

## People We Meet

MISS Helen Fraser, daughter of Mr. James Fraser, of Walker Avenue, Toronto, who has been for the past five years superintendent of the native training school for nurses in Doshisha College, returned home in August, bringing with her one of her pupils, a charming little Japanese maiden, who purposes taking a three years' course of training in one of the hospitals of the western world before returning to Japan.

She is such a little creature,—only four feet nine inches in height. "Small—a little," she says, in her shy English, when I ask her whether she reaches the average height of the Japanese maiden. Plump, yet well proportioned, with the prettiest of hands and small, slender feet, that even the white 'tabi' cannot render shapeless, dark hair tossy and soft, narrow brown eyes, and rows of perfect little white teeth. Although her face is rather large, with the high cheek bones of the Mongolian, she is a most attractive little maid, whose twenty-four years are difficult to realize, although she declares it 'old, old' in Japan.

Her name, Shidzu Naruse, has a liquid sound as she says it in the softest voice. Really, her voice and her laughter are like the tinkle of bells, the murmur of a brook, or any other innocent lulling. When she speaks her imperfect English she pronounces it as if each word were a caress; but her vocabulary is limited, and she makes much gentle laughter fill in the spaces. When she falls again into her native tongue it sounds so liquid and softly sibilant that we are quite content to learn her thought through her friend and interpreter, Miss Fraser.

Shidzu cannot yet number her days on the Western Continent by months—only by weeks. She likes Canada, she says, but the houses are 'big.' That is her surprise at present. Coming from a miniature land, she can only look in childlike surprise at the bigness of things, the tall men and women, the giant, many-storeyed buildings, and the rash, up-reaching trend of western life at large.

We sit out upon the piazza during these warm August nights, and Shidzu comes and curls herself beside her friend in the group upon the steps. She is in native dress, which she always wears in the house. To-night it is of grey material,—a kind of Japanese crêpe. A broad sash terminates in the usual large bow about her waist, and the little white tibi gleam out in the gathering darkness from beneath the narrow Oriental drapery.

The little round, brown throat rises plumply from the folds of the kymano, and the full loose sleeves fall away from the brown round arms, and the plump little hands that wave so prettily as she tells us Japanese fairy stories.

We recognise traces of our own fairy stories as we listen. This woman who ill-treated the sparrow, and afterward found her gift-box full of snakes, is surely akin to that unkind girl whose mouth dropped snakes and beetles for every word she spoke.

This of the frogs who went ajourneying—not to woo, but to view strange sights; and having eyes in the backs of their heads, unconsciously surveyed their own cities from neighbouring hill-tops, then went home filled with astonishment at the marvels thereof,—this little satire

maiden shows us her pretty silks, so fine and soft 'for best'; or she takes down her blue-black hair,—it is knotted softly now, as is the Western custom,—and illustrates how it is dressed, all perfumed and stiffened, when at home. She has only been wearing shoes,—our hideous, civilized affairs,—a week or two.

"Oh, yes, I walk slow,—but no, I do not like them," she says. And in the house the spotless white tibi are slipped on. She thrusts them out for us to see, and we all wish we had known no other footwear than these soft moccasin affairs.

Shidzu's home is in Kobe, a seaport of some sixty thousand population. She interests us

also has a familiar ring. But Shidzu does not know "Mother Goose," and has no Japanese version of "Arabian Nights."

Then we talk of dress. The little Japanese

from her friend's shoulder to strongly dissent from our careless conclusion that, as they are kept so much in seclusion, the Japanese women are probably not patriotic. "Indeed we are,—oh, yes,—we love country," she protests. Then in fluent native speech she tells us that the revival of anti-foreign sentiment during the past five years has had a marked effect upon the dress of the Japanese woman. The European dress, once so eagerly sought after, has been almost abandoned, save at Court, and the Japanese women of the interior now wear their native dress on the street and at home. The men in the cities generally wear the European dress, which, while not so graceful, they have found more convenient for business purposes.

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Shidzu has been for five years in the Doshisha training school for nurses. She understands English fairly well and speaks it falteringly, quite enough to give her a fair start in the New York hospital, where she hopes, in a few months, to be received. She is a convert to the Christian faith, although her family are not. The fact that this bright little maid should be permitted by her parents, not merely to receive her training under avowedly Christian auspices, but to come away into the great western world to complete the same, is evidence of Japanese appreciation of our better educational facilities, and their desire to avail themselves of the same.

After three years course of training, she expects to return to Japan, and devote herself to the work of nursing among the women of her native country.

She gives us her autograph presently,—when we ask it,—in both Japanese and English, also her photograph, taken together with her sister of fourteen years. The long robe of rich black silk crêpe, lined with pink,—a 'best occasion' dress,—makes her look oddly tall and old, quite unlike the little brown, soft-laughing, childish creature who is standing in the doorway leaning against her Canadian friend and calling a pretty foreign 'good-night' to us.

FAITH FENTON.

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[The instance of Doshisha College, Kyoto, Japan, illustrates the present anti-foreign feeling existent in that country, as well as the keen business instincts of the natives.

Doshisha College, one of the largest and most comprehensive educational institutions in Japan, was founded some twenty-five years ago for the Christian education of the Japanese youth. It has since been largely endowed by American benevolence, and the work, which comprises hospital training school for nurses, departments in theology, science and many other subjects, has been carried on under the control of the American Foreign Mission Board.

Owing to the existent law that prevents foreigners from holding property in Japan's interior, it was necessary to place the valuable institution in the trusteeship of native gentlemen who were in sympathy with Christianity. During the years these have died, and younger native men have succeeded them, who are influenced by the anti-foreign feeling at present existent. In three years,—that is, in 1900,—the present estate laws will lapse, and it will then be possible for foreigners to legally possess property in Japan. Foreseeing the possible results, the trustees of Doshisha College are now taking action to dispossess the American Mission and assume full control of Doshisha College, which will henceforth probably be devoted to the secular education of the Japanese youth.

The present feeling in 'Chrysanthemum Land' is emphatically Japan for the Japanese, and success to the native-born.—ED.]



Shidzu Naruse.

by stating that it is the residence of that brilliant descriptive writer, Lafcadio Hearn, who so fell in love with gentle Japan that he married one of these dear musumees and made his home among them. He is on the staff of a foreign paper. "He makes more, and he is not good," says Shidzu, with a little negative shake of her head. By which we infer that Mr. Hearn, like other foreign literary folk who become enamoured of Japan, has a reputation for license not merely in his beautiful descriptive work, which, indeed, might be well allowed, but in his moral bearing.

Presently we speak of the tidal wave disaster in northern Japan. Kyoto is about the centre of the islands; but Red Cross nurses went up from its hospital to attend to the many bruised and injured. We talk a little about the recent China-Japan war, and Shidzu raises her head