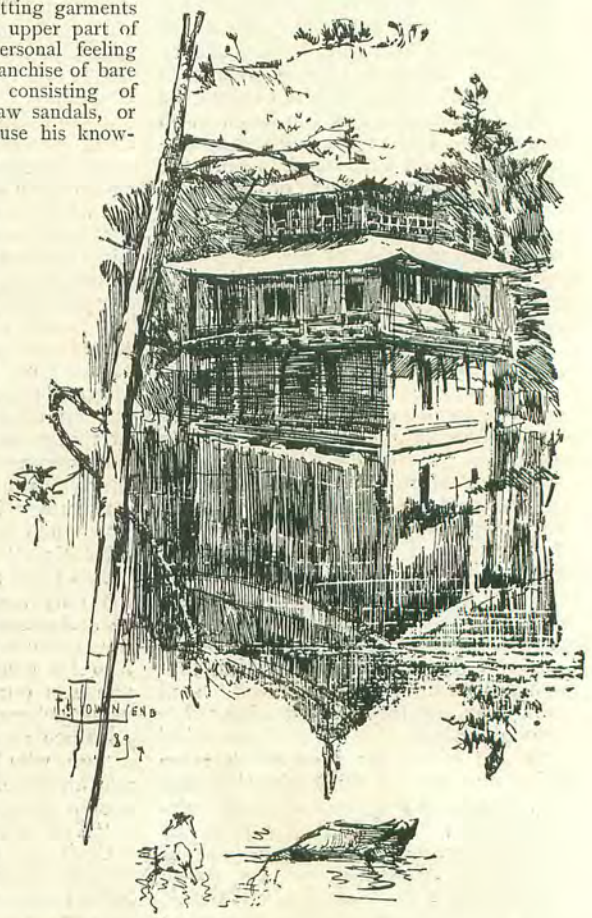
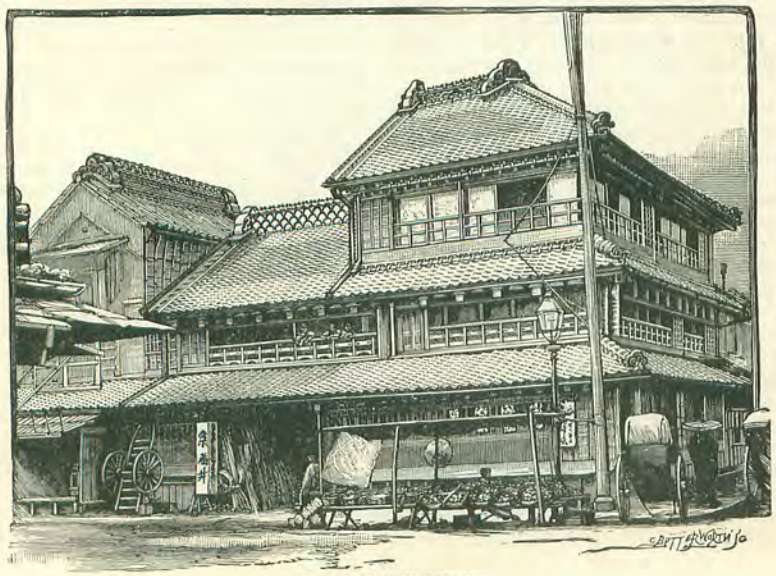
ON AND OFF A PACK-SADDLE IN CENTRAL JAPAN.

PART I.

"You are very bold," said a Japanese gentleman in Maebashi the other day, turning round from the missionary who had been giving him some account of my adventures in the hill country beyond the Amethyst Mountains that gemmed the horizon, and speaking in his very best English. Gentle or simple, male and female, every Japanese is polite to the backbone, courteous by nature and education in every joint of the body and word of the mouth, and equally incapable of using a rude expression or mastering the kaleidoscopic changes of mood and tense incidental to our English verbs; the words were to be taken in a complimentary sense and interpreted "you were very brave," and for the first time the thought arose that possibly it had been a venturesome proceeding, as undoubtedly it was an unusual one, for a lone woman to travel about in the heart of Japan without guide, guide-book, or vocabulary, dependent only on her passport and the law-abiding character of the natives for safe conduct, and on their amiable disposition for welfare.

Certainly Miss Bird had been first in the field and had gone further along what were then "unbeaten tracks," but she was accompanied by an able-bodied guide who spoke excellent English and was keenly alive to his responsibility, as caretaker of a person who had influential friends in high political and social circles in the capital. Moreover she bore about with her a camp bedstead and bath, etc., which impressed the simple country folks with a grand idea of her importance as a luxurious foreigner when acquaintance with the uses of those strange articles had disillusioned them of the first fond belief that she was a travelling show. Missionary ladies also had been over every inch of ground I traversed, but seldom singly and never without a knowledge of the language and ways of the people. Twice I encountered tourists journeying in orthodox fashion in jinrickshas with portmanteaus uncomfortably disposed between their knees, and the inevitable guide bringing up the rear with a gloomy countenance, partly owing to his being encased in tight-fitting garments of foreign make as regards the upper part of his person—patriotism and personal feeling maintaining his right to the franchise of bare legs and native *chaussure*, consisting of cotton foot muffitees and straw sandals, or wooden clogs, but mainly because his knowledge of English being limited, and chiefly derived from a curious little book containing such sentences as "Please you to sit for the table," "To stint not for to eat yourself full," "Behold this venerable, the uncle of unworthy my's father," in parallel columns of French, English, and Japanese, he was mentally engaged in framing answers to the questions which his employer might possibly put to him at the next stopping place, and in abortive attempts to conjugate the verb "to be." On pack-saddle seated with a blanket-shawl and pillow underneath and my traps, neatly packed in two oblong covered baskets (*coree*) strapped at each side as supports, or on foot, my belongings fastened on the back of a cheery-faced, sturdy little carrier always ready with a smiling and voluble response to any remark which I might happen to utter either in his mother tongue or mine, I jogged past these little processions without an envious glance; rejoicing rather in an unconventional mode of travelling that left me free to go, stay, or change the route at any point, made roads available that were impossible for jinrickshas, and brought the wayfarer into closer touch with the kindly country folks. The guide is a product of the last decade. Like much of the old bronze, lacquer, Satsuma, and Kyoto ware, and nearly all the cabinets, fans, umbrellas and *bric-a-brac* fondly displayed at home as Japanese curios, he has been especially manufactured to meet the requirements of foreigners. He knows a certain line of road and the owners of tea houses situated thereon, has learned the prices current and a few sentences about eating and sleeping, in French and English, and has put off with his national dress much of his native courtesy and all his cheerfulness, and put on with his foreign garb the manner of a bear-leader. There are a few really good guides who speak well, cook fairly well, can act as interpreters, and are willing to fall in with the wishes of their employers, but they are as rare as Solomon's "virtuous woman," and, like her, their "price is above rubies." The ordinary guide resembles a classical female also—the "wife" of the cynical old toast, a "being who halves one's joys, doubles one's cares, and trebles one's expenses." His salary must be paid, board and lodging and travelling comforts provided. In return he conducts negotiations with inn-keepers and jinricksha coolies, assists in concocting vile messes set forth and charged for in the bill as "foreign food," controls the movements and hours of the person under his care, and follows unswervingly the plan of campaign laid down at





A JAPANESE SHOP.

starting—his own particular beat from which he will not deviate to gratify any capricious traveller's change of mood.

Some of these services I thought I could perform for myself; others could be dispensed with. Mountain air had been the grand desideratum of my visit to Japan, economy in obtaining it "fresh and fresh" was become a necessity when, after a month spent in the Nikkôsan, my purse-strings and the days of my sojourn in the land were alike drawing to a close. A charming little inn, within sound of the great temple bells, had been my headquarters at Nikkô, Chuzenji's lovely hill-bound lake, and the still more beautiful one of Yumoto, my outposts. In the one I had learned half-a dozen Japanese sentences such as, "Thanks for your kind trouble," "If you please," "Excuse me, I beg," and the names of a few eatables and common objects, and had invented, with their aid (in combination), a colloquial system which occasionally astonished the natives, especially when a treacherous memory betrayed me into using the wrong word, but had, on the whole, the merit of being intelligible to a certain extent, and at its worst was not, I flattered myself, much more surprising than the English with which "interpreters" sometimes baffled my comprehension. Going to and fro between the others, I had acquired the art of sitting securely, if not easily, on top of a high pack saddle.

Having heard of the rival attractions of Ikao, famed for its hot spring, already a favourite summer resort, although so recently opened to foreigners that no mention is found of it in Keerling's Tourist's Guide, published in 1884, and seeing on the map that it was situated about fifty miles due west of Nikkô beyond the mountains that blocked up our horizon, in a secluded nook on a spur of a more distant range, I determined, for the reasons above stated, to make my way thither across country, and without a guide, instead of going down to Utsunomiya by jinricksha, taking the train to Omiya, which is within a few miles of Tokyo, there changing into the north-western and running north again to Maebashi, and thence by jinricksha up the hills to Ikao after the approved fashion. Expenditure of time and money would be about equal in either case, but my projected route kept me among the mountains.

JAPANESE TEA-HOUSE ATTENDANT.

First ascertaining that Joshiu, the province in which Ikao is situated, was named in my passport, lest mine should be the fate of a lady missionary, of whom I had heard, who, after toiling on foot for fifteen miles up to the village, was solemnly marched back again, between two soldiers, to Maebashi, put into the train, and commended to the close attention of the guard as a defaulter in that respect until she should be over the border. I sought an interview with my host, Kauaya, that most courteous and obliging of proverbially courteous and obliging landlords, to announce this intention, and secure his assistance in carrying it out.

He at once rushed out and requisitioned a student. During the long summer vacation, Nikkô swarms with missionaries and Government school-teachers, attended usually and numerously by youths of both sexes from their various colleges and seminaries. The missionaries are inclined to be exclusive, having, as they do not hesitate to say, more compulsory society among themselves than the exhausted natures they have come to the earthly paradise to recruit, can endure with equanimity. Two or three, who boarded at my inn, were good enough to give me the pleasure of their acquaintance and some information about their work, and to one of them I was subsequently indebted for much kindness. They belonged to the American Board of Foreign Missions, which is doing a vast amount of educational and evangelistic work, and bids fair to be a great religious power in the country; and as nothing is more stimulating than success, possibly they were less "weary in well-doing" than their brethren of weaker churches. But the students, one and all, were affable, and with many of them I was on speaking terms. For my worthy host, although for fifteen years he had been entertaining strangers and pilgrims, notably the British and French legations and Miss Bird, spoke no language but his own, yet for some unexplained reason objected to my use of it. At the first word he would spring up from his respectful sprawl on the mat, jump on top of his clogs, deftly work his toes between the thongs and clatter off, to return presently with a student-interpreter, who generally looked as if he had been dragged out of bed by his long hair. Then we would all set down on the floor and struggle for an hour or so—time being of no consequence in the land of the rising sun—for the mastery over "English as she is spoke," presumably in the college where that youth was graduating, his efforts being addressed to the utterance of words, new and strange, in connection with common objects, and mine to the discovery of their relation to the subject under discussion. Finally he would bow himself out, apologising for the "badness of the languages" on the ground that his knowledge of English was very "impure," but feeling at the same time a modest conviction that the compliments politeness obliged me to pay him on his remarkable linguistic ability were not wholly devoid of truth. Several of these amiable beings were brought in succession to advise me of the discomfort, impropriety, and, from a conventional point of view, impossibility of my scheme, and nearly lost their reputation as scholars in the vain attempt to dissuade me from carrying it out, failure being ascribed to the inadequacy of their words of expostulation. At last a passing missionary was called in, who kindly quoted the Japanese synonym, for "a wilful man must have his way, much more a wilful woman," and made it plain to my host's understanding that I meant to pursue my way to Ikao as straight across country (country in that part of Japan meaning mountain-passes, defiles, marshes, and ravines) as my passport, which strictly

STONE STATUE OF BUDDHA.

confined me to known thoroughfares, would permit. Three routes were outlined on the map. One ran north up the hills through Chuzenji to Yumoto, then over the Kousie Pass, round Akaugasan, and down south and west to Ikao without passing through any town. The other went down hill to Imaichi, round the base of a mountain range to Ashiwo, thence through several villages to Omama, on to Maebashi, and up again to the hill country—a good jinricksha road all the way. The third, which I chose as the most direct, led almost due west over the Ashiwo Pass to the little town of the same name. There it joined the lower road, but I was not without hope that, despite passport regulations, a shorter path to my destination might be found among the mountains. After one futile remonstrance and recommendation of the lower road, jinrickshas and a guide, Mr. Kanaya, with the kindness and promptitude for which he is distinguished, set to work to further my arrangements. Early breakfast was ordered for the first fine morning—the summer having been unusually rainy, and the skies still lowering, no more definite time could be named—a traveller's lunch of hard-boiled eggs supplemented to suit the peculiarities of a European digestive apparatus, by roast chicken, bread and tomatoes, was also to be forthcoming. My lunch-basket was already furnished with knives, forks, spoons, cup, plate, and napkin. Changes of raiment, chiefly of thin woollen material, sheets, towels, soap, a tin of biscuits, another of condensed milk, one of soup, some potted meat, tea and sugar, and a bottle of boot-polish, were carefully packed in two boxes, or oblong baskets, of plaited rush; guide-book, vocabulary, note-book, and writing-case, were strapped together; umbrella, rain-cloak, and sun-hat placed in readiness.

There was "no harness for women going over the Pass," a student interpreter had warned me. I had never been broken in to run either in double or single harness, a pack-horse, with appropriate "fixings" was all I should require, I said, noting his air of bewilderment, and dimly comprehending that a side saddle was the article indicated. About an hour after sunrise two mornings later, the wind being in a favourable quarter, I was following an animal of that species along the upper road of Irimachi to a spot where a small temple, flanked by a huge stone lantern, stands on a platform abutting on the street. Here I was enabled to climb upon my pack-saddle, a feat which the size of the horse buttressed and begirt with baskets, bundles, and wraps, the loftiness of the saddle, with the space between its two high wooden bows filled up with pillow and blanket-shawl, and the lowliness of everything, including the overhanging roof of the verandah, about the house where I had lodged, had made impossible there—except peradventure by stepping forth through the first floor windows. A stout little *bettô* (groom) walked a few feet ahead and dragged this equipage along by a rope tied to a primitive wooden bit, and man and beast were bound, for the sum of two *yen* (about seven and sixpence), to convey me and my appurtenances over the Pass and as far as the village of Gozo, a distance of nearly thirty miles, before nightfall.

There are pack-horses and pack-horses. This one, as a young lady-student graciously explained, was specially constructed for climbing mountains, an exploit which none of the small "female horses" to which I was accustomed, could be guaranteed to perform. He had a large shapeless body, hindquarters that had apparently been fastened together with pegs, and legs stiff, and set far apart, on which he rolled about like an old salt. Furthermore he held his head low and had a curious habit of alternately stumbling on one front foot and kicking up viciously at nothing with the off-hind one. This gait had its recommendations, perhaps, going uphill, but on the level ground was productive of much uneasiness of mind and body. We had left the temples and cedar-groves of Nikkô far behind, passed Gamman with its one hundred and odd stone Buddhas sitting in a row impassively staring at the rushing, whirling, tumultuous Daiygawa, and Dainaichido's pretty miniature lake and fanciful stone lanterns making this world attractive for the countless gods whose bright little brazen effigies are ranged on shelves all round its temple, and had stumbled and rolled for some miles along the new road by the river, had crossed that snow-white foaming torrent and begun the ascent proper before I felt at home on my lofty perch with "a mind at leisure from itself" to consider the scenery.

Oh! the wild, strange, exhilarating beauty of it! The path climbed the mountain-side where, by some convulsive throe of nature in the remote past, it had been cleft from its twin range and flung against another. Up, and up, and up, we zigzagged, occasionally crossing narrow side ravines, or slender down-tumbling streams, on primitive bridges of fagots lightly covered over with stones and clay, without parapet or rail, where it was a comfort to know that sudden death would be but a quick passage from the earthly to the heavenly heights. An unpremeditated stumble or, perchance, an abandonment of his premeditated one, a fall, a slip, the bursting of the frail rope which bound pack-saddle and packs, and the whole arrangement, including horse and rider, would have gone rolling and bounding from crag to crag, tree to tree, down the ravine for hundreds, or, in some places, thousands of feet. Happily I did not realise how frail was the tenure, and the rich mountain air like new wine kept fear at bay. From summit to base the hillsides were covered with dark conifers, oaks, birches, maples, mountain-ash, the latter already flaming out in patches of that deep crimson foliage which, mingling with the evergreens, produces such splendid effects in October, and makes these Nikkosan Mountains a glory worth coming from the ends of the earth to see.

On and on we climbed with never a human habitation, not even a tea-house in sight, and yet not quite alone with mother nature, for ever and anon other pack-horses and their leaders met and passed us, the wonderful courtesy with which the men greeted each other striking one as little less remarkable than the consideration with which they treated the animals they led or rode. Belief in the transmigration of souls and the possibility that the beast in their charge may be animated by the soul of a revered ancestor accounts for the one, the other is distinctively Japanese. The earnest politeness with which my *bettô* and another took off their hats and bowed to the ground, each apologising and taking the blame on himself when a slight collision occurred between their respective charges (fortunately in a safe place, for whatever soul was serving its time in my steed it was a careful one), suggested the thought that it might be a good thing for the Missionary Societies to conduct their operations on reciprocal terms, and send, yearly, a number of Japanese horse-boys to convert the draymen and cabmen of Christendom from the brutality of their ways.

Up and up we toiled. The trees grew thinner. Then a tea-house of the rudest description was passed, and suddenly we emerged, as David would have said, "on a large place." Mountain tops were behind us, mountain ranges rolled back from our feet to right and left, far away in front the great plain of the Kwantô, "a land flowing with milk and honey," could be seen beyond the hills and mountain spurs that ran out from great ranges; vegetation was sparse, signs of cultivation none, and for the first time in Japan I saw a poverty-stricken village, a row of miserable huts roughly constructed of wattles and brushwood, with ragged, thatched roofs, covered over with big stones to keep them in place and resist the force of the wind, which at times evidently swept all before it. Several had been blown down the hillside and abandoned to their fate—let us hope before the flight. The road became wider and led directly down hill to a narrow valley through which flowed a stream like all Japanese up-country rivers chiefly remarkable for its stony bed and the steepness of its banks. My horse was only adapted for going up-hill with any degree of security. His peculiar gait, aggravated by a swagger which he now assumed in proud consideration of having surmounted a pass six thousand feet above sea-level, made my descent from the pack-saddle inevitable, either by tumbling down his neck and over his nose, or by getting my feet on the shoulders of the *bettô* and then sliding down him. I chose the latter course, and once down knew it would be impossible to regain my seat unless we met a giant or came to a house with a suitable roof.

It is said to be eight miles from Nikkô to the top of the pass and seven thence to Ashiwô. They were the shortest seven miles I ever walked. The road followed the windings of the river whose banks were gay with flowers; thickly wooded hills closed in the valley, which, in places, narrowed to a mere defile, mulberry orchards covered the lower slopes and quaint high-roofed cottages, and picturesque farm-houses, peeped forth from the fresh foliage. Every possible bit of ground was under cultivation. We were approaching the great silk-producing district, and more than once in the houses we passed I saw women at their pretty work, loosing the fair white films from the cocoons and winding them into skeins by the help of simple home-made wooden machines. Close to Ashiwô we noted the ingenious contrivance of chain-pipes by which water is carried across the river and through a ravine to the copper mines at Akakura. These mines are well worth a visit, but as I had not the Japanese for copper, or mines, or anything connected with mining, in my vocabulary I did not care to play the part of a deaf and dumb inspector of works.

Here we drew up at a tea-house to rest and dine. The landlord ought to have gone on all fours on the mat and knocked his head against the floor, but he did not, his manners having been corrupted by intercourse with foreigners. Neither did he unlace my boots as he should have, at least, tried to do. I had to perform that office myself on the street and then pick my way in my stockings through the kitchen, which also served as shop and bar parlour, to a laddder up which I clambered for nearly seven feet (the ceilings being exceptionally lofty in that inn to meet the needs of tall barbarians) into a guest-room reserved for luxurious travellers. In addition to the Japanese furniture (a wooden Buddha, and a matted floor to be plain) it contained a rickety table and more rickety chair. Tea was brought at once in a tiny teapot attended by a tinier cup and a plate of wee biscuits made of rice-water and sugar coloured and cut into leaf and flower shapes. For this refection, and the use of the room while I ate the ample lunch Kanaya had provided, a charge of half a dollar was made, although I had placed the usual honorarium, a ten-cent piece, on the teatray, and twenty cents an hour would have been a princely rent for the apartment. However, as it took the whole household and the chair and table to assist me on to that pack-saddle, perhaps I got the worth of my money.

(To be continued.)

ON AND OFF A PACK-SADDLE IN CENTRAL JAPAN.

PART II.

FOUR-AND-TWENTY straw shoes for the horse and a dozen straw sandals for the man had dangled from the saddle bows and formed a fringe all round the pack when we started from Nikkô. They had been worn out and shed on the mountain path, and a fresh supply was now tied on. My umbrella and some parcels, one of which contained my guide-book and vocabulary, though not worn out had also been thrown off and lost. Fortunately my passport was safe or I should have been forced to turn back. That document is essential to travellers. It is expressly stated that it must be shown on demand to officials, innkeepers, and the head men of any village one may happen to pass through. Every tenth man I met seemed to constitute himself an official for the moment, and to save trouble I generally carried my passport stuck in my belt like a revolver. In lieu of the missing umbrella I procured a *bettô's* hat, a big straw affair like the lid of a round hamper, and tying it on top of my own forth we fared along the valley which at every turn grew more picturesque. Unhappily the rain came on and the shades of night fell early. In the hill-country it never rains but it pours, literally, and notwithstanding the efforts of the *bettô* who wrapped me and my traps and the horse in oiled paper, and bound us round with twine, a huge ungainly package, I was soon wet through and gladly fell in with his suggestion that we should put up for the night at a village instead of struggling on to Gogo.

The houses were everywhere shut up within their wooden guards. A gentle knocking, a short parley outside one of them, and a shutter was slidden back. The *bettô* took off his hat in the rain and bowed to his knees. I was lifted down somehow, I think by the ankles; ragged paper, dripping cloth, soaked hats and boots were removed before I was permitted to step on the nicely matted floor. A wadded coverlet was spread on the mat, tea was brought, and I was given to understand that the hot bath, prepared every night in Japanese households, was at my disposal. One tub of boiling water suffices for the whole establishment, each taking his turn from the eldest or most honourable, to the least. Guests fortunately take precedence even of great-grandfathers, and I enjoyed this privilege. It was rather awkward for me with my slender knowledge of Japanese to find the bath prepared in the general living-room, and difficult to make the family understand that I must perform my ablutions in private, but nothing to the awkwardness which befell me later on. Supper, of eggs and rice, had been served (on a tray on the floor), and the bed, a couple of coverlets folded in two laid on the matting, and doubled up under a counterpane that was much too short for me. I was just dropping asleep when a panel of the paper wall was pushed aside and the landlord entered with the *bettô* and proceeded to make his bed! It might be the custom in that far eastern land for servants to sleep at their employers' feet, but if so, I would be a nonconformist. I did not know the Japanese for "Get out," and any way it is a mortal insult to use the imperative tense to a native of that country, and I had been warned never to do so. I could only wave my hands towards them in sign of negation. They looked puzzled, and hurt I thought, and in desperation I pushed at the coverlet and cried, "*Gayanaro—Gayanaro*" (good-bye, good-bye). Answering politeness obliged them to return this valedictory address with many bows, and their ready wits jumping to the conclusion that after saying farewell the proper thing to do was to go away, they took up the bed and departed.

A glorious, sunny morning succeeded the wild, wet night. A fresh horse and leader were engaged to conduct me to Omama where I meant to take the train to Maebashi, but time being of no consequence in the Land of the Rising Sun, and bargaining the only pleasure in a *bettô's* daily experience, the best hours of the early day were lost arranging preliminaries. My words were few on these occasions, and invariable, but they went a long way. "*Mma, Omama,* Ikura?*" (Horse; Omama; how much?) Then, "Too much; abate your price, please," this last sentence being repeated at intervals for an hour or two until the *bettô* or jinricksha puller came down to the authorised road tariff, finally, "*Yoroshee,*" which means agreed, all right.

The sun was high when we started, and hot. The fresh horse, a little "female one," seemed a very frail foundation for the pack-saddle

* Or the name of my destination.

BUDDHIST TEMPLE.

flanked on both sides by my baskets and bundles, but carried us all bravely. The groom treated her with marked consideration, turning aside from the rough, storm-torn highway, rutty and stony, to a charming bridle path, which, first crossing the river, led through a sylvan country, in and out among the hills at the far side. Past comfortable homesteads and funny little rice mills, through orchards and mulberry groves, under live oaks and silvery birches we paced, now and again getting peeps at the river, white and swollen, rushing through its narrow valley far below. Past a high-roofed temple whose surrounding wood of stately cedars crowned a hill above, through a graveyard thronged with stone lanterns and images of Buddha enthroned on the heavenly lotus; across a farmyard, down a sheer descent to the river here broken into cataracts, the path ran to join the main road. Out from the hills and through a park-like champain, and Omama, a very long and absurdly wide street, with houses so diminutive that, small as my mare was, I could see into the attics (which were also the first floor) as we jogged along for a mile to my *bettô's* favourite tea-house where, being late for the last train to Maebashi, he had planned that I should remain all night. It was a particularly clean and sweet-looking inn, white matted and white-and-silver-papered, but after so many hours on the horns (wooden and iron-tipped) of a pack-saddle I wished for something to sit on other than the floor. The place was crowded and my passport greatly in demand, chiefly as an excuse for looking at the foreign lady over its rim, for in some cases I noted that it was held upside down. The landlord desirous of retaining me all night, as an advertisement perhaps, would give no help in finding jinrickshas. There were two young men in uniform in the throng, genuine officials. To them I appealed. They may have been generals in the army, or lords of the admiralty, or clerks in the telegraph or railway office, for the Japanese are as much given to wearing uniform as the French. They may have been Daimios in court dress, for they looked surprised at my audacity. But they had inspected my passport, and knew from it that the government had taken me under its protection for two months, provided that I did not "cut down trees, or ride furiously on horseback to a fire," or force my way where there was no thoroughfare. They were representatives of the government. Disdaining to bargain they simply ordered two jinrickshas, one for me, one for my baggage, and in a lordly tone fixed the charge.

A MORNING'S OUTING.

The overawed ricksha-pullers ran the whole fifteen miles to Maebashi without stopping. That town is situated at the foot of Akagisan, whose southern slope seems to spring directly from it, and owes its prosperity and importance to the silk industry which flourishes all around. The route from Omama passed through a well cultivated district, a sea of waving corn, with islets of great trees or little shrines, each in its cedar grove. To the right front, the Haruna Mountains, behind which Ikao is situated, on the east the Mikkôsan, to the west the Usui Pass, with the ever lively volcano, Asamayama, towering above it, wreathed in smoke.

JAPANESE STRAW HAT.

The friend I proposed to visit lived in an inn somewhere in the town. I had no other address, and inns were innumerable. There was a second foreigner in the place, a gentleman in charge of the government school, and happily I knew the word for school. As we rolled over the handsome bridge, which is the pride of Maebashi, the street *gamins* for the only time in my experience showed themselves of a like nature with their European cousins. They hooted and jeered, the coolie hat which I still wore umbrella-wise, being too overpowering for the restraints of inbred politeness. It had served its day and had only cost twopence; I could afford to throw it away, then bowing gracefully I said, "*Chu Gakko*" (college). An intelligent youth grasped the idea that I wanted to go thither, and instructed the ricksha-men as to its whereabouts.

Arrived at the school we found it closed, but a student was picked up who guided us to Mr. J——'s house, and that

JAPANESE MOTHER AND CHILD.

gentleman kindly accompanied me to Miss S——'s lodgings, two rooms on the first floor of a tea-house. Shoes had to be removed and left outside, Japanese housewives not allowing mud, or dust, or high heels to touch their floors. Then we walked upstairs straight into my friend's apartment. She was a missionary, living alone in a semi-Japanese fashion, teaching English for five hours daily in a girl's school, in the hope of gaining an influence over her pupils, and inducing them to come to her Bible-classes in the afternoons. Instruction in the Christian religion is not permitted in Japanese schools, and teachers are obliged to enter into an agreement not to attempt to introduce the subject during school hours. After hours it is optional on the part of the scholars, and as a true, earnest, kindly teacher can generally win the regard of her classes, and make them solicitous of her counsel and help both in school and out of school, many missionaries are working in this way.

A couple of cane chairs, some boxes of books, piles of newspapers from the dear homelands in the corner, a table with a shawl for its cover, a crowd of photographs, and a big blue-green jar of clematis and lilies, gave a homelike aspect to one room; in the next, a wooden chair or two, a screen, and a pile of coverlets on the floor indicated the bedchamber—the washing apparatus was downstairs in the outer hall, and the back verandah served as dressing-room, I subsequently learned. Beef, and bread, and milk were obtainable, but when alone, Miss S—— lived on Japanese fare chiefly, which does not include those luxuries, and consists mostly of rice, eggs, and eel soup, or pickled eel. They have a great variety of vegetables, and fish abound in the rivers, but for some inexplicable reason the above-named articles of food were invariably served to me in country places. As I had left my vocabulary on the Ashiwo Pass, I could not ask for a change, although the sight of "the cucumbers, and melons, and the onions, and the leeks, and the garlick," growing in profusion around me, stirred my soul, as the remembrance of them in Egyptian "fleshpots" did that of the children of Israel in the wilderness. Miss S——, however, averred that she liked the simple fare, and plied her chopsticks with a will.

For the next two days it rained incessantly. Then there was a lull in the downfall of which I took advantage to get to the railway-station. The road to Ikao was flooded and impassable, but the north-western railroad to Yokogawa, at the foot of the Usui Pass, ran through Maebashi, and Kirizumi, a newly-opened and wildly beautiful summer resort, with mineral springs, and hot baths, was situated in a romantic valley, among the mountains, a few miles to the north of Yokogawa. At the top of the Usui Pass, 3000 miles above sea-level on a glorious plateau, stood the town of Karuizawa. There the north-western resumed its interrupted way, and ran right on to the northern sea, and there, too, some missionaries to whom I had introductions were spending the summer vacation. Either place could be reached by horse or jinricksha from Yokogawa. The lull in the storm was brief, the rain came down in torrents, presently blotting out the landscape. Yokogawa when reached—in about an hour and a half—looked like a double line of canal boats gone adrift by mischance, and tumbled down a waterfall. Neither horse nor jinricksha, nor inviting tea-house was visible, when according to rule the officials expelled me from the platform. But a party of ladies rushed through the flood from a dirty, ill-smelling shop across the street, to catch the down train, and one of them, a very pretty young American, stopped midway to ask if she could be of use as an interpreter. I said I wanted to get on to Kirizumi, whereat she looked amazed. "Kirizumi," as I afterwards learned, means, the "valley of the piled-up mist," and doubtless she thought Yokogawa watery enough for the present. Or Karuizawa, I added, I had friends there, the W.'s, who would put me up for a night. They had just come down from Karuizawa, she said, her party that is, fleeing from the tempest that was raging there. Here her friends called out that she would miss her train. She ran into the station and I made my way to the shop they had come from, rightly calculating that it must be an inn, dirty though it seemed, and weather-beaten. Dirty it was, and battered, and storm-torn, but the people were kind. Tea, rice, and soup, were brought and served on bended knee, and a young man fetched from the telegraph office to inquire my will and pleasure, while I sat on the floor with the supper trays strewed round me on the matting. His comprehension of English speech was small, but he made me understand I had better remain where I was until morning. The accommodation was poor, certainly, the ceiling so low that my hair brushed against it when I stood upright, the paper walls shattered in many places by the wind and rain, but the roof-tree remained intact and water-tight, while the tempest raged, and the rain still fell in torrents. "Notwithstanding the

VISITORS.

proverbial cleanliness of Japanese inns," saith the guide-book, "those little pests, fleas, will intrude, and travellers will do well to carry good insect powder in their bags." I always did, but the fleas seemed to have grown accustomed to it, or provided themselves with antidotes. When, by misadventure, one of them came under the stupefying influence of my Dalmatian powder, his neighbours at once jumped to the rescue, and their plan was to walk him about as if he were suffering from an overdose of laudanum until animation returned. I did not sleep in that room that night, I merely abode there.

The storm, which I afterwards learned was the outer edge of a typhoon which did immense damage in the Sea of Japan, abated suddenly about midnight and the day broke on a cloudless sky. In the early dawn the following letter, written in pencil on a strip of paper four inches wide and a yard and a half long, was handed me made up in a neat roll.

"Madam. Excuse me, I was very rude last evening, but I thought you were troubled which you could not speech in Japanese langages and this hotle master did not understand English, therefor I could not put you alone in my kindly heart.

"I wish to tell you something which did you need, but I can't tell you English well therefor I don't gave you content, a little. I am very, sorry. I am very sorry, thereby this morning I heartily wish to see and show you something for your travelling course, but I can't it because I have very busy task in railway office. So then I will write to you following notes.

"You believe me. God bless you, farewell.

"Notice 1. If you want to go to Karuizawa you'd better to ride on tram-cart and you ought to pay fourty sents for cart price, and out of this, besides this, you shall payable for your bagages, (this price will be fixed bagages went by tramway officer) therefor both payment will be one yen, about.

"Notice 2. Tram-cart will be arrived at twenty O'clock in this noon at to Karuizawa.

"I advise you do not try some horseback, it is very dangerous because as you know this road is very bad.

"Notice 3. If you wish to go to Kirizumi you will be better to hire a jinricki and a cooly (or carrier for your bagage) a jinricki price is eighty sents from here to Kirizumi and a carrier is fourty sents. 80 + 40 = 1,20 yen sen.

"Two jinricki are cost one yen sixty sents 80 + 80 = 160.

"Notice 4. For this hotle you are payable eighty two sents, this side is dear, remember Japanese people are very truefulness.

"Your obedient servant

"A. Y."

His "kindly heart" must have kept the good soul up all night composing this epistle. Despite his advice and the expostulations of the "hotle master," I tried "some horseback" when bright and early in the morning. Hearing that the road to Karuizawa up the Usui Pass was really very bad, I elected to visit the Valley of the Piled-Up Mist. We had scarcely left the long, straggling, stony streeted town behind and turned aside from the steep ascent of the Pass into a deep narrow valley down which a mountain torrent coursed, when my steed fell lame. All pretence the *bettô* gave me to understand, sheer cussedness and temper, but the pace was uncomfortable, and as I had seen that the pack-saddle was simply girdled on to the ill-shaped beast with a straw rope, I dismounted and walked on up the valley, which rapidly narrowed into a wild ravine. Presently there was a shout, and, looking back, I beheld that ill-conditioned steed prone in the torrent. He had deliberately put his foot in a rut and tumbled down the bank, and now lay with his head and legs sticking up, the pack-saddle and my two large basket trunks forming a system of life-buoys beneath and around him. He had chosen his place wisely. There was a tea-house at hand with a little field attached. Some wayfarers resting in the one lent their aid in detaching and fishing up the pack and packages, and, finding his bed stony without them, he soon scrambled out, and was sent to dry himself and frisk about in the other, while the unhappy *bettô* shouldered my traps, from which the water was pouring in streams. The money for carriage was to be paid in Kirizumi, and as I was now marching forward in that direction he followed.

The ravine became a gorge, a mere cleft in the mountain, the precipitous sides rising sheer up from the river. The narrow path had been cut along its back on whichever side a foothold could be obtained, crossing the torrent on bridges when necessary. Presently we reached a point where the first of these bridges used to stand. It was gone, swept away, a boiling, foaming current, broken into fury by huge rock in its way, tore round the curve. We sat down in dismay, and looked at it hopelessly. It was humiliating to turn back, but what could a weak woman do in the face of a raging river and a precipice? Up came our friends from the tea-house—men of resources, with homes beyond the flood. They brought the slender trunk of a fallen tree with them, and clambering down to the brink of the stream, pushed one end on to a rock in mid-current, then running lightly along it, notwithstanding their stiff wooden clogs, made signs to me to follow. Having but little of the monkey nature remaining, I hesitated. The *bettô*, already as wet as he could be and careless of further ducking, dashed across, and, leaping from rock to rock, gained the farther bank. I started to follow. At once two men retraced their steps, and held up by one on each side, I got over somehow. Then the trunk was drawn in and pushed along to another rock, and so on, until we reached the other side. So far, so good, but at the next crossing-place also the bridge was gone, and there was no fallen tree available. The *bettô* hoisted my baskets high on his shoulders, splashed into the river, and waded through. The men calmly undressed. Fortunately the weather was cool, and they wore thin woven vests under their flowing garments, and these they retained as water would not hurt them. What was to become of me? Return to Yokogawa was cut off, I would not take off my clothes, and under no circumstances dared I venture into that rushing, angry, boiling torrent, where the men were now buffeting the waves. Again those kindly creatures came to the rescue. One of them sidled up as I stood shivering on the brink, two others with a quick movement shoved me on his back, and then, as he staggered under my weight, seized his arms and guided and upheld his tottering footsteps. As for me, once embarked in this unusual manner, and happy in the consciousness that there was no spectator, I climbed as high on his shoulders as possible, and gathered up my feet, indeed I think I carried them on my back during the transit.

Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute. Every bridge along that gorge was gone, and again and again I forded the stream, pick-a-back, as a matter of course. At last we reached a point from which, far as the eye could see, no path was visible—it also had been torn away.

(*To be continued.*)

HIS EXCELLENCY'S ENGLISH GOVERNESS.

By SYDNEY C. GRIER, Author of "In Furthest Ind," etc.

CHAPTER VI.

AT Karachi there came the first interruption to the smoothness which had hitherto marked the journey. Lady Haigh had expected to be met at this point by the gun-boat which was under Sir Dugald's orders, and was generally occupied in patrolling the Shat-el-Arab and the Persian Gulf for the protection of British interests, and she had intended to make a triumphal voyage and entry into Baghdad by its means. Instead of the gun-boat, however, there came a telegram from Sir Dugald to say that the services of the *Nausicaa* were imperatively required in the opposite direction, and that the travellers must therefore come on in the ordinary way. Unfortunately, however, they had missed the regular steamer to Basra, and Lady Haigh, who had developed an extraordinary desire to have the journey over, insisted that they should take passage on another that happened to be starting. Charlie Egerton protested loudly against this, declaring that he knew what those wretched coasters were like, ramshackle old things, creeping along and touching at all sorts of unheard-of ports, and staying for no one knew how long. They would probably reach Basra not a day sooner than if they had waited for the next steamer, and if they were fated to lose time on the journey, why not spend it at Karachi, and take the opportunity of showing Miss Anstruther a little of India? But here Lady Haigh looked at him with mingled sorrow and impatience, and simply reiterated her determination to press on.

The voyage on the coasting steamer was a new experience to Cecil. The vessel was old, the cargo mixed, the crew also mixed, in fact, everything was mixed but the society, and that was extremely select, since it was confined to their own party. The captain and mate, overawed by the presence of two ladies on board, withdrew themselves as much as possible from the cabin, though they fraternised with Charlie, as everyone did, when they could get him alone. Day after day the vessel steamed past the same low shores, with coral-reefs stretching out to sea, and

food may be taken shortly before lying down, a biscuit and a glass of milk, if they have had an early supper; if not, a tumblerful of cold spring water, with a teaspoonful of the effervescing citrate of lithia or potash in it, makes, in many cases, the best soporific that I know of.

Men should take a bottle of real soda-water immediately before lying down. By real soda-water, I mean that which contains fifteen grains of bi-carbonate of soda to each bottle. That is what I do myself when hot and restless after a hard day's work. Speaking from experience, I find this an excellent plan. I have tried spirits, stout, and wine negus, but they only heat the brain. There is nothing like the soda-water. But endeavour to banish all thinking when you lie down. Or you may mentally recite hymns to yourself. I have many favourites which serve the purpose. The Scotch Bibles have all the psalms in metre, and the twenty-third is the most beautiful ever King David wrote. Then there is that sad, wailing hymn beginning—

"How still and peaceful is the grave,
When life's vain tumults past,
Th' appointed house by Heaven's decree,
Receives us all at last."

Probably that other lovely hymn, which is really a poetic edition of the Lord's Prayer, will be better known. It commences—

"O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led."

I have travelled much in wilderness and desert too, and in woods and wilds, and I cannot mentally repeat that hymn in bed without imagining myself tramping all alone through some wildery, with His hand to buoy me up.

But I weary you, so I must say, "Good-bye till we meet again in another month."

ON AND OFF A PACK-SADDLE IN CENTRAL JAPAN.

PART III.

THERE was nothing for it now but to scale the precipice, climb the mountain side, and descend into Kirizumi from the north. After crawling along the cliff for some perches, aided by shrubs and saplings which, happily for me, grew close enough to form a kind of parapet, a hunter's trail, or narrow path, was gained, which led eventually to the village.

A strange spectacle that pretty village, where every house had been built for the accommodation and pleasure of summer boarders, presented. The previous day the river, swollen by the rains, had burst its bounds and swept through the narrow valley, breaking down bridges, carrying away trees, cutting up paths, and overturning houses. Several of these lay upside down in mid-stream, others tottered and hung sideways over the banks. The wooded heights around, glorious in their autumnal tints, with the remnants of climbing paths still clinging to their shelving sides, rose up even to the shoulders of the adjacent mountains, over all the cloudless sky, clear, shining after rain. It was still mid-day, and the sun's rays brightened the recesses of the ravine, but the air of desolation was oppressing.

Except a few caretakers, the residents had fled for their lives that morning, on foot and in single file, along a narrow trail over the hills and far away, up and on to Karuizawa. Supplies had been cut off and provisions were running short, but I could do no less than order *taberoo* (a meal) for my carriers, one of whom I subsequently discovered was attached to the staff of the hotel to which he had brought me, and had only done his duty as tout perhaps. Their gratitude was overwhelming, though not carried beyond the regulations of custom. It took the form of a psalm of thanksgiving, chanted on their knees, every phrase punctuated by knocking their foreheads on the matting. My friend in Mayebashi had always returned the salutations of her native visitors in kind, but these genuflexions were too much for my stiff knees, and I could only trust to their innate courtesy to excuse my want of manners. The dripping contents of my baskets next claimed attention. As there are no fires attainable in Japanese houses, a brazier of charcoal scarcely deserving the name, these had to be dried in the sun. This necessitated my remaining a day or two, for the sun only shines over that valley for a few hours about noon. I had a handsome bath-house, and a boarding-house containing thirty rooms for my sole use and behoof, both standing high and dry on the rocks, but remembering that earthquakes often followed storms, and conscious of the neighbourhood of an active volcano, Asamayama, I was glad to charter a guide, who also acted as baggage carrier, the second morning and follow the trail of the refugees up hill and down dale, and over a mountain-height, through rich woods, carpeted with a wonderful variety of ferns and grasses, to a pass above Karuizawa. There a magnificent view awaited us. Mountains to right and left, to the south, far as eye could reach, stretched the Kwanto (eight provinces), the richest and most fertile plain in all Japan, a land of corn and silk, rivers of water and "trees of the Lord." Once, more than a thousand years ago, somewhere on these heights, perchance in this very spot, a young prince had stood and looked on this panorama. By the might of his arms and the aid of the divine gods of the land, he had won the country for his father, the Mikado of Western Nippon, away behind Fuziyama and the Hakone Mountain barrier, and remembering the cost at which that aid had been gained, and the fair young wife who had given her life to secure it, he flung his hands towards the heedless mountain-tops, the dwelling-place of the cruel gods, and groaned aloud, *Adzuma! Adzuma!* (My wife! my wife!) And Adzuma has been the name ever since by which this garden-ground of Japan is known in song and story.

To the north, eighteen hundred feet below, notwithstanding its great altitude (3000 feet above sea-level) lay the broad plateau of Karuizawa flanked by smoking Asamayama. Then at the head of the Usui Pass the North Western Railway renewed its interrupted course, broken at Yokogawa by that formidable mountain wall. And to the Railway Hotel we betook us after descending the grass-covered slopes to the town, and finding it waste and void so far as the foreign element was concerned, the summer residents having departed down the Pass at the first break in the storm, the adults on foot and the children in paniers securely tied on pack-horses.

Railway inns are not always desirable residences. The landlord of this was surly; in his youth he had probably been a *samourai*, and still bore himself with the aggressive hostility to all things foreign characteristic of those swaggering two-sworded gentry. A sleeping compartment, narrow and bare, was accorded grudgingly and charged for extortionately. Desiring the usual hot bath I was shown a room specially designed for that purpose. On one side it was open to the station yard, on the other a glass partition fenced it off (like a conservatory) from the general sitting-room thronged with tea-drinkers. A smiling damsel proffered her services as bath-woman, anxious to see what a foreigner looked like when disentangled from the unnecessarily numerous and jealously fastened, buttoned and hooked-up garments of civilisation. She was disappointed, ostentatious ablutions being forbidden by a modest and retiring disposition. Bathing is almost a religious rite in Japan. Anyway, its votaries love to perform it, as the Pharisees of old said their long prayers, where they may be seen of men. The night that followed was disturbed.

GATE OF BUDDHIST TEMPLE.

A JAPANESE POSTMAN.

Asamayama sent out a suggestively unpleasant fiery glow about the near horizon; an earthquake shook and rocked the building, and earthquakes, though of weekly occurrence in Japan, are natural phenomena, to which one never grows accustomed, or submits with tranquillity. Some men in the next compartment drank saké and discussed politics until the midnight train bore them away still quarrelling. I feared every moment they would come to blows and tumble through the paper wall. Servants pulled the screens aside and peeped in at me at unexpected times; and, worst of all, whenever a train came in, the landlord went stark, staring, raving mad apparently. He would rush out, double himself up, and, gesticulating violently, hurl anathemas at the arriving passengers. Subsequently, in Zeukoji, I had reason to believe this was simply another manner of touting and attracting visitors to the house, invitation, not invective, being the subject of the wild Pacan, but as a first experience it was more terrorising than being dragged pick-a-back through an angry flood.

Early in the morning I took the train for Nagano, the farthest point to the north to which my passport gave access, more generally known as Zeukoji, the headquarters of the Monto Sect of Buddhists whose Abbots are Princes in their own right—in short the Canterbury of Buddhistic Japan. The railroads are well built and the carriages commodious, airy, and comfortable. For four hours I could have imagined myself in Switzerland as we skirted Asamayama and then coursed to the north-west, the bare mountain ranges at each side now drawing close, anon folding back and permitting views of the higher ranges behind. The houses here in the very heart of Japan seemed larger and better built than those in the Capital and Yokohama, and much more picturesque with their many gables and high fantastic roofs. The towns we passed were well placed, distinctly prosperous and clean. This mode of travelling is deservedly popular. The carriages quickly filled and the passengers were an unflagging source of interest. Many of the men were in European dress, but the ladies had all gladly discarded corsets and tight bodices, *de rigueur* in fashionable town life, and resumed the national *Kamona*, a dressing-gown sort of wrapper belted round the hips with an *obi* or with stiffly-lined sash tied at the back in a knot the size and shape of a knapsack. The children's costume, like their faces, showed features of both parents. All of them used pieces of tissue paper as pocket-handkerchiefs, and I have no doubt their stockings were shaped with a special receptacle for the great toe, and that, as soon as they reached their journey's end they pulled off their Parisian boots and slipped into sandals or clogs. It was a funny sight to see a gentleman correctly attired in foreign clothes, with a flower in his buttonhole and a dainty kerchief in his breast pocket, draw a square of paper from his bosom and wipe his children's noses all round, then fold the thing carefully and replace it. And quite as amusing to watch the efforts of the country people to tuck their feet up behind them on the narrow seat and sit on their heels.

I stepped off the platform at Zeukoji into the midst of a band of seeming lunatics ranged in two lines across the street, all bent double as if in agony and shrieking in chorus. One of them attacked me on my most vulnerable point, my baggage, and taking possession of it ran off to the inn whose merits he had been extolling. Naturally I followed. The inn fully justified being "put to a tune and sung in the market-place," as the Irish say. It was large, clean, well-kept and well-appointed. A room up six flights of stairs was given to me—a room with glass windows on two sides commanding a magnificent view of the river and plain and distant mountains to the south-east, and the principal street of the town to the west—and a youth told off as special attendant, with a little boy to do the light work. Later on a policeman was added, who undertook the outdoor work.

The typhoon had not extended its ravages so far north, and the loftiness of the building indicating that earthquakes were not a subject of constant apprehension, I made this my

JAPANESE LADIES.

headquarters for a few days, and luxuriated in the brightness and dryness of the atmosphere. There was much to see in the town and more in the neighbourhood. Like Ephesus in the days of St. Paul, Zeukoji possesses a famous temple which influences the arts and manufactures and trade of the town; shrine-making in particular brings "no small gain to the craftsman," every third or fourth house being devoted to the sale of them. Pretty things they are, fashioned mostly of cedar-wood or white pine, and charming little bookcases or cabinets they make when set up in Christian homes.

About half a mile up the main street stands the Gammon or principal gate of the temple, a huge structure as conspicuous and imposing as the *Arc de Triomphe* in Paris, somewhat the same shape and, though constructed of wood, quite as ornate and much more picturesque. An irreverent American journalist describes the ecclesiastical buildings in Japan as huge and indescribably ornamental roofs set on the ground. The supporting walls certainly are low and dwarfed into insignificance by the superincumbent building, their crown and glory, the masterpiece of both architect and artist. May not this be as symbolical as our church-spires, the outcome of the same spiritual thought. A quarter of a mile farther on another *mon*, or gate, is passed, if possible with a higher and more ornamental roof than the first, and the traveller walks on through a long row of booths where little images of the gods, relics, charts of the temple grounds, story-books, and gewgaws of all kinds, are exhibited for sale, together with fruits and sweetmeats. At each side, behind the booths, labyrinths of minor temples, monasteries, and priests' houses, show their fanciful roof-trees above the surrounding walls; then come two magnificent flights of steps leading up to the grounds of the great temple. Surmounting these the eye is attracted at once by the stone lanterns, the finest and largest exhibit of the kind in Japan, intermingled with statues, in stone or bronze, of Amida (Buddhas), conspicuous among them being that of Bindzuru, the Helper of the Sick. Originally one of the "Most Holy Sixteen," Bindzuru, notwithstanding his distinguished piety, was, saith tradition, expelled from their chaste society for having violated his vows by remarking on the beauty of a woman; his usual place is therefore outside the temple-doors. "A woman's exterior," to quote a Buddhist text, "is that of a saint, but her heart is that of a demon." Bindzuru's study of the Scriptures may have been perfunctory, carried on by means of the rotatory library, and have left him in ignorance of this dogma, or he may have been tinged with scepticism, but neither his favour with the gods nor his popularity with mankind suffered in consequence. On the contrary, the thousand-handed Kwaunon, Goddess of Mercy, naturally took him under her special protection and endowed him with miraculous powers of healing, which have been continued like a serial tale, down to the present day in all the numbers of his images. His effigy is always conspicuous for its smoothness and shining brightness, the work of true believers who, at all hours of the day, may be seen using the diseased part of their bodies as a polishing pad, hoping thereby to obtain the healing unction, or, at least, a little relief. Possibly it was in consequence of Bindzuru's lapse that a certain kind of hood called a "hornhider" became obligatory as a woman's head-covering when attending special services in the great temples, horns being as distinctive of the Buddhist demon as the cloven hoof is of ours.

The temple grounds are vast and enclose gardens, burial-grounds for the priests, a museum and exhibition of native industries, and, of course, the various accessories of a temple, such as belfries, treasure-houses, a pavilion for the Rinzo, or "revolving library," and a baptistery—an initiatory rite somewhat resembling our baptism being practised by this sect. The invention of revolving libraries is ascribed to a Chinese priest, who lived in the sixth century of our era, but it is eminently suggestive of American labour-saving contrivances. It is a large book-case of red lacquer on a dark lacquer base and lotus-shaped pedestal, and contains the whole Buddhist Scriptures—6771 volumes. It is a merit to have read this library through, salvation in the life to come, and the "avoidance of all misfortune" in the life that now is being thereby assured; but unfortunately the books are written in Chinese—the Chinese of a thousand years ago—and that has never been a language whose literature could be devoured at the rate of a volume or two per day, like the contents of our English circulating libraries. Few men have leisure for such a course of study in these days. Still fewer in the dark ages fifteen hundred years ago dared tackle those Scriptures. Even the priests had to spend so many hours of the day and night repeating the worshipful name of Buddha, and telling their beads that they had no time for the herculean brain-task, they could only dip into an odd volume now and then. Fu Daishi hit on the passage asserting that salvation is the reward of faith, and ardent desire equivalent to accomplished act. The book-case was in existence then; he inserted a pivot in the pedestal on which the whole structure could be made to revolve by one vigorous push, and wrote an inscription on the base asserting that a "degree of merit, equal to that accruing to him who should have perused the entire canon, will be obtained by those who will cause this library to revolve three times on its axis, and moreover long life, prosperity, and the avoidance of all misfortunes, shall be their reward." For a shilling one can obtain all these blessings if one has faith. It is the cheapest theological course in the world, and the most thorough.

The Monto sect has been called the Protestantism of Japan. It was founded in the thirteenth century by a priest, who became convinced of the futility and vanity of the complicated doctrines and difficult practices of the Buddhism of the time, and abolished most of its rites, and even the celibacy of the priesthood, and taught that piety consisted solely in faith in Buddha's willingness to save.

(To be continued.)

DRESSMAKERS AND MILLINERS AT WORK AND AT LEISURE.

"Know what thou canst work at, and work at it like a Hercules."

"In all true work, were it but true hand labour, there is something of divineness."

Carlyle.

HERE are over a million women and girls in London who wholly or partly gain a living by their own industry; of these, some sixty thousand are dressmakers and milliners, a larger number than is to be found in any other European capital.

It seems next to impossible to gain any accurate knowledge of the character, success, or influence of such large numbers of our fellow-citizens, and still more difficult to discover how they spend their leisure if they are so fortunate as to have any. The subject is, however, well worth looking into if only to see how sixty thousand women and girls, engaged in honest labour in our metropolis, make their mark, for good or for evil, on the remaining portion of the population.

Their ostensible work is to decorate or make seemly the bodies of others of their sex, but they do a great deal more than this, and as far as I have been able to see, our London is a good deal the better for this army of workers.

If we are to investigate this subject, it can only be done by breaking up the numbers into those who work in great London houses with settled incomes and without household cares; those who are in business for themselves in a large way, and in fashionable districts, who have to start with large capital and a grand show of rich and valuable materials to meet the demands of their aristocratic customers; those in a more modest way of business, in all parts of London, who do not disdain to make up ladies' own materials; those who go out to private houses by the day, for half-a-crown or three shillings, out of which omnibus or railway fare must be paid; and lastly, those who do slop work at sweating prices, for example, a dozen fashionable blouses at tenpence a dozen! In this way we shall, at all events, touch the fringe of the subject.

It is necessary to say at starting that a large proportion of these sixty thousand are not born Londoners, although they are counted as such; many are from various parts of the kingdom, and also from France; as a rule they are daughters of farmers, doctors, clergy, solicitors, and tradespeople of all degrees.

To begin with, the life of milliners and dressmakers engaged in the great London houses is an altogether different thing from that which obtained twenty or thirty years ago—the hours are fewer, the food is better and more carefully served, the sleeping-apartments are good, the care bestowed on the workers is almost parental, their health is watched over—in most houses there is an invalid-room and a house-doctor—their leisure is profitably spent, and they do not now lie in bed every spare moment, as they used to do, because they are too tired to sit up.

The gradual development of this improved state of things has naturally had an effect upon the girls themselves; their pleasures and recreations are of a higher class than formerly, there is a greater power of thinking among them, a more earnest desire to make use of every opportunity for improving themselves intellectually, and there is a great deal of earnest practical religion noticeable both in their work and their leisure.

The result of all this is that there is a marked decrease in the percentage of deaths among milliners and dressmakers during the last ten or fifteen years.

It must not be supposed that the whole sixty thousand are equally well off or equally successful; three-sixths, or thirty thousand are working for bare subsistence; two-sixths, or

ON AND OFF A PACK-SADDLE IN CENTRAL JAPAN.

PART IV.

JAPANESE LADY.

THE wealth and influence of the Monto sect have enabled it to rear unusually large and imposing edifices. These are generally styled Hongwanji, "Monastery of the Real Vow," in commemoration of the vow made by Amida that he would not accept Buddha-ship unless salvation was made attainable for all who should sincerely desire to be born into his kingdom and express this desire by calling earnestly upon his name. The Hongwanjis are always among the chief sights of any town possessing them, that in Zeukoji is simply the central idea, pride and glory of the district. Built of wood, of course, with a magnificent double roof crowning and overhanging the massive time-darkened beams of which the walls are composed, the huge porch and transverse beams overhead adorned with beautiful carvings and great pillars (of wood) dashed with whitewash, according to the invariable custom of the Monto sect, upholding the dimly-seen, handsomely decorated ceiling, it impresses even the most careless. After the tawdry, relic-crowded, hideous idol-crammed temples of the Jado sect, for which Nikko and Tokio are notorious, the bareness of the great hall was solemnising. The central area of the floor is matted, with a wooden aisle running at each side and in front of the chancel, from which it is separated by a low railing. Handsomely carved screens partly concealed the side chapels, the altar was gorgeous with its vessels of fabulous antiquity and priceless value; behind, indistinct in the dim light, were paintings on Kakemono even more precious.

A curious echo which my footsteps apparently called forth in walking along the aisle, caused me to look round suddenly. It was the "clang of the wooden shoon" of twelve or fifteen children of both sexes, who, on beholding the full face and unblackened teeth * of the queer-looking biped whose feet were leather-bound and seemingly toeless, whom they were pursuing, fell back as terror-stricken as if the reputed horn were also in sight; but courtesy is due even to demons, they remembered, and one and all at once performed the usual reverence solemnly and somewhat automatically. Fortunately the word for sweetmeats was in my possession, also a few copper coins. While establishing friendly relations by their means a policeman came on the scene who advertised himself as being able to "spik Angleesh good."

"Where are you going yesterday?" he inquired magisterially. "How shall you be to-morrow? You are have, eh!—passenger paper? How you are name yourself?"

I answered these queries to the best of my ability and produced my passport, pointing to the surname inscribed therein; my pronunciation of the latter struck him as incorrect from a phonetic point of view, and therefore suspicious.

"You require an inter-peter," he said. "You shall have me, eh? I can inter-repeat you, I, myself, shall charge you."

And he was as good as his word, despite my remonstrances, constituting himself my guardian there and then, accompanying me in my circuit of the temple, and, doubtless, imparting much useful information which, however, was incomprehensible, his knowledge of English being superior to mine, and finally escorting me to the hotel, where his appearance created some apprehension at first. Afterwards the establishment became familiarised to it. He kept up a close surveillance on my movements, marched into my room at all hours when he had a few minutes' leisure, sought to conduct all negotiations for me, and demanded night and morning an account of my doings and intentions. Moreover, he admonished the hotel people and 'ricksha men to treat me fairly. And whenever I went on an excursion in the neighbourhood wrote a missive recommending me to the best offices of all with whom I should be brought in contact.

After nightfall I returned to the temple in the expectation of finding the stone lanterns illuminated.

This is only done on great occasions, such as the Japanese Hallowe'en, when the souls of the departed saints are understood to revisit earth and to desire light on their path. My inter-repeater's habit of replying in the polite affirmative ("There is") to all questions was misleading. I found the stone lanterns white and dim and ghost-like in the gloom, but public worship was being conducted in the

COLOSSAL BRONZE STATUE OF BUDDHA.

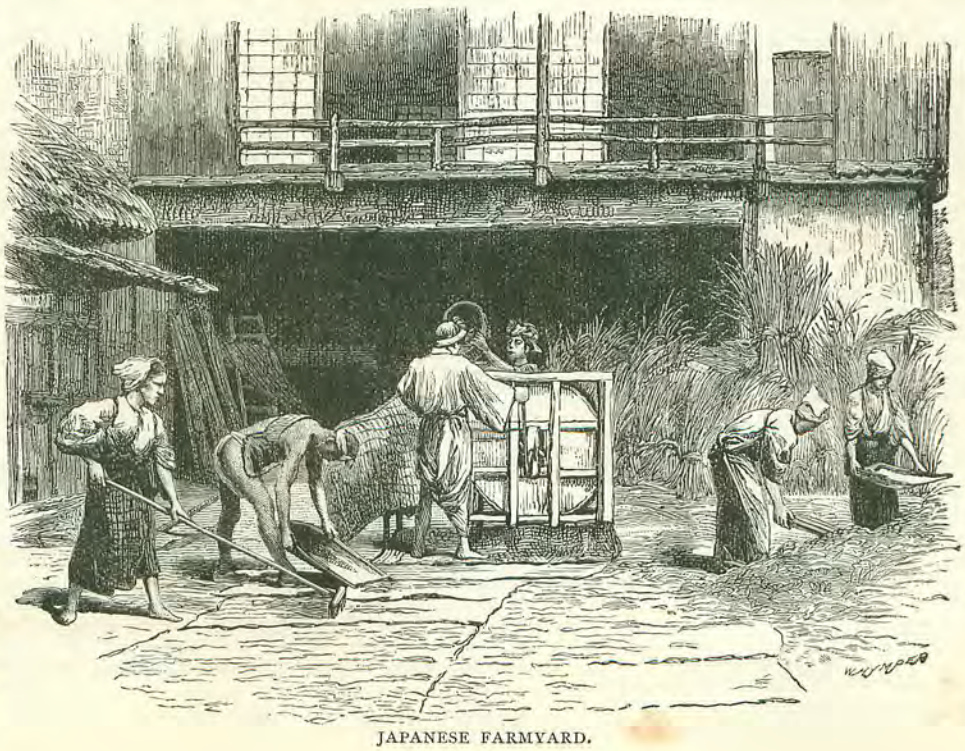
* All respectable women in the interior blacken their teeth.

JAPANESE PRIEST.

temple and that was a sight worth seeing. The great hall was in semi-darkness, but alive with fervent worshippers prone on the matting whispering the invocation to Buddha and knocking their foreheads against the floor. Within the chancel rails the lamps burned duskily, revealing the handsome, yellow, richly embroidered robes of the priests, walking in procession round and round the altar chaunting the service. Every moment a bell was rung, and three of their number dropping out of the procession prostrated themselves before the table with its sacred vessels and emblems and knocked their heads nine times, until all had performed this ceremony. Strangely familiar seemed the chaunt, and procession, and "dim religious light," and gorgeous stoles and robes, only the kow-towing kept one awake to the fact that the scene was laid in the far, far East. That, and the English of my policeman, who had pounced on me on arrival and taken me in charge.

Perhaps nothing in connection with the two religions of Japan, Shinto and Buddhist, is more surprising to a foreigner than the amity in which they exist side by side and rear their temples and shrines. Zeukoji was wholly Buddhist, but the mountains all round were covered with temples, "houses made with hands," for the resting-places of the Shinto divinities, the old gods of the land, when it should please them to come down to earth on a little picnic, or shrines to mark a spot, where, in the bygone days, they had revealed themselves to mortal eyes. These are invariably charmingly situated, above all things the great gods delighting in sublime and wide prospects, and well repay the explorer the time and strength spent in climbing. Somewhere at the back of the precipitous range which rose directly from the grounds of the Hongwanji like a wall, a sacred village surrounding a peculiarly holy temple nestled, I had heard, on the shoulder of another and higher range, quite out of the world, little known, and as yet unvisited by foreigners. The temptation to explore it was irresistible. On a pack-horse as a matter of course I intended to travel, but "Peter" (his given name ran into nine syllables before reaching the honorific "Sen," to which he was entitled by courtesy, and it was convenient to fall back on an abbreviated form of the designation, self-given, on first introduction), "my interpreter," laid an embargo on the horse; the ground was too sacred to be trodden under foot by a quadruped. A jinricksha with two or three pullers I might have, or a *kago* (or palanquin) with four bearers, the latter would be the more expensive and the more honourable conveyance. Now the Japanese *kago* is of two kinds, and I had had experience of both. The one is a wicker hamper with the sides cut away, and the other a sort of wooden coffin with sliding boards at each side. In neither can a medium-sized foreigner find room for his head and legs in connection with his body unless he is capable of turning his lower limbs into a spring mattress and lying back on them, using his heels as a bolster.

I chose the jinricki. While squatting on the floor arranging preliminaries with the headman of the ricksha clan of coolies, a card was brought in which had gone the round of the hundred and odd tea houses in Zeukoji. It bore the printed legend, "So-and-so, Boston, U.S.A." and in pencil, "Is there anyone in this town who can speak English?" English was my mother tongue, but as a medium of communion with the natives it had not proved distinctly useful. Peter invariably listened to it with doubt expressed in open lines on his countenance. Where the chaste diction of Boston had failed to open a door of intercourse there was little hope that my vocal powers would avail. Possibly So-and-so required an equal acquaintance with Japanese; the few words I could utter in that language though understood by intelligent natives, were



JAPANESE FARMYARD.

rather above the heads of ordinary folks, and, anyhow, had not enough of them for my own use, and could not afford to place any at the service of an utter stranger. A gentleman with a disappointed and disgusted air, accompanied by a guide, whose expression was despondent almost to the depths of despair, passed the house an hour later on their way to the railway station. "So-and-so" indubitably and his paid interpreter.

Morning is the best time for travelling. Shortly after sunrise next day, followed by two men dragging a jinricksha, I was climbing up a mountain path almost as steep and leaf-shaded as the famous "Beanstalk" of the nursery tale. Progress was slow, interrupted by the politeness of the coolies who had been charged to treat the "Great One" with becoming veneration, and always plumped down on the road when addressed, jumped up to bow, and sat down again to reply to her observations, in accordance with the rules of etiquette. Like the "Jack" whose name is associated with the beanstalk, at the top we found ourselves, not in the sky as might have been expected, but in a fair and smiling country not unlike the land we had left two thousand feet below, a circular valley, with a depression in the centre suggestive of an extinct volcano, every yard of which was under cultivation. Pleasant homesteads dotted the sides of the surrounding hills, and little temples stood here and there in their cedar groves. One large, gaunt, apparently rock-hewn shrine upreared its sharp profile against the blue sky on a mountain peak to the south, but it was not towards it our course was bent. Skirting one side of the vale we hurried westward to the farther hill-tops, then up, and on, and up, and up again, commanding as we journeyed on wonderful views of the hills and plains to the north, with the rivers winding through them and far, far away, a gleam of silver sunlight on the Northern Sea. At last the farthest range was reached and surmounted, and behold! a vast plateau, bare of trees owing to its great elevation (over six thousand feet above sea-level), but covered with grass and wild flowers and thickets of low shrubs, and level as far as the naked eye could see. In the centre a huge *Torii* or "Sacred Portal," indicated the sanctity of the ground. The *Torii* may be described as two Latin crosses set up side by side, with their transverse beams touching and a second beam shaped like the keel of a boat overlying them. It always marks the entrance to holy places, and in some locations ranks as an object of special veneration. I was requested to dismount from the 'ricksha and walk when we drew near, humbly and on foot only might it be passed. Chu-In was not in sight, nothing but the great plain, although here was its "Portal." Some miles still lay between gate and temple and the sun was high overhead. Resuming my seat we hurried on, dropped over the edge of the plateau, ran down a valley where the trees grew in wondrous luxuriance, and gained the shoulder of another mountain range. And now it was the south country, a land of corn and fruits and flowers, of which glimpses were caught over the hill-tops. Presently, crowning the slope and nestling under a group of bare, jagged peaks, Chu-In was descried, a village like the towns of the sons of Levi in old Judea, for all the inhabitants were of the priestly order seemingly. Before each door as well as at the entrance to the street of the village stood a *Torii*. In the gardens shrines and images were as plentiful as trees. Each house had the high, many-gabled, ornamental roof so pleasant in the sight of the gods, and so quaintly picturesque in the eyes of artists; and there at the head of the street, elevated on a stone platform and to be reached only by climbing a steep, steep flight of steps, rose the mother temple with half a dozen baby temples and shrines clinging to her skirts, behind and at each side groves of those "trees of the Lord," as Isaiah calls them, the stately crytomerias.

Peter had furnished the 'ricksha pullers with a letter addressed, probably, in royal style, "to all whom it may concern." Remembering that to show hospitality has been the prerogative of dignitaries of the church from all ages, I drove up to the priestly residence nearest the temple, took off my shoes and bowed myself into the presence of a benevolent-looking little man with a bald head, who may have been astounded at my appearance but was too courteous to show it. The coolies on bended knees presented the note of introduction, and after glancing at it the old gentleman went down on his knees and gave me welcome; then he rose up and pronounced a blessing and bursting out into the kitchen blew the fire into a red glare and boiled the kettle, made the tea with his own hands and carried in the tray. Then he made a speech. His tones were liquid and musical, unlike the Japanese of the lowlands—if indeed his words were Japanese at all. His gestures indicated that he was placing himself and his house, and everything he possessed, at my service, and perhaps he had commenced with his knowledge of Sanscrit or that older and more sacred tongue, the language of the sons of heaven brought down to earth by the first Mikado. It was the hour for his private devotions he intimated or his legs were weak,* and unhappily he must depute his daughter to take his place and show me over the Holy Places. If the Buddhist belief in Metempsychosis be founded on experience that young lady must, in her immediately preceding Karma, have been a female clerk in a British post office. Her manner was never acquired in Japan. She did her duty—showed the Holy Places—but no more, and was grimly indifferent to, or sceptical of their sanctity. Her young brothers and cousins made the round of the minor temples with us, and comported themselves several degrees more abominably than the children of Belial who mocked the Prophet Elisha—they sought to make game of the great gods. In front of each shrine there was a kind of shallow trough covered with a grating, overhanging this a bell-pull. The arrangement was useful both as offertory and oratory. The pilgrim threw in his money, rang the bell to advise the tutelary deity of his presence and attract attention to the offering, and then bowed himself over the grating in the attitude of worship. It was the delight of these scions of priestly houses to rattle pebbles into each trough and ring the adjoining bell and then run away as if they dreaded the anger of the disturbed divinity. If by any means they succeeded in playing this trick while I stood in front of a shrine their joy was exuberant. The enraged deity would think I was the deceiver and visit me, it was fondly hoped, with instant punishment.

Fortunately the main temple was essentially sacred—no unconsecrated Japanese foot dare enter there. Courtesy to the stranger within their gates opened its beautifully gilt and emblazoned doors to me, after my shoes had been removed, and leaving the boys and 'ricksha pullers sprawling on the steps, the latter praying and the former pretending, we passed in. It was "a gem of purest ray serene," in its exquisite cleanliness and brightness, a room such as the Mikado might delight to dwell in rather than a temple in our sense of the word, the floor covered with the whitest matting, ceiling and walls a blaze of colour, crimson, blue, green, and yellow, blended and subdued by the dead gold ground. Cornices and doors, altar-rails and altar, the latter crowded with gorgeous vessels, were marvels of the carver's skill. Behind the altar stood a shrine or large casket, of rare and lovely old lacquer, on each side of which huge figures armed with bows and arrows sat on guard. These were not idols, or objects of worship, but simply representations of attendants. The imperturbable young priestess allowed me to penetrate behind the screens which separated the shrine and its body-guard from the main hall and examine these, and even to touch the sacred vessels of precious metal on the altar. Then with an imperious gesture she stalked out through a side door, past several apartments seemingly for the use of officiating priests when on duty, across a graveyard and along an avenue leading towards the rugged crown of the mountain. I followed, first, however, securing my shoes which the boys before going back to afternoon school had placed upside down in an attitude of devotion on the bottom step.

It is impossible for Japanese to wear peas in their shoes when going on pilgrimage, their foot-gear being a sort of little wooden stool with a loop of string in the middle through which the foot is thrust, and a smaller loop at the end for the great toe. Instead, they strew the paths leading to their holy places with small flints and rough stones, and make them as like the dry beds of mountain torrents as art can copy nature. The more holy the place, the rougher the road thereto. We were now bound, I perceive, for a very high and holy ground indeed, and the old priest had been wise to prefer exercising the rites of his religion at home, where he had a private oratory, or chapel of ease, on the ground floor, softly matted. Stately cedars, two and three hundred years old, lined and shaded the way; little streams ran at each side, rare ferns, especially maiden-hair of abnormal length, growing in luxuriant profusion on the brink, and wild pinks and strange white star-like flowers covered the banks. Nevertheless, it was a toilsome road.

From some queer charts of Chu-In and the neighbouring holy places, purchased in the evening, I gathered that this water had been struck from the rock personally by one of the old gods in ages long past; it and the crags were therefore sacred, and the shrines, erected in commemoration of the event to which it owed its spring, were most holy. Even in these degenerate days miracles were not unknown, effected by the agency of the tutelary deities. When we reached those shrines near the top of the crag, we found their doors and outer gates shut and bolted. Several immense tanks, hewn out of the solid rock, were to be seen brimful of the sacred water, but the gods, like Baal of old, were supposed to be either talking, or on a pursuit, or journeying, or, peradventure, sleeping, if not, eating their evening rice, and their priests and attendants were, one and all, following their example. Not a human being was visible. After knocking vainly on the wooden walls of what looked like a windowless and doorless barn, but which may have been a monastery, my guide turned round, black in the face with indignation that her father's daughter should have had all this trouble for nothing, and plunged down the rocky, slippery path. I crept after her, footsore and hungry and disappointed. I had gone on pilgrimage and done penance, fasting according to the severest canons of the church, but no miracle was wrought on my behalf. Only by a miracle could that return tramp have been rendered enjoyable and worthy of remembrance.

(*To be continued.*)

* Sign-language, though expressive, is open to misapprehension.

THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER

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ON AND OFF A PACK-SADDLE IN CENTRAL JAPAN.

PART V.

THE gods require little at the hands of their servitors, a few grains of rice, fresh flowers, a vase of water occasionally satisfy them, but a gladsome air and a smiling countenance their worshippers must bring into their presence. As there are over eight millions of these gods, and Japan is a small country, the spiritual atmosphere is crowded. One never knows what unseen divinity may be facing one at any moment, and it is therefore advisable to look pleasant at all times. My young guide had failed in this act of religion, and her gods had turned away their faces from us it would seem.

If I had been the sun-goddess in person, the good old priest could not have welcomed my reappearance with a more radiant countenance. In the most patriarchal manner he bestirred himself to boil the rice and prepare the hot bath. The kitchen-fireplace was a large square brazier of charcoal ashes sunk in the floor of a nicely-matted room. Together we knelt beside it, for I had brought a tin of soup, a strange comestible in his eyes, and it behoved me to cook it myself. This was done in the tin, a rice-pot and big kettle being, so far as I could see, the only cooking-utensils in the house.

After the lid had been operated on with a dagger, chop-sticks were produced, but, happily, I had also brought a spoon. If anyone has ever tried to eat soup with the aid of two pen-holders, they will understand what my difficulty would otherwise have been. Then, with some ceremony, the old gentleman led me to the bath, which was boiling hot, with a blazing wood-fire in a metal receptacle in the side of the tub. It was placed in an out-house (the private baptistery, perhaps), without door or screen, but I managed to rig up a curtain with the help of some cloaks, and to make my host understand that neither bath-man nor bath-woman would be required as assistant in the ablutionary rites. A friend had told me in Tokio that hospitality was exercised even to the extent of washing not the guest's feet only, but also his or her back, and that, like shampooing, this service was always rendered by a person of the opposite sex, and modesty forbade

PLAY-TIME.

my thinking myself worthy of such distinction. "Early to bed and early to rise," is the practice in the country. The primitive little oil-lamps furnish but semi-light; there is nothing to see, and little to do in the house; and as there are no seats, chairs, stools, or tables, and one must lie on the floor, the appearance of the bed-rugs is welcomed at nightfall. My host laid down mine with his own hands, and then brought a pipe and a pot of tea, and immediately afterwards a square wooden box lined with metal, containing lighted charcoal. These he arranged at the side of my bed, and, after pronouncing a benediction and wishing me a good-night, retired. Before dawn he returned with more tea and stirred up the fire, and seemed surprised to find I had not tried the "soothing weed." Soon afterwards, I heard him performing morning worship in the next room, which was fitted up as an oratory, had a shrine and altar and screens, like a miniature temple, and was beautifully lighted with tall candles, and gay with flowers, fresh gathered. The service was musical, the prayers said in a kind of chant, and a bell rung every moment —or rather a chime of bells—to attract the attention of his tutelary deity. There was not a harsh or dissonant sound, or unpleasant sight, and the worthy man's earnestness and devotion were evident and impressive. He was praying to his god, a great being whom he believed to be able and willing to save from sin and its consequences. I sat down in the passage and lifted my heart to mine, and who can say that both cries did not reach One and the Same Ear.

What a wonderful view of the lower world awaited my outgoing! Clear, and fresh, and pure, shadowless, and without mist or haze; mountain-range beyond range, hill-tops and valleys, highlands and lowlands lay below and stretched north, east, and south in the cool, clear morning light. Not yet had the rising sun gained power enough to cast a shade or draw out the grey breath of the moist earth. Truly it must be in the early morning that the nature-loving Japanese believe the old gods of the land delight to visit the heights and look down on the beautiful world fresh from the baptismal touch of night. Already had the priestly services begun. Fresh flowers, in little bamboo vases, glistened before each shrine in the garden, and lay at the feet of each statue. Thus honoured I found a Madonna and Child in marble, seated under a wooden canopy. In Chinese characters it bore the title "Woman and Son," but the workmanship was European. How it had reached that remote village was a mystery, but the fact that it had been adopted as a Japanese divinity was obvious. Breakfast was enlivened by the boom of the great bell of the temple sounding at short intervals for the delectation of the gods, who love music and dancing, and all things bright and beautiful. A sacred dance was being performed on a stage close by the temple, also for their pleasure, and that of the ricksha pullers, who were with difficulty induced to tear themselves away, and return to the world of secular things. Mine host, overwhelmingly gracious to the last, accepted half a dollar for the night's board and lodging, and twenty cents as an honorarium for the young priestess, and in return bestowed his blessing and a parting gift—a picture-map of the holy places, out of drawing and innocent of perspective, but highly-coloured, and strikingly unlike Nature, and, therefore, distinctly a work of art.

The return to Zeukoji was effected on foot, for the most part. The jinricksha is a comfortable vehicle, but small, and the shafts, between which the foremost puller is stationed, are short. Going down hill it is difficult for a long-legged foreigner to avoid pushing against the coolie's back with his feet. In rough places this push is apt to be jerked into a kick, a severely unwomanly proceeding, and as repugnant to me as it must have been to the man, who wore no clothes worth mentioning save a large basket-work hat, which he preferred to carry balanced on his forehead, rather than utilise as a shield or splash-board.

After Zeukoji and Chu-In, Ikao, with its foreign restaurant and hotels, furnished with bedsteads, tables, and chairs, would be tamely homelike. I had still a few days and about twice as many dollars at command, and having heard that it was possible to branch off from the high road at Karuizawa, cross over the shoulder of the volcano Asamayama by a bridle-path, and reach Kusatzu, a village notorious for its violent hot springs, from which there was a fairly-good mountain-road to Sawatari, another boiling place, and thence to Mayebashi, with a branch to Ikao, I decided to make this *detour*, and spend the spare time and money on the way to, rather than in, the latter watering-place. The railway journey to Karuizawa was effected third-class, and very comfortably, the Post-Office van being assigned me by the guard, unasked. Jinrickshas were procured at the station, and an easy run to Kutsukake, at the base of Asamayama, was quickly made across the breezy plain. No horse or carrier could be procured so late in the day to cross the mountain-passes. The afternoon was spent bargaining and arranging for the next morning's work, and the night passed in a fairly-good hotel, whose name signally resembled a sneeze in sound. At daybreak, once more enthroned on a pack-saddle, I turned my face towards the rosy east and began the ascent of the slope of the volcano, the fire on top, which had glared all night, now veiled in smoke. The path rose directly towards a funny little round-topped hill, perched on the summit of the pass, and ran through scattered groves of pine and larch, with lovely mountain-views east, south, and west, and quaking, steaming Asamayama blocking up the north. From the summit of the ridge the Haruna Mountains, on one of whose many shoulders Ikao is situated, were seen on the right, Shiramsan lifting his glowing head some eight or nine thousand feet towards the sun on the left; and in front, far away below in the depression, where the long spurs reaching out from both ranges met and intersected, lay Kusatsu.

The route then followed a long downward grade over the lava ejected from the volcano, an excellent path so far as dryness goes, but loose and unsubstantial, and giving out a hollow sound when struck by the horse's hoofs or my thick boots. It was followed on foot for the most part, the pack-horse from the first, when I affronted his sense of right by attempting to mount on the left side, thereby proving my foreign extraction, having shown a firm, though courteous, disinclination to carry me. He was consideration itself in his manner, always choosing a safe place and going down on his knees in an attitude of respect before rolling me off. During the ascent the path was often too narrow, and occasionally too dangerous for this performance. The descent, however, made it easy to shake me from my perch, and cause me to come down like an avalanche over his head, to the discomfiture and semi-strangulation of the *bettô*, whose neck frantically clutched *en route* helped to break the fall. It saved time and trouble to walk.

About ten o'clock we reached and traversed a miserably poor-looking village, then, turning away from the lava and *débris*-covered height, continued a gentle descent through a pleasant park-like country to the valley, and after crossing a stony river-bed by means of a rude bridge of wood and fagots arrested our steps at the entrance to the town of Hanewo, and vainly asked for food at the principal tea-house. Not even hard-boiled eggs could be had for love or money, nothing but tea and sweetmeats. Happily I had procured a tin of biscuits in Karuizawa, and one of milk. These were opened with some difficulty, one sharp stone acting as chisel, and another as hammer. The contents formed a satisfying meal, and, having dispatched it quickly and baited the horse with some provender which he had carried on his pack, we commenced the ascent of the opposing slope of Shiramsan, following the tortuous course of a picturesque defile to the head of the pass. There a more open country was attained, and the path continued down hill and up hill, and down hill again, through charmingly-sylvan scenery, for three or four miles, and a last descent stranded us in Kusatsu, on the edge of a pool of ill-smelling sulphur—"Hell," the Japanese call it, the Buddhistic idea of the "lake of fire and brimstone" resembling ours materially. And, straightway, having no cutaneous disease and no desire to acquire one, my urgent impulse was to escape, if not for my life, certainly for the safety of my skin, from Kusatsu.

"Hell" was an oblong space, about one hundred feet by fifty, in the centre of the village, surrounded by railings, outside of which was a roadway bordered by the lodging-houses, most of which were three storeys high, as if to keep in the fumes. From the upper end of this space the boiling water gushed up, and flowed over rocks and through flat troughs laid down to catch the deposit of sulphur. Clouds of steam floated upwards from the unsightly mess, and the air was impregnated with brimstone odours. The water is of a severe but highly-curative nature, with temperature so high that it is necessary to wear some covering, unless the bather's object is to get rid of his offending cuticle once for all. No European would care to enter the public bath, unless sewn up in an ox-hide, which might reduce the process from boiling to stewing, but the Japanese were planted all over the place like mud-squashes, with just their heads above the slimy water. Some sat on the brink, gradually inducting themselves at the rate of an inch per second; while others, who had just emerged in a parboiled condition, stood there cooling, and rubbing themselves down with a kind of white powder. And across the roadway, between the public bath and the lodging-houses, men and women calmly passed, clothed chiefly in diseased cuticle, wooden clogs, and umbrellas!

The lodging-houses looked clean and new, but the idea of spending an evening and night in such a neighbourhood was insupportable. Without removing my boots or entering, I sat down outside the doorway of one, and, flourishing my passport as if it were a royal mandate, appealed to all within hearing, "Sawatari, horse! Jinricksha—Kago, Sawatari! One dollar—two dollar, Sawatari!" The season nearly over, guests few, and business slack, the innkeeper was anxious to detain such a distinguished stranger on his premises. No conveyance was available so late in the day he declared. Kusatsu is famous for its salmon-trout. I ordered some, and then resumed my chaunt, "Sawatari—two dollars! Horse, 'ricksha, Kago—two dollars to Sawatari!" A foreigner howling on a doorstep naturally attracted attention. In the crowd, which soon gathered, there happened to be a man from Sawatari, who had brought over a patient on horseback that day, and decided to spend the night and have a plunge into "Hell" at his expense, but the offer of triple fare for the return-journey was too good to be lightly passed by. He went off to saddle his beast, and I consented to have my boots taken off, and to go in to dinner.

The salmon-trout was excellent, and cooked to perfection (cased in paper and broiled), in

Japanese fashion, and steamed rice formed a suitable accompaniment. A bottle of Yokohama beer added a homelike flavour to the repast, and, much strengthened thereby, I was hoisted on top of the mountain-steed about six o'clock, and started off on a five hours' march to Sawatari. A memorable ride, up one hill and down another, along a valley and across a river, deep in the shade of Shiramsan. Then, as the full moon rose high overhead, and followed, or rather went before us, in our course, flooding hill and dale with rich, clear, mellow light, we climbed another mountain-side, thickly studded with chestnut-trees, to which it owes its name of Kurizaka, and crossing the pass plunged down a narrow defile whose sides were thickly wooded, the mountain-ash and maple shining resplendently and flashing back the moonlight.

By this time I had learned how to sit with least discomfort on a pack-saddle. The mountain-pony was sure-footed and accustomed to carry invalids, the horns of the saddle were wider apart than usual, and a sort of chair-back had been tied on against which I leaned, too tired after walking twenty-three miles, from Kutsukake to Kusatsu, to care whether its last tenant had been a leper, or merely suffering from eczema, but sufficiently at ease to enjoy the glorious views, and drink in the beauty of the night, unutterably bright, and restful, and soul-satisfying. The valley widened as we descended; a foaming white torrent coursed along at the bottom. Presently an extensive view unfolded between the hill-slopes, and directly in front a huge white rock stood forth, like a giant sentinel guarding the peaceful vale. A nearer approach revealed another rock, larger but less prominent, and, just beyond, on a narrow ridge at the head of the valley, Sawatari nestled, still and white and ghostlike in the moonlight. Then came the thought, would it prove to be altogether such another loathsome, ill-smelling, unsightly sulphur-bed as Kusatsu? Well, it was midnight now, and with the morning sun it would be possible to escape to fairer regions if desired. On, therefore, cheerfully, and up the steep street of a village, as clean and sweet, and picturesque as any of those whose gabled sides and high roofs peep out from the folds of the "blue Alsatian mountains!" Then a vigorous knocking on the outside shutters of a silent house, a short parley, and in a moment more a whole family, alert and gracious, were waiting on the late travellers with more than French politeness. The Japanese habit of sleeping in their daily apparel has its advantages under such circumstances, and the neighbourhood of a hot mineral-spring its recommendations. Before the water could be boiled for the customary offering of tea, the bath was ready in a deep tank, sunk in the floor of a nicely-matted room, pipes (of bamboo) from both the boiling and the cold springs, carrying the waters, fresh and fresh, by day and night. Bedding was quickly laid down in a pleasant upper chamber, and the sleep that followed was long and refreshing. The mineral-waters here are highly beneficial in rheumatic affections. After a second bath in the morning I felt renewed in strength and muscle, and ready for a sixteen-mile walk to Ikao, but the quaint prettiness of the village and surrounding hills, detained me there until high noon.

A visit to the cold spring was especially charming. To the eye there was no difference between this and the hot spring, both were foaming over rocky beds, snow-white and cool-looking, and flashing back the sunshine. Later on in Ikao this deceptive white foam led to the scalding of boots and fingers—it was so difficult to realise that the pretty little rivulets tumbling down hill, or running along the gutters of the streets, or sparkling in the gardens, were boiling hot.

Sawatari possessed one carriage and several jinrickis. I engaged the former to carry me and my traps as far as Nakanojo, where the road to Ikao branched off and climbed the Haruna Mountains. "Cart," would be a better name for that springless, heavy-wheeled vehicle than carriage, but it was expeditious. We rattled down a long tortuous gorge, well covered on both sides with trees—many of them festooned with mistletoe—for six miles; then into a wide valley with rice-fields and fresh corn (maize) clusters, and long beds of vegetables. Here the river, previously passed on the way to Kusatsu, was again met with. The carriage (?) was left on the near bank, the driver volunteering to act as luggage-carrier, and the river crossed by means of a primitive ferry-boat without oar or paddle, a rope stretched from shore to shore along which the boatman shuffled hand over hand dragging his craft with him, supplying their place.

Then the arduous ascent began. Ikao, perched on a ledge at the top of a great gash high up on the northern slope of the Haruna Range, distinctly visible five weary miles ahead. The path was rough (the carrier, who acted as guide, having chosen a short cut), and, in spots, precipitous, but green under foot with ferns and grasses and mossy boulders, and overhead with great trees—"the great rock pines like nodding plumes," and gay mountain ash, and tremulous birch. At one side a wild stream rushed down in a series of rapids and little falls, white riband-like waterfalls gleamed now and again through the foliage on the farther bank, and between the giant trunks extensive views opened wider and wider as we mounted of Akagisan to the north, and the Nikko group in the far west with Nantaisan, the "Sacred Mountain," rising, like Saul among his people, "from his shoulders and upwards higher than any." Soon we came upon grey stone Buddhas seated here and there wherever the scenery was prettiest, for the sainted ones dearly love rocks and streams and the boom of falling water; then a long row of them on a ledge overlooking plain and distant hills, a steep flight of steps, and we were in Ikao. Hurrah! Now for bread and butter, new milk, beef-steak, cups and saucers, clean linen, tables, chairs, and a bedstead! Alas! the season was over; the foreigners had all departed, the dairy farm been transported back to the lowlands; butcher, baker, laundryman, all, all, were gone!—"gone glimmering in the mist of things that were." The big hotels, where English was spoken and charged for in the bills, were closed, the speakers vanished. The "Foreign Restaurant" was on the point of following their example, but, luckily for me, kept open for one day longer, though the man in charge had to send down to Mayebashi for bread and meat and milk to satisfy my requirements. Immediately on my establishment in an inn where only Japanese and moderate charges were understood, he rushed in with some steaming coffee, and, having ascertained what I would like for dinner, returned in an hour's time with something quite different, but excellent in its way, and the assurance that "dinner" would be provided to meet my wishes "for breakfast in the morning."

The fare was sumptuous next day, fish and flesh and fowl, tarts and cakes, fruit and after-dinner coffee. But Ikao was a town with shops for the sale of curios in wood and lacquer and rock-crystal, with narrow, dirty streets, and huge hotels, and an immense public bath-house, and soldiers on guard at the entrance, and policemen on duty, and a post-office. And yet Ikao was a desert and a waste place in my eyes because of these very possessions, and an anomaly up there on the mountain heights, where only the sun and air and trees and rocks and waterfalls (and the latter cold), ought to have prominence. There were a few pretty walks in the neighbourhood, notably that up a gorge behind the town, over the mountain and down into a high level valley at its back, where a lake and some red lacquered temples surrounded by splendid cedars, were worth a visit. Ojikoku ("Hill"), close to this gorge, had a certain fascination about its boiling holes and deep mud caldrons. I was glad to see that the way to it was made as difficult of access as possible. It was not in general use as a bathing-place, most, if not all, the houses in that locality having little springs or streams on their premises, or tanks in their yards to catch the water which ran freely, it seemed to me, in rivulets all over the slope. My inn was furnished with private baths, and I took the usual course of three. The bath-room was simply a collection of deep tanks capable of accommodating twenty or more people at a time. The bather undressed in his or her apartment, then walked out on the verandah, along one side of the house, passed through the kitchen, crossed a yard and thus arrived at the so-called "private bath," where immersion could only be accomplished by slow degrees, owing to the heat of the water steaming in the tanks. The return was by the same route and afforded every opportunity for cooling and enjoying an air bath. This was the course I followed with certain mitigations afforded by a cloak and a Japanese robe, which I hired and used as a bathing-dress. Not knowing the word for "hire," I had been obliged to requisition this Kamona, the astonished owner being also speechless, but too polite to interfere with my actions. When the course was finished I restored the garment with thanks, and held out a handful of small coins, saying, "Ikura?" (how much) and he (for no woman's robe would have been long enough) indemnified himself with a couple.

A difficulty presented itself on the second morning when I prepared to leave Ikao. My passport was not forthcoming, the landlord, whose morals had been contaminated by dealings with tricky foreigners, having retained it in his possession instead of restoring it to its rightful owner after it had been inspected by the authorities. Without it I could scarcely pass the guard-house at the end of the town, and certainly would not be allowed to enter Mayebashi. I did not remember the Japanese for "passport," and my limited command of sign language quite failed to affect mine host. Thought-reading was useless, as he declined to consider my mind, and I read in his a firm determination to keep me and my passport in his house as long as possible. No one in Ikao understood English "as she is spoke," but the greater number of Japanese students can read "her" when "writ large," and nearly every family contains one or more students.

Again I appealed to the public from a doorstep. "I want my passport," I wrote in large schoolboy hand on a leaf of my pocket-book, and held the page towards every passer-by, as if it were a tract or a blind man's placard. Everybody regarded it with interest and pretty soon that passport was in my hands, the landlord's own son having been a member of the first group which gathered round and spelled out the inscription. Jinrickshas were then chartered, and a pleasant run down the southern slope and through mulberry groves along the river-side to Mayebashi followed. Thence next day by train to Tokio, where that travel-worn safe conduct, the much frayed and crumpled passport, was sent back to the British Legation for restoration (like a bank-note) to its issuer, the Lord High Minister of the Interior.

S. J. ROWE.