

SOLOMON RAY.

A hard, close man was Solomon Ray;
Nothing of value he gave away;

He hoarded and saved,
He pinched and shaved,
And the more he had the more he craved.

The hard-earned shillings he tried to gain
Brought him little but care and pain;

For little he spent,
And all he lent,
He made it bring him twenty per cent.

Such was the life of Solomon Ray.

The years went by, and his hair grew gray;

His cheeks grew thin,
And his soul within
Grew hard as the pound he worked to win.

But he died one day, as all men must,
For life is fleeting and men but dust.

The heirs were gay,
And laid him away,
And that was the end of Solomon Ray.

They quarreled now who had little cared
For Solomon Ray when his life was spared;

His lands were sold,
And his hard-earned gold
All went to the lawyers, I am told.

Yet men will cheat and pinch and save,
Nor carry their treasures beyond the grave;

All their gold some day
Will melt away,
Like the selfish savings of Solomon Ray.
—*The Christian Statesman.*

THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN.

Rev. Dr. H. W. Swartz writes from Japan about the people. He says:

The people of Japan are rather smaller than American's are. They all have black eyes, black hair, and a dark skin. Though some are not very dark, simply brunettes. They live in a very simple way, with small houses, and they sit and sleep on the floor. The floor is covered with mats, very soft and clean, and they leave their

shoes outdoors or in the entrance. They have paper windows, and their doors are always open, even in winter.

They have many doors, so that often one or two sides of the house are entirely open. But in the night they shut them all up, and many of them will sleep in a small room with no ventilation at all. Their stoves are little wooden boxes lined with zinc or copper, partly filled with mud and ashes to hold the heat, and a little charcoal fire which does not blaze or smoke, never more than about a handful of fire, and around this they will sit holding their hands over it and lighting their pipes at it and talking and laughing. They are always pleasant and very polite.

Sometimes they will put a blanket over their stove (called hibachi) and all put their heads under the blanket to keep warm, with the doors open and the wind and cold free to come in. In the night I suppose some sleeper may straighten out under his blanket and kick over his hibachi and set the house on fire. In the winter or dry season there are many fires and some very large ones. Almost every night we were awakened by the fire bells, and sometimes we were up and dressed ready to "move out" for we feared we might lose our home.

The Japanese are great smokers; they have little pipes that will not hold a thimbleful; they will fill, light, puff once or twice, then they are done for a little while. They are constantly drinking tea too. They make their tea in a much better way than we do at home. They take the leaves and pour hot water upon them and let it stand for a few minutes. They never "steep" the tea. They never put sugar or milk into it.

We observed "Children's Day" here as you did in America. Little ones from four Sunday-schools united at our native church where we had singing, recitations, etc. The boys and girls of one school recited the fifteenth chapter of St. John (of course all in Japanese); another school recited one of the Psalms, while the girls from our Women's Foreign Mission school recited some of Proverbs, the one part