

CHAPTER II.

Even while the minister in the coolness of his study softly and gently questioned his faltering "convert," a wily and smooth-speaking Nakoda was visiting her step-mother. Madame Yamada, as the latter was called, knew the marriage broker well, and being the mother of two daughters by a marriage previous to that with Azalca's father, she welcomed him with more than usual cordiality.

Would not the estimable Mr. Okido remove his shoes and eat the noon meal within her humble house?

The estimable Mr. Okido would.