Japanese "Koji."

IN the current number of *NATURE* (p. 469) is a note upon the preparation of Japanese *kōji*, taken from the American Consular Reports.

IN *NATURE*, vol. xxiv. p. 468, will be found a report of a paper read before the British Association on this subject, supplemented in the following number (p. 509) by a letter from the author giving more details. The whole subject was exhaustively treated in a paper on "The Diastase of Koji," read before the Royal Society in 1881, and also in a memoir on "*Sake-brewing*," published by the University of Tokio in the same year. Further, an abstract of the latter appeared in the *Chemical News*, November 11, 1881, p. 230.

I shall feel obliged if you will insert this letter, as most people, on reading the note in *NATURE*, would be led to think that Prof. Georgeson had made observations which were previously unknown. This is not the case.

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44 Loudoun Square, Cardiff,
March 18.

THE TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE OF JANUARY 1.

BY the kindness of Mr. Todd we are enabled to give a drawing summarizing in a general way the phenomena observed during the last total eclipse. A comparison of this with the records at the two preceding sun-spot minima indicates very clearly that we have now very definite information concerning the corona of the sun as observed at the minimum period of sun-spots.

Everything written relating to the form of the corona in 1878 is now strengthened by still another critical observation at the succeeding minimum. It remains to be seen whether the same marked absence of bright lines in the coronal spectrum has been noted.

Here is an extract from what I wrote in 1878:—

"The utter disappearance of the large bright red corona of former years in favour of a smaller and white one in this year of minimum, struck everybody. Indeed it is a remarkable thing that after all our past study of eclipses, this last one should have exhibited phenomena the least anticipated. It isolates the matter that gives us a continuous spectrum from the other known gaseous constituents. The present eclipse has accomplished if nothing else, the excellent result of intensifying our knowledge concerning the running down of the solar energy. With the reduction of the number of spots or prominences for the last four years, the terrestrial magnetism has been less energetic than it has been for the preceding forty years, while at both ends of this period we have had famines in India and China.

"As the sun is the great prime mover of earth, and as every cloud, every air current depends upon it, its present quiet condition is worthy of the most minute study.

"The absence of lines from the corona spectrum shows a great reduction in the temperature of the sun, and such a marked change in the sun should produce a corresponding change on the earth, so that the associated

FIG. 1.—The equatorial extension and Polar tracery observed at the minimum of 1867.

FIG. 2.—Tracing of the results obtained by the cameras in 1878, showing inner portion of equatorial extension, and how the surfaces of it cut the concentric atmosphere in lat. 35° N. and S., or thereabouts.

terrestrial phenomena should be carefully observed. Hence I regard this eclipse as the most important that has been observed for many years, as it throws much-