

FIFTY YEARS OF NEW JAPAN

VOLUME I

# FIFTY YEARS OF NEW JAPAN

(KAIKOKU GOJŪNEN SHI)

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ENGLISH VERSION  
EDITED BY  
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VOLUME I

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DEDICATED  
BY SPECIAL PERMISSION  
TO  
HIS MAJESTY  
KING EDWARD THE SEVENTH  
BY  
COUNT ŌKUMA

## PREFACE

THE objects of this work are twofold. First, to preserve an authoritative account of the development of the Empire of Japan during the fifty years that have elapsed since the ratification of its first treaties with the outside world. Secondly, to make the present condition of the country more widely known and understood, both at home and abroad.

To this end the foremost contemporary authorities of the rejuvenated nation have contributed, each having written upon that department of which he has exceptional knowledge and experience. It is consequently a living history written by living men.

For a complete understanding of the matter, it has been in almost every instance necessary to trace the history of the past, and therefore, in so far as the work describes the characteristics of the people of Japan and the unfolding of their national destinies, this narrative of New Japan is also a concise and accurate *résumé* of the five-and-twenty centuries that our nation has existed.

The work was published last year in Japan as a record of the fifty years subsequent to the opening of our country to foreign intercourse, namely from 1854 to 1904, and therefore most of the essays only brought their facts up to the time of the Russo-Japanese War. In the present English edition, however, the information is carried as near to date as public statistics enable it.

It is a most distinguished honour for me that His Britannic Majesty, King Edward the Seventh, Emperor of India, and our great Ally, whose influence with Japan has been most widespread and salutary, should have granted me permission to dedicate this humble compilation to His Majesty's illustrious name.

My profound thanks are due to Count Komura, Count Hirokichi Mutsu, Baron S. Matsuo, Baron K. Takahashi,

Mr. Usaburo Yanagiya, Mr. Eigo Fukai, and Captain F. Brinkley, to whose assiduity and help this edition owes much. I am also under especial obligations to Mr. Marcus B. Huish, through whose valuable suggestions and laborious and painstaking editorship this book is enabled to see the light in its present form.

SHIGÉNOBU ŌKUMA.

Tōkyō,  
*July* 1909.

# NOTE

THIS monumental work, which it has been my privilege to carry through the English press, presents certain unusual features which may probably strike the reader, and therefore call for some words of explanation.

For instance, its fifty-six chapters have been contributed by almost as many authorities, each, presumably, writing independently of the other, upon subjects which in many cases have a common foundation. This has resulted in overlapping in numerous instances, which, whilst it has made each subject self-contained, has led to some repetition. I have endeavoured to avoid this wherever possible, but much remains that could not be deleted without breaking the thread of continuity.

The translation, which was originally made in Japan (in itself a remarkable feat, and one which, I believe, could have been accomplished by but one or two Englishmen), has been the work of many hands, and has been accomplished with an aptitude which in some instances is extraordinary. But the varied renderings of the translators has made the editing of the text an unusually difficult task, as those who are acquainted with the various ways of Anglicizing Japanese words and phrases, and their orthography, will know. The reader will therefore, I am sure, deal leniently with any discrepancies or deficiencies in this respect.

MARCUS B. HUIH.

COOMBE WOOD,  
DITCHLING, SUSSEX,  
*October* 1909.