

# "A FAIR JAPANESE" An Original Story by Eva Hamilton Young

This Story by Mrs. George E. Young, of Chatham, was written for the Hospital Edition of the Banner-News.

TIPPIN had just been served at the "Villa of Falling Flowers," the residence of Yokohama's English consul, to a company of native and foreign officials, their wives and daughters, and the officers from the fleet lying at the granite piers and landing places of the gay Japanese seaport. On rising from the table they went out on the wide veranda, facing the harbor. Here the oppressive heat was tempered by the refreshing waft of briny air which percolated through the vine-covered bamboo lattice.

Two or three of the men strolled to the far end of the veranda, ostensibly to smoke, in reality to talk of their neighbors' affairs. But, attracted by the teeming life of the city, they stood silent awhile looking and listening to the tumult. In the distance, there is the sound of voices and beating of drums and gongs as processions of pilgrims pass to and from the temples and shrines, or to the "lotus viewing." It is a festival day, and the broad short street, lined on either side with quaint buildings with varied frontages of projecting eaves, paper lanterns, and open lozenges, presented a picturesque scene. Here were tea-houses, toy-shops, restaurants, temples, shrines, tempting booths for the sale of household gods, lacquered ware, incense-burners, ornamental hair pins, and other useful and useless articles to attract the thronging multitudes. Here, too, were men and women with large parasols spread over their heads to keep away the sun's rays. Women, old and young, with branches of feathery, pale green bamboo in their hands and wearing looking-babes tucked into the backs of their dresses, Japanese dandies in European clothes, Chinese merchants in silky array and sporting the skull cap and red button of their rank, Kuruma runners in short blue cotton drawers, blue cotton shirt with wide sleeves, and blue cotton kerchiefs knotted around their heads. Merry, laughing girls in holiday attire, jugglers, musicians and singing-girls, swarmed and buzzed in the hot June sunshine like bees in a garden of flowers.

"Jack Manners is playing the fascinating game of love with a vengeance, and the lovely Japanese seems not averse to his winning the game," said the gray-bearded Captain of a man-of-war, turning with a slight gesture towards a large willow chair whereon sat Hakodate Kenji, the belle of Yokohama.

Behind her chair stood a white-clothed fan-bearer waving a fan of gorgeous peacock plumes. Surrounded by her little court of admirers she looked a very queen of love. The beauty of her skin—which was as fair as that of any Westerner—was enhanced by the glory of her purple-black hair which, refusing to be confined by jeweled comb or pins lay in soft coils about her shapely head. Her sliver Kimono (dress) was confined at the waist by a richly brocaded sash, or scarf which was the envy of all her lady friends—not only because of its great beauty and value but because of the peculiar grace it gave her. A mild, but animated expression was on her face as she took part in the gay talk going on about her; but for Lieutenant Manners was reserved the rare sweet smile that showed the white, even teeth.

"Playing! If it were only playing!" exclaimed Frank Ellacott, "tell you Captain Newton," he continued vehemently, "that Jack Manners is in dead earnest; he is making a fool of himself too. Worse than a fool for a good, true-hearted Canadian girl is waiting to become his bride when we return to Canada."

Ellacott looked so hot and indignant, and fanned himself so vigorously, that his companion laughed, and offered him his cigar case.

"Keep cool, my friend," he said, "keep cool but this is a merry game indeed, and the end of the play is not yet."

"No, the end of the play is not yet!" repeated Ellacott, soberly; "any man's heart if he really were all but an enlightened Christian can think for one moment of taking a wife of the Buddhist faith, is more than I can comprehend. I believe the girl has bewitched him with some heathen charm."

"The personality of the girl is enough to charm any impressionable man," said Captain Newton. "Perhaps," he continued humorously, "in some far distant stage of transmigration her soul inhabited the form of a serpent and some of the serpent's power of fascination has clung to her present personality or perhaps she was one of the Pterodactyls which roamed the earth in the secondary period, and her mind and fan are the rudimentary remains of the wings with which she lulled her victims into unconsciousness."

"You speak lightly and jokingly," replied Ellacott, "but it is no light matter to see a man like Manners weaving such a tangled web for himself; and when you think of the little CANADIAN why, its for my part, I wish the fair Japanese was in her blissful Nirvana."

Before his companion could reply, Ellacott turned on his heel and walked to the other end of the veranda, and seated himself near Hakodate.

"I'll make a study of the Bha d st," he said to himself, "and break the charm if I can."

the strings; until the sweet subtle cadence, died away into a long mournful wail; then panting, moaning, writhing, growing ever wilder, it rose to a penetrating cry, that was like the cry of a lost spirit.

As the last notes died away into silence, a wave of mystery passed over them. Ellacott alert, watching, saw his friend Lieutenant Manners, draw a long breath of relief, and wipe away the sweat that had beaded on his brow during the playing; and feeling that his own nerves were somewhat overwrought, he determined to break the eerie spell that the music had thrown over the party.

"Good people all," he cried gaily, "there is a steam yacht lying at the wharf which I am at liberty to use whenever I wish; steam is already up or will be at short notice, and if you will come, we will try to keep cool, and forget the aches of life for the rest of the afternoon."

There was some demur at first among the elder members of the party, who preferred to remain where they were rather than walk to the quay, but, going into the street Ellacott called, "Oh! KUMAMAYA! Oh! KUMAMAYA!" and presently, with the aid of chairs propelled by coolies and jostling Jin-ri-ki-sha men, they were all on board the handsomely appointed yacht, and sailing over the Bay of Yedo.

Frank Ellacott stood talking to the mate for some time, watching meanwhile the pretty Japanese pacing the deck with Lieutenant Manners.

"I like her face; it is full of earnestness and thought," Ellacott muttered to himself after the mate had left him. "And oh, how beautiful she is! Perhaps I have been mistaken! I wonder—"

The young man felt a sudden desire to know her better. Watching his opportunity, he saw her after awhile, standing alone, resting one

heathen girl, for so you call all those of my faith—a faith to which more than a third of mankind owe their moral and religious ideas—a faith which is full of beautiful thought and teaching. Listen!"

Kokoro da ni makoto.  
No niri ni kana h naba  
I no face to be no sham,  
Jano no ramon.

"Upright in heart be thou and pure,  
So shall the blessings of God  
Throughout eternity be upon thee."

As she quoted the lines, a strange light shone in her eyes, dispelling for the moment the look of weariness that had been there.

Ellacott started slightly and looked questioningly into the girl's sweet face.

"You are surprised," she said, "that he who would take the high Nirvana-way must conquer love of self and lust of life; and far hath he gone whose foot treads down one fond offence."

Ellacott sighed audibly; but it was from relief: from pleasure; keen, subtle, strange, as though some wondrous, sweet perfume had flitted past him. He wondered why he had been so anxious to save his friend from the enchantment of this girl. He told himself that he was not in the habit of interfering with other people's business, and so could not understand his strange overpowering desire to do so now.

"Lieutenant Manners is not worthy of you," he said to her and there was reverence in his tones for the girl at his side.

Hakodate had acquired the English language and reserve at an English school—and through association with foreigners and visitors of the diplomatic corps. But, now, under the influence of Ellacott's sympathy of manner and tones—though not of words—the childlike trust and freedom of her race, asserted itself and she told him how Lieutenant Manners had enthralled her by his admiration and seeming tender-

"Lieutenant Manners has told you of his engagement," he said. "It was madness for him to think of any one else—now."

"Yes," she faltered, "he has just told me."

"And you?" he asked gently, pityingly.

"I—I have bidden him to go back to her and forget me—now!" she continued frankly, "I love him; but he is not true; and my idol is broken!"

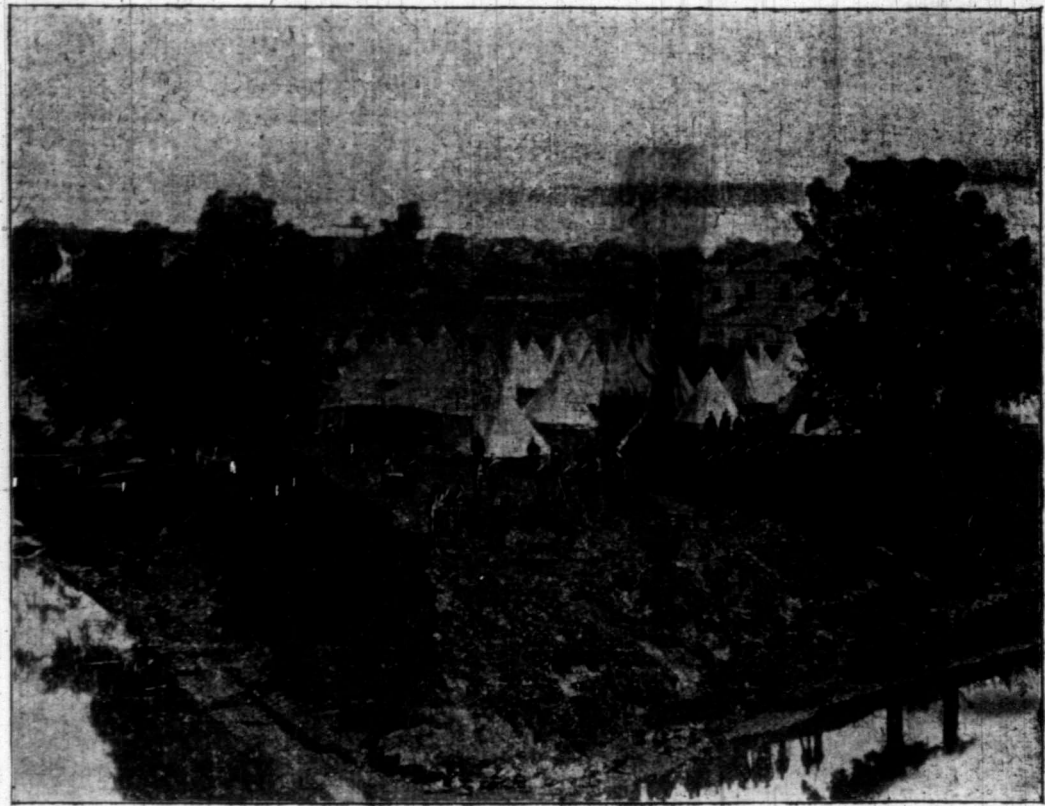
They stood silent for a while: she in the calm of exhaustion after the storm, the swish, swish, of the waves soothing her into quietness and peace; Ellacott quiet because of the surging tumult in his breast—the pulsing throbbing of the engines seeming but the echo of his heart beats—could not, dare not speak for a while, for fear of betraying the feelings which possessed him. And so he stood quiet, drinking in the beauty of the face before him, hearing to speak or move lest he should startle her, realizing that his highest dreams of human loveliness and perfection were more than fulfilled in the girl who stood before him; that the beautifulasket was but the outward reflection of the brightness and purity within, and longing with an almost irresistible longing to gather her to his arms for all eternity.

Quitting himself at last with a determined effort, but with a curious tremor in his voice, he broke the long quivering silence:

"Is it not always so? We set up an idol which we think is pure gold; but by-and-by it becomes tarnished, or dulled by too close an intimacy, and, if kept long enough, the gilding may wear off altogether, and behold! the thing we thought gold, is but brass—an alloy of base metal! But, the law of compensation still holds good, and so other hopes will come—other idols may be set up."

"Miss Hakodate," he continued

## TECUMSEH PARK, AS IT WAS



This picture was made in the early days and shows the old 24th Battalion in camp on the old military reserve.

hand on the shining brass hand-rail, looking, with a far away expression, at her lovely face, across the bright waters. He walked across the deck to her side with some trepidation—he was not a ladies' man, and somehow the lovely Japanese had a way of making people feel that she could read their very thoughts.

"Are you enjoying this refreshing coolness?" he asked her brightly, when at last he stood by her side.

"I love to be on the water," was her simple answer.

Her face was turned from him, but Ellacott thought there was a sob in her voice; he affected not to notice this, however, and talked far more than was his wont. He was not a curious man—but curiosity set for him the task of finding out what had caused this girl, who a little while ago was the gayest of the gay, to shed tears. He was certain now that she had been weeping, for he saw her take a flimsy bit of lace—a mere apology for a handkerchief—from the large sleeve of her Kimono and press it furtively to her eyes. He was equally certain that Lieutenant Manners had something to do with the tears in this case.

"Miss Hakodate," said he, gently, "you can't mind if I speak plainly to you?"

She was silent a little while; but so silently she turned to him and began to speak excitedly:

"It is about your friend you would speak; you need not fear for him; I am not the kind of person you deem me."

There was sore pain and protest in her sweet high-bred tones, and Ellacott twisted his mustache perplexedly.

"It's needless for you to speak," she continued, "I have seen it all in your face every time you looked at me. You have said to yourself, why should my friend ruin his life for this

ness for herself. But, to have him confess his love for her, and then tell her of his engagement to another, was more than she could bear; her notion of honor were thoroughly Japanese and she shrank from such an exhibition of inconstancy. It was a strange tale for a mild to tell a young man; but the pathos and sincerity of it all redeemed it from any impropriety. It was not a continuous narrative; but rapid broken sentences—into which many Japanese words and terms were interpolated—and long pauses, more eloquent than words.

"And this," said Ellacott to himself, "is the girl whom I have regarded as the embodiment of self-possession and secretiveness; as a cool, crafty, designing maid, using one victim of her charms to lure another, until the ulterior object of her ambition was attained!" and now, as she unburdened her heart to him, he began to realize how utterly unjust he had been in his estimation of her and in his comments upon her character. A comment, regret, reverence, pity, love, fear, tore him with their various emotions as he listened to her story and when she had finished and stood with half averted face looking out over the water, the strong man trembled as with the palsy.

"It is strange," mused Ellacott, as they stood silent for a moment. "How a great joy, a great sorrow, sudden peril, sudden excitement or emergency will cause people to reveal their true selves to whoever may chance to be with them, and carefully acquire habits, barriers of pride and position and race and religion are swept away by the resistless tide of nature, and the ego, the soul of the being, stands forth in all its beauty or all its deformity: 'verily as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,' and happy is the one who, like this lovely Japanese, is without guile."

with quiet earnestness, "I want to beg a favor of you: I want you to forgive me my past lack of appreciation of your worth, and let me be your friend; will you?" For one brief second of time he laid his hand persuasively on hers as it rested on the hand rail, and the touch sent the blood thrilling through veins like fire.

"Will you," he repeated eagerly, "will you forgive me and let me be your friend?"

She flushed a little, and said musingly, "Can you really wish to be my friend, now?"

"Try me and see," said he, laughing softly.

"Well, then," she replied, "I'll promise to forgive you if you—". She did not finish the sentence—a blinding flash of lightning, followed by a mighty roar, drew from her a cry of dismay.

They had not noticed the gathering gloom, but during their conversation one of those sudden violent storms peculiar to tropic seas and lands had rushed up from the southward and was about them in all its fury and terror. As the yacht reeled in the wind, a sudden lurch brought her against him somewhat unceremoniously, she put out her hand seeking blindly for something to steady herself by. Ellacott grasped it, and throwing his arm about her drew her gently to him, for he saw that she was afraid, her eyes betrayed her, and she was in danger of being dashed overboard, or carried away by the waves.

With a sailor's quick comprehensive glance he took in the whole situation and saw that there was great danger for all of them. The gale was rapidly increasing, and black, vicious waves roared and rushed around them in angry menace; the horizon was a bill of care, and a sky seeming but one mass of writhing

(Continued on Page Seven.)

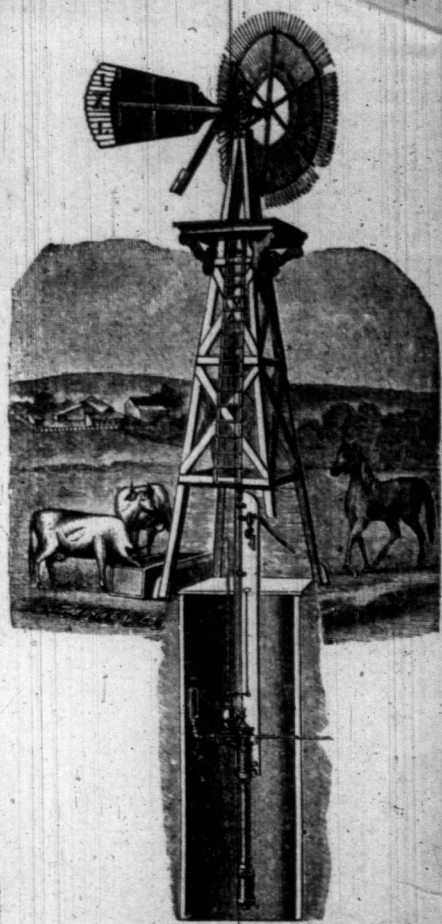
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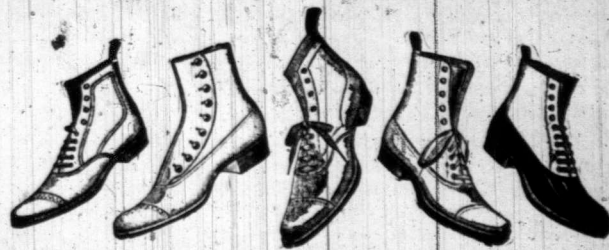
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