

individuality, made doubly difficult here in the Orient, where the individual—particularly if she has the ill-luck to be a woman—is lost in the family, the real unit of society.

Throughout the interview—which was carried through the medium of an interpreter, a charming girl student of Doshisha Girls' School, a representative type of the coming woman of Japan—it interested me to observe that the term "woman's movement", which we used frequently during our conversation, was always expressed in English. Another expression that was never translated but used by Madam Hirooka at frequent intervals was "strong will."

These two expressions from the key-notes to her entire career. She possesses the latter, doubtless an inheritance from a male ancestor, and she believed from her childhood in the former, although it has only been within the past few years that she gave it a name. To-day she is Japan's foremost exponent of the woman movement. Her entire life has been a protest against the inequalities of the sexes as emphasized by the laws and customs of her people.

"When did you resolve to assert yourself?" I asked her early in our conversation. "Early in my girlhood", she replied. "The more I thought about it the more determined I was that a girl should be treated as a human being—not as a slave. No expression of this feeling escaped me, however. Outwardly I was a typical Japanese girl, meek, submissive, dutiful, self-effacing. Then at the age of seventeen came marriage and deliverance of a sort. To the average Japanese woman marriage is only a shift in the obediences, from that of one's own parents to that of the husband and his parents.

"My husband was nine years older than I, and the nominal head of the great firm of Hirooka, which, like that of my father's family, carried on the financial affairs, the money-lending, etc., of the Daimios—the feudal lords of the nation. Actually, my husband regarded money-making as vulgar and beneath his notice. With others of his kind he spent the greater part of his time at the fashionable tea-ceremonies and at geisha entertainments.

"This gave me my opportunity. As soon as my husband left in the evening, I would begin my studies. I taught myself to read and write the Chinese characters. I purchased a *soroban*, and taught myself mathematics. I bought books and devoured them. There were comparatively few to be had, for we were still a hermit nation, shutting ourselves in, and the West, and all it had to give us, out. Science, politics, industry, Western literature, and arts were all closed books to us before the Restoration, for under the Tokugawa shogunate there had been 300 years of isolation from the rest of the world, with emphasis laid on luxurious living and elaborate social customs to while away the time of the rich and idle.

"One of the few books that I was able to obtain explained the American banking system to me. I knew that our business was in the same state as that of many another big family—on the verge of dissolution; that unless some one undertook its management and directed it with close attention to detail, it was bound to fall. I knew I could do this. I tingled to show my ability, to use my newly acquired knowledge.

"But that a woman should engage in business, particularly that which related to money matters and high finance, was unheard of, unwomanly, disgraceful. I knew it would mean ostracism, jealous criticism, ridicule, and opposition from every side. But I knew that I was strong enough to battle against even these, and I set to my task with the consent of my husband, who was both skeptical of my ability and indifferent to my ambitions."

What Madam Hirooka was able to accomplish is writ large in the history of Japan's modern business development. She not only put her husband's business in excellent condition, saving it from failure at the time of the Restoration in 1868, when all about them went to the wall, but developed it into a modern banking business on Western lines—the first in the history of the nation, which now has more than 5,000 national and private banking establishments.

Not content with this demonstration of her business ability, Mme. Hirooka, with far-sighted wisdom, forecasted the development of Japan's industries, her cotton and silk manufactories, her railways and ship-

ping interests, and advanced the idea of the necessity for the development of Japan's coal mines, specifically those on the Island of Kyushu.

This met with stubborn opposition from her business associates. Mining was looked upon with the same scorn that an Englishman looks upon "trade"—not to be mentioned in polite society. Not being able to overcome the antagonism of her family and associates, Mme. Hirooka determined upon the undertaking without the aid. She went to Moji, and, inspecting the land, leased it from the Government and personally directed the development of the mines. This was in 1879, when she was but twenty-eight years old.

Despite the predictions of failure, for mining without modern machinery and trained men was regarded as a great speculation, Madam Hirooka's venture proved an unqualified success and in ten years she was able to sell out the greater part of her business to the Mitsui company at a large profit, reserving a small share which she recently sold to the Government for a half-million yen.

Another enterprise in which Mme. Hirooka has been a pioneer is life insurance. The closing out of her mining interests left her free to return to Osaka, where she enlarged the bank and formed a life-insurance company, called the Asahi Company, with a capital of 2,000,000 yen. This has since been consolidated with other companies and is now known as the *Vai-do Seimei Hoken Kaisha*.

To-day Mme. Hirooka, at the age of sixty-five, although as keenly interested as ever in her business, has relinquished much of its personal supervision to her son-in-law, who, as a *yoshi* (an adopted son), car-

concessions to the family by adding Japanese rooms, where her grandchildren spend much of their time when they are not studying under an American government.

"How long will it take to bring it all about?" I asked.

"At least fifty years," she replied. "I shall not be here to see it, but it will come."—Sel.

Hope's Quiet Hour

For Their Sakes.

For their sakes I consecrate myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.—St. John 17:19 (R. V. margin).

Our Lord's great conflict was near at hand, and He was treasuring every moment of that last evening with His dearest friends. Going forward to face death, for those friends and for mankind, He was not blind to the greatness of the sacrifice so willingly offered. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," He said to those men who would have held him back from the road to Calvary if they could. St. John never forgot the wonderful words of peace and comfort which his Master spoke that night. Can any farewell compare with that described in St. John XIV, XV, XVI? Then the Master turned from the

consecrated themselves for our sakes—are we worth dying for? With no half-hearted unwillingness those Canadian volunteers pressed forward to the danger-line, placing themselves between us and the horrors of war. They deliberately faced mutilation, imprisonment or death for our sakes—are we willing to accept their sacrifice and make no return? What are we doing for their sakes? For their country's good they have shown themselves ready to die. It is our part to consecrate our lives for the good of others. Selfishness is dead failure. We are given one life on earth, one opportunity to serve our generation. What opportunities of service may open up to us after death we don't know, but we have plenty of opportunities here.

Our Lord sketched in a few words the picture of one whose life on earth was a failure. Some might call it a "successful" life. The man was rich, royally dressed and sumptuously fed. The sick beggar at his gate lay unattended and uncared for. Only the dogs visited him. The rich man's life of selfish comfort slipped away, and one day Death's stern hand swept aside the mists which had blinded his vision, and he saw how he had failed to use the opportunity of helpful service which we call "Life." He had made a failure of life, but—after death—the desire to help other perishing souls awoke in his heart. And so our Lord leaves Him, no longer absorbed in his own interests, but eagerly desirous of arousing his brethren to their need.

In this day of glorious heroism it seems impossible that any should be content to receive everything and give nothing. We may not be able to do anything "great,"

but at least we can refuse to make self-interest our object in life. For the sake of the men who are consecrating their lives to their country's service, we can try—by straight dealing, clean living and right thinking—to be worthy of the sacrifice they are making.

I want to quote some words from that splendid book—"The Great Discovery"—by Norman Maclean.

The ticket-collector was speaking.

"Mahn," said he, "I've come to a great resolution. I'm too old to fight; and they can't get at me in any way. No income tax for me; and threepence on the tea is naething, for I never take it; I want to feel that I am worth men dying for me; and I am going to be tee-total till the end of the war. I'll give the money to help the soldiers' weans."

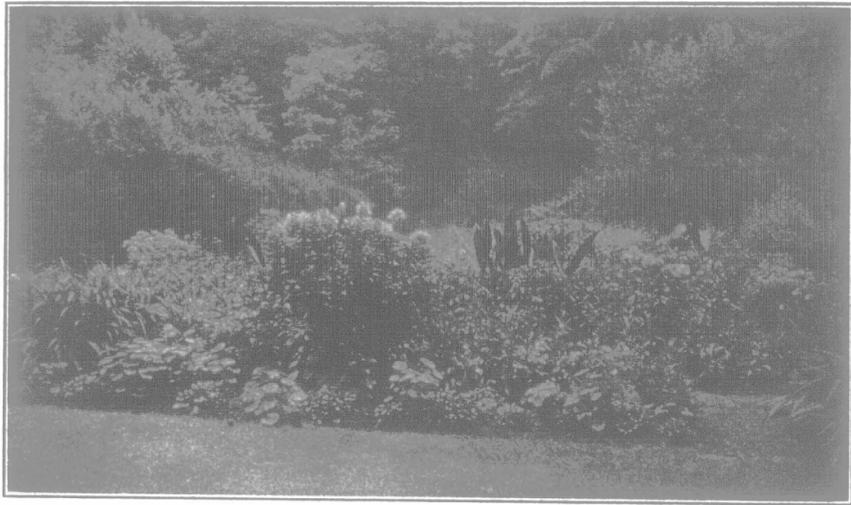
Two men who heard him went on their way, exclaiming indignantly over his silly resolution. They slowed up as they neared the village inn, then went resolutely past it. They said he was foolish—but his example was followed.

Then Mr. Maclean tells how a man who had gone out to serve his country killed a comrade in a drunken brawl. "His mother doubtless sent him forth to fight as a hero for his King, and he became a murderer under the fostering of the State."

Men are putting their lives into deadly peril every day, in order to carry food to England; yet I received a letter yesterday from Old London which described how the busses were decorated with signs: "Eat less bread and drink Buchanan's whiskey." The sailors risk their lives to provide food for hard-pressed England. For their sakes the precious grain should not be wasted—and worse than wasted—by the men who stay at home.

May I quote again from "The Great Discovery?"

"What reward are we preparing for the men who are baring their breasts to the arrows, standing between us and death? When they come back, war-worn, to what will they return? To homes in which the fires are extinguished, the cupboards bare, the children neglected? Is that to be the guerdon of their sacrifice; is it for that that they have gone down into hell? Surely it cannot be for that! We can make the world know that we



Where Garden Meets the Woods.

(Horticultural Societies' Report, 1916.)
In fall a border like this can be got ready for next year.

ries on the family business and perpetuates the family name, which he adopted on his marriage to her only daughter.

At sixty Mme. Hirooka began the study of philosophy. At sixty-one she became interested in Christianity, studied its message and accepted it. To-day she has pledged herself to spend the remaining years allotted to her in disseminating its truths and working for the advancement of the women of her country, who, she assured me, needed more than any other one thing "to develop strong wills."

Many men in Japan, Mme. Hirooka confided to me, favored Christianity except for its moral code and its attitude toward woman. Once, in a conversation with the late Prince Ito, he had assured her that he thought Christianity "good on the whole, but too strict in its moral standards." She had come to realize, she told me, that "only Christian ideals would lift women to the place they had a right to occupy, side by side with men."

Within the past year, to the surprise even of herself, Mme. Hirooka has launched forth as a public speaker. She is forceful and dynamic; her talks to the hundreds of women, whose secluded lives have been the practical working out of that same book of morals which Mme. Hirooka so despised in her youth, are along Christian and practical lines.

Mme. Hirooka many years ago adopted Western dress, and just as she demands that her frocks be foreign, so has she built her house—a handsome mansion in the suburbs of Osaka. She has made

earthly friends He was trying to inspire with hope and good cheer. Looking up to His Father He uttered the prayer of the True High Priest, offering Himself to be the One Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. He was proving His undying love for man and pleading for such visible unity of His followers as must convince the world of His Divine Mission. For their sakes He consecrated Himself, giving up His life for them; but He was a Leader as well as a Saviour, and was sending them into the world to bear witness for Him and His Cause—the Cause of personal holiness and national righteousness. Dying, He looked forward to the time when He should "see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied." He expected death—and victory! He was ready to die for His friends, willing to consecrate His young life for their sakes. Were they worth dying for? He knew that, in the first shock of seeing Him arrested, they would fly in panic. But would they rally again and prove themselves worthy of their calling? Would they retreat before the forces of evil and then, in shame, turn and conquer the foe? Though He knew they would act like cowards, knew that even the boldest apostle would that very night disown all connection or knowledge of Him, yet He trusted them still. One was a traitor, but the rest were loving and true of heart, though weak.

When I see groups of returned soldiers, many of them with a leg or an arm missing, I can't help a sense of shame. They

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