

lamation from the Empress, who declared that the change in the life and habits of the people, particularly that from the sitting and kneeling etiquette of the Orient to the standing ceremonies of the Occident, required this change in the fashions of women's dress as well as that of men. In a way, she was right, for it is said a Japanese man in European dress will treat a Japanese woman clothed in the same fashion with far more respect than he will one clad in the flowing kimono.

The sacredness of the royal person hindered the change in dress for the Empress for some time, we are told, for no ignoble dressmaker was allowed to touch her. Countess Ito, one of the handsomest and most accomplished women at court, came to the rescue, and had the garments of the Empress fitted to her until patterns could be made. Both men and women are now less self-conscious, and somewhat accustomed to the change, but to my mind, neither look so well as they would if they were arrayed in their national costume.

The Empress is admittedly a clever woman, according to the Japanese standard. That she is amiable goes without saying; she is deeply imbued with Western ideas with regard to the status of woman, and the influence she has exercised in the state as well as the domestic circle, has been worthy a woman born and reared among the most liberal ideas of the Occident. Her readers and teachers have found their seed falling into good soil. She began at once to interest herself in silk culture, lace-making and embroidery. Competent women were selected to instruct Her Majesty in the art of silk-weaving and care of the worms,

etc. Lace schools are under her patronage, and she has never failed to encourage any industry and education among women. She is most benevolent, giving to charity with a free hand. It is said that she gives so liberally of her private allowance, that were it not for the care of the Chancellor of the Exchequer she would be a bankrupt before the end of the first week of the quarter.

The Peeresses' School is especially under her fostering care, as well as several of the hospitals in Tokio. She is particularly fond of children, and often goes into the children's wards with her arms full of gifts for the little ones. Each autumn there is held a fancy fair or bazaar for the purpose of raising money for the public charities, and Her Majesty makes a point of spending one afternoon there, buying liberally; and if one did not know that she was the Empress there would be no outward sign to discover her identity. She wore a tailor suit of dark blue, a sealskin cloak, and blue bonnet, with feathers and aigrettes, when I saw her, and was fair to look upon. She has no children of her own, and her life is undoubtedly clouded by this fact, for a childless wife in Japan is an object of pity, and she sees the Emperor's son, but not hers, growing up to succeed his father.

There are two other most fascinating personages at court—the Empress Dowager and the Heir Apparent—the former one of the best preserved relics of old Japan, and the latter one of the best specimens of new Nipon. The Dowager has her separate palace and court at Kyoto and Tokio, where the ancient regime prevails. She seldom appears at official functions, and has made but one concession to modern

ways: she uses a landau with liveried cockaded men on the box. She is said to have charge of the Imperial nurseries, where the children of the Emperor by his various wives are kept until they reach the age of five or six years. There are rooms set apart for her at the palace of her son, but she seldom occupies them, for she visits but little, and cannot reconcile herself to the change that has come over her land and her people.

Prince Haru was born in 1879, and proclaimed Heir Apparent in 1887, and elected Crown Prince in 1889, thereby dispossessing, as heir to the throne, Prince Arisugawa Takihite, a young cousin, who had been adopted by the Emperor when he thought he should have no son to succeed him. Since his adoption legally as heir to the throne, there has been passed a law prohibiting the child of a concubine from inheriting a noble title. The heir to the throne must hereafter be the son of the Emperor and Empress, or the succession passes to some collateral branch of the family.

Prince Haru, who is the son of the Emperor and Madam Yanagiwara, is not affected by this law, but if he were to die without issue the throne would be given to his cousin. There are

two little princesses living, but ten royal children have filled untimely graves.

Prince Haru attends the Nobles' School with other boys of his age, and is being educated for the position he is expected to fill. He is very much inclined to foreign ways, as is natural; and the more liberal wing in the Japanese house expects great things of him when he comes to the throne. In a few years he will make a grand tour of the world, and return to Japan fitted for the life which will open for him. He is very democratic, and it is difficult to believe that he is the descendant of the secluded and exclusive Mikados; still he has a way of rebuking those who venture upon too much familiarity which shows that he has their blood in his veins.

He is only an ordinary, wide-awake boy of the twentieth century, but to the Emperor and the court he is a wonder. They forget that they had much to unlearn before they could learn anything of foreign ways, while to the child born under different conditions, and into a different atmosphere, education began on virgin soil.

No matter to what greatness the Crown Prince may attain, he will never be the marvel to the world that his father has been.

A MADCAP river is swiftly flowing
 O'er dry bare fields, where yesterday
 The winds of winter were briskly blowing
 As if reluctant to go or stay.

There are no birds on the lacing branches,
 No grass green tinges the hillside shades,
 No bloom or blade on the low-growth stanches
 The rain slow falling o'er somber glades.