

TALK II.—ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

MISSIONARY PAGEANT—"A VISIT TO A JAPANESE HOME"

Scene—Interior of a Japanese home. Everything very plain, straight, plain walls, something to represent sliding doors and windows, light-colored Japanese matting on floor. Only decoration, in a recess at one side of the room, a vase containing one flower or a branch, near which hangs a long, unframed scroll or panel on which is Japanese writing or picture.

Characters—Japanese mother and daughter, Japanese servant and lady missionary. (Japanese lady in kimono of sober hues, with fan, seated on one of the mats. Suddenly the door in one side of the wall slides open and a Japanese girl, in gaily-flowered kimono, comes in, drops on her knees, bows until her head touches the floor, and then comes over and seats herself on a mat near her mother.)

MOTHER—And what is it my daughter has learned to-day? Did the honorable teacher have something new to say?

DAUGHTER (bowing again)—Oh, yes, it was very wonderful, mother. The teacher gave us to-day a wonderful lesson in arranging flowers. She took a cherry branch so (making the motion of lifting a branch in one hand) and put it in a beautiful bowl just so (another motion). It was all very delightful. And she did it so gracefully, most honorable mother. She let me try, but I was very clumsy, I am afraid.

MOTHER—Have patience, daughter. Do not be in a hurry even to learn the things that you are so anxious to know. Did not the honorable teacher tell you that?

DAUGHTER—Oh, yes, that was in yesterday's lesson. One must not appear to be in haste. One cannot be graceful and hurried at one and the same time. But, most honorable mother, you have some news. I can see it in your face, even though you are trying to hide it, as I know a Japanese lady should.

MOTHER—Yes, I have news for you, my daughter, good news, I think you will say. Your Canadian friend, the Jesus lady, as you call her, will be here shortly. (Daughter shows excitement). Not so much excitement, child. Remember you are a Japanese lady, the daughter of a much-respected Japanese gentleman.

DAUGHTER—I know, most honorable and adorable mother, but it is *such* good news. Will she come soon? And, oh, do you think I may be allowed to stay and talk with her?

MOTHER—If you remember all you have learned at school, I shall be happy to have you stay. There—is that not a strange voice?

(Doors slide back and Japanese servant appears, bowing to the ground).

SERVANT—Most honorable lady, a stranger asks to come in. Shall I bid her enter?

MOTHER—The stranger is welcome (bows in dignified way).

(Door closes noiselessly on servant, opens a minute later to admit Canadian missionary, who enters in stocking feet. As she comes in she is speaking to servant outside, "Thank you, I shall leave my shoes here.")

MOTHER (bowing, and then, without touching her 's to floor, gracefully rising from her mat)—Many times welcome to our miserable home, most noble and gracious lady. Would it be asking too much of a lady of such nobility and grace to ask you to be seated upon our poor mat, and to make yourself as comfortable as possible in our humble dwelling?

(Missionary bows then seats herself. At a nod from the mistress, the servant, who stands near the door, withdraws, to return later with a tray on which are tiny cups of tea. Without a word, a cup is handed to the guest, who sets it down beside her, as if in no hurry to drink it.)

DAUGHTER (edging nearer to missionary)—Most honorable guest, may I ask but one miserable question?

MISSIONARY—As many as you like, child. (Turns, takes up her cup and slowly drinks the tea.)

DAUGHTER—It is a very great favor I want to ask, and I know that it is not seemly that you, who are so learned and so good, should grant it, but, oh, it would make me so happy if I could but sing the wonderful song I hear as I pass the Jesus house. The air of it I cannot forget, but the words I do not know.