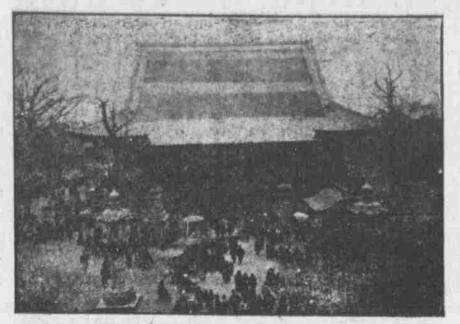
July 23, 1905.

THE OMAHA ILLUSTRATED BEE.

# Asakusa---the Garden Where Japanese Mix Pleasure and Piety



TEMPLE OF THE GODDESS OF MERCY AT ASARUFA.

in any other place. I use the word "Mid-

way" because it has come to have a pe-

cultar meaning which more nearly de-

scribes this place than any other that I

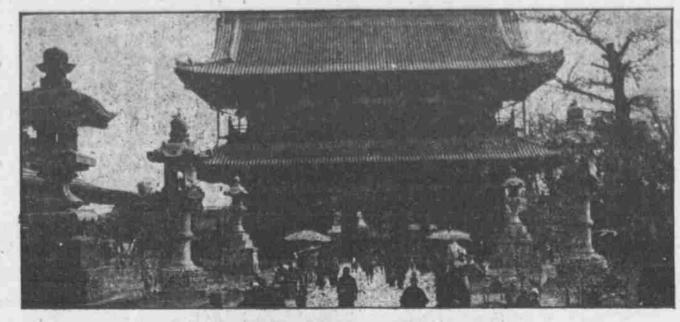
know. It is, or may be, even a Midway

Plaisance to the Japanese, but this it can

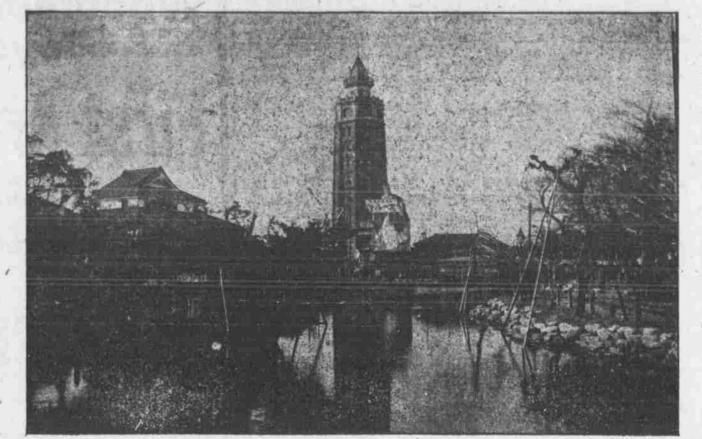
never be to the foreigner' who hurrles

APAN doesn't even play like any- is a sort of "Midway" where one may body else. In her pleasurings; in buy at little gaudy booths any kind of toy ordinary summer holiday or brilliantly colored sweetmeat or fanher 1998 I. foolishness, she is, as in all things tastic gewgaw ever manufactured in Japan. else, quite unique, quite isolate. And in this "Midway" the tricksters, the apart from all other peoples; selfish. Re- fortune tellers and the owners of trained sentment avails us nothing, however, for animals pitch their little tents to tempt she is entirely indifferent to our approval the unbroken line of worshipers or onin all things save the one in which she lookers who from morning until late at is able to command it. She is a Gargan- night every day of the world diank-clonk tuan baby defying precedent, and though their thousand wooden shoes over the flag we cannot eat with her, we cannot drink pavement toward the temple. But it is with her, we can not even play with her. not like anything that anybody ever saw we must acknowledge her one of us, and not the least of us, in the great comity of nations, because she is superior in that thing which has counted for superiodity always in all the history of all the world. The closer one gets to Japan, the more one knows about her, sees of her, the leas one is able to understand that thing which she has done, is doing in Manchuria. The along, silently pursued by a crowd of other day down at Asakusa, the Japanese staring little orientals to whom he is the Consy Island, the conglomerate pleasure most curious thing to be seen in all the place about which I am going to write, place. I remember one day at the World's there was a juggler in an outlandish fair in Chicago, following down the Midcomic-opera costume sitting in the shadow way, in company with two or three other of a sacred Buddhist antern delighting a girls my age, a poor little Japanese maid gaping crowd with skillful tricks of necro- who, in her native costume and queer little mancy. He took from his big kimono wooden shoes was the strangest creature sleeve a bit of brown paper, common un- imaginable to us. We didn't even try to attractive brown paper, and proceeded, be respectful. We didn't keep at a little after carefully showing it to the audience, distance and endeavor to vell our curiosity to roll it up into a little round ball about by a pretense of interest in something else the size of a robin's egg. He showed it when the girl looked around, we simply to us and smiled foolishly, shrugging his stared at her, that's all, and made re-, shoulders comically, then he rolled it merks which she probably imagined were around a time or two again, opened his anything but friendly. Well, I've often hands and presto, it was gone. Of course, thought of that musuem over here in Japan he reached up and produced it from the and the, memory of her has helped me to back of his neck with a child-like smile control my resentment against the gaping which made the audience laugh as if it crowds that have so many times made had not seen the same trick done a thou- life a misery to me. If she lives anywhere sand times before. But this was not all. on the beaten tracks in Japan, as she Again he began to slowly roll it around and then he shut it up in one hand and blew upon it knowingly. Pretty soon he began to pull out from between his fingers yards upon yards of creps paper cut in fine strips. He blew upon his hands again. gave it a funny little flip and a perfect cloud of confetti flew out over the heads of the people. He made believe to shut his hand up very tight and then he began to dig into it with his other fingers and in a moment he pulled out a whole flowering peony bush of creps paper which spread itself out into perfect gorgeousness. Nobody could have expected more than that, but that was not all. He began to push

one flager vigorously into this wonderful fist and protty soon a long stle began to appear which grew and grew until it became a huge umbrella which he opened with a click in answer to the enthusiastic plaudits of the crowd.



LOOKING OUT THROUGH THE GATEWAY OF ASAKUSA.



HIGHEST STRUCTURE IN JAPAN-TOWER IN THE ASAKUSA PLEASURE GROUNDS.

doubtless does, she has had opportunity to take revenge upon me and I venture she has done it, too, telling her less traveled Morgan of New York. He took her home bore it most patiently. Society did not and introduced her to the J. Pierpont Mor- have the excuse moreover of knowing that

gan strata of American society, where she was "only a Geisha girl," and conse-

its highest development. Everybody re- she was a Japanese countess or some- at least take refuge up against a pillar members how she was received. She very thing of that sort and was therefore en- and become the observer of one's observers. it. To describe it is quite impossible. The popularity seems to always increase with sensibly wore her native costume with lit- titled to their consideration. This has ab- Within the temple yard there are many altar, all gold leaf and gewgaws, is behind his increasing dilapidation until someand world-wise neighbors at the same tie white tabl, or ankle socks, and straw solutely nothing to do with Asakusa, but strangenesses. Flocks of sacred pigeons a huge wire net, put up to protect it from times he can hardly be recognized as a man time about how rude the "green-eyed bar-barians" are at home in their great cities A in New York drawing rooms. The young member such little incidents when they over the half-cooked beans one buys for all is motiley madness. Great lanterns, as watch the line of worshipers perform their

Within the Temple Yard.

politeness and consideration for the feel- quently used to being stared at and talked through the "Midway" and get into the make an ideal scene in a Japanese drama great hollows in his wooden temples. In-ings of others is supposed to have reached about. They had been told. I believe, that shelter of the great temple where one may if it were cleaned up a bit and a few of deed Binzuru is never a whole image no

as you ride through it on horseback.

and how they follow and laugh at helpless gentlewomen of the smart set treated her feel like doing violence to a Japanese them from the wizened little old woman much as fifteen feet long and eight feet odd little ceremonies, but a priest came little foreigners. It is a digression, I very much as if she were an oddly dressed crowd that will not permit them to walk who sit under the huge votive lanterns in diameter, are suspended in either end along and stirred up some smouldering in-know, but I just happen to think of the doll brought in for their amusement, to along the streets in peace, for we are just watching their stores and knitting per- of the high celled room and all round them cense nearby where I shood and I had to experience of little O. Yuki San, the Geisha be looked over and picked to pieces at as curious creatures to them as they are haps, or gossiping. A fortune teller in are smaller ones, each bearing its mes-girl who became the wife of young Mr. their pleasure, and O. Yuki San, they say, to us. Butsu" (Glory to the Eternal Buddha) as ideographs splashed upon its yellow sur- rafters. he waits under his big yellow paper um- face. Goblin shaped drums sit here and At Asakusa one is glad enough to hurry brella for some believing one to come along there with little cotton wrapped mallets

BEAUTIFUL GATEWAY AND PACODA IN THE TEMPLE PLEASURE GROUNDS.

with a few rin to barter for a glimpse into lying near which the priests use at inhis future state. A seller of pink sundried tervals to beat a steady ta-ta-ta-tumpdough cries his wares in strident tones tump-tump accompaniment to their inbeside a purveyor of yellow literature toned sutras. The floor is not covered with which shricks aloud for itself in such mats as most temple floors are, but is colors as never came from any printing made of great rough cedar planks which under the temple steps is the inevitable hundreds of clonking wooden shoes. Over press but Japanese.

old woman with evil eyes and blackened on one side sits dear old Binzuru the teeth sitting beside a cage of wild spar- healer of all ills. He would be a pitiable rows, all fluttering pitcously against their old chap if he were not so much beloved prison bars. She sits and grins and rubs for he was once an honored Rakkan, or her hands and when some kind soul is disciple of the great Lord Buddha and got moved to purchase the freedom of one or himself turned out of the holy circle for more of them she bows very low and remarking one spring morning upon the chuckles, then she probably sends her boy beauty of a passing woman. Since then off to watch the flight of the little suf- his images are not allowed within the alferers and to catch them again when they tar rails of the temples and are usually stop to rest their tired and stiffened wings. outside in the porch. It seems, however, One mounts the long, broad temple steps that the Buddha had a fellow feeling in in the midst of a clattering throag and his heart for Binguru after all, for to comin astonishment turns to look upon the pensate in a measure for all he had taken scene' spread below. The great twofold away from him he gave him the power to gateway through which we have come is heal all suffering and pain and that is painted a brilliant flaring red and the why he is one of the favorite delties of intricate art by which the timbers are Japan. His worshipers keep his naked joined under the deep caves is emphasized wooden body all wrapped up in queer little by touches or bright blue and white which red cotton ruffles and his bare head covlights up the interstices and makes the ered with a funny little white cap which whole structure look like a huge puzzle makes him look more like a statue of a in bright colored building blocks.

#### Scene for a Drama.

The author of "A Japanese Nightingale" whereon they are themselves afflicted, and should have copied the interior of the place if he weren't such a solemn and such a for the tample scene in which her poor useful person he would be very funny, for little singing girl is made an unwilling he is rubbed into the most fantastic devestal virgin, but they say the author of formity. Sufferers from rheumatics have "A Japanese Nightingale" never saw Japan rubbed his knees and elbows until they so one cannot wonder that her temple was are all rubbed away; those afflicted with like nothing that ever grew in this coun- catarrh have quite destroyed his nose, try of temples. The Asakusa shrine would while multiplied headaches have worn

the sacred dominick hens chased out of matter where one may find him, and his escape from the stifling odor which arose

Qualat Features of the Garden.

One had to thread one's way carefully among the kneeling people before the screened altar and permit one's self to be

cook than anything else. At Asakusa the

people stand in line before him awaiting

their turn to rub that of him wherein or

## Genius of Japan.

"Well," I thought, "If that doesn't exactly illustrate the genius of Japan I never saw anything that did." There it was. Marvels out of nothing. Japan is unfolding marvels of itself every day before an admiring world and to ever increasing applause, but to us, its visitors, its most intimate observers, it is as the bit of brown paper, revealing to our unassisted mental vision absolutely no evidence of the wonderful powers with which partment for analysis and advice, and a it is endowed. This is the thought which goes with me always as I wander around among its crudities and oddities trying to bridge the gulf which is fixed between us are fixed between our shores. Even in the midst of the country's most recently imported modernities this thought is sure place as Asakusa it is the uppermost idea.

# What is Asakusa?

It is difficult to determine at first whether Asakusa is a place of prayer or a place of play, but one very soon concludes that as far as one's self is con- son. cerned it is a place of neither. It is a temple. Everything in Japan which rises an inch above the dead level of single storied, gray-tiled monotony is either a temple or a new building in "foreign style," so-called, somebody says, because it is a style foreign to anything else anybody ever saw. Asakusa is an ancient temple wherein she of a thousand hands, Kwannon, goddess of mercy; sits enshrined in gaudy splendor. So ancient, indeed, is it that its beginnings are "lost in obscurity," as the guide books say about so many things. It is situated away down on the Sumida river, which flows sluggishly through the heart of Tokyo and out into Yeddo bay, and near the spot where it stands, a fisherman, they say, drew up in his net, sometime about the year 600, a remarkable little image of the Goddess of Mercy which possessed miraculous powers. It was about one and one-half inches in height and was supposed to have been fashioned by god hands, so perfect was it in every detail, but knowing the wonderful skill displayed by some of the least of these people in the art of good carving I can imagine nothing more god-like than a lazy fisherman digging daintily away at a small bit of wood through long summer days and finally dropping his finished image overheard with a prayer to the diety it was made to represent for much luck in his fishing. It would be a beautiful addition to somebody's art-curio collection anyway, but this is a fate that is not likely to be in store for it since it is enshrined within the holy of holies of this great temple of Asakusa and is never looked upon by other than priestly eyes. The temple is enormous and there is a popular joke about the disproportion of its ze to the size of the image it was built o shelter. But there is much at Asakum colde the diminutive goddess. Kuannon is very much beloved diety and to her all the unhappy and unfortunate go in prayer. and she bids them be light of heart be-dauge the time is not far off when the axe which she holds aloft in one of her many hands shall sever the thread which binds them to earth life and they may then go to the River of the Three Roads where perchance they may be able to choose that one leads upward to Nirvana. he divine absorption into blizzful Nothinghess, and over the country, pleasure and way. intermingle themselves so freely; why it is so difficult to discover indeed where one leaves off and the other begins. The approach to the tample at Asakusa

testing the land and reporting upon its of scientists from Washington, are now white pine. The latter is the sweeter and from South America and Jamaica, Porto value. Many samples of soil have been here at work. sent to the United States Agricultural devariety of experiments are being made in fertilizers and new branches of farming. This is so not only as to sugar and tobacco. which are the main crops of the island, and her-fixed as surely as broad oceans but also as to fruits, vegetables, bennequen, fitted for government work. sea island cotton and other things. The experiments are largely carried on by Americans. The most of the employes are gradto intrude itself upon one, but in such a untes of our Agricultural department at Washington, and here at Santiago de Las Vegas, about fifteen miles from Havana, a

government experimental farm is in operation, under such management, with an American director, who was brought here on the recommendation of Secretary Wil-

# Cuba a Big Farm.

Before I describe in station, let me say a In the banana fields there are a score of word about this islard. It is one of the biggest farming propositions on earth. It has more good soil than the valley of the Nile, and it promises to be the great Japanese persimmons have been planted. winter fruit and vegetable garden of the United States. Cuba lies in Uncle Sam's front yard, with a short water road to his kitchen door. The island is about as big as Pennsylvania, and, although it is mountainous in places, the soil is good to the tops of the hills and almost every bit of it can be farmed.

different varieties of oranges have been Japan has a greater area and it supports planted for comparison and study, and also between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 people; but a large number of pineapples of different only about 10 per cent of it is tillable. Java is as hig as Cuba, but it is largely taken kinds. up by mountain ranges, with active volcanoes and arid lands. Nevertheless, Java supports 25,000,000.

Cuba today has less than 1,500,000, and it is safe to say that it will some time rival Java in its products, though it -, ill always have a less population, for a Javanese can live where a Cuban would starve. The two islands raise about the same crops-sugar. tobacco and tropical fruits, with coffee on the uplands. Java is now growing tea and suinine, but these articles have not been subject to experiment in Cuba.

So far less than one-third of this island has been laid out in farms, and at the close of the war only 3 per cent of its area was under cultivation. There is more now, but it is safe to say that not one-sixth of the island is used. The best cultivation is done in the provinces of Havana and Matanana, and also in the tobacco fields of Pinar del Rio. At present sugar is the most important crop, being produced in all the provinces. Tobacco comes next, raised chiefly in Pinar del Rio, and away down at the foot is coffee, which was once more important than sugar, and which now, owing to the tariff and other conditions, will again come to the front.

#### Cuba's Experimental Station.

The agricultural farm at Santiago de Las Vegas is the center of this new agricultural development. It is run by the government, which gives it large appropriations and pushes its work in every possible The direcor is Prof. F. S. Earle, who was for years connected with the United States Department of Agriculture, and who at the time the Cuban government asked for a man for this work, was about

(Copyright, 1905, by Frank G. Carpenter.) to go to Porto Rico to take charge of our The pineapple industry is rapidly increas- ported some choice Durnam, Hereford, neighborhood of 25,000 crates. He has 280 ANTIAGO DE LAS VEGAS, Cuba, experimental station there. The Cuban ing and the department is making great ef- Jersey. Polled Angus and other bulls and acres of oranges and grape fruit embracing possible to derive a modicum of amuse-July 20 - (Special Correspondence salary was a large one-I think \$5,000-and forts to get the best variefles. The exports cows and many of these are kept at about 120,000 trees; and when he has set ment from the glaring signboards and of The Bee.)-The Cuban govern-ment is preparing to develop the island. It has established a depariment of agriculture, and is sending out been purchased, the buildings equipped and United States. The two chief Cuban pines most of the cattle now here come from and grape fruit every year. experts to prospect the different provinces, an agricultural department, with a corps are the Pina de la Tierra and the Havana native animals crossed by importations

New Fruits for Cuba.

varieties which have just been introduced

States.

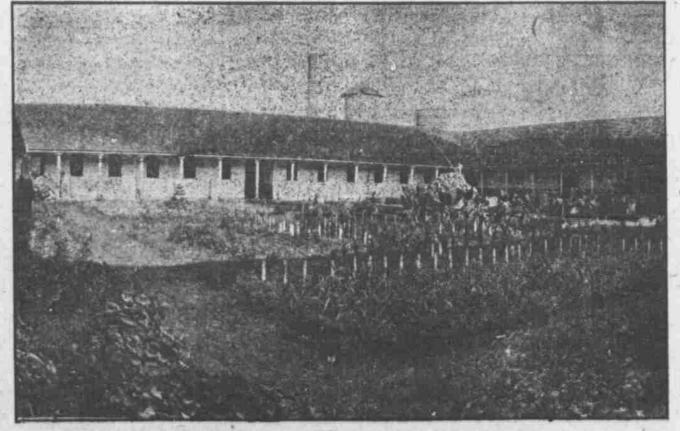
larger, but it does not keep well. There Rico and others of the West Indies. The The farm itself comprises 150 acres. Its are other pines which are smaller and less common beasts imported are mostly of buildings are great Spanish barracks, run- julcy, but more hardy and better for ex- the long-horned, raw-boned variety and so ning around a central patio of an acre of port. The white pincapples are consumed far the Venezuela stock seem to thrive flowers and plants, and also many cot- in Cuba. They sell from 40 cents to \$1.17 best. The Agricultural department extages which have been erected for the a dozen. Professor Earle tells me that Cuba will farmers. The barracks are of one story. They are of great extent and are well lorgely supply our winter market with

vegetables. He has been experimenting I spent some time going through the with lettuces and finds that they grow well. buildings and afterward took a walk with The choicest varieties thrive and is more Prof. Earle over the farm. The establish- tender and juloy than our lettuces. In the year around. There is one variety ment is thoroughly systematized, and in walking through the garden I saw lettuce of pasture known as guinea grass, which It all sorts of investigations as to plant heads as big . \* small cabbages, and Mr. grows so high that it is above your head breeding, fertilizer testing and plant and Earle said he cad raised one this year animal diseases are going on. In the bo- which weighed more than three pounds. tanical department I was shown about Leituces can easily be shipped abroad, 20,000 specimens of Cuban plants and flow- and there is no reason why they should ers, and in the gardens nearby saw many not go from here to our chief cities. new vegetables and fruits growing.

It is the same with celery. This plant is supposed to thrive only in a temperate ago and bought several hundred acres of climate, but it grows luxuriantly in the sand at 25 an acre. He has added to his station gardens. The stalks are large rid purchases since then at higher prices, his tender, and they can be bleached just as easily as at home.

from Porto Rico, and near by twenty varietles of peaches and fifteen varieties of The experiments with tomatoes have resuited in excellent yields, and a number of land is near the railroad, and a switch has There are figs from California, Japanese Americans have begun to raise tomatoes been constructed to it, so that his fruit walnuts and all sorts of grapes which grow for export. They grow well and the profits can be sent to the Havana harbor at the well in the southern parts of the United are great. Indeed the stories told are so lowest possible cost. At present he is

rosy that I hesitate to repeat them. It is shipping pineapples. It costs him only \$7 Among the most important experiments said that tomatoes, cabbages, egg plants, a carload, and I am told he can put pineare those with citrus fruits. All the best- potatoes and cucumbers, if properly apples, oranges and grape fruit into the handled, will yield anywhere from \$50 to markets of New York and Chicago more known limes, lemons and pomelos are now being planted or budded. More than forty \$500 per acre, according to soil and shipping facilities, and oranges, pineapples and any orchard in Fiorida or California. He a long row of magnificent palms, each shan. The Japanese fleet off in the blue lemons much more.



PART OF THE MAIN BUILDING AT CUBAN AGRICULTURAL STATION.

# A Business Proposition.

pects to take this stock as a basis and cross it with the best of foreign breeds. The department is also experimenting in raising beets and the various grasses for cattle food. I am told that one acre of the best Cuban grass will keep a cow Berlin at one time and inter studied fruit inches of slush, more or less?

Leaving the agricultural station I drove about two miles farther on to visit a fruit plantation belonging to Mr. Adam Gray, an insurance man of Cincinnati. Mr. Gray came to Cuba about five years and the timber made into charcoal. Charlast one costing him more than \$150 per acre, and he has now all told \$00 acres within a half hour's ride of Havana. The grape fruit and pineapples.

# Hundreds of Acres of Pineapples.

-

I wish I could show you this farm as it appeared when I rode through it today. It

and mango trees. We rode a long distance through the pincapple fields, the pines extending out on all sides of us in a great bronze carpet. Near the carriage the fruit was distinctly seen, the great round balls of red and yellow set in long green leaves tipped with pink. Farther away pines and leaves blended together, and the whole under the sun became a gorgeous cloth more splendid than the dress of a queen. The pineapples are planted in rows, but the plants are set close together and they yield a great number per acre. I am told they bring on the average about 2 cents apiece when sold, and that each costs the farmer about 1 cent to raise. The pineapples of Cuba are large, and those which I had on the Gray farm, fresh from the field, were delicious.

## Oranges in Cuba.

From the pineapple fields I went on into the orange orchard, where I met the manager, Mr. Schmidt, and the son of Adam Gray, a young man of 22, who has just graduated at Yale college and has come to Cuba to help work this farm. When I saw him he was superintending the spraying of the fruit trees. He tells me that Cuba has five different varieties of scale and that it pays to spray.

In company with Mr. Schmidt, I walked through the groves. The orange trees are planted twenty feet apart. They are carefully plowed and hoed and are watched like a choice orchard at home. The trees are now about 4 years old and they have

(Continued on Page Eight.)

How Cuban Government is Developing the Island carried along with the crowd out through the side entrance to the gardens, where all was holiday merriment. Queer shows of all sorts lined the muddy avenue down one side of the garden and if one doesn't mind getting splashed to the knees it is wonders within. It is always muddy in all such places in Japan. The Japanese like

it that way, evidently. If the sun begins A plantation like this is a business prop- to dry the mud up a bit a water boy, who osition. It requires large capital and it seems intent on overworking himself, will probably bring large profits. The work comes along with two pails on the ends upon it is thoroughly systematized and of a stick balanced on one shoulder and the business will be run like a great a big bamboo dipper and proceeds to throw American factory, with due regard to the great puddles around one's feet and he calls cost element. As soon as Mr. Gray bought it sprinkling. Of course, those who wear the farm he put it in charge of an expert leather shoes mind it, and as they are agriculturist named Schmidt, who had "about one out of every 909, they don't been employed by him in the United States. count. All the others, men, women and Mr. Schmidt is a graduate of one of the children, wear wooden geta which stand chief agricultural colleges of Germany. He up on little stilts about five inches off had charge of the emperor's gardens in the ground, so what care they for a fow

culture in France. He aided Mr. Gray in Asakusa is not respectable. Having picking out the property and then started prayed their prayers to Kwannon the peoto clear it. It had all been under cultiva- ple go out into her temple environs and tion, but had run down during the war, revel in joys far from godly. There are and parts of it were covered with trees many "tea houses" where tea is a mere and underbrush. The trees were all cut pretense and where Kirin "boroo" on draught is the favorite beverage. "Boroo" coal is the chief fuel of Havana, and Gray as they call it is, by the way, manufachad no trouble in disposing of his 10,000 tured in Japan with almost as much sucbags which came from the clearing. After cess as has been achieved for it in Milthis he began to set out the farm and has waukee, and "the beer that made Osaka gradually increased the cultivated area un- famous" is an advertisement which is quite til he now has almost 500 acres of oranges, as well known on this side of the earth as a similar one is upon the other.

### "Storming of Nanshan."

There is one thing now at Asakusa which bears some resemblance to a place of extends for more than a mile along the amusement, and that is a panorama in cheaply than they can be sent there from road and at the front and side of it runs "foreign style" of the storming of Nanhas now about 200 acres of pineapples un- from 100 to 150 feet high, with a trunk like waters of Kinchow bay on the east are The government is making experiments der cultivation, and his crop this year will a marble column, out of the top of which sending lurid, wonderful shells through the in stock breeding. It has recently im- be worth about \$40,000, amounting to in the great fan-like leaves quiver in the wind. air to meet those hurled by the Russian The roads are of a rich fed loam, as soft fleet from Talien Wan on the west, while and as smooth as a race track. They are on the hills between the two armies are wide, and in many places shaded by palms locked in a struggle that is simply beautiful, Nothing feases the valiant Japanese. He says to the cringing Russian "Take that! and that! and there now!" and then strikes an attitude on the highest point in the landscape just where the light from a bursting shell may illuminate his noble mien as he overlooks with sorrow the fearful havoc he has wrought. Barbed wire entanglements, hig guns, shricking shells, insurmountable obstacles, all difficulties of war are mere incidents, background as it were against which this Japanese attitude may display itself before the admiring eyes of Japan. But the wonderful part of it is the fact that it is only for the eyes of Japan. To the world they turn an entirely different face and the world exclaims "How modest!" There are absolutely no limits to Japanese genius, but I think the greatest thing it achieves is this concealment of itself. A mask is held up before the world and the wor'i is told it is Japan, and only by accidental flashes or revelation

do we recognize the fact that it isn't. We foreigners are permitted to live in the country, but we are shut out of Japan as completely as we ever were in the days before Commodore Perry came into Yeddo bay with his gunboats. They play a little game of jiu-jitsu with us and win all their points by yielding, and we know they win but

we cannot help ourselves. We must admire. They are quite isolate, apart from all other people, selfish, but they are one of us and we can only hope that for our own peace of mind they may continue to conceal themselves.

ELEANOR FRANKLIN.