merchants, Will Adams in service of, 192
- Barber, Mr., Keeper of the Tower Armouries, 41
- Barking Church, citizens meet in, 16
- Barmecides, massacre of the, 118
- Basel, sketch of Sir T. More and family at, 24 note
- Bass's ale in Japan, 300
- Batrachomyomachia, a, 277
- Beaumaris, built by Henry III., 11
- Beauvais, College of, Xavier a Professor of, 158
- Bec, Normandy, Benedictine monastery of, 6
- Becket, Thomas, banishes the Flemings and repairs the Tower, 10
vision of, destroying the Embankment, 12, 13
- Beer, Julius, his loan to Japan, 180
- Beethoven, played in Japan, 179
- Bell, Admiral, drowned at Osaka, 280 note
- Bell, Doyne, serves as antiquary at the repairing of the Tower Chapel, 30, 31
- Bell, Doyne, *The Chapel in the Tower*, 22 note, 24, 27 note
- Benten or Benzaiten, goddess of mercy, patroness of Enoshima, 269-271
- Beresford, Hannah, grave of, 33
- Berlin, 233
- Bettégumi, the, 238
- Bible, knowledge of, due to invention of paper, 112, 114
- Bismarck, 145
- Biyôbu, Mount, 290
- Black magic, Leonardo da Vinci investigates, 69, 70
- Blood, Colonel, 45
- Blount monument in the Tower Chapel, 30, 33
- Bodhi tree, the, 160
- Bokhara, 109
- Boleyn, Anne, her death in the Tower, 24, 25
her ghost, 3
her grave, 29, 31-33
- Bonji characters, the, 307
- Boswell, James, his *Life of Johnson*, quoted, 137, 138
- Botanical collections, 91.
- Botany, Leonardo da Vinci's discoveries in, 68
- Bradgate, 27
- Brahmans, priesthood of the, 223
- Brandon, Richard, executioner, 22 note
- Brazil, 193
- Briar Rose, the, 79
- Bridges, Da Vinci's, 61
- Brinkley, Captain, his work on Japan, 162
on the spread of Christianity in Japan, 159, 163
- British Embassy in Japan, 179

INDEX

- British Museum, Da Vinci MS.
in, 57
Hamurabi's despatch in,
107
- Brittany, Dukes of, 228
- Brogie, Duc de, on respect for
the past, 234
- Bruno, contrasted with Kant,
49
- Brussels Gallery, supposed por-
trait of Sir T. More in, 23
note
- Buckingham, Earl of, 5
- Buddha-Shakya-Muni, revolu-
tion of, 224
- Buddha, statue of, at Ashi-no-
yu, 306
at Fukazawa, 262-266
at Kiyôto, 265
at Nara, 263, 265
- Buddhism in Japan, rivals Chris-
tianity, 159-161
spread of, 159, 172, 246
- Buddhist, classics, characters of,
307
god Kwannon, image of,
312, 313
monks, 303 note
priesthood, at Enoshima,
271
military power of, 289
usurps political power,
160
shrine of Shôjosenji, 264
state of Nirvana, 298
- Bungo, Will Adams in, 194,
195
- Buonarroti, Michael Angelo,
see Michael Angelo
- Buglary, a great, 45
- Burgundy, Dukes of, 229
- Burke, Edmund, 138
- Bushi-Do, example of, 130-131
320
- CÆSARS, the, 145
- Cairo, Da Vinci in, 57
- Calais, 25
executioner of, 25
- Californian pines, 93
- Cannon, Da Vinci's, 61
- Cape Inamura, 281
- Cape of Good Hope, Tritomas
of, 93
- Carpet-bedding, fashion for, 83,
100
- Carrara, quarries of, 59
- Caterina, the mother of Da
Vinci, 53, 54
- Cellini, Benvenuto, 51
- Cervantes, 231
- Chalendra, 57
- Chamærops, Fortune's, 102
- Chamberlain, Houston
his *Foundations of the Nine-
teenth Century*, quoted,
106, 110
his *Immanuel Kant*, 49, 66
on Schopenhauer, 48
on the discovery of paper,
106
- Chao, States of, 113
- Chapuis, 38
- Charity*, *see* *Liesle*
- Charlemagne, his embassy to
Haroun Al Raschid, 111
- Charles I., execution of, 22 note
his commission *re* Tower
armour, 39
- Charles II., holds last court in
the Tower, 19
- Charles V., 38
autocracy of, 50
- Château de Cloux, death of Da
Vinci at, 71, 231
- Chatham, 192
- Chelsea, Sir T. More's house
at, 232

INDEX

- Chelsea, Thames at, 92
 Chequers, Japanese game of, 296, 298
 Chestnut trees on Mount Ida, 81
 Chili, 193
 Chin dynasty, the, 113
 China, Great Wall of, 113
 introduction of cotton into, 116
 its arts taught in Japan, 88, 121, 172, 182
 its feudal system destroyed, 113
 Japanese raids on coast of, 157
 Lord Elgin in, 154
 Chinese, art of printing, 107, 110
 classics preserved by memory, 113
 invention of paper, 107, 110, 116, 121
 lack of progress, 110, 113, 300
 language, Japanese perversion of, 182, 183
 method of making bamboo paper, 108
 paper-makers in Samarkand and Bagdad, 110, 111
 pines, 93
 porcelain of the Cinque Cento, 51
 Repository, quoted, 108
 Chipping Campden Art School, 132, 145, 146
 Addresses to, 125, 137
Chips, quoted, 224
 Chisholm, Marquis, 261
 Chivalry, born of feudalism, 234
 Chôja-dzuka, 269
 Chokichi, Mr., 282
 Chôshiu, 185
 Mori, Prince of, 170, 225
 Yônin of, 229, 257
 Christianity in Japan, early history of, 159-164
 modern tolerance of, 179
 Christie's auction rooms
 Japanese lacquer cabinets in, 276
 sale of Queen Elizabeth's ring at, 21 note
 Chusan Palm, 93
 Cinque Cento, state of knowledge in, 65
 world-wide phenomena of, 51
 Circulation of the blood, discovery of the, 69
 Civil Wars, English, Tower Armoury used in, 39
 Cleves, Anne of, portrait of, 232
 Clouet, his patrons, 231
Clove at Hirado, 203
 Cocks, Captain, his Diary, 192, 204, 208
 his estimate of Will Adams, 208-211
 Codex Atlanticus, Da Vinci MS. in, 57
 Coldstream Guards, officer of the, 3
 Coleridge, S. T., his lack of observation, 48
 Colet, Dean of St Paul's, 50
 Colleone, Verrocchio's, 55, 56
 Colorado, fir trees of, 93
 Columbus, Christopher, 50
 his crew's mutinous fears, 65
 his imagination and his courage, 142-144

INDEX

- Common Pleas, Court of, sits in the Tower, 16
- Confucius, 172
 paper used in time of, 107
 Works of, 113
- Constables of the Tower, 9, 29
 note
- Constantinople, Da Vinci in, 57
- Conway Castle, built by Henry III., 11
- Copernicus, discoveries of, 65, 67, 142
- Corea, Japanese raids on, 157, 172, 247
- Corffe Castle, built by Henry III., 11
- Corpus Poetarum Latinorum, 277
- Cotswold Hills, the, 132, 146
- Cotton as a basis of paper, 110, 115-118
- Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas sit in the Tower, 16
- Cranmer, Thomas, 25
- Crécy, battle of, 177, 228
- Credi, Lorenzo di, fellow pupil of Da Vinci, 55
- Crimean War, the, 4, 37
- Cromwell, Sir Thomas, Kingston's letters to, 24
- Crown Jewels kept in the Tower, 8
- Cruikshank, George, his illustrations to *The Tower of London*, 3
- Crusaders, the, introduce paper into Europe, 112
- Cryptomerias in Japan, 86
- Curzon Howe, Admiral Sir Assheton, 131 note
- Cyprus, Island of, Da Vinci visits, 57
- DAI BURSU, Buddha of Fukazawa, 262-266
- Daigo II., Emperor, his feud with his son, 257-260
- Daimyos, the, degradation of a, 161
 their feudal system, 166, 174, 185
 their foreign policy, 166
 their palace grounds, 88
 their position under the Shōgunate, 224-230
- Damascene. swords of the Cinque Cento, 51
- Dante Alighieri, 231
- Daté, Inkiyo of Uwajima, 230
- Da Vinci, Leonardo, anecdote of his *Last Supper*, 63, 64
 as an anatomist, 69
 as an architect, 62
 as an artist, 56, 63, 64
 as an astronomer, 67
 as a botanist, 68, 74
 as an engineer, 58, 59, 61
 as a geologist, 68
 as a sculptor, 56
 contrasted with Kant, 49
 his birth and education, 53
 his Eastern travels, 57
 his experiments in aviation, 59, 60
 his last years, 70, 71, 231
 his mathematical genius, 52, 59, 61, 65, 70
 his model of monument to the Sforza, 56, 63, 64, 70
 his Monna Lisa stolen, 45, 46
 his MSS., 57, 66, 67, 70
 his probable attitude to photography, 72-75

INDEX

- Da Vinci, Leonardo, his own estimate of his capabilities, 61-63
 his verdict on necromancy, 70
 his work for Verrochio, 55, 56
 on perspective, 73
 universality of his genius, 55, 59, 61, 64
- Defoe, Daniel, *Robinson Crusoe*, 189
- De la Mare, Monsieur, Keeper of the King's Armoury, 40
- Demosthenes overcomes his stammer, 126
- De revolutionibus orbium*, 66
- Descartes, contrasted with Kant, 49
- Deshima, Island of, Dutch trading guild of, 154, 156, 164, 219
- D'Este, Beatrice, bust of, 56
- De Unitate Ecclesiastica*, 26
- Devereux, Lady Frances, 21
 note
- Dickens, Charles, terror of composers, 126
- Dickins, Mr., his version of the Ten Thousand Leaves, 173
- Dictionary of National Biography*, quoted, 27 note
- Diggines, Nicholas, 192
- Dillon, Viscount, Keeper of the Tower Armoury, 38, 41
- Diodario of Syria, Da Vinci's letter to, 57
- Discontent, Divine Spirit of, 125, 133
 exemplified by Japan, 127-132
 exemplified by Michael Angelo, 126
- Dixon, Hepworth, on Gundulf, 6, 13
- Dog of Heaven, the, 279
- Don Quixote*, 153, 230
- Dragons, legends of, 268, 307
- Drake, Sir Francis, 157, 191
- Dromios, 242
- Dromore, Bishop of, Dr. Percy, 138
- Dryden, John, his Absalom, 21
 his complaint of foreign words, 95
- Dudley, Lord Guildford, his grave in the Tower, 34
 his marriage and death, 28
- Dun, Edward, executioner, 22
 note
- Dürer, Albrecht, his mathematical genius, 47
 regards perspective as essential, 72
- Durham, Bishop of, *see* Ralph Flambard
- Dutch East Indian trade, 192
- Dutch traders in Deshima, 154, 156, 163, 164, 219
 Will Adams's relations with, 200, 203, 204, 208-210
- Duveen, Messrs., 21 note
- EAST INDIA COMPANY establish trade with Japan, 203-205
 Will Adams's relations with, 207-211
- East Smithfield held as a vineyard, 9
- Eaton, William, executor of Will Adams, 210, 211
- Eden, Garden of, 83, 100
- Edinburgh, 227

INDEX

- Edmere, burgess of London, 7
 Edward I., compensates the brethren of St. Katherine, 10
 his additions to the Tower, 17, 28
 Edward VI., plans for marriage of, 27
 Effingham, Lord Howard of, 191
 Egypt, Da Vinci in, 57
 manufacture of paper in, 120
 Egyptian flax, 117
 El Fadl advises use of paper, 119
 Elgin, Lord, negotiates treaty with Japan, 154, 169
 Elinor of Provence, Queen, citizens' demonstration against, 15, 16
 Elizabeth, Queen, commands the remodelling of Tower armour, 39
 her gift of a ring to Essex, 21
 her suitor, Lord Sudeley, 21
 sea-dogs of her reign, 190, 219
 Elm trees, their claim to be indigenous, 95, 96
 Ely, Bishop of, *see* William Longchamp
 Embankment of the Thames begun by Henry III., 11-13
 Empoli, 53
 English colonists as gardeners, 93, 94
 English Flower Garden, 84
 English gardens, pre-eminence of, 92
- English traders in Japan, censure of, 173, 174
 their accusations of the Jesuits, 163
 treaty with Japan, 154, 169
 Enoshima, Island of, legend of, 269-271
 situation of, 266-268, 275
 Erasmus, 50
 Froude on, 230
 his introduction of Holbein, 232
 Erlanger and Beer, Messrs., their loan to Japan, 180
 Esquire, title of, claimed by hangmen, 22 note
 Essex, Earl of, his burial in the Tower, 21
 his ring, 21
 Essex, Geoffrey Magnaville, Earl of, Constable of the Tower, 9
 Etas, Japanese, 226, 227
 Etna, Mount, 57
 Eton, Cuckoo Weir, 272
 Exotics in English gardens, objections to, overruled, 79, 95
 variety of, 93, 101
- Faith*, the, 191
 Fane, Sir Spenser Ponsonby, present at the exhumation of Anne Boleyn, 31
 Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, autocracy of, 50
 encourage Columbus, 143
 Feudalism in Japan contrasted with European, 220, 224, 228
 contrasted with Indian, 223

INDEX

- Feudalism in Japan, ghost of, 220
 literature and art under, 230-233
 overthrow of, 127, 174
 rule of the Shōguns, 220-230
 traces of, 301
Fidelity, 191
 Fir trees in Japan, 86
 Fisher, John, Bishop of Rochester, his sufferings and death in the Tower, 21-23
 Fitzstephen, his description of the Tower, 7
 Flambard, Ralph, Bishop of Durham, his escape from the Tower, 9
 his imprisonment in the Tower, 7, 8
 procures the money to build the Tower, 7
 Flanders, Duke of York in, 99
 Florence, Signoria of, Da Vinci notary to the, 53
 Florence, the Cinque Cento in, 58
Foundations of the Nineteenth Century, quoted, 106
 Francis I., autocracy of, 50
 patron of Leonardo da Vinci, 71, 231
 Franciscan friars in Japan, 161
 Frederick, Emperor, his gift of three leopards, 17
 French Academy, 234
 as colonists, 93, 94
 invasion of Milan, 56
 treaty with Japan, 169
 Frobisher, Martin, 157, 191
 Frogs in Japan, 276, 277
 Froude, J. A., on literature under feudalism, 230
 on Sir T. More's last words, 23
 Fuchibé murders Prince Moriyoshi, 259
 Fujisawa, visit to, 275-278
 Fujiwara dynasty, the, 221, 243
 Fuji Yama, the Peerless, 266
 Japanese reverence for, 87, 239
 view of, 279, 309
 Yoritomo on, 303
 Fukazawa, bronze Buddha of, 262
 Fuller, Thomas, on Lady Jane Grey, 28
 Futago Yama, Mount, 293
 GALILEO, his defiance of the Inquisition, 142
 Gardening as a fine art, 100-102
 Gardens, fashions in, 83, 84, 97-100
 ideal, sought in Nature, 83-89, 100
 Latinity in, 90, 91
 supremacy of English, 92
 their debt to exotics, 93-97, 101
 Garrick, David, 138
 Garter Mission to Japan, 151, 177, 182, 184
 Gautier, Théophile, 46
 Gen and Hei, wars of, 219, 222, 246, 288, 311-313
 Genius, the gift of the mother, 53
 Genji Yumé Monogatari, the, 166
 Genkichi, 239
 Genoa, 143

INDEX

- Genoa cedes Leghorn, 58
 Geology, Leonardo da Vinci's discoveries in, 68
 George III., his conversation with Dr. Johnson, 138
 reign of, 145
 Georgian era, vandalism of the, 19, 30, 37
 Gerald, his instance of Da Vinci's wit, 63
 German inscriptions, 261
 Giafar, Grand Vizier of Bagdad, 111, 118, 119
 Gibbon, Edward, 138
 Gibbons, Grinling, his work in the Tower Armoury, 40
 Giheigi, 199
 Gillingham, birth-place of Will Adams, 192
 "Girl I left behind me, the," 4
 Godiva, Lady, 302
 God's acre, Chinese equivalent of, 278
 Goethe, J. Wolfgang von, 231
 contrasted with Kant, 49
 on Leonardo da Vinci, 67
 Go-issin of Japan, the, 180, 271
 note
 Goldsmith, Oliver, 138
 Gongen, temple of, 306, 307
Good News, 191
 Gorse, indigenous to Britain, 79
 Goto of Tosa, 229
 Govio on Da Vinci, 58
 Granville, John, Earl of, 21 note
 Gravitation, laws of, discovery of, 144
 Gray, Thomas, on the Tower of London, 5 note, 37
 Greenwich, Palace of, first Royal Armoury at, 38, 39
 Grey, Lady Jane, her death in the Tower, 21, 28
 Grey, Lady Jane, her education, 27, 28
 her grave in the Tower, 34
 Griffin, Prince of Wales, 9
 Grimshaw, his forgeries of armour, 40
 Gros, Baron, negotiates treaty with Japan, 169
 Grothe, Hermann, on the Cinque Cento in Florence, 59
 Grottoes, fashion for, 98-100
 Grove's *Antiquarian Repertory*, quoted, 39
 Guild of Painters, 56
 Guinea, coast of, 193
 Guinness's stout in Japan, 300
 Gundulf, Bishop, builds the White Tower, 4, 6, 7
 his architectural fame, 6, 37
 his tears, 6, 7
 Gutenberg, his invention of printing, 106
- HAARLEM, 106
 Hachiman, temple of, at Kamakura, 244-255
 Hada, House of, 250
 Hadenham, Edmund of, 6
 Hakluyt Society, publishes letters of Will Adams, 192, 210
 Hakoné, 302
 lake, legend of, 307
 mountains, the, 244, 292
 beauty of the, 86, 279
 temple at, 304, 306, 307, 313
 visit to, 308, 309
Hamlet, 147, 230
 Hampton Court, Henry VIII at, 25
 Hamurabi, King of Assyria, his despatch, 107

INDEX

- Hangmen claim title of esquire, 22 note
- Hara-kiri* privilege of the Samurai, 231, 284
- Harleian MSS., 38
- Haroun Al Raschid, Caliph, establishes paper manufactory at Bagdad, 111, 119
his gift to Charlemagne, 111
massacres the Barmecides, 118
- Harris, Townshend, negotiates treaty with Japan, 169
- Harry Grace de Dieu*, the, 177
- Haruko, Empress of Japan, 177
- Harvey, William, discovers the circulation of the blood, 69
- Hata, visit to, 310, 311
- Hazel, indigenous to Britain, 79
- Heaton, Mrs., on Da Vinci's letter to the Sforza, 63
- Hector*, 203
- Hei and Gen, wars of, 219, 222, 246, 288, 311-313
- Helen of Troy, 81
- Helicon of Japan, the, 172
- Hemin, Will Adams's estate at, 202, 205, 207, 213
tomb at, 199
- Henri II., patron of art, 231
- Henry I., his additions to the Tower, 8, 10
- Henry III., his additions to the Tower, 8, 11, 13-17
his architectural fame, 11
his embankment of the Thames, 11-13
his private apartments in the Tower, 14, 36
- Henry III. imprisons Griffin, Prince of Wales, 9
- Henry VI., murder of, in the Tower, 17
- Henry VIII., 18
as patron of Holbein, 232
autocracy of, 50
his armouries, 38
his battleship, 178
his love for Anne Boleyn, 25
his revenge on Cardinal Pole, 26
- Hentzner, visits the Tower Armoury, 39
- Hera, Lady, on Mount Ida, 82
- Herbert, Lord, his account of Lady Salisbury's death, 26, 27
- Hidéyoshi, Taiko, his persecution of the Jesuits, 160-162
- Himalayan bamboos, 93
- Himé-Ishi, the Princess stone, 254
- Himémidzu, Spring of, 293
- Hippolochus, Prince, 185
- Hirado, 200
British factory at, 203-205, 208-210
- Hiratsuka, 281
- Hirosé, Commander, performs *hara-kiri*, 130, 131
- Hitachi, province of, 243 note
- Hiyeizan, 258
- Hôjô, village of, 250
- Hôjô dynasty, the, 244, 253
Princess of, 293
rise and fall of, 289-292
- Hôjô Shinkurô Nagauji, military prowess of, 289
- Hôjô Tokimasa, treachery of, 248-250

INDEX

- Hôjô Tokiyoro, Shôgun, his opposition to Nichiren, 267, 268
 Shôgun, rewards Aoto, 256, 257
- Holbein, Hans, 51
 his English patrons, 232
 portrait of Sir T. More attributed to, 23 note
- Holland, king of, his intercourse with Japan, 165
- Holly, the, hedges of, 97
 indigenous to Britain, 79, 96
- Holyrood Palace, portraits of Scottish kings in, 40 note
- Holy Trinity, Priory of the, suffers from its neighbourhood to the Tower, 9, 10
- Homer, *Iliad* quoted, 185
 the country of, 81, 82
- Hongkong, 276
- Hope*, 191
- Horace, his method of work, 126
- Horse-Plunge River, the, 280
- Hosugai of Enoshima, 270
- Hot Gospeller, the, 3
- House-leeks, 84
- Houssaye, Arsène, on Leonardo da Vinci, 67
- Howard, Katherine, her arrest, 25
 her burial in the Tower, 33, 34
 her execution, 26
- Howard of Effingham, Lord, 191
- Howe, Admiral Sir Assheton Curzon, 131 note
- Huxley, his heritage from his mother, 53
- Hydrostatics, Da Vinci's experiments in, 59
- 328
- ICHÔ tree at Kamakura, 248
 Ida Range, 81
 Idzu, province of, 250, 289
- Imagination, backed by courage, 141
 distinguishing gift of man, 137, 140
 Dr. Johnson on, 138
 progress due to, 144-147
- Inari Sama, garden temples to, 87
- India, art in, during the Cinque Cento, 51
 claims the invention of paper, 107
 development of kingship in, 223
- Indigenous trees, 95
- Indo-European race, superiority of, 110
- Inkiyo, the, influence of, 229, 230
- Inquisition, Italian, 67
 Galileo before the, 142
- Institut de France, Da Vinci MSS., 57, 67
- Inubô Maru, 306
- Iranian Persians, their improvements in paper-making, 110, 118, 120
- Iris Kämpferi in Tokyo, 88
- Irish Barracks, the, 36
- I-ro-ha, syllabary of, 307
- Irving, Washington, his tribute to English gardens, 92
- Ishigaki, Mount, 290
- Isuka overthrown by Kamadari, 243
- Ita erects the great Buddha of Fukazawa, 263, 264
- Italy, patronage of art in, 231
- Ito, Prince, Yônin of Chôshin, 229

INDEX

- Iwai, a Ronin, 199
 Iyémitsu, Shōgun, his anti-foreign policy, 156, 157, 163-165, 170, 174, 184, 218
 his hold on the Daimyos, 166
 Iyétada, Shōgun, Court of, 205, 209, 211
 Iyéyasu, Shōgun, 165
 founder of the Tokugawa dynasty, 156, 162, 222, 290, 291
 his Edict against Christianity, 163
 his hold on the Daimyos, 166
 his reception of Will Adams, 195-197
 patron of Will Adams, 198-205, 209-211, 219
 Will Adams's daily tribute to, 202
- JAHIZ on cotton, 117
 James I., his embassy to Japan, 192
 James Royal Company, the, 211
 Janet, his patrons, 231
 Jannsen on the art of printing, 106
 Japan, anti-foreign policy of, 155, 156, 163-167, 170
 Buddhism in, 160, *see* Buddhism
 charm of old, 152
 Chinese arts in, 88, 121, 172, 182
 Christian missions in, 179
 early history of, 158-164
 Dutch traders in, *see* Dutch traders
- Japan, Daimyos of, *see* Daimyos
 East India Company trades with, 207-211
 European civilisation in, 129, 152, 172, 176-186, 219, 300
 feudalism in, *see* Feudalism
 financial position of, 179-182
 foreign policy of, 176, 186
 foreigners first enter, 164-170, 173
 frogs in, 276, 277
 Garter Mission to, 151, 177, 179, 182, 184
 Go-isshin of, 164, 174, 175, 271, 283
 Government of, its fee to the temple of Hachiman, 254
 her conquest of Corea, 247
 her rank as a Power, 184
 her war with Russia, 130, 172
 honours Will Adams, 189, 199, 205, 210
 isolation of, 154, 156, 157, 162, 164, 218
 Meiji of, 175, 176, 186
 natural landscape gardening in, 86, 87
 Portuguese traders in, 157, 158
 rainy season in, 288, 292, 313
 reception of Will Adams in, 194-198
 scenery of, 242, 266, 279, 293, 298, 299
 Shintō, the indigenous religion of, *see* Shintō

INDEX

- Japan, travelling in, 308, 309
 risks in 1872, 283-285
 treaties with, 169
 Will Adams's description
 of, 211-213
Japan Gazette, 210
 Japan Society, lectures delivered
 before, 151, 189
 transactions of, 173
 Japanese animated by dis-
 content, 127, 130
 army, 177, 184
 art of paper-making learnt
 from China, 121
 art under feudalism, 231-
 233
 baths, 294, 298, 301, 302,
 311
 Buddhas, 262-266, 306
 divers, 272
 dragons, 268, 307
 etiquette, 275, 282, 300
 historical books, 257, 281
 husbandry, 240, 262
 inns, 240, 241, 244, 261,
 275, 287, 294, 310
 lacquer cabinets, 276
 work, an artist in,
 296-300
 landscape gardening, 310
 language, Chinese corrup-
 tion of, 182, 183
 literature, 172, 173, 230,
 231
 longevity, 266
 love of art, 127, 128, 132
 love of scenery, 87
 marqueterie, 299
 melodrama of Will Adams,
 199
 metal work in the Cinque
 Cento, 51
 navy, 178, 184
- Japanese navy, first ironclad of,
 128
 Will Adams founder of,
 201, 213
 pirates, 157
 pleasure-houses, 239, 286,
 304
 ponies, 287
 proverbs, 278
 rivers, 279
 society, 176-179, 295-297,
 300
 spirit of Yamato Damashi,
 130, 131, 171
 surgery, 178
 toy gardens, 86-88
 vendettas, 303-306
 wars of Gen and Hei, *see*
 Gen and Hei
- Java, Island of, English mer-
 chants in, 192, 202
 Jesuits in Japan, denounce Will
 Adams, 194, 196
 Jesus, Society of, founders of,
 158
 its history in China, 161
 in Japan, 159-164
 Jews in London, outrages on
 the, 15
 Jikakudaishi at Hakoné, 308
 Jimmu Tennô, the Mikado,
 221, 222 note
 Jinfukuji, Temple of, 252
 Jingô, Empress, legend of, 247
 Jizô Sama, figure of, 306
 Joachim, Japanese pupil of, 179
 John, King, 10
 Johnson, Dr., Boswell's *Life* of,
 137
 his account of Pope's
 grotto, 98-100
 on the poems of Dr.
 Ogilvy, 138, 139

INDEX

- Judas Iscariot in Da Vinci's *Last Supper*, 63, 64
 Julius Cæsar, 145
 supposed builder of the Tower of London, 5
- KAGA**, Prince of, 224
 Kagoshima, Bay of, 159
 Kadzusa, province of, 243 note, 265
 Kait Bai, Sultan, employs Da Vinci as engineer, 58
 Kamadari, Prince, his dream, 242
 his honours, 243
 Kamakura as a military capital, 243, 246, 290
 death of Yoritomo at, 248, 281
 dragon of, 268
 feud against Yoshimasa at, 289
 legend of its name, 243
 murder of Prince Moriyoshi at, 258
 Nichiren at, 267
 ruins of, 244, 255
 statue of Buddha near, 262-266
 temple of Hachiman at, 244-255
 visit to, 242-262
 Kaméyama, Emperor, 254
 Kang Hsi, Emperor of China, 161
 Kant, Immanuel, contrasted with other great thinkers, 49
 Karabacek, Professor, his discoveries concerning paper, 105, 114, 115, 119
 Karô, the Japanese, 229
 Kashiko-dokoro, the, 222 note
 Kashima, shrine of, 242
- Kataki-Uchi, the evidence of, in Yedo, 226
 Katsû, dragon of, 269
 temple of Riyukôji at, 267, 268
 Katô at Miyanoshita, visit to, 292-301
 Kemble, Adelaide, *see* Mrs. Sartoris
 Ketch, John, beheads the Duke of Monmouth, 21 note
 Khorâsân, paper-makers of, 117, 119
 Kido, a Yônin, 229
 Kiga, hot iron springs at, 298-300
 King's Bench, Court of, sits in the Tower, 16
 Kingston, Sir William, describes the death of Anne Boleyn, 24, 25
 Kishiu, province of, 290, 306
 Kiushiu, Island of, Christians in, 162
 Xavier lands in, 158
 Kiyomidzu, Temple of Kwan-non at, 313
 Kiyomori, his hatred of Yoritomo, 288
 Kôbôdaishi, priest, sculptor, and linguist, 307, 308
 Kôgoku, Empress, 243
 Kojiki, annals of the, 172
 Kokushu Daimyos, the, 224
 Komura, Baron, Japanese Ambassador, 152
 Kôra Miyôjin, shrine of, 247
 Koshigoyé, 269
 Kôtsuké, province of, 243 note
 Krupp, Herren, 178
 Kshatriya, the, 223
 Kublai Khan, reign of, 116
 Kugés, fall of the, 185, 221

INDEX

- Kugiyô, his revenge on Sanétomo, 250-252
 Kumano, temple at, 306
 Kuré, arsenal of, 184
 Kuropatkin, General, in Manchuria, 178
 Kushiwamado, deity of Shintô, 247
 Kwambaku, office of, 243
 Kwannon, Yoritomo's image of, 312, 313
 Kwantô, provinces of, 290
 governors of, 243, 291
 Kyôto, 260
 anti-foreign fanatics in, 155
 bronze Buddha at, 265
 Buddhist and Christian rivalry in, 160
 court of, 169, 221, 290, 307
 foreign ships at, 166
 its art in the Cinque Cento, 51
 Kugiyô at, 250
 Nagauji at, 289
 Silver Pavilion, 233
- LAKING, GUY**, his note on the armoury at the Tower, 38-41
 Lamburn, Adam de, engineer of the first Thames Embankment, 11-13
 Landscape gardening, ideal, in nature, 83-89, 100
 value of massing, 88-90
 Lanfranc, his pupil Gundulf, 6
 Lang family, the, Chinese potters, 51
Last Supper, Leonardo da Vinci's, Judas Iscariot in, 64
 first sketch for, 69
 Leghorn ceded to Florence, 58
- Levens, 97
 Leo X., 50
 his patronage of art, 231
 Leo XII., Pope, his treatment of Leonardo da Vinci, 71
 Leopards, the three, 17
Liesde, Will Adams pilot of the, 191, 194, 197
 Lilly's nativities, 234
 Limehouse, Will Adams in, 192, 198, 202
 Lin Fu, adaptability of, 237, 240
 Linen as a basis for paper, 117
 Lingard's *History*, 27
 Lion, his reception in Japan, 238, 272, 287, 300
 Lisbon, 143
 Lister, Lord, his antiseptic methods, 145
 Lombard bankers, outrages on the, 15
 London, 231, 233
 Aldgate, 9
 Bishop of, *see* Aylmer
 Bridge, 33
 Queen Elinor retreats from, 16
 New Court, 182
 Postern Gate, 11
 Threadneedle Street, 182
 Longchamp, William, Bishop of Ely, encloses the Tower of London, 10
 Longford, Mr., on the Yônin, 229
 Lord Chamberlain, the, his responsibility for the Tower, 29 note
 Lord Mayor's Day, 1876, 31-33
 Lorenzo the Magnificent, his patronage of art, 231
 sends Da Vinci to Milan, 61

INDEX

- Louis XII., Da Vinci's work for, 71
- Louis XIV., 85
- Louvre, the, bas-relief of Scipio Africanus in, 56
theft of *Monna Lisa* from, 45
- Loyola, St. Ignatius, 50
his influence on Xavier, 158
- Lucretia, death of, 26
- Lusitania*, 190
- Luther, Martin, 50
on Copernicus, 66
- Lyceum Theatre, 40 note
- Macaulay, Lord, *History of England*, 22 note
on the Tower chapel, 20, 35
- Macdonald, Sir Claude, British Ambassador to Japan, 190
- Machiavelli, Niccolò, 50
- Madonna delle Grazie, Convent of the, Milan, 63
- Magellan, 50
Straits of, Will Adams in, 193, 196
- Mahomet, 145
- Maidenhair trees in Japan, 248, 252
- Maihore, Jaques, 193
- Malay Archipelago, natural landscape gardening in, 83, 84
Straits, St. Francis Xavier in, 159
- "Malbrook, Madame," 99
- Manchester Ship Canal, 57
- Manchuria, railways of, 181,
Mangan exorcises the dragon, 307
- Manila, Governor of, 202
- Manyoshiu, the Tanka of the, 172
- Maritornes of Kamakura, 244
- Mary, Queen, 18
her governess, 26
- Mathematics, Leonardo da Vinci on, 64, 65
- Mathews, Charles, 40 note
- Mauger the Headsman, 3
- Mauretania*, 190
- Mayence, Gutenberg at, 106
- Mecca, introduction of paper into, 116, 117
- Mechanics, Leonardo da Vinci's genius for, 52, 55, 61
- Medici, Lorenzo de', *see* Lorenzo the Magnificent
- Medici tombs, the, 48
- Meida, visit to, 282
- Meiji, Japanese era of, 175, 176, 186
- Melanchthon, Philip, on Copernicus, 66
- Melzo, pupil and executor of Da Vinci, 71
- Memory, examples of, 112, 113
- Mencius, 172
works of, 113
- Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Felix, 179
- Messour, Chief Eunuch, 111
- Metal work, Japanese, in the Cinque Cento, 51
- Mexican pines, 93
- Meyrick, Sir Samuel Rush, his work in the Tower Armoury, 40
- Michael Angelo, 51
a learner in old age, 127
his mathematical genius, 48
- Michelham, Lord, 21 note
- Middle Kingdom, The*, quoted, 113

INDEX

- Mikado, the, accession of present, 175
 divine state of, 221-223
 gardens of, 88
 his foreign policy, 176, 186
 his ministers, 243
 honours Prince Kamadari, 243
 power delegated to Shōgun-ate, 246
- Milan, aviation experiments at, 59
 Barghetto, 64
 French invasion of, 56
 Leonardo da Vinci in, 57, 61, 64, 70, 71
 his *Last Supper*, 63, 64
- Milman, Colonel, Governor of the Tower, 31
- Milton, John, 231
- Minamoto dynasty, the palaces of, 255
 feud of, with Taira, 223,
see Yoritomo
- Ming dynasty, the, 51
- Mito, Prince of, his attitude to foreigners, 166, 167
- Miyanoshita, visit to, 292-301, 311
- Miyōchin family of metal workers, 51
- Mogul Akhbar, the, 51
- Mollien, Ravaisson, interprets Leonardo da Vinci, 67
- Monat, Dr., F.R.C.S., identifies the bones of Anne Boleyn, 30-32
- Mongolia, flower effects in, 89
- Monmouth, James, Duke of, his death and burial in the Tower, 21 and note, 34
Monna Lisa, merits of, 46
 theft of, 45
- Monte Falterona, 52
- Montgolfier, his ballon, 60
- Moors as paper-makers, 120
- More, Sir Thomas, 50
 his death in the Tower, 21, 23
 patron of Holbein, 232
 portraits of, 23 note
- Mori, Prince of Chōsin, 170, 225
- Moriyoshi, Prince, unhappy history of, 257-260
- Moses, 107
- Mount Fuji Yama, *see* Fuji Yama
 Ida, 81
 Ishibashi, Yoritomo hides on, 311-313
 Ishigaki, Taiko Sama on, 311
 Koya, 290
 Okura, 242
 Oyama, 279
- Mukden, battle of, 172
- Müller, Max, on the Brahmins, 223
- Müntz on Da Vinci, 58, 67
- Musashi, province of, 243 note
- NAGASAKI, execution of monks in, 162
- Nai-shi-dokoro, the, 221 note
- Naméri, story of the river, 256
- Nango, 278
- Nanushi of Kamakura, the, acts as antiquary, 244, 245, 251, 252, 262
- Naples, grottos at, 98
- Napoleon I., 145
- Nara, court of, 221
 statue of Buddha at, 263, 265
- Nata-uta, the, 172

INDEX

- Necromancy, Leonardo da Vinci investigates, 70
- Nelson, Horatio, Viscount, 157
- Newcastle, Duke of, his grotto at Oatlands, 98, 99
- Newport, Mountjoy, Earl of, 39
- New Zealand, Acæna of, 93
- Nichiren escapes execution, 267, 268
- Nightgall the gaoler, 3
- Nihon-bashi, Tōkyō, 210
- Nihongi, annals of the, 172, 173
- Niigata, bar of river at, 279 note
- Nikaido, murder of Prince Moriyoshi in, 259
- Nineteenth Century, The*, 3 note
- Nintoku, Emperor, shrine of, 253
- Nobunaga, Ota, 165
his policy towards Christianity, 159, 160
- Noel, Gerard, First Commissioner of Works, 5, 31
- Norfolk, Duchess of, her neglect of Katherine Howard, 25
- North-West Passage, the, 205
- Northumberland, Earl of, 21
his grave in the Tower, 33, 34
weds his son to Lady Jane Grey, 28
- Nostradamus, 234
- Nottingham, Lady, fails the Earl of Essex, 21
- OAK-TREES**, on Mount Ida, 81
their claim to be indigenous, 95, 96
- Oatlands Park, grotto at, 98, 99
- Oberon, King, 46
- Odawara, 282
ruled by the Hōjō family, 244, 289-294, 308, 311
Soga at, 304
visit to, 286-292
- Office of Works, Secretaryship of the, 4, 29
- Ogilvy, Dr., his poems, 138, 139
- O Hana, Miss, 239
- Oiso, Tora Gozen of, 304
- Ojin, Emperor, God of War, 246, 253
- Okura, 243
- Oliphant, Laurence, on old Japan, 179
- Omori family at Odawara, 289
- Onaka, Princess, shrine of, 247
- Ono Goroyémon, 265
- Orange trees in tubs, 85
- Originality the privilege of man, 140
- Osaka, bar of river at, 279 note
Will Adams at, 197, 202
- Osborne, Sherard, on old Japan, 179
- Osman, Caliph of Bagdad, 109
- O Také San at Hata, 310
- Ota Nobunaga, 165
his attitude to Christianity, 159, 160
- Othowerus, Constable of the Tower, 9
- Otsu, bride of Will Adams, 199, 200
- Otto, Constable of the Tower, 9
- Ovid, on Tarquin's lilies, 89
- PALESTINE**, manufacture of paper in, 120
- Pali characters, the, 307
- Palmistry, Leonardo da Vinci on, 70

INDEX

- Pandora, legend of, 137
 Panurge, moutons de, 46
 Papal Bulls, 26
 concerning Japan, 161, 163
 Paper, Arabian, 115-117, 120
 Aryan improvements in, 110, 114
 Chinese invention of, 107, 110, 116, 121
 precedes invention of printing, 106
 introduced into Europe by Crusaders, 112
 introduced into Japan, 121
 manufactured in Samarkand and Bagdad, 110, 111, 114-120
 rag, first made in Europe, 110, 115, 118
 secret industry of the East, 111, 120
 silk, 118
 Papyrus, Egyptian, 107, 119
Paradise Lost, 147
Paradisi in sole Paradisus terrestris, 85 note
 Parchment used by the Caliphs, 119
 Paris, city of, 231, 233, 276
 Paris, Matthew, on the fortification of the Tower by Henry III., 11, 13
 Paris, perennial youth of, 81
 Parkinson, John, his Paradise, 85
 Parr, Queen Catherine, her household, 27
 her husband, 21
 Partridge, Nathaniel, gentleman gaoler, 28
 Pasqualigo visits the Tower Armoury, 38
 Patterson, Sir T. More's jester, 232
 possible portrait of, 24 note
 Paul III., Pope, Copernicus dedicates his book to, 66
 Pavia, Francis I. at, 71
 Peace, Charles, 45
 Peking, Forest of Pencils, 182
 Pendulum, invention of the, 144
 Pera, 57
 Percy, Dr., Bishop of Dromore, 138
 Pericles, the age of, 59
 Perry, Commodore, appears in Japan, 164, 169
 Persian art in the Cinque Cento, 51
 art of paper-making, 110, 118, 120
 Perspective, Leonardo da Vinci on the value of, 72, 73
 Peru, 193
 Perugino, fellow pupil of Da Vinci, 55
 Philip IV., patron of Velasquez, 232
 Photography, its scientific allies, 47
 probable attitude of Leonardo da Vinci to, 72-75
 Phyllotaxy, laws of, 68
 Pine trees in Japan, 86, 87
 on Mount Ida, 81
 Pisa, 53
 Cathedral of, 144
 Planché, J. R., his agitation for the improvement of the Tower Armoury, 40, 41
 Plantagenet, Margaret, *see* Countess of Salisbury

INDEX

- Plato contrasted with Kant, 49
 his *Phædo*, 27
- Poetry, definition of, 138, 139
- Pole, Cardinal, his mother's death, 26, 27
- Ponsonby, Sir Henry, 29
- Pope, Alexander, his grotto at Twickenham, 98, 99
- Port Arthur, siege of, 130, 172, 178, 219
- Portuguese traders in Japan, 158, 163, 200
 denounce Will Adams, 194, 196, 201
 wars with England, 196
- Priam, King of Troy, 80
- Priestcraft, its influence in Japan, 158-164
 usurps political power, 223
- Prince Consort, the, 4
- Princess-Water, spring of, 293
- Pring, Captain Martin, 211
- Printing, invention of, subsequent to that of paper, 106, 114
- Pyrenees, the, honeysuckle of, 93
- RABELAIS, 51
- Racine, *Iphigénie*, 48
- Rag paper, first made in Europe, 110, 115, 118
- Rainer, Archduke, his collection of MSS., 115, 117
- Rainy season in Japan, 237
- Raleigh, Sir Walter, 157, 191
- Raphael of Urbino, 51
- Ratcliffe, Will Adams in, 198
 Highway, 227
- Ravenburg, paper-mill at, 114
- Reformation, origin of the, 25
- Renard, Simon, 3
- Restoration, the, 40
- Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 138
- Rice paper, composition of, 109
- Richard I., 10
- Richard II.*, quoted, 5 note
- Richard III., 18
- Richard III.*, quoted, 5 note
- Richikōin, temple of, 260
- Richter on Leonardo da Vinci, 56, 57, 67, 75
- Rig Veda, hymns of the, 223
- Riyukōji, temple of, 267, 268
- Robert of Normandy contends with Henry I. for England, 8
- Roberts, Rev. E. Jordan, Chaplain of St. Peter's, Tower Chapel, 35
- Rocheford, Teravin de, his visit to the Tower, 1672, 39, 40
- Rochester, 192
 Bishop of, John Fisher, in the Tower, 21-23
 Gundulf, Bishop of, architect of Cathedral and Castle, 4, 6-8
- Rochford, Lady, her grave in the Tower, 34
 Lord, his grave in the Tower, 33
- Rojdestvenski, Admiral, defeat of, 172
- Romaji hiromé kai, the, 183
- Roman Catholic Church, its attitude to Copernicus, 66
- Roman *comitatus*, 229
 fortifications on the site of the Tower, 5, 36
 ignorance of paper-making, 120
 lack of creative imagination, 139
- Rome, Leonardo da Vinci in, 60
 Michael Angelo in, 126, 127

INDEX

- Rōnin, the, foreign policy of, 171
in Yedo, 185, 225
Iwai captures Will Adams,
199
- Roper, Anne, portrait of, 232
- Rossini, played in Japan, 179
- Rōwlandson, Thomas, his
aquatint of the Tower
Armoury, 40
- Royal Photographic Society,
Presidential Address to, 45,
105
- Royal Society of Antiquaries,
38
- Royal Zoological Society, foun-
dation of, 17
- Ruskin, John, 298
- Russell, Lord, execution of, 22
note
- Russian raids on Japan, 164
statesmen, political power
of, 50
- Russo-Japanese War, the, 172
incident of, 130
- SAGAMI, province of, 242, 243
note, 289, 304
story of the river, 280
- Said, his capture of Samarkand,
109
- Salih, Zijād, son of, 117
- Salisbury, Margaret Plantagenet,
Countess of, her death in
the Tower, 26, 27
her grave in the Tower,
34
- Salting Collection, the, 232
- Salvin, Mr., as architectural
adviser on the Tower, 4, 5
- Samarkand, capture of, by Bag-
dad, 109, 115
paper-makers in, 110, 111,
114-120
- Samurai, the, 153, 237
the spirit of the, 227, 234
their attitude to foreigners,
284
- Sanéhira hides Yoritomo, 312
- Sanétomo, Shōgun, murder of,
248-252
- San Felipe, 120
- Santa Maria, Island of, 194
- Sardinian pines, 93
- Saris, Captain John, his embassy
to Japan, 192, 203-208
- Sartoris, Mrs., essay of, quoted,
218
- Sasébo, arsenal of, 184
- Satow, Sir Ernest, his work on
Japanese literature, 172
- Satsuma*, 213
- Satsuma clan, the, 170, 185, 296
disciple of Xavier, 159
Princes of, 230, 257
revenue of, 224
Terashima of, 229
- Scamander in flood, 80, 81
- Schliemann, his discoveries, 80
- Schopenhauer, his axiom on
genius and mathematics dis-
proved, 47-49, 52
- Scipio Africanus, bas-relief of,
56
- Scott, Sir Walter, 227
- Sea Adventure, The*, 209
- Séailles, M., on Da Vinci, 58,
67, 69
- Segar, Sir William, Garter
King-of-Arms, 22 note
- Sesshō, office of, 243
- Sforza, Francesco, his monu-
ment, by Da Vinci, 56, 63,
64, 70
- Sforza, Lodovico, Il Moro, his
patronage of art, 61, 231
- Shaka Niyorai, Shrine of, 265

INDEX

- Shakespeare, William, 51, 231
 attributes Tower of London to Julius Cæsar, 5 note
 his mathematical genius, 48
- Shang Chuan, Island of 159
- Shanghai, 218
 sheep from, 287 note
- Shâtiba, paper-mill at, 120
- Shên Tien, 278
- Sheppard, Jack, 45
- Shidzuka Gozen, fidelity of, 253
- Shigénari, his festival attended by Yoritomo, 280, 281
- Shih Hwang Ti, Prince of Chin, orders destruction of Chinese classics, 113
- Shimadzu Saburô, Prince of Satsuma, 170, 225, 230
- Shimôsa, province of, 242
- Shimôtsuké, province of, 243 note
- Shinagawa, Katakai-Uchi in, 226, 227
- Shintô, Buddhism grafted on, 172
 deities of, 247, 271
 indigenous religion of Japan, 271
 Mikado High Priest of, 221, 222 note
- Shiraki, as a horseman, 237, 241, 242, 267
 as a travelling companion, 285, 288, 292, 293, 300, 310
 at Kamakura, 244
 his parable of the frog, 276
- Shôguns, the, abolition of, 171
 government of, 166-169, 175, 223-229, 246
- Shoguns, Tokugawa dynasty of, 156, 162, 163, 166
 Will Adams's daily tribute to, 202
- Shôjôsenji, shrine of, 264
- Siam, Buddhas of, 262
 English trade in, 209
 Japanese piratical raid on, 157
- Siebold, Doctor von, 154
- Silk adulterated in Egypt, 120
- Silk paper, manufacture of, 118
- Sinbad the Sailor, 111
- Sion House, 25
- Smith, W. H., 5
- Smythe, Sir Thomas, Governor of the East India Company, 203
- Soga, the brothers, graves of, 303, 306
 swords of, 308
 their vendetta, 303-306
- Somerser, Lord Protector, his grave in the Tower, 21, 33, 34
- Soranzo, visits the Tower Armoury, 38
- Sosanoô, Shintô deity, 271
- Sôun, *see* Nagauji
- South Kensington Museum, Da Vinci's *Discord*, 56
 Salting Collection, 232
- Spalding, Augustus, his intercourse with Will Adams, 203, 204, 212
- Spanish traders in Japan, 196, 201, 208
- Spanish wars with England, 196
- Sparkes, John, 214
- Spenser, Edmund, 51
- St. Bernard on the woodland, 85

INDEX

- St. Edward the Confessor, 13,
 14
 St. Francis Xavier, *see* Xavier
 St. George, festival of, A.D. 1240,
 12
 St. Ignatius Loyola, 50
 St. Katherine, brethren of,
 compensated by Edward I.,
 10
 St. Louis, 221
 St. Paul's Cathedral, 20
 Steam-power, discovery of, 59,
 144
 Stephen, King, 9
 Storey, Mr., his story of Michael
 Angelo, 126
 Stow, his descriptions of the
 Tower, quoted, 7, 8, 11
 Stromboli, 57
 Sudeley, Thomas Seymour,
 Lord, his burial in the Tower,
 21
 Suez Canal, the, 145
 Suffolk, Duke of, father of
 Lady Jane Grey, 27
 Sugi-yama, Mount, 311
 Sukénari Soga, vendetta of, 303-
 306
 Sukétsuné, Kudô, Soga vendetta
 against, 303-306
 Sukéyasu, murder of, avenged,
 303-305
 Swiss inscription at Kamakura,
 261
 Sydenham, fountains of, 83, 85
 Syracuse, grottos at, 98

 TAÏJÔKWAN conferred on Ka-
 madari, 243
 Taiko Hidéyoshi, the, his perse-
 cution of the Jesuits, 160-
 163
 340
 Taiko Sama besieges Odawara,
 290, 291, 311
 Taira family at war with the
 Minamoto, 223
 Taira no Kiyomori, his hatred
 of Yoritomo, 288
 Takahashi, Mr., on the financial
 position of Japan, 181, 182
 Takauji, his plot against Prince
 Moriyoshi, 258-260
 relics of, 248
 Takénouchi Sukuné, shrine or,
 247
 Tamadaré no Kami, shrine of,
 247
 Tanka of the Manyôshiu, the,
 172
 Tarquin, his lilies, 89
 Tasso, Balzac on, 51
 Tatsu-no-Kuchi, 269
 Taurus range, the, 57
 Taylor, Sir John, his treatment
 of the Tower, 5, 29, 37
 Tengu of Japan, the, 279
 Tenshi, the, 221
 his toast, 179
 Ten Thousand Leaves, Collec-
 tion of the, 172, 173
 Terashima of Satsuma, 229
 Thames Embankment begun
 by Henry III., 11-13
 Thomas, the, 203
 Thomas the Martyr, a vision
 of, 12, 13
 Thompson, Sir Edward Maunde,
 edits the diary of Captain
 Cocks, 191, 214
 Thouars, Admiral Du Petit,
 171 note
 Thynne family, sale of heir-
 looms of, 21 note
 Tihama, 120
 Times, quoted, 230

INDEX

- Titian, 51
 Togo, Admiral, his fleet, 157
 Tokaido, the, 220
 Tokimasa, Hôjô, discovers
 Yoritomo in hiding,
 312
 treachery of, 248-250
 Tokimuné Soga, vendetta of,
 303-306
 Tokiyori, Hôjô, his opposition
 to Nichiren, 267, 268
 Tokugawa dynasty, the, 156,
 162, 211, 222, 224
 Tokugawa Keiki, Prince, abdi-
 cation of, 162
 Tôkyô, my garden at, 88
 under the Shôgunate, 225,
 231
 Will Adams honoured in,
 199, 200, 210
 see also Yedo
 Topiary art, the, 97
 Tora Gozen, aids the Soga
 brothers, 304
 becomes a nun, 306
 grave of, 303
 Tosa, Yôdo of, 170, 185, 225,
 229, 230
 Totsuka, visit to, 238-241
 Toyoiwamado, deity of Shintô,
 247
 Tower Green, 3
 scaffold on, 28, 29
 Tower Hill, 11
 Tower of London, Armoury,
 38-41
 Ballium, 36, 37
 Broad Arrow Tower, 36
 Chapel of St. Edward the
 Confessor, 14
 Chapel of St. John, 14
 Chapel of St. Peter ad
 Vincula, 8, 14, 17
 Tower of London, Chapel of
 St. Peter ad Vincula,
 its nameless graves,
 20-29
 its restoration, 29-35
 citizen guards at, 17
 Cradle Tower, 36
 early fascination of, 3
 famous escapes from, 9
 Gundulf, architect of, 6, 7
 Henry III.'s additions to,
 11-17
 Lantern Tower, 14, 16,
 18, 36, 37
 Lion's Tower, 17
 military stores at, 18, 19
 restoration of, 4, 5, 18
 Roman fortifications on its
 site, 5, 6, 36
 Salt Tower, 18, 36
 Sir C. Wren's additions to,
 17, 18
 St. Thomas's Tower, 8,
 13
 Wakefield Tower, 8, 17
 Water Gate, 13
 Well Tower, 36
 White Tower, 4, 6, 11,
 13, 14, 41
 its restoration, 18, 35-
 37
 Trafalgar, battle of, 178
 Treaties with Japan, 169, 283
 Troad, the, journey in, 80
 Troy, discovery of, 80
 fall of, 113
 Tsar, autocracy of a, 50
 Tsurugaoka, temple of, 246
 Tunbridge Wells, Japanese
 equivalent of, 294
 Turpin, Dick, 45
 Twickenham, Pope's grotto at,
 98

INDEX

- Tycoon, power of the, 283,
308, 309
- UDAIJIN, office of, 250
- Uga, the goddess, 271
- Ujimasa, Hôjô, his death as a
traitor, 290
- Ujinao Hôjô, 290
- Ujiyasu, annexes the Kwantô,
290
- U-Kitaru-Jima, 269
- Ulysses, 9
- Uraga, Commodore Perry at,
164
- Utility wedded to Art, 141
- Uwajima, Daté of, 230
- Uyeno, concert at, 179
- Uzielli, on Da Vinci's ancestry,
54
- VALENCIA, 120
- Vallombrosa, monks of, 56
- Vander Hay, Peter, 193
- Vander Veek, Hans, 193
- Vannucci, Pietro, fellow pupil
with Da Vinci, 55
- Vasari, Giorgio, on Leonardo da
Vinci, 55, 60
- Vauban, fortifications of, 83
- Velasquez, his patron, Philip
IV., 231
- Venice, 143
 Arsenal at, 40
 art of printing in, 106
 Colleone, 55, 56
- Venus di Medici, copy of at
Oatlands, 99
- Verrocchio, Andrea del, Leon-
ardo da Vinci a pupil of, 55,
56
- Versailles, fountains of, 83, 85
- Vespucci, Amerigo, 50
- Vestris, Madame, 40 note
- Victoria, Queen, her interest
in the Tower, 29
- Vierge aux rochers, la*, 74
- Vikings of the East, 157
- Vinci, Accatabrigha di Piero del
 Vacca di, 53
 Leonardo, *see* Da Vinci
 Ser Piero Antonio da,
 father of Leonardo, 53,
 54, 55
 castle of, 53
- Virgil, Balzac on, 51
 inspires fashion for grottos,
 98
- Vorsterman, Lucas, 24 note
- WAAGEN, Dr., 46
- Wagner, played in Japan,
179
- Wakamatsu, siege of, 186
- Waldenses, their knowledge of
the Bible, 112
- Walpole, Sir Robert, 92
- Walsh, Hall and Company, 128
- Walter, Mr., discovers Adams's
tomb, 190
- Wandering Jew, the, 218
- War Office, its responsibility
for the Tower, 29 note, 40
- Wars of the Roses, the, 223
- Water-clock, 111
- Wattenbach on paper, 115
- Wavemen of Japan, the, *see*
Rônin
- Weever, quoted, 19
- Westminster Abbey, compared
with the Tower Chapel, 20
- Westminster Hall, William
Rufus's expenditure on, 8
- Westminster Palace, Armoury
at, 38
- Weymouth, Louisa, Vis-
countess, 21 note

INDEX

- Weymouth, Thomas Thynne, 2nd Viscount, 21 note
- Wiesner, Professor, his discoveries concerning paper, 105, 114, 115, 120
- William the Conqueror, 145
builds the Tower of London, 6, 37
his supposed armour in the Tower, 39, 40
- William Rufus, his additions to the Tower, 8
- Williams, Wells, on Chinese memory, 113
The Middle Kingdom, quoted, 113
- Willis, Dr., his school for surgery at Yedo, 178, 296
- Windsor Castle, 16
Da Vinci MSS. in library of, 57, 67
- Wolf, Lucien, presides at the Authors' Club, 217
- Wolfytt, 3
- Wolsey, Cardinal, 50
- Worcester, Marquis of, first utilises steam, 144
- Wren, Sir Christopher, his additions to the Tower, 17, 18
- XAVIER, St. Francis, 50
his missionary labours in Japan, 158, 159, 164
- Xit the dwarf, 3
- YAMATO, feudalism of, 220
Damashi, the spirit of old Japan, 130, 227
its opposition to Western influence, 171, 172
modern outlet for, 185
- Yashikis, Japanese, 179
- Yatsumato, ghosts on the moor of, 281
- Yedo, *see also* Tōkyō, 165, 238
Bay of, 129
burial-ground of Shōguns at, 257
Castle at, 179, 202
European civilisation in, 179
merchants of, 254, 263, 264
plain of, rainy season in, 237
under the Shōgunate, 225, 231, 291
Western architecture in, 244
Will Adams at, 198, 204, 205
Willis medical school at, 296
- Yemen, 120
- Yézo, Island of, 253
- Yōdo, Prince of Tosa, 170, 225, 230
- Yokohama, 226
dialect of, 255, 285
European doctors of, 302
port of, 238, 240, 261
restrictions on foreigners in, 283
- Yokosuka, 164
arsenal of, 184, 213
- Yōnin, the Japanese, 229
- Yoriiyé, Shōgun, murder of, 248-250
- Yoritomo, Minamoto no, hides on Mount Ishibashi, 311-313
his death and its portents, 219, 280, 281
his enmity against his brother, 253

INDEX

- Yoritomo**, his enmity against
 Taira no Kiyomori, 288
 his family god, 265
 his grave, 257
 his wife, 263
 relics of, 248
 Shōgunate of, 246-248,
 280
 Soga vendetta against, 303-
 306
 statue of Buddha erected
 in memory of, 263, 264
Yoritsuné, relics of, 248
York, Duke of, his seat at Oat-
 lands, 98, 99
Yoshimasa, Shōgun Ashikaga,
 289
 at Kyoto, 233
Yoshitoki, uncle of Sanétomo,
 249-252
Yoshitsuné, brother of Yorito-
 mo, 253
 ghost of, 281
 murder of, 280
Yui in Sagami, 242, 246
Yukiaigawa, story of the river,
 267
Yukiiyé, ghost of, 281
Yumoto, visit to, 311, 313
Yusuf, son of Amru, 116
Yuten, priest at Fukazawa, 264

ZEN sect, Tokiyori, priest of the,
 267
Zeus on Mount Ida, 82
Zijâd, son of Salih, 117