

Our official friend has been invaluable. He has told us a great many things, he has shown us a great many places, and, *à la Japonaise*, he has promised so often to show us others that we are now under the impression that we must have seen them too. But, more than all, he has given us an opportunity of studying Taro San, the Japanese official, with his semi-foreign manners and his semi-foreign education, his self-satisfaction and his self-distrust, his shrewdness and his blindness, his boyishness and his incomprehensible reticence, his illimitable ambitions and his scintillating hopes. What from the conversations we have had with the Frenchman concerning our friend, what from some remarks made to us by the Frenchman's daughter, with whom Taro San was once in love, what from the gentleman's own accounts of himself, I have been able to make a rough sketch of a man who, it is very probable, may be thought some day worthy a volume.

At sixteen Taro San left school, not from choice, but simply because he had his father and sister to support. It is a fortunate thing that laughter and playing are not confined to any age in Japan, and that men of thirty can still enjoy the jokes of the conjurers, and a game of battle-dore and shuttlecock, for there is practically no childhood in the life of the Japanese, no ignorant, thoughtless, boisterous, awkward period of existence. Babies of seven come to serve you in the shops, and the little girls in long dresses and elaborate *chignons* bow to each other with all the grace and gravity of ladies dancing a minuet. When European boys are still indulging in Scott, the Japanese youth is pondering over John Stuart Mill, and if you ask this prodigy what he intends to be when he grows up, he will very probably answer, "A diplomatist." I don't know whether Taro San found his position a particularly hard one, I don't think it occurred to him to question it then, but the other day, when a lady enthusiastically said, "It was just lovely, the way the Japanese took care of their forefathers," he replied that the obligation should soon cease if he had any authority. Knowing that they could call upon their children to support them in their old age encouraged people to marry thoughtlessly, and live improvidently; while the necessity which young men were under to support, not their parents alone, but very often a family of sisters also, was an inestimable drag upon their own and the nation's progress. With his aims Taro San saw only one road to follow. He would go to Yokohama and he would be a guide. As his object was less to facilitate the foreigner's progress through Japan than to increase his own knowledge of the foreigner's language, and all in furthering his own ends, to fulfil his duty towards his family, a guide seemed the best thing to be. So Taro San left Tokyo, the school where he had worked, and the quiet walks where he had dreamed, his boyish love for sweet O Kiku San, and his boyish ambition to enter the University, and went to Yokohama to be the foreigner's servant. What he really thought, and what he really felt, what his pride suffered, or if it suffered at all, during the time he spent in that vulgar, roystering city, was difficult to see then, and, to a casual observer, it is not easy to discover now. The Frenchman has told us that Taro at that time (and I believe he tacitly thinks him so still) was a spiritless youth in whom all personal dignity and patriotic pride were absolutely wanting. He abandoned his native manners and his native dress. He sought the society of Europeans in preference to that of Japanese, though the former might belong to a much inferior class; he met insults with smiles; and even after the people whom he served had ridiculed both his country and himself over and over again, he remained in their employ. "Why," continued the Frenchman, "when Taro was ridiculous enough to fall in love with my daughter, and I told him to his face I would as soon see her marry a Zulu, did he spring at me as I should have done? Did he offer to fight? No, he simple grinned and said, *So desuka*, So you say. But when Taro himself has spoken of those days in Yokohama, I think I have detected a faintly sardonic smile flitting over his face which has set me thinking.

Unaided by any teacher, Taro succeeded in two years in gaining a very thorough knowledge of English, a fair understanding of French, and a smattering of German. He then looked about for a position more worthy of him than that of guide to insolent foreigners. He became student interpreter in one of the Japanese consulates in America. His quick perceptions and his admirable preparation from his Yokohama experiences made this glimpse of the Western world of infinite benefit to him. He returned with a clear comprehension of Western civilization, but he returned too, like many other Japanese, in the most unfortunate ignorance concerning the proper time and places for the introduction of the reforms he found so necessary to the progress of his country. His first step was to start a newspaper. The next step was that taken by the authorities who seized it and put poor Taro San in prison. Now, if Taro San had been a European, especially a Frenchman, whom the Japanese, wrongly I think, is said to resemble, so arbitrary a proceeding might have raised seditious feelings in his young breast, but it didn't. Upon his release he promptly gave up all idea of newspaper work, settled down into an honest school-master and student of European literature and philosophy, only murmuring every now and again to himself, "*Sukoshi mate*—Wait a little," which might be taken as a motto by the whole Japanese nation. Time went on; the authorities forgot all about the ephemeral *Shimbun*, and marking Taro San's abilities, gave him a very important and responsible official position.

It was at one of our Saturday afternoons. Taro San

remained as usual after the others to have a little friendly chat. We had been talking about literature, and I was more than ever surprised at the delicacy of his perception, and his quick appreciation of our remarks. More than ever anxious that one who realizes infinitely better than any European or Japanese we have met what Japan needs should be placed in authority, suddenly Garth said, half in joke, half in earnest:

"Do you know, Taro San, I think you would make an excellent diplomatist?"

Taro San instantly blushed up to the roots of his shock of black hair.

"I should like much to enter the diplomatic career," he said with boyish frankness.

Now every Japanese is a diplomatist by nature, and if, added to his natural bent, he has received an education in the ways of foreigners and the ways of the world, there is, or he thinks there is, no other field in Japan besides the diplomatic one in which his talent can be employed as it deserves. It is true that Taro San's attempts to hoodwink us have often been amusingly naive, and that he has fibbed in a way which would not have deceived a child; that he has spoken with far too much openness about his intentions and hopes, and has appeared to throw himself into the power of certain people with hazardous imprudence; but beneath it all we have caught a suggestion of aims, and ambitions, and abilities, that have made us very proud indeed to know our official friend.

"Well," continued Garth, "I tremble for the time when you shall enter the diplomatic career."

Taro San laughed.

"Won't you take your revenge?" she said tentatively.

Taro San laughed again.

"You will scatter the foreigners to the four winds of heaven after you have got all you want out of them," I said smiling. "Come, confess."

"Oh no, no, not at all. You are quite mistaken." But Taro San still laughed.

"You will have no mercy upon the people who come here to play with your women, to ridicule your institutions, to treat your nation as a Japanese joke."

Taro San grew grave.

"And when the time comes," I went on, "you will give such men as your friend the Frenchman the choice between *hara-kari*, and a rencontre with his Majesty the Mikado's Lord High Executioner."

But this was growing far too serious for a Japanese discussion, and we all laughed at Monsieur's expense.

Our servant Buddha came in to announce dinner. As Taro San would not join us, we told him to wait.

"Wait," answered Buddha, whose increased knowledge of English is making him simply irrepressible. "Wait, no—America—rude! *Sukoshi mate*—wait a little."

I turned to Taro San who had risen to go:

"Ah! so, that is it! Nippon does not say 'wait,' but *Sukoshi mate*." LOUIS LLOYD.

THE IROQUOIS AT THE STAKE.

ANCIEN REGIME, CIRCA 1680.

BROTHERS! All things have end, as hath this feast—
This farewell feast of sweet sagamity
And fine brown flesh of beaver and of bear.
Your own provision I have thus set forth
After the ancient custom. Whilst you ate
I sat aside, and thought how we are one—
In language, race—in all things one save love.
I sat aside, and pondered in my soul
The severing hate which seals my lingering death,
Yet sweetens still the foretaste of its pangs!

The feast now over—bowls well scraped—but, first,
Confess I ran the gauntlet well! Aha—
No hatchet hit this loftier head than yours!
And, save these mangled hands, all's right with me.
Why not? Since you, the quarry of my chase,
Have ne'er o'ertaxed my speed to run you down.
This galls you! Now let womanish passion rise
When captives of your nation give us feasts;
And break my leave to speak! We let them speak
Yet, truly, they beseech their lives, not death,
With torture, as I do. Another word:
You dotard would not take me for a son—
A substitute worth fifty of his tribe!
Nor would that wench accept my brotherhood,
Though thus she might be sister to a man,
Not to a Yendat dog with soul askew,
That sneaks and snarls. This was your chief's desire:
As far from mine as I am from your power
To make me quail at aught that ye can do.
I lift you up! An Onondaga help
Your craven breed to rise! Nay, were this urged,
Then would your tortures strike!

You bear with this!

Brothers! I see our nations would be one
But for this flood of hate which, turned to love,
(For now my thoughts clear up with coming death)
Might well oppose the flux that threatens all:
Those pale, thin streams which up our inlets pour—
Diverse, yet deadly. Oh! your whites are friends
With whom you trade, as we with ours, you say!
And, true, their tools are better than our stones,
Their kettles than our clay, their arms, but, ah—
"No more!" ye cry. Then lead me to the tree!

Behold me! It is Atotaroho's son
You ambushed yesterday; a goodly prize,
Therefore exhaust yourselves! No moose-wood strings
And scaffolding of flimsy bark for me,
But something which will tie my spirit down!
Aha, ye will not heed! So—I am bound—
Securely bound ye think! But, look! one strain,
And all your linden ropes and lashings snap
Like rotten twigs. Ye must be taught to bind!
Chut! yelping urchins, hence! Ye wizened crones
And screeching hags, stand off! Your wise men know
I am their sacrifice, and not your sport.
Ye warriors, what I would say is this:
Naught holds the Onondaga but his stocks
Of iron-wood and the hard grey willow withe.
Bring these, then tie me to my people's tree—
The foliated elm, leaf-wreathen to the root!

Believe me, chiefs, I have no fear of death—
That lies not in the compass of my soul!
Nay, I rejoice in this your sacrifice
To great Areskoni, who, from the Sun,
Looks down upon us all. Yet there are thoughts
Which, like a storm-cloud beating 'gainst the wind,
An eddy running up against the stream,
Do yet oppose my headlong hate and yours,
And all our tribal currents of revenge.
O, did Yonondio but look on this—
Corlaer! they who, earth-hungering and athirst,
Drink up our waters, and devour our lands!
How would they gloat upon your dance of death,
And whisper from behind their screening palms,
"One foe the less, one fertile tract the more!"
Ah, they would smile askance at us and this,
And laugh to see you dancing round me now;
For they who still beseech will yet demand,
And dance in grinning triumph round you all!

Have we not heard—but wherefore should I speak,
Since ye but mock me with assent? forked words
With which unwittingly ye stab yourselves!
Have we not heard our fathers' tales of yore—
How the destroyers voyaged with the sun
O'er boiling reaches of outlandish foam,
And, anchoring fast by many a torrid isle,
Woke the mild Arrawac from his livelong dream?
Ye have not? Care not! Foes are friends, friends foes
In the dread turmoil which confuses all.
Yet, if your ears have served not, ye have seen—
For, elsewhere, we ourselves know how they came:
The Wamesits and Wampanoags know
The holy exiles from across the wave!
The men who stood with faded, upturned eyes,
And supplicated some outlying fields
For pious use, then straight enlarged themselves!
Who from the gift made title to the whole,
And thrust the red man back upon the ribs
Of spiny mountains, bleak with summer snow,
Till great Metacomet arose and fell!
And, otherwhere, encased in iron they came,
Or in black robes—and won you to their side.
Through you they smote us, tore our castles down,
And sought to lay the mighty Long House low,
Which else had spread—a shelter for us all!
Away all thoughts and feelings save my hate,
Which burns and hisses in my veins like fire!

Hate infinite and fierce, whose sense will dull
The pangs of all your faggots and your flames.
O fools! We were the tempest, you the leaves
Which fled before it! Traitors to our race,
Where *are ye?* Erie, or Andaste, speak!
Ye craven remnant of the Yendats—where?
Your emptied forests tell! Your ruined towns!
O, ye poor creatures of Yonondio, blush!
Your women should deride, your children jeer,
And Atahensic, from her silver home,
Look down, and curse you! Ha! Come back, my soul!
This rage is viler than the fear of death.
O Jouskeha, give calm! that I may feel,
And, so, endure, and, by endurance, please
Areskoni and Thee!

The stocks at last!

My meaning has been reached, and I am bound.
No flimsy setting this, half-fast, half-free,
But the triced frame as stubborn as the elm.
Ah, there is something yet unsaid, but—no—
The darkness falls; now—torches and the fire!
Prince Albert, N. W. T. C. MAIR.

THE FUTURE OF CANADA.

DURING the past few weeks and months some very able writers in THE WEEK, notably Mr. Granville C. Cunningham, have been advancing some elaborate theories touching the future of this country, and the conclusion which they seem to reach is that Imperial Federation, or a general citizenship throughout the whole British Empire, is the best and only really practical solution of the interesting question. If I venture to suggest any views on this topic, it is not for the purpose of controversy, for that implies definite opinions, whereas I conceive that a practical politician would be safest not to adopt any fixed conclusions. The question is still in its infancy, and a thousand accidents, which time and events are constantly bringing about, may change the whole situation com-