

Our Little Asian Cousins

Japanese, Korean, Chinese

VOLUME TWELVE

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Volume 12

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Our Little Japanese Cousin

By Mary Hazelton Wade

Illustrated by L. J. Bridgman



Lotus Blossom

Our Little Japanese Cousin

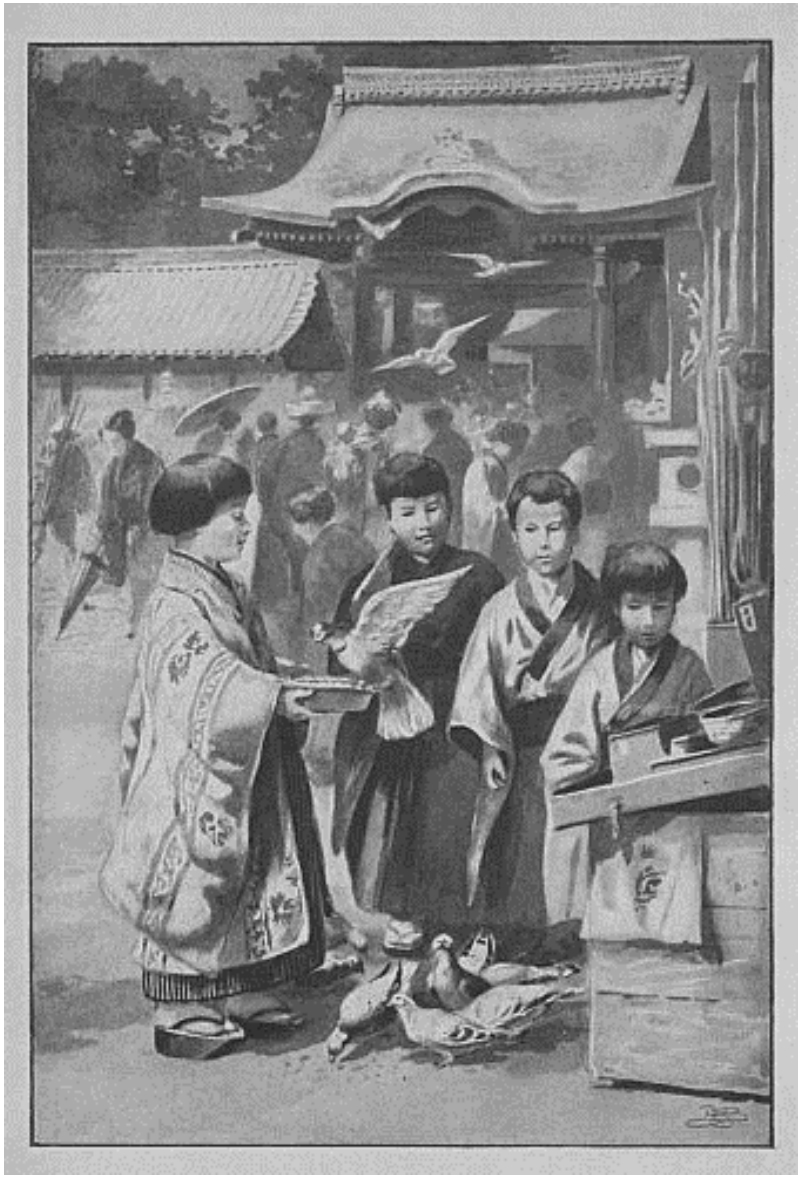
LOTUS BLOSSOM is the dearest little girl in the world. I beg your pardon—I mean in the Eastern world, for she lives far away across the Pacific, on one of the beautiful islands of Japan.

Lotus Blossom is very pretty. She has a round face, with a clear, yellow skin, and her teeth are like little pearls. Her black hair is cut square across the forehead and braided behind. It is never done up in curl-papers or twisted over a hot iron; the little girl's mamma would think that very untidy.

Lotus Blossom does not smile very often, yet she is always happy. She does not remember crying once in her life. Why should she cry? Papa and mamma are always kind and ready to play with her. She is never sent to bed alone in the dark, for she goes to sleep, and gets up in the morning when her parents do. She does not play so hard as to get tired out and cross with everybody. She takes everything quietly, just as the big folks do, and is never in a hurry. Her playmates do not say unkind words to make her sad, for the children of Japan

are taught to be polite above everything else. Why, I have heard that once upon a time one little yellow boy so far forgot himself as to call a lady bad names. His parents were terribly shocked. They felt that they had been disgraced, and at once sent for a policeman to go to the lady's house and ask for their child's pardon. As for him! well, he was severely punished in a way you will hear about later on in my story.

Besides all these things which help to make Lotus Blossom happy, she is dressed comfortably. Tight, stiff shoes could never be thought of for a minute. She wears white stockings made of cloth, with a separate place in each one for the big toe. In fact, they resemble long mittens. That is all Lotus Blossom wears on her feet in the house; but when she goes out-doors she has pretty sandals, if the walking is good. These sandals have straps, which are fastened on the foot between the big toe and around the ankle. If the ground is muddy or covered with snow, Lotus Blossom puts on her clogs. They are queer things, raised high on strips of wood. Of course one can't walk very fast on such clumsy affairs, but the Japanese dislike getting their feet wet as much as kittens do, and would wear anything to prevent such a mishap. But if Lotus Blossom stops at a house or store while she is out



Toyo feeding the pigeons.

walking, she is polite enough to take off her clogs or sandals before going inside. That is one reason why every building can be kept so clean.

The little Japanese girl's clothes are pretty as well as comfortable. It is not possible for pins to prick her tender flesh, because they are never used about her dress. In summer she wears a silk or linen garment made very much like your papa's dressing-gown, except that it has immense sleeves. Beautiful scarlet flowers are embroidered all over it, and a wide sash is wound around her waist and tied in a big, flat bow behind. She is very fond of red, so she has a bow of red crape in her hair, and a small red bag is fastened to her belt in front. What do you suppose she carries in the bag? Paper handkerchiefs! Not linen ones like yours, which are washed when they get soiled, but rather of soft, pretty paper. As soon as each one is used it is thrown away. Don't you think that is a very nice and cleanly custom? Indeed, there are many things about the Japanese which we might copy with profit, for they are the cleanest people in the world. Perhaps another reason why our little cousin is so happy is because she is always clean.

Lotus Blossom carries another bag at her belt, filled with

amulets. These are charms to keep away any evil spirits that might do her harm. In the bag with the charms, there is a brass plate, which tells her name and where she lives. So if she should get lost, her mother need not worry, for she will be brought safely home without loss of time. But what can be the use of such big sleeves? When her mamma cut them, she made them long enough to nearly reach the floor. Then they were doubled up inside and fastened in front so that they could serve as pockets. How you would laugh to see Lotus Blossom and her brother tuck away their playthings in their big sleeves when their mother calls them away to do something for her! It is enough to make an American boy's heart fill with envy. He may boast of six pockets, but what of that? They could all be filled and stowed away in one of Lotus Blossom's sleeves, and room would be still left.

The little girl's life is like a long playtime. In the first place, she lives in a sort of play-house. There is nothing to get out of order; no chairs in the way, no table-scarfs to pull down, no ink-wells to tip over. There is only one big room in the house, but there are many beautiful paper screens, so her mamma can divide the house just as she pleases by moving the screens about. If company should arrive

suddenly, there need be no question whether there is a guest-room or not. One can be made with screens in a moment. Even the front of the house is made of screens, which can be closed at night, and folded away in the morning to open up the whole house to the fresh air and sunshine. There are no carpets on the floors, but instead of these there are pretty mats made of rushes. They are exactly alike in size, and are shaken every morning. There are no chairs, for Lotus Blossom's family sit on the mats or on cushions on the floor. They cannot lean against the walls either, for remember, there are no walls! And if they should lean against the screens they would tumble over.

The only tables are six inches high. They are pretty and delicate, and are highly lacquered. When Lotus Blossom has nothing else to do, she likes to look at the pictures on these little stands. But where are the stoves? How do the people keep warm in the cold winter days? And where is all the cooking done? In the picture do you see a little box with smoke rising from it? It is lined with metal, and charcoal is burned in it. All the food is prepared over these little fire-boxes. If anyone is cold, he has only to get a fire-box, light some charcoal, and sit down beside it. And when Lotus

Blossom goes to breakfast, she has a fire-box beside the lacquered table, so that water for her tea can be kept hot.

Tea! you say. That little girl, nine years old, drinking tea? Yes, we have to admit that the Japanese child drinks tea at a very early age; and with no milk or sugar, either. But then the cups are so tiny they do not hold much. They are no bigger than those in a doll's china set. How quickly the little tea-table is set at meal times. Each member of the family has one all to himself. There is no table-cloth, no knife, or fork, or spoon; instead of these one sees a pair of chop-sticks, a small cup and saucer, and a plate from which he eats the steaming rice and the minced fish. But suppose that the tea or rice should be spilled on the beautiful table? Please don't imagine such a thing. Japanese children are too carefully trained by their kind mammas to be so careless. They handle their chop-sticks so daintily that no grain of rice nor bit of fish falls as they lift the food to their pretty mouths.

Where does our little Japanese cousin sleep in this funny house? There are no bedsteads, or mattresses, or blankets, or sheets. When bedtime comes, her papa and mamma move the screens around so as to shut themselves off from the rest of the house. Then they go to a cupboard and take

down some wadded quilts and queer wooden blocks, whose tops are slightly curved. A quilt is spread on the floor, and a wooden block serves as a pillow. Some paper is laid on it so that it may be kept clean. And now, you think, Lotus Blossom may get into her bed after she has undressed and put on her night-dress. Not so, however. She must bathe in a tub of such hot water that it would turn your body very red, if you were only to hop in and out again. The whole family bathe in the same tub of water, one after the other, and it is kept hot by a tube which runs to a fire-box. The little girl puts on her day-dress after her bath is finished, and, lying down on the quilt, she rests her head on the hard pillow. Mamma covers her with another quilt, and she is soon sound asleep.

When Lotus Blossom was two years old her brother Toyo was born. How the family rejoiced at having a little son! When he was only seven days old a very important ceremony was performed. He had to receive a name. His papa, who believes in the religion of Shintoism, fully wrote out five of his favourite names on pieces of paper. Then he took his baby in his arms, and, carrying the papers, he went to the temple where he worshipped. The papers were handed to

the priest, who placed them in a bowl. After some ceremony, the priest began to fish in the bowl with a sacred wand. The first paper he lifted out bore the name of Toyo. This was the way that Lotus Blossom's little brother received his name. When he was about four weeks old he was again carried to the temple by his father and nurse. The Japanese believe in one great power, or god, but under him there are many others; as, a god of flowers, a god of art, and so forth. This time he was put under the care of his special god, who was then expected to protect him for the rest of his life.

All this time Toyo's head was kept perfectly smooth. In fact, his first visit to the barber was very important, for all his hair was shaved off then except a little fringe at the back and sides. When he was four months old another important ceremony was held. Toyo left off baby clothes and was given his first solid food. That was rice, of course, which he would continue to eat at every meal for the rest of his life.

Toyo and Lotus Blossom are always happy together. His sister was the first one to help Toyo squat on his little heels. Japanese babies never creep. The little brother had no baby-carriage or cradle, but he never missed them. He was always such a happy little fellow; never perched up in a high-chair

with his body fastened in by a wooden tray, but always moving around, sometimes on the floor, sometimes fastened on mamma's or nurse's back, again on the older children's backs, when Lotus Blossom was out playing in the garden with them. When he got tired he would simply go to sleep, while the children would keep on with their play. But when he woke up, he would look about with a dear little smile, as much as to say: "I'm all right, thank you, don't fret about me."

It was a most important time when he cut the first tooth, and not only that, but the second and the third—in fact, every tooth in turn had its arrival celebrated. A poem about each one was written by his loving papa, and a little festival was held in the home. Such happy, childlike people are the Japanese! They are ready to enjoy everything. Even the funerals are cheerful, and have nothing sad and dreary about them. Why should they, when the people believe that they always will live, and that they will come back to earth again to enjoy the beautiful fields and flowers and sunshine in new bodies?

Almost the first words that Toyo learned to speak were, "Thank you," and "If you please." Don't think for a moment

that he ever did such a rude thing in his life as to answer "no" or "yes" without some very polite expression with it. For instance, if his mamma asked him a question, he would answer with his baby lips, "No, thank you, most admirable mother," or, "If you please, my adorable, honoured parent," at the same time bowing his little body over till his head reached the ground. Why! he and Lotus Blossom are taught to speak respectfully even of the potatoes or the dishes or the table. For example, they say, "the highly respected cup," etc. Isn't it funny? But, after all, isn't it nice, too, to act kindly toward everyone and everything in the world?

If her little brother should step on Lotus Blossom's doll and break its arm, what would she do? Give him a slap and say, "Oh, you bad, bad boy?" By no means. A slap is unknown in her land. The little woman would not even let herself look cross or unhappy, while Toyo would spend five minutes in telling her how unutterably sad and broken-hearted he was made by his cruel, ungentlemanly carelessness. And then, to make them forget all about it, mamma would bring a new doll from the cupboard.

But perhaps Lotus Blossom is tired of playthings, so she and Toyo run out in the garden to have a frolic with their

pets. They have new ones nearly every day, for they are fond of every creature that is alive. Today they are going to hunt for some big beetles, as Toyo has planned a little carriage which he will make out of paper, with pasteboard wheels and reins of silk thread for the paper doll. The beetles will be harnessed, and the children will train them to draw the carriage. Jolly fun! The whole afternoon is spent in finding some black beauties and playing with them.

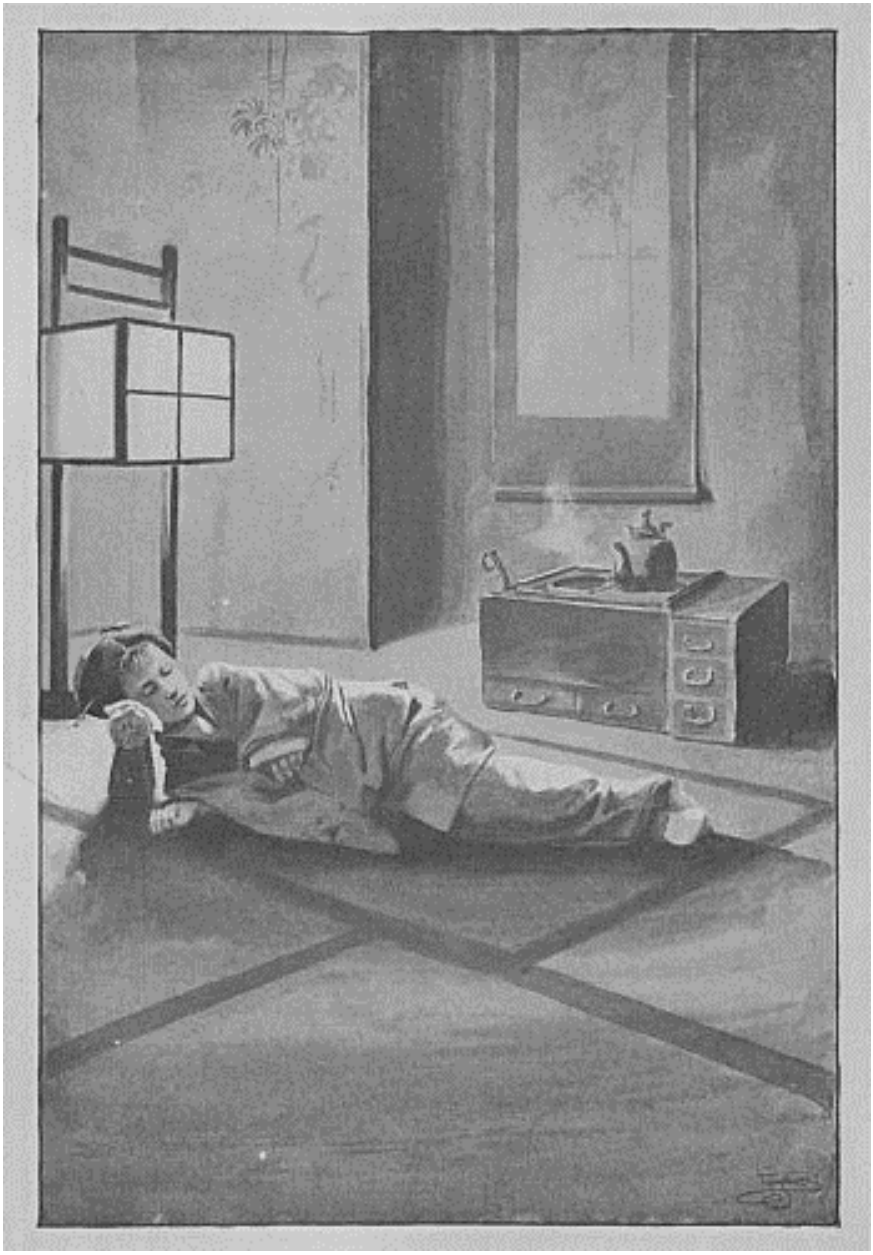
Another day the children will catch some grasshoppers and tame them. Toyo will make a pretty paper cage to hold them, while both he and Lotus Blossom will be very careful to feed them regularly on the dainties they like best. When night comes the turtles must be looked after and fed, for Toyo has some beauties. He likes to fasten a string through the shell and take them walking, just as his American cousins do, but he would not willingly torture them.

Lotus Blossom has a globe full of gold-fish different from any you have ever seen. Their tails are fan-shaped, and are as long as their bodies. During the long summer days the globe of fish is set out on the broad balcony, and many children stop to watch them as they pass. Toyo loves his little dog more than all his other pets. He is the dearest little

fellow, and wishes to follow his young master wherever he goes. He looks somewhat like a spaniel, except that he is white. His nose is turned up at the end, so that he looks all the time as if he would say, "Humph! I am very wise. You poor people don't know much." And he looks all this in such a way as to make you wish to laugh. Toyo's mamma has made a big scarlet ruff for the dog's neck, and it makes him feel very fine, I dare say. His master has fastened a wooden label on his collar to tell where he belongs.

I know you will be disappointed when you learn that Lotus Blossom's dear little kitten cannot play with her tail. No fun for her, poor kitty, you are thinking. But why is it? Because she *has* no tail, or at least only the stub of one. So of course she is quite calm and solemn—that is, for a kitten. But then she lives in Japan, and so she ought to be more dignified than kittens of other lands. Don't you think so?

We must leave all these pets now and go to church, or rather to the temple, with Toyo, Lotus Blossom, and their parents. There is no set day for worship, for there is no such thing as Sunday in Japan. The temples are always open, and the children are fond of going to them to offer prayers, and also to have a good time. As they near the temple they see



“She is soon sound asleep."

stands of sweetmeats and good things of all kinds. The way is lined on both sides with these stands. Great numbers of people, rich and poor, high and low, are coming and going. Pigeons are flying in and out of the sacred building, and no one harms them. Toyo stops and buys a yen's worth of corn and scatters it for the birds to eat. They flock around him without fear. They are so tame that the children could catch them with no difficulty. But Lotus Blossom and Toyo pass on to the entrance, and, bowing low, take off their clogs.

The inside of the building is almost bare. There are no statues of gods or goddesses, no ornaments—nothing except an altar with some queer sticks standing upon it. Festoons of white paper hang from these wands, or "gohei," as the Japanese call them. A priest stands behind the altar, and a large cloth is spread out on the floor in front of it. Lotus Blossom and Toyo clap their hands. This is to call the attention of the gods. Then they say a little prayer and throw some money upon the cloth. If they are very good and devout children, perhaps the gods will descend into the temple. The queer papers on the wands are to be the clothing of these great beings. No images are needed, you see, only plenty of paper. Rather hard to understand this,

and yet all that is necessary for Toyo and Lotus Blossom is to worship their ancestors properly, and believe that the great spirits are working everywhere in nature. This is the reason they are taught to obey their parents at all times, and never to harm anything living. The children are also taught to believe that the Mikado, the Emperor of Japan, is descended from god-kings who once ruled over the country. This is why such great honour is paid him wherever he goes. Until a few years ago the people thought him so sacred that they ought not to look at him, so he was obliged to stay inside his beautiful palace like a prisoner. But times have changed, and his subjects have a little more common sense nowadays.

After our little cousins have said their prayers and given their money, they go to a dance-hall in another part of the temple. You know by this time that the Japanese like to enjoy themselves. But isn't it a strange idea to have dancing, praying, and feasting in the same place? The dancers are dressed like butterflies. They have beautiful red and gold wings. They are very graceful, but the music is unpleasant to us. Toyo thinks it is fine, and wishes he could play as well.

Now for a good dinner in the restaurant in the next hall,

for the boy's father has promised to treat his family to all the dainties of the season—candied lotus-leaves, and everything they like best. It is a happy day, and the children wish they could go to the temple oftener.

One morning not long after this, poor little Lotus Blossom woke up with a bad pain in her stomach. Her face and hands were hot. She was not able to get up and go to school. Mamma felt very sad, and at once sent to ask the priest for something to make her little daughter well. You say at once, "Is the priest in Japan a doctor? And will he prepare medicine marked in some such way as this: 'One teaspoonful to be taken each hour?'" No, indeed. Lotus Blossom's mamma received from her queer physician two "moxas," with orders that one of them should be placed on the back of the sick child, and the other on her foot. The direction of the priest was followed, although it made Lotus Blossom very unhappy. I think you would not like it, if you were in her place, for a moxa makes a burn far worse than a mustard plaster does. You know the punk that you use on the Fourth of July to light your firecrackers and fireworks? The moxas are made of a certain kind of pith, and burn slowly just as the punk does. The Japanese believe in the use

of moxas for many things—bad children, sickness, and I can't tell you what else. The impolite boy I told you about, at the beginning of the story, was burned with a moxa, in such a way that he never forgot himself again. As for fevers, why, the moxa is certain to drive away the bad spirits that cause them.

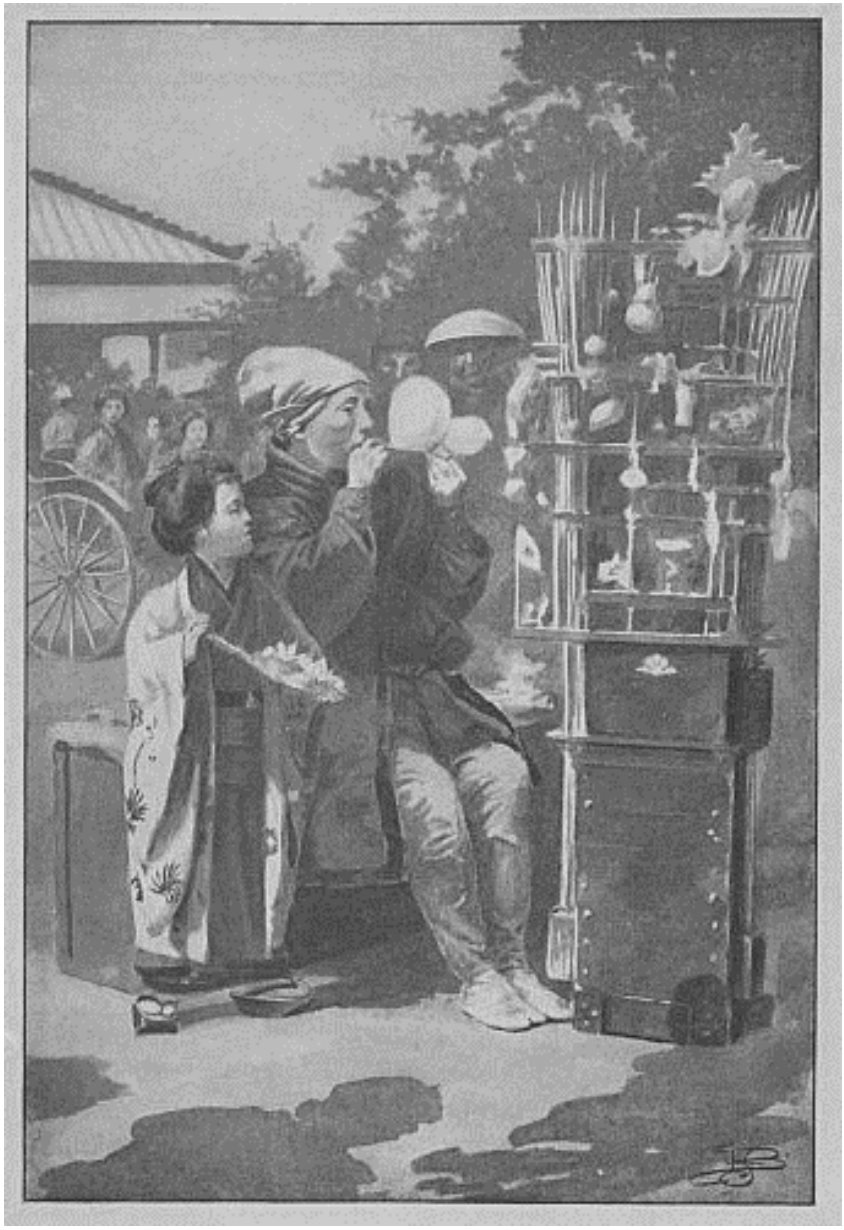
No doubt you wonder at it, as I do myself, but Lotus Blossom got well enough in two or three days to sit up and be dressed. But she did not care for her dolls or games; she felt tired all the time. Her loving and most honoured father said a change of air would do her good. It would be well for her to spend some days at the house of an aunt who lived several miles out in the country. Toyo was allowed to go, too. How were they to get there? In steam or electric cars? What can you be thinking of to ask such questions? Two jinrikishas were brought to the door; one was for Lotus Blossom and one for her brother. Strong men were hired to draw them. I wonder if you ever saw anything like a jin-riki-sha, or man-power-carriage, for that is what the word means. They are very comfortable, much like baby-carriages, and are lined with soft cushions. The men look strong and kind. They are nearly naked, so that they can run easily and

rapidly.

It will take only an hour to carry the children to their aunt's, if they do not stop on the way. But there are so many things to see to-day that Lotus Blossom forgets all about her sickness and burns, and wants her runners to stop every few minutes to rest. The children spend at least five minutes bidding their mother a proper good-bye. Then, at the word, off they go, down "Dog" Street into "Turtle" Street. There are no sidewalks, but they are not needed, for horses and wagons are rarely seen.

But look! Here is a man standing in the middle of the street, dancing and singing a funny song. The sober Japanese who are passing stop and laugh. The man has a little stand by his side, and on this stand are a dish of wheat-gluten and a bamboo reed. As Lotus Blossom and Toyo draw near, the man ends his song and calls out, "Now who wants me to blow him a candy dog? Or shall it be a monkey eating a nut? You, my most honoured little lady, want one surely."

This he said to Lotus Blossom, who was sitting up straight in the jinrikisha, full of interest. She thought a moment or two, and then asked for a stork with wings spread out to fly. She had hardly stopped speaking before the man seized a



The Candy Man.

bamboo reed, dipped it in the sticky paste, and blowing now this way, now that, fashioned the graceful bird. Pinching it here and there to make it more perfect, he put on some touches of colour from a box of paints. It was wonderfully done. Lotus Blossom gave him five yen for the candy toy, the runners took hold of the jinrikisha, and away the children went on their journey.

They came soon to another crowd of boys and girls gathered about a batter-cake man. He had a little stand on which a pan of charcoal was burning. A large griddle rested over the coal, and a tiny little urchin was standing on his tiptoes and baking cakes. The man cut them out for him in pretty shapes. See the pleasure on the youngster's face! All this fun for ten yen, or one cent. The other children watch him in envy. As Toyo and Lotus Blossom draw near, the jinrikisha men make a place for them in the crowd, and Toyo jumps out to get a lunch. He has the next turn, and so he asks the pleasant-faced man to cut his batter-cakes in the shape of turtles. Lotus Blossom does not wish any, but lies back in her easy carriage under her pretty sunshade, and watches Toyo cook and eat them. Umbrellas and sunshades are of the same material in Japan. They are made of several

layers of tough, strong paper, and will last a long time. When they are worn out, they are thrown away just as the paper handkerchiefs are, and new ones are bought for a very small sum of money. In stormy weather Lotus Blossom and Toyo not only carry umbrellas, but wear long capes of oiled paper to keep off the rain, while very poor people have coats made of grasses. Funny looking things these are! If you should see a man with one of them over his shoulders, and a queer mushroom-shaped hat on his head, you would feel like laughing, I know—that is, if you had not already acquired some of the politeness of the Japanese themselves.

But let us return to Turtle Street and find out what is now attracting the attentions of our little cousins. Would you believe it? They can't be in very much of a hurry to get to aunty's, for they have stopped again. You would also stop if you saw what they do. A travelling street show is entertaining numbers of men, women, and children. Babies are on the backs of some of them, laughing and crowing, too. See that clever fellow in the middle. He is making butterflies of coloured paper and blowing them up into the air. He keeps them flying about, now in one direction, now in another, by waving his fan. It seems as though they must be alive, he

does this so cleverly. That yellow butterfly is made to alight on a baby's hand. Hear the little fellow crow with delight. Another flies over Lotus Blossom's jinrikisha, and then, by the dexterous waving of the showman's fan, goes off in another direction before she can catch it.

After the butterfly show another man performs some wonderful tricks with a ladder. He places the ladder upright on the ground without any support; he climbs it, rung by rung, keeping its balance all the time. Finally he reaches the very top and stands on one foot, bowing and gracefully waving a fan. There is not time to tell you all the wonderful feats of the Japanese. Toyo and Lotus Blossom are delighted, although they have seen performances like these many times before.

But they must really hasten on their journey, for aunty will be expecting them, and it will soon be sunset. In a few moments they leave the city behind and are out in the beautiful country. They pass tea plantations. The glossy green leaves are almost ready to pick. See the man in that field, running wildly about, making hideous noises. Is he crazy? Our little cousins do not seem disturbed as they pass by, for he is only a hired scarecrow. You remember that the



Aunt Ocho's Garden.

people in Japan think it wrong to kill any living thing. But there are great numbers of birds in the country which are likely to eat the crops and do much damage. So men are hired to act as scarecrows and make noises to frighten the birds away.

At last Uncle Oto's rice plantation is reached. The children draw up in front of a large, low house with wide verandas. It is more beautiful than their own home. The roof is magnificent with carvings, and must have cost a great deal of money. It is the pride of Aunt Ocho. The gardens contain the choicest plants and trees, besides a pond and an artificial waterfall. Lotus Blossom and Toyo are sure of a good time and much fun. They will have a great deal to tell their mamma when they return to their home.

Time passes by. The children have been back in their own home a long time. They are now looking forward to New Year's day. Everything is excitement about the house. Mamma has hired an extra servant to help clean the house from right to left; not from top to bottom, as we say, for there are no stairways or rooms overhead. Everything is on one floor, remember. The screens are carefully wiped, the

mats receive an extra shaking, and then mamma brings out her choicest vase from the storehouse and places it on a beautiful, ebony stand in the place of honour. The Japanese are not at all like us. They are so simple in their tastes, and love beautiful things so much, that they have only one or two pieces, at the most, on view at a time. They think they can enjoy them more fully in this way.

The most honoured father orders some workmen to come and set up some tall pine branches in front of the gateway. One is of black, the other of red pine, and tall bamboo reeds are placed beside them. A grass rope is stretched from one reed to the other, and some funny strips of white paper are hung on it. You saw many of these papers at the temple where the children worship. This work is very important to the childlike people. They think that the rope, with papers fastened to it, will keep away all the evil spirits that are ever ready to spoil the happiness of human beings. They are demons, who take the shape of foxes, badgers, and wolves, and are frightful enough to the imagination of Lotus Blossom and her brother. Of course, the children are glad that the evil spirits are to be surely kept away.

Other things are hung on the rope for good luck. There

is a piece of charcoal and some seaweed, and a "lucky bag" filled with chestnuts, a bit of herring and some dried fruit. All these things will make the gods understand they are not forgotten.

The day before New Year's some men come to the house with an oven and proceed to make the grand New Year's cake. It must not be eaten, however, until the 11th of January. The children stand around and watch the men pound the sticky rice-paste with a heavy mallet. At last it is smooth enough, and then it is cut into rounds and built up into a pyramid. I hear you say, "Well, I'd rather have my mother's plum-cake, any time." But not so with Lotus Blossom and Toyo. They watch their mother anxiously as she places it with great care on a lacquered stand, to remain until the time comes to eat it.

Now they are allowed to put on their clogs and go to buy the "harvest ship," which they will hang up in the house instead of the holly and evergreens you like to see at Christmas time. The Japanese believe that on New Year's eve a wonderful ship comes sailing into port. Of course, it is sent by the gods. No one has ever really seen it. That does not matter; there are pictures of it, nevertheless, and no New

Year's decorations are complete without a miniature harvest ship. The shops are as full of them as our markets are of evergreen trees at Christmas time. They are made of grasses and trimmed with gaily coloured papers. The selection of this ship is a very exciting event, not only for Lotus Blossom and Toyo, but also for their mother. How anxiously they look at one after another as the shopkeeper shows them. Finally one is chosen that suits the children's mother as to price and beauty. But the shopping is by no means ended, for presents must be bought for friends and playmates.

And now, children of America, please don't get envious of all the pretty things which your cousins can buy for a few pennies. Lotus Blossom and Toyo have been saving money for a long time. Each has a number of square copper coins strung on a string. They are not like our pennies, for they are larger and thinner, and each one has a square hole in the centre. Ten of these are equal in value to one of our cents, and there are many pretty things that Japanese children can buy for a yen, as this piece of money is called. Such pretty picture-books made of the lovely Japanese paper! Dolls that are dressed in the same fashion as the two children, only the dresses are of paper; pictures of the

Japanese gods and goddesses; games and tops and candies. At length the shopping is over and the last yen has been spent. The family are glad to go home and take a hot bath and nap, for they are very tired.

On New Year's morning Lotus Blossom and her brother receive their own presents, and although they do not shout and jump up and down as you do when you are very happy, they are much pleased. Toyo has a drum, some lovely books and a new game of battledore and shuttlecock, which is the game of all games to be played at New Year's. The shuttlecock is a large gilded seed with feathers stuck all around it; the battledore is a bat, flat on one side to strike with, while the other side has a raised figure of a beautiful dancing-girl. Lotus Blossom has, among other things, a doll which her mother has dressed in flowered silk, and a set of lacquered drawers in which to keep her ornaments. But the greatest surprise to the children is a white rabbit. These little creatures are the dearest of all pets in Japan, because they are so rare. It cost the loving father several dollars, but he is more than repaid by his children's delight.

Lotus Blossom's mamma has spent many weeks in embroidering gowns for each member of the family. They

are of silk, and are worn for the first time on New Year's day. This good mamma has had her hair arranged for the grand occasion with the greatest of care. You would hardly believe it, but the hair-dresser spent hours upon it, rolling it up in wonderful shapes, sticking it in place with a kind of paste, and fastening many ornaments in it. It was done two days ago, and you may be sure that the Japanese lady placed her head very carefully on the pillow every night so that nothing should disarrange it. She has had her teeth blackened afresh for the greatest holiday of the year, while both she and her little daughter paint their necks and faces white and their cheeks red before their toilets are finished.

I believe I have not yet told you that the pretty Japanese women spoil their good looks as soon as they are married by colouring their teeth black! Isn't it a shame? I'm glad we don't have this custom in our country, aren't you?

And now the New Year's calls begin. What a bowing and bending! Men, women, and children are all calling and lavishing many-worded compliments on each other. Refreshments are passed, and then there is a "show" to amuse everybody. Some men have been hired to come to the house. They dance and sing many songs. After this comes

the funny part of the entertainment. One man puts on a mask and makes believe he is an animal. He rolls around on the floor at the ladies' feet, makes queer noises, and everybody laughs and is delighted. The big folks like it as much as the children. Perhaps the funny man will now put on two masks and represent different things at the same time—on one side he will look like a dancing-girl, while on the other he will appear as some strange beast. He will change about rapidly, and keep the company watching him with excited interest.

Night comes to very tired and happy people, but it does not end the fun by any means. Lotus Blossom's papa will not do any business for a week at least, and there will be new pleasures each day that he is at home with his wife and children. After the festival is over, the family settle down to their daily work until the coming of another holiday.

The children go to school again, but that does not trouble them. They love their teacher and try to please him. The school is closed at noon. Lotus Blossom and Toyo start out every morning with little satchels over their backs. In these they carry their books, a cake of India ink, and a paint-brush. When they arrive at their schoolroom, they are met

by a quiet, kindly man with big glasses over his eyes. The children instantly bow down to the ground before him, for he is their teacher. Of course the low bow is to show great respect. Japanese children are taught to treat their instructors, as well as their parents, with honour and regard.

And now they enter the schoolroom. But what a schoolroom! No desks, no platform, no seats! The teacher sits down upon a mat with a small lacquered stand beside him. The children squat on the floor around him and begin to study. What queer letters in the books! You would not be able to read one word. Lotus Blossom and Toyo have already learned their alphabets. You smile, perhaps, and think, "Hm! that isn't much." Well, just wait till I tell you there are forty-seven different characters in one alphabet, while in another there are several times as many. The easy alphabet is the only one that girls must know, while boys learn both. But Lotus Blossom is a very bright child, so she studies the more difficult characters as well.

Japanese books are printed very differently from ours. The lines run up and down the page, and keep the eyes of the reader busily moving. The children don't have many examples to perform, for the Japanese do not consider

arithmetic so important as Americans do. Do you sigh now, and wish you could get your education in that far-away land where long division is not a daily trial? But wait till I tell you about the writing, or rather painting, lessons. You will certainly be envious. When the schoolmaster gives the signal, the children take the brushes and the cakes of India ink from their satchels. They mix a little of the ink with water, and then are ready to paint their words on the beautiful paper made in their country. Many people think that the Japanese are such fine artists because their hands are trained to use the brush from the time they are babies.

It would make you laugh if I should tell you how the teacher directs the children to write letters to their friends. They must begin by writing something very poetical about the weather. They must then compose some very flowery compliments to the friend who is addressed; a sheet or two, at least, must be used in this way before they are allowed to tell the news, etc. But throughout the letter, as in fact in all conversations, Lotus Blossom and Toyo are taught to speak of themselves as very mean and humble creatures.

Their kind school-teacher ends the morning lessons with proverbs. You know what these are, of course, but the ones

which our Japanese cousins learn are especially about duty to their parents, and kindness to all living creatures. It would be a great sin for Toyo to tease the cat or kill a fly. His parents would be shocked beyond expression.

"How about punishment in the Japanese school?" I hear a little boy ask. My dear child, it is hardly ever needed, but when it does come, it is not being kept after school; it is not a whipping. The child is burned! The teacher takes a moxa, which I told you is a kind of pith, and sticks it on the naughty child's hand. He then sets the moxa on fire to burn slowly. It is a long, sad punishment for anyone who is so bad as to deserve it. It does not need to be given every day. Lotus Blossom and Toyo, as well as their little schoolmates, are very attentive to their work, and try their hardest to please the teacher.

When school is done, what will the children do throughout the long afternoon? Lotus Blossom must work a certain time in embroidery, and take a short lesson with her mamma in arranging flowers. Why, there are whole books on this subject in Japan. The people are very fond of flowers, and study how to arrange them in the most graceful manner. They would never think of bunching many together without



A lesson in arranging flowers.

their leaves in an ugly bouquet, nor would they dream of cruelly twisting wires around their poor little stems. In Japan it is thought an art to know how to place one spray in a vase in such a way as to show all its beauty.

While his sister is doing her work, Toyo is practising on his koto. This is a musical instrument of which the Japanese are very fond. It looks much like a harp. Toyo strikes the strings with pieces of ivory fastened on his finger-tips. Listen! Do you call those sounds music? It is enough to set one's teeth on edge. Yet Toyo's music-teacher says that he is doing finely and shows great talent. If that is so, I fear we would not care to go to many concerts in Japan, for the Japanese idea of music is very different from ours.

Hurrah! The children are now ready for play, and there are so many nice things to do. If it is winter and there is snow on the ground, Lotus Blossom and Toyo gather together with their little friends to make a snow man. Not an Irish gentleman with a pipe in his mouth, such as you like to build, but a figure of Daruma, who was a disciple of Buddha. It is easy to make this, for it is believed that Daruma lost his legs from sitting too long in one position. So the snow man has no legs. When it is made, the children knock

it down with snow-balls, just as you do.

Spring comes, and with it, tops, and kites, and stilts. The stilts are very high, and Toyo puts his toes through parts of the wooden lifts. He and the other boys run races and even play games on stilts, and think it great fun. But the kites! Yours are just babies beside them. Some of them are so large that it takes two men to sail them. In fact, grown-up people, in Japan, seem as fond of kite-flying as the children. Many of these toys have neither tails nor bobs. You wonder how they manage to get up in the air at all, till you see that the strings are pulled in such a way as to raise them. They are of all shapes. The boys sometimes play a game with their kites. They dip the strings in glue and afterward in powdered glass; then they run with the kites and try to cross each other's strings and cut them. The boy who succeeds wins the other's kite. Toyo lost his the other day, and what do you think he did? Pout, or exclaim, as you sometimes do, "I don't care, that isn't fair?" By no means! He made three beautiful bows and gave up his kite with a polite smile. Maybe he did not feel any happier about it than you would, for it was a fine new one, but he wouldn't show his grief, at any rate.

Toyo sometimes wrestles with the other boys, but they are

not rough and noisy about it. They wrestle gently, if you can imagine such a thing. They have often seen the trained wrestlers at the shows; such big, fat men. They must weigh at least three hundred pounds. The fat fairly hangs upon them. The Japanese people are generally slim and rather small, but if a man is going to train himself to be a wrestler, he eats everything that will help to make him fat. I should think they could not get hurt, for they look as though they were cushioned in fat.

The boys of Japan have marbles and tops, just as you do; in fact, nearly all the games which you like best were played by your far-away cousins long before there was a white child on this great continent of ours. "Blind man's buff," "Hide the thimble," and "Puss in the corner," are great favourites with the Japanese. Instead of hiding the thimble, however, they use a slipper, and instead of puss in the corner, they play that it is the devil. You must not forgot that the Japanese believe there are many devils, or bad spirits, as well as good ones who are ready to help. They even think of them in their games.

How many holidays have we in a whole year? Stop and count. Not a great number, we must admit. Lotus Blossom

and Toyo have so many that they can count on their fingers the number of days between any two of them. Next best to New Year's, our little girl cousin likes the Feast of Dolls. It comes on the third day of the third month. At that time the stores are filled with dolls—big dolls, little dolls, dolls dressed like princesses with flounced silk gowns, dolls made up as servants, as dancing-girls, and dolls the very image of the Mikado, the ruler of Japan—nothing but dolls and dolls' furniture. When the great day arrives, Lotus Blossom's mamma makes a throne in the house. She brings out the two dolls that she herself received when she was born, besides those of her mother and grandmother and great-grandmother! They have been carefully packed away in soft papers in the family storehouse. What a sight they are, with all the new ones that have been bought for Lotus Blossom. The Mikado doll is first placed on his throne, surrounded by his court, and then the soldiers and dancers and working people are made to stand at either side. They are dressed in the proper clothing that belongs to their position. But this grand array is not all. There are all kinds of doll's furniture, too—little tables only four inches high, with dolls' tea-sets, the tiniest, prettiest china dishes. There are the wadded silk

quilts for the dolls to sleep on, and wooden pillows on which the doll-heads can rest. Yes, there are dolls' fans, and even dolls' games.

On this great occasion there is a dinner-party for the whole family of dolls. Lotus Blossom and her little friends, as well as her father and mother, are quite busy serving their guests with rice, fish, soup, and all kinds of sweet dainties. Somehow or other, all these nice things are eaten. What wonderful dolls they have in Japan, don't they?

Toyo enjoys the day as well as Lotus Blossom, but still he is looking forward to the fifth of May. That will be his favourite time of all the year. By that time the girls' dolls will be put away, and the stores will be filled with boys' playthings—soldiers, tents, armour, etc. Toyo's father will place a tall bamboo pole in front of the house, and hang an immense paper fish on the top of it. The fish's mouth will be wide open, so that the air will fill his big body. At some of the other houses there will be a banner instead of a fish. There are figures of great warriors who fought in olden times on these banners.

When Toyo was a baby his father bought him a banner stand. It has been kept very carefully, and is now put in the

place where the doll's throne stood a little while ago. The banners of great generals are hung up, and figures of soldiers are placed on the stand. You see Toyo has dolls as well as his sister. Everything is done to remind boys of war at this Festival of Banners. They have processions in the streets. They play a game in which they form armies against each other. Every boy carries a flag, and those of one company try to seize the flags of the boys in the other. Of course the side wins which first succeeds in gaining the flags of the other.

A festival which everybody loves is the Feast of Lanterns. It is in the summer time, and the children are dressed in their gayest clothes. They form processions and march through the streets singing with all their might. Every child carries a large paper lantern and keeps it swinging all the time. It is such a pretty sight in the evening light—the bright dresses, the graceful figures, the gorgeous lanterns. Oh, Japan is the land of happy children, young and old.

One pleasant summer afternoon, as Lotus Blossom and Toyo were playing on their veranda, they noticed some one stopping at the gateway and then coming up the walk to the house. It was the man-servant who worked at the home of a friend of theirs, whose father was very rich. Toyo whispered,

"Oh, Lotus Blossom, I believe he's bringing us an invitation to Chrysanthemum's party. You know she is going to have one on her birthday." Sure enough, the man came up to the children, and, making a low bow, presented them with two daintily folded papers and then departed. They hastened to open them, and found, with delight, that they were really and truly asked to their friend's party. It was to be at three o'clock in the afternoon of the following Thursday. Lotus Blossom ran to her mother, just as her American cousins might do, and cried, "Oh, mamma, my precious, honourable mother, what shall I wear? See this; do look at my invitation." It was a rare thing indeed to see the child so excited. Her mother smiled, and answered, "My dear little pearl of a Lotus Blossom, I have almost finished embroidering your new silk garment. It shall be finished, and you shall have a new yellow crape kerchief to fold about your throat. A barber shall arrange your long hair about your head; and I will buy you white silk sandals to be tied with ribbons. Even though your friend is more wealthy than ourselves, you shall not disgrace your honoured father. Toyo, too, must have a new garment."

All was made ready, and Thursday came at last. The

children were sent to the party in jinrikishas, so that they should not get dusty. They looked very pretty. Their little hostess and her mamma received the guests with smiles and with many long phrases of politeness. Lacquered trays were brought in and placed in front of each one. On these were beautiful china cups with no handles. What do you think was served in them? Don't get up your hopes now and say "lemonade," or "sherbet," for you will surely be disappointed. It was tea—simply tea, without milk or sugar. The children drank it in honour of their hostess and her mamma. But something better still was to come. The tea was removed, and fresh trays, covered with dainty pink papers, were brought in. A cake made of red beans lay on the middle of each tray, and around it were placed sugar maple leaves coloured red and green. They looked pretty enough to keep, but the little guests ate them, leaves and all. After these came other cakes and sweetmeats, enough to delight the heart of everyone.

Now for games! Proverbs come first of all. It is played very much like the American game of "Authors," and is a great favourite with both old and young in Japan. Next comes blind man's buff, but you would hardly know the game, it is

played so much more quietly and slowly than you are in the habit of playing it.

Wine-cakes, dainties, and tea are served next, and then the best part of the fun arrives. The screens are moved aside, and the children behold a little stage. They sit, or rather squat, down on the mats about the room while some hired performers represent one of their loved fairy stories in a play. The actresses have lovely gowns, and are very graceful. It is a very enjoyable occasion.

The time to leave comes all too soon. The jinrikisha men arrive, and after assuring their hostess that they never had had so lovely a time before, Lotus Blossom and Toyo make two deep bows and return home very happy. I believe you would not object to a party like that yourself, would you?

Among all the joyous festivals of the year, I must not forget to tell you of the plum-viewing. The winter season is very short in Japan, and the houses are not built to keep out the cold very well, as you must have already perceived. When the spring days arrive and the blossoms begin to appear, the child people are very happy. If they are happy, of course they must show it. How can they do it so well as by having out-door picnics in the plum orchards? The children watch for

the great day's arrival when the flowers will be in full bloom. They save up their yen to spend, and plan for a great good time. No school on that day! No practising on the koto! No embroidery for Lotus Blossom! Every one is up early on the bright, clear morning, and baskets are filled with the nice luncheon mamma has prepared. There is actually an air of excitement in the quiet Japanese household. The good father leads the family procession as they start out on their walk to the picnic grounds. It is about two miles from their home. Other families join them as they walk along. The throng of gaily dressed and happy people grows larger every moment. As they near the plum-orchard they find the road lined with stands, which have been put up for the day. It seems as though everything one could desire were on sale: cakes, tea, fruit, fans, sweets of all kinds, toys, etc. No wonder Lotus Blossom and Toyo wanted to save up their money. But the orchard! Was there ever a lovelier sight? Hundreds of trees loaded with fragrant pink blossoms!

The people write poems about them, and pin them on the branches, to show how much they appreciate the beautiful sight which Nature has given them. Tea-drinking, story-telling, and the entertainments of travelling showmen

take up the day. Sunset bids them leave the beautiful scene and go back to home and work.

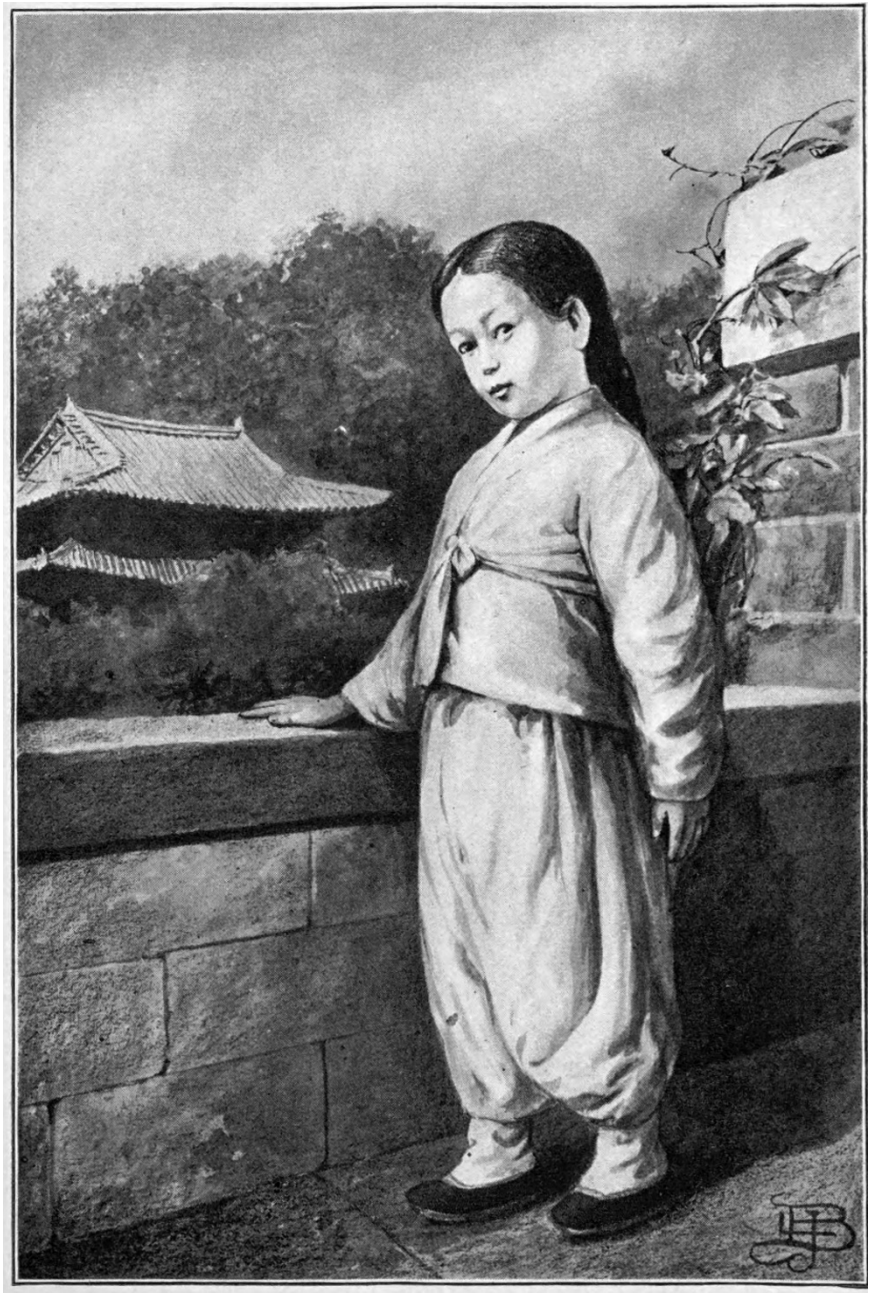
And now, children, we must bid these dear cousins good-bye for a little while. Although they worship in strange ways, and read their books upside down, besides doing many other things in a manner that seems strange to us, yet we can learn much from their simple, childlike natures. And, after all, isn't one reason why we live in this big world and are so different one from another, that we may learn from each other?

THE END.

Our Little Korean Cousin

H. Lee M. Pike

Illustrated by L.J. Bridgman



Yung Pak

Preface

Until very recently little has been known of the strange land in which the subject of this tale lives. Recent events have done much to introduce Korea and its people to the world at large. For this reason the story of Yung Pak's youthful days may be the more interesting to his Western cousins.

These are stirring times in Korea, and it may safely be prophesied that the little Koreans of the present day will occupy a larger place in the world's history than have their fathers and grandfathers. Their bright eyes are now turned toward the light, and, under the uplifting influences of education and civilization, the old superstitions and antique customs are bound to give way.

Some famous Americans and Englishmen have had no small part in letting in the light upon this dark nation, and in years to come, when Korea shall have attained to the full stature of national strength, the names of Rodgers, Blake,

Kimberly, and many others will be held in high esteem by the people of that country.

This little volume gives just a glimpse into the mode of life, the habits and customs, the traditions and superstitions, of the Koreans. If it awakens an interest in the minds of its young readers, and inspires them with a desire for further knowledge of their cousins in this far Eastern land, its purpose will be well served.

CHAPTER I

Some Queer Things

Yung Pak was the very queer name of a queer little boy who lived in a queer house in a queer city. This boy was peculiar in his looks, his talk was in a strange tongue, his clothes were odd in colour and fit, his shoes were unlike ours, and everything about him would seem to you very unusual in appearance. But the most wonderful thing of all was that he did not think he was a bit queer, and if he should see one of you in your home, or at school, or at play, he would open wide his slant eyes with wonder at your peculiar ways and dress. The name of the country in which this little boy lived is Korea.

One thing about Yung Pak, though, was just like little boys everywhere. When he first came to his home in the Korean city, a little bit of a baby, his father and mother were very, very glad to see him. Your father and mother gave you no warmer welcome than the parents of this little Korean

baby gave to him.

Perhaps Yung Pak's father did not say much, but any one could have seen by his face that he was tremendously pleased. He was a very dignified man, and his manner was nearly always calm, no matter how stirred up he might have felt in his mind. This was one of the rare occasions when his face expanded into a smile, and he immediately made a generous offering of rice to the household tablets.

All Koreans pay great honour to their dead parents, and tablets to their memory are placed in some room set apart for the purpose. Before these tablets sacrifices are offered. Yung Pak's father would have been almost overwhelmed with terror at thought of having no one to worship his memory and present offerings before his tablet.

It is to be feared that if, instead of Yung Pak, a little daughter had come to this Korean house, the father and the mother would not have been so pleased. For, strange as it may seem to you who live in homes where little daughters and little sisters are petted and loved above all the rest of the family, in Korea little girls do not receive a warm welcome, though the mothers will cherish and fondle them – as much from pity as from love. The mothers know better than

anyone else how hard a way the little girl will have to travel through life. But it is Yung Pak we want to tell you about.

As his father was a wealthy man, all the comforts and luxuries which could be given to a Korean baby were showered on this tiny boy.

One of the queer things, though, was that he had no little cradle in which he might be rocked to sleep. And you know that all babies, especially little babies, sleep a great deal. So how do you suppose Yung Pak's mother used to put him to sleep in this land where cradles were unknown? She put him on the bed and patted him lightly on the stomach. This she called to-tak, to-tak.

As Yung Pak grew older he was given many toys, among them rattles, drums, flags, and dolls, just as you had them. Some of the toys, though, were very peculiar ones – different from anything you ever saw. He had little tasselled umbrellas, just like the big one his father used when he walked out in the sun. He also had little fringed hats and toy chariots with fancy wheels. One of Yung Pak's favourite toys was a wooden jumping-jack with a pasteboard tongue. By pulling a string the tongue was drawn in and a trumpet carried up to the mouth.

Another favourite toy was a tiger on wheels. Tiger-hunting, by the way, was considered great sport by Yung Pak's father. It was a very dangerous one, too, and sometimes lives were sacrificed in his efforts to capture or to kill this fierce wild beast. Sometimes the animal was caught in a trap which was nothing less than a hut of logs with a single entrance. In the roof of the hut heavy beams would be placed on a forked stick. The bait – a young lamb or kid – would be tied beneath the beams. The moment the bait was touched, down would come the heavy timber – *smash* – on the tiger's head.

But Yung Pak's tiger was ferocious only in looks. It was made of paper pulp and painted with bright stripes. This harmless image of a fierce beast Yung Pak would pull about the floor with a string by the hour.

All his pets were not of wood and paper. Real live animals he had. Puppies and kittens, of course. His greatest pet, though, was a monkey. What little boy ever saw a monkey that he didn't want for his own? So when Yung Pak's father made him a present of a monkey – a real monkey, alive – he just danced with glee.

This monkey was not a very large one – not over a foot

high – but he could cut capers and play tricks equal to any monkey you ever saw travelling with an organ-grinder. He was dressed in a scarlet jacket, and he was always with Yung Pak, except sometimes when he would try to plague him by breaking away and running – perhaps to the house-top or to the neighbour's garden. After a little while Yung Pak got used to these "monkey shines," and he knew that his pet would not stay away long after meal-time.

As Yung Pak grew older he was allowed to play with other boys of his own age. A favourite sport was Hunting the Ring. In this game the boys would get together quite a large heap of sand. In this sand one of them would hide a ring, and then the urchins would all get slender sticks and poke around in the pile trying to find the ring. Whoever succeeded in getting the ring on his stick won the game, and carried the prize home as a sign of victory.

Sometimes Yung Pak would be the winner, and then he would march home with great glee and show the trophy to his father.

One of the first things Yung Pak was taught was to be respectful to his father.

Never was he allowed to fail in this duty in the least. This

does not seem strange when we know what a sober, serious, dignified man Yung Pak's father was. It would not do to allow his son to do anything that would upset his dignity, though he loved him very much indeed.

It was far different with the boy's mother. Her little boy soon learned that her wishes counted for very little in the family, and she never ventured to rebuke him, no matter how seriously he might offend her or what naughty thing he might do.

One queer thing about Yung Pak was the way he used to wear his hair. While still very young his head was shaved, except a little round spot on the very crown. Here it was allowed to grow, and as years went by it grew quite long, and was braided in two plaits down his back.

When Yung Pak grew to be a man the long hair was knotted up on top of his head, and for this reason many people call Koreans "Top-knots." But of this arrangement of the hair we shall tell more farther on.

CHAPTER II

Yung Pak's Home

Ki Pak, Yung Pak's father, was one of the king's officials. On this account his home was near the great palace of the king, in the city of Seoul, the capital of the country.

This city did not look much like the ones in which you live. There were no wide streets, no high buildings, no street-cars. Instead, there were narrow, dirty lanes and open gutters. Shopkeepers not only occupied both sides of the crowded streets, but half their wares were exposed in and over the dirty gutters. Grain merchants and vegetable dealers jostled each other in the streets themselves. In and about among them played the boys of the city, not even half-clothed in most cases. There were no parks and playgrounds for them such as you have. Often, too, boys would be seen cantering through the streets, seated sidewise on the bare backs of ponies, caring nothing for passers-by, ponies, or each other – laughing, chatting, eating chestnuts. Other



A Street in Seoul

boys would be carrying on their heads small round tables covered with dishes of rice, pork, cabbage, wine, and other things.

Around the city was a great wall of stone fourteen miles in length. In some places it clung to the edges of the mountains, and then dropped into a deep ravine, again to climb a still higher mountain, perhaps. In one direction it enclosed a forest, in another a barren plain. Great blocks were the stones, that had been in place many, many years. It must have taken hundreds and thousands of men to put them in position, and, though the wall was hundreds of years old, it was still well preserved. It was from twenty-five to forty feet high. The wall was hung from one end of the city to the other with ivy, which looked as if it had been growing in its place centuries before Yung Pak was born.

In the wall were eight gates, and at each one a keeper was stationed at all hours of the day and night. No persons could come in or go out unless their business was known to those who had charge of the passage.

Every evening, at sunset, the gates were closed, and during the night no one was allowed to pass through in either direction.

A curious ceremony attended the closing of these gates. They were never shut till the king had been notified that all was well on the north, on the south, on the east, and on the west. As there were no telegraph lines, another way had to be provided by which messages might be quickly sent. Bonfires upon the surrounding hills were used as signals. By these fires the king was told if all were well in his kingdom, and every evening, as soon as the sun was set, four beacon-fires on a hill within the walls told the news as it was flashed to them from the mountains outside. Then four officers, whose business it was to report to the king the message of the fires, hastened to him, and with great ceremony and much humility announced that all was well. On this the royal band of music would strike up its liveliest airs, and a great bell would toll its evening warning. This bell was the third largest in the world, and for five centuries it had given the signal for opening and closing the gates of Seoul, the chief city of the "Land of the Morning Radiance."

At the stroke of the bell, with a great clang the gates were shut, and strong bars were placed across the inner sides, not to be removed until at early dawn the bell again gave its signal to the keepers.

To little Yung Pak, the loud tones of the bell meant more even than to the sentinels at the gates. He knew that not only was it a signal for the closing of the city gates, but it was also a warning that bedtime was at hand.

The house in which Yung Pak lived was a very fine one, although the grounds were not as spacious as those of many houses in the outskirts of the city. But its walls were of stone, whereas many of the houses of Seoul had walls of paper.

Yes, actually walls of paper!

But this paper was a very tough, fibrous substance, and would resist quite a heavy blow as well as keep out the cold. Its slight cost brought it within the means of the poorer people.

In some parts of Korea the houses were built of stout timbers, the chinks covered with woven cane and plastered with mud. Neat hedges of interlaced boughs surrounded them. The chimney was often simply a hollow tree, not attached to the house.

Ki Pak's house was not only built of stone, but about it were four walls of stone, about five feet high, to help keep out intruders. The wall was surmounted by a rampart of plaited bamboo. In this wall were three gates, corresponding

to entrances into the house itself. One gate, the largest, on the north side, was used only by Ki Pak himself, though after he grew older Yung Pak could enter this gate with his father. The second gate, on the east, was used by the family and friends of Ki Pak. The third and smallest gate was reserved for the use of the servants.

The roof of this house was not covered with shingles, but with clay tiles, coloured red. Many houses in the city had simply a roof-covering of thatched straw.

The house was but a single story high, but in this respect the king's palace itself was no better. There were three divisions to the house. One was for the use of the men, a second for the women of the family, and a third for the servants. Each division had a suitable number of rooms for its occupants.

Yung Pak's own sleeping-room was a dainty affair, with its paper walls, tiger-skin rugs upon the stone floor, and the softest of mats and silk and wadded cotton coverings for his couch.

This couch, by the way, was another queer affair. It was built of brick! Beneath it were pipes or flues connected with other pipes which ran beneath the whole house. Through

these flues were forced currents of hot air from a blaze in a large fireplace at one end of the house. The chimney was at the other end, and thus a draught of hot air constantly passed beneath the floors in cold weather. On warm nights Yung Pak would pile his mats upon the floor and sleep as comfortably as ever you did on the softest feather bed your grand-mother could make.

The windows of Ki Pak's house were not made of glass, but were small square frames covered with oiled paper. These frames fitted into grooves so that they could be slid back and forth, and in warm weather the windows were always left open. The doors were made of wood, though in many houses paper or plaited bamboo was used.

When Yung Pak ate his meals, he sat upon a rug on the floor with his father and such male guests as might be in the house. The women never ate with them. Their meals were served in their own rooms.

A servant would bring to each person a sang, or small low table. Instead of a cloth, on each table was a sheet of fine glazed paper which had the appearance of oiled silk. This paper was made from the bark of the mulberry-tree. It was soft and pliable, and of such a texture that it could be

washed easier than anything else, either paper or cloth. On this were placed dishes of porcelain and earthen ware. There were no knives or forks, but in their place were chop-sticks such as the Chinese used. Spoons also were on the table. A tall and long-spouted teapot was always the finest piece of ware.

On the dining-tables of the poorer people of Korea the teapot was never seen, for, strange as it may seem, in this land situated between the two greatest tea-producing countries of the world, tea is not in common use.

All Koreans have splendid appetites, and probably if you should see Yung Pak eating his dinner you would criticize his table manners. He not only ate a large amount of food, but ate it very rapidly – almost as if he feared that someone might steal his dinner before he could dispose of it. And you would think that he never expected to get another square meal!

But it was not Yung Pak's fault that he was such a little glutton. In his youngest days, when his mother used to regulate his food, she would stuff him full of rice. Then she would turn him over on his back and paddle his stomach with a ladle to make sure that he was well filled!

CHAPTER III

A Glimpse of the King

Yung Pak's earliest days were spent very much as are those of most babies, whether they live in Korea or America. Eating, and sleeping were his chief occupations.

When he grew old enough to run about, his father employed for him a servant, Kim Yong, whose business it was to see that no harm came to the child. For several years the two were constantly together, even sleeping in the same room at night.

Once when Yung Pak and his attendant were out for their daily walk their attention was attracted by the sound of music in the distance.

"What is that music?" asked Yung Pak.

"That is the king's band. It must be that there is going to be a procession," was Kim Yong's reply.

"Oh, I know what it is," said Yung Pak. "The king is going to the new Temple of Ancestors. My father said the tablets on which the king's forefathers' names are engraved

are to be put in place today."

"Let us hurry so as to get into a place where we can have a good view of the procession."

"Yes, we will; for father told me that this is to be an extra fine one, and he is to be in it himself. I want to see him when he goes by."

By this time Yung Pak and Kim Yong were running as fast as their flowing garments and their dignity would allow them. And everybody else, from the dirtiest street boy to the gravest old man, was hurrying toward the palace gate through which the procession was to come. Yung Pak and Kim Yong were fortunate enough to get a position where they could see the palace gate, and the procession would have to pass by them on its way to the temple.

Meanwhile the band inside the palace walls kept up its music, and the people outside could also hear the shouts of officers giving their orders to guards and soldiers.

Soon there was an extra flourish of the music, and the gate, toward which all eyes had been strained, was suddenly flung wide open with a great clang.

Hundreds of soldiers already lined the streets to keep the crowd back out of the way of the procession.

First through the gate came a company of Korean foot-soldiers, in blue uniforms. Directly after them came a lot of palace attendants in curious hats and long robes of all colours of the rainbow. Some were dressed in blue, some in red, some in orange, some in yellow, some in a mixture of colours. All carried staves bound with streamers of ribbons.

Following the attendants came a line of bannermen, with red flags, on which were various inscriptions in blue; then came drummers and pipe-players dressed in yellow costumes, their instruments decked with ribbons.

Yung Pak next saw more soldiers, dressed in the queerest of ancient costumes; afterward came men with cymbals and bells, cavalrymen on foot, and more palace attendants. Through the whole line were seen many officials, gaudily adorned with plumes, gold lace, gilt fringe, swords, and coloured decorations of all sorts. Many of the officials had on high-crowned hats decorated with bunches of feathers and crimson tassels. These were fastened by a string of amber beads around the throat. Blue and orange and red were the colours of their robes. Then followed more bannermen, drummers, and servants carrying food, fire, and pipes.

All the time there was a tremendous beating of drums and blowing of horns and ringing of bells. The noise was so great that Kim Yong hardly heard Yung Pak when he shouted:

"Oh, I see papa!"

"Where is he?"

"Don't you see him right behind that little man in yellow who is carrying a big blue flag?"

"Oh, yes," said Kim Yung. "He has on a long green robe, and on his turban are long orange plumes."

"Yes; and on both sides of him, in green gauze coats, are his servants. I wonder if he will notice us as he goes by."

"Indeed he will not. At least, if he does see us, he will give no sign, for this is too solemn and important an occasion for him to relax his dignity."

On state occasions Ki Pak could look as sedate and dignified as the most serious official in all Korea; and that is saying a good deal, for in no country do the officials appear more solemn than in this "Land of the Morning Radiance."

Now along came more soldiers, followed by the great nobles of the kingdom, and finally, amid a most terrific beating of drums, a fearful jangling of bells, and a horrid

screaming of pipes, the guard of the king himself appeared.

Suddenly all was silent. Drum-beating, pipe-blowing, and shouting all died away. The sound of hurried footsteps alone was heard. All at once into sight came the imperial chair of state. In this chair was the king, but not yet could Yung Pak get a glimpse of his royal master. Yellow silken panels hid him from the view of the curious crowd, and over the top was a canopy of the same description, ornamented with heavy, rich tassels.

This gorgeous chair was much heavier than those used by officials and ordinary citizens, and it took thirty-two men to carry it quickly and safely past the throng to the entrance of the temple. Only a few minutes were necessary for this journey, for the temple was but a short distance from the palace gate, and both were in plain sight of Yung Pak and Kim Yong.

It was only a fleeting glimpse of the king that they got, as he passed from his chair to the temple gate; but this was enough to repay Yung Pak for the rushing and the crowding and the waiting that he had been obliged to endure. Rare indeed were these glimpses of his Majesty, and they afforded interest and excitement enough to last a long while.

But the procession was not over yet. A chair covered with red silk, borne on the shoulders of sixteen chair-men, passed up to the temple.

"Who is in that chair?" asked Yung Pak of his companion.

"The crown prince," was Kim Yong's reply.

"He attends his royal father in all these ceremonies of state."

Yung Pak drew a long breath, but said nothing. He only thought what a fine thing it must be to be a king's son, and wear such gorgeous clothes, and have so many servants at his call.

And then he had a second thought. He would not want to exchange his splendid father for all the glory and magnificence of the king's court.

After the king and the crown prince, with their attendant officials and servants and priests, had gone into the temple, Yung Pak and Kim Yong did not stay longer at their post. The order of the procession had broken, and the king and his immediate retinue would return privately to the palace after he should pay homage and offer sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors.

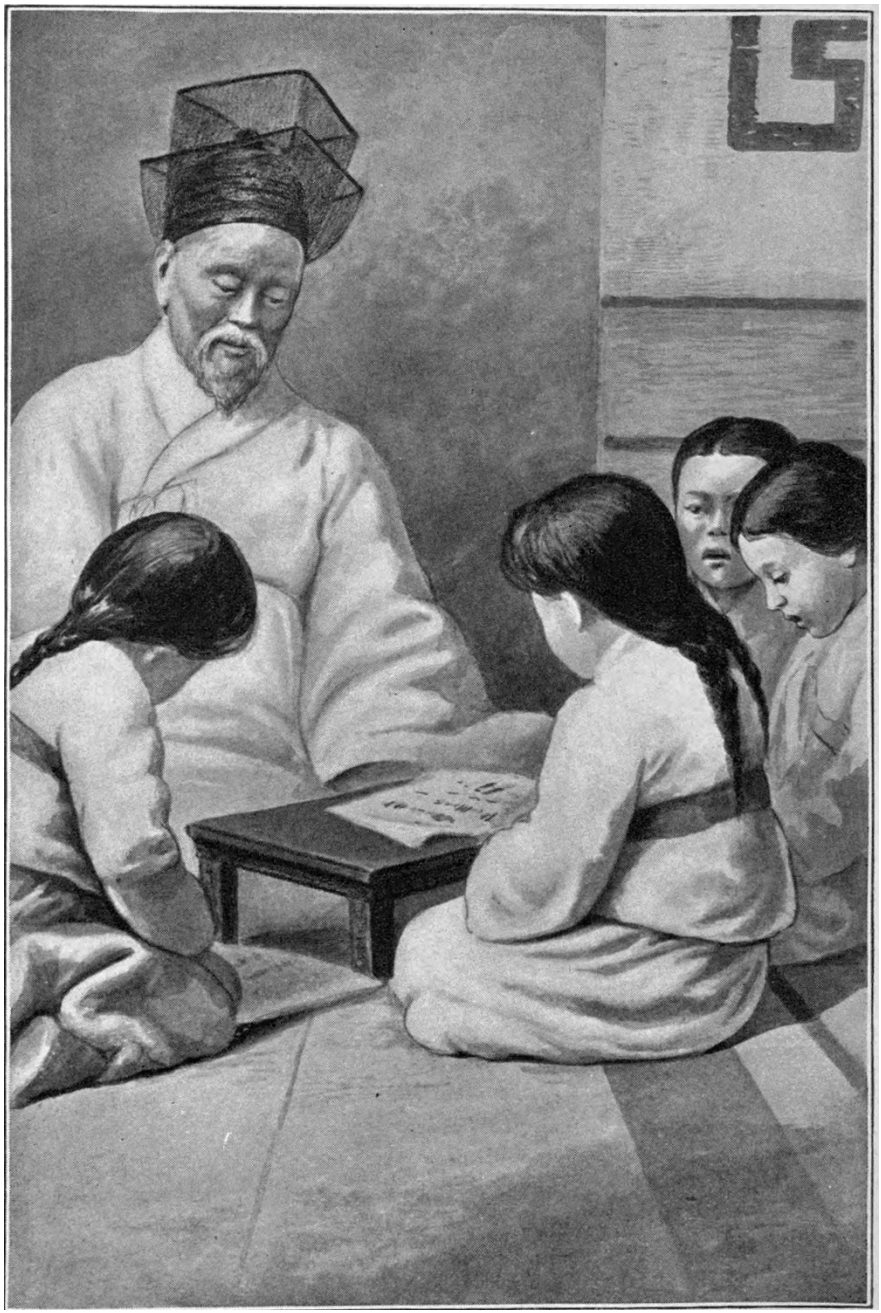
CHAPTER IV

Yung Pak at School

Little Korean boys have to go to school, just as you do, though they do not study in just the same way. You would be surprised if you were to step into a Korean schoolroom. All the boys sit upon the floor with their legs curled up beneath them. Instead of the quiet, silent scholars, you would hear a loud and deafening buzz. All the pupils study out loud. They not only do their studying aloud, but they talk very loud, as if each one were trying to make more noise than his neighbour.

The Koreans call this noise kang-siong, and it seems almost deafening to one unused to it. You would think the poor teacher would be driven crazy, but he seems as calm as a daisy in a June breeze.

The Korean boys have to have "tests" and examinations just as you do. When a lad has a good lesson, the teacher makes a big red mark on his paper, and he carries it home



“All the boys sit upon the floor.”

with the greatest pride – just as you do when you take home a school paper marked "100."

But Yung Pak was not allowed to share the pleasures and the trials of the boys in the public school.

One day, soon after he was six years old, his father sent for him to come to his private room – perhaps you would call it a study or library. With Yung Pak's father was a strange gentleman, a young man with a pleasant face and an air of good breeding.

"This," said Ki Pak to his son as he entered the room, "is Wang Ken. I have engaged him to be your teacher, or tutor. The time has come for you to begin to learn to read and to cipher and to study the history and geography of our country."

Yung Pak made a very low bow, for all Korean boys are early taught to be courteous, especially to parents, teachers, and officials.

In this case he was very glad to show respect to his new tutor, for he liked his appearance and felt sure that they would get on famously together. More than that, though he liked to play as well as any boy, he was not sorry that he was going to begin to learn something. Even at his age he had

ambitions, and expected that sometime he would, like his father, serve the king in some office.

Wang Ken was equally well pleased with the looks of the bright boy who was to be his pupil, and told Yung Pak's father that he believed there need be no fear but what they would get on well together, and that the boy would prove a bright scholar.

To Wang Ken and his pupil were assigned a room near Ki Pak's library, where Yung Pak would spend several hours each day trying his best to learn the Korean ABC's.

The first book he had to study was called "The Thousand Character Classic." This was the first book that all Korean boys had to study, and was said to have been written by a very wise man hundreds of years ago. A strange thing about it was that it was composed during one night, and so great was the wise man's struggle that his hair and beard turned white during that night. When Yung Pak was told this fact he was not a bit surprised. He thought it was hard enough to have to learn what was in the book, to say nothing of writing it in the beginning.

At the same time that Yung Pak was learning to read, he was also learning to write. But you would have been amused

if you could have seen his efforts. The strangest thing about it was that he did not use a pen, but had a coarse brush on a long handle. Into the ink he would dip this brush and then make broad marks on sheets of coarse paper. You would not be able to understand those marks at all. They looked like the daubs of a sign-painter gone crazy.

Later on, Yung Pak had to study the history and geography of his country. Some of the names he had to learn would amuse you very much. The name of the province of Haan-kiung, for instance, meant Perfect Mirror, or Complete View Province. Kiung-sang was the Korean name for Respectful Congratulation Province, and Chung-chong meant Serene Loyalty Province. One part of Korea, where the inhabitants were always peaceable and unwarlike, was called Peace and Quiet Province, or, in the Korean language, Ping-an.

Under Wang Ken's instruction Yung Pak made rapid progress in his studies, and when the boy's father questioned him from time to time as to what he had learned, he was very much pleased, and commended his son for his close attention to his studies.

"Sometime," Ki Pak said to the boy, "if you continue to

make such good progress in your studies, you will be able to hold a high position in the service of the king."

In explanation of this remark, you should understand that no young man was able to enter into the government service of Korea until he could pass a very hard examination in many studies.

Many things besides book-learning did Wang Ken teach his pupil. In all the rules of Korean etiquette he was carefully and persistently drilled.

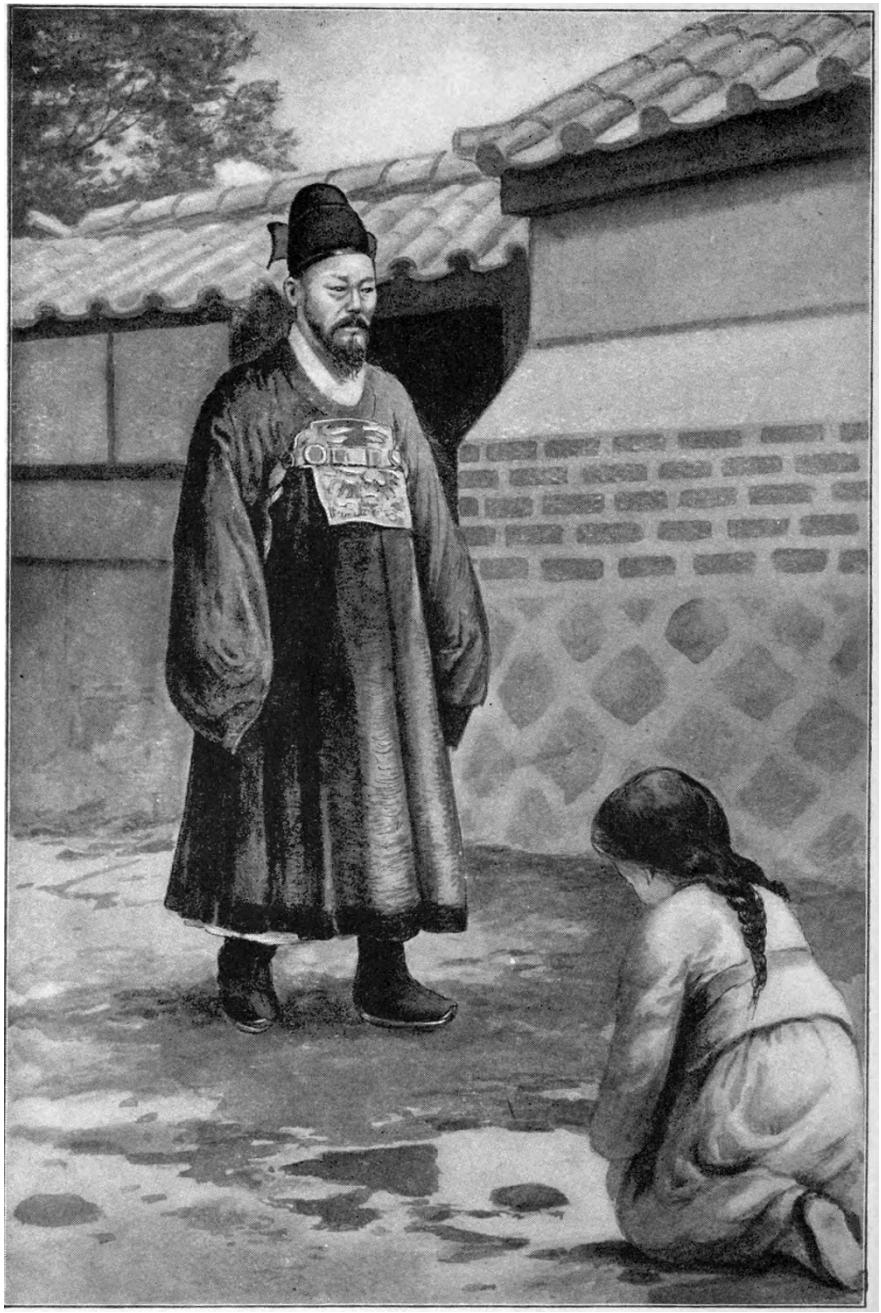
As you have already been told, Yung Pak had from his earliest days been taught the deepest reverence and honour for his father.

This kind of instruction was continued from day to day. He was told that a son must not play in his father's presence, nor assume free or easy posture before him. He must often wait upon his father at meal-times, and prepare his bed for him. If the father is old or sickly, the son sleeps near him by night, and does not leave his presence by day. If for any reason the father is cast into prison, the son makes his home nearby in order that he may provide such comforts for his unfortunate parent as the prison officials will allow.

If, by chance, the father should be banished from the

country for his misdeeds, the son must accompany him at least to the borders of his native land, and in some instances must go with him into exile.

When the son meets his father in the street, he must drop to his knees and make a profound salute, no matter what the state of the roadway. In all letters which the son writes to his father he uses the most exalted titles and honourable phrases he can imagine.



“He must drop to his knees and make
a profound salute.”

CHAPTER V

A Lesson in History

As you already know, Yung Pak's father intended that his son, when he grew up, should fill a position in the service of the king. To fit him for this work, it was important that the boy should learn all that he could of his country's history.

On this account Yung Pak's tutor had orders to give to the lad each day, during the hours devoted to study, some account of events in the rise and progress of the Korean nation or of its royal families.

You must know that Korea is a very old country, its history dating back hundreds of years before America was discovered by Christopher Columbus.

Now Wang Ken knew that dry history had very few attractions for his young pupil, or any lively boy for that matter, so as far as possible he avoided the repetition of dates and uninteresting events, and often gave to Yung Pak much useful information in story form.

One day, when the time came for the usual history lesson, Wang Ken said to Yung Pak:

"I think that today I will tell you the story of King Taijo."

At this Yung Pak's eyes sparkled, and he was all attention in a moment. He thought one of Wang Ken's stories was a great deal better than puzzling over Korean letters or struggling with long strings of figures. The tutor went on:

"When Taijo was born, many, many years ago, our country was not called Korea, but had been given the name of Cho-sen."

Yung Pak had been told that Cho-sen meant Morning Calm, so he asked Wang Ken how it came about that such a peaceful name had been given to his country.

"Why," said Wang Ken, "the name was given to our land years and years ago by the leader of some Chinese settlers, whose name was Ki Tsze. In his native land there had been much violence and war, so with his friends and followers he moved to the eastward and selected this country for his home. Here he hoped to be free from the attacks of enemies and to be able to live a peaceful life. For this reason he chose a name which well expressed its outward position – toward the rising sun – and his own inward feelings, Cho-sen, or

Morning Calm. This is still the official name of our country.

"But to come back to our story of Taijo. At the time of his birth, the rulers of the country were very unpopular because of their wickedness and oppression of the people. There was much suffering on account of the misrule, and the people longed for a deliverer who should restore prosperity to Cho-sen.

"Such a deliverer appeared in the person of Taijo. It is said that even as a boy he surpassed his fellows in goodness, intelligence, and skill in all sorts of boyish games."

Wang Ken improved this opportunity to tell Yung Pak how important it was that all boys should follow such an example.

But while Yung Pak listened with apparent patience, he could hardly conceal his inward desire that the tutor would go on with his story. Like most boys, of all races, he felt that he could get along without the moralizing.

"Hunting with the falcon was one of Taijo's favourite sports. One day, while in the woods, his bird flew so far ahead that its young master lost sight of it. Hurrying on to find it, Taijo discovered a hut beside the path, into which he saw the falcon fly.

"Entering the hut, the youth found a white-bearded hermit priest, who lived here alone and unknown to the outside world. For a moment Taijo was speechless with surprise in the presence of the wise old hermit.

"Seeing his embarrassment, the old man spoke to him in these words:

"'What benefit is it for a youth of your abilities to be seeking a stray falcon? A throne is a richer prize. Betake yourself at once to the capital.'

"Now Taijo knew how to take a hint as well as any boy, so he immediately left the hut of the hermit, forsaking his falcon, and went to Sunto, then the capital of the kingdom.

"As I have already told you, Taijo was a wise youth. He did not rush headlong into the accomplishment of the purpose hinted at by the hermit. Had he done so, and at that time attempted to dethrone the king, he would certainly have been overpowered and slain.

"He took a more deliberate and sensible way. First he enlisted in the army of the king. As he was a young man of courage and strength, he was not long in securing advancement. He rapidly rose through the various grades, until he finally held the chief command of the army as

lieutenant-general.

"Of course Taijo did not reach this high station in a month, nor in a year, but many years went by before he attained such an exalted place. Meanwhile he married and had children. Several of these children were daughters."

Wang Ken did not say right here, what he might have said with truth – that in Korean families girls are considered of very little consequence. But in this case Taijo's daughter proved to be of much help in making her father the king of Cho-sen.

"One of these daughters was married to the reigning king. Thus Taijo became father-in-law to his sovereign. You can easily see that in this relationship he must have had a large influence both over the king and over the people.

"Being a brave man and courageous fighter, Taijo was idolized by his soldiers. He was also very popular with all the people because he was always strictly honest and just in all his dealings with them.

"Taijo proved his bravery and his reliance on the soldiers and on the people by attempting to bring about a change in the conduct of the king, who abused his power and treated his subjects without mercy.

"The king, however, refused to listen to the advice of his father-in-law, and, as a consequence, the hatred of the people for him grew in volume and force every day.

"Meanwhile, the king was having other troubles. In former years, Korea had paid an annual tribute or tax to China, but for some time it had been held back by this king. Consequently the Chinese (or Ming) emperor sent a large army to enforce his demand for the amount of money due him.

"The Korean ruler neglected the matter and finally refused to pay. He then ordered that more soldiers be added to his army, that the Chinese forces might be resisted; but with all his efforts the enemy's army was much the larger. Nevertheless, he ordered Taijo, at the head of his forces, to attack the Chinese. Upon this, Taijo thus addressed his soldiers:

"'Although the order from the king must be obeyed, yet the attack upon the Ming soldiers, with so small an army as ours, is like casting an egg against a rock, and no one of us will return alive. I do not tell you this from any fear of death, but our king is too haughty. He does not heed our advice. He has ordered out the army suddenly without cause, paying

no attention to the suffering which wives and children of the soldiers must undergo. This is a thing I cannot bear. Let us go back to the capital, and the responsibility shall fall on my shoulders alone.'

"The soldiers were quite willing to take the advice of their courageous leader, and resolved to obey his orders rather than the king's. They went to the capital, forcibly removed the king from his throne, and banished him to the island of Kang-wa.

"Not yet, however, was Taijo made king. The deposed ruler plotted and planned all kinds of schemes whereby he might be restored to his old position of authority. Taijo heard of some of his plots, and finally did that which would forever extinguish the authority of the old king or any of his family. He removed from the temple the tablets on which were inscribed the names of the king's ancestors. More than this, he ordered that no more sacrifices be offered to them.

"The king could have suffered no greater insult than this, for, like all Koreans, he held as sacred the memory of his ancestors, and even to speak ill of one of them was an unpardonable crime. But this time he was powerless to resent the indignity or to punish the offender, and

consequently he lost what little influence he had been able to retain.

"Taijo was now formally proclaimed king. He was able to make peace with the Chinese emperor, and under his rule the Koreans enjoyed freedom from war and oppression. His descendants still sit upon the throne of Korea."

CHAPTER VI

The Monk's Story

One evening, after Yung Pak had finished his supper, he sat talking with his father and Wang Ken.

The early evening hour was often spent in this way. It was a time of day when Ki Pak was generally free from any official duty, and he was glad to devote a little time to his son. He would inquire about the boy's studies as well as about his sports, and Yung Pak would regale his father with many an amusing incident or tell him something he had learned during study hours. Sometimes he would tell of the sights he had seen on the streets of Seoul, while on other occasions he would give account of games with his playmates or of his success in shooting with a bow and arrow.

This latter sport was very common with the men and boys of Korea. It was approved by the king for the national defence in time of war, and often rewards were offered by rich men for winners in contests. Most Korean gentlemen

had private archery grounds and targets in the gardens near their houses.

Ki Pak had an arrow-walk and target in his garden, and here it was that Yung Pak used to practise almost daily. He often, too, invited other boys to enjoy the sport with him.

At regular times every year public contests in arrow-shooting were held, and costly prizes were offered to the winners by the king. The prizes were highly valued by those who secured them, and Yung Pak looked forward with eager anticipation to the day when he should be old enough and skillful enough to take part in these contests.

While Yung Pak was listening to the conversation between his father and tutor on this evening, a knock was heard.

On opening the door there was seen standing at the entrance a man rather poorly clad in the white garments worn by nearly all the people of Korea. But upon his head, instead of the ordinary cone-shaped hat worn by the men of the country, was a very peculiar structure. It was made of straw and was about four feet in circumference. Its rim nearly concealed the man's face, which was further hidden by a piece of coarse white linen cloth stretched upon two

sticks and made fast just below the eyes.

This method of concealing the face, together with the wearing of the immense hat, was a symbol of mourning. Such a sight was not uncommon in the streets of Seoul, and Yung Pak knew well its meaning.

With great courtesy and hospitality Ki Pak invited the stranger within the house.

"I thank you for your kindness," said the visitor. "I am a stranger in your city, a monk from a monastery in Kong-chiu. Your peculiar law not allowing men upon the street after nightfall compels me to seek shelter."

"To that you are entirely welcome, my friend," said Ki Pak, whose hospitable nature would have granted the monk's request, even if sympathy for sorrow and reverence for religion had not also been motives for his action.

"Let me get the man something to eat," said Yung Pak as the monk seated himself upon a mat.

"Certainly, my son; it is always proper to offer food to a guest who takes refuge under our roof."

Quickly the boy sought his mother in the women's apartments, and very soon returned with a steaming bowl of rice, which he placed before the visitor.

This gift of rice was especially pleasing to the traveller, as no dish is held in higher honour in Korea. It is the chief cereal, and the inhabitants say it originated in Ha-ram, China, nearly five thousand years ago. Yung Pak called it Syang-nong-si, which means Marvellous Agriculture. He had learned from Wang Ken that it was first brought to Korea in 1122 B.C.

To the monk the warm food was very refreshing, and after he had eaten a generous amount he entered into conversation with his hosts.

He told of the monastery where he made his home, and his account of the various religious ceremonies and their origin was very interesting to Yung Pak, who found that the visitor not only knew a great deal of the history of the country, but was also familiar with its fables and legends.

Like many who live in retirement and dwell in a world apart from their fellows, this monk thought the people of former times were superior to the men of his own day. Especially did he praise the kings of years long gone by.

"Do you think," said Yung Pak, "that the old kings were any better than our own gracious ruler?"

Yung Pak was very jealous of the honour of his king.

"Why, yes," replied the monk. "And to prove my statement let me tell you a story:

"Many years ago there was in Cho-sen a king named Cheng-chong. He was celebrated throughout his kingdom for his goodness. It was a habit with him to disguise himself in ordinary clothing and then to go out and mingle with the common people. In this way he was often able to discover opportunities for doing much good to his subjects.

"One night, Cheng-chong disguised himself as a countryman, and, taking a single friend along, started out to make a tour of inspection among his people, that he might learn the details of their lives.

"Coming to a dilapidated-looking house, he suspected that within there might be miserable people to whom he could render assistance. Desiring to see the inside of the house, he punched a peep-hole in the paper door. Looking through this hole, the king perceived an old man weeping, a man in mourning garb singing, and a nun or widow dancing.

"Cheng-chong was unable to imagine the cause of these strange proceedings, so he asked his companion to call the master of the house.

"In answer to the summons, the man in mourning made his appearance. The king, with low and respectful salutation, said:

"'We have never before met.'

"'True,' was the reply, 'but whence are you? How is it that you should come to find me at midnight? To what family do you belong?'

"Cheng-chong answered: 'I am Mr. Ni, living at Tong-ku-an. As I was passing before your house I was attracted by strange sounds. Then through a hole in the door I saw an old man crying, a dancing nun, and a man in mourning singing. Why did the nun dance, the bereaved man sing, and the old man weep? I have called you out on purpose to learn the reason of these things.'

"'For what reason do you pry into other people's business?' was the question in reply. 'This is little concern to you. It is past midnight now, and you had better get home as soon as you can.'

"'No, indeed. I admit that it seems wrong for me to be so curious in regard to your affairs, but this case is so very extraordinary that I hope you will not refuse to tell me about it. You may be sure that I shall not betray your confidence.'

"'Alas! why such persistence in trying to learn about other people's business?'

"'It is very important,' replied the king, 'that I should obtain the information I have asked of you. Further than that I cannot explain at present.'"

Yung Pak wanted to interrupt the story-teller here and say that he did not blame the man for objecting to telling his private business, but he had early been taught that it was highly improper for a Korean boy to break into the conversation of his elders.

"The monk continued:

"'As you are so urgent in your desire to know the cause of the strange proceedings you have witnessed, I will try to tell you. Poverty has always been a burden upon my family.

In my house there has never been sufficient food for a solid meal, and I have not land enough even for an insect to rest upon. I cannot even provide food for my poor old father. This is the reason why my wife, from time to time, has cut off a portion of her hair and sold it for an amount sufficient to buy a bowl of bean soup, which she has generously given to my father. This evening she cut off and sold the last tress of her hair, and thus she is now bald as a

nun.'"

Yung Pak already knew that Korean women who devote their lives to religious service kept their hair closely clipped, so the monk did not need to explain his reference to a bald-headed nun.

"'On this account,' said the man to Cheng-chong, 'my father broke out into mourning in these words:

"'Why have I lived to this age? Why did I not die years ago? Why has this degradation come to my daughter-in-law?" Tears accompanied his words. My wife and I tried to console him, and, besides urging him not to weep, she danced for his amusement. I also danced and sang, and thus we diverted the old man's thoughts and caused him to smile. That is the true reason of our queer behaviour. I trust you will not think it strange, and will now go away and leave us to our sorrow.'

"The king was very much impressed by the man's story, particularly with the evidence of such great devotion to his father, even in the time of poverty and misfortune. So he said: 'This is really the most extraordinary instance of filial love that I ever saw. I think you should present yourself at the examination to-morrow.'

"'What examination?'

"'Why, there is to be an examination before the king of candidates for official position. You know that all officials have to pass an examination before they can receive an appointment. Be sure to be there, and you may be fortunate enough to secure a position which will remove all fear of poverty from your household.'

"Having thus spoken, Cheng-chong bade the man good night and went at once to his palace.

"Very early in the morning he caused proclamation to be made that an examination would be held that day, at a certain hour. Notwithstanding the brief time for preparation, when the hour arrived a large number of men presented themselves at the king's palace as candidates.

"In the crowd was the poor man whom the king, in his disguise, had talked with the night before. Though he understood little of the matter, he felt that his visitor of the previous night must have known perfectly about it.

"When all had assembled, the following was announced as the subject of the examination: 'The song of a man in mourning, the dance of a nun, the tears of an old man.'

"With the exception of the poor man, not a single one

of the candidates was able to make a bit of sense out of the subject. He alone knew it perfectly well, because of his own personal sad experience. Consequently he was able to turn in a clear essay upon the subject, which, upon examination, the king found to be free from error.

"Cheng-chong then bestowed the degree of doctor upon the man, and ordered that he be brought into his presence.

"Upon the man's appearance, the king asked: 'Do you know who I am? It is I who last night advised you to be present at this examination. Raise your head and look at me.'

"With fixed gaze the man looked at the king, and recognized his benefactor. He at once bowed himself to the ground in gratitude, and in words of the most humble sort returned his thanks.

"'Go at once,' said Cheng-chong, 'and return to your wife and old father. Make them happy with the good news you have for them.'

"This story of royal generosity has been handed down from generation to generation, and I give it to you," concluded the monk, "as an example of the goodness of our ancient kings and the rich inheritance we have from them.

True devotion to parents has never been unrewarded in Korea."

His story concluded, the monk expressed a desire to retire for the night. At Ki Pak's command a servant led him to a sleeping-room. Yung Pak and the other members of the family also retired, and were soon buried in peaceful slumber.

CHAPTER VII

A Journey

It sometimes happened that Ki Pak, in performing his official duties, was obliged to make long journeys to various parts of Korea. One of Yung Pak's greatest pleasures was to listen to the stories which his father used to tell him about these journeys.

When Ki Pak made one of these trips through the country he could not ride on the cars as you do, for there were no railways, with puffing engines and comfortable coaches; neither could he take a carriage drawn by swift and strong horses, for they too were unknown by the Koreans. Even if he had possessed horses and carriage, there were few roads over which they could have been driven.

Most of the highways were simply rough paths, over which men usually travelled on foot or on the backs of ponies up and down the hills of the country. It was generally necessary to cross rivers by fording, though, where the water

was too deep for this, rude and clumsy ferry-boats were provided. Occasionally, over a narrow stream, a frail foot-bridge would be built.

You can easily imagine Yung Pak's joy and surprise one day when his father told him that he proposed to take his little son on his next journey.

Ki Pak had been ordered by the king to go to Chang-an-sa, a city among the Diamond Mountains, near the eastern coast of Korea, and about eighty miles from Seoul. In this place was a famous monastery, or temple, which would be an object of much interest and wonder to Yung Pak.

It was decided, also, that Wang Ken should be one of the party. He would be able to explain to Yung Pak many things they might see on the way.

There was much to do to get ready for the journey. It would take four days to cover the distance, and, as hotels were unknown along the route, it was necessary to take along a good supply of provisions, bedding, cooking utensils, and all sorts of things they might need while absent from home.

In addition to getting together all this material, ponies and drivers had to be engaged. Sometimes, when Ki Pak

went on short journeys, he was carried in a chair by strong men, who by much practice had become able to endure the fatigue of travel, and of bearing heavy burdens. This chair was very different from the kind you have in your houses. Even a comfortable rocker would not be very nice in which to take a long journey.

The Korean traveller's chair consists of a boxlike frame, of such height that one may sit within in Turkish fashion upon the floor. The roof is of bamboo, covered with painted and oiled paper. The sides also are covered with oiled paper or muslin. In some cases a small stained-glass window is set in the side or front, but only rich men can afford this luxury. The curtain in front can be raised or lowered. This serves the double purpose of shutting out the glances of the curious and keeping out the cold air. When the owner can afford it, an ample supply of cushions and shawls makes the clumsy vehicle more comfortable for its occupant.

The chair rests upon two long poles, which hang by straps upon the shoulders of four stout men. Under ordinary circumstances these men can travel with their burden from twenty to thirty miles a day.

Sometimes, also, when Yung Pak's father went about the

streets of Seoul, he rode in a chair very similar to the one just described. The only difference was that it rested on a framework attached to a single wheel directly underneath. This cross between a wheel-barrow and a sedan-chair was supported and trundled along the street by four bearers.

On this journey, however, Yung Pak and his companions were to ride on ponies.

The Korean ponies are small, fine-coated animals, little larger than Shetland ponies. They are very tough and strong, and can endure long marches with little food. They are sometimes obstinate and are desperate fighters, squealing and neighing on all occasions. They often attack other ponies, and never become friendly with each other on a journey. In their attacks upon one another loads are forgotten and often seriously damaged. Notwithstanding, they bear with much patience a great deal of abuse from unkind masters.

Because of much beating and overloading, they are generally a sorry-looking lot of animals.

Ki Pak had to engage ponies for himself, Yung Pak, and Wang Ken. He was also obliged to employ a cook for the journey, who had to have a pony to carry along the kettles

and pans and other utensils. It was also necessary to hire body-servants and several ponies to carry luggage, and as each pony must have a mapu, or groom, it made quite a procession when the party started out of Seoul on the journey to the northeast.

It was a fine day when the start was made. It was not early in the morning, for, if there is anything a Korean hates to do, it is to make an early start on a journey. If you had been in Yung Pak's place, you would have gone crazy with impatience. The servants were late in bringing around the ponies, and the process of loading them was a very slow one.

But Yung Pak had long before learned to be patient under such circumstances. In fact, he seemed to care little whether the start were made in the morning or at noon. He calmly watched the servants at their work, and, when at last all was declared ready, he gravely mounted his pony and fell into the procession behind his father, with Wang Ken immediately following.

A most comical sight was the cook, perched on top of his load of pans, pots, and potatoes. As his pony trotted along with the others, it looked as if the cook was in constant danger of a fall from his lofty seat, but he sat as calm and

unconcerned as one could imagine.

You would laugh if you should see the strings of eggs hanging across this pony's back – yes, eggs. They were packed in bands of wheat straw, and between each pair of eggs a straw was twisted. Thus a straw rope enclosing twenty or more eggs, well protected, was made and thrown over the top of the load.

Other riders had more comfortable seats, for most of the ponies carried baggage in two wicker baskets – one strapped upon each side – and on top of these was piled bedding and wadded clothing, which made a soft seat for the rider.

The mapus who accompanied the procession were dressed in short cotton jackets, loose trousers, with sandals and cotton wrappings upon the feet. They had to step lively to keep up with the ponies.

All the people in this company carried with them long garments made of oiled paper. You have already learned that the Korean paper is very tough, and when soaked with oil it forms a splendid protection against the rain. Many of these garments had a very peculiar appearance, because they were made of paper on which had been set copies for schoolboys to use in learning to write.

As Yung Pak and his companions passed along the dirty streets of Seoul toward a gate in the great wall, a curious crowd was attracted by the unusual sight. This mob of men and boys were good-natured, but very curious, and it gathered so close as to impede the progress of the ponies. Moreover, a watchful eye had to be kept on all the luggage, lest some over-covetous person might steal the provisions and supplies on the ponies' backs.

Notwithstanding the slow progress made by Ki Pak's company, it took only a short time to pass through the narrow streets and out by the great gate, leaving behind the noisy mob of men and boys who had followed them to the city's wall.

Once outside, upon the road which wound around and over the high hills that surround the city, the pure country air seemed very sweet and refreshing to Yung Pak, who knew nothing of life outside Seoul. This was his first journey into the country, and the many strange sights drew exclamations of surprise and wonder from him. The green waving grass and swaying foliage of the trees were ever new sources of joy and pleasure, and the delicate odours which the breezes bore to his sensitive nostrils were refreshing and life-giving.

Among the strange sights which attracted Yung Pak's attention, as they rode along through the country, were some very curious figures erected by the roadside. These were posts, one side of which was roughly planed. On the upper part of each of these posts was a rude carving of a hideous human face with prominent teeth. The cheeks and teeth were slightly coloured. A most fiendish appearance was presented by these figures, called by the Koreans syou-sal-mak-i, and if looks counted for anything, they ought well to serve their purpose – the scaring away of evil spirits from the village near which the figures always stood. The mile-posts, or fjang-seung, along the way were often similarly decorated.

Another curiosity by the wayside which led to wonder on Yung Pak's part was an old trunk of a tall tree. For about thirty feet from the ground this was painted in coloured stripes very much like a barber's pole. The top and branches of the tree had been trimmed off, and the upper end was rudely carved in a shape representing a dragon with a forked tail. From the head, which resembled that of an alligator, hung various cords, to which were attached small brass bells and a wooden fish. Wang Ken told Yung Pak that this was a monument to some famous Korean "doctor of literature."

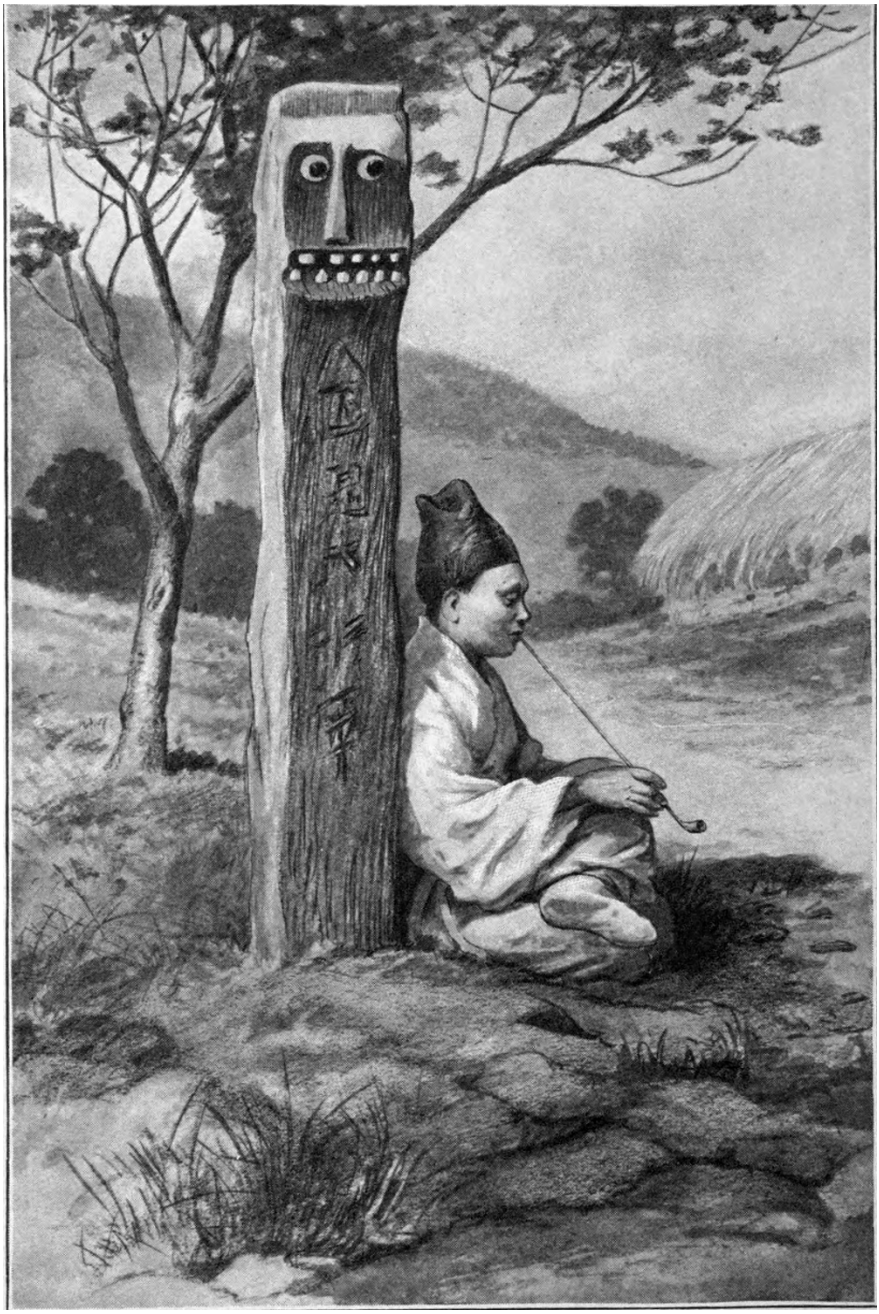
On the first day's journey toward Chang-an-sa the party made good progress. The plan was to get to Yong-pyong, about twenty miles from Seoul, before nightfall. To you this would seem a short day's journey, but when it is remembered that many of the servants were on foot, and that the little ponies were heavily loaded, it does not seem so strange that more ground could not be covered in one day. In addition, in many places the roads were poor, though in the valleys there was a smooth bottom where the sand had washed down from the hills.

On some of these hillsides little villages were perched. Yung Pak noticed that on the upper side of each of these hill-towns was a moon-shaped wall.

"What is that wall for?" he asked Wang Ken as they passed one.

"That protects the village in time of rainstorms," replied the tutor. "The soil here is of such a nature that it easily washes away, and if the town were unprotected the earth would soon be swept from beneath the houses. If you will look sharply, you will see outside the wall a deep trench which carries off the rushing water."

As they were slowly riding along a road which wound



"On the upper part of each of these posts
was a rude carving."

around and over a high hill Yung Pak still kept his eyes wide open for strange sights. Suddenly he lifted his arm, and, pointing toward a tree upon a little hill at one side of the road, he said to Wang Ken:

"Oh, what a queer-looking tree that is! And are not those strange leaves on it? What kind of a tree is it, anyway?"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Wang Ken, "I don't wonder that you call that a strange-looking tree. Let's take a walk up to it and get a closer view."

So the ponies were halted, and down sprang Yung Pak and Wang Ken. Leaving the ponies in charge of the mapus, they marched up the hill to get a nearer sight of the tree.

"Why," said the boy, as they approached it, "those are not leaves that we saw from the road, but they are rags and strips of cloth. It looks as if some one had hung out their clothes to dry and forgotten to take them in again. What does it all mean?"

"That tree, my boy," Wang Ken replied, "is called the sacred devil-tree. That is a queer combination of names, but you know there are a lot of ignorant people in our country who are very superstitious. They believe in all sorts of evil and good spirits. They think these spirits watch every act of

their lives. Consequently, they do all they can to please the good spirits and to drive away the evil ones. This tree they believe has power to keep off the bad spirits, so every man who thinks that a demon has possession of him tears a piece of cloth from his garment and carefully ties it to a branch. That is how all these strips you see come to be hanging above you. Some have hung there so long that the wind and rain have torn them to rags."

"Yes, but why is this done?" asked Yung Pak.

"Because," was the reply, "a man who is possessed by an evil spirit thinks that by thus tying a part of his clothing to the tree he may induce the spirit to attach himself to it instead of to his own person."

Yung Pak's curiosity satisfied, they returned to the road, mounted their ponies, and quickly caught up with the rest of the party.

No further incidents of special importance marked this first day's journey, and shortly before nightfall they arrived at the town of Yong-pyong. They found the village inn to be a series of low, small buildings built on three sides of a courtyard. Into low sheds in this yard the ponies were crowded and the luggage removed from their backs. Ki Pak's

servants proceeded to build a fire in the centre of the yard and the cook made preparations for getting supper. Travellers had to provide a large part of their own meals, for, as already stated, these village inns were not hotels in the real sense of the word. They were simply rude lodging-places where travellers might be protected from the night air and have a chance to sleep while passing through the country.

Into the main waiting-room of the inn Yung Pak, with his father and tutor, entered. At the door they removed their shoes and left them outside. In the room were several other travellers seated upon the floor, which was covered with oiled paper and grass mats. There was absolutely no furniture. The walls were covered with clean white paper. Each man in the room was smoking a pipe, which consisted of a brass bowl and a reed stem over three feet long. All wore long white robes, though one of the occupants had hung his hat upon the wall.

Into this room after a time the cook brought supper for his masters. Other servants brought in boxes which were used as tables, and though the style was not just what Yung Pak was used to, he managed to eat a hearty meal. The day in the open air had given him a hunger and a zest he rarely

knew.

After supper, for a short time Yung Pak and Wang Ken talked over with Ki Pak the events of the day. A servant soon announced that their sleeping-rooms were ready, and they gladly at once sought their beds. To get to their rooms they again stepped out into the courtyard. They found that each bedroom was one of the little buildings facing the yard. Yung Pak and Wang Ken occupied one room, while Ki Pak had a room by himself. Through a narrow door about three feet high the lad and his tutor entered their room. The door was simply a lattice shutter covered with paper. The room was very small – barely space for the two mattresses which had been put there by the servants, and the ceiling was so low that even the short Koreans could hardly stand upright. Yet here our two friends managed to make themselves very comfortable for the night.

Outside in the courtyard the fire was kept burning, beside which two watchmen sat all night smoking and telling stories. It was necessary to maintain a watch till morning because the country districts of Korea are infested with wild animals, particularly tigers, and the bright blaze of the fire served to keep them at a distance. Otherwise the thin-walled

houses would have been slight protection for the sleeping travellers.

As it was, Yung Pak slept soundly the whole night, and did not awake until after daylight, when servants brought to his door a wooden bowl and a brass vessel full of water for his morning bath. Quickly he sprang up, and with his companions made ready for the day's journey, for they were all anxious to be on their way.

Breakfast was served in much the same manner as the supper of the previous evening had been. Of this meal all heartily partook, for a Korean is never guilty of having a poor appetite.

As usual, it took a long time to get the ponies properly loaded and ready to start, and the forenoon was about half-gone when the procession finally left the courtyard of the inn.

A twenty-mile march would bring the party to Rang-chyon, where it was proposed to spend the second night of the journey.

The day was passed in much the same manner as the preceding one, though of course new scenes proved ever interesting to Yung Pak. During this day the party had to

cross a river which was too deep to ford, and over which there was no sort of bridge. For the assistance of travellers a ferry-boat had been provided. This boat was a broad, flat-bottomed, clumsy affair. It could carry but three ponies at a time, with several men. The men in charge of the boat were slow and obstinate, and consequently it took a long time for all to get across the river.

It was right here that an unfortunate, yet laughable, accident occurred.

As on the preceding day, the cook rode perched upon his pony's load of kettles, pans, and pots. When riding along a good road his position was precarious enough, requiring all his best efforts to maintain his balance.

When his turn came to go upon the ferry-boat, Ki Pak advised him to dismount and lead his pony across the plank which covered the watery space between the bank of the river and the boat. But the cook was an obstinate Korean, as well as a trifle lazy, and refused to get down, thinking he could safely drive his beast across the gang-plank. Ordinarily this would have been possible, but on this particular occasion, just as the pony stepped upon the plank, the boat gave a lurch, the plank slipped, and overboard went pony,



"The day was passed in much the same way as the preceding one."

cook, and all. For a few moments there was enough bustle and excitement to suit anyone. Fortunately, the water was not deep, and quickly the drenched animal and man were pulled from the water. The only permanent harm was to some of the provisions that were a part of the pony's load. The cook was a wiser as well as a wet man, and made up his mind that the next time he would heed the advice to dismount when boarding a ferry-boat.

The day's journey was completed without further special incident, and at night they rested in the inn at Rang-chyon under conditions much the same as at Yong-pyong.

The third day's journey brought the company to Kewen-syong. On the way thither Yung Pak was much interested in the sights of the country, which grew wilder and more strange the farther they got from Seoul. On this day numerous highwaymen were met, but they dared not molest the travellers on account of the large number in the party.

The cabins along the country roads were a continual source of curiosity to Yung Pak. They were built of mud, without windows, and no door except a screen of cords. In nearly every doorway would be sitting a man, smoking a long-stemmed pipe, who looked with wide-open eyes at the

unusual procession passing his house.

Of course all the men who lived in these country cabins were farmers, and Yung Pak liked to watch them as they worked in their fields, for to the city-bred boy this is always an entrancing sight. What seemed most curious to him was the fact that women were also at work in the fields. At his home the women of the family nearly always stayed in their own apartments, and when they did go out always went heavily veiled. These country women not only assisted in the farm work, but they had to do all the spinning and weaving for the family, in addition to usual household cares.

Wang Ken was able to tell Yung Pak much about country life, for, like most of the school-masters of Korea, he was himself a farmer's son. He told how the Korean farmer lived a simple, patient life, while at the same time he was ignorant and superstitious. He believed in demons, spirits, and dragons, and in nearly every house were idols in honour of the imaginary deities.

Pigs and bulls are the chief animals on Korean farms. The latter are used as beasts of burden, though occasionally a more prosperous man may own a pony or a donkey.

The farming tools are extremely rude and simple, thus

necessitating the labour of several men or women where one man could do the work with good tools.

While travelling along Yung Pak met several hunters. They were not an uncommon sight on the streets of Seoul. When in the city they wore a rough felt conical hat and dark blue cotton robe. The garments were ugly in appearance and inconvenient. When the hunters were after game the robe was discarded, and its place taken by a short wadded jacket, its sleeves bound around the arms over wadded cuffs which reached from wrist to elbow. In a similar way the trousers were bound to the calf of the hunter's leg, and light straw sandals over a long piece of cotton cloth were strapped to the feet and ankles. A huge string game-bag was slung over his back, and in an antelope's horn or a crane's bill bullets were carried. Powder was kept dry in a tortoise-shaped case of leather or oiled paper.

Yung Pak's father would have been glad to have taken time for seeking game with some of these hunters, but the business of his trip prevented any unnecessary delay on the journey.

CHAPTER VIII

The Monastery at Chang-An-Sa

In the latter part of the afternoon of the fourth day, our travellers, weary and worn with the long journey, came in sight of Chang-an-sa, the Temple of Eternal Rest, one of the oldest monasteries of Korea, where hundreds of monks devoted their lives to the service of Buddha.

The temple buildings, with deep curved roofs, are in a glorious situation on a small level lot of grassy land crowded between the high walls of a rocky ravine.

Yung Pak was delighted at his first sight of the great temple and the surrounding buildings. Through the swaying branches of the forest-trees he caught brief glimpses of the granite walls and turrets reddening in the sunset glow. The deepening gloom of the gorge was lighted by the slant beams of the setting sun, and on the water in the stream below flecks of foam sparkled and danced in the light of the dying day.

At first conversation was out of the question in the presence of such a majestic display of nature's wonders combined with the handiwork of man.

Coming to a gate of red stone, Yung Pak asked the meaning of the carved arrow in the arch overhead.

"That arrow," replied his father, "signifies that the temples to which this gate is the outer entrance are under the patronage of the king. Wherever you see that sign, you may know that the king has a special interest, and his messengers will be treated with respect and hospitality. Consequently, we may expect to be well cared for during our visit to this place."

Passing through the gate, our friends found themselves at once in the midst of the Chang-an-sa monastery buildings. In addition to the great chief temple, there were many smaller places of worship, with bell and tablet houses. There were also cells and sleeping-rooms for the monks, servants' quarters, stables, a huge kitchen, and an immense dining-room, together with a large guest-hall and a nunnery. In addition there were several buildings devoted to the care of the aged, the infirm, and the sick. All these places, during his stay, Yung Pak visited in company with Wang Ken and

guided by one of the monks.

Besides the buildings already mentioned there were several houses that had been erected by the king on purpose for the use of his officials, and it was to one of these that Ki Pak and his son and Wang Ken were led by several of the priests of the monastery. In the meantime, the servants and the ponies were cared for in other places assigned for the purpose.

Yung Pak was not sorry to arrive at his journey's end, even though he had enjoyed himself every moment of the time since he left Seoul. A four days' ride on the back of a pony will make the most enthusiastic traveller tired, and Yung Pak was glad to get to bed in the comfortable room provided just as soon as he had eaten his supper. His night's sleep was a sound one, though at midnight, and again at four o'clock in the morning, he was awakened by the ringing of bells and gongs that called the monks to the worship of Buddha.

In the morning Yung Pak awoke greatly refreshed, and, after a bountiful breakfast, he started out with Wang Ken, guided by a monk, to see the wonders of Chang-an-sa monastery.

One of the first things he noticed was the large number of boys about the place. He learned from the guide that these lads were all orphans who were being cared for by the priests, and who, later in life, would themselves become priests of Buddha. They were all bright and active, and were kept busily employed as waiters and errand-runners when they were not at work on their studies. Like most boys, however, they managed to get a generous share of time for play.

It would be impossible to tell in detail about all the strange things Yung Pak saw at this monastery. The chief temple was an enormous structure of stone and tile and carved wood, all decorated in gorgeous combinations of red, green, gold, and white.

Within this temple was one room called the "chamber of imagery." Inside its darkened walls a single monk chanted his monotonous prayer before an altar. During the chant he also occupied himself by striking a small bell with a deer-horn. Bells played a great part in the worship at Chang-an-sa, and all the prayers were emphasized by the clanging of bells great or small.

Along the shadowy walls of this room could be seen the

weapons, as well as the eyes and teeth, the legs and arms, of gods and demons otherwise invisible. These had a ghostly effect on Yung Pak, and made him cling closely to the side of his tutor.

Above the altar before which the priest knelt was an immense carving in imitation of an uprooted tree. Among the roots thus exposed were placed fifty-three idols in all kinds of positions. Beneath the carving were represented three fierce-looking dragons, on whose faces were signs of the most awful torment and suffering.

"About this altar-piece," said Yung Pak's guide, "there is a legend you might like to hear."

"Oh, yes," was the reply, "tell us the story."

"Many years ago," began the guide, "fifty-three Buddhist priests came from India to Korea for the purpose of converting the people to their belief. When they reached this place they were very tired, and sat down by a spring beneath the wide-spreading branches of a tree. They had not been there long when three dragons appeared and attacked the priests. During the contest the dragons called up a great wind which uprooted the tree. In return, each of the priests placed an image of Buddha on a tree-root, turning it into an

altar. Thus they were able to overcome the dragons, who were forced into the spring. On top of them great stones were piled, and afterward the monastery of Chang-an-sa was built upon the site of the battle between the priests and the dragons."

Afterward Yung Pak visited the great kitchens, the dining-rooms, the stables, the private rooms of the monks, and every place which might be of interest to an inquisitive boy of his age.

During the time he remained at Chang-an-sa he made several excursions into the surrounding country, but always returning to the monastery at night.

Meanwhile Ki Pak had transacted the business for which he came to this region, and at the end of ten days was ready to return to Seoul.

Of this journey it is not necessary to tell. No mishap marred the pleasure of the trip, and all returned safe and sound to their home in the capital city of Korea. Yung Pak had enjoyed the journey very, very much, yet he was not sorry once more to be among the familiar scenes and surroundings of home.

CHAPTER IX

A Full-Fledged Top-Knot

Like all Korean boys, Yung Pak wore his hair in two braids, and by the time he was twelve years old these had become very long, and hung in black and glossy plaits down his back.

On the day that he was thirteen his father called him to his room and told the lad that the time had come for him to assume the dignities of a man. In accordance with that statement, he had decided that on the next day his son should be formally "invested" with the top-knot. In other words, the crown of his head was to be shaven, and his long hair tightly coiled upon the bare place thus made. This is called the "Investiture of the Top-knot," and is always attended by solemn ceremonies.

In preparation for this event Ki Pak had made careful and elaborate arrangements. He had provided for his son new clothes and a hat after the style of his own. He had also

consulted an eminent astrologer, who had chosen the propitious day and hour for the ceremony after due consultation of the calendar and the stars and planets in their courses.

Generally, if the father is blessed with good fortune and a number of sons, he acts as his own master of ceremonies on such an occasion, but as Ki Pak had only this one son he decided to ask his brother, Wu-pom Nai, who had several sons and was a prosperous merchant of Seoul, to fill this important position.

Yung Pak could hardly wait for the morrow to come. So excited was he at the thought of the great honour that was to be his that he spent almost a sleepless night. However, like all nights, long or short, this one passed, and the wished-for hour at last arrived.

All the male members of the family were present. Korean women are reckoned of little importance and take no part in social and family affairs. On this occasion no men except relatives were asked to attend.

Yung Pak was directed to seat himself on the floor in the centre of the room, facing the east. This was the point of compass revealed by the astrologer as most favourable to the

young candidate for manly honours.

With great deliberation and much formality Wu-pom Nai proceeded to loosen the boy's heavy plaits of hair. Then with great care, while the onlookers watched with breathless interest, he shaved the crown of the lad's head, making a bare circular spot about three inches in diameter. Over this spot he twisted all the remaining hair into a coil about four inches long, pointing slightly forward like a horn.

Over the top-knot thus made the master of ceremonies placed the mang-kun, which was a crownless skull-cap made of a very delicate stiff gauze. This was tied on very tightly – so tightly that it made a deep ridge in Yung Pak's forehead and gave him a severe headache; but he bore the pain heroically and without flinching – for was he not now a man? The regular Korean man's hat, with its flapping wings, was next put on, and this part of the ceremony was complete.

Yung Pak now rose from his position, and made a deep bow to each one in the room, beginning with his father, and then in regular order according to relationship. Afterward, accompanied by his relatives, he proceeded to the room where were placed the tablets in memory of his ancestors.

There he offered sacrifice before each one in turn. Lighted candles in brass candlesticks he placed in front of each tablet, and beside the candles he put dishes of sacrificial food and fruit. Then, as before his living relatives, he bowed profoundly to the tablets of the dead ones, and formally and seriously let them know that he had been regularly invested with the top-knot, and now had the right to be regarded as a man.

The sacrifices made, Yung Pak called at the homes of all the male friends of the family, who now for the first time looked upon him as their equal, and in the evening Ki Pak gave a great dinner in honour of his son. Here there was much feasting and rejoicing, and all united in wishing the greatest prosperity and lifelong happiness to the little Korean boy now become a man.

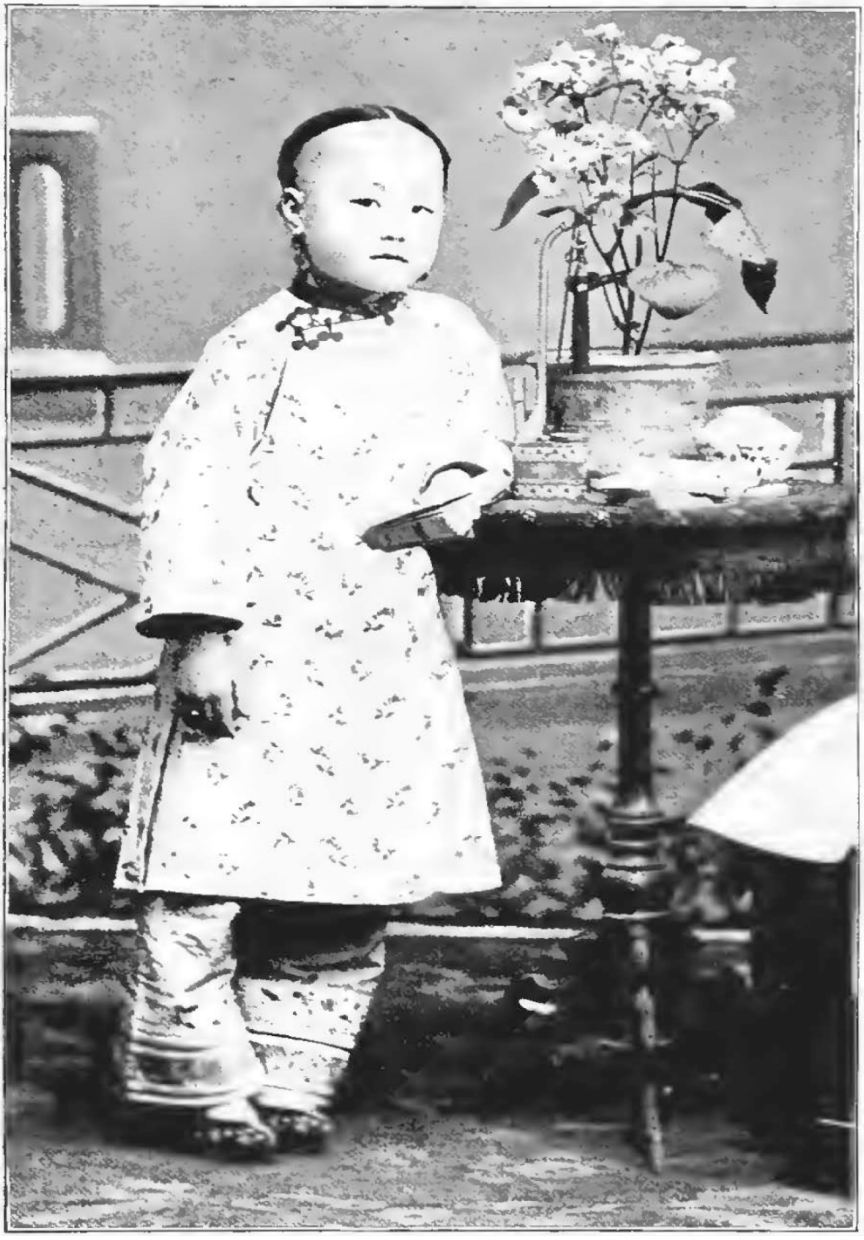
He is no longer our little Korean cousin. Hence, we leave him at this point, joining heartily in the best wishes and the compliments bestowed upon him by his friends.

THE END.

Our Little Chinese Cousin

By Isaac Taylor Headland

Illustrated with reproductions of photographs
and drawings of native artists



CHENCHU

Our Little Chinese Cousin

"MAMMA, you won't let her do it, will you? Please do not let her do it, mamma!"

These were the words of little Chenchu (Pearl), uttered in tones of supplication that only the pleading voice of a tender-hearted little girl carries with it when she has perfect confidence in the one besought.

She was being held by her mamma to have her feet bound for the first time. Her mother loved her very much, but like many another stylish mammas, she was more or less enslaved by the customs of her country, and as Chenchu was her only little girl, she wanted her to grow up to be the most accomplished lady in her circle of society. She had four brothers older than herself, and as a consequence she was a great pet, for little girls in wealthy families in China are almost as much appreciated as little boys, especially if they are in the minority.

When they are in the majority, however, if the family is poor, it is quite a different matter, for whatever she may be in other countries, a girl in China is little more than an expense until she is married, and hence it not infrequently

occurs that parents give their daughters to the families to which they are betrothed to be brought up, taking into their own home the girls who are betrothed to their sons. It thus happens that a boy and his future wife grow up together very much as brother and sister until they are of a marriageable age, when they are united as man and wife, to live happily – or otherwise – ever after. And so our little Chinese cousins often become better acquainted with their future wife or husband than their antipodal neighbours, with all their boasted freedom.

I wonder how you would like that. Just think of having the little girl you like best living at your home all the time – not living with you, however, for girls live in one part of the house in China, and boys in another, after they have reached the age of seven years, and do not play together very much more than if they were strangers. They have less liberty than their brothers, and on the whole most people prefer a preponderance of boys.

It is often amusing to hear the remarks in a family when a baby comes. If it is a boy, the parents are both congratulated because of the "Great Happiness" that has come to their home; while if it is a girl, and they already have

a girl or two without any boys, the old nurse goes about with her head down as if she had stolen it from somewhere, and when congratulated, if congratulated she happens to be, she looks more gloomy than before, and with a long-drawn sigh replies in the stereotyped expression of the race : “Only a ‘Small Happiness,’ but even girls are worth something.”

It was not so, however, with Chenchu. Her nurse was very fond of her. When she was little she often took off her shoes – which were made with nose, ears, and eyes like a pig, and which she called her "piggy shoes," and taking hold of her toes one by one, she repeated the following Chinese Mother Goose Rhyme, which always amused her as much as “This Little Pig” does her American cousin:

“This little cow eats grass,
This little cow eats hay,
This little cow drinks water,
This little cow runs away,
This little cow does nothing
But just lie down all day –
We'll whip her!”

With which last expression she would playfully slap the bottom of her foot.

Chenchu was a sweet, but I have sometimes thought rather a solemn, little girl. She had beautiful black eyes, just a trifle on the bias; long, straight, black hair, which was kept shaved off about her forehead, parted sometimes in the middle, sometimes on the side, sometimes diagonally, but usually not at all; wrapped at the back of her neck with a red cord, and neatly braided in a queue; a clear, yellowish, alabaster skin, and healthy, ruddy cheeks.

Her clothes were made of silk and were both rich and beautiful. Her skirt reached only to her knees, over which she wore a vest, or sleeveless garment, richly embroidered with butterflies and flowers, while her loose trousers were bound about her ankles with flowered ties, except when she preferred to wear them loose. Of course, she did not wear these silk clothes every day. Her common clothes were made of blue cotton cloth or large print calico, but they were always clean and neat, for Chenchu would never allow herself to be seen with soiled clothes or uncombed hair, much less would she go about with a dirty face.

Her father was a high official and was not able to be at home more than once every two or three years, so that she saw very little of him, but he loved her dearly, and as she was

his only little daughter, he was determined that she should be well educated. He was very wealthy, as all great Chinese officials are, so that she never knew what it was to be in want herself, though she was sensitive to the slightest discomforts of her companions, and was always trying to help them.

She lived in a fine house with large, stone lions in front of the gate, that looked as if they wanted to eat every little child that came near them, and she often told her nurse that



when she grew up she was going to give her a big house, and not let her live in a small, back room.

"Because, nurse," she used to say, "one day you will get

to be an old lady, and I will take care of you then as you take care of me now."

"Hey! this little child," the old nurse would say to herself, as only a Chinese nurse can say it, "she is always thinking of others, and never of herself."

She had a kind little heart. She was always trying to do for others regardless of herself. If a little playmate fell and hurt herself and began to cry, Chenchu would run to her, rub the spot that was injured, and say so many kind things that she soon forgot her pain, and so her little playmates were always glad to see her coming. She liked also to run and play with her brothers, but she liked still more to play with her nurse.

"Because," she said to her nurse one day, "you know how to play so many things. Boys only know how to play boys' games, such as 'Strike the Stick,' 'Kick the Marble,' and fly kites; but you know everything. How did you learn to play so many things, nurse? You must have had a very good nurse when you were a little girl." And then, as she looked at the gray hair and wrinkled face of the old nurse, she added, "But perhaps you never were a little girl."

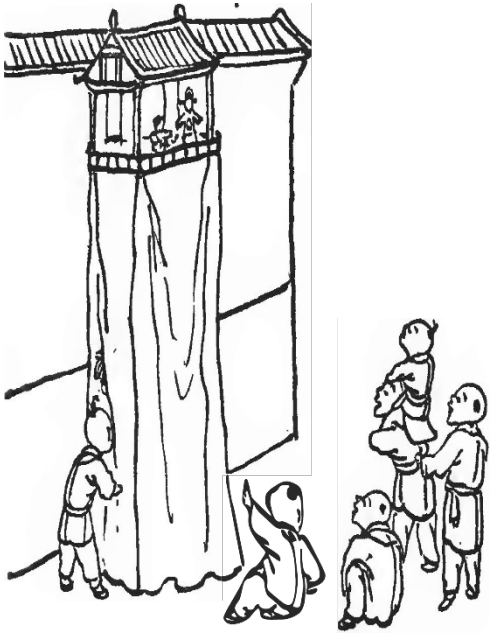
And the old nurse explained to her for the twentieth

time that she did not have a nurse when she was little; that she was poor and had to work very hard, until Chenchu's mamma asked her to come and be her nurse, and then "I studied how to play with children, as all good nurses should; but come, Chenchu, we must go into the house, the wind is rising and it looks like rain."

Chenchu never objected to what the nurse wanted her to do, but rather turned all her duties into a new kind of entertainment, and so, instead of whining to remain outside, she said: "Nurse, what is that rhyme you told me about Wind and Rain?" At which the nurse repeated the following:

"Old Grandmother Wind has come from the East,
She's ridden a donkey – a dear little beast;
Old Mother-in-law Rain has come back again,
Direct from the North on a horse it is plain;
Old Grandmother Snow is coming, you know,
From the West on a crane – just see how they go;
And old Aunty Lightning has come from the South,
On a big yellow dog with a bit in his mouth."

As they were going into the house they heard a rattle at the gate, and Chenchu exclaimed:



"Oh, nurse, there is 'Punch and Judy'; call him in and he can play for us while we are shut up in the house!"

Punch and Judy, a play which originated in China more than two thousand years ago, was called in, and for an hour Chenchu and her nurse, with other women and servants of the household, listened to the music of the cymbals, the singing of the showman, and the squeaking chatter and never-to-be-forgotten jokes of the facetious Punch and other members of that renowned puppet family, until the audience was satisfied, and the showman congratulated himself that he had spent such a pleasant and profitable hour while the "Heavens were leaking outside."

"How much are you giving him, nurse?"

"Ten cents," answered the nurse.

"That is not enough; give him a string of cash," said the child.

"What, sixty cents!" exclaimed the nurse with feigned surprise, looking at the little girl's mother.

The latter said nothing but nodded an assent.

"Yes, give him sixty cents. We can better afford to give him too much than he can afford to go with too little."

And as she gave him the string of cash, she muttered, "Yes, she thinks of everybody, even the passing showmen."

"Supper is ready," said one of the servants, stepping inside the door, and standing as straight and stiff as a well-trained footman.

It was only four o'clock in the afternoon, but, although they were rich, they followed the Chinese custom of eating only two meals a day. They drank tea when they got up in the morning, had their breakfast at ten o'clock, and supper at four or five.

It was a very different meal from what we usually see. The table was set without knives, forks or plates; but with spoons, bowls, and chop-sticks. There was neither table-cloth nor napkins, but in place of the latter there were small bits of paper cut in squares, with which they wiped their chop-sticks

and small side dishes.

Only one dish was brought on the table at a time, from which each was helped by a slave, a servant, or a nurse. They all ate together except the wife of the second brother, who took her food in her own room, because in China a younger brother's wife is never allowed to sit at the table with the eldest brother of her husband.

Chenchu and her brothers treated their mother with the greatest deference, each other with politeness, and the servants and slaves with kindness; said nothing about the food, whether it was good, bad, or indifferent, and in all their conversation acted as if each were the other's guest. One could not but be pleased to see the way in which, when a fresh dish came on the table, each with his own chop-sticks tried to select the choicest morsel for their mother or the older members of the family. Deference to their elders was the atmosphere of their home.

I am afraid some of Chenchu's little cousins, will be surprised and perhaps offended at the mention of slaves. And perhaps they will be still more surprised when they are told that one of these slave girls was Chenchu's very own.

She was only a little older than Chenchu herself, and had

been with her as playmate, nurse, assistant, or slave – for she was all of these as occasion demanded – ever since Chenchu could remember, and she would not have known very well how to get along without her.

When she was a very little child, many long years ago – at least four or five years ago – her mamma had bought this little girl from very poor parents, who said they would have to "throw her away" if they could not sell her, and brought her to their home, where they fed and clothed her very well.

It was only a few days after she had been given to Chenchu that she began to cough, and then to whoop, and soon Chenchu did the same, and in short they had whooping cough together. Chenchu did not scold or complain because the little Ya-t'ou, as she called her slave, had brought her this disease. Neither did the old nurse scold or complain, but just took care of the two children as though they had been sisters, always giving the first care, however, to Chenchu.

It was only a year after they had the whooping-cough until Chenchu "came down with the measles," and a few days later the Ya-t'ou took them, and they both laughed, and said that "turn about was fair play," and the nurse comforted

them by saying that as everyone must have these diseases it were better that they have them in their youth.

"I wonder if we will 'flower out' next," said Chenchu to the nurse after they were over the measles.

"No, indeed," answered the nurse, pulling up the child's sleeve, "I took care that you should not 'flower out' by planting flowers in your arms after you had had the whooping-cough."

And sure enough the two girls, slave and mistress, had the same kind of marks on the same places on their arms, where they had been vaccinated from the same tube of virus, to keep them from "flowering out" with the smallpox, which a large majority of our little Chinese cousins do very early in life. Indeed, one often sees a child on the street with its nurse or playing with its companions, covered all over with that loathsome disease. And then when they grow up their face as well as their body is covered with the marks, which disfigure them very much, and often injure their prospects for life.

"Come, Chenchu," said her youngest brother, Yüshan (or, as we would call him Jade Mountain), after supper was over, "would you not like to go for a walk in the garden? The



YÜSHAN

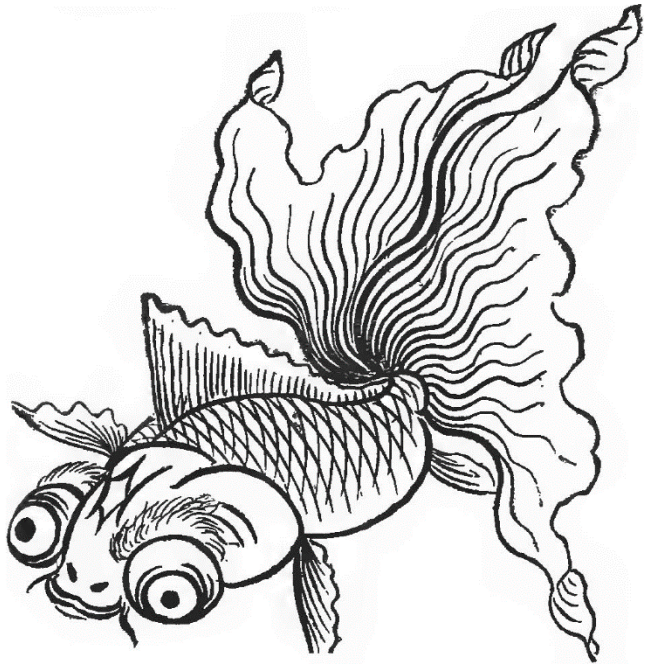
rain has made everything look clean; let us go out and see the flowers and goldfish, and listen to the birds."

"Thank you, brother, yes; the fish will be delighted with the fresh rain water in the pool, and the birds that all the dust is washed from the trees. Come, mamma; come, nurse, let us go out to the garden; bring your bird with you, brother, and feed him out there."

"Quite right, Chenchu, birdie will enjoy his food more if he takes it in the garden, and will be better off for the exercise; besides I can practise him a little."

The garden was laid out in all kinds of peculiar patterns, around which were borders made of roofing tiles. There were many kinds of beautiful trees, and it was a very paradise of blooming flowers and blossoming shrubs. But the prettiest part of the garden was a large pool in one corner in which were hundreds of goldfish, of which all Chinese are very fond. They are different from any other fish seen in any other country. They have large tails for such small fish, short, thick bodies, and big lumps like eyebrows above their bulging eyes, which make them look very hideous until you know that this is one of their greatest charms. As soon as you have learned that the price of a fish depends upon the

size of its eyebrows, you feel inclined to exclaim, "Oh, what beautiful big eyebrows it has."



Chenchu also kept a crock of fish in her own room which took the place in her play life that Yüshan's birds took in his. She had a beautifully carved black ebony stand on which she kept a variety of specimens from the pond. There were two black ones with large eyes, which she said would turn into goldfish after they were a little older. Their tails were horizontal and triple fan-shaped, and were so large that she told her nurse one day that she was "uncertain whether the tail wagged the fish or the fish the tail." Then she had two ordinary goldfish whose tails were perpendicular and double

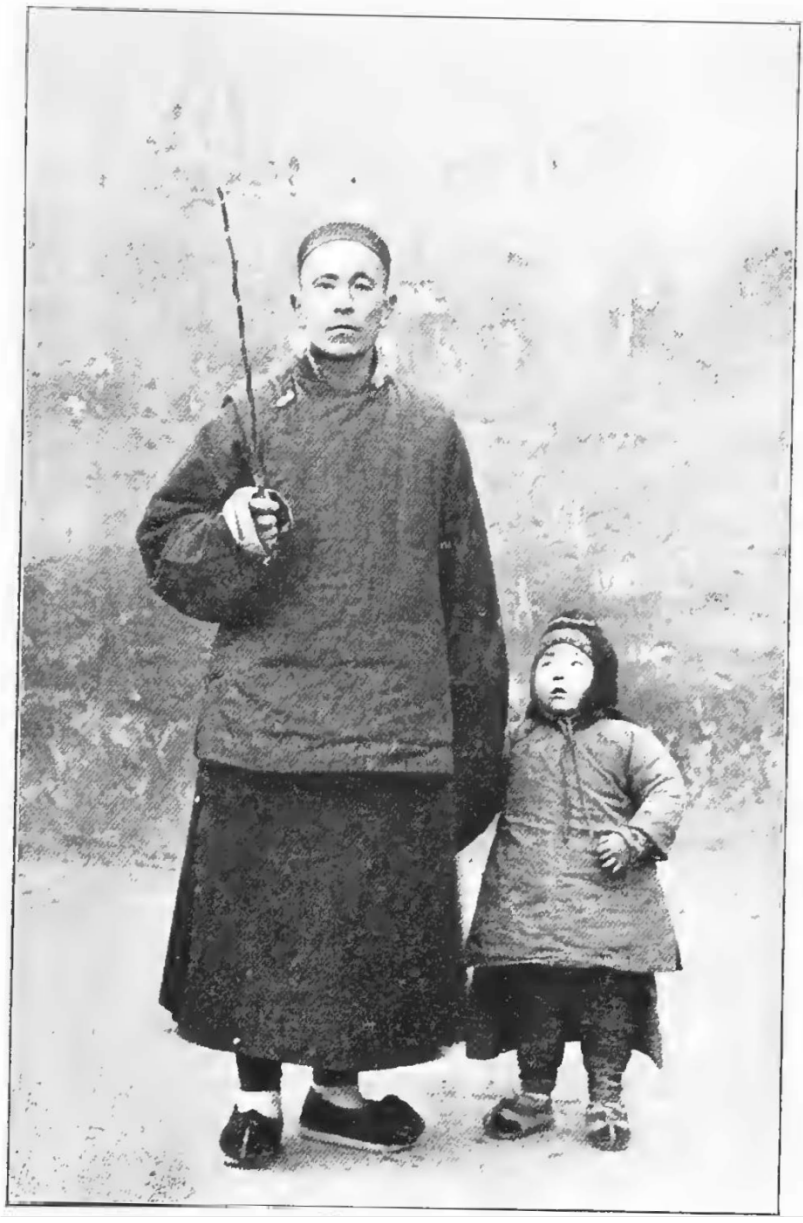
fan-shaped, two brown ones of the same general form, another brown one with a tail like the black ones, and two white ones which she called her "Albino fish." These she fed well, changing their water every day, and was as careful of them as though they were her children, never allowing them to get too hot in summer nor too cold in winter. Then when they grew large, she liberated them by putting them into the pond, taking, as she said, "a new family of little ones to raise."

Rising up from one side of the pool was a rockery, built like a mountain full of caves and winding staircases, with here and there a bridge over a deep ravine, and beside it a little bamboo grove where Chenchu liked to sit in the shade and watch the goldfish when they were fed. Among the rocks and caves in the cliff were birds and animals, lizards, scorpions, and snakes, painted in their natural colours, with here and there a little temple or shrine. In the trees all about the garden, hundreds of birds were singing their last evening song, while the red sun was setting behind the western mountains, lighting up the clouds with a fiery or purple hue.

"Now, birdie," said Yüshan, "we must have some exercise and get our supper," and with that he tossed a seed into the

air which the bird flew up and caught, returning to eat it upon his shoulder, or on the bent perch he held in his hand. Of course, the bird would not do that at first. It had to go through a process of training. When he first got it, Yüshan carried it about in a cage until it became accustomed to him; then he tied a string around its neck and let it perch on a stick he held in his hand; then he made the string so long that it could fly, for the seeds he threw up in the air; and finally by kind treatment the bird became so tame that it needed no string, for it knew that Yüshan loved it so much that he would not hurt it, and so it would perch on his shoulder, head or arm, and fly up many yards to catch the seeds he tossed into the air.

One of Yüshan's pleasantest pastimes, after he had his bird well trained, was to take it out on the common where a hundred other boys and men were gathered practising their birds and compete with them in his bird tricks. And the birds seemed to enjoy it as much as the men. They would fly up high into the air to catch a seed, while their masters would change their positions, and, after going in a great circle, would return to their masters' shoulders to eat their seed, and to be kindly stroked or petted for their good



A MAN WITH HIS TAME BIRD

conduct.

As darkness began to gather over the garden, the old frog of which the children were very fond hopped up on the edge of the pond, and sang his evening song, while Chenchu repeated the follow rhyme:

"Froggie, old Froggie, come over to me,
You'll never go back to your home in the sea,
You're an idle old croaker as ever I saw,
And if not calling papa, you're calling mamma,"

pronouncing the words papa and mamma in such a way as to imitate the voice of the frog.

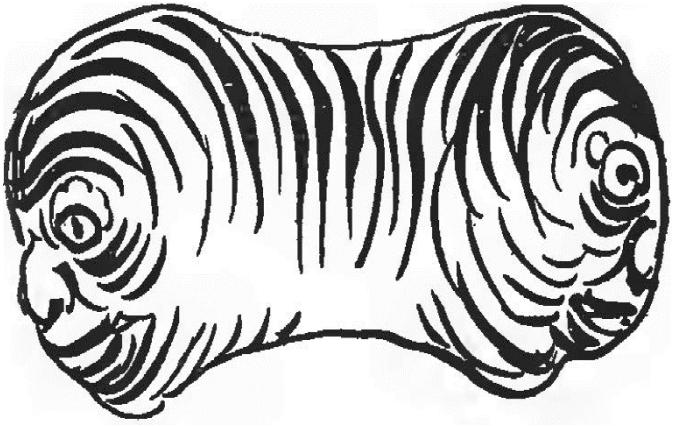
"Come, Chenchu," said her mother, "it is time little girls were in bed; we must not stay out after dark."

"Yes, mamma," answered Chenchu, never thinking of remaining outside after her mother told her to come in, "nurse and I are going to bed at once."

Chenchu always slept with her nurse, and the bed on which they slept was very different from that of her little American cousin. It was made of brick – one-half of the room being built up twenty inches above the other, and covered with brick the same as the floor. In winter they built a fire under the bed until the bricks were warm, over which

they spread a thin mattress, and thus instead of having one hot brick in their bed they had twenty.

They folded their bedding up neatly every morning and put it in boxes or piled it up on the end of the bed, and then covered it all over with a spread to keep out the dust. And indeed you would say they ought to do so if you could have seen the dust storm that passed over the city a few days later. The sky became overcast with yellow clouds, the wind blew a gale, and finally the rain began to fall; but not pure, clear drops of water like those you are accustomed to see, but drops of yellow mud, during all which time it was so dark at three o'clock in the afternoon that they had to light the lamps in shops and stores and homes.



You would have been surprised, I am sure, if you could have seen Chenchu's pillow. It was made like a tiger with a head on each end, with large, black glass eyes, a savage

mouth, and leather ears, and filled with sawdust instead of feathers. When not used as a pillow, it was employed as a plaything, and is called the Chinese bogi-boo. Strange, isn't it, that children would rest their head upon them? But so it is with the people on the other side of the earth, who walk with their feet toward our feet and their head pointing in the opposite direction. It was thus Chenchu lay down to sleep on the lower side of the world, like a fly on the ceiling, without falling off.

"Come, Chenchu," said the nurse the next morning, "the boys are already in school; you will be late with your lessons this morning."

"Oh, dear," said the little girl, awaking with a smile and a little yawn, "I slept so soundly. I did not awake at all during the night."

She never thought of getting up with a frown and a groan, as some lazy children do, because she had to go into school. She spent two hours in study every morning before breakfast. She loved to get her lessons, in spite of the fact that they were sometimes very hard. And well she might, because did her papa not want her to be as well educated as her brothers? Of course, she would not disappoint her papa.



CHENCHU'S FATHER

They did not have a public school to go to, nor even a private school like little English and American boys and girls have; but ever since her oldest brother was seven years old, they had had a teacher who taught them in their own home; and Chenchu studied with her brothers.

Each had his own little rough stool at his own little rough table, for although they were rich, they did not have fine furniture in their schoolroom. You should have heard them when they began to study in the morning. It was like – I was about to say pandemonium let loose, but I do not want to compare those well-bred children to a lot of demons. But just think of it, they all studied aloud and all at the same time, and the louder they studied the better the teacher liked it. The boys began with a book something like this:

"Men one and all in infancy
    Are virtuous at heart;
Their moral tendencies the same
    Their practice wide apart,"

not one word of which they understood until years later, when the teacher went through it with them and explained

it. Now all they were expected to do was to commit it to memory, which, of course, they did.

When they had completed this book, which contained several hundred different characters, like so many A, B, Cs, they took up the "Rules of Behaviour for Boys," which taught them that—

> '"When riding or driving, you always descend
> From your horse or your cart when you meet with a friend,
> Nor remount till your friend has passed by, I should say,
> A hundred, or more than that, steps on his way,"

and here again they had several hundred new A, B, Cs which were more difficult than the others. Indeed, American and English boys and girls ought to rejoice that it is English that they are studying, and not Chinese, for every book that these dear little folks pick up is full of nothing but new A, B, Cs from beginning to end.

"And does poor little Chenchu have to learn all this?" you ask.

No, not just the same, but what she has to learn is not any easier. And if she hopes to make her papa happy, she

will have to learn all these and many thousands of others of the same kind.

Chenchu began with the little "Classic for Girls," which was very unlike any of the books we read. It began at the right side instead of the left; it was printed on one side of the paper only, the leaves being cut at the back instead of at the edge; notes were printed at the top instead of at the bottom of the page; and she read up and down instead of from left to right. But that is not all. She writes with a brush instead of a pen; on tissue instead of stiff paper; with a cake, instead of a bottle, of ink; and turns her back to the teacher when she recites. Not very polite, you think? Yes, indeed, she is a very polite little girl, and never forgets to thank the teacher for hearing her lesson.

Today the first verse she learned was:

"You should well prepare the cooking,
Be the food however plain,
And be able in receiving
To politely entertain,"

and in order to accomplish this end, Chenchu was allowed

to have as many tea-parties as she wished, to which she invited her little friends, just as her mamma invited and entertained the ladies of her acquaintance. And you should have seen the dignity with which they were conducted, it was:

"Won't Lilly have another cup of tea?" with a little bow and a rising from her seat.

"No, I thank you, I have had quite enough," with more bows and risings.

"I am afraid my tea is not to your taste today;" more bows.

"Indeed, on the contrary, it is very good, I think I have never drunk better tea," etc.

During the afternoon, Chenchu was allowed to remain out of school and play with her pets, of which she had a goodly number. In the first place she had a large, green grasshopper, which she said could "sing with its legs." She had a beautiful little cage made out of a kind of gourd, in which she kept it, and she carried it with her all the time, feeding it as her brother fed his bird, and treating it very kindly.

That afternoon as she was playing with it, and talking to

it as if it was one of her little friends, she turned and said to her nurse:

"Next to you and mamma and papa and brothers, I love my grasshopper."

Then she looked solemn and thoughtful for a moment, and added:

"No, I forgot; there is grandpa and grandma and aunties and uncles and cousins, and – no, there are a great many people I love better than grasshopper – of course, one should love one's friends better than one's pets, shouldn't they, nurse?"

And the nurse told her she thought so.

"But grasshopper is a very good companion, don't you think so?"

"Yes, Chenchu, he is a very good companion, and I am sure he loves the little girl that keeps his cage so neat and clean, as much, at least, as a grasshopper can love. But what about Ruffles?"

"Oh, Ruffles is a very nice dog, but then, you know, he is such a mischief; he is always biting and tearing things."

"Yes, of course; but he will get over that when he gets bigger; that is the way, you know, with puppies."



CHENCHU'S NURSE

"Quite right, nurse, but he is not bigger yet. I suppose I shall love him more when he grows. Just look at him as he sits there, nurse, isn't he cunning and mischievous looking?"

And sure enough, Ruffles looked as if he would like to have had a sawdust doll or a bogi-boo pillow to tear to pieces.

And thus Chenchu continued to talk and play and study in her solemn little way, becoming more and more attractive as the days went by, and the old nurse was heard to utter many, many times:

"Hey, this little child!"

It was only a few days after this that she came to the nurse with her brow puckered into half-century wrinkles with some problem that had been puzzling her wise little brain. She had been reading her "Classic for Girls," and had come to that part where it says:

"Have you ever learned the reason
Why your ears should punctured be?
'Tis that you may never listen to the talk of
Chang and Li.
True the holes were made for earrings
That your face may be refined,

But the other better reason you should
ever keep in mind."

As she repeated these lines, she told the old nurse how it hurt when they made the big holes in her ears for earrings, how they bled, and how sore they were for some days afterward; and then with a solemn look on her sweet little face, she said:

"Nurse."

"Yes, Chenchu."

"Why are the lower parts of your ears so much torn?"



"That, my little girl, is because my earrings were so heavy that they tore out the first hole, and I had to have another made," said the nurse.

"Nurse, if people ought to wear earrings, why are they not born with holes in their ears, so that they would not have to have them bored?"

But the old nurse could not answer her question; and indeed I doubt if it occurred to her that boring holes in little girls' ears in which to put jewels is a heathen practice, which,

by the way, very many of Chenchu's little Christian cousins have not yet given up.

If you had seen the old nurse's earrings, you would see that her earrings were made of large, heavy pieces of silver in the form of rings, on which were hung other rings made of glass or stone which looked like jade.

Chenchu's, of course, were little as well as light. They were small, gold rings in the shape of dragons, with savage eyes and open mouth; with two little coil wire springs for feelers, on the ends of which were two little pearls; and Chenchu was very proud of them, for she had not yet learned that it was wrong to bore holes in the perfect little ears nature had given her, in order to make them into a jewel case.

She was very proud also, of course, in an inoffensive way, of her fingernails, and their shields. She had let the nails grow on her little finger and ring-finger, until they became very long, and then wore nail-protectors on the ends of her fingers like thimbles, to keep them from being broken. The protectors were made of silver, plated with gold, with beautiful flowers enameled all over the back, and were about two and a half inches long.

Every afternoon after her lessons were done, in addition to her play, Chenchu had to spend an hour or two in learning to embroider. Her nurse as well as her mamma was very skillful with the needle, and Chenchu never thought of growing up to be a woman without knowing how to make beautiful shoes for herself as well as her husband, finely embroidered handkerchiefs, and all kinds of pretty clothing, besides having an accomplishment which would be a recommendation in the eyes of any mother-in-law. Had she not learned also in her little "Classic for Girls"?

"If from fancy work and cooking
You can save some precious hours,
You should spend them in embroidering
Ornamental leaves and flowers."

Chenchu's mamma often told her how the Chinese are famed, and have been for centuries, for their beautiful embroidery, and she herself undertook the teaching of her little daughter in this particular art, for her mamma was very skillful with the needle. They not only embroidered "ornamental leaves and flowers," as they were taught in the

little classic, but dragons, demons, and children, on all kinds of decorations, from magnificent tapestries and screens, to dolls' clothing and fans. None of them were more skillful than the old nurse, and it was not uncommon to see the mother, the little girl, and the nurse doing the same kind of work, with but little difference in the degrees of perfection except in the case of Chenchu. She was not yet able to ply her needle as well as her elders, but everyone said she did very well for a girl of her age.

"Mamma," said Chenchu one day as she was embroidering a beautiful little child on a piece of silk, "I would like to learn to paint."

"Very well, my daughter, just as soon as you learn to write well you may begin to paint. But you can never hope to be a painter unless you are a good writer."

"Why, mamma?"

"Because writing is the A, B, Cs of painting."

For many days thereafter, Chenchu spent a large part of her time with her pen (which was a brush) writing or painting out the words she found in her lessons, and she was delighted when, showing it to her mother, it met with her approval, and she was allowed to begin her painting lessons.

Now I have no doubt that most of Chenchu's little English-speaking cousins do not know that all the art of eastern Asia originated in China. They have seen such beautiful things from Japan that they think the Japanese are the artists of the East, but if they will inquire of the Japanese they will find that the highest ambition of a Japanese artist is to do something that will compare favourably with the work of the Chinese master he happens to be imitating. Eight hundred years before Michael Angelo and Raphael were decorating the cathedrals of Rome, and painting pictures of the angels, Wu-tao-tzu and Yen-li-pen had decorated with Buddhist divinities the temples of the East, and were establishing schools which were to do for Asia what the Italian schools did for Europe.

Of course, Chenchu's papa had a large collection of the paintings of great artists. Every official and scholar who pretends to be anything, is more or less of a patron of art, for, next to literature, art stands highest in the estimation of the Chinese people. These pictures are very different from those which hang on your parlour walls. They are painted on paper or silk (paper being preferable), mounted on soft paper with silk facing all around the picture, and then put

up in the form of a scroll, so that it can be rolled up when not hung on the wall. Some of them are six or seven hundred years old, and have become a deep, rich brown with their advancing years, which gives them a value that only age and a good state of preservation lend to all things human. Many of them are painted by men, and so Chenchu wanted to see if she could not follow in the footsteps of Yün Ping and Chao Meng-hui, two of the greatest of these female painters, of whose pictures she was especially fond.

The first thing to be done was to find her a teacher who could give her proper instruction; and the next thing was to purchase books which contained pictures worthy to be copied. To get these she must send a servant or make a trip to Liu-li-ch'ang, the great book street of the city, if not the greatest street in China.

After she had talked the matter over with her nurse, she came to her mamma greatly excited.

"Mamma," she said, "I want you to promise me something, you will do it, mamma?"

"I can hardly grant my little girl's requests until I know what they are," said her mamma.

"Oh, yes, mamma, you need not be afraid, I will not ask

anything wrong."

"I know you would not," said her mamma. "But you know it would be rash for me to grant a thing before I know what it is, and you know what the 'Rules of Behaviour for Boys' says."

"What is that?" asked Chenchu.

"About –

"'A rash promise, if ever you made it,
It's wrong if you make it, and wrong if you keep it.'

answered her mamma."

"Well, it is this," said Chenchu, communicating it as a matter of the greatest importance. "I want you to let nurse and me go with the teacher to Liu-li-ch'ang to buy a copy-book."

Consent was given at once, the mule was hitched to the official cart, and it was not long before they had arrived at the east end of the great street.

It is not great like Broadway, because of its length; nor like Commonwealth Avenue, because of its width; nor like Wall Street, because it is a great financial centre; but because

it is the centre of literature and art of the oldest, longest-lived, and greatest literature and art-loving nation the world has ever known.

At the east end is a framework which looks like the relic of an ancient gateway. Here Chenchu insisted upon getting out and walking with the nurse that she might get a view of the stores.

Now the side of the stores that faced the street looked very much like broken-down pig-sties, but when once you were inside you could find all the treasures of porcelain, jade, pearls, and precious stones, together with curios, that had been sold and resold, and then sold again and yet again for two thousand or more years.

There were bookstores, book shops, book stalls, and book peddlers in which or from whom you could get any book that is published or has ever been published in China. There were encyclopaedias that contained as many volumes as there are days in a hundred years; and there were histories that a two-horse cart would not haul, because, forsooth, you could not pile them on a cart.

About half-way down the street there is a large – no, we cannot say large, for no building in China is large as we view

buildings – but a very noted candy store. The guide-books say it is the best place in the city to buy candy; at any rate Chenchu bought some. Then she went into an art store just opposite. There were cases after cases of pictures in a most dilapidated-looking condition – pictures for which they asked three hundred dollars. In a back room they had stacks of books of paintings by famous artists, some of which were only to look at, while others were designed as copies for budding genius to begin by.

Chenchu bought three or four of these at an enormously high price for a copy-book, but a very reasonable rate for a work of art, and then returned home as delighted with what she had seen as any of you would be if you were to visit this great curio centre.

That evening when Chenchu was about to go to bed, feeling tired after her long ride, she said, as she laid her head down on her bogi-boo pillow:

"Nurse, can you tell me a story before I go to sleep?"

"Yes," answered the nurse, "if you will guess who the story is about."

"Very well," said Chenchu, "if I do not go to sleep."

"Once upon a time," began the nurse, "there was a little

boy who lived in a quiet home with his father and mother, and the three were very happy together, for they all loved each other dearly."

"As soon as I know who it is, I will tell you," said Chenchu, breaking in at this point.

"But the mother died when the child was only seven years old, leaving him and his father alone together.

"The father was very lonely without his wife, and often his eyes would fill with tears. The child noticed this and wondered what he could do to comfort his papa, for he had a kind heart and thought more of his papa's sorrow than he did of his own.

"What thoughts passed through his mind we cannot tell, but he seemed to have determined to devote himself entirely to the task of making his father happy.

"In summer when it came time to go to bed, the child would fan his father's pillow to make it cool, and in winter he would lie down on his couch to make it warm, and in a hundred little ways like this, he manifested his love for –"

"Wasn't it Huang Hsian?" asked Chenchu, with a little yawn.

"Yes, do you not think he was a good little boy?"

"Very good," said Chenchu, "tell me another."

"Once upon a time," began the old nurse, in the stereotyped way, ready at once with the story, "there were a number of little boys who lived in neighbouring homes, and always played together.

"They were very careful in their play never to hurt each other or to say anything that would hurt anyone's feelings. None of them ever thought of using any bad language, or of saying anything that they would be ashamed to have their nurse or their mother hear.

"One of them was especially diligent in his study, and always slept at night on a round pillow, so that when he became restless and moved about, it would slip out from under his head and he would awake and resume his work.

"He was also very careful of his books and would never soil them by wetting his thumb to turn over the leaves, or run the risk of tearing them when turning the leaves by scratching them up with his nails.

"One day when he and a lot of his little companions were playing together, one of them by accident fell into a large crock of water that stood nearby.

"While all the others scattered in every direction calling

for help, the boy who had spent so much time at his books quietly kept his presence of mind, picked up a large stone, with which he struck the crock such a blow as to make a hole in it so that the water all ran out, and thus he saved the life of the child who must have otherwise been drowned before help could have arrived."

The old nurse had been watching the drooping lids while she related this story, and as she finished, a little start and a catching of the breath told her that Chenchu was in the land of dreams.

"Come, Chenchu," said nurse, about two o'clock in the afternoon, "come and dress; mamma is going to call on Mrs. Ch'en."

"Oh, goody, goody!" said Chenchu, with childish glee, and ran to be dressed, for Mrs. Ch'en's was one of the most delightful places to go calling.

Now when they arrived at Mrs. Ch'en's you would never have thought that this little lady was the one who had so far forgotten her dignity as to have said, "Goody, goody." She met Mrs. Ch'en's two little daughters, and they her, with the same dignity and respect shown to each other by their mammas; but a few moments later when, with their nurses,

they were out in the garden, they were again little children, and were down on the ground playing "jackstones" as naturally as any other little folks you ever saw. After a few moments they tired of this, and changed to "Blind Man's Buff," and then "Three-cornered Cat," and a kind of "Hop-scotch," and – would you believe it? – they even took off their good, silk garments and played roly-poly, and tumbled about as boys would have done, even climbing some of the smaller trees – and their nurses did not scold them.

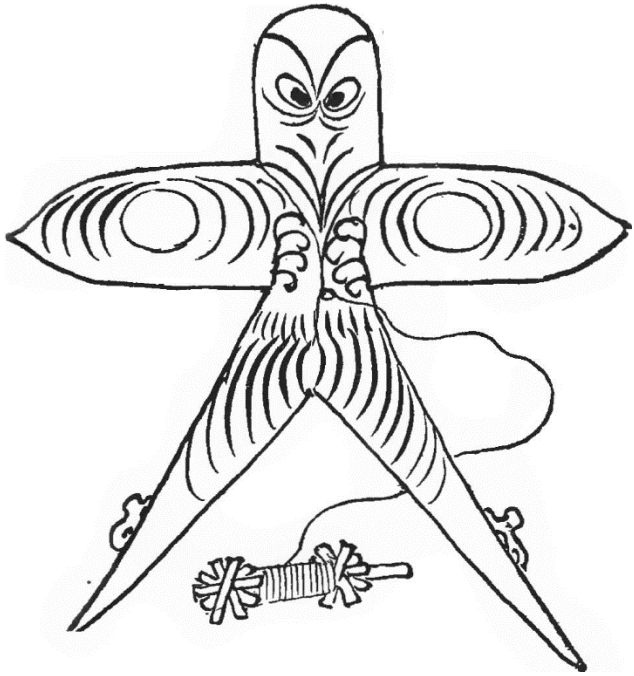
Then they were called into the house, not to be scolded by their mammas – for had not they done the same when they were little girls? – but to have tea with them. Now again they were little ladies, and drank their tea and ate their cookies and candy with the same quiet dignity as their mammas, only engaging in such part of the conversation as concerned them, for children in China act upon the principle that it is better to be seen than to be heard when mamma has company.

As they were going home that afternoon, a little beggar girl, with bound feet and nothing on but a pair of trousers, ran after their cart begging for a cash. Chenchu asked the nurse to stop the cart, and she gave the child a handful of

cash, and, after saying a few kind words to her, she told her to come to their house, and she would give her some of her clothing, as she was the same size as Chenchu herself.

"It is very hard," she said to the nurse after they had passed on, "to have to run after a cart and beg when your feet are not bound, but when they are bound it is very much harder."

As they passed on, the nurse saw a shoemaker with his shop slung on the two ends of a stick, and she once more stopped to tell him to bring it around to their house to



mend her shoes. Queer, isn't it, that the shoemaker should carry his shop to people's houses to mend their shoes, rather

than that they should take their shoes to his shop? But so it is in the land of the Celestials, where not only the shoemaker, but the barber, the blacksmith, and the soup-kitchen are willing to go to the customer, rather than wait for the customer to come to them.

As the spring winds began to blow, Yüshan got out his kite, and he and his grandfather went to fly their kites together, that of his grandfather being a centipede about thirty feet long, while Yüshan's was in the form of a butterfly, painted in the most gorgeous colours. How high they went! Away up above where the crows fly, and while they, with a hundred others, were flying their kites on the common, thousands of crows came in flocks from the country where they had been feeding, and went to roost in the gates of the palace grounds and other imperial buildings, the rookery to which all the crows of the neighborhood resort.

Of course, Chenchu could not go out on the common to see the sport, as our little Chinese girl cousins are not allowed to play with the boys – not even in kite-flying or coasting, but she had just as good a time inside the court, for as soon as they went out she called to a servant to tell the carter to saddle her donkey.

"What are you going to do, Chenchu?" asked the nurse.

"Going for a ride. You see if I do not exercise Lü'rh, we will not be able to live with him."

Lü'rh was the dearest little donkey you ever saw; but perhaps you never saw very many donkeys. He was about the colour of a rat, but his hair, or fur, for it was more like fur than hair, stuck out like the bristles on a shoe-brush. He was very, very little even for a donkey, and his ears were almost a foot long. He had the wisest kind of a look on his face when he threw his ears forward, and a very mischievous look when he turned them backward. His little tail, which was very much like a cow's, kept going *swish-swash*, this way and that, to keep off the flies. If a man jumped on his back, even though he was so large that his feet almost dragged on the ground, Lü'rh would trot off with him as though he were no heavier than a bag of hay for his dinner, so that Yüshan said there was "more muscle wrapped up in the same space in a donkey than in anything else in creation," which Chenchu felt was almost the truth.

But you should have seen him when he had Chenchu on his back. He seemed to know that he must be gentle. He would canter off as carefully as though he were carrying



CHENCHU'S DONKEY, LÜ'RH

eggs, his long ears bent forward, and a look on his face as wise as that of a judge, while he seemed to be saying to himself:

"Now you must be careful, Lü'rh, and not throw Chenchu off; and do not run with a rough gait, for little girls do not like to be jolted when they are riding," and off he ran as fast as he could go, and as gently as anyone could wish.

The following day was to be a holiday; no school, not even in the forenoon. It was the fifth day of the fifth month, and one of the greatest holidays of the year. The children had waited anxiously for its coming, and now it was at hand. It was the Spring Festival, which was ushered in by the beauties of budding and blossoming trees and flowers, and all the promises of summer filled with luscious fruits and rich harvests. There was no "spring fever" feeling as the children arose that morning. Indeed, all the children in the city, as well as most of the grown people, were in holiday garb and ready for a picnic. The labourers had all "knocked off" work for the day, and were going to spend as much money in a few hours as they could make in a week.

Each one had made for him, out of silk, a little ornament in which was a mulberry, a cherry, a cucumber, a bean, and

a small gourd, all of which were also made of silk, and which for five days he wore suspended from the button of his coat, after which he threw it away, with the belief that he was casting off all ills for at least a year, and anyone who picked it up would "take" the diseases which otherwise would have come to him.

When they arose in the morning, each one had powdered "dragon stone" put into his ears and nose to prevent scorpions, snakes, lizards, and hundred- or thousand-legged worms from creeping into his head, and a little bunch of fragrant weed tied to the tassel of his queue to ward off disease. They ate three-cornered rice dumplings wrapped up in reed blades, in memory of one of the great poets who gave his life for the sake of his prince, and then if they were convenient to a river or a lake, they went for a ride in a dragon boat all decorated with bright-coloured flags and paper lanterns.

There was a fair at the largest Buddhist temple in the city, and both Chenchu and Yüshan were to be allowed to go. It was almost as important a time as the New Year's festival, and they were very much excited over the prospects.

The large, black mule was hitched to the cart – the

official cart, with red wheels, notched tires, two windows on each side, and a red oilcloth band around the bed. It was like a very large Saratoga trunk on two wheels, and would have been rough to ride in but for the fact that it was well filled with cushions. As it was, the rider was tossed from side to side, his head bumped against the framework, and he was in danger of coming home, after a short ride, with his head a veritable "brain-bag."

Both children and the old nurse were packed in the cart, while one servant walked on each side with one hand on the shaft, and another led the mule. They went just as fast as the legs of the servants could carry them, bumpity bump, bumpity bump, over the rough streets, now through a narrow alley, and now along a broad avenue, with clouds of dust following them all the way, until when they reached the temple you could have written your name with your finger in the dust on their fine silk garments.

But what did they care for dust? Besides, one of the servants soon brushed it all off with a piece of silk tied to the end of a stick with which every cart is provided. There were too many attractions to allow them to think of dust, or of anything else except the many things there were to hear

and see and eat and drink. It was like Fourth of July, or Bunker Hill Day on Boston Common, with many other side-shows and entertainments added to the list.

First and foremost, before they entered the gate, was the peanut man, with Chinese peanuts, and American peanuts, and hulled peanuts, and salted peanuts, and sugared peanuts, and peanuts in every form that would attract the attention of the child. There were peanut hulls all about his stand; and little boys and girls, well dressed, medium



dressed, poorly dressed, and undressed, on all sides eating peanuts and scattering the hulls in every direction.

Next to him, but just inside the gate, was the toy man,

and, as they entered, Chenchu, forgetting for the moment that she was the daughter of a great official, and realizing that she was only a little girl, exclaimed:

"Oh, nurse, just look at the toys!"

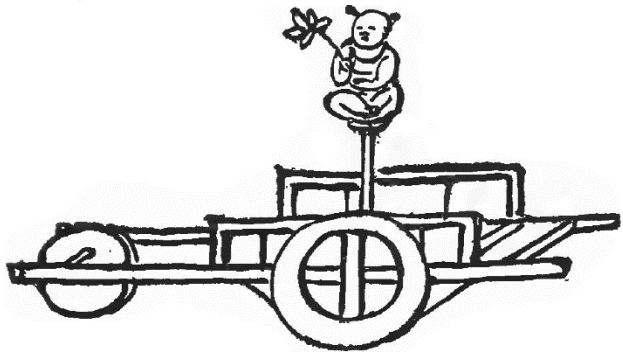
"Yes," said the nurse, "would you like to have some?"

But as she spoke the toy-seller turned from a poor little girl who did not have money enough to buy the doll she wanted, saying:

"No, if you do not have the money, you cannot have the doll."

"What will the little lady have?" asked Chenchu, pointing to the poor little girl.

"She wants that large doll but she does not have the money to buy it."



"How much is it?" she continued.

"Twelve cents," said he, adding two cents to the price he had just asked the little one.

"Give it to me," she said, and taking it in her arms she placed it gently in the arms of the other, saying:

"Do you like it? Nurse will give him the money. Would you like anything else?"

"You are very kind," said the little girl, with a polite bow and a thank you, "I would not dare to ask for anything else."

"Yes, she wanted this cart," said the toy man, with an eye to business, "but if she could not buy the doll, she certainly could not buy both."



"Would the cart make you happy?" asked Chenchu, "because my papa lets me do whatever I wish that will make anyone happy," looking at her nurse.

The nurse paid the money without a word, as though it was something she was accustomed to doing, and purchasing a toy or two for Chenchu, they walked on, leaving the little girl very happy.

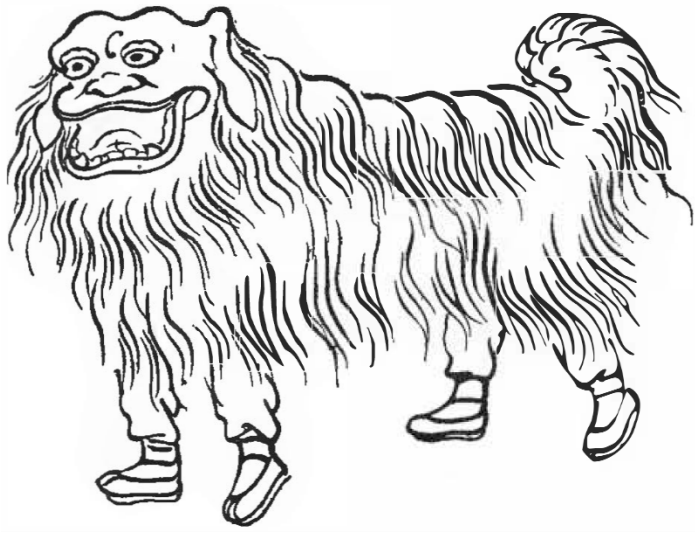
There were things that could attract, interest, or amuse children of all ages, from fifty down to four. There were

curios two thousand years old. There were rich gold and silver ornaments, jades and pearls. There were birds and kites that vied with each other in flying high into the sky, and there was the little clay lady, with skirts loaded at the bottom, and round like the end of an egg, so that she could not be upset. But the thing that was most amusing to the children, was an old man who had married a young wife, whom he was carrying about on his back, watching in all directions lest she should speak to someone else.



There were men and women, boys and girls, who had come in from the country to spend the day, and who could be easily distinguished from their city cousins by their healthy, ruddy faces, their bright green or pink trousers, the open-mouthed wonder with which they gazed at the sights, and the way they ate peanuts and drank suant'mi-t'ang – a drink made of sour plums – a good substitute for lemonade

in hot weather at city or country picnics. Men had brought their kitchens on their shoulders, slung on the two ends of a stick, and were kept busy baking cakes and frying onion and garlic hash for the thousands whose business it was, for the day at least, to eat, drink, and be merry.



The showmen were there too. There was the man with the trained bear which would juggle with the sword, wrestle with the manager, stand on his head, turn somersaults, or sell bean-curd as the spectators might desire. There was the man with the trained mice, "the cunningest little things you ever saw," so he told the children. They would draw water, turn a mill, go through a pagoda, climb a tree, or do whatever the manager indicated with his wand was expected of them. Then there was the man with his two little boys,

one of whom he dressed up like a girl when they played in the "dry-land boat show," and then made them into a lion



by covering them with a grass mat, and putting a lion's head on the one in front. There were men sitting on the ground whittling toys out of wood, and others moulding them out of clay, and what was that? a boy with a clay chicken and bellows attached, by the pulling of which he could make it cackle like a real hen. The queer thing about these clay toys was that the rooster crowed, the dog barked, and the baby cried all in the same tone as the hen cackled. Do you ask why? Because they all had the same kind of a whistle in them – a whistle made of a reed.

"Oh, look at the jugglers," said Yüshan.

"Where?" asked Chenchu.

"Under the shade of that big tree. Let us go and see them."

And sure enough, there was a man balancing a table on one leg on his chin, while a small boy, standing on a stool a foot high, was bending backward and picking up a handkerchief from the floor with his teeth. As the boy raised up, the man let the table down, amid the applause of the crowd, and they each took up one new trick after another, the best of which was when the man balanced a pole twenty feet tall on his shoulder with the boy lying on his back on the top.

All day they wandered about among the stalls, watching the hucksters sell their goods, eating cakes hot from the pans of the travelling kitchens, or candies blown into various forms for them by the candy blowers; talking with friends who had come to enjoy the day as they had done, or watching the sleight-of-hand performer manipulate his little wax balls, or take dinners of ten courses out of an empty cylinder, until they were tired, and as glad to go home as they had been to come in the morning.

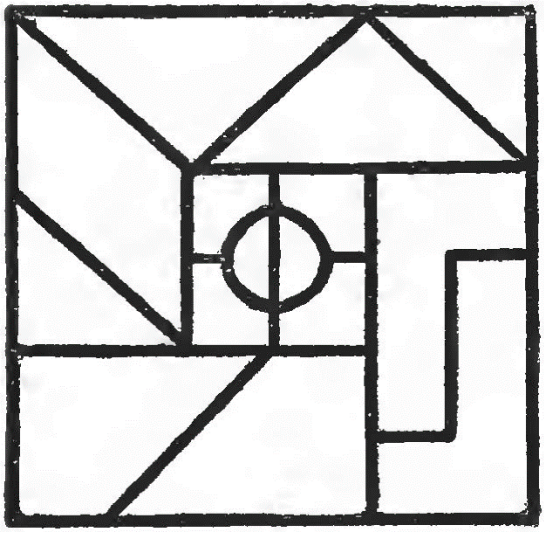
On their way home they saw a company of boys playing at "Lame Man." One of them had wrapped his girdle about his legs and had a shoe in his hand with which he was trying to hit one of the other boys. In case he succeeded in doing



PLAYING LAME MAN

so, the one hit had to have his legs wrapped and be the catcher. Yüshan would have liked very much to have stopped and taken a part in the game, but, of course, he could not do so, and leave the others in the cart.

"Why do you not hit the boy on the right?" he called out as they passed, but the rattle of the cart drowned his voice, or he did not call loud enough, for the other paid no attention to what he said.

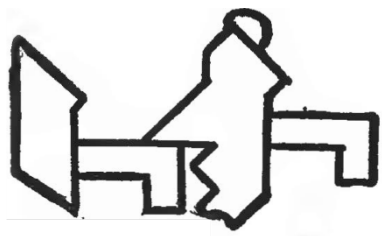


"Let us have a game of 'Magic Blocks,'" said Chenchu to Yüshan after supper.

"Very well," answered Yüshan, and away he ran, returning after a moment with two copies of the "Fifteen Magic Blocks." Each copy contained two volumes and a piece of paste-board cut into fifteen forms, all of which was

wrapped up in a cloth cover. On each page was a picture illustrating some incident in history or poetry, which the children could make out of the blocks, at the same time repeating the poetry or relating the incident.

"What is that?" asked Yüshan as Chenchu finished making a picture of a man standing by an imaginary pool.

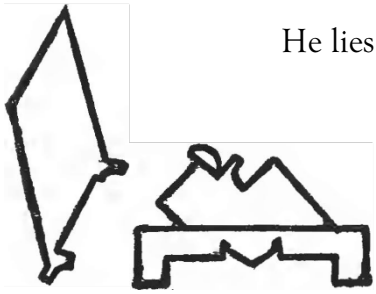


Chenchu answered by repeating the following rhyme:

"The grass is growing on the pond,
While on my books I labour,
And listen to the frogs at night,
Each calling to his neighbor,"

with which she tossed the blocks off into a pile asking: "What have you made?"

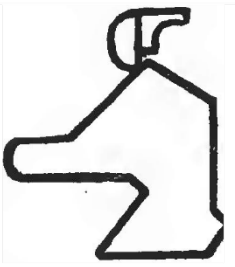
"A stone the student's pillow,
And his home a paper screen,
He lies upon a bamboo bed,
And dreams a pleasant dream,"



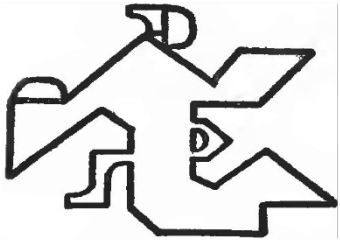
answered Yüshan, tossing his blocks off into a pile as his sister

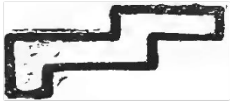
continued building.





It was only a moment until each had completed another picture, Chenchu's being, as she explained, that of an old woman standing by the side of a furnace in which she was "melting stones to mend the sky; while Yüshan's was that of the wife of an earl, whose husband being repeatedly insulted by another earl, went into the home of the latter at night and carried away the box in which he kept his most precious jewels. The following day she returned them by her husband with the threat that if he continued his arrogance his head would be taken just as his box had been. And thus they continued to play until they had made a large portion of the two hundred and sixteen pictures the book contains.





The next day, after school, Chenchu had a good romp with Ruffles, then, stopping suddenly, she came to her nurse

very much disturbed. She had been learning in her little "Classic for Girls" the following verse:

"Have you ever learned the reason for the binding of your feet?

'Tis from fear that 'twill be easy to go out upon the street.

It is not that they are handsome when thus like a crooked bow,

That ten thousand wraps and bindings are thus bound around them so,"

and her little face was more solemn looking than ever as she repeated it to the nurse.

"I do not like that, nurse," she said.

"What do you mean?" asked the nurse.

"I do not like to think of having my feet bound," answered Chenchu; "I cannot run, I cannot play, I can scarcely walk – and nurse, does it not hurt dreadfully?"

"For every pair of bound feet there is a bed full of tears," said the nurse, repeating a proverb the little girl had often heard before. "You know your little friend Manao (Amethyst). Her feet were not bound until she was eight, at

which time they had grown so large that the bones of the instep had to be broken. Her cries could be heard a li (one-third of a mile) and her tears flowed like water, but they were all disregarded. Her feet were wrapped up with strips of cloth, and bound around with bands, as all of our feet are, regardless of swelling or pain. They festered and broke and large sores formed, and for weeks the little girl who had listened so joyfully to the singing of the birds, and had run and played as freely as her brothers had done, lay weeping on a hard bed, until she once more fulfilled the proverb that 'For every pair of bound feet there is a bed full of tears.'"

"Chenchu!"

The call came from one of the servants who had emerged from the front gate.

"What is it?" inquired the nurse.

"Her mamma wants Chenchu to come in."

The little girl went tripping toward the house much faster than the old nurse could follow, hobbling along as she must on her small feet. When it occurred to Chenchu that the nurse was old, and walking was not an easy matter with her, she turned about, tripped as lightly back as she had gone forward a moment before, and taking hold of her hand, she



CHENCHU'S MOTHER

said: "You cannot run as I can, can you, nurse?"

"No, Chenchu, an old woman with bound feet cannot run like a little girl whose feet are natural and free."

She entered the house as light-hearted and happy as a lark rising in mid-air with its morning song bursting from its throat, and with her face still aglow with her romp, yet not forgetting to be dignified in the presence of her mother, she made a polite little bow, and asked:

"What is it, mamma?"

Her mother took her on her knee with as much affection as any mamma could show for her only little daughter, as she said:

"The woman has come to bind my little girl's feet."

"Please, mamma," said the little girl, throwing her arms around her mother's neck, and kissing her again and again, "please, mamma, don't let her do it, don't let her do it, mamma."

"No, no, my darling, that would never do; you must have your feet bound, or mamma can never get a husband for you," said her mother, taking off her shoes.

"I don't want a husband! I don't want a husband! I'll live with nurse!" said Chenchu, bursting into tears.

But her mother was a stylish mamma, and could not afford to let her little girl grow up "with feet like a man," and run the risk of not getting her a respectable husband, and so she was forced to disregard her pleadings and her tears; and the little pink toes were one by one bent in under the foot, and they were just about to apply the bandages, when the servant announced a visitor who requested the privilege of seeing Chenchu's mamma at once. As the visitor was a woman, she was allowed to enter that the process already undertaken might not be interfered with, but when she saw what was going on, unlike most middle-men, which she happened to be, in spite of the fact that she was a woman, she at once announced the mission on which she had come.

"You know the family of Yuan," she said to Chenchu's mamma, by way of introducing the subject.

"The young Liberal?: said the latter, interrogatively; "yes, I know them very well. They are a fine family, and he has prospects of being a great official. Few do not know them, but we have the honour of a pleasant and intimate acquaintance."

"As you know, he has just been made governor, and it is

rumoured that he may be a viceroy at an early age."

"My husband has a very high regard for him, and thinks he will be an influential man in a large way, in the near future," said Chenchu's mamma.

"They are very fond of Chenchu," ventured the middleman. "Indeed? I am glad to hear it; we should feel greatly flattered, as indeed we are."

"They have a son who is now just ten, a strong, healthy, good-tempered boy, and very smart," continued the middleman.

"Yes, I have often seen him. He is a boy of whom any parent might well be proud."

"And they would like to know if it would be agreeable to you to give him Chenchu as his wife," she went on.

The mother looked lovingly at the little girl, whose foot she still held in her hand, pressed her to her bosom, and kissed her forehead.

"Would he take me if my feet were not bound?" asked Chenchu, innocently.

"Yes," answered the middleman, "Mr. Yuan is a member of the Anti-footbinding Society, and I was ordered to say that if the matter be agreeable to you, Chenchu's feet need

not be bound."

"Then," said Chenchu, jerking her little, bare foot from her mother's hand, and forgetting for the moment that she was the daughter of a dignified and very stylish mamma, "I'll be his wife, may I, mamma?"

And so the matter was settled, and Chenchu by the same act secured a husband, and was allowed to grow up with natural feet; and it is difficult to say which was the most happy, the mother who was relieved from such a disagreeable undertaking, the old nurse who had endured it all her life, or the little girl who was thus happily rescued.

THE END.