

Fine Japanese Chemists

Probably no eastern nation is more strongly represented than are the Japanese in the English annals of science, and more particularly in the literature of chemistry. They possess an undoubtedly strong faculty for original research and they combine this faculty with a sharp-sightedness as to the possibilities of practical application of the fruits of research. The Japanese chemist, in fact, unites the power of originality of the English chemist and the practical intuition of the German. At the University of Tokio practical study is very much favored and splendid facilities for work are provided in the laboratories and workshops. There are several distinguished Japanese chemists who are fellows of the English Chemical society and who were elected to the fellowship on account of the excellence of their contributions to original science.

The Japanese chemists discuss with a freedom which astonishes the western chemist all the modern abstruse theories bearing upon the atomic theory, the constitution of matter, the theory of dissociation, and so forth. They write powerful dissertations on the views advanced by such esteemed thinkers as Ostwald Arrhenius, Van't Hoff, Kelvin, Thomson, Lodge, Crookes, Ramsey and others, and have offered valuable criticisms on the methods of systematizing and compiling atomic weights adopted by western chemists.

Chemistry is a powerful weapon in war, and there can be little doubt that among other things which have so far contributed to Japanese successes is a sound knowledge of explosives, their composition, action, and behavior under a variety of conditions. When there is no longer any need for the implements of battle, and may that soon be, we may be pretty sure that the same subtle insight which is so marked a feature of the Japanese intellect will turn with equal success to the application of science to peaceful pursuits.—London Lancet.

Island Governed By Women

This is not ancient history, neither a fiction culled from a woman's periodical, but a fact. In our day there exists an island, it is true of modest dimensions, at present inhabited by 400 people, although at one time it contained 5,000—where women govern and where men are in truth their humble servants. This island has the name of Tiburon, and is situated in the gulf of California, being inhabited by the Seris Indians, who live isolated because of pride and also because of religious rites which forbid intermarriage with foreigners, even though these be the Indians of the mainland. The bad climate of the island compels the people to endure long periods of hunger and thirst, a fact which accounts for their transports when they catch game. If this be a pelican, a wild animal, etc., the Indians throw themselves upon it, tearing their prey with teeth and nails, and regaling themselves with the blood and raw flesh. The Seris are all fine-looking men, splendidly built, and they do not have in their number any person who is maimed, weak or sickly, for the reason that all children who are born sick or weak are pitilessly put to death.

The curious fact to be noticed, however, is that these vigorous men, who

have resisted the attacks first of the Spaniard and then of the Mexicans, are ruled by their wives. In their huts, formed of the trunks of trees, the mother of the family exercises an absolute power, the husband waiting in attendance at the door and being the slave of the household. The husband is absolutely forbidden to interfere with or to chastise his children. The government of the island is exercised by a council of matrons invested with a discretionary power, and although the Seris have a nominal chief this poor devil has not the right to say a word, not even in his own house.—Public Opinion.

The Railroad Man's Watch

"The adjustment of railroad men's watches is a science all by itself," said

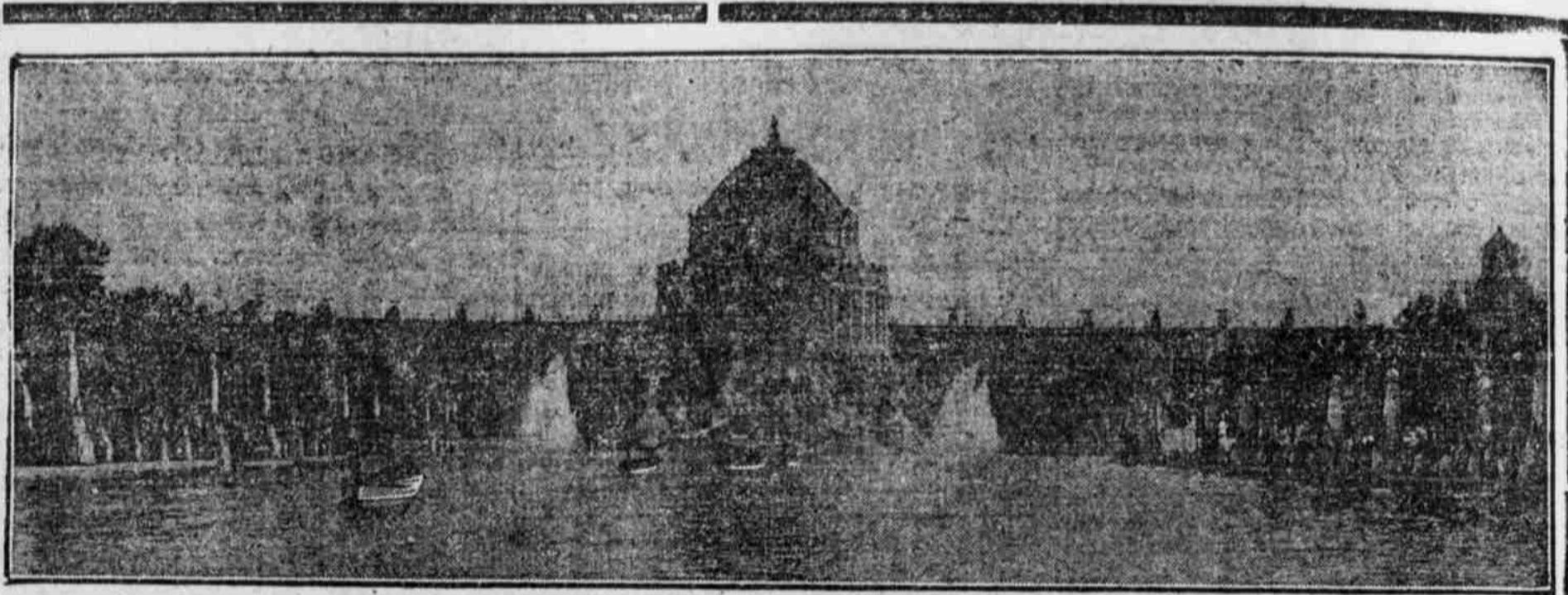
J. S. Coy of Chicago last night. "The variation of only thirty seconds a week is allowed in the watches, which have to be adjusted to temperature, isochronism and five positions.

"The watches must run equally well with either face or back up, or with the '12,' '9' or '3' at the top. The standard watch has seventeen jewels, and is a model of the watchmaker's craft. In the early days of railroading five minutes were allowed for the variation of watches. If a trainman were ordered to wait at a certain station until 10:30 o'clock to meet another train, he would wait until 10:35. The time has now been reduced to such a fine division that the engineers steam out of the station at the moment called for by their orders. Between the original allowance of five minutes and the present system there

was only one step, which was three minutes.

"The strict rules which are observed in regard to the time pieces of railroad men were originated from a disastrous wreck that occurred in the east a number of years ago—I should not like to say on what road. When the fact became known that the accident was due to the variation of watches almost every road in the country began to make stricter requirements, and now all good railroads look after the watches of their men with the same care that they attend to rolling stock and motive power."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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