

### NEW YEAR'S DAY AMONG THE JAPANESE

is not only the day that begins a new year, but it is the highest and most important of the year to the Japanese. Preparation for it begins early in the month of December. The American Christmas shopper, if landed in Tokyo in mid-December, would find crowds of her brothers and sisters in spirit thronging in shops decorated with the most attractive symbolic ornaments and displaying with great skill the things most requisite for the coming holiday year. At night, along the thoroughfares, the stranger would see multitudes crowded about street booths to purchase the wares exposed there, all which are significant of the New Year festival, and nothing else. Every where the avenue and byways would be illuminated with rows of shining lanterns, bearing trade devices, and family crests, all of which are the low caves of stores and houses. Never are the streets of Japanese cities so thronged with gayly dressed crowds and busy traffic as on the eve of the time of our own, yet kindred, Christmas excitement.

The specific traditions for the New Year begin about the middle of the last month. Then, within every house in the empire, a general cleaning up takes place. A fresh, green branch of the bamboo tree and twigs to symbolize good fortune, is used as a wand in completing the thorough sweeping. At this time the sacred character of the flag in Japanese houses is made so sacred that the callers at the New Year may be kept away from the spot. At this time, too, all mirrors and mounds are busy getting ready for wear on New Year's day. Kimonos that shall have no trace in them of the washed out. To old and young the daily theme of thought and talk is the coming "New Year," full as much as "Christmas" is to us.

Outside the houses symbolic decoration has full sway, and transforms the thoroughfares into gayly colored and evergreen avenues. The tree-like streets are turned, for the time being, into vistas of awaying bamboo and pine trees. Before each house entrance, according to the tenants' sources and fate, stands a kind of archway. Its pine branches, symbolizing longevity, on the right and left, and the tall, thin bamboo shafts, both of which symbolize longevity, that is a harbinger that, borne the storms and struggles of long life into the world, will come the visitor. Over head, spanning the space between these uprights of the arch, is a decorative rope always the same, the anemone, and various pendants arranged in series of five, and three (lucky numbers). The rope recalls one of the most revered and poetic traditions of the Japanese past. The anemone, which is the emblem of the imperial house, of the empire, was angered with her brother in the ancient days, and in revenge hid herself in a cave. Darkness then prevailed in heaven and on earth. To open the door of her self-chosen dungeon. One of the gods then drew her forth, and to prevent her running back to her cave, he fastened a straw rope across the entrance. The perfume of the sun, secured thereby, remains memorialized in the garlanded braid hanging above each Japanese portal on New Year's time.

Among the most noticeable and significant objects connected with the day are the bushy white leaves remain washed until after the young leaves have budded. The lobster's scabrous body tells of the year, while the bush branches around it show how parents remain even while children and children are growing up. The same decoration fronds of fern are placed in the same decorative vases. The orange, whose color brightens the clustered symbols, is a name which, in pin, means "generations," and tells of family life. Sea-weeds is there, too, as a memorial of good fortune, commemorating also the prehistoric conquest of Korea by the Empress Jingo, and the danger of defeat because their horses on the Korean seashore were starving for lack of food. Then, by aspiration, she ordered seaweed to be checked from the waters and given to the horses, who then were so invigorated that they carried their riders to glorious victory. Golden white bands of paper wave over the garlands of the doorway, and are the ancient offerings that have won the favor of the myriad gods.

### Old Man Had a Good Memory

Delivered Blow to Micky Doolin for Trick Played After Forty Years.

At a recent dinner Richard Croker told a story of an Irishman who, making his fortune in the States, returned to his old home in Ireland. As he strolled about the little place where he was born, it occurred to him that things had not changed much since his departure. He was surprised to find that the old man had a good memory.

### Officers Are Glad Public Knows the Unprepared Condition of the Army.

Congress has been warned by the House Committee on Military Affairs that the army is unprepared for a sudden emergency.

### Progressive Republicans May Ask President to Resign.

Members of the House Committee on Military Affairs have expressed their dissatisfaction with the administration's handling of the war.

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