JOTTINGS FROM JAPAN

A PATH IN THE WOODS

JOTTINGS

FROM

JAPAN

BY

SUSAN BALLARD

ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE.

In response to the wish of friends these jottings have been collected and are now issued in book form. My thanks are due to the Editors of *Dawn of Day* and *Life and Work* for permission given to use what has appeared in their pages; also to a Japanese photographer for the portrait of the aged Mission worker facing page 68; the remaining illustrations are from photographs taken by myself.

We are told that "one touch of nature makes the world akin". It is my hope that readers may find here some touch of nature which will help them to realise the kinship of the human race.

SUSAN BALLARD.

November, 1909.

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CHRISTIAN KINDNESS.

ONE day my servant showed in a young man who, she said, was anxious to see me. Instead of making the customary Japanese bow, he advanced with stretched out hand, saying, "How do you do?"

By this I knew that he must have been in England, and I replied in English, but it was soon evident that his knowledge of English was limited to that one sentence.

"Please to excuse my coming to see you," he said in Japanese. "You do not know me, though we have met once before. Two years ago, when you were visiting your native country of England, you gave an address to a large party of Japanese bluejackets who had been invited to tea at an English Soldiers' Home. I was one of those sailors. After you spoke, some of us asked where you lived when in Japan, and you wrote down your Tokio number on some pieces of paper and distributed them among us, and I got one of them. I have kept it ever since. This is the first time that I have had leave from my ship, and as I have come to stay with some relations living near you, I thought you would allow me to call and see you."

I told him how glad I was to see him, and we talked about his experiences in England.

"We Japanese sailors often lost our way in the streets," he said, "but we were never in the least anxious. The English people are very kind; there was always some man or boy who would guide us right back to our ship. Now I wish to ask a favour of you."

And so saying he produced his *furushiki.*

A *furushiki* is like a large handkerchief, and it is quite a feature of Japanese life. If you buy something in an English shop it is given to you wrapped in paper; but in a Japanese shop the shopman will ask for your *furushiki* and the purchase is wrapped in it. You may carry your Prayer-book and hymn book to church wrapped in a silk *furushiki* or you may carry vegetables from market in a cotton one; in fact, anything you carry at all in Japan ought to be wrapped in a *furushiki*, so I was not surprised when the young sailor produced a gaily coloured little bundle.

Out of it he took a letter written in English which he requested me to read, saying that the favour he wished to ask was that I would write an answer to this letter for him. The letter was evidently written by a working-man; it expressed great interest in the young sailor, and earnestly urged him to become a follower of our Saviour.

"How did this man come to write to you?" I asked. "Where did you know him?"

"When we arrived at Chatham," he said, "a lot of

us went on shore. We had no house to go to, for we knew no one. As we were lounging along in the dockyard a man came up to me and laid his hand on my arm and said, 'Come along with me'. He took me to his home; there I saw his wife and his sister-in-law and his two children. I had supper with them; they were all very happy and we laughed a great deal. I had read in books of what is called a Christian home, but I now saw it. I will never forget it."

"How did you talk to each other?" I asked. "Did the man know any Japanese?"

"Oh, no, not a word, but we got on all right.". [They spoke the language of *kindness*, which is understood by all.] "I went a second time, and when I came away the man wrote me this letter. I wish very much to answer it; please to write down the English for me."

We set to work at the answer, but I found that *my* written answer was not to be sent; the young sailor said that he had practised writing the English a, b, c, and he thought that if he had my letter before him as a copy he could write it out himself; the envelope, however, he entrusted to me. We had some talk about Christianity, and the next day being Sunday he came to church, but that same evening he had to rejoin his ship. I never saw him again, but I like to think of that dockyard workman who showed to a stranger from a far land the happiness of a Christian home, and I think that to him it will be said, "A stranger and ye took Me in".

IN A JAPANESE VILLAGE.

I.

THERE is a village in Japan which I have been in the habit of visiting monthly for some years. It is a place that I always enjoy going to, for one gets on to a more intimate footing with the people there than one can do in the towns. When I came this month it was for the purpose of attending the funeral of the wife of the chief man of the village.

There are few things more mysterious than the Providence which takes away the mother of a family. Here was a Christian woman called upon to leave her eight children amid the temptations of a heathen country.

At the funeral one saw the respect in which this Christian household is held. About three hundred people were present. This included women and children, for in Japan it is the custom for them to go to the grave.

The coffin was carried from the house to the Mission-room, and there a sermon, preached by one of the Japanese clergy, was attentively listened to both by Christians and non-believers. After singing the

Japanese translation of "Peace, perfect peace," we walked to the grave. The procession consisted of first a large plain white wooden cross, carried by a boy; then came the clergy in their white surplices; then men carrying two large trees about twelve feet high, into which were stuck branches of pink cherry blossom; these were followed by men bearing the coffin, which was covered with a purple silk pall, this the gift of her husband and to be kept as a memorial of her. Behind the coffin came her children, the youngest of four carried Japanese fashion on a servant's back; after them came the Christian women of the congregation, followed by all the other friends.

The grave was in the cemetery attached to a Buddhist temple, for there are only one or two places in Japan where Christians have a burial-ground of their own. The Buddhist priest stood, fan in hand, at the door of the temple and watched us as we passed, but did not come forward.

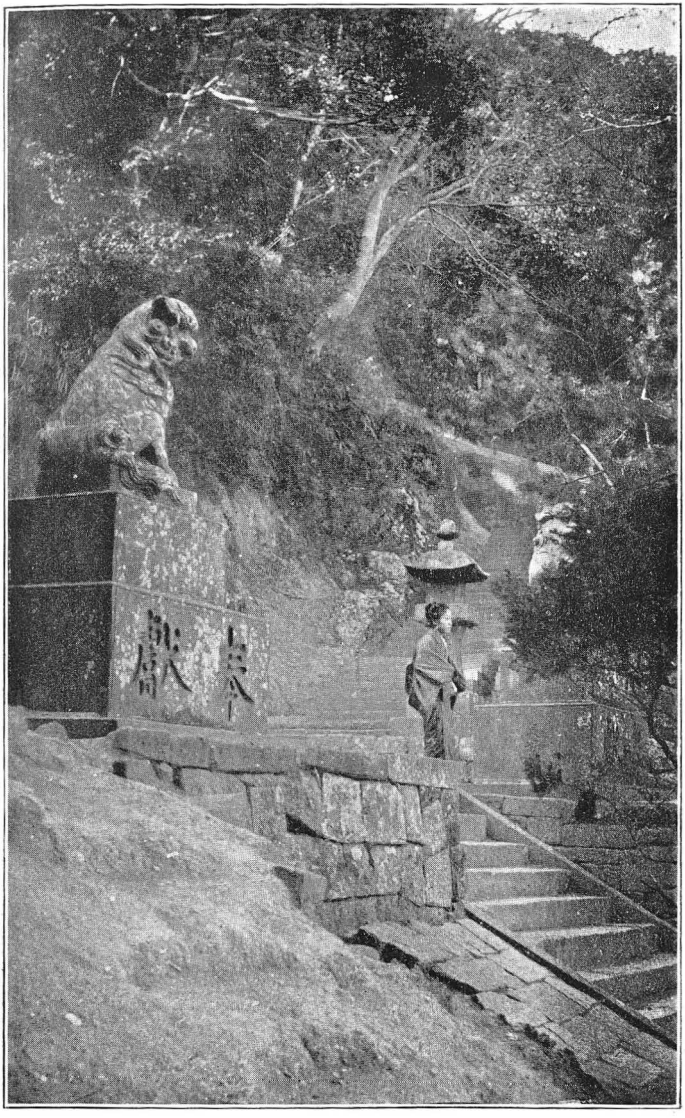
At the grave we sang, "There is a land of pure delight".

There is one thing in which we might well follow the example of the Japanese: they never put their dead into great leaden coffins with ornamented handles as we do. For the highest princes as well as the simplest peasant, a coffin of plain white, unpainted wood is used. The wood may be of a very fine texture and carefully planed, but there is nothing more than the fresh sweet wood, and surely this is better than the elaborate precautions we take against the purify-

ing laws of nature, by which all that is unlovely is absorbed back into the mother earth.

In Japan all points of social etiquette are just the contrary to whatever our custom is. Could you see a funeral procession you would be surprised at the gaudy dresses of the mourners, for there is no sign of mourning worn in Japan, except that at a grand funeral the nearer relations wear *white silk*, whereas at a wedding, black Chinese crêpe is the correct thing for both bride and guests.

The woman whom we have laid to rest showed an example of a happy and consistent Christian life, which influenced many another woman in the village, and among the band of mourners were a large number of people who had been led to Christ by what they had heard in her house. There is nothing so important as the character of the first few Christians in a place. A "living epistle" is a much more potent influence than any eloquent sermon or logical argument as to the existence of God; indeed, I may say that, during an experience of some years, I have never met a woman who has been convinced of the truth of Christianity by anything that she has *heard* in an address. Rhetoric and logic do very little for the furtherance of the Gospel, and any one who is kept back from being a missionary by the feeling that they lack "golden-mouthed eloquence" with which to set forth the Gospel truths is making a great mistake. It is *patience* that is the beginning and end of a missionary's needs; patience for teaching, patience for



GOING UP TO A SHRINE

bearing with the unenlightened minds that do not seem to grasp truths set forth in the simplest language; eloquence does not find a place in work among women, and I doubt whether it has done much towards the conversion of men, whereas the influence of the living epistle is untold. That and the desire for comfort in times of trouble are the two great factors that make for Christianity. "What made *you* first wish to hear about God?" I once asked. "I had such a lot of bundles in the railway carriage, and my friend helped me out with them all so very kindly, that I thought I would like to hear from her about the Teaching that she studies," was the woman's answer. "And what influenced *you?*" I said to another. "Oh, as for *me*, I went to the catechist's house without knowing anything about the Teaching; but I was in great trouble, and was just looking for something that would strengthen my heart." "And what helped you?" I asked of one of the prettiest little Japanese women I ever met. This was her reply:—

"There was a young man who lived in a distant part of Japan called Echigo. He went to Tokio to study, and there he became a Christian, but he fell ill of consumption, and he had to set out to go back to his own home. It was before the railway came up the mountain pass, and, as he was ill, he journeyed very slowly and his money got all spent. And when he came to a little town (it was the place where we were living) he went about saying, 'Is there perhaps a Christian in this place?' And the people said, 'Yes,

there are Christians,' and they took him to a man whose house was near ours. This man called the other Christians, and when they saw that the young man was really ill, they took a room for him and got a nurse, and he died there. My husband knew these people, and he saw all that they did, and he used to say to me, 'The Christian teaching has power. Watch the conduct of those Christians. See how they have taken care of the young man! See how politely they have buried him! Yes, some day we too will study the Way; it has power.' But soon after that my husband and I left that place, and for a long time we had no opportunity for such study; but still he often said, 'Some day we will study the Way; it has power,' and at last we received baptism."

I have often passed the town she spoke of; one reaches it after the train has slowly puffed up a splendid rocky pass; twenty-six tunnels take one in and out among the mountains, and between the tunnels one has glimpses of wooded slopes and rushing rivers, and then one comes out at the top on a plain where this town is situated. I had often thought what a dull little place it was, but now it is beautified for me by the recollection of that little band of Christians to whom surely it will be said, "A traveller, and ye took me in".

And so it goes on, always an *unconscious* sowing of the seed. The wind bloweth whither it listeth, and we see the thistledown floating about, but who can tell where it will drift to earth and bring forth green leaves

in the spring-time? and it is our smallest actions that sometimes float the farthest, bring forth fruit in a spot of which we had never thought.

> Little, nameless, unremembered acts
> Of kindness and of love

are, as the poet tells us, the "best portion of a good man's life".

I notice that the first effect of a growing belief is not what is called a "conviction of sin". I believe that those who lay a great stress on this, as the first step in religion, make a mistake when working among people who are hearing for the first time that there *is* a God, and that He has given laws the transgression of which is sin. The pictures in the Roman catacombs show us that the early converts to Christianity clung to the joyful side of their religion; it was not the Cross, but the Good Shepherd that they loved to represent, and I have found that the first feeling among my Christians here is a certain cheerful gratitude; it is only as their spiritual life deepens, and as they get higher ideas of God's purity, that the sense of sin and their own unworthiness comes before them.

The reasons that they give for believing that they are improving under the "Teaching" are sometimes quaint, but generally practical. "I don't understand it fully yet, and I can't find my places in the New Testament very well, but I know that what I hear is changing my heart," said a woman.

"How is it changing your heart?" I asked.

"Well, my husband used to say to me, 'You are a

very good woman; you don't go about gossiping with the neighbours, nor buying delicacies to eat; but there is one bad thing about you, and that is that you are lazy in the mornings, you don't like getting up.' Now that was quite true. I did not like getting up, and after I was up I would sit shivering and saying how cold it was. But now that I am becoming a Christian it is quite different. When I wake in the morning I say to myself, 'Well, to be sure, I ought to be thankful to God that my body is strong and well, and that I can get up at all is a matter to be grateful for,' and so I jump up and don't feel at all cold, and I know that a religion that can change me like that must be entering my heart."

I had another practical proof of the power of the Teaching offered me a few days ago in Tokio by a sweet-faced, beautifully dressed little lady. We sat talking in a room that was furnished with handsome English furniture, and in which there was electric light and every modern invention for comfort. But the mistress of all this grandeur was not free to follow her own wishes; her every movement was watched by a large number of relations and family retainers, who strongly opposed her becoming a Christian. All she could do, she said, was to read the Bible privately, "and," she added, "I know by the state of my heart that the Teaching is entering it".

"How is it changed?" I asked.

"Well," she said, "formerly, whenever there was an earthquake, I used to rush wildly out of the house;

now, when there is an earthquake, I just sit quite still and remember that *God is.*"

II.

Japan looks at its very best in the month of April. It is then that the exquisite little pink tassels of the cherry-blossom shake themselves out, and the dingy streets are transformed, for even in big cities one finds cherry-trees, and their spring dress is a pleasant reminder that the winter is over.

As I drive to my village, along a road that winds by the river-side, the country I pass through is a mass of brilliant yellow and lush green. The green is the young wheat, for the careful Japanese farmer takes a crop of wheat off his fields before he plants out his rice. These fields never lie fallow one moment; there is a perpetual planting and weeding and reaping and planting afresh going on the whole year round. One of the things that most struck a Japanese lady who accompanied me to England was the *lonely* aspect of the English country. We sat looking over some large pasture fields, and there was not a person in sight.

"The people in my country would not believe it if I told them," she said; "what do the farmers here *do?*"

I too had been thinking what a strange contrast it was to Japan, where in every direction one sees men and women toiling away in their small fields.

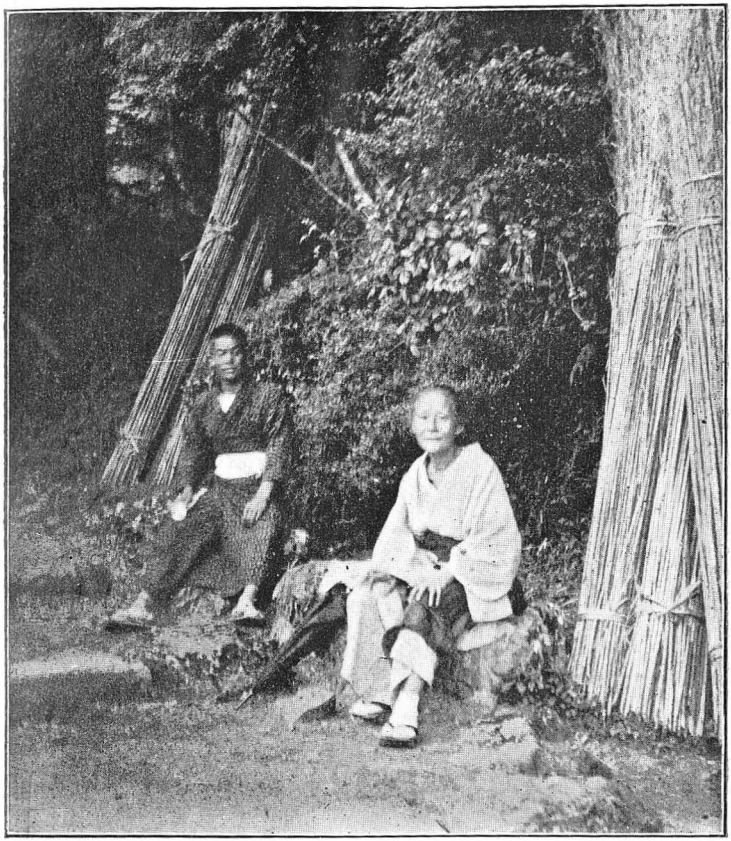
Pasture land is rare in Japan, for unfortunately there are few places where good grass can be grown.

I have known people make the greatest efforts to have a grass lawn, and all in vain. One of the sights one most enjoys on returning to England is that of a deep grass meadow with its daisies and buttercups.

In the neighbourhood of my village there is so much of the rapeseed that the country looks as if spread with a cloth of gold, for the flower is like the mustard flower. Looking across the green and yellow fields to Fuji in the distance, one sees that it is still very white and glistening, though the snow has completely melted off the lower mountains. The rainy season has not yet set in, the air is bright and pleasant, and you do not wonder that the Japanese all seem seized with a desire to go holiday-making. It is the very worst time for travelling, for just when you think that the train is so full that it will not hold another being, it will draw up at a station where a seething mass of people have all to be packed in somehow. The Japanese are the most patient travellers I ever knew; they seem to think it quite natural and right that if one person should get a seat another person should sit on his knees!

Buddhism does much to encourage the Japanese love of travelling, for devotion is generally displayed in the form of pilgrimages, and these pilgrimages are such a feature in the lives of the Japanese peasantry, that I cannot speak of village life without saying something of this chief form of excitement.

Sometimes the pilgrimage is to a sacred mountain, of which there are many in Japan; on such occasions



SETTING OUT ON A PILGRIMAGE

the pilgrims are all robed in white, and many such a party have I met as I drive to my village.

Sometimes the pilgrimage is to a Buddhist temple. I happened to be living close to the famous temple of Zenkoji at Nagano at the time of a festival which only takes place once in seven years. Zenkoji is so famous that the old and ignorant among the Japanese peasants firmly believe that you won't find a place in "gokuraku" (paradise) if you have not paid a visit to Zenkoji, and the result is that thousands of old and even tottering men and women come from the most distant parts of Japan to worship there.

What quaint sights I did see during the festival! It seemed as if mediæval Japan had come back to walk about the streets and mix with nineteenth century innovations. The Zenkoji temple has the peculiarity of belonging both to nuns and priests, and a few years ago there was a dreadful squabble between them as to the division of the money, services, etc. They went to law on the subject, and it was decided that the nuns were to say the early prayers and the priests those later in the day. The head of all the Buddhist nuns, a relation of the Emperor, came to be present on the occasion of the festival. I met her one day returning from the temple. She was such a wizened old dame, it was as if one had taken a mummy from its case in the Cairo museum and, dressing it in brocades, had put it to ride in a jinricksha. I felt like apostrophising her in the words of the poet,

And hast thou walked about? How strange a story!

In front of her jinricksha walked a young nun, clad in bright green silk. For a young nun to walk abroad with an uncovered head, also in green silk, and with a fan in her hand, is distinctly incongruous to our minds, but, perhaps more incongruous still, was the fact that this old lady went next day to a meeting of the Red Cross Society.

A Buddhist nun with the badge of a Red Cross!

The Buddhists are making desperate efforts to keep all knowledge of the way of the Cross out of the Red Cross Society. I have sat in the little waiting-room at the door of the Red Cross Hospital, giving a Scripture lesson to a few Christian nurses under constant interruptions, because I knew that it was no use applying for the use of a room. "It can't be done, it will make the Buddhist priests so angry," is the reply to such a request, and when you ask why the Buddhist priests should have any voice in the matter, you are told that the rich Buddhist temples contributed largely to the building of the hospital.

The Japanese peasants, when they get themselves up for the business of a pilgrimage, are the quaintest figures imaginable. The women generally tuck up their petticoats well above their knees, either leaving the legs bare, or else swathing them in white bandages, which form a kind of leggings. Their hair is done in the usual elaborate Japanese style, and generally an artificial flower is stuck in at the top. It does look so comic to see the wizened face of an old woman with a large red rose bob-bobbing over it. And this floral decora-

tion is not confined to the women; when you meet a party of pilgrims you often see the old men also with a flower stuck coquettishly above the ear. I found out the reason of this rather inappropriate ornamentation when I was at Nagano. It appears that many of the poor old dears from the country get so bewildered by the magnificence of the places they go to, and the distractions of shopping, that they quite lose their heads, and consequently their way. So the ever-thoughtful Japanese police have insisted that every party of pilgrims is to have a distinguishing badge. At Nagano it was the commonest thing possible to see some ancient dame rushing about wailing, "Where is my party? Where is the purple iris party?" or, "Where is the yellow-towel-round-the-neck party?" And then she would be told that the "yellow-towel-round-the-neck party" was on its way to the station, or that the "purple irises" were still saying their prayers in the temple.

When the pilgrimage is to a mountain, there is very little that is religious about it, but when it is to a temple the pilgrims generally perform a certain amount of devotions. On stepping out of the train a large party will usually form into a long procession, two and two, each with a little gong in the left hand and a striker in the right. Then they will go up the street, repeating "Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu,"[1] ding dong, ding dong.

[1] This is an invocation for help to Amida, who is regarded by many Japanese as the greatest incarnation of Buddha.

I used to watch numbers of such parties pass under my window. It was a sad interruption to their devotions if they met me in the street. Many a discussion have I heard carried on as to whether I was a man or woman. *That* I do not mind, but my feelings were hurt when I heard a woman inform her neighbour that I was a Chinese!

On their way to the great temple, the pilgrims often turn into the nuns' own special temple, and at five o'clock I have found it thronged with people. The temple is a very large, low-roofed room, capable of holding about two hundred people. Opposite the entrance is the shrine, which is a mass of gilding and lighted candles.

On one occasion, when I went in I found the chief nun dressed in purple silk, seated in front of the shrine reciting the prayers; round her were six others in black and brown robes, who joined in responses, and at intervals beat gongs. The people, who all sat on the floor, paid very little attention to the service; beside me two women were quarrelling about the price of something they had just bought; men went about selling incense and pictures; suddenly a large party, with the sign of a pink convolvulus, got up and went out with a great clatter.

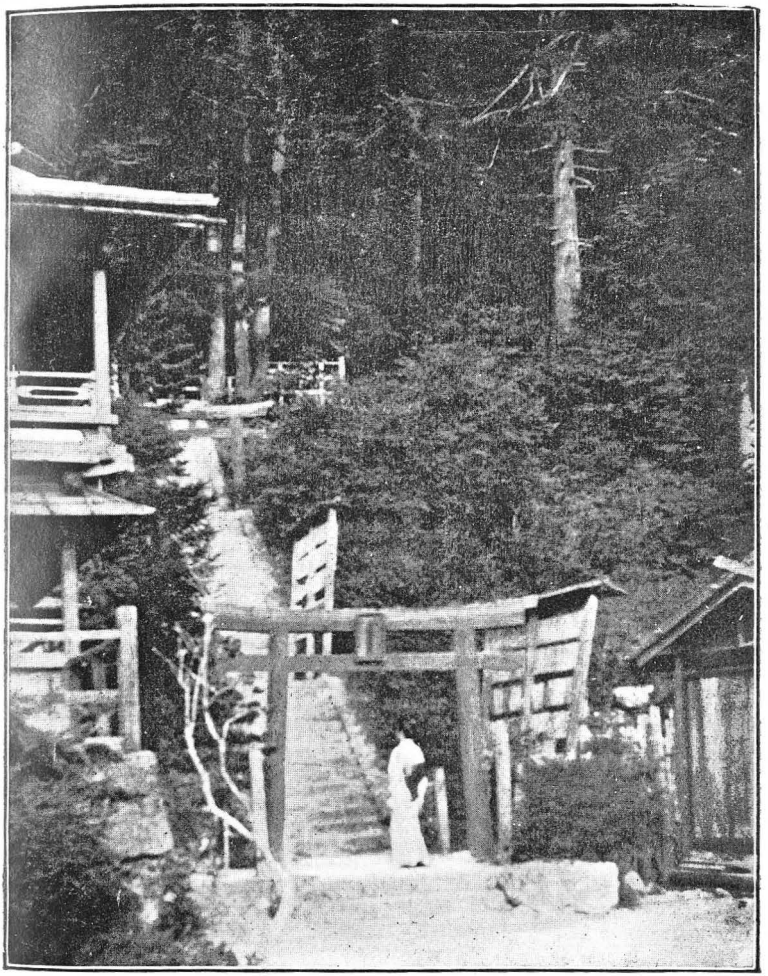
Occasionally a woman would seize up a rosary, which they all carry, and begin "Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu," but, as a rule, there was nothing in their demeanour to show that they were at a religious service. The ceremony ended by the chief nun turn-

ing round and facing the congregation, and one then saw that she was a girl of about twenty, who looked very quaint with her shaved head and her purple dress. There was a moment's hush, and in a clear girlish voice she again began that interminable "Namu Amida Butsu," the people this time all joining in. She repeated it at least twenty times, then the nuns filed out, and people proceeded on their way to the great temple. As they went up between lines of shops for the sale of rosaries, shrines, pictures, etc., some stopped to throw down money in front of a huge incense-burner, thus gaining the right to put in some incense; some would place money at the foot of the statue of Jizo, the patron saint of children and travellers; and then, when they got to the great temple, there was a great throwing down of small coins in front of the altars; but as some pilgrims cannot get through the throng so as to throw their money inside the sacred enclosure, the priests had placed a huge barrel in the centre of the temple, that money might be thrown into it.

A curious little incident proved to me that the priests have not the reputation of being very sympathetic to the poor. Early one morning an old, old looking woman came tottering to the door of the Mission house where I was staying. She begged and implored to be taken in for a few days. One of the Mission workers came out and asked where she came from, and how it was that she came to an unknown house, asking to be taken in.

Her tale was that she came from Nagoya, a place about two hundred miles off, and that though she was over seventy she had, with four companions, walked all that distance. But she found the way very long, and when they took short cuts the roads were bad, and her feet got so sore that, when at last she reached her destination, she could not walk. And after the party had spent several days in an inn, her companions said that now they must be starting back again, but she begged them to wait one more day, thinking that her feet would be better, and she would be able to go with them. But the next morning it was quite clear that she would never be able to tramp all that distance. Then her companions said, "We have stayed this extra day entirely on your account, so you must pay the extra expense". And they took one of her two remaining florins, and started off, leaving the poor old dame in a place where she had not a single friend But before they started they consulted the inn people as to what she should do, and it was agreed that as there was a house of the "Jesus Faith" she had better go there. "'They will put something on your feet to heal them; *they* are sure to be kind to you.' This is what they told me and so I have come."

No idea of going to the nuns! "Just go to the Christians; they are sure to be kind to you"—this seemed to be the sum total of the advice she had received. It seemed to me that the outlook is very hopeful for Christianity, if this is the reputation of the Christians.



STEPS LEADING TO A SHRINE

III.

I was amused at a little instance I saw, in the train coming here, of the march of civilisation in Japan. In the carriage with me there was a charming family party, consisting of a man, his two little girls and an old grandmother, all of whom were evidently bound on a pleasure-trip. When we came to a junction where the train always waits, I bought myself a little teapot, full of boiling hot Japanese tea, paying for the teapot, tea and a cup the equivalent of one penny. I also bought a small wooden box of lunch—rice, fish, beans, ginger, bamboo root—which, along with chop-sticks to eat it, cost fourpence. The man meanwhile had bought something which excited his party very much. It was "rather dear"—fivepence, and no chop-sticks sold with it; and the people at the station had only within the last few days begun to make and sell this delicacy.

The grandmother wanted to know what it was made of, and she was told that "you take a preparation of corn, then a preparation made from the milk of a cow, and mixing this with pig's flesh you have a most delicious result".

"Indeed," said a traveller from another corner of the carriage, "you may eat it without fear, for it is a well-known fact that the Empress herself is very partial to this preparation."

I thought that I would like to see this new delicacy, and bending forward to see a novelty, I recognised my old friend of English railway stations—a ham sandwich!

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," we are told, but I cannot say that I feel hungry for a sandwich when I hear it spoken of as a preparation of corn, mixed with a preparation from the milk of a cow and pig's flesh! To think that railway travelling is so advanced in Japan that one can even buy sandwiches at the stations!

In May the busy silkworm season begins. Every house in my village is turned upside down, and the family squeeze into one or two rooms in order to accommodate these horrid little creatures. I do so dislike them; there is something about their eyes that is so disagreeable! the feeding of them is a never-ending business, for it has to be done every two hours.

This beautiful May weather made me think that it would be nice to take the Sunday-school children for a walk; so we started off, a party of about twenty, to go up a small hill in the neighbourhood. The children all pattered along most gaily in the straw sandals which they put on for rough walking, instead of their high wooden clogs.

The hillside was covered with flowers—violets in profusion, but, alas! scentless, so that one turns away from them as from something that is deceitful; anemones of the kind that are brought from the Riviera to sell in the London streets, only that while the Riviera ones are of many colours, those I have seen here are all a deep claret colour; blue forget-me-nots are to be found here and there, and in some parts the ground is bright scarlet with the Pirus Japonica, the

shrub we are so fond of in England. Growing wild in Japan, it has a curious way of creeping along the ground, not growing upright as with us.

As we wandered up the hillside, we talked of many things. One little maiden gave me an account of the last magic-lantern entertainment which, it appeared, had been very interesting.

"And what was it about?"

"It was about a very good man called Daniel, who *would* pray and was thrown into a sheep's den."

"Lions' den, O Miyo San, not sheep's den."

Well, she thought—in fact she was almost sure—that it was a sheep's den, because she saw sheep in the picture! This of a lantern-slide after a picture of Briton Rivière's, where the most ferocious-looking lions are raging round poor Daniel.

Sheep are the cause of much mental perplexity in Japan, and I confess that I am sometimes led to wish that there were not so many references to them in the New Testament. To the Japanese child, lions, tigers, sheep are all wild animals that you see in cages in the Tokio Zoological Gardens.

On getting to the top of the hill slight refreshments were served out by me in the form of "Mixed Drops".

Were I giving them to English children, I should simply shake out some into each child's hand, but in a country where they are so polite as to call even an unconscious baby "Mr. Baby," one has to be more ceremonious—so I brought with me a spoon. Each

small person came forward with a low bow, and receiving a spoonful, retired with another bow. I was pleased to see that though they thought the Mixed Drops most delicious, the children were not going to eat them all up; each child was going to put away some to take to the people at home. I intimated, however, that as a second spoonful was forthcoming, the first might be freely eaten up.

When we were sufficiently rested, and had thoroughly distinguished between the yellow drops and the red drops, and discussed the interesting question as to what they are made of, we began to play a game. Any one who has been in Italy can easily picture to themselves the favourite game of the Japanese children. How often in the sunny Italian streets one comes across a shady doorway where a group of dark-eyed workmen are playing "mora". One is told that in Italy the game of mora often gives rise to fierce fighting, and is, on the whole, to be condemned. But I have never heard that any harm comes of it in Japan, where it is played as follows: Two children stand opposite each other, and instead of our "One, two, three," they say "Jan, ken, pon"; at "pon" each throws out a hand, which must have either the thumb, the first finger, or the little finger extended. The thumb is the frog, the first finger the snake, the little finger the snail.

"And which counts highest?" I asked, when going into the intricacies of the game.

"Why, of course, the frog is higher than the snail, because the frog can eat the snail; but the snake can

eat the frog, so it counts higher than the frog; but the snail is higher than the snake."

"And why should that be?"

"Because, if a snail sat on a snake's tail, the snake will melt away."

"That is very curious!" I said. "I never heard of it before. Does it really melt quite away?"

"Yes, quite away. No one has ever happened to see a snail on a snake's tail, but the snake would certainly melt."

"I see," said I. "Strange to say we have things just like that in England. We know that if you put salt on a bird's tail you can catch it at once, but no one has ever seen it done, which is also a curious thing."

When we had had enough of this game the children scattered about the hill. From the top of the hill a spur runs back, and on its crest is—what do you think? I am sure no one would ever guess. A race-course for horses, nicely levelled out! Is there any other country but Japan where, with a great plain in front of them, they would deliberately make the race-course on the top of a hill? The first time I ascended the hill, and the race-course burst upon my sight, I, of course, wanted to know *why* it was there and not on the plain.

One is always asking why, why, in Japan, and very rarely getting an answer that quite satisfies one.

In this case the reason was clear, if not very convincing. "By coming up the hill you can see the

horse-races and the view both at once." There was certainly no disputing that, for a lovely view it is from the top of the hill; Fuji San on one side, and the blue sea with islands in the distance on the other. And so twice a year the hillside is thick with people, who are wending their way up to see the horse-race and the view.

When my little Sunday-school party reached the bottom of the hill, they made me low bows and went off to their own homes. I would that there were more of them, but am thankful that there are enough to prevent any Christian child from being really badly teased at school. Last week, when I was staying in another part of the country, I heard such a piteous tale from a young woman. She had been deserted by her husband, and left with a boy who was just eight years old, when his mother became a candidate for baptism. At first she was very regular in coming to church, but suddenly she ceased coming, and I heard that it was on account of some trouble about her boy, but what the exact case was I did not know till she came to see me last week, and poured forth her tale. She poured it forth so fast, and so often relapsed into broad country dialect, that I had frequently to ask her to repeat what she had said.

She told me that her boy is the great pleasure of her life, and her one idea is his happiness. She left her own village because the children there used to tease him on account of his father's bad reputation. She could not bear that the child should suffer, and so she came

A YOUNG JAPANESE LADY AT HOME

to the town where I knew her, and where she first heard about Christianity. But it got noised about among her neighbours that she was becoming a Christian, and then her peace was at an end. For at the Government school where her boy went, the head teacher was well known as a stern opponent of Christianity, so the children began to tease the boy unmercifully. Not only that, but the neighbours showed him pictures of the Buddhist hell, and told him that the "Jesus Faith" people all went there.

"And this morning when he had gone out to school, I opened my Bible and Prayer-Book and sat down to read, but he had forgotten something and came back for it. When he saw what I was doing, he flung himself on the floor and cried, and said that he had now no more happiness because of this 'Jesus Faith'. When he went to school his mind was full of anxiety all the time, in case his mother should be reading bad books, for if she did he knew that she would go to hell and be among devils and people with their throats cut. And he cried so that I cried too, and now I have come to ask you not to come to my house any more, for I cannot bear to see my boy so unhappy, and if I become a Christian I must hide it from him."

"Do they speak against Christianity at school?" I asked.

"Not much, but lately there was an examination of all the children's bodies. My boy has a beautiful strong body, and the teacher said to him, 'Now with

your strong body you will have to become a great man. You must become a soldier and fight for the Emperor. You must never listen to the Christians' teaching or anything else that will hurt your country.' And so my boy is now so angry when he thinks that I am going to church, and begs me if I love him not to become a Christian."

I asked her whether, if I found a good school in Tokio, she would let him go there. Even if it was impossible for her to move there herself, would she let him go as a boarder? Her eyes filled with tears, and she said that her boy often said that he was very "lonely," having no father, and that his mother must promise that whatever happened she would never leave him, and she had always promised not to separate from him. So her plan was that she should become a Christian secretly, not telling him till he was older and better able to understand. I could not agree that *that* was the right thing to do, but just what is the right way to treat the poor little fellow I do not know; it is very hard on a child when his mother and his favourite teacher are in opposition to each other.

Here as in other countries some children develop of themselves a religious faculty and have ideas about the Unseen, while others go on their ways like little kittens. Two days after this mother had told me her story another woman sat in the same room telling me the history of her spiritual life. She is a Mission worker, and we were speaking of the fact that some women say that they *want* to come to church, and yet

let themselves be stopped from coming by such mere trifles.

"When I think of how I longed to go to church when I was becoming a Christian, I can't understand it," she said.

"Tell me how it was that you became a Christian."

"When I was only a child of eight years old, I would say to myself, 'There must be a *creator*-god'. I would take one of the field flowers in my hand and look at its petals, so beautifully made, and I would think, 'That's not made by a man, no, no!'

"I know that it was when I was eight years old, because it was about the time when my father died, that these thoughts came most to me. And after he died I used morning and evening to stand in front of the shrine to his spirit and implore his help, and I went to every festival in the neighbourhood, to Hachiman (this deity is the god of war), to Fudo (in Sanskrit Achala, the same as Vairo Kana) and others, but all the time I used to say to myself, 'Now, which is the creator-god?'

"Then when I was fifteen I went out one day to go to the festival of Hachiman, and my friends and I had to pass a little Christian preaching station, and as they were singing a hymn there we thought we would go in. The hymn was about flowers, and when it was over the preacher said, 'Now there is a festival going on just now to Hachiman. But who was Hachiman? He was only a man; he was not the Creator of the World.' And he said a great deal that I did not

understand, but I thought they knew about the Creator. And after that I did not care so much for the festivals, and my friends used to laugh and say, 'You are not nearly so pious as you used to be'.

"Then after a few years I went to Tokio, and whilst I was there I fell ill. The doctors did not know what was the matter, but I was very depressed, and they said that I must be amused. And my relations were very kind and used to take me to the theatres. But I did not like them at all, and I did not wish to go. Then some one said, 'There is a Christian church with music, quite close; perhaps it would *amuse* her to go there. It is much less trouble to send her to church than to send her to the theatre.' So for some months I went regularly to church, and I enjoyed it, and got to understand the teaching quite well. But though I went to church I had no Bible, and I used to long to see a Bible, but I could not ask my relations to give me fifty sen (one shilling) to buy a Bible. I thought and thought, and at last I found a way to get one. I had a very nice tortoise-shell comb and pin for the hair, and I sold these, and so got two shillings and bought a Bible and hymn-book. And to prevent my relations finding out what I had done, I cut my hair, so that it could not be done in the Japanese way with comb and pin. My relations laughed and thought me very odd. After I was baptised I put my Bible out for them to see, and they did not seem to mind much, but very soon I had to go to live with my brother, and he hated Christianity, and took away my books. My relations

at that place hated everything that was foreign and new. My aunt, for instance, had never tasted meat in her life, and when her son, who had got some of the new ideas about food, brought meat and wished it cooked, she would say, 'If you make me do so, I must cook it, but not in the house where there is the shelf with the offerings to the spirits of our ancestors. To cook it there were pollution. I will cook it in the fields.' So she would take the box of charcoal fire and go into the fields to cook the meat, so as not to defile the house. To this extent did they hate everything that came from foreign countries, and so I was forbidden to go to church, or to read the Bible and other foreign books. Only twice during five years was I able just to slip into a church for a little, and that was while I was supposed by my relatives to be doing shopping. Now I can go to church every day, but I often think that I am not such a good Christian as I was then. I did a great deal of the house-work, and I remember how, when I washed the boards of the verandah, I used to say to myself, 'Oh that God would wipe away all stains from my heart, as I wipe away the dust from these boards!' And when I said my prayers at night, I was so much in earnest that without meaning to do so I prayed aloud, and in the morning my brother would say, 'What do you make such a talking about in your room at night?' So then I took to saying my prayers in a little outhouse in the garden, and I remember how calm my heart used to feel in that little outhouse. I was all alone, there was

no distraction, and I was more peaceful than I am now when I kneel at prayers in church. Why is that?"

Alas! that is one of the everlasting Whys; and from the time of King David, who in his prosperity fell into sin, unto the present time, it has been found that prosperity and absence of conflict are the true enemies of the soul.

A PRISONER IN JAPAN.

A STEEP hill with a grove of feathery bamboos; views which give glimpses of the great city of Tokio stretching for miles all around me, and beside me a solitary grave. The dead man who has lain there more than a hundred years was the last Japanese who professed Christianity in the old days, when "even to speak by mistake of these matters invites severe punishment".

This man was a servant in the prison where Christians were shut up, and the hill is known to-day as the Christian Hill.

When I pass near that hill engaged in mission work, free to come and go and speak of "these matters" to whom I will, I often think of the last missionary who died in that prison; of his years of preparation for his work; of his suffering and close imprisonment, and of his death, before he had once had the opportunity to make known the Gospel he had given up all to preach. And then I look at my comfortable house, the ever-increasing band of Christians throughout the country, and the freedom with which even a woman may travel everywhere and speak of the True Way to all. And I often wonder whether martyred missionaries are ever allowed to look down from another world and see the

spread of the Gospel for which they suffered so long and sacrificed so much.

The story of the last prisoners for the Christian faith on Christian Hill is an intensely interesting one, both as showing us a remarkably noble character and as giving curious vivid glimpses of a past age.

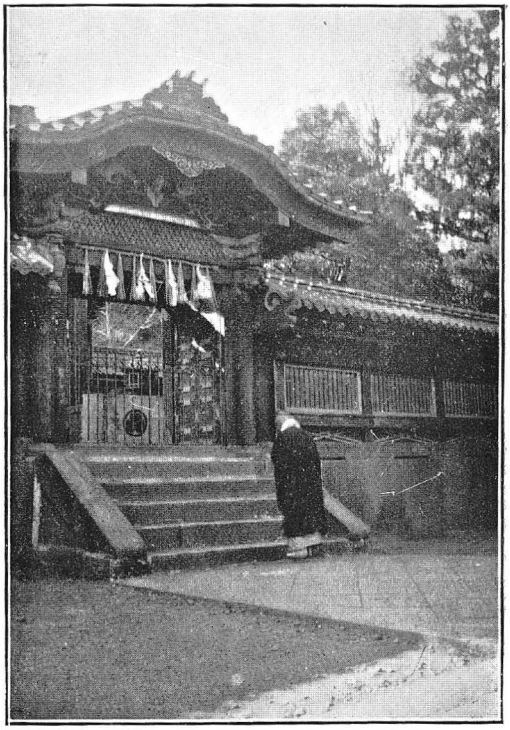
It was in the early morning of a January day, in 1709, that a Japanese fisherman was startled by meeting on the beach "a wild man," who, laying down his sword, made signs that he wanted water.

At that period the laws of Japan with regard to European intercourse were of the strictest. No ships were to be built in Japan big enough to go to a foreign country; no foreigner was on any account to land, with the exception of a few Dutch; as for Christianity, for which so many hundreds of Japanese had laid down their lives, it was prohibited as a thing too vile to be spoken of.

It was at this period that a Roman priest, the Père Sidotti, resolved to force an entrance into this shut-up country. For six years he made preparations for his hazardous undertaking, and gradually working his way as far as China, he there persuaded a ship to take him across and leave him on the Japanese coast.

On a winter's morning he found himself alone, with no knowledge of the language, the only Christian in the midst of a great teeming population, all of whom were sworn to extirpate the followers of Christ.

His presence created great alarm among the simple country people, who were not sure that they would not



A PRIEST WORSHIPPING IN FRONT OF A TEMPLE GATE

be punished for the mere fact of having such a monster among them. He was at once taken to the proper authorities, and after several months' delay, during which time he was examined with the aid of Dutch interpreters, he was taken to the capital, Tokio, from the far south where he had landed.

What a wonderful journey it must have been! No doubt he met many a daimio with his retinue, going to visit his country estates. Passing by numberless tea-houses, and by thronged temples, as he got nearer to Tokio, the snowy slopes of Fuji rose on his left, while on the right rolled the great waves of the blue Pacific, and all around were quaint houses and fantastic gardens.

But of the scenes that he passed through he saw nothing; all through the bright sunny days he sat in darkness, for the norimono (or kind of palanquin) in which he sat, was closely shut, and orders had been given that every one he met on the road should turn aside and not speak until he was past. And so in darkness and silence he was carried through the Flowery Land.

And what must have been worst of all to bear, was that all the time he had to sit in such a cramped position that he was never again able to walk without help.

I do not gather that all this was done from motives of cruelty or religious persecution. The Japanese Christians of former times suffered much from the political motives attributed to the missionaries, and there had been alarming rumours of a Spanish inva-

sion. In Sidotti they thought that they had captured the spy of some great foreign power, and their chief object was to keep him in complete ignorance of the roads and the nature of the country.

On arrival at Tokio, he was taken to the prison on the Christian Hill, where some Christian captives had already lived and died.

There he met with Arai Hakusei, a Japanese official of great learning and more enlightenment than his contemporaries. Arai was appointed one of the commissioners instructed to examine Sidotti, and he wrote a minute account of the interviews. This account has been preserved among the Government papers, and published. Arai's ideas as to European languages were vague. He reports himself as saying to the Dutch interpreters, "If I look at a map of the world, Italy and Holland are within the same continent of Europe, and not so far separated as Nagasaki and Mutsu. Therefore, if we suppose that you speak with the Dutch language to an Italian, seven or eight words out of ten will be understood." There are many glimpses of the naïve ignorance of the Japanese as to the things of the outer world, but the book interests us more particularly by the way in which it brings out the patient, steadfast character of the man who had so bravely taken his life in his hand in order to preach the Gospel. The first interview between the commissioners and Sidotti is thus described by Arai :—

"When it was past three o'clock he was called out,

and two men, one on each side, kept guard, and he saluted the persons present. They ordered him to sit down, and then the commissioners came to the side of a table. That house faced south, and there was a wooden verandah; the table was placed three feet from the verandah, but I sat a little in the rear. As the Roman had come from a distance in a norimono, he could not walk; therefore even in coming from the prison he came in a kago or palanquin. Therefore, too, the two men held him up by the arm-pits. When he had sat down by the table, one horse-soldier and two foot-soldiers were beside him and behind him, and knelt on mats. His height was over six feet; he was taller than ordinary men, his head the shape of a censer, his hair black, his eyes deep set, a high nose, and he wore a brown, stuffed, small-sleeved, pongee silk robe. This garment he had received from the Lord of Satsuma. Next the skin he wore a white calico shirt. When he sat down he made the ceremony of the sign of some letter with his right hand on his forehead, and afterwards he always did the same. I have written the shape of it at the end of this book.

"Then the commissioners spoke to the Roman through an interpreter. When they did so he made an obeisance and replied. Then the commissioner said that as the weather was very cold they wished to give him a garment; but he would not receive it. The reason was, as I have heard, that he was not allowed by the rules of his religion to receive from any but disciples.

"But since such like as food was necessary to sustain precious life, that he might accomplish the commands of his King, it was quite enough to receive the benevolence of this country by eating its rice. How could he oppose the rule of his religion by receiving clothes? As he is wearing a garment which he received at first in Satsuma, he is not cold, and they must not distress themselves. . . . 'The cause of my coming to Nippon, is to respectfully teach my doctrine, and thus benefit all and save men. But since coming to Nippon, I have caused trouble to many, which distresses my conscience. Since I arrived here, this year has nearly ended. The weather is cold, the climate too is severe, and snow will soon fall. It is truly a source of sorrow, that men, beginning with these Samurai, should have to guard me day and night. I suppose that the reason of thus guarding me is the fear that I may run away. My coming without fear over many thousand miles of wind and waves, is that, at all hazards, I may come and tell the message of my Lord to Nippon. I have come by my own desire; and so I shall certainly not leave and go elsewhere. And though I run away, I could not stay one day in a place unknown, as I am not like the men of this country. But if you are guarding me by the Shogun's orders, it would not be right to be negligent in this. The day-time does not matter, but as the night is truly miserable for these guards, put on manacles and fetters, and place me bound in the prison.'

"When the commissioners heard this, they thought

it very frightful. Arai said to them, 'I should not have thought him so deceitful'.

"Sidotti said, 'It would be shameful for any one not to speak the truth, much more since there is a special command of my religion with regard to telling lies. From the time I came to understand the principles of this religion until now, I have not told any untruths.'

"I asked him, 'In what you said now, did you say the year being nearly over and the climate cold, it is unbearable to see these guards having to keep watch day and night?'

"'Yes,' he replied.

"'If so, then I think you spoke deceitfully, because it is considered very important, and is by command of the Government; and since the commissioners have received orders and so commanded you to be guarded, as they are anxious that nothing untoward should happen to you, inasmuch as your clothes are thin, they wished to give you clothes; but you won't receive those garments. If it is as you say, now say why do you cause them such anxiety? If you don't care on account of your religious rule, why is it, at all events, that you don't care on account of those who are in charge of you? Therefore, if what you said now is true, what you said before is a lie. Anyhow, explain to me what is your meaning?'

"He replied, 'Since I have heard your words, I think that what I said before was a mistake, therefore I will receive the garments, and set the commissioners' minds

at rest. If it is all the same, I humbly wish not to receive silk robes, only cotton ones.' "

Arai, after a good deal of conversation on other matters, asked him as to the exact reason of his coming, to which Sidotti replied :—

"Six years ago I heard that I was to come here as a messenger, and, enduring many thousand miles of land and wave, at last I have arrived at this capital. But, as this day, if I lived in my own land, would be the beginning of the New Year, a time when all men are rejoicing together, I think it truly a joyful thing that to-day, for the first time since I came to Japan, I am asked about my religion."

But one fears that his heart must have been heavy when he returned to his prison, for his explanation of Christianity was evidently met with scorn.

Arai writes :—

" When he came to speak about his religion, it appeared to be not in the slightest respect like the true way. Wisdom and folly suddenly became interchanged in him. At first I had thought him very intelligent, but he began to explain his doctrine—he became like a fool—it was just as if one had heard the words of two men."

Sidotti had, of course, been strictly forbidden to preach his religion; and, indeed, at a time when the laws against Christianity were so severe, it is unlikely that any one would have listened to him. But some seed, which had been sown by the former Christian prisoners, was made to blossom by the sight of Sidotti's patient suffering.

His imprisonment does not seem at first to have been excessively rigorous, for we are told that he had cut red paper into the form of a cross, and pasted it on the west wall, and was reciting his prayers so as to read them under the cross.

In the days of the former Christian missionaries' imprisonment, a man and a woman, both servants in the prison, had received their teaching. How far they had been instructed one does not know, but the prison authorities were aware that they were tainted with the pernicious doctrine; they were made to marry each other, and were kept as servants in the prison, never being allowed out. Apparently they renounced their faith, and can one wonder? They had no Bible as a source of strength, no one to encourage them, and so no doubt they gradually forgot what they had once known of the sufferings of a Redeemer. Suddenly they were aroused by the unexpected arrival of another teacher of the Way, and they saw the cross which he painted in scarlet on his prison wall. They were old people. Were they at an advanced age to give up their lives and suffer a martyr's death for a teaching of which they had so little knowledge? The Mikado, whom they revered as almost divine; the laws of their country, which all Japanese hold in the greatest reverence;—all held that teaching to be a crime. Yet an inward voice told them that it was the True Way. What struggles must have gone on before they could come to a conclusion. But they confessed their faith. Coming before the commissioners, they said :—

"Formerly, when our master was alive, he secretly taught us his doctrine; but we did not know that he acted contrary to the laws of the country when he taught us that doctrine. Now that we have become very old, we have seen how this Roman, not regarding his life for the sake of religion, has come many thousand miles, is captured, and dwelling in prison, and loath as we are to lose the short span of this life, yet, as it is a fearful thing to fall into the soul prison, we have received the doctrine from him, and become believers. As it would be opposing the goodness of this Government not to confess these things, we confess this much. However it may turn out for us, we ask that we may be dealt with for our crime according to the laws."

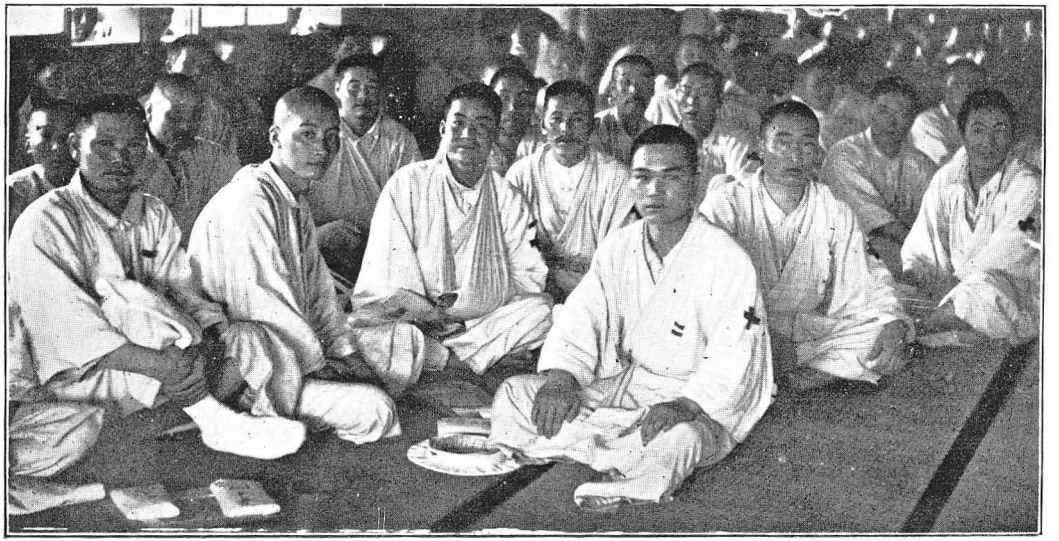
It is a quaint confession, and for us it is difficult to understand why they call it "a crime" that they are confessing.

They were then separated, and next year, when the Dutch interpreters came to Japan again, there was an examination of Sidotti's crime of reviving their faith.

His imprisonment, which till then does not seem to have been accompanied by any cruelty or harshness, was completely changed. He was put bound into a damp, dark place.

"Then," says Arai, "he showed his real thoughts; raising his voice, he abused the commissioners, called out the names of the old couple, and, strengthening their faith, ceased not day and night advising them to hold steadfast until death."

In order fully to understand the force of this, one



AT TEA. (*Page* 69)

must remember that the walls of a Japanese house are but paper screens, so that Sidotti's raised voice could probably be heard quite well by the old couple. From this imprisonment his earnest spirit was released by death, in October, 1715. Terrible must have been his loneliness, aggravated by the thought that never once during these years had he been able openly to declare the Gospel message. Nor had he once received any news of the country to which he belonged. How were they faring in Rome? During these years of silence, did those he loved talk of him, and wonder how he fared? Were they picturing him as holding successful Missions, and followed by earnest listeners, the lot he had pictured for himself during his years of his preparation; or did they have some presentiment of fate? Such thoughts as these must have passed through the mind of the lonely man as he lay dying in the prison on Christian Hill.

His death relieved the Japanese of a great difficulty. There had been many discussions as to what to do with him. Some wished to send him back to Europe; some to keep him bound in prison; others thought he should be put to death.

The grave on Christian Hill was long thought to be Sidotti's; but a German savant, who lately made a careful investigation of an old map of the place, kept by the Japanese Government, has shown that it is not Sidotti's, but that of the old man-servant who so bravely confessed his Christianity.

THE 'BUS BOY.

WHEN travelling in Japan I very seldom go in an omnibus. These conveyances jolt so dreadfully and are generally so crowded that they are a most unpleasant mode of travelling.

One summer's day, however, a Japanese friend and I decided that we would go by 'bus to a village about five miles off.

The coming of the 'bus was notified by the most deafening too-tooing on a horn; the performer on the horn was a boy of seventeen who stood on the 'bus step. This boy wore the most tattered garments and had a fat stupid face. As we drove along I sat idly looking at him.

"I don't suppose that that boy has any mind," I thought to myself. "Of religion, of course, he knows nothing, he spends his life on this hot dusty road, blowing his horn, and probably thinking of nothing but his next meal."

Suddenly the boy sprang off his step. Dashing into a field he gathered a kind of onion flower, then running back to his step, he held it out to a well-dressed man, one of the passengers.

"Please, sir," he said, "will you tell me about this

flower?" and he proceeded to ask several questions, listening attentively to the man's replies.

"What a mistake I have made," thought I; "that boy clearly has a mind."

A woman carrying a child got into the 'bus. The child leant against her mother, who pressed a cloth on her forehead.

"What's the matter with the child?" asked the boy.

"She ought to be in bed," said the mother, "but I just *had* to go to town, and I could not leave her behind as there was no one to look after her. She has such a bad head. I think it must be fever."

"Is the cloth wet?" said the boy.

"It has got dry, but it was wet," said the woman.

The boy looked round him, in another moment he spied what he wanted; seizing the cloth he jumped off the step, rushed to a well by the roadside; drawing a bucket of cold water he dipped the cloth into it and then wringing it out while he ran, he raced after the 'bus.

"That's better," he said triumphantly, putting it on the child's head. Not once, but half a dozen times that hot day, did he dash after the 'bus with the newly-wetted cloth in his hand.

"What mistakes one does make," I thought; "this boy with the stupid face not only has a mind but he uses it and tries to learn what he can on the step of his 'bus. Not only has he a mind but he has attained to the great height of religion—to be self-forgetting in serving others' needs."

"PRAYING FOR THE CONGREGATION."

THE child was only nine years old when I first knew her, a fat-faced little thing, who used to sit, during the Sunday-school lesson, gazing at me with great solemn eyes.

"What can I do with Hana?" sighed her mother. "I fear she will never become a Christian. She comes home from the Sunday-school shaking her head and saying, 'How can I believe the story of the Crucifixion and Resurrection? It is *too* wonderful.'"

"Don't be afraid about her," I said, "she has got further than many Christians in England who have heard about the Life of Christ all their lives, and yet never got the length of discovering that it *is* wonderful."

The family lived in a small town in Japan; the country round was covered with fields of mulberry trees and tobacco plants, and in the distance one saw the great snow-capped mountain Fuji. The father was a man of importance in the place, and his becoming a Christian had led many others to study the Gospels, and so a small church was built there.

The mother was an earnest Christian, and most anxious for the welfare of her children. "What can

I do about Hana?" she sighed, another day. "Yesterday she came back from school crying. I asked her what had happened, and she told me that the day-school teacher had said hard things about Christians, and the other children had turned and stared at her because they knew she came from a Christian house. I said to her, 'You must remember the verses you have been learning in the Sunday-school, "Blessed are ye when ye are persecuted for righteousness' sake"'. 'It is very easy,' said Hana, 'to stand before the teacher saying, "blesseds," but when the children turn and stare at you, and your face is all red, you don't feel blessed.'"

Years passed away, and the mother was laid in her grave, and O Hana San[1] was sent to a good school in Tokio, and we only met in the holidays. There was no missionary, only a catechist (or an unordained Japanese worker), resident in the place. When I was there on one of my monthly visits, he said to me that he thought that O Hana San was going to be a remarkable Christian. "I am glad to hear it," I said; "what makes you think so?"

"Well," he replied, "the doctor has ordered me to be out at six o'clock every morning. Last week I passed the church door at that hour and I saw a pair of shoes outside." [The Japanese always take off their shoes on going inside a building.] "I wondered who was there, but I did not look in. Passing

[1] In Japan O and San are always added to the name of a woman who is not a relation.

back half an hour afterwards I saw the shoes still there, and I opened the door and looked in. There I saw O Hana San, kneeling in prayer. The next day the same thing happened, so I think she is very earnest."

That evening O Hana San came to see me, and we had a long talk.

"O Hana San," I said, "do you realise your responsibility before God, in having such a good education? You are learning a great deal more than most of the women here have ever learnt, but in proportion God will require of you the fruits of righteousness; I hope that while you are here in the holidays you try to bring some one to Him."

"Oh, indeed I do try," she said, "and at school I prayed so often to God that He would give me some work to do for Him in this place. And when I came home for the holidays, I wondered if there was any one whom I could teach. But I don't like to speak to the older people, for they would think it presumption on my part to try and teach them. And then I thought about the young people of my own age, but none of them wished to hear about Christ. So when I thought about it I just felt that perhaps God means me to give myself to prayer, and I made up my mind to pray for every member of the congregation. And you know it takes quite a long time. I go to the church in the morning to pray, so as not to be interrupted."

As I listened to the girl, who was then sixteen, I knew that her mother's prayers for her were being

answered, and I also felt sure that before long she would have the joy of doing some definite work for God in leading others.

Yes, O Hana San had made great progress on the Christian path: there are, I fear, comparatively few who kneel in prayer for the congregations to which they belong.

THE BLIND "AMA".

ONE bitterly cold day I was told that a blind man had called to see me. I led him in and placed him in front of the fire, where he could feel its comfortable glow on his face. I have always thought that one of the misfortunes of the blind is that they can never look upon a brightly burning fire, and I do not suppose that this man had ever before sat beside a coal fire, for the Japanese warm their houses with boxes of charcoal, which do not give out the cheery warmth of blazing coal.

The blind man seemed to find it very comfortable, and he settled down to discuss many subjects. He was well dressed; his Japanese clothing was of good material, for, strange to say, in Japan the blind can make a living almost as easily as those who are in possession of all their faculties. A blind man or woman is taught the art of "massage," or rubbing of the body, and no one who is not blind is allowed to practise it.

This rubbing is in great favour among all classes in Japan; even labouring men, when they return from work, will often call in an *ama*, as the blind rubber is called, and for the sum of twopence will enjoy the

luxury of having the tired feeling taken out of their bones by the skilful hands of the blind.

My blind friend was of course an *ama*, and having received a good education was able to support himself in comfort. His trade brought him into contact with all sorts and conditions of men, and he told me that when he went out in the morning he never knew what strange houses he might not be called into before he returned at night.

He had come to ask my advice about a girl for whom he wished some Christian teaching.

"And how did you become a Christian?" I asked him.

He smiled.

"You are like me," he said; "I always want to know what it was that first made a person wish to know about the true God. I will tell you what first influenced me. I knew a good many Christians, but I had no desire to hear their doctrine. For some years I knew of the Christian faith, but it did not seem to me to be a thing that had any connection with me. Then I took a house with another *ama*, and we lived together. Now this man was a Christian, and every morning and evening he said prayers to God. You probably know that we Japanese do many things *aloud* that you do silently, even reading to ourselves, we read aloud, and so this Christian always said his prayers aloud, and of course I heard his prayers, and to me they seemed very strange, for I noticed that he prayed more for other people than for himself. And he

prayed *so* earnestly for the wants of others. Buddhists go to temples and pray, and sometimes they pray very earnestly, but it is always for something connected with themselves. A mother prays for her son; a husband prays for his wife's health; a child for its parents; but this man prayed for kinds of people who were not in any way specially connected with himself. I thought a great deal about this, and then I determined to ask him about this doctrine that had made his thoughts so different from those of other people, and thus it was that I first heard of Christianity and became a believer."

And as I looked at the blind man sitting smiling to himself, I felt that the earnest prayers that had converted him had done a good work, and it was a lesson to me.

"AS OTHERS SEE US."

ONE of our great poets has expressed a wish that we could sometimes have the gift of "seeing ourselves as others see us".

Now we English are very proud of our position as a Christian nation; we are proud of our religious liberty, proud of our missionary enterprise, and yet there is no doubt that if we were suddenly to see ourselves as some "ithers see us" we might get a painful surprise.

I was talking once to a Japanese gentleman, a man of good education, who could speak English fluently, and he was telling me how he had become a Christian.

"What about your parents?" I asked, "did they also become Christians?"

"Oh, no," he said. "My father was one of the old-fashioned Japanese who had lived in the days when no Japanese gentleman ever went into the street without putting on his two swords; and in those days Christianity was spoken of as a wicked teaching which would destroy the freedom of the country. So when I became a Christian he was very angry and used every argument he could think of to make me give up my faith. But I had become a Christian from

serious conviction, and I was not in the least influenced by his arguments.

"Then my father in despair sent for the Buddhist priest of the neighbouring temple. The priest began suggesting different arguments against Christianity, but my father sadly told him that he had tried them all.

"'There is only one *certain* cure for Christianity,' said the priest; 'but it costs a great deal of money.'

"'I don't mind spending some money,' said my father, 'if only I can make my son give up this pernicious teaching. But what is the one *certain* cure?'

"'Send him to a Christian country,' said the priest; 'send him to England or America; *there* he will be quickly cured.'

"'To a Christian country!' said my father; 'why, you don't understand, my son has come in contact with only a few Christians in Japan, and yet he has become a Christian; now if I send him into the midst of them in a Christian country he will become tenfold more earnest.'

"'No,' replied the priest; 'there you make a mistake; it is the cure—I have seen it work. I have known men who have become Christians and then they have gone to see a Christian country. And they were very much pleased before they went because they expected to find everything peaceful and pure. But when they got there they saw many things both in men and women that surprised them very much, and gradually their faith wore away. And if you talk to

men who have been to the Christian countries you will know that it is the cure.'

"And that was a very wise old priest," continued my friend.

"Did your father send you?" I asked.

"Yes, I was sent—sent to see the wickedness of professing Christians. It was a dangerous time for a young convert, and I will allow to you that my faith grew very cold. But God helped me, and in spite of many terrible surprises at what I saw I came back a Christian. The old priest was wrong, it was not a *certain* cure, but it was a *dangerous* thing for me to go to a Christian country."

A dangerous thing indeed! What an effect it must have on a man to walk through the streets of our big towns looking for *visible* signs of our faith. Churches there are, but, except for a few hours, closed and empty; public-houses always open and full; those who will lead him to vice always on the outlook and persuasive; those who could lead to higher things busy and unheeding. No wonder faith grows cold in the heart of a stranger in a Christian country.

Walk through the streets some day, my friend, and try to see our Christian towns "as ithers see us".

A JAPANESE SAILOR.

AMONG all the hundreds of people that met an elderly Japanese sailor hurrying along the streets of London, not one probably ever suspected that he was hastening to a Bible lesson. When we see these natives of other lands in our streets, how little thought we give them beyond an idle curiosity. This man had come one day to the Church Home for Japanese Sailors and asked for instruction in Christianity.

"I suppose you know something of the Christian Faith?" asked the clergyman.

"No," said the man, "I am really quite ignorant as to what it is."

"How then is it," said the clergyman, "that you are so anxious to become a Christian?"

"I will tell you," said the sailor. "I come from a very out-of-the-way village in Japan. Now in that village there lives a woman who was known to be a Christian believer. She had a husband who drank, and who was frequently unkind to her, and the villagers all pitied the woman, but she never complained, she was always cheerful and brave. It seemed to me a very strange thing that in spite of all her troubles

THE GUESTS AT A TEA-PARTY. (*Page* 69)

she should be so uncomplaining, and at last I went and asked her what made her so brave and so different to other women. And she said that it was because she had the Christian Faith. I then asked her to tell me of this Faith, but while we were talking the husband came in, and I saw that he was angry at my talking to his wife. I was afraid of making her lot more unhappy, so I did not go again, but I resolved if ever I could find a teacher of the Christian Faith I would ask for instruction, for I could see that it gave something to that poor woman which helped her to pass through life in a different way to us who do not hold the Faith. And I wish for that help and comfort for myself."

A drunken husband and no doubt squalid surroundings; one can imagine the trials of her daily life. If we could have seen that woman I have no doubt we should have been surprised to think that to her was given the honour of bringing a soul to Christ. Not through any eloquence of words had she influenced; it was through the power of patient endurance. And when I think of that unknown humble believer in her far-away Japanese home, I feel that to her may be applied the words of the poet, "An angel-watered lily, which near God grows and is quiet".

TRUTH.

I LIKE to think that men who are earnest seekers after Truth are sometimes allowed to lead others to Our Lord, even though they do not themselves see that He is the great revelation of Truth.

Herbert Spencer was a great thinker, and a good man, but not a believer in the Godhead of Christ; yet one day when I asked a Japanese lady what it was that had *first* made her wish to become a follower of Christ, she said that it was what she read in a book by an Englishman called Herbert Spencer.

"The book was translated into Japanese," she said, "it was very difficult, and I could only understand bits of it; but there was a word which was translated 'Truth' which came in several times, and I thought what a difference it would make in my life if I could learn this 'Truth'.

"Truth is what we need to help us; surely it would keep us from sin and make us walk in the right path. The Truth this Englishman speaks of must of course be the English religion, but what is the English religion? Then after some time I heard that the English religion was called the Christian Way, but I

knew of no one in my part of the country who could teach me that way.

"One day there was a meeting of an Educational Society, and the chief people of the town came to it. As I was a teacher in the Upper School, I was invited. There were speeches and then tea and cakes, after which the Mayor said that as a token of friendship they would all drink a cup of *saké* (wine) together. Every one received their cup of *saké* very gladly, and thought it a great honour that the Mayor should present them each with a cup of *saké*. There was just one Japanese lady sitting close to me who, when the *saké* was brought to her, only bowed but did not take it. I had never seen such a thing before, and I was much surprised. Why does she not take it? I thought, and I asked afterwards who this lady was. Then I was told she belonged to the sect called Christians, and that she did not drink wine.

"I felt sure that this lady must know the Truth of which Spencer spoke, so I asked a friend to take me to her house, and I told the lady that I wished to study the Christian Way with her. I told her that I wished to study some doctrine that would teach me how to govern my passions, and how to put all sin from my heart. She replied that no human being had the power to do that. I asked her what the Christian Way taught, if it did not teach that?

"'It teaches you,' she said, 'how to open your heart to God, and He will gradually fill it with His Spirit and rule it for you.'

"So I began to study with her, and now I know that when Herbert Spencer spoke of Truth, he did not mean the divine Truth, but I am grateful to him, because it was he who first made me think that there is such a thing as Truth."

A JAPANESE EASTER OFFERING.

"YES," said a poor Japanese woman to me last year, "yes, I made up my mind at the beginning of Lent that I was going to really *keep* this Lent. It is three years since I received Holy Baptism, and I have been thinking that even a child of three can do something to help its parents, and I might be doing more to serve God, and I thought that I would try hard this Lent, and so I made a rule for Lent."

While she spoke the woman was making tobacco boxes. Seated on the floor in the true Japanese style, she quickly shaped the cardboard in the required way and then tossed the box into a huge basket standing ready to receive it. Every now and then a messenger would come from the tobacco factory and carry away a basketful. She worked from morning till night, and sometimes when her two daughters helped her she would make over two thousand boxes in a day. But though it was hard work for the fingers, it left head and tongue free, and when the household became Christians, they had plenty of time to think and talk over their Christian obligations.

"And what is your rule for Lent?" I asked.

"Well," she said cheerfully, "I am offering twenty minutes of every day to God. I have divided the twenty minutes into two. The first ten minutes I make tobacco boxes and I put the value of ten minutes' work at once into this bamboo box, which I got my husband to make for me," and she showed me a small box beside her.

"And how much do you make by your ten minutes' work?" I asked.

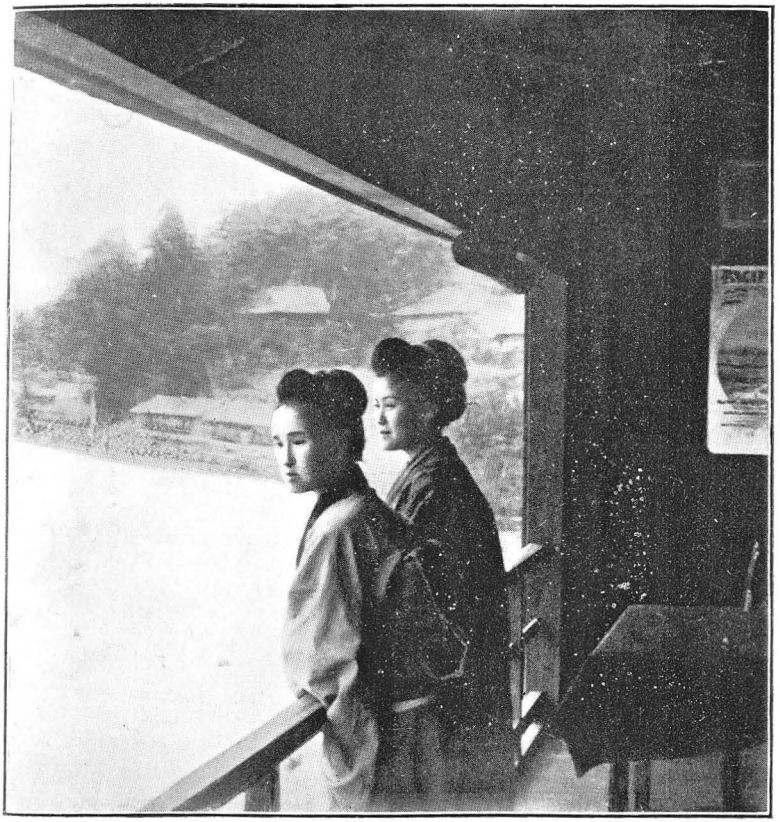
She laughed. "It is *very* little, in fact it is only four *rin*, but I will save it up in this box, and I will put it all in the church offertory on Easter Day."

A *rin* is the fortieth part of a penny, so that by working for ten minutes every day through Lent she would be able to put in fourpence on Easter Day.

"Of course," she said, "I know that it is really nothing at all, and there are lots of people that can give more than that without ever thinking of it. It isn't much to offer, but it is just as a sign before God; and He can use it, yes, I know that *He* can use it."

"If you work the first ten minutes, what do you do the second ten minutes?" I asked.

"Well," she said, "you know it is three whole years since I was baptised, but then I am so slow at reading that there is a great deal of the New Testament that I don't know at all. Still, I go to church and I go to the women's meeting, so I do know more than some people. And I thought that this Lent I would try to do direct missionary work by finding out some one



ON LAKE CHUZENJI

who knows *less* than I do, and teaching them. But, of course, it is no use going out of the house for ten minutes, for you are no sooner out than you have to be coming back again, so I save up the ten minutes for three days and there's half an hour. The first visit I paid was to that girl Sato San, for I heard that you had given her a Gospel of St. Matthew, but you are here only once a month to explain it to her, and she says she does not understand the sermons in church. So I went along to her, and I said, 'Now you must not ask me hard questions, but I think that I could explain the parable of the Sower to you, that is the one I understand best'. And I gave her a lesson on that. It is not much to do, and the money is *so* little, but it is a sign before God that I am remembering, and He will use it."

As I walked away from that poor little house and left the woman still bending over her boxes, I thought how wonderfully these poor uneducated Christians with their elementary knowledge grasp great Christian truths that we, with all our learning, are sometimes in danger of forgetting.

Not the amount given, but the work put into it is the true offering.

"It is nothing, but God can use it," what an incentive it would be to regular giving if we all had the same firm faith. She had none of the feeling "it's not *worth while* giving so little," that keeps so many back; she had realised that He who fed the multitudes from a few poor loaves and fishes may so bless and multiply

the humblest offering that it may be the means of performing great things.

"Even a child of three can do something for its parents, and it is three years since I was baptised."

Ah! but there are so-called Christians who have been baptised not three but thirty and more years who have not yet begun to *work* for God. It has never entered into their heads to go forth and search for some one whose knowledge is less than theirs.

Giving and working. It seemed to me that bishops and clergy would find it difficult to form a better rule for the practical observance of Lent than that made by this humble Japanese Christian.

A MEETING IN THE TRAIN

ONE hot summer's day I was passing in the train through some most beautiful country in the interior of Japan. It is now many years ago, and yet I remember that journey as vividly as if it had been yesterday. Around were lofty mountains with sharp rocky peaks, and a river flowed beside the railway track.

But more interesting to me than anything in the landscape were the people beside me in the carriage. The party consisted of a Japanese gentleman and two ladies. At first they only looked at me in a friendly way, but they were much pleased when they found that I could understand their Japanese, and they began a conversation, though my powers of answering their questions were very limited.

They asked how long I meant to stay in Japan, and I replied that as I was a missionary I hoped to stay for years. On hearing this the elder woman seemed very much interested, and leaving her place came to sit close to me.

"I will speak very slowly," she said, "please try to understand me."

She then went on to tell me that they had been

staying at a summer resort, and there she had met a connection of her own who had become a Christian.

"Up to this time," she said, "I had prayed to many Buddhas; but he taught me, and yesterday I prayed for the first time to God the Great Trinity. And when my friend prayed for me he prayed that I might have a happy journey, and it is very strange to me that on this journey I should meet with you, a Christian missionary."

I tried to give her a little teaching and I told her that she must continue in prayer.

"But," she said, "I do not know the proper way of Christian prayer, I only know one very short prayer," and very reverently bowing her head she said, "it is 'Amen'."

It was touching to see how earnestly she said it, that word which is said thousands of times in such a light and unthinking way in our churches; but though she had no very clear idea of the meaning of the word, I am sure that it expressed for her the attitude of her mind towards her Creator.

She then asked if I could "preach," and if I would come and stay in her distant part of Japan to teach her. I told her that my Japanese was still so bad that I feared that my preaching would not help her much, but I could write her letters and send her instruction by post. She seemed pleased at the idea and wrote down her address. As she got out of the train she told me that she would be "waiting and hoping for the letter".

When I wrote I asked her to tell me again what she had said in the train in case I had misunderstood her. This was her reply, which came at once.

"Thank you for your kind letter. Now on the summer day when I met you in the train you let me listen to many kind things, from my side were only stupid things. You have condescended to send me a very kind letter together with an instruction about God.

"My gratitude is mountains high, again and again I reverently read it. I am very grateful to you for your kindness. I enclose a separate paper, please deign to read it, and do not laugh at it."

This is a translation of the enclosure:—

"The other day I went to the hot springs of Ikao, there I met a relation whom I had not seen for a long time. This man had been travelling in the West [this means in Europe] since he was a youth, but last winter he returned to Japan. He has become an earnest Christian, and had what was, I think, called the 'Holy Scripture' with him, but as it was in English I could not read it, so he condescended to translate a little to me.

"The day before I started, he prayed to God for me that I might become a believer, and that we might meet together sometimes to ask God for His grace. And he also prayed that I might have a safe and peaceful journey. On the way home I unexpectedly met you, who are a missionary, and you spoke to me. This is certainly the guidance of God, I thought, and therefore I spoke to you, but you were not able to understand all I said.

"In Japan there are truly many gods and many Buddhas, until now I have bowed before them all, but I have not really believed them. I do not yet understand about Christ, but I have heard that it is truly pure teaching for man's heart. Please, please, I wish thoroughly to understand the teaching, but at my home there is no one that knows it.

"Many of my relations live in Tokio, therefore I sometimes visit there. When I go there I certainly wish to call and see you as I wish to receive your kind teaching. But this year you are studying Japanese, and next year if when I call you are absent, who will teach me? Is your house a church or a school? please let know.

"I am very sorry to trouble you but please write this to me. In this severe heat, I beg that you will condescend to take care of yourself."

I answered this letter, sending a Testament and some books, and again she wrote, but she said that her eyesight was getting very bad, and she doubted whether she could write again. She said that she could not ask any one to write for her as her household were all opposed to Christianity. Though I wrote several times I never heard more of her.

We were as "ships that pass in the night"; we had sighted each other and exchanged a greeting, and floated apart on life's wide sea, never probably to meet again till we touch the shores of the "Land that is very far off".

AN AGED CHRISTIAN.

THE old women of Japan sometimes show great vigour of mind. A remarkable instance of this was to be found in old Mrs. Sonoda, an S.P.G. Mission woman who died last May. She was nearly sixty when she first became a Christian, but, until the time of her death, she laboured unceasingly, living in the little Mission-house at Odaki. It is a very out-of-the-way place, twelve miles from a railway station, and there was no other resident worker there but herself, a clergyman going monthly to take a celebration. Miss Tange, the S.P.G. worker at a neighbouring place, went to see her some months before she died and wrote of her visit as follows :—

"Through the rain and dreadful mud old Mrs. Sonoda came to meet me. She is a white-haired old lady of nearly seventy, but as lively as any young person. She had a big umbrella and high clogs, and seemed to think nothing of the weather. I followed her, fearing at every step that my clogs would stick in the mud. She led me to the straw-thatched cottage of two rooms which is the Mission-house. She spends her time visiting the few Christians and teaching all

who will listen. In her spare time she works in her garden, and seems to have no care or trouble. I went, meaning to comfort her in her lonely position, but instead it was she who comforted me."

In Japan a very common form of poetry consists of a couple of lines which must contain no more and no less than thirty-one syllables in all. During her last illness Mrs. Sonoda wrote one of these poems, which when translated runs thus:—

The end of life's journey has come,
My burden I lower;
Let me go to perpetual Spring
In the Garden of God.

MRS. SONODA, AN AGED JAPANESE CHRISTIAN.

A TEA-PARTY IN JAPAN.[1]

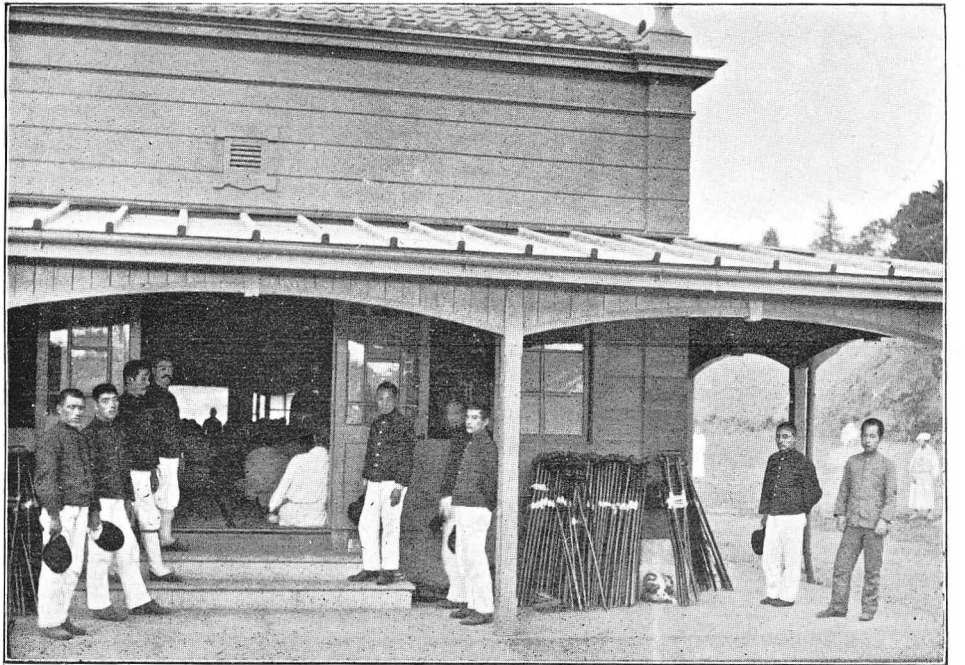
WHAT a happy thing it would be if all the sorrow and suffering caused by a war could come to an end when peace was signed! But, alas! such is not the case, and at the present time there are still many thousands of Japanese men stretched on beds of sickness or going about crippled and maimed in different ways. Last April and May the number of men in the Toyama hospital where I visit was nearly five thousand, now it is *only* twelve hundred. Think of it, in that enclosure twelve hundred more or less suffering men; some, of course, have not much the matter with them, but there are quite a number who were wounded at Mukden and who during all these months have never left their beds. They surprise one by their healthy appearance, but one often finds that quite a strong-looking man has really some serious wound. Last week I was standing by the bed of a nice young fellow who has been ill for months. Sitting on his bed was a very bright-looking young man, and I turned to him several times so as to include him in the conversation, but he gave me no answer—"Evidently does not like

[1] Written in 1905.

Christianity," thought I. "Well," said the one I had gone to see, "I have not been able to stand for months, and he has not been able to speak." The silence was explained! A Mukden bullet had passed through his mouth, cutting his tongue, and this poor young fellow was dumb.

The hospital authorities are most grateful to any one who will give an entertainment to the men, and in addition to frequent lantern evenings we have had two tea-parties. One was in June and the other on the 3rd of November, a great day in Japan, for it is the Emperor's birthday. It is such a delightfully simple thing to give a tea-party in Japan. There is no dreadful "cutting up"—one merely chooses one little packet of assorted cakes in a shop and two hundred identical ones arrive, and each soldier is handed his little packet. There is no putting in of milk and sugar; there is no counting of chairs, for every one sits on the floor. I send you some photos I took, and in them you will see the door of the recreation room where the parties take place, also the men sitting on the floor with their cakes beside them.

Two dear little Japanese maidens in very bright dresses, and two little American children went with us. The soldiers do love to see children; even when the baby of eighteen months began to howl I think that they quite enjoyed the home-like sound. The children sang some little songs and a few short speeches were made; we also amused them by putting on some Corean dresses. Each man was given a post-card with



ENTRANCE TO RECREATION ROOM

a picture of the English sailors in Tokio on Admiral Togo's arrival. At the end Mr. Kanazawa, one of our Ushigome church-wardens, made a speech in which he told them that some people had a very mistaken idea of Christianity, and thought that to be a Christian was to be disloyal to the Emperor. He then read them the prayers for the Emperor and Royal Family out of the Prayer-book. At the end each man was given a tract and a short life of Queen Victoria, which I have written especially with a view to its circulation among soldiers.

It is a very simple entertainment to offer to a couple of hundred men, but soldiers all the world over love sympathy, and the Japanese soldier in particular, at this crisis in his country's history, feels keenly any little mark of sympathy from English-speaking people. Here are some of their letters.

"I was wounded at Mukden on April 8, and came into this hospital in July. It has been cloudy and rainy lately, but yesterday it cleared, which was fortunate. Yesterday was a day which we will never forget to the end of our lives. Your kindness made you come here for our pleasure, and you even gave us tea and cakes and valuable books, for which we thank you. That we should be able to celebrate the Emperor's birthday with you who belong to our honourable and close ally, England, is indeed a gift from heaven. Honourable Miss Ballard, I have a request to make to you. Since I went to the war my family have been in great trouble, they have been sorrowing and weeping. Please will you pray to the God Jesus who is in heaven

to give them some comfort. When I leave the army may I come to you to hear Christ's teaching and to be taught by you? I write this letter to thank you and to make these requests."

"Thank you for coming so far and giving us such nice things. Yesterday, the Emperor's birthday, was the most joyful festival. That even we who are in hospital should be able to pass it so happily is owing to your kindness, for which we thank you. And it was especially a joy to us that you brought these dear little children. My wounds are now nearly healed, and cause me but little inconvenience, but there are a number of badly wounded men in hospital who for a long time have been seeking only each other and talking of the same things, so it is very dull. To see the dear little children with their innocent ways and to hear them sing with their charming little voices was a great pleasure. So because of that we were able to pass a happy Emperor's birthday. We were all very happy. The weather is becoming cold; pray take care of yourself. Please give my compliments to all who came."

"Kind friends! Yesterday for our pleasure you gave a tea-party in the hospital. Your kindness draws tears of pleasure even to the eyes of rough fellows like us. Ah! what pleasure it gave me to hear those charming little girls sing! We have no proper words with which to thank you, but as we do so in our hearts, warm tears of gratitude come to our eyes. However, my pleasure was such that I must send you this one line."

JAPAN IN TIME OF WAR.[1]

A COLD March evening,—the March of Japan is as cold as the March of England,—rain coming down in torrents, and a bitter wind whistling round the house; yet every now and then I rush to the window and, sliding aside the wooden shutters, I lean out into the dark night. There is a tinkling of bells, and in a few minutes there appear some dozens of swiftly-running men, each of whom carries a paper lantern and a bell. It is a pilgrimage to pray for the success of the Japanese army. On they come; and as they pass under my window I see that the men are clad in nothing but white cotton shirts, which are soaked in the rain and blown about by the wind. For a moment the bells tinkle loudly beside me; I see the lights reflected in the wet road; and then they enter a grove of trees in which there is a Shinto shrine. Here a halt is made; and presently from among the dark high trees there comes a loud voice, "Dai Nippon banzai," "Hurrah for the Empire of Japan"; then all the men of the pilgrimage chant the same words. Then, "Hurrah for the Emperor of Japan"; then, "Hurrah for the army of Japan". In each case the leader says the words

[1] Written in 1904.

first; then the men repeat them; after this they all stand and worship at the shrine, and then they run on again, lantern and bell in hand.

At least a dozen of these parties pass during the evening. Cold as the night is, I cannot help looking out at them, and I cannot help admiring them. They are all hard-working men, who have done a long day's labour, and yet in the cold and the wind they start out to pray for the success of their country's arms. Who is the God that can grant success? That they know not, so they pray before all the shrines: they pray before Kwannon, the goddess of mercy; before Hachiman, the god of war; before Jizo, before Kompira, before Buddhist shrines and Shinto shrines. If any effort of theirs will help their fellow-countrymen who are fighting the fierce Russians, they will not grudge that effort.

Some schoolgirls come to me for an English lesson, and I ask them about the pilgrimages. But they laugh scornfully: they are very modern young women; they believe in none of these gods; they ridicule the idea of praying before a shrine; they have no faith in any kind of prayer. "You may laugh," say I, rather hotly; "I don't. These labouring men are, at any rate, forgetting their own comforts and pleasures; they are working for others. We may surely admire their earnestness and devotion." In Japan every labouring man, every woman, every child feels that he or she must have some part in their country's struggle.

Go to the railway station of some country town in the early hours of the morning; you will perhaps find

VISITING A GRAVE

it packed with people. Young and old, rich and poor, they stand patiently waiting. They are rewarded for their patience at last as a train rushes in full of soldiers bound for the front. If the men are first reservists, they are in high spirits, excited at the thought of the coming struggle; they lean out of the train, they laugh, they shout greetings, for they are young and but few of them leave children. But with the second reservists it is different; they are the older men, and have parted from wives and children. They know that their families will have a hard time while the bread-winner is away.

The younger men think of war merely as the road to fame; they are all panting to do some distinguished deed. But the older men, though they too are ready to die for their country, realise that war means sickness and battlefield horrors, sorrow and sadness as well as fame and glory. On the morning that they left their homes a little red tablet was nailed to the gatepost, with the words "Gone to the front," and the name. They know that some day the wife may have to go out and take down the red tablet and put in its place a black one,—"Killed in battle". The train stops but a minute in the station; the children on the platform wildly wave their flags; the men shout "Banzai"; there is talking and confusion, a whistle, and it is off again. "Why, it is hardly worth while to go for such a minute!" say I to a Japanese lady friend. "Oh, but," she answers, "we cannot let our soldiers see an empty station; it would be so dull for them."

It is not only the statesmen and soldiers of Japan who have been preparing for this war for years; the women have been preparing too; and now Japan is reaping the benefit of their work. Many things that in England are done entirely by the Army Medical Department are in Japan entrusted to the members of the Ladies' Volunteer Nurses Association.

The enthusiasm and energy of the volunteer nurses is beyond praise. They have not only rolled thousands of bandages, but they have even done the antiseptic dressings for the whole army. These dressings require the most careful handling, and are entrusted only to a chosen few. A lady who undertakes to help with them goes to the Red Cross Hospital in Tokio about seven o'clock in the morning; there she changes every article of clothing, including her shoes; covering her head with a cap, she goes to a room specially prepared with tiles and asphalt. There she sits on a stool at a zinc table, and works the whole day. Many of the most influential society women of Tokio have spent days at this hard monotonous work. But they do it with good will, knowing that on it depend the lives of men.

When a train full of wounded soldiers passes through the country the Government depends on the volunteer nurses to be at the stations to dress and bandage the wounded men.

When the wounded are discharged from hospital they are generally sent to some mountain resort to recruit. This they enjoy immensely, as many of them

have had but little opportunity of seeing the beauties of their own country.

Such a health resort is Karuizawa, where many of the sick and wounded are now resident; and here a touching incident lately occurred, interesting to the British visitors. A lecture was being given for the entertainment of the invalids. It was illustrated by lantern slides, and among them was a portrait of Queen Victoria. When this picture was displayed the whole audience rose; officers and men spontaneously saluted it as they would have saluted their Emperor.

The Government provides food for their sick and wounded, and gives to each one penny a day for pocket-money. Their amusements are restricted by their slender means, and when a man buys a newspaper it passes from hand to hand till it is dropping to pieces; that small sheet has cost half a day's pocket-money!

The Japanese are poor, and it was a great trial to them, when with the Allied Forces at Pekin, that they could make small return for hospitalities offered to them by British and American soldiers. The proud and sensitive Japanese felt this humiliation keenly. We never see an intoxicated Japanese soldier. It would be well if European armies could be inspired with the sentiment of a Japanese I know of. The victim of intemperance before he enlisted, he wrote on joining the army: "My body now belongs to the Emperor, so of course I must not get drunk".

At the commencement of the war an attempt was

made to make it appear that the struggle was between Buddhism and Christianity, as represented by Japan and Russia. This wholly erroneous view of the crisis is, however, passing away. The Christians in the Japanese Army may be few, but they play a not insignificant part, and they are not without influence. It was a Christian officer who, along with a Buddhist friend, undertook to blow up a Manchurian bridge and was taken in the attempt. They were allowed by the Russians to have a soldier's death, by being shot instead of hanged. A Buddhist and a Christian, they stood side by side, and before they were led out to the place where they were to die, the Russians asked if they had any request to make. The Christian asked that he might have the Sermon on the Mount read to him by a priest. Strange indeed the words must have sounded, read aloud by a Russian priest, followed by the condemned man in his Japanese Bible, while the soldiers who were to fire the fatal volley waited at the door. This was not the only one who carried his Bible with him till death; a bloodstained copy of the Gospel of St. John was taken from the breast-pocket of a man who died in the second attack on Port Arthur, and his comrades testified that he was known to be a follower of the "way".

"May my life blossom into glorious death," is the prayer of the Japanese soldier. The parting with wife and children saddens, but love of home is not so strong as love of country. This is the ruling passion, and the man who has been leading a "mute inglorious" existence, is filled with the hope that a glorious "death flower" may crown him.

The Japanese soldier is cremated where he falls, and his ashes are sent to his home. Then there is a great funeral, but it is more like a festival than a funeral; not a tear is shed; the man has attained his desire, the "death flower" has blossomed, and it were wrong to weep.

After the funeral is over there is a strict observance of anniversary days, on which the grave must be visited —the seventh, fourteenth, forty-ninth, and one hundredth days after the death, and then the actual anniversary next year, are all days on which honour must be paid at the grave.

There is little of beauty in the graveyards, no elaborate monuments, and no planting of flowers, but the mossy grey stones contrast well with the green trees, and they are always placed in such tranquil surroundings that they form picturesque spots, and seem to blend with the scene. On the slopes of the mountains, in the depths of the forest, on the shores of lakes one finds those little groups of stones, and the freshly turned earth, the flowers, and the cup of rice show where a soldier's remains have found a resting-place.

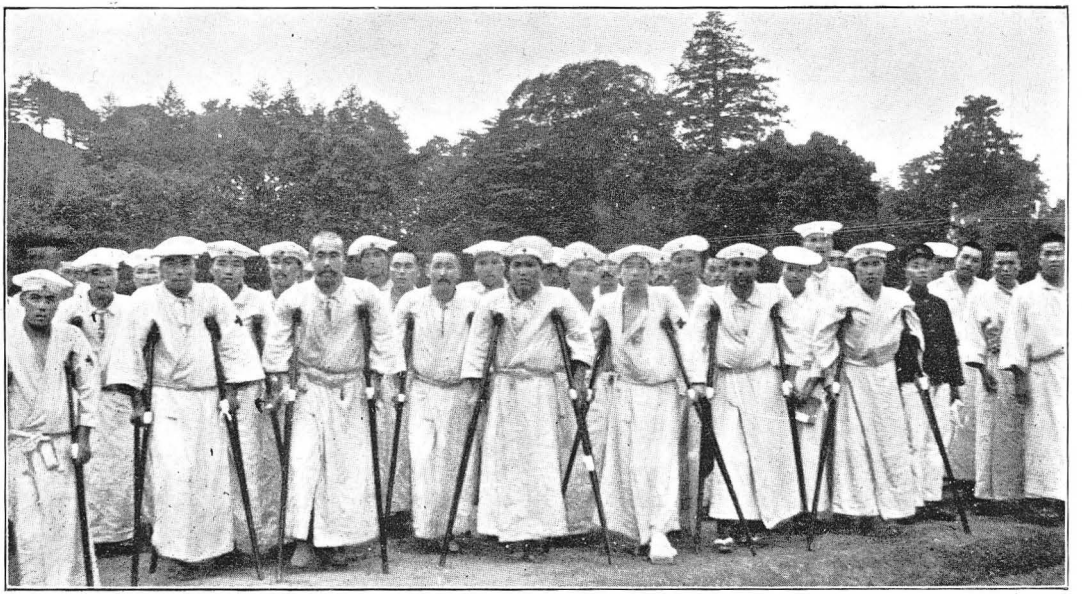
Future generations will point to those graves of the men who fell in the great war—the men who won for Japan her place among the nations.

"GIVE PEACE IN OUR TIME, O LORD."

JULY in Japan, how hot it can be! There are days of pouring rain and then days when the sun beats down and the moisture rising from the earth makes one feel as if one were in a vapour bath.

If on these days life seems a burden to the strong, what must it be like to those who are stretched on beds of sickness, tossing about through all the long hours of the hot night as well as through the sultry hours of mid-day. When I enter the little rooms of the big military hospital I realise that every one who is *not* in pain ought to have a thankful heart.

I only visit the part of the hospital that is reserved for long illnesses or serious wounds that require special attention. Instead of big wards there are little rooms with two men in each. The room is quite bare, no chair, no table, just two beds. Each bed is made with a little shelf at the head; on this the soldier keeps his medicine bottles and his own special treas ures—books, cigarettes, artificial flowers, bowls of gold-fish and even dolls are to be seen on the shelf, and-one gets to know by a look at it whether the sick man is very poor or fairly well off, whether he has friends to come and see him or whether he is one of



SOME OF THE SOLDIERS WOUNDED IN THE WAR

those whose friends are all far away in some distant part of Japan.

When I go to the hospital one of the nurses always offers to come round with me to carry the *Graphics* and tracts which I distribute to the men.

"Please don't trouble," I say to her, but it is evident that she rather looks forward to having a little look at the pictures herself!

In the first room we enter there is a young man sitting up in bed, he is talking and laughing and working away with some balls of bright coloured cottons. He has been shot in the back, and though he has been six months in hospital he cannot stand even with crutches. Another soldier has taught him how to net shirts and he is quite enjoying his work. He is so cheerful and contented that he is a lesson to all.

In the next room it is very different, a man lies panting on the bed, an ice bag is on his head and a woman stands beside him fanning him. I lay a flower beside him, it may give him a moment's pleasure. The nurse shakes her head as we pass out, "Yes, he is dying," she says.

In the next room is a man who knows a little English and is delighted to have some pictures of the Baltic Fleet. He has heard some of "the Christ story" and would like a tract. His room companion is a man who looks quite well, but can't use his foot. He is worrying over his future; how is he to support his family, if he can't walk? Then we come to a sad case, a nice-looking young fellow who has

been shot in the head and whose memory is affected. On seeing my bag of books he pulls out a pitiful little purse, and pressing a piece of money into my hands he whispers, "Books, books". I put the money back into his purse, and choosing a simple little life of Queen Victoria place it in his hands.

"Where does he come from?" I ask.

"Don't know," says the other man in the room, "he can't tell us much."

Poor young fellow, no doubt some anxious mother is looking for his letters, wondering why they do not come, and all the time he lies there with a clouded brain.

The next room surprises me; pinned to the wall is a picture of Our Lord's Agony in Gethsemane.

"Do you understand it?" I ask.

"No," is the answer, "not very well, but a friend gave it to me."

"Read this," I say, putting into his hands *The Story of the Crucifixion.*

Among the pictures which kind friends have sent for the soldiers was a gardener's catalogue with about a hundred brilliantly coloured pictures of flowers. What pleasure these pictures have given! Some men pin them up at once on the wall, some keep them carefully rolled up. In one room is a hospital orderly who has been ill for some time.

"Please give me one," he says.

"I gave you one of these pictures last time."

"No, no," he says, "don't you remember? my old mother was here and you gave it to her. She was so

pleased, and I let her take it back to the country when she went home."

If it is sad to see those who have lost an arm or a leg, what can one say when one sees the blind? those who are never again to look on the faces of friends, doomed to grope their way in darkness through life.

This is war, and it is as one goes from bed to bed that one realises the depth of meaning in the petition: "Give *peace* in our time, O Lord!"

There they lie, these poor men, many of whom went out with such light hearts, thinking of nothing but honour and glory.

"Dynamite," says one, putting his hand to his head.

"The bullet wound was nothing, but there was no one to pick me up and I got frost-bitten. *That's* agony," says another.

War comes to an end and peace reigns, but will that comfort this poor wife who is watching by her husband in his last few hours of life?

"Give peace in our time, O Lord."

Every Sunday we hear the words, yet how few think of them with any keen sense of how much the petition means; if they could see these dying men and these silent stricken women surely they would with all the fervour they are capable of petition God to "Give peace in our time".

Peace to the Russians and Japanese; peace to England; peace to the world; peace which may bind together the nations and help those who know Him not to learn the truths taught by the Prince of Peace.

BY A BUDDHIST TEMPLE IN JAPAN.

LET me take you a stroll round one of the old Buddhist temples of Japan.

At the gate are stone figures covered with moss, which look as if they had stood there for many generations; an avenue of tall trees makes a cool shade under which there are little booths where the pilgrims rest and drink tea.

The temple building consists of one big, high-roofed room which is entered by ascending a flight of steps. The pilgrims go up this flight of steps, and standing in front of the principal shrine they toll the great bell hanging there; this they do to attract the attention of the god, then they clap their hands together and say a prayer.

Inside the gate you will see a man sitting with a pile of heavy tiles in front of him, they are evidently intended for a roof. "Why in the world are these piled up here?" I ask. "Our roof is very old," he says, "but we have no money to pay for a new one, so we ask every pilgrim to pay for just one tile, and by each person doing their little share, we are gradually getting the whole big roof done." When a pilgrim lays down the five farthings which constitute the price of a tile,

THE BUDDHA IN THE WOOD

one of the tiles is taken from the pile. The Buddhist priests have grasped the practical truth of the Scotch proverb: "Mony littles mak a muckle".

Inside the temple is a wooden figure of the god Jizo. This god has always a pathetic interest, for he is especially the patron saint of children. Close beside his image is a wooden stand with dozens of dolls arranged tier upon tier; each gaudily dressed doll represents a dead child and is offered by the parents. As one looks at these dolls a vista of desolate homes and broken-hearted mothers seems to rise before one. The joy and delight of the house is gone, the treasured child is now somewhere in the dark shades of another world. There, they believe, it will meet with a horrid old hag who will steal the little one's clothes. No one can help but Jizo. What wonder that they haste to the temple to implore Jizo's protection for the child. Other gods may be neglected, but Jizo never wants for incense and bright flowers and worshippers.

Passing on to the next temple we find it thronged with people, banners and flags wave in the air and all the children of the village seem to be playing round. "Is it a festival?" I ask. "No, a funeral," is the reply. "The funeral of a soldier who was killed in the war. These are his ashes in that box." I long to ask where it was that he fell. Was he with the Japanese army in their desperate attacks on Port Arthur, or did he fall in one of those long bloody fights at Mukden? But the strange sight of an English woman in that place collects such a crowd that I hurry away.

By the gate of the temple are two huge figures, "the two kings" they are called, supposed to guard the gate of the temple and frighten away demons. As we stand looking at them some women come up to worship. One of the women is very much in earnest; she stands worshipping with bent head and then she takes a piece of paper, puts it in her mouth, chews it up, and throws it at the image. "Stuck fast," she calls out in glee. These two figures are representative of strength, and if the paper thrown sticks to the figure, then some of that strength will pass into the body of the worshipper. The woman chews another piece of paper and throws it; again it sticks, and she goes on her way rejoicing.

Passing out of the temple enclosure into the high road, one finds oneself opposite a strange sight. The paper walls of a little cottage have been all taken down so as to show a gilt shrine erected inside. The shrine contains the figure of a Buddhist god, beside it are the words, "Above righteousness, above all things, this god likes to be worshipped". What strange words! What sort of a character must they attribute to a god who likes "to be worshipped" "above righteousness".

Beside the gilt shrine stands a skeleton; on a great white sheet hanging behind it are painted red flames of fire; above the head of the skeleton are the words "Take care". There the skeleton stands, facing the busy road, a grinning ghastly thing reminding the passer-by that he too will be some day like what it is now. And the painter of those leaping red flames of

fire, what did he wish to say to the world when he hung that sheet beside the skeleton?

"Take care," were all the words that he wrote. "Take care, or you too come to these flames of fire; take care,—life, youth and energy must pass." This surely was what he meant to say. A skeleton in flames of fire, certainly enough to arrest the attention of any one finding it by the busy road, and yet how few of those who pass by give any real heed to the lesson it might teach; they go on their way to the temple and spit out their petitions for strength of body and trust that they will be heard for their much asking.

THE LAND OF MORNING CALM.[1]

"THE Land of Morning Calm,"—this is the poetic name by which the inhabitants of Corea designate their own country, and it has also been called the "Hermit Kingdom" because of the way in which it has shut itself off from all communication with other countries. Even now, though Europeans are allowed to enter Corea freely, the Coreans do not care to have much intercourse with them, and a Corean book, published not many years ago, says, "as for Europeans, they are more like beasts or birds than human beings and their speech is like the chirping of fowls".

The Land of Morning Calm is causing great commotion in the world at the present time, for the terrible war between Russia and Japan was partly caused by the fact that both these countries want to govern Corea. One would think that the Coreans might be left to govern themselves, as they have both an Emperor and a Government; but this they have proved themselves to be incapable of doing; in their language the same word that means "work" signifies misfortune, and this just expresses the Coreans' view of life—to have to work is to meet with misfortune; and so en-

[1] Written in 1905.

ergetic people like the Japanese go over to Corea to make railways, regulate the post office, and generally arrange the affairs of the Corean people.

The capital of Corea is Seoul. This city, and indeed nearly all the cities of Corea, have walls round them with big gates, like the ones we are accustomed to see in pictures of Palestine. Each gate has a name over it; one gate in Seoul is called "the gate of animated amiability"; another has the grand title of "the gate of elevated humanity".

The dress of the people of Corea is most extraordinary, and when walking about Seoul, one feels as if one were Alice walking about Wonderland, and, like her, one is perpetually asking "Why?"

"Why do the Corean women walk about the streets with the sleeves of their cloaks hanging over their heads? Why don't they put their arms into their sleeves?"

No one can answer this question, but it is quite certain that no woman would ever think of putting her arms into those long green sleeves which are condemned to hang useless on each side of her head.

Nothing could be more extraordinary than the men's hats. If a man has the misfortune to lose a parent he is obliged to proclaim his grief by wearing a hat like a clothes-basket. For three long years his head is immersed in this huge hat, and for one year of the time he is further obliged to carry a sort of screen in front of his face whenever he appears in the street. "Why does he hide his face behind a screen?" one asks, but here again no one can give an answer.

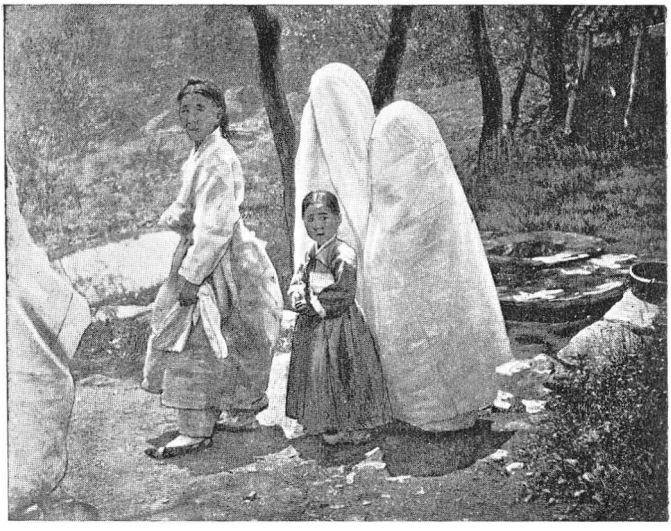
The Coreans are not a progressive people. Nearly every new invention of the day may be seen in Japan; bicycles are no novelty there and may be seen in every street of Tokio and in most parts of the country.

But such things do not suit the dignified slow walking Corean with his long white robes and tall hat. Lately one of the English missionaries rode up from the country to the capital on his bicycle; the people seeing this black thing coming along with inconceivable rapidity fled from the fields, calling out that a monster raven was approaching.

Among the places I saw in Corea, two will always remain in my memory as having a peculiar charm of their own, one the Emperor of Corea's East Palace in Seoul, the other a Buddhist monastery in the island of Kangwha.

Receiving a special permission through the English Legation, we went to spend the afternoon in the grounds of the East Palace. It was in May, and the fresh green of the trees was delicious, cuckoos were to be heard in the distance, the azaleas were nearly over, but the ground was strewn with violets. In one corner of the park was a heronry; one could walk under tall pine trees and look up at the nests while great white birds poked out long necks and looked rather scornfully down as if resenting our intrusion on their quiet.

It is not often that they are disturbed, for the Palace is deserted. The buildings are not fine, but they could accommodate some hundreds of people, so



A GROUP OF COREAN WOMEN

IN A COREAN MARKET PLACE

it is rather sad to see them falling to pieces. Some years ago when the Emperor was giving a banquet there was a revolution in the Palace and some of his guests were murdered. Since then the Emperor has refused to live there, saying that he sees the ghosts of the murdered men. There is yet another palace that the Emperor is kept out of by his fear of ghosts; it is the palace in which the late Empress was murdered about ten years ago.

Murders and ghosts and deserted palaces do not seem to belong to the twentieth century, but they are accepted as part of the existing order of things in Corea!

When one has heard a little of what goes on in that country one is not surprised to learn that the Emperor and Crown Prince live in daily fear of being poisoned. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," and I don't think that the poorest Englishman would exchange his chances of life with those of the Emperor of Corea.

The Buddhist monastery I visited was on Kangwha, an island about the size of the Isle of Wight.

The English church has a very successful mission there. After spending two nights with the sisters who carry on work in that far-away spot, I crossed the island to see the Buddhist monastery. The journey was performed in a chair carried by two men, and the scenery was so lovely that it seemed all too short. As the morning mists dispersed ranges of mountains became visible; the air was like that on a Scotch moor in summer, while the sunshine had all the brightness of the Far East.

The monastery was situated on the slope of a hill. Most of the monks were away, the few that were left seemed good-natured, ignorant men, who were living an easy life far from the turmoil of the world.

The tranquillity of the place, the fresh green of the trees, the note of birds, the distant views of the sea, and above all the banks of wild lily-of-the-valley made one want to stay there for days, if not weeks.

While we gathered handfuls of lilies, Corean women came round us and anxiously inquired how we cooked them! It never entered their heads that we would gather them for anything except eating purposes.

Poor Coreans! it is rather sad to think that they have proved so very incapable, but they have really not had a fair chance yet, for their Government provides no education for them.

Schools don't exist out of big towns: the position of women is a very inferior one, and consequently the home life counts for very little. We can but hope that with the help of the Japanese the Coreans may wake to a more vigorous life.

WHAT I BOUGHT WITH TWO POUNDS.

LAST year a branch of the King's Messengers sent me two pounds.

When I received this money I thought that I would like to get something that would be used in the Sunday-school, and something that would be very useful and last a long time.

I kept the money for some months, because I could not make up my mind what would be the best thing to get, and then last January I spent it. Do you know the game when you guess a thing, beginning with the questions—Animal, vegetable, mineral? People say that they can guess anything if you only let them guess long enough; but though my friends tried to guess what I had bought, they all had to give up. I used to help them to guess by saying: "The thing is made chiefly of wood, and you can see numbers of the same kind of thing in the streets of Tokio, and it is so big that I could not get it in at the gate". "Oh, if it is something like what we often see in the streets we are sure we can guess," said my friends; but they never did guess, and always gave up, so I had better tell you at once.

It was a policeman's box that I bought! In Eng-

land our policemen walk about all the time, but in Japan they have little boxes like sentinel's boxes to sit in.

The box I bought was made for the policeman at an exhibition last year, so it is bigger and better made than the ordinary ones. Its roof is quite grand and it has windows.

And now I suppose that you wonder what in the world I was going to do with the police box.

Well, I must explain to you that my Sunday-school is divided into four classes, but I have only three rooms that I can use for the Sunday-school, and the rooms are so little that I can't have two classes in one room, even though the children sit on the floor. So the poor little infant class used to be sent to have their lesson in the garden. This was very nice when it was fine weather, but when it rained, they had to sit on the verandah, and then if they said their hymns too loud they were told to be quiet, and sometimes they got wet. I did so wish that I had just one more room in my house, even a little room I thought would do; and one day by the road I saw this neat-looking little house of one room.

So I asked one of the Christians to find out if it was for sale; she came and told me that it was for sale, and that with the glass windows and stones for the foundation it would cost one pound. I was delighted and told her to go quickly and say that I would buy it.

It *was* a business getting it into my garden; that cost sixteen shillings, nearly as much as the box itself.

MY POLICE-BOX CLASS

Six men carried it, and as it was too big to get in at the gate, part of the garden fence had to be taken down, then a big camellia tree which was in the way had to be dug up; then the branch of a tree had to be cut off; indeed it took the whole afternoon for these men to get the box into its proper place. The children were delighted with it; they thought it fine fun to sit like a policeman in a box; eight children and a teacher could get in. But we were only able to use it for a few months, because soon the class grew to fourteen, and the teacher would come to me, looking very troubled, and say, "I can't squash more than nine in, however tight I squash them". We don't want to squash them too much, so now we have them in the garden on fine days, and when it is wet and there are not so many children we use the box. It is useful in a lot of ways; The Sunday-school begins at one o'clock, but the children sometimes come before twelve (I am sure I can't think when they have dinner), and on wet days they wait in the box instead of standing outside as they used to do.

The other day some of the older boys came to me and said that they thought that the box was getting rather dirty, and might they wash the windows, and sweep the floor. I told them that they might wash and sweep as much as they liked. When I went out to see what was happening, I found them polishing the windows with bits of cloth, and as my servant would not give them the broom they had made one for themselves with bamboo leaves.

In my Sunday-school the children choose the hymns. The infant class (whose ages are from five to seven, so really they ought not to be called infants, but they are the youngest) know quite a number by heart. The boy standing on a seat inside the box always chooses "Once in Royal David's city". The boy lower down chooses "Blest are the pure in heart". The little girl with rather a smile, standing in the middle, chooses "We plough the fields and scatter".

I hope that the King's Messengers who sent me the two pounds will read this, and when I am in England perhaps I shall meet some of them and be able to tell them more about the children in Japan.

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