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THEY TAKE OFF THEIR SHOES.

HAPPENING in at the native church in Yokohama one Sunday, writes an American correspondent, I was treated to a sight which would amuse church-goers in America. The Jew keeps his hat on when he goes to church, the Japanese takes his shoes off. And this not merely while worshipping, either. Everywhere and at all times he seems determined to obey the injunction, "Take thy shoes off from off thy feet." At the theatre he not only collects the tickets when the people go out, but still further delays their exit by obliging them to wait at the door until their footgear is handed them. At the large theatre in Trukigi, Tokio, the rush for shoes is sometimes tremendous. Imagine two thousand people after a matinée crowding, and elbowing, and pushing to get at their shoes, so as not to be late for their supper! Further, imagine what anxieties and distress of mind the attendants must undergo who have in charge the task of getting the multitude properly shod. The famous problem propounded by Carlisle in the opening chapter of "Past and Present" of getting the thousands of shirts on the thousands of backs doesn't offer more difficulties.

And the sexton in the Yokohama church did look careworn. He was squatted meditatively in the vast shoal of footgear which covered the floor of the vestibule. It seemed as if the clog and sandal sellers of Yokohama had arranged a trust, lumped their separate stocks into a common pool, and had impiously set-up shop in the very doorway of the church. What a variety! The rats in Browning's poem—

Great, small, lean, brawny,  
Brown, black, gray, tawny,

were not more diverse. Elegant wooden shoes with silken cords, rough sabots of the poor man, worn straw slippers, children's sandals, wee clogs for the babies even, were ranged in deep rows across the lobby. But this Japanese custom is not without its advantages. Think how it must facilitate visiting! You walk down the long, narrow streets of a Japanese town, and you will notice before each door the family clogs carefully drawn up in rows. If there are many pairs, the whole family is most likely at home; if one or two, the servant and possibly the mother are the only ones in. Difficulties and delays are, thanks to this easy process of calculation, reduced to a minimum. No door-bells, no tardy servants, no standing first on one foot and then on the other. A glance at the clogs. She is in. Rapture steals over Romeo's heart.

COSTUME BALLS.

IN Paris last year, one of the leaders of society gave a fête, where everything was Provençal from the times of the troubadours. After old books and pictures, dresses were copied, charming love-ballads were sung, and long-forgotten customs from that romantic period were brought into light again. It was a great success, and success also followed Lady Warwick's attempt at reviving for one short night the charm of the eighteenth century. I hope (writes "Era") that many more hospitable hostesses will follow in their footsteps. History surely offers ample opportunities; we need only to look around us in London of to-day. The performance at the Lyceum points out just now one period rich in quaint beauty; and the Venetian exhibition in the New Gallery marks another, which shines with all the splendour of a Renaissance. Where is the woman who would not gladly attire herself like one of those sumptuous beauties of Titian and Veronese.

One of the able writers who serve us with the wares of Autolyca, has told us that when looking at these pictures he—or was it not a she?—came to the conclusion that the woman of Venice in the sixteenth century was coarse and brainless, and wore heavy, inert dresses. How these lines did amaze me! To me those same pictures had spoken so very differently. In my eyes they called forth a bevy of lovely women, exquisitely made creatures, who shed life and light in the vast rooms of a Venetian palazzo, who in stately robes swept the marble steps near Canale Grande, who, like richly coloured flowers, rested on velvet cushions in the gondola. They were made for love and passion. But are we just in naming them fools, because, as children of their time, they did not worry their brains with mathematics and philosophy, but were satisfied with their vocation in life—to be beautiful in the eyes of men?

Look at Titian's daughter, who, in a debonnaire attitude, is lifting a golden casket, or at Vittoria Colonna, painted by Piombo, in a dress of moonlight shining satin. Do not pass the beautiful woman in the green and red dress, painted by Lorenzo Lotto; round her head is twisted a white turban, in her hand she holds a drawing of Lucrezia; and here, fairest of them all, is Laura da Dianti, the beloved of Alfonso d'Este. When your mind is filled with all their warm colouring, their exquisite forms, then turn to Titian's famous picture, "The Worship of Venus," and it will seem to you like an apotheosis of the time.

In a vast landscape stands the statue of the goddess. Like a moving carpet on the ground are hundreds of blue-winged cupids playing with apples and flowers. At the side two women are eagerly rushing towards the statue, imploring Venus to give them grace, beauty, and love, all which for these women meant life itself. But these two are of the same type as Laura and Vittoria, as all the beauties of Bordina and Tintoretto. We know they knelt on their prie-dieus and devotedly sent prayers to the Madonna, but we read at the same time in their faces that never did they forget Venus.

But oh! thou pioneering woman of to-day, who with disgust will shrug your shoulders at these splendid types of la femme de l'homme, give for a moment your attention to the portrait of Lucrezia Marielli, and to that masterly painting by Giorgione which represents a lady professor of Bologna. Learn of the first that cleverness in woman can quite well be united to grace and elegance. Let the last teach you, if possible, to bring into your own countenance some of that gentle tolerance, that wise humanity which stamps this noble face.

TROUBLE IN THE MENAGERIE.—"You're an all around tough," said the baboon to the rhinoceros. "But I've got one good point," replied the rhinoceros, tossing the impudent animal to one side with his horn.

A: "Why, man, all your shop-girls are squint-eyed! Can't you manage to obtain a prettier set?" B: "I have got these as a protection against shoplifters. The scamps will never know where the girls are looking!"

"I WANT a dog's muzzle," said a little fellow, entering a hardware shop.—"Is it for your father?" asked the cautious shopkeeper.—"No, of course it ain't," replied the little fellow indignantly: "it's for our dog."

OLD GUY REXMAN (to little boy, who is playing soldiers): "Ah, my little man, you're a son of Mars, eh!" Little boy (indignantly): "Course I'm a son of man's. Didn't suppose I was a son of auntie's, did yer?"

OUR HEALTH IN WINTER.—Dr. Andrew Wilson, writing in *Liverpool's Newspaper* on diet, says: "The teaching of nature should never be neglected, and in the matter of winter food let us see we are not wrong, and take sufficient fat, for the changes that result in the wear and tear of our bodies are lessened in intensity by the fat of food, and the need for flesh is always less when fat forms a due proportion of our diet." The Doctor proceeds to enumerate natural products that are admirable, among them "Cocoa" with its contained Cocoa Butter. Relatively to this it may be said that EPPS' PREPARED COCOA retains all the constituents of the natural Cocoa, including the oil or butter, intact.—Advertisement.