



LADY IN A CAR.

480 [VII]
THE WORLD
IN MINIATURE;
EDITED BY
FREDERIC SHOBERL.

Japan,

CONTAINING

ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE

CHARACTER, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, RELIGION,
DRESS, AMUSEMENTS, COMMERCE,
AGRICULTURE, &c.

OF THE
PEOPLE OF THAT EMPIRE.

WITH

Twenty Coloured Engravings.

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“The proper study of mankind is man.”
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PREFACE.

IN presenting to the public this portion of his labours, the Editor might aptly refer the reader to the prefatory remarks to the volumes which treat of the people of China, as they would be almost equally applicable to the Japanese nation. Closely resembling their continental neighbours in person, manners, and religion, oppressed by as severe, if not a still more cruel

despotism than they; cut off with even greater caution by their government from the intercourse with foreigners; the Japanese, however, with all their vices, display an energy of character and estimable qualities, not to be found in the other debased and effeminate Asiatics. This difference is owing, in a great measure, to their insular situation; and the mountainous nature of their country may probably have contributed its share towards their moral superiority. Possessing within themselves the elements of a great and powerful nation, we may fairly presume that at

some future period, these high-spirited islanders will set limits to the arbitrary power of their rulers, and by their native energy and talents, justify the appellation of *the English of Asia*, given to them by Charlevoix.

For the first authentic account of Japan, Europe was indebted to the great work of Kämpfer, who visited the country towards the conclusion of the seventeenth century, and to the information furnished by him little of importance was added by Thunberg and Charlevoix, who wrote in the latter half of the eighteenth. The same may be said of the publi-

cations of Langsdorff and Krusenstern, who, in 1805, made an unsuccessful attempt to introduce a Russian embassy into Japan. The peculiar situation of Captain Golownin, though it prevented his acquiring much knowledge of the country, yet enabled him to study the manners and character of the people. This officer, who was sent by the Russian government, in 1811, to make a survey of the southern Kuriles, having gone on shore in one of the Japanese islands with six of his crew, was detained on account of hostilities committed some time before, by a vessel

belonging to the Russian American Company ; and it was not till after a confinement of upwards of two years, that he and his companions were liberated on the remonstrance of his government. The *Narrative of his Captivity*, which he published on his return to Europe, and which, from the nature of his adventures, combines with the touching tale of reality a high degree of romantic interest, and his *Recollections of Japan*, contain valuable materials couched in a tone of greater impartiality than might have been expected from

the circumstances of the writer.* Of these, as may naturally be supposed, the Editor has not omitted to avail himself in the compilation of the present volume. To these modern authorities, from which he has borrowed, he has also to add a selection from the papers of the late M.

* Both these works have appeared in English, and to the latter the ingenious Editor has prefixed an interesting review of the attempts made by foreigners, and especially our own countrymen, to open a commercial intercourse with Japan. The many pertinent remarks with which it is interspersed, seem to deserve the serious notice of the merchant and statesman.

Titsingh, formerly chief agent to the Dutch East India Company at Nangasaki,* who, during a residence of fourteen years in the country, possessed, by means of his connections, greater facilities for obtaining accurate information relative to the Japanese empire, than had ever been enjoyed by any European.

* Published with the title of *Illustrations of Japan*, &c. with numerous coloured plates, from Japanese original designs. Royal 4to. Ackermann.

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JAPAN

In Miniature.

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TRADITION RELATIVE TO THEIR ORIGIN
AND THE INTRODUCTION OF THE ARTS
AND SCIENCES—POPULATION—CHECKS
TO POPULATION: INFANTICIDE, SUI-
CIDE, EARTHQUAKES.

The empire of Japan consists of several large islands surrounded by hundreds of smaller, which occupy altogether upwards of sixteen degrees of latitude and eighteen of longitude. Nippon, the principal of these islands, is nearly eight hundred miles in length,