The Housewife in Japan

Childhood left behind, a Japanese woman finds life not without many cares and responsibilities. Marriage takes place eary and with it a new life begins. With her parents the young girl has grown up innocent, modest and unassuming. She is obedient to the wishes of her superiors, helpful in the household, and handy with her needle. The outer world she knows but little of, and the husband, who is chosen for her by her parents, is accepted usually without doubts or misgivings, there being no question of love between the young people before marriage, though sometimes there may be a little social intercourse. The friend who serves as go-between arranges all the details of the engagement, ceremony and marriage, and on an auspicious day, the trousseau of the bride, consisting of furniture, bureaus, and lacquer boxes filled with many beautiful dresses and rich girdles, silk quilts and bedding, and all the necessary appurtenances of a Japanese lady, are sent with due ceremony a few hours before the arrival of the bride at her future home.

The bride is accompanied by the go-between and his wife, and the wedding ceremony takes place quietly at the home of the groom, with no one present but the contracting parties, the go-between and the little maid who pours out the symbolic wine taken from the two-mouthed cup, each side of which is given to groom and bride alternately. The drinking of this wine is a token that life's joys and sorrows are to be shared together hereafter, it is taken by them nine times in all. After this formal ceremony between the bride and groom, the bride also takes wine with her husband's relatives, the parents, brothers and sisters, as a symbol of the union between herself and them.

Although such a ceremony would seem very simple, it is in truth most complicated. It is not gay and brilliant as a wedding would be among Europeans and Americans, with crowds of invited guests, showy decorations, and a grand ceremonial in some large church. The Japanese ceremony, as well as the feast which is held after it, and given to parents and relatives of bride and groom, is carried out under many strict rules of etiquette, which entail much thought and care. On the part of the bride there is a very elaborate toilet. The underdress, of pure white silk, long and flowing, is worn under a gayly-figured overgarment, with the broad sash tied behind, the costume being changed several times in the evening. There is the coiffure, most carefully arranged and adorned with tortoiseshell comb and hairpin, the fixing of which has taken an hour or two of the skillful hairdresser's time. Presents to each member of the family of the groom are given by the bride. The rooms are decorated with appropriate scroll pictures and ornaments, all symbolic of good luck and happiness, among the emblems being the stork and tortoise, the pine, plum and bamboo. The house and the salutations and order of the ceremony and the service of the dinner are all arranged by rules too complicated and numerous to be detailed here.

Presents are sent from friends and relatives, who have heard of the nuptials, a feast is held in the bride's home a few days after the wedding, and, then finally a grand entertainment is given to relatives and friends by the newly-wedded couple. After that life settles down to its usual routine, and the new wife fits herself as best she may into her new surroundings. The newly-married pair do not make a separate home, but it is expected that they will remain with the parents of the husband under the same roof and form a part of the household. In this way it is often trying to the new wife, especially if there be many members of the family, for it will be her duty as far as possible to bend her will to theirs and to please them in every way. Her husband and his parents stand first, however, and she must see to their comfort, wait upon them, and forestall their wishes in many little ways.

During the life-time of the mother-in-law, or at least until she has grown too old to desire to hold the actual reins of government, the young wife does not have full authority to manage the household, but is entirely under the rule of the elder woman. She is thus initiated into the ways of the house and trained to follow in the footsteps of her predecessors. It is this custom which makes early marriage in Japan a possibility, for otherwise a young girl of 16 or 17 could not take into her hands the whole management of a household, nor serve the husband as she is expected to do. As it is, the young wife has her hands full in attending to the wants of those around her, for she takes a subordinate place, and her own desires and personality must be sunk in those of others. No longer a child, a woman's duties are demanded of her and she must endeavor to fulfill them, for on her ability to please depends her future happiness. Failing in this means disgrace and divorce, and a return to the paternal roof, a dependent for life on father or brother, the on'y alternative being a second marriage, which can hardly be so propitious as the first one. Divorces are easily gained and for several causes but in every case the breaking of the marriage tie, is, for the woman, more or less a disgrace, and must be avoided by every means possible.

The daily round of duties is not varied. The Japanese house, with its polished wood-work and soft matted floor, must be kept scrupulously clean. Every morning and evening they must be wiped or swept, for the open paper partitions let in much dust from the gardens and streets. The flowers in the raised alcove must be arranged in the vase, the one hanging scroll in the room changed according to season or occasion. The women of the household must see that all is made neat and tidy. The young wife assists her husband in his preparations as he starts off on his daily round of business, sees that everything is conveniently on hand, and is ready to receive him and tend to his comfort when he returns home in the evening. In case of unexpected guests—and these are of almost daily occurrence—everything must be attended to promptly and without the least show of the inconvenience which must necessarily occur when dinner for several visitors is called for on short notice. But Japanese hospitality is genuine; such things are considered to be a matter of course, and no one thinks how much anxiety it entails on the wife of the household. Cooking, however, is a simple matter, and in Tokio there are so many establishments in every part of the city where dinner for a number or a few dishes may be ordered on short notice and brought by a special messenger that this part of the entertainment is made much lighter than might be thought possible. Moreover the constant coming in and out of guests makes almost the only variety in the life of the women, who, though the acquaintances are friends of the husband, get their almost only experience of the outside world and learn something beyond the narrow life in the home and the petty details which fill up each day.

It must not be thought, however, that a wife has little responsibility, or that her life is without important duties. In all the affairs of the house, in the arrangements of accounts, the hiring of servants, the buying and sending out of presents—this in itself no slight task—the wife has virtually, if not nominally, full power, and there is no doubt that the prosperity or the poverty of the house depends as much on the wife as on the husband, for a capable manager, a good housewife and helpmate can do as much in Japan as in America for her husband's welfare and honor.

It is touching to see how women, even in the lowest classes, take care of their children. They seem always loving and kind, wearing old and common clothes, so that their little ones may have some bright, gay garment, or going with-

But above everything, a woman's life in Japan has its best opportunities for usefulness as well as its greatest responsibilities in its duties as mother; for a Japanese mother has almost unbounded influence over her children. The father is often too busy to interest himself in the minor details concerning his children, and from infancy until school days are over a mother is all in all to her little one. Even the sons are taught to show every mark of respect for her, and she is their guardian and helper, even when they are going to school, or receive instruction from tutors. The little girls of course are under the mother entirely, and in many cases receive only home training after a few years at a primary school. It is she wh oplans for their pleasure, arranges the little festivals in the different season as they come for both boys and girls, takes them with her on her occasional outings and visits to her relatives; or if they are left at home who never forgets the "omiagi," or present for them on her return, be it only a ball, a toy or a little candy. out some necessity that they may buy some cheap toy for them.

In the homes of the higher classes the mother and children are brought together less often, and nearly everything is done for children by servants and attendants. But the children know few cares and anxieties and lead a happy life.

Much respect and honor is paid to the old mother or to the older grandmother in Japan. Her own children and her son's daughters vie in doing things for her, and in trying to please her. She is free to come and go as she likes among them, and they will entertain her and make much of her, so that her old age is full of freedom and pleasure. No wonder children are longed for by Japanese women, for it is only through them that this happy period is reached, and so many blessings are obtained.

THE BOILER BLEW UP.

Horrible Death of Firemen on a French Steamer.

The steamer Rio de Janeiro, which arrived recently at San Francisco, brings news that one of the boilers of the French steamer Sachalien exploded while the vessel was off the Chinese coast on December 2, bound from Singapore for Hong Kong. Eleven of the stokers in the fire-room and one engineer were killed instantly by the explosion or by the scalding steam. The chief stoker was so badly injured that he died a few hours afterward, and four other firemen died the next day as a result of their burns.

The vessel was crowded with passengers, and there was the wildest confusion on board. The passengers had just assembled in the saloon for dinner when there came a loud report like that of a cannon from the direction of the engine-room. The deck-boards were torn up, gratings were sent flying in the air and the steamer trembled from stem to stern. A dense cloud of steam and smoke issued from the hatches with a deafening roar of escaping steam.

The officers of the vessel who were on the decks rushed to their places at the lifeboats ,and from the cabins came screaming women and shouting men. It was some time before order could be restored and the extent of the disaster ascertained.

As soon as the steam had cleared away men were sent below in the stoke-hole. Eleven Lascar firemen lay about the floor before the ruined boiler, dead or writhing at the last gasp, with their flesh parboiled by the terrific bath of superheated steam in which the explosion had plunged them. Ten other firemen who were in the stoke-hole were badly burned. Four of them died during the night following the explosion.

TIMELY AID.

Weren't you frightened when your revolver missed fire?

No; my wife held the burglar off with a hat pin while I reloaded.

SOUTH AFRICAN MARVELS

AN INTELLIGENT BOA CONSTRICTOR AND ITS PREY.

Robbed of a Half-Swallowed Buck It Gulped Down a Native and Cut Off His Escape by Swallowing Its Tail.

The latest snake story comes from South Africa. It is recorded in the Transvaal, published in Cape Town, as cold fact, that in Sekukiniland, a native ran across a boa constrictor, measuring about forty-seven feet, which had just swallowed a young Koodoo buck, all except the horns. The horns stuck out on each side of the reptile's mouth. The native recognized the horns as those of a buck he owned, and he ran and got sticks and pinned the serpent, which was dormant, to the ground. Then he got hold of the horns and pulled and twisted. He got the buck out inch by inch, until half its body showed, and then it came with a jerk, and the boy fell over on his back.

Before he had time to think twice the snake, relieved of its load of mutton, was upon him, and it seized his head in its mouth and in three minutes the native had taken the place of the buck, only he was all inside; there was nothing left out to pull on, even if a rescuer had come along. Having swallowed the boy the boa deliberately swung its head around and grabbing its tail swallowed eight feet of it, then closing the mouth and throat, down which the native had disappeared, and making escape

ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE.

The Transvaal vouches for the truth of the story.

Besides snakes of this ferocious and ingenious character, they have lions aplenty in South Africa, as the following from the Cape Times of Cape Town shows:

"The following is an extract from the letter of a young Colonist now in Mashonaland, sent to the Queen's Town Free Press. The letter is written from Belengwa, a place 110 miles southeast of Bulawayo:

"Writing to B—— last week, I gave an account of a rather exciting experience I had with lions, but since then I have been within two yards of them, hearing the brutes roar, and seeing them devouring cows. I went down to Fynn's, a son of Mr. Fynn of Kreli fame; he is a Native Commissioner of the district and a very smart fellow indeed, to dinner. I was walking, as it is only three miles from here. I forgot to take my rifle with me. I stayed at Fynn's until 9 o'clcok, and then walked over to the local store to post my letters, leaving there shortly after 10 to return to my camp. We had been spinning yarns of different lion experiences all the evening. Consequently when I left I was full of lions and their daring habits. However, I would not show the store people I did not quite like the walk home alone without a gun, and so started, with my terrior as a companion. Being in good fettle I did the three and a half miles in forty minutes, and got home safely. Very early next morning I got a note from Fynn, saying that within half an hour of my leaving the store the lions had come down and taken four donkeys belonging to a prospector, and three calves out of the store kraal, all within fifteen yards of the store. A hunt was organized and we scoured the neighborhood without result, returning at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when we found out that the brutes had also taken and partly eaten

TWO COWS AND A CALF

belonging to Fynn. Fynn, myself, and Orpen, nephew of the Treasurer, decided to build a scherm, a small hut made of poles and tied with green hide, and sit up all night and see if they returned. Well, as ill luck would have it, the night turned up bitterly cold, with a drizzling rain, and as dark as pitch. We decided to do relief for two hours, and keep watch. The cows' carcasses were only within two yards of the scherm.

"During my watch, from 2 to 3 o'clock, the lions turned up, and announced their presence with a roar. I do not think I shall forget it. They appeared to be very hungry, as they promptly started to eat the dead cows. Fynn got first shot, and hit his lion badly; in fact, we thought it was going to attack the scherm. However, it thought better of it and cleared off. By this time it was so dark that we could not see the lions, and could only shoot by guess work. I got a shot at the next one and missed; in fact, it simply went on eating. I fired again and hit. By Jove! He roared and growled, gnashed his teeth, and tried to make for the scherm. Fynn fired and hit him again, and we felt sure of having secured one at last.

"Presently another came up, and Fynn fired again, but missed. This one cleared. Another came up, Fynn fired, and this one cleared also. At this time we could hear my lion moaning and growling, and felt sure we could find him there in the morning, but, to our disappointment, when we got out the brute had gone. Although great pools of blood could be traced where he had rested, we could not follow his spoor for more than a mile, the rain having washed out all trace of him. We spent two days in trying to find the bodies without success. I am sorry, as I made so sure of having hit and killed my one. I daresay someone would be fortunate enough to find his skin before destroyed by birds. The whole experience was novel and exciting. Orpen did not get a shot as the lions came up from the lee side and we dare not move.

TWO WERE KILLED

some time ago with spring guns. This district is fairly teeming with them, and it is dangerous to move about at night, whether you have a rifle or not."

Still another abundant product of South Africa is the locust. Just look at these telegrams from a South Africa paper:

Queen's Town, Jan. 2.—Mr. Colin White, of Richmond, sent in some locusts to-day that he met near there, travelling east. They are a new kind, and have large bodies and long prickles, on their legs. They eat leaves, peach, quince, apple, fig, and willow.

Port Elizabeth, Jan 4.—The up-country train this morning passed through swarms of locusts of greater or less density for 150 miles. It has also been ascertained that similar swarms are on farms in the Uitenhage district. They are reported to be a new species.

Durban, Dec. 31.—The locust pest is now appearing, the swarms of hoppers having hatched in Durban and Victoria counties, where the screen system will be brought into operation.

Last but not least they have in South Africa the world famous three-card monte game. But the Judges down there don't seem to be very familiar with it yet, or can't see that there is any cheating in it, as their story shows.

"Recently at Port Elizabeth Joseph Stewart was charged before the Magistrate with fraud by means of a certain three-card game. John Hendrik van Heerden, and we travelled second class. Prisoner and another man, whose name I do not know, joined the train at Middelurg Road on Sunday morning. After the train left Middleburg the prisoner said he should like a talk with us and he introduced a subject in connection with a game of cards in which

ONLY THREE CARDS

were required. He said he had been playing a game of cards with a man. Prisoner's friend said: "Show us how to play that game." He agreed to do so, and took three cards out of an ordinary visiting card case. He showed the other man how to play with three cards. The prisoner and his companion, after the latter had the game explained to him, started to play for money. The companion—or confederate—first won, then lost. Both of them then asked me to play. I said: No. It is Sunday, and we should not play cards on Sunday. They then asked Mr. Van Heerden to play. At first he would not, but being pressed very much he agreed to stake half a sovereign, and Van Heerden won. Prisoner suggested that the stakes be for £5. He drew out a £5 note, and seeing that, prisoner said, "Oh, make it £10." Van Heerden did so; he put down another £5 note. He lost that £10. Prisoner asked him to continue playing, so he put down another £5. Well, I thought I would try and get my friend's money back for him, so I put in £10, making our joint put in £15. We lost it all. Prisoner's friend urged me to play again. He said, 'Try and regain your money.' I did so after much persuasion, and the result was I lost £10 more. I would not play any more, although they begged me to continue. I spoke to the guard about my loss, and asked him his opinion.

"The farmers lost between them £35, and then told the guard. Stewart offered to compromise the affair by giving them £22 10s. to tell the guard that the affair was settled. The guard gave Stewart in charge for gambling on the line, but found little money upon him. The confederate had disappeared by that time.

"The Magistrate held that no fraud had been proved and prisoner was discharged."

South Africa, it will be seen, is a great place.

REGULATED BY A STAR.

A Simple Way of Telling When a Time Piece Runs Accurately.

Some very old paintings that was brought to light the other day contains curious suggestions for making certain calculations that will interest many people.

An easy method of correctly regulating a timepiece by the stars is as follows:

As the motion of the earth with regard to the fixed stars (those that twinkle) is uniform, timepieces can in a most simple manner be correctly regulated by the stars with greater facility than by the sun. Choose a south window, from which any fixed point, such as a chimney side of a building, etc., may be seen. To the side of the window attach a piece of cardboard having a small hole in it in such a manner that by looking through the hole toward the edge of the elevated object, some fixed star may be seen. The progress of the star must be watched, and the instant it vanishes behind the fixed point the observer must note the exact time it disappears. The following night the same star will vanish behind the same object three minutes and fifty-six seconds sooner. If a timepiece mark 9 o'clock when the star vanished one night the following night it will indicate three minutes and fifty-six seconds less than 9.

If the timepiece be faster or slower than the indication of the star, then it has gained or lost the indicated difference. If several cloudy nights follow the first observation of the star it is only necessary to multiply three minutes fifty-six seconds by the number of days that have elapsed since the observation, and the product deducted from the hour of the clock indicates the first night clear enough for the second observation and gives the time the clock or watch ought to show. The same star can only be observed during a few weeks, for as it gains nearly an hour in a fortnight, it will in a short time come to the meridian in broad daylight and become invisible.

In marking the observation care must be taken that a planet is not chosen instead of a star. Additional to the fact that the light of fixed stars twinkles, while that of planets is steady because reflected, a sure means of distinguishing between them is to first watch a certain star attentively for a few nights. If it changes its place with regard to the other stars, it is a planet, since the fixed stars appear to maintain the same relative positions with regard to each other.

AMERICA'S RICHEST MAN

SOME FACTS ABOUT JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER AND HIS WEALTH.

Said to Be Worth More Than $200,000,000—Gives Large Sums in Charity—$10,000,000 to Chicago University—How He Acquired His Wealth—Means Employed to Crush Opposition.

John D. Rockefeller.

He is America's richest man.

His wealth is more than $200,000,000.

When a boy he had the reputation of being lazy.

His colossal fortune was made of oil—Standard Oil.

He gives away $500,000 in charities every year, it is said.

He can play the violin very well, and has a fondness for pictures.

His income is a trifle more than $20,000 a day—nearly $17 a minute.

He gets less real enjoyment out of life, probably, than most $12-a-week clerks.

He never attends the theater or opera, but occasionally goes to a concert.

He looks like a preacher. He has sloping shoulders and a melancholy face.

His highest ambition when a youngster was to be a trapeze performer in a circus.

He founded the Chicago University, and has given to that institution about $10,000,000.

He pays $10,000 a year to the person who looks after the distribution of his charities.

He saved money from the time he first began to earn it. In two years he had put away $500.

Then he and M. B. Clark went into the commission business in St. Louis, and in eight years had saved $5,000.

With this capital he started a little oil refinery, out of which grew the Standard Oil Company and his vast wealth.

In a short time the Rockefellers were near unto failure, and were rescued by Henry M. Flagler's father-in-law, M. V. Harkness.

Once safely established the Rockefellers started out to acquire the plants of their rivals. Some were acquired by purchase, others by—other means.

So successfully was this plan of business campaign carried out that to-day there is scarcely a rival plant—practically all the oil industries are in the control of the Rockefellers.

Some very ugly stories are told about the methods employed by the Standard Oil Company to acquire the plants of rivals or else to drive them out of business. Even arson has been mentioned.

It has been said that John D. Rockefeller gives millions to charities to atone for some—well, never mind what. However, the ruin of more than one business rival has, coincidentally, been followed by the gifts of thousands to some institution.

He has a number of residences—one at No. 4 West Fifty-fourth street, New York City; one in Cleveland, another in Greenwich, Conn.; and a very handsome place near Tarrytown. Connected with this house is a very good skating rink.

He is an iron king as well as an oil king. He practically owns all the Lake Superior mines, as well as the principal deposits in Cuba. During the fiannicial depression a few years ago he bought all the iron mining property in who at once ordered me to be taken to sight—and at a bargain.

His parents were Scotch folks, who settled on a small farm near Moravia, N.Y. They moved to Oswego, and later to Cleveland. John D. Rockefeller married a Cleveland school teacher, Miss Lucy Spellman. They have four children. The two daughters are married.

Just now Mr. Rockefeller is having a deal of trouble with his parson, the Rev. Daniel C. Potter, pastor of the Tabernacle Baptist Church, of New York. Mr. Rockefeller some time ago gave to the church $50,000. The Rev. Mr. Potter asserts that Mr. Rockefeller has wrecked the church because his conduct has not been such as to please the Standard Oil magnate. The case is now being tried.

EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYED

Women are forced by various exigencies in life to take a very decided stand in the ranks of the great army of workers who battle for bread and butter. For a long time, selfish man was bitterly opposed to the supplanting of male labor by feminine help. But in the eternal fitness of things the situation is now more or less accepted, with the philosophic expression that the "survival of the fittest" has proved it to be a correct condition of affairs. It is noticeable, that women not only survive, when they take up occupations erstwhile monopolized by man, but they go to the front in science, literature, art, business.

With women, as with men, whatever must develop their talent, honor, conscience, energies, and skill, whatever gives him or her a higher aim and assists its realization, is of inestimable value throughout life. The efforts made by an honorable employer, to raise the character and the work of his agents, conduce alike to his prosperity and to the individual. The spirit is too often manifest to make gain of each at the other's expense. This is a short-sighted policy. The interests of each are in a measure identical, and the more this is realized in all business relations, the more harmonious and valuable becomes each integral of a business success. We wonder whether the unselfishness of woman, generally, has not had a great deal to do with their success?

BARRELS OF MONEY.

There is a good reason for the expression "barrels of money." Old safes were made in the form of a barrel, iron-bound, with big rings for handles and a cover lifting with a hinge. There is one of German origin in the Art Museum. It is a little smaller than a flour barrel.