

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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Not Lost.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

When I went visitin' to-day,
And stood by nurse's knee,
I heard the lady say she'd lost
A little girl like me.

She cried, and kissed me on my curls;
It made me feel so bad;
To lose her darling little girls
Must make such mamma's sad.

But I kept wonderin' how she could
Have lost a little daughter;
I lost my kitty Whitefoot once—
(Somebody must have caught her!)

So many times I've lost my doll,
And other playthings, maybe;
But how could any mamma lose
A really, truly baby?

Nurse says the little girls died:
I'm sure that can't be so;
For if she died, she went to heaven,
And that's not lost, you know.

Why, heaven is for us little ones
The very safest place!
How could a little child get lost
Before God's very face?

The holy angels guard the gates,
The gentle Shepherd's there;
No harm comes near his little lambs,
All days are bright and fair.

Lost? Oh, she could not call her lost,
Nor for her child be weeping,
If she had only gone to be
In heavenly Father's keeping.

JAPAN.

BY W. J. J. SPRY, R.N.

No travelling in Europe can rob Japan of its peculiar claims to admiration, for nothing in the West resembles a thousand things that meet the eye.

I landed at Yokohama, a town which has within the past few years risen from a small fishing village to a place of great importance, possessing numerous buildings; also wide streets, both in the foreign concession and Japanese quarter, with business houses of various kinds; streets lighted with gas; and, if so many Japanese were not met with, it would not be difficult to imagine oneself in some European town.

The bay is full of shipping of many nationalities; but by far the greater number fly the national flag of Japan, for the country possesses several war-vessels and a large coasting fleet, manned and officered entirely by Japanese. The visit to the capital, Tokio, was a most interesting treat. The seventeen miles are run over in somewhat less than an hour, although we stop at three or four stations on our way; passing some pretty scenery through garden-bordered streets and the open country, with rice and wheat fields everywhere indicating, unmistakably, signs of skilled and careful agriculture. Leaving the streets for the suburbs, showy little cottages, each surrounded by gardens laid out with tasteful neatness and artistic skill, are passed. A friend was in waiting to receive me, and we entered the building he occupies, which had at one time been attached to a large temple near at hand, and for which this part of Yedo is famous.

We ascended one of the highest points of the fortifications, from which a fine panoramic view was obtained of the vast city, with its two millions and a half of inhabitants, occupying an area equal to, if not greater than, London. Looking in any direction, the view was one of beauty. Everywhere are picturesque scenes; hill and dale clothed with brilliant vegetation of sparkling green.

JAPANESE GARDENS.

I was filled with feelings of astonishment and delight as we passed through fragrant avenues of peach cherry and plum trees in full bloom, over arched bridges spanning the bright blue river that flows through the heart of the city; getting here and there glimpses of the

exquisite taste displayed in the gardens and cottages along the roadside. No model estate in England can produce structures in any way comparable with those which adorn the suburbs of Tokio. These charming little "chalets," raising their thatched roofs amid numberless fruit-trees and creepers, were usually surrounded by flower-beds and artificial rockeries, laid out with exquisite taste. All the people seemed happy, talking, laughing, and smiling—their greetings and salutations assailed us wherever we went.

Here and there, at the close of long avenues, were to be seen gorgeous temples embosomed amongst giant camphor and cedar trees; standing about at their entrances were lazy-looking priests with shaven crowns, in robes of silk and transparent material. Sauntering up the shady walk, we ascend the steps and

of Tokio is of great interest, for at every step something new is to be seen. The streets are always filled with vast numbers of people, and run on for miles. The shops are filled with goods to suit every requirement; some are rich in Japanese ingenuity and perfection of work in lacquer, porcelain, basket-work and bronze, fancy silks and embroideries spread out in every tempting form. The silk stores and book-shops are equally attractive. The carvings in wood and ivory, of groups and animals, are in the best style of art. Figures and vases in bronze are artistic and marvellous in their make. China and porcelain, beautiful and delicate, with a thousand other articles, are laid out in tempting array.

JAPANESE TEMPLES.

Continuing my way, I paid a visit to numerous temples, and in describing the



JAPANESE TEMPLE.

enter the sacred edifice dedicated to Buddha. The priest, for a few tempos, shows us all that is of interest.

The floors are matted, the pillars lacquered and richly gilded. A large shrine, with a gilt image in its recess, gold and porcelain vases, lighted candles and tapers, surrounded by a forest of artificial flowers, at once attract our attention. In the rear are the imperial mausoleums, where lie the remains of Tycoons of centuries past. Before leaving we are reminded of the collecting boxes in various parts of the building, where the pious worshipper fails not to contribute a few "cash," not an act of charity, but to provide the means by which the priest may be enabled to feed the hungry demons.

At frequent and short distances along the road were little stalls with fruit and tea, the universal beverage, always hot and ready to quench the thirst of the weary pedestrian.

SCENES IN TOKIO.

A tour through the business quarter

one at Asakusa I shall nearly convey an idea of the whole. This is one of the largest and most celebrated in Tokio. On reaching the locality, we pass on through long avenues crowded with men, women and children. As we approach the Holy of Holies, a large bronze figure of Buddha is in view, and we pass on to the building, gorgeously decorated in gold and lacquer work, with elaborate and ornamental carved roofs and pillars. The sacred shrine, to which the multitude comes to pray, is protected by a large frame of wire netting. A curious practice seems in force with the hundreds who pay their devotions here; they purchase from the priest in attendance small squares of paper, on which are inscribed certain hieroglyphics; these they chew for a time, and then throw as pellets at the grating (which is consequently covered with the results). And the precision with which these pellets strike the grating, or go through the mesh, determines certain inferences as to good or bad luck.

The streets are full of life and move-

ment. People are wending their way home, or to the bathing-house, which, strongly lighted up, shows through its lattice bars crowds of both sexes enjoying the luxury of the bath. Gaily painted and figured lanterns are flitting to and fro, and light up somewhat dimly the shops and roads, for the gas is not as yet laid on all over the city, and the law still remains in force that every one after dark shall carry a lighted lantern on which his name is painted.

PROGRESS IN JAPAN.

All honour to this nation, which, after living an isolated life for centuries from the rest of the world, has now gone ahead in such an earnest manner, leaving all that any other Eastern nation has attempted far behind. In going over the workshops, which are well supplied with every modern appliance of machinery for successfully carrying out extensive engineering work, we find that steam hammers, forges, lathes and other appliances in the fitting, smiths', and boiler shops are in full swing; so a stranger cannot fail to be struck with the singular combination of energy and perseverance of these wonderful people, who within the past few years have thus almost by themselves laid the foundation of a steam navy, and taken quite naturally to a modern science which was to them altogether unknown, notwithstanding the difficulties encountered at every step. The docks are excellent specimens of work. The longest is 395 feet, in which the "Challenger" was placed, and remained for a week, undergoing certain repairs to the rudder, etc.

Near the village of Hasegura stands the famous bronze figure of Buddha, called in Japanese Dal butsu; the approach to it is through a very beautiful avenue of evergreens. The immense casting, although not in one piece, is so cleverly jointed as almost to avoid detection. It stands upwards of fifty feet in height. Its interior is hollow, and forms a temple, where are numerous gilt idols. A priest in attendance disposes of historical books and photographs of this great divinity.

THE ENCOILING ARMS.

The baby was taking his first steps, faltering and uncertain, but he was a very proud baby, laughing and crowing over his own achievement as he tottered across the carpet with his mother following, her outstretched arms surrounding but not touching him.

"He thinks he is doing it all alone," said grandfather.

"And so he is," the mother answered. "I am not carrying him, I am not hindering him; my arms are only so close that I can catch him in a moment if he falls."

So it is that we older children walk, and fancy often that we are going on our way alone. God does not hold us back as we turn in one direction or another. He does not carry us; step by step we must make our own way, but always his loving arms are close to uphold us if we fall. Sometimes we are proud of our strength and freedom, and sometimes in our weakness we fear and falter, but our changing moods never change the guarding care that enfolds us. Unseen, unfeeling, the everlasting arms surround us, and we cannot fall beyond their upholding strength and tenderness. Forward.

THE QUEEN'S KIND HEART.

Here is a charming story of the Queen from the Dean of Windsor, told by Canon Bevan at the recent Church Congress at Newcastle. The dean was sent for to see a sick kitchen-maid at the castle. Up flights of stairs he toiled until he reached the room where the poor girl lay. She received him with sparkling eyes. "Oh, sir," she said, "her Majesty has just left the room. She came in quite suddenly, and said 'My dear, I hope you are better. I felt I must come and see you, but I am eighty-one years of age, and had to stop and rest on the stairs.'" Fancy William the Conqueror, or Charles II., or George IV., doing that!