

industries of the country are open to the observation of the passer-by. The weaver, dyer, carpenter, cooper, blacksmith, and farmer may all be seen at work. Tea-booths and refreshment stalls—some of them elegantly fitted up, others the rudest possible—are very numerous. A most singular feature of Japanese life is the great numbers of children in duplicate playing in the streets. Mothers wishing to devote their time to household duties or to field labour, tie the younger babies on the backs of the elder children, and send them outdoors to amuse themselves. These gather in groups and join in such sports as spinning tops, flying kites, and other games of childhood, and always with overflowing good nature, the little ones on the backs of the elder ones taking quite an interest in whatever is going on. The only drawback is the danger to the eyes and shaven pates of tender children, even infants, exposed without any sort of protection to the blaze of the scorching sun.

We cannot but notice that the people are "very religious," as we behold their devotions, and observe the almost innumerable shrines, stone images, and temples which everywhere abound. Indeed, the nation seems "wholly given to idolatry." Public sentiment, however, is rapidly changing in regard to all this. Very few new temples are being built, and the old ones are fast falling into decay. With no probability of revival, but rather the reverse, it is only matter of time when they shall have entirely disappeared from the face of the country. They cannot live under the light of Christianity and the new civilization. Already "the oracles are dumb," and soon it may be written of the cultus of Buddah and Shinto—

No voice or hideous hum

Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.

"The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens."

Let us enter one of the houses of the people. In front, under the porch, is a little clay court a few feet square, where the clogs and sandals are left on entering. No one thinks of going into a house with foot gear on; even we must take off our shoes. Stepping up on the polished boards of the narrow porch, we enter the matted room. Each mat is exactly three feet by six—the size regulated from time immemorial by Imperial statute.