



Life, Literature and Education.

(Contributions on all subjects of popular interest are always welcome in this Department.)

SONG FROM "PIPPA PASSES," BY ROBERT BROWNING.

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!

A JAPANESE RECEPTION.

The two months since I reached this honorable and friendly land have been one long reception. Even the islands seemed to have reached out into the ocean to receive our vessel as she slowly drew into port. Looking over the side of the ship down into the upturned faces of hundreds of people in every variety of water craft, clustered like chicks around the mother hen, I heard my name called. What pleasure it is to hear one's own name on the borders of a foreign land and amongst strangers!

My friends had found me, and, conducted by them through crowds of half-clad, starving navvies and kumayas, I reached Yokohama station. My first impression was of sound, not sight—the noise of the thousands of wooden geta on the pavements.

From Yokohama we took train for Tokyo—my future home. Our train was late, and, on arriving, we found that most of the missionaries had called in the afternoon—a reception without a lion, a "Hamlet" without a ghost. But the welcome extended by the Japanese Christians was yet to come, and I was informed through an interpreter that my "honorable self" would be welcomed on Saturday, and "please come early."

I came early—at half-past one on the appointed day, attended by an escort of four boys to the reception hall. Before entering it was necessary to remove my shoes and substitute a pair of gorgeous purple Dutch socks provided for the occasion.

With much bowing and smiling, I was ushered into a large room, whose original size had been increased by sliding back the walls which separated it from adjacent apartments. This room, the floor covered with tatami, was empty of furniture, save for a small, low card-table. Around the walls numerous cushions were placed. These are like the Canadian variety, only much thinner, and on them the people sit.

Conducted to the place of honor, I wondered with consternation how I could reach that lofty level gracefully. A gentleman saw the difficulty and relieved it with great good nature by bringing forward the above-mentioned table, placing upon it four of the cushions, and begging me to

be seated. This was an improvement on the floor, but the table plus the cushions were not yet so high as one of our chairs, and I was woefully tired before the festivities were over. When I was seated, a diminutive lady dropped on her knees before me, bowed till her forehead touched the floor, and presented a cup of tea (green it was), with no condiments.

For my amusement, until all had arrived, those present played a game after this fashion: One person called the name of one of the company, and

giving no sign (they are so trained),—but my name ceased to be called.

After all had assembled, there was a short service of singing and prayers. Then Muriyama San gave the address of welcome. The appropriateness of my reply was somewhat doubtful, through my ignorance as to what the welcomer had said.

Japanese etiquette presents some difficulties to foreigners, but the custom of taking refreshments home to be eaten has its advantages. The gentlemen waited upon the ladies with tea, and cakes served on a clean piece of wood wrapped in dainty Japanese paper. The cakes were made of bean paste, served in different styles. One was like two pancakes, having brown bean paste between; one was a ball of paste covered in white candy, another with brown. I tried manfully to partake, but, nevertheless, was glad to be able to wrap up the cakes and carry them home, secure in the thought that no one would be offended.

A short programme of Japanese speeches and Chinese songs was followed by another game. In this, a ball of paper, wrapped in a furashiki (the national shopping-bag), was passed quickly from hand to hand around the circle, while one in the middle, blindfolded, sang "Goro, Goro, Goro," which means "go around." The person who held the ball when the singing stopped had to contribute to the programme. A lady, when caught, sang "God Save the King"; another acted the beggar; a third recited, in English, "Little Drops of Water." One boy

final effort for my entertainment, and the guests departed, bowing lavishly and thanking me for coming among them. M. F. L. Tokyo.

"CANADA'S NATIONAL DESTINY."

In the trend of events and the growing sentiment of the age, we fail to find any justification for Mr. Justus Miller's recent prophecy that Canada will eventually cut adrift from the British Empire. While Canada, strong in the vigor of her youth, confident in the immense, almost unlimited potentialities of her inherent wealth, may not submit to the paternal meddlesomeness that has, too often, in the past, characterized the attitude of the mother country, we believe her attachment to the land and the race from whence the best of her population has sprung, will grow stronger and more genuine as time goes by.

The advantages of union with the Empire will be apparent to any fairly close observer, who cannot fail to notice the crippling expenditures on armies and navies of the countries of Europe, the suicidal restrictions on trade that the nations of the world foolishly impose on free and natural commercial intercourse. "In union there is strength." The nations that comprise the Empire can much more economically and efficiently maintain the legitimate defence and police surveillance that is required by uniting their efforts. The tendency, we believe, will be to moderate tariff restrictions within the Empire, which anyone, not interested in restricting trade, can see will be to the mutual advantage of all parts of the Empire participating.

If these considerations, and others of a like nature, do not influence the peoples and statesmen of the Empire in holding the Empire together in the future, we very much misjudge the good sense of the peoples making up the British Empire.

J. D. TAYLOR.

WOOD ALCOHOL.

Among the list of casualties chronicled in the daily papers, there not infrequently appears an account of a person or persons being poisoned by "wood alcohol." To many people, still, it is to be feared, the word alcohol is only suggestive of spirituous liquor in some form. We knew personally of a woman who was about to mix up a hot drink of wood alcohol for someone who had a cold, and only found out in the nick of time what she was about to do. No doubt many of the deaths from this cause recorded in the newspapers are due to a similar ignorance. Since, then, the risk is one hard to be met, especially among people who seldom or never read—and there are many such—why not change the name completely, giving such substances as wood alcohol, denatured alcohol, etc., names that from the first shall stand for poisons that are not to be tampered with? The changing would be an insignificant matter, and if even one human life were saved thereby, it would be well worth while.



Two High-class Ladies.



Afternoon Tea in Japan.

the latter in his turn must call the name of someone else within a given time limit. If he failed to pronounce the name in time, he must perform for the amusement of the rest. Such names as Katayama San, Muriyama San, Kiwai San and Yado No San proved my downfall, for they politely called my name. After the mournful Chinese dirges that some of the rest had sung, I thought my attempt to sing one verse of "Mary's Lamb" might be endured. They listened—

offered to display his English for the sake of the honored guest, and then eloquently and impressively delivered that best-known sentence in English literature, "It is a cat."

A boy persuaded me, with the formality and reserve due to a princess, to have yet another cup of tea and some additional cakes. Even the memory of the four already in my pocket did not make me refuse, though I'm afraid my gratitude was not too apparent. This was the