

### JAPANESE MARRIAGE CEREMONIES.

In former times, and to a great extent even now, marriage in Japan is arranged entirely by the parents; but the young people are beginning to take the matter somewhat into their own hands, and veritable love-matches are not now uncommon.

The bride brings no dowry to her husband, but it is a matter of family pride to make the *trousseau* of the daughter as rich and elegant as possible, and at the marriage feast this *trousseau* is displayed to the best advantage.

A betrothal ceremony is celebrated some time before the marriage, at which all preliminaries are settled. After this the young people have opportunities of meeting and becoming acquainted, although they have frequently seen each other before.

On the morning of the wedding, the bride's *trousseau* is sent to the house of the bridegroom, and tastefully arranged for the inspection of friends. The house is adorned with flowers; and in the chief room an altar is erected, upon which are placed offerings to the family gods, patron saints, etc. At about noon the bridal procession comes to the house; the bride dressed in white and veiled, and her especial attendants dressed in robes of bright colours. Usually a gentleman and a lady friend preside over the ceremonies; and as they are very active, flitting from place to place wherever their service is needed, they are called the male and female butterfly. The decisive ceremony is very simple, and does not require the aid of a priest. The bridesmaids fill a decorated pitcher, having two mouths, with the native wine, and it is presented to the kneeling bridegroom and bride alternately until they have emptied it, thus symbolizing their purpose to share together the vicissitudes of life, whatever they may be. Feasting and merry-making follow for a few hours, and then the newly-married couple are left to themselves; though, for some little time after, friends and relatives are ex-

pected to honour them with calls and invitations.

Marriage in Japan usually takes place quite early in life,—the bride being generally about sixteen years old, and the bridegroom from eighteen to twenty. The Japanese classics say that "a bride must have an unsullied reputation, a gentle and yielding disposition, an amount of education fitted for her sex, and the acquirements of a good housekeeper,"—requisitions which are not always found, even in a Christian land.

If the marriage proves an unhappy one, the wife has no redress; but the husband may divorce his wife for any one of seven reasons, provided her parents are still living for her to return to. These reasons are: disobedience to her parents-in-law; having no children; being unfaithful to her husband; being jealous of him; having any contagious disease; stealing, or talking too much. As the husband is the only judge in these matters, it is of course very easy for him to be rid of a wife of whom he has become tired.

We are happy to state, however, that the rights of women are receiving more consideration of late in Japan. The girls are securing a more careful education to fit them for the duties of wife and mother, and the husbands are treating them with more honour and respect, both in public and private; and the government is seeking to improve the marriage laws.—*Little Helpers*.

### PIAPOT'S RESERVE.

This is a new station opened up among the Indians in the North West. It has a population of about 400. Last year Chief Piapot gave his consent to the opening up of a school on this Reserve. A school house has been built costing \$900. Miss Rose of Woodstock, Ontario, was appointed last spring to take charge of the school. She has lately written about her work and I know you will be pleased to hear what she says.

"The Indians are constantly begging for tea, tea, I wish I had a car load of black