

"Thy will be done," in her prayers, it is hardly uncharitable to assume that there was a little mental reservation with respect to Frank's next year at school.

Often did she stand over the drawer where were kept the quantities of work her mamma had made her do (in anticipation, it may be, of long spinster life in a cottage), and she looked at the work for all the world as if she were pricing it.

Industry would make it all good again, and if it were converted into money she would gain a little, at any rate, towards this terrible fifty pounds. Once she took some of the work with her to Preston, and offered it at shops and repositories, but so low was the price offered her that she brought it away again, sorry that she had subjected herself to the mortification of seeking a purchaser. She had heard of some societies for disposing of "ladies' work," without tradesmen intercepting the chief share of the purchase, but how to find this beneficent channel she knew not. One of her forlorn hopes was colouring photographs, but on application she was told that there was no opening, and those already engaged had not enough work to fill their time.

One morning, while reading the papers, some remarks on a law case opened a new door of hope for her. Women, it seems, are sometimes employed in law-copying. She saw this in the examination of a witness in a disputed settlement case. She resolved to go to Preston to make inquiry. Ostensibly she had shopping to do, but besides that she had a little business to transact on her own account.

Arrived at the station she took out her memorandum-book, looked again at an address or two, and then walked hurriedly into Lune Street. The hurry of her pace abated, however, when she found herself actually in the street. She walked for a few moments backwards and forwards before the chambers of a certain lawyer, as if she had some purpose in her mind she had not resolution to accomplish. At last, with a desperate courage, she entered, went up two flights of stairs, and timidly rapped at the door indicated by large black letters to be the professional sanctum. The rap was responded to by a gentleman who looked in keeping with the dusty littered den, wherein he waited for his prey.

Katie's eye took in every detail of his room at a glance; it also with one nervous flash made a middling accurate estimate of him.

Now he was used to being visited by lady clients, nervous, excitable lady clients, anxious lady clients, and sharp, acute, business-like women, who seemed as if they thoroughly enjoyed a bit of perplexed litigation, but it was rarely indeed that any of these visited him without some "protector" in the person of guardian, husband, or brother, to give them a kind of prestige and protect them if possible from legal iniquities. The *visite solitaire* of this young girl did therefore rather surprise him; but he supposed she was a new client, and seeing that she had some difficulty in announcing her errand he asked her,

with the utmost deference and suavity of manner, in what way he could advise or serve her.

"I have not come for legal assistance," she said; "you must excuse me for intruding upon you. Do you give out law papers to copy? If you do, and have sufficient to employ another copyist, I should be happy to offer my services."

In a moment his manner changed. The man was clever and of the class gentleman, but he was not of the species gentleman, so he allowed himself to eye his visitor rather superciliously before he answered her. She felt it, and her colour rose; yet he did not learn much from his prolonged stare. She was dressed just as any other young lady might be for a morning in the town. If she was under an imperious obligation to apply for such work it did not appear in her toilette.

"Have you been used to the copying?" he asked.

"No; but a very little practice, and I should soon acquire the hand."

"What would you propose doing it for?"

She muttered something almost unintelligible. But the drift of it was, "I thought if I devoted four hours a day to it, I ought to earn twelve shillings the week."

"You mistake! that is a very exaggerated figure. Why, a man I employ, a cripple, who has a wife and children to maintain, and therefore you may be sure works as hard as he can, only earns twelve shillings. He would not do that," he said loftily, "but, knowing his circumstances, I am happy to do my best for him."

Katie did not appear greatly impressed with his disinterestedness; she simply said, "If you think I might employ any of my time for you in that way, you must please state your own terms. I can of course consider whether or not it is worth my while to accept them."

"At present all my copying is done by the person I have named, but you can leave me your address."

This permission was given so patronisingly, that she had a hard struggle with herself before she could comply. It would not do, however, to lose any opportunity through a foolish pride, so she wrote it for him in a firm hand, addressing it to her schoolroom, and then rose.

"Good morning," he said shortly, without rising.

"Good morning," she replied, with a bow, in which he detected more than a slight sarcasm. It made him wonder more than ever who she was; but if she was small enough to point a rebuke, he felt it would be still smaller of him to feel it, especially from a girl who had just applied to him for copying at twelve shillings per week. What business had such people with such airs?

(To be continued.)



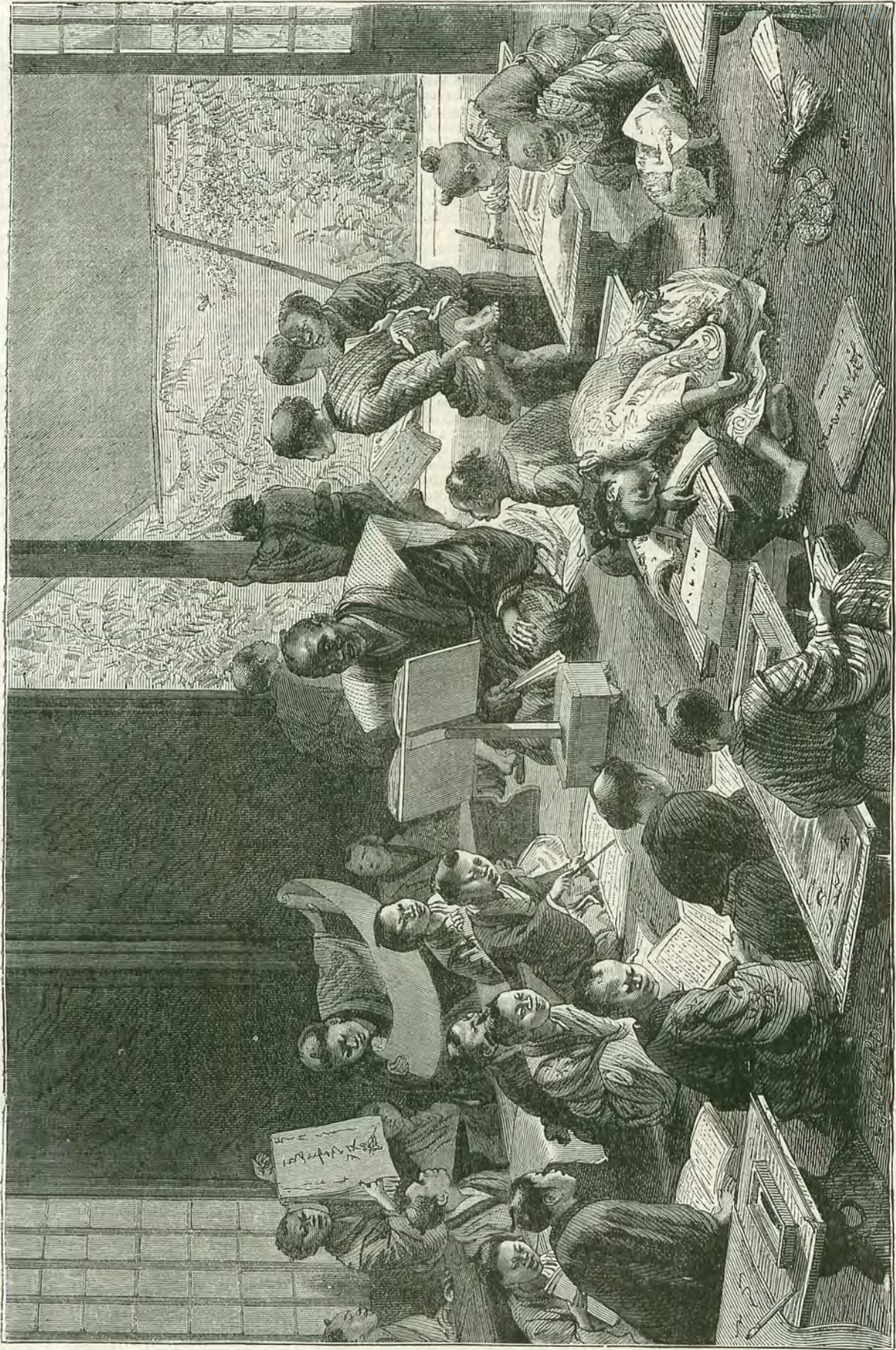
A PEEP IN JAPAN.

HOUSE builders in Japan do their work in a very different way from Englishmen in the same line of business. They don't lay foundations under the earth, but upon wooden rafts laid on the ground they erect their lightly-constructed homes. These homes seldom have an up-stairs to them. The walls are of wood, and the doors are sliding panels covered over with daintily-designed paper. If you take a peep into the house you will see how destitute of furniture it is. True, although they dispense with such useful articles to the English, as beds, chairs, cupboards, &c., they indulge in a table, but then that is no higher than one of our little footstools—about 6 inches from the floor. But this is all they need, as, with them, the mode of sitting at table is to double their legs under their body upon a mat, and in this apparently cramped attitude enjoy their meals.

Their water-colours and oil paintings are not framed and hung upon the walls as ours are, but are rolled up and lightly attached to the wooden partition for a casual inspection. These pictures, however, are wonderful works of art, for the Japanese are possessed of remarkable artistic talent and taste. As with us there are some favourite pictorial subjects which seem to monopolise the popular fancy, and are to be found on most Japanese walls—for instance the quaint Japanese picture from which the frontispiece to our monthly number is taken is illustrative of a well-known story in Japanese history, and may be seen in almost every house. The middle figure is that of a gentleman, taking a constitutional with female attendants. They are all richly dressed in silken robes, bearing the distinguishing marks of their families. The lady who walks with the gentleman is not of equal rank with the lady in the front, who is looking back upon them. The different style of head-dress shows this. The great hair-pins, of coloured glass or metal, are distinctive of a low class of females. The simple style of the lady in purple, who wears but one pin and a plain blue flower, shows that she is of a higher class. They are evidently enjoying their winter walk. Snow lies thickly upon the ground, and yet from the use of the umbrella we may suppose the sun to be shining. In the background are grown-up men and women pelting each other with snowballs.

In the accompanying illustration is represented a Japanese school. The inattentive little people have, in turn, to say their lessons. The boy on the floor, pointing with a stick, is trying to recite the *irova*, a kind of alphabet consisting of four lines, in which are contained, not the vowels and consonants, but the fundamental sounds of the Japanese language, of which there are forty-eight. These, instead of being classed grammatically, are formed into a verse of poetry, the first word "*irova*" giving its name to the alphabet. This is what the young gentleman is saying:—"Irova nivoveto isirinourou wo. Wagayo darézo tsoune naramou. Ou wi no okuyama kéfou koyété. Asaki youmémisi vimvo sézou oun." And this is the translation—"Colour and perfume vanish away. What can be lasting in this world? To-day has disappeared in the abyss of nothingness. It is but the passing image of a dream, and causes only a slight trouble." All the Japanese learn this in childhood.

Just look how some of the pupils are misbehaving themselves. One is climbing up the door-post, another is asleep, and one is on his hands and knees, teasing an innocent little pussy-cat by putting a dunce's cap on its head when it ought to be on his own. You will observe that the cat is without a tail. Japanese cats, like those of Java, are born without such appendages.



A JAPANESE SCHOOL, FROM A NATIVE PAINTING.—(See page 31.)



THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

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A WINTER WALK IN JAPAN.

Reduced Facsimile of a Japanese Painting.