

New Aspects of the Hermit Kingdom Under Influence of the Japanese



HOW FUEL IS BROUGHT TO CONSUMERS.

(Copyright, 1909, by Frank G. Carpenter.)
SEOUL, Korea, 1909.—(Special Correspondence to The Bee.)—How would you like to be a bone everlastingly fought over by angry dogs? This has been the position of Korea in the past, and it will probably be so in the future. The country lies at just the right place to be the battlefield of three nations. It hangs down like a great nose on the east face of Asia, its bottom almost touching the hungry, overcrowded empire of Japan. Its top ends at Manchuria, beyond which is Siberia, with her Pacific ports, leeching half the year round and needing it for an outlet to the warm open seas. On the west is China, with its vast horde of almond-eyed subjects, who are just beginning to adopt the modern civilization and will soon like to chew at the bone of Korea. The Chinese dog is still too weak to more than snarl at it, and Russia, for the time, has been driven back by the iron teeth of Japan. The sweet morsel now lies in the paws of the latter, and she is wondering whether she dare eat it or not.

Korea's Past Troubles.
 Korea has been ravaged by Japan and China again and again. The Japanese came here as far back as A. D. 300 and under the Empress Jingoo conquered the country. About 100 years after Columbus discovered America they again overran it, under their "Monkey-faced General" Hideoyoshi, who had taken an army across the strait, intending to proceed onward to the conquest of China. I am not sure during which invasion it was that the Koreans took the skins of the Japanese and used them for drumheads; and the Japanese, in turn, carried back home with them several hundred thousand human ears, which they buried near one of their temples in the city of Kyoto. During both invasions, however, Korea suffered greatly, as she did also in her troubles with China. The Chinese practically controlled Korea up to the war with Japan, and that war was brought about over disputes as to the rights of the Japanese here. I was in the country when the war broke out, and the king of Korea was then sending tribute to Peking. Yuan-Shih-Kai, who was consul general from China to Korea, was then practically the dictator of this country's foreign policy, and he had a way of riding with his retinue which etiquette and custom prescribe for his Majesty alone.

After the war, the Japanese took the lead and began to bulldoze Korea. At the same time, Russia drew nearer and nearer the bone and began to chew round the edges. She was planning the taking possession of certain islands when the Japanese declared war upon her, and the result was the great fight in Manchuria, which has now thrown Korea into the paws of Japan.

Will Japan Eat Korea?
 The live question before the world today is whether the great Japanese dog will eat this fat and juicy Korea. I have

come here to find out, and in these letters hope to tell you of just what the morsel consists and all I can learn as to its prospective mastication. During the past few months I have been traveling in Japan, and if hunger is any index, there is no question but that Korea will eventually rest in the Japanese stomach. Just now the government is acting somewhat on the humanitarian plan which we have adopted as to the Philippine Islands. This was originated by Prince Ito, and as far as he and his assistants can go, it is being carried out in good faith. The situation, however, is such that it is doubtful whether this can be long continued.

Let me give you one phase of it in a nutshell. Japan now has 50,000,000 of the most industrious, most aggressive and most enterprising souls upon earth, and to these she is adding 500,000 more in births every year. All these are confined to a country about the size of California, a country so mountainous that its good farming land is only 12,000,000 acres. Collected in one place, it would be about half the size of Kentucky, and this small area is now supporting the whole fifty millions. If all the land were divided equally there would only be one-quarter acre per head and the holdings all told average less than two acres each in size. Suppose you were to cut our farmers' holdings down to two acres each and put the whole American people into Kentucky, you would have about the conditions that prevail in Japan. At the same time, imagine that Indians, just over the Ohio river, had a more fertile soil and that it was half tilled, with much land lying vacant! Could anyone keep the Kentucky man out of it?

Japanese Immigration.
 Well, that is just about the condition of Japan and Korea. The strait which flows between the countries can be crossed in a night, and today the Japanese are emigrating in great numbers and gradually taking possession of this territory which they have gotten through their struggle with Russia. There are already, outside the officials and army, 100,000 of them on the ground, and they are rapidly changing the face of the country. They have their settlements in all the large centers. I found Fusan a new city when I landed there a few weeks ago. Instead of mud huts, thatched with straw, running along dirty alleys, covered with filth, a new Japanese city had arisen. Wide streets, as clean as a Dutch kitchen floor, crossed one another at right angles, running far up the hills. There were many two-story buildings, and shops with all kinds of goods. I rode several miles through business streets of one kind and another, passed several schools and a big city building, and finally stopped at a three-story structure which proved to be a commercial museum, containing every variety of goods, both Japanese and Korean.

There were samples of Korean cotton and Korean silk, and many suggestions to the natives as to how they might develop their country.

visage had been badly battered, "and is it replete ye'd have us, wid the colonel and all the officers in the boxes"—London Tid-Bits.

Making It Plain.
 In the course of his sermon a preacher in a rural district used the word phenomenon. This word caused one of the members some trouble, for he was unable to attach any meaning to it. Finally, he determined to seek an explanation from the minister, and at the close of the service approached him on the subject.

"What did you mean by that long word yer used in yer sermon?" he began.
 "Oh, I see you do not know what a phenomenon is," replied the minister. "Well have you ever seen a cow grazing in a field in which thistles were growing?"
 "Yes; many a time."
 "That is not a phenomenon. And no doubt you have often listened to a lark singing merrily away up in the clouds?"
 "Yes."
 "That, again is not a phenomenon. But if you saw that cow sitting on a thistle singing like lark that would be a phenomenon."—Cleveland Leader.

Size of Taft's Vest.
 It would naturally be supposed that a woman who knows President Taft as well as Miss Mabel Boardman would have been the right person to select a present for the executive. The "Tafters," that is the party that made the trip with Taft to the Philippines, decided to give the president a watch and chain. Miss Boardman was selected to procure the present.

The watch was a substantial one, as it should be for a man like the president, and the chain was one of the heavy gold link-chains which stretch from one vest pocket to another across the front of the wearer, relates the St. Louis Star.

Before presentation was made one of the "Tafters," Senator Scott of West Virginia, called at the Boardman house and was shown the watch and chain. "Look here, Miss Mabel," remarked the West Virginia senator, "you have entirely miscalculated the length of that chain. I guess you don't know how broad Taft is a 'oss the front. Just try it on me," and the senator presented a fairly returned form, and it was found that the watch chain would have stretched like a taut horse across the front of the president. Upon this measurement five inches were added to the chain in order to make it fit the presidential frontage without causing any inconvenience.

Retreat! Never!
 In an Irish garrison town a theatrical company was giving performances, and some soldiers from the local barracks were engaged to act as superns. Their duties included the acting of a fierce, fight in which, after a stirring struggle, one army was defeated on a given signal from the prompter. For a few nights all went well, but on the Friday evening a special performance of the piece was to be given under the patronage of the colonel and other officers of the garrison. The two armies met as usual at the end of the second act, when they fought and fought and kept on fighting, regardless of the agonized glare in the eye of their (actor) general, who hoarsely ordered the proper army to "retreat, confound you!" But the fight still went on, and soon the horrified manager saw the wrong army being driven slowly off the stage, still fighting desperately. Down came the curtain amid roars of laughter, and the fuming manager hastened to ask the delinquents why they had failed to retreat on hearing the signal. "Retreat!" roared a burly fusilier, whose



PLOWING IN KOREA.

At Taiku, a city of 50,000, a hundred miles further north, there is another large Japanese settlement, and Japanese cities have sprung up at Pyenyang and Gensan. Pyenyang is the biggest town between Seoul and the Yalu. Previous to the Japanese war it contained 80,000 people, and it is now the third largest city in the empire. It lies on the right bank of the Taidong river, some distance inland from the sea, and its situation is such that some think it will eventually be the biggest town in Korea. It has already in the neighborhood of 10,000 Japanese settlers, and a section devoted to them has been laid out near the station and is fast building up. Public buildings have been erected. The Dai-Ichi Ginko has erected a new bank building close to the gate and the settlement has a city hall, a clubhouse, a theater and a government hospital. Schools for both Japanese and Koreans are going up and the dry bones of the natives are beginning to shake at the changes.

There are now between 5,000 and 10,000 Japanese in the west coast, and there are 20,000 more here at Seoul, with another large settlement at Chemulpo, on the Yellow sea, twenty-six miles away. More than 30,000 immigrants came in last year and the prospects are for a steady increase from now on. This is especially so from the fact that a big colonization company, backed by the government, has been formed in Japan. This has a capital of \$3,000,000, and it will exploit the crown lands which were taken charge of under certain conditions by the Japanese after the abdication of the old emperor now almost two years ago.

Look at Korea.
 But first let me give you a bird's-eye view of Korea. The peninsula is of about the same shape as Florida, and its area all told, is about that of Kansas. It is as long from north to south as from New York to Cleveland and in some places as wide as from Washington to Philadelphia. The country lies just opposite our eastern state on the other side of the globe. If I could bore a hole right through the earth from where I now am and had the right sort of glass I might see the American sun within a short distance of New York city. The latitude is just about the same as that of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, and the climate is better than ours. For the greater part of the year the skies are as blue as those of Colorado, and then it rains for two or three months, off and on, giving a plentiful supply of water for crops. If the mountains had not been skinned of their timber the rainfall is such that they might be culti-

ated clear to their tops, and by reforestation such farming will probably be done.

Land of Mountains.
 Korea, like Japan, is a land of mountains, but the mountains are less steep and there are more broad, open valleys. There is a range which runs north and south from Manchuria to the Strait of Korea, with spurs branching off here and there. The range is not lofty. There are but few peaks a mile above the sea, and the highest of them all is only 8,000 feet. This is Mount Paik-To-San, an extinct volcano, whose crater is filled with water, forming a beautiful lake of unknown depth. The average hills are below the altitude of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, and some slope off into plains.

All of these mountains were at one time well wooded. There were forests from one end of the peninsula to the other, and the farms ran up the sides of the hills. Today in the central and lower parts of Korea the tops of the ridges are as bare as the desert of Sanara, and there is only a thin growth of pines on the sides. This is so all the way from Fusan to Seoul. Right here at the capital, which lies in a basin surrounded by mountains, the most of the hills are as bare as the Rockies, and the clay has been washed down into the valleys. Trees will grow easily, but the people skin the mountains year after year of every bit of vegetation in order that it may be used for fuel. First they cut down the trees. Later they chop away the sprouts and young growth and finally pull up the grass until the country looks as though it had been plowed over.

How Korea Keeps Warm.
 At this writing the streets of Seoul are filled with bullocks, ponies and men loaded with fuel which they have brought into the city for sale. Porters go along with cartloads of evergreen branches fastened to the jigger, a sort of framework which they wear upon their backs. Bullocks by scores are entirely covered with bundles of similar fuel. A single animal will carry almost 1,000 pounds, or as much as one horse could haul in a cart in our country. Indeed, the load is so large that you could not put it into an American cart. It rises six or eight feet above the back of the bullock, and hangs down on the sides almost to his feet, so that one sees little more than his head, tail and hoofs as he goes along the road. There are ponies carrying wood, chopped into stove lengths and tied up in bundles, and men laden with charcoal which has been made in the hills.

The chief form of heating here is by fires, which run under the floor, and straw twigs and pine branches are excellent for this purpose. A bunch is put in at the entrance of the flues and lighted, and its flames spread out, making the floors hot almost to roasting.

One of the first works of the Japanese will be to stop this skimming of the mountains. They will plant trees as fast as possible upon the available hills, thus conserving the rainfall and greatly increasing the land susceptible to cultivation. They have already planted model forests in the vicinity of Seoul, Pyenyang and Taiku, and as soon as the nurseries are in good shape will extend the program to other parts of the country.

Farms of Korea.
 Today most of the farms of Korea are confined to the valleys. The area being cultivated is just about half that which is tilled in Japan, and if it were as intensively farmed it would be feeding 25,000,000 people instead of less than 15,000,000 as now. I am told that the soil here is naturally much better than that of Japan, but I doubt if the product is one-fourth as large. The farmers fertilize but little and they know nothing of artificial manures. During a recent trip over the country I saw men carrying manure from villages to the fields on their backs, and farther on bullocks were used for the purpose, the stuff being loaded into baskets of straw rope which hung down on each side of the animal.

Everywhere the methods of cultivation were crude. The plows were little more than forked sticks shod with iron. They are one-handed affairs, drawn by bullocks, reminding one of the plows of the scriptures. Much of the country is hoed over by men and women. The clods are broken up with mallets, which the people swing back and forth as they walk through the furrows. There is no machinery of any kind. The grain is all sowed by hand. It is threshed with flails and winnowed in the wind, the grain and chaff being thrown high into the air.

The contrast between the country scenes of Japan and Korea is striking. Everything in the former country shines with thrift. There is not a weed in the fields, the houses are neat and well built and the people clean and rosy from the hot baths they take every day. All farming here is done in the most slovenly way. The methods of taxation and squandering have been such as to leave but little incentive to work, and the bulk of the profits have gone to the officials. The farmhouses are mean. They are squallid huts of mud and stone with roofs of straw thatched tied on with strings. They are collected together in little villages which often nestle on the sides of the hills. There are no trees or gardens about them. Every home is surrounded

by a mud wall high enough to keep the men from the streets from looking in at the girls.

The streets are winding alleys, where the garbage of the houses is thrown out to rot in the sun. Sometimes ditches run along the sides of the streets serving as sewers, and the houses have no sanitary arrangements whatever. The conditions are so bad that typhoid, cholera and dysentery are of frequent appearance and smallpox is almost universal. Nearly every other face one sees is more or less pock-marked, and parents, I am told, do not count their children as permanent possibilities until after they have had that disease. These are some of the conditions of this country which Japan is trying to make over.

Land Without Roads.
 As to other things, Korea in many respects is worse off than the Philippines. There are practically no roads. The only ways from place to place are by bridge paths with fords across the streams. Now and then one finds a rude bridge, two or three feet wide, propped up on poles, and again he has to make his way over such streams by stepping stones or be carried across on the back of men. Practically all transportation away from the railroads is by pack bullocks, ponies and porters. All these carry great loads, and the men will take as much as 500 pounds at a pinch. There is a big guild of porters. Its members are found in every city and village and can be seen everywhere carrying great loads over the country.

One of the first things that the Japanese will do will be to make wagon roads, and military highways, connecting all parts of Korea. I understand they are building some now, and that four main lines are to be constructed. A number of new railroads have been planned and several started. This is in addition to the 90 mile line now in operation. At present, Japan is so poor that it cannot push this feature of its work, but it is its intention to extend the railroads at the earliest possible time.

People of Korea.
 I have space here for only a word about the people of Korea. They are among the queerest and most interesting of the Asiatic races and have great possibilities.

The people are divided into classes, and formerly, the emperor and the nobility owned most of the lands and held all the offices. They have been the curse of the country and have squandered the others unmercifully. The nobility until now have gone about dressed in silks and fine grass cloths, with a lot of retainers about them. They have had coolies with them to hold up their arms as they walked, and if they rode, a servant would go along on each side of the horse to see that they did not fall from the saddle. They did absolutely no work and considered it a disgrace to carry a bundle. The boys who went to the modern school, established by the emperor, took servants along with them to carry their pencils and paper, and some tramped to the school building through the rain, because they would not endure the disgrace of carrying an umbrella.

This sentiment prevails somewhat today, although it is fast disappearing. By the coming in of the Japanese the most of the nobility have lost their fat incomes and the farmers and common people are now to have a better show. It is claimed that they are being oppressed by the Japanese, but their condition cannot possibly be as bad as it has been in the past and the dawn of freedom seems to be breaking. The Japanese are establishing courts in the cities, and they propose to thoroughly reorganize the government of the provinces as well as that at here at Seoul.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.



KOREAN PORTERS.

As to their number, a census was taken some time ago and the count made 10,000,000. They have been so squeezed and ground down by taxation, however, that they will not give out the full number of souls in each house, and the probability is that there are many more than were counted. A fair estimate, I am told, would be 14,000,000. The Koreans themselves estimate the population at 20,000,000, but their figures are of little value, as they have no basis to go on.

The most of these people live in villages such as I have described. There are no very large cities. Seoul has now perhaps 250,000, although the census gave it only about 200,000. Pyenyang has 60,000, Taiku 50,000, and after that come Chemulpo, Fusan, Gensan and Sengdo.

Social Conditions.
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W. C. T. U. Convention Committee

IT HAS been Omaha's privilege to entertain many distinguished women, but few among them have enjoyed the world-wide distinction of Mrs. Lillian M. N. Stevens of Portland, Me., and Miss Anna Gordon of Evanston, Ill., president and vice president of the National Woman's Christian Temperance union, who spent a part of last week and the week before in the city. A few years ago they took up the work that Frances Willard laid down because they, through their long and close association with her, were deemed best fitted to carry on and carry out the plans she had so wisely laid in the work for temperance.

Mrs. Stevens is a woman of exceptional executive ability. She has the kindness and the firmness that, combined with thorough knowledge of parliamentary law and quick judgment, make the admirable presiding officer. She is also one of the comparatively few women who possess all the essentials of the successful public

speaker. Convincing and eloquent, she also has a voice of rare carrying quality that may be heard by thousands.

But Miss Anna Gordon, more than anyone else, perhaps, came closest into the life of Miss Willard. A Bostonian by birth, as a young woman still in her teens her association with the organizer of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance union began. As Miss Willard's secretary and constant companion, she was trained into the work she has assumed as head of the Loyal Temperance legion, the children's branch of the organization. Rest Cottage, Miss Willard's home at Evanston, at her death reverted to Miss Gordon for her lifetime and after that becomes the property of the organization. This Miss Gordon maintains just as Miss Willard left it and thousands of people visit it. The National Woman's Christian Temperance union headquarters are maintained under the same roof, though in a separate and newly constructed building. It includes twelve rooms and houses, besides the records of the organization, a working force of twenty or more which carries on its business.

In her mildness and gentleness of manner Miss Gordon is not unlike Miss Willard. Her work for children is a work of true love and her success in leading hundreds of little folks in temperance demonstrations has been remarkable.

Mrs. Stevens and Miss Gordon visited Omaha to confer with the local committee regarding the entertainment of the National Woman's Christian Temperance union convention next October. Monday morning with the committee, they inspected the Auditorium, suggesting arrangement that would have to be made for the great gathering of women. In the afternoon they addressed a big meeting of club women at the First Congregational church.

The local entertainment committee includes Mrs. Louis Borshelm, Mrs. George Tilden, Mrs. Edward Johnson, Mrs. R. Todd Hyde, Mrs. Eaton and Mrs. Elmer Thomas.



W. C. T. U. COMMITTEE THAT INSPECTED THE OMAHA AUDITORIUM IN CONNECTION WITH THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

From the Story Teller's Pack

Bulls Without Horns.
 HIS "Irish Life and Character," Michael Macdonagh has a choice collection of bulls. He called on a hairdresser in Kingstown. As he was leaving the man tried to induce him to buy a bottle of hairwash. "What sort of stuff is it?" he asked. "Oh, it's grand stuff," the man replied. "It's a sort of mullum-mullum parvo—the less you take of it, the better."

A few days later the writer was walking with a friend over the Wicklow mountains, where they met a "character." "Well, Mick," said my friend, "I've heard some queer stories about your doings lately." "Och, don't believe thim, surr," replied Mick. "Sure, half the lies told about me by the neighbors isn't true."

The following notice Mr. Macdonagh saw posted in a pleasure boat on the surr: "The chairs in the cabinet are for the ladies. Gentlemen are requested not to make use of them till the ladies are seated."

And this he clipped from a Kingstown newspaper: "James O'Mahony, wine and spirit merchant, Kingstown, has still on his hands a small quantity of the whiskey which was drunk by the Duke of York, while in Dublin."

Retreat! Never!
 In an Irish garrison town a theatrical company was giving performances, and some soldiers from the local barracks were engaged to act as superns. Their duties included the acting of a fierce, fight in which, after a stirring struggle, one army was defeated on a given signal from the prompter. For a few nights all went well, but on the Friday evening a special performance of the piece was to be given under the patronage of the colonel and other officers of the garrison. The two armies met as usual at the end of the second act, when they fought and fought and kept on fighting, regardless of the agonized glare in the eye of their (actor) general, who hoarsely ordered the proper army to "retreat, confound you!" But the fight still went on, and soon the horrified manager saw the wrong army being driven slowly off the stage, still fighting desperately. Down came the curtain amid roars of laughter, and the fuming manager hastened to ask the delinquents why they had failed to retreat on hearing the signal. "Retreat!" roared a burly fusilier, whose

visage had been badly battered, "and is it replete ye'd have us, wid the colonel and all the officers in the boxes"—London Tid-Bits.

Making It Plain.
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"What did you mean by that long word yer used in yer sermon?" he began.
 "Oh, I see you do not know what a phenomenon is," replied the minister. "Well have you ever seen a cow grazing in a field in which thistles were growing?"
 "Yes; many a time."
 "That is not a phenomenon. And no doubt you have often listened to a lark singing merrily away up in the clouds?"
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The watch was a substantial one, as it should be for a man like the president, and the chain was one of the heavy gold link-chains which stretch from one vest pocket to another across the front of the wearer, relates the St. Louis Star.

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One on the Professor

A STATELY old professor was approached by a young student one day in one of the western colleges. Trying hard to keep back a smile, the young man asked:

"Professor, you say you are an expert at solving riddles, don't you?"
 "I claim that I am, my boy."
 "Well, then, can you tell me why a man who has seen London on a foggy day and a man who has not seen London on a foggy day are like a ham sandwich?"
 The professor studied for a long time, venturing several answers which proved to be wrong. Finally, at his wit's end, he said:

"I give it up."
 "It's easy," said the other.
 "Give it up," repeated the professor.
 "Why," was the reply, "one has seen the mist and the other has missed the scene. Ha, ha! Catch on!"
 "Of course I do, you lunatic! But what has the sandwich got to do with it?"
 After the youngster had recovered from a spell of laughter he chuckled:
 "Oh, that's what you bite on."—Circle Magazine.

A French Compliment.
 Will illumine one of the dueling stories in Monsieur Ronsier-Dorclere's recent book, "Sur le Pre."
 Prince Pierre Bonaparte and a French gentleman, Monsieur de la Valette, fought with pistols.

Monsieur de la Valette fired first and missed. The prince fired, hit De la Valette just above the belt, but did not wound him, owing to a 5-france piece in his waistcoat pocket, against which the bullet was flattened.

"Sir," said Prince Bonaparte to his adversary, holding out his hand, "let us make friends, and allow me to congratulate you on the foresight with which you have invested your money."—Youth's Companion.

Only the Fit Can Wed.
 That they are physically and morally fit to wed is what prospective brides and bridegrooms in the state of Washington will have to show by physicians' certificates and affidavits after June 1 before any county auditor can issue marriage licenses.

The new law provides also that women must be of legal age, fixed at 15 years, and men 21 years; also that the parent cannot give consent unless the girl is more than 15 years of age.

The penalty for giving false information or performing such marriage is a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment in the state penitentiary for not more than three years, or both.

It is also provided that no woman under 45 years of age or man of any age, except he marry a woman of more than 45 years, either of whom is a common drunkard, habitual drunkard, epileptic, feeble-minded, idiot or insane person, or formerly afflicted with hereditary insanity, or is afflicted with pulmonary tuberculosis, or any contagious disease, shall intermarry or marry any other person within the state.

One on the Regulars.
 During the encampment of several regiments of British soldiers in a certain district the wood and turf used for cooking purposes were carried by the neighboring farmers. One day a donkey cart full of turf was brought in, the driver being a country lad. As a regimental band was playing he stood in front of the donkey and held the animal tightly by the head. Some of the "smart ones" gathered round highly pleased, and the wit of the party asked why he "held his brother so tightly."

The reply was crushing: "I'm afraid he might enliss!"

Queer Gardening.
 Secretary Wilson, of the Department of Agriculture, said the other day of a certain farmer:

"He is now profiting by the department's advice, but he was very stupid at the beginning. He farmed as a Philadelphia woman, one spring season, planted her garden.

"The woman's husband came home and found her poring over a seed catalogue. She had a long list of seeds written on a sheet of paper.

"This was a list, my dear," she said, "that I want you to buy for me tomorrow at the seedman's."
 "Her husband looked at the list. Then he laughed loud and long.
 "You want these flowers to bloom this summer, don't you?" said he.
 "Yes, of course."
 "Well, those you have put down here don't bloom till the second summer."
 "Oh, that's all right," the lady said, easily.
 "All right! How is it all right?"
 "I am making up my list," she explained, "from a last year's catalogue."