The makers and heroes of New Japan.

The origin and development of "The New Japan" continues to be a fascinating subject of inquiry. What were the forces and what the combinations that produced the "youngest child of the world's old age"? The historian of both events and tendencies, who inquires into the inner workings of mind as well as of things outward, would wish to know what preparatory thinking was done by the Japanese themselves. At what were their men of vision and foresight active a century or two before Townsend Harris? The writer who looks at the problem from the European side will tell you much about British and other naval operations. Probably the American missionaries who, as early as 1859, began to train the modern intellect of Japan and to make it a seed-bed for thought brought from the West, could tell most of all. Yet not the least important side is that seen from the view-point of the foreign servant of the Japanese government, who a generation ago taught material civilization and matters of engineering interest to eager pupils in Japan. Such an author, competent and clear-headed, although not a past-master in literary composition, is Mr. J. Morris, who spent some years of his early manhood in helping the Japanese to learn the arts and sciences by which they afterwards were able to humble Russia. In the twenty-two biographies, each accompanied by a full-page reproduction of a photographic portrait, that compose his volume entitled "The Makers of Japan" (McClurg), he sets out to show who these makers

really were. He tells us of Keiki, the still-living last of the shoguns, and of the three men who, seeing the American treaty ships coming when these were yet below the horizon, wanted their country to welcome them, but who, in the sixties, met what may be called the death of martyrs. Then he pictures the two bright lads who, exchanging the incendiary's torch and the assassin's sword for the ways of peace and law, stole away to Europe and came back to be the unquailing champions of civilization, now known as the Marquis Ito and Count Inouye. The two Kioto court nobles who formed the link between the throne and the people, Iwakura and Sanjo, are next set before us. After that follow the great statesmen, soldiers, and creators of New Japan, each with a chapter. If Mr. Morris had the literary skill, he would have made a book of value and interest far beyond the writings of Lafcadio Hearn, who is popularly supposed to be "an inspired exponent of Japanese esoterics," but who has built not a few theorems out of materials supplied by his own enthusiastic admiration. Basing his narrative on facts, Mr. Morris has made a book probably as readable as his novel of 1895, "What Will Japan Do?" He has furnished a handbook of biographical information immensely superior to Mr. Lanman's "Leading Men of Japan." A good index furnishes the key to open the treasures here presented with a richness that reminds one of Ali Baba's cave. It is just the book needed, and often called for in vain, at many libraries.
