

PARIS MUSIC.

By Robert Buchanan.
Whence, in the season of the pensive eve,
The earth plumes down her weary, weary wings;
The Hours, each frozen in his mazy dance,
Look scared upon the stars, and seem to stand
Stone still, like chiselled angels mocking Time;
And woods and streams and mountains, beasts
and birds,
And serious hearts of purblind men, are hushed;
While music sweeter far than any dream
Floats from the far-off distance, where I sit
Wondrously wov'n about with forest boughs.

A JAPANESE VENGEANCE.

Clo. Graves, in The Sketch.

Oishi Yoshio, Second Secretary of Legation, aged twenty-five, and named after the celebrated leader of the Forty-Seven Ronins, stood in the doorway of a London drawing room which bore a considerable resemblance to a Knights-bridge curio-brocade-and-pottery shop, and wondered greatly. For in Japan they use aniline dyes, English and American, and wear, or put on, European clothing, and endeavor to assimilate European cookery, and paint up the names of their streets in English. But they do not hang up English boots and shoes upon their walls for spill holders, nor do they cherish English cooking pots and butter boats as things of price.

The streets outside had been wet and drab, and the social atmosphere within seemed as neutral tinted, if less humid. The room was full of clacking women, in furs and out of them, drinking bad tea, with much milk and sugar, at the savor of which infusion the soul of Oishi Yoshio revolted, and his heart yearned for Tokio, for sunshine, brightness, the dainty refinements of life, and the hue and color loveliness which constitute Japan.

His hostess beckoned him, and he steered his dapper, unobtrusive way to her, his slim hand fingering with his neat little black mustache. He was introduced to a young lady who murmured something unintelligible as Oishi Yoshio bowed before her. Her name was Miss Darchfield, and the lithe Japanese observed that she was young and very pretty in her wheat haired, cornflower eyed, English style. She told him that she adored everything Japanese, and Oishi Yoshio could imagine her buying pastille sticks or paper fans, or string bath sandals at the Brompton emporium for the sale of such cheap and trashy merchandise. She said, "Have you seen the conservatory?" and took him there; and on a cane settee, in front of a miniature pond containing goldfish and a prospect of Japanese dwarf trees in the midst of which appeared the roofs of a crimson doll's temple, they fell into conversation. Miss Darchfield still harped upon Japan and things Japanese. Her white teeth showed under the pink gable of her short upper lip as she said, hesitatingly, "I want to ask."

She changed her tone, and put the question positive, "Do you know anything about tattooing as it is done in Japan?"

Oishi Yoshio gave a quick glance at the charming face, and assented, passing one slim fingered, honey colored hand over the other. "Of tattooing I certainly do know something," he returned, in his slow, correct English. "It is an art much practised in my country—among certain classes of individuals." He preserved perfect gravity, and wondered privately what was coming next. It came.

"Could you tell me of anybody—any Japanese person living in London," the girl asked, "who could do it—don't you know?" She blushed pink, and looked everywhere, vaguely, before she brought the cornflower colored eyes back to Oishi Yoshio.

The perfectly marked eyebrows of the Secretary of Legation were lifted the breadth of a baby's finger nail.

"The art of tattooing" . . . He thought a moment; "there is one man . . . I could give you his address, if required. He lives"—the slim hand of the young Japanese waved eastward—"near your London Docks. He carries on a business there in curios, and in the art you speak of he is proficient, though he is now very old. Sailors resort to him, and rich, eccentric Englishmen, and sometimes"—the oblique Asiatic eyes narrowed a little—"occasionally ladies," he said.

Miss Darchfield's cheeks deepened their pretty pink. She was full of her subject, and her exuberant interest in it sparkled in her eyes.

"Then," she cried, "of course this old person who lives near the London Docks could carry out . . . of course, he could do what I want at a reasonable charge?"

"I imagine he has charges to suit all purses," said Oishi Yoshio. "Perhaps you will tell me what you require done?" He shrugged his sloping shoulders slightly as he continued, "It is, no doubt, a gentleman of your acquaintance who desires to be tattooed with a figure . . . or an initial . . . or, perhaps, a name."

Miss Darchfield tossed her pretty chin and laughed a little harshly. "It is not a gentleman," she said; "it is I, myself. Perhaps you think it a queer fancy." . . . Her chin and shoulders expressed great indifference to the thoughts of this little Japanese. "But I want to be reminded of something"—she caught her breath a little, and clasped her hands nervously together upon her knee—"something cruel and mean and heartless, that has been done—by somebody I believed in. Call it a vendetta, if you like"—Oishi Yoshio tried to do so, but was not enlightened in the least. "I want it to be stamped upon me, so that I can carry it to my grave." Her tone grew tragic; her sensitive upper lip trembled; for the moment she had forgotten Oishi Yoshio, and was alone with her resentment and her wrong. "I've been badly treated," she broke out, becoming quite an ordinary angry young woman in a moment; "and I don't intend to forget it. And I'm going to have it tattooed on my wrist! You can see the inscription if you care to," she added, with a great assumption of indifference. And she took a half sheet of cream laid note paper, folded in four, from the pretty reticule—a piece of Paris foolishness—that hung at her waist, and handed it to Oishi Yoshio. The piece of paper bore, in a large, schoolgirl hand, this inky legend:

W. J. B.

"All the World to Him!"

June 19, 1900.

"Not Good Enough!"

Nov. 8, 1900.

"In my country," said Oishi Yoshio, carefully perusing the inscription, "when a man takes a young wife, and finds himself dissatisfied or displeased with her, he can return her to her parents or guardians without blame. But he returns her dowry, or he pays an indemnity. It is all very simple," he ended.

"It sounds so," said the girl with some acerbity, "but, of course, the case is different. I was not married to William Johnson-Bradley; we

were engaged, that's all—and quite enough, too!" she added viciously.

"For any reasonable man," said Oishi Yoshio quietly.

"You are very kind," said Miss Darchfield. She hesitated a moment, then turned her pretty face and looked full at the Secretary of Legation.

"You would be still kinder," said Oishi Yoshio, "if you would tell me more about this Mr. . . ." He wrinkled his fine black eyebrows. "Pardon!" . . . it is elusive—the English name—William Jowley-Badson?"

"William Johnson-Bradley," said the girl, a slight frown drawing her pretty brows together. "We met last March, at Prince's Skating Rink. He skates awfully well, you know—figure skating, and all that. Everybody wanted him to take them round on the ice—Babs Mortimer, Flossie Daventry and Everilda Fitzharding—they were quite wild about him. Everilda fell down in front of him, on purpose to get him to pick her up, and showed all her frills—she has a way of doing that, and wears lovely things on purpose—and I was flattered because he preferred me—and we did the outside edge, and it was like skating in heaven to the Hungarian band—and he taught me to waltz before the season was over—and the other girls were just wild—and Everilda said horrid things, and was as spiteful as a ferret! But I didn't care, and we were secretly engaged at Ascot, in June. Nobody was to know, because we had not much money, and couldn't afford to marry; but he said I was 'all the world to him!'"

"Yes?" said Oishi Yoshio, with delicately interrogating eyebrows, twisting the half sheet of cream laid note paper in his honey colored fingers. His manner was full of unobtrusive deference and gentle politeness, and Miss Darchfield looked at him more appreciatively than before. She observed that his hair was as fine and smooth as black silk, that his eyes were handsome, even if the corners did tilt up toward the temples—his honey colored complexion was a peculiarity one might get used to—and that his hands, one of which bore a superb emerald signet ring, were lithe, supple and beautiful in shape.

"Yes," Miss Darchfield went on, "the engagement was secret. We used to meet at places, and on Thursdays he would come to tea at Clarges-st. I live there with my aunt. He was as devoted as anything for quite a long time. It was only when Everilda made up to him and told him about the £20,000 she had inherited from her uncle that he began to cool off, and I know it was all her doing. Beast!"

Her bosom rose and fell stormily under the fanciful tucks of her smart silk blouse. She took off her hat and stabbed it through viciously with a long gold pin, and threw it upon a neighboring chair.

"It is over and done with, and there's no use making a fuss," she said; "and I would bet a dozen pairs of gloves to one that Everilda will be sorry she ever married him," she said, "though I don't want to be revenged on Everilda in any way—a little, round eyed, silly dolly, bit of a thing! And she really didn't mean to behave dishonestly. When I came upon them—together—only a week ago, in the Oriental tearoom at Liberty's, I actually heard her say, 'How can I be all the world to you when you are engaged, on the strict Q. T., to Flossie Darchfield?'"

"I thought," hazarded Oishi Yoshio, "that nobody was to know?"

"I told a few of my intimate friends, in confidence," replied Miss Darchfield, "and, of course, they—told theirs."

"It would have happened in Japan," said the Secretary of Legation, suppressing a twinkle.

"Well, Everilda said that," went on Miss Flossie Darchfield. "And he—William Johnson-Bradley—gave one of his laughs, and said, squeezing the hand with which she held the teapot, and twisting his silly little fair mustache, though I've begun to dislike fair mustaches only since that day. 'Oh, come, I say!—those were his exact words—'Oh, come, I say! How can you? That's not good enough!' And at that I came on, right past their table, and cut him as dead as though he'd been—a black beetle." She got out a dainty little handkerchief, not to cry into, but to bite and twist between her restless fingers.

"And now it's all over between us," she said. "But I don't mean to forget William Johnson-Bradley's perfidy, and—and what a fool I was! So I'm going to have those words of his tattooed on my wrist, with a fancy border of dragons and devils and things—in the Japanese style. And whenever I look at that—"

Miss Darchfield stepped for breath. Oishi Yoshio was sitting on the bamboo settee about three feet away, listening intently. One slim patent leather booted foot was tucked beneath him; his lustrous, oblique eyes were looking straight at the girl.

"Whenever you see that, you will remember that you have disgraced yourself for life, for the sake of a man who is not worth a dead fish. More, you will have stamped yourself as a member of the vulgar class, because, in Japan, it is only boatmen, sailors, porters and rickshaw men who wear the tattoo. But if you are so de-

termined to be revenged upon this—he hesitated—"this Braddam Wilson-Jonley, or what his name may be, why not employ a charm?"

Miss Darchfield associated the word with little golden and enamelled trinkets made to hang upon porte-bonheurs and watch chains.

"A charm?" she repeated.

"A spell," explained Oishi Yoshio. "By reciting a certain formula of words, and burning perfumes specially prepared, it would be possible, in Japan, to be revenged upon an enemy without diverging from the strict dictum of politeness." He produced a delicate little cigarette case of some fine woven grass, and took from it a slender cigarette. "You do not smoke? No! But—you will allow me?" The mind works more smoothly assisted by tobacco." He struck a vesta, taken from a curious little case representing a sea mouse in golden brown and green enamel, lighted his cigarette, and tucked the other foot beneath him for a change. His eyes were very thoughtful, and the emerald signet he wore upon the middle finger of his left hand glowed and scintillated with living green fire, as though it had been the eye of an angry cat defending her kittens from a too intrusive tertier.

Miss Darchfield arrived at the meaning of Oishi with a little scream. "Why," she said, "do you really believe? . . . Why, that's witchcraft! It would be dealing with the devil!" Her voice dropped awfully. But the Japanese was speaking.

"In Japan, in my country, we have more than one devil. Plenty of devils, the big and strong and the little and weak, and many of them are remarkably obliging. There is one who could make this Willy Johnson—I forget—very uncomfortable indeed. He is shaped like a bat, with crimson eyes, and all night he hangs upside down from the ceiling overhead. The person—who is being made uncomfortable—cannot sleep, for this devil seems every instant about to fall upon his head!"

"Couldn't he get up and move his bed?" suggested Miss Darchfield.

"In Japan the beds are spread upon the floor," said Oishi. "Yes, of course, he could move; but the devil moves too, and when he looks up—there it is in the old place, and this continues until the sufferer goes mad or dies."

"How awful!" commented Miss Darchfield.

"It is a good revenge and very cheap," said the Japanese. "You have only to give the devil a little rice. And there is another evil spirit who lives in a gong. You can arrange with him to make the person you wish to punish become possessed with the notion that the sound of the gong is always in his ears. It begins with a droning note and swells to an insupportable boom, and this continues until the afflicted one drowns himself in despair. The devil who does this lives in a gong in one of our Shinto temples. You repeat the invocation and hit the gong!"

"But I should have to go to Japan to do it!" expostulated Miss Darchfield.

Oishi Yoshio smiled with quiet subtlety. "It would, of course, be more effective if you were upon the spot. Oh, certainly, yes! But I have a friend in Tokio who would arrange . . . Or I myself . . . I go to Japan every spring to visit my father's wives. He died over here some years ago, and they are always very pleased to see me."

"Did he have—many?" asked Miss Darchfield shyly.

"Only four," replied Oishi.

"Japan must be a—queer place!" said Miss Darchfield. A sudden look of interested curiosity came into her eyes as she turned them on the young Japanese diplomat. "Are you married?—if you don't think it's rude of me to ask. And have you?"

She stopped in confusion.

"Have I four wives?" said Oishi. "I have not yet one. I am a Europeanized Japanese, and belong to the American Evangelical Church; therefore, any union I contract would be monogamic."

"But you believe in Japanese devils?" said Miss Darchfield, rather mystified by the last word.

"Ah! To go on with those devils," continued Oishi gravely, but with a lurking smile hidden at the corners of his lips: "There is another, a lady, who carries three little baby devils in a pouch, who could do the business of this John-will Bradson-Yamley in what you English call a jiffy. You burn a gilt paper sword and call upon her name, Magahara O-Todao Kanesada, and the offending party is immediately seized with such remorse for his crime that he forgets his food, abstains from bathing, and at last is reluctantly compelled to commit self-dispatch. You could not do better than employ her."

Miss Darchfield rose and began to look about for her hat.

"You have taken a great deal of trouble to explain things to me," she said, "and I'm awfully obliged. But I won't call in any of those devils to William Johnson-Bradley; and, as to the tattooing, I've changed my mind. I'd read a story—a book we got from Muddie's, called 'Lady Vinolia's Victim'—that put that into my head. It was Lady Vinolia who made a memorandum on herself, with a redhot bodkin, of a vengeance she meant to carry out on a wicked Austrian duke who had ruthlessly betrayed her. But that

was in the time when people wore ruffs, and, somehow, it seems too big a way of treating a man like!"

Oishi gave his version of the name in a musical singsong. This time it was "Bradjoan Jimson-Leeson."

Miss Darchfield gave a little "eal of laughter. "You've never got that name right once!" she said. Then she pinned on her Boni-st. hat, and Oishi helped her. She had masses of the wonderful wheat colored hair, and the sleeve link in the cuff of the Secretary of Legation caught in a silken strand of it and brought a great coil tumbling down.

"Don't look frightened—the other end has roots!" said Miss Darchfield. She looked vaguely about her, her slight arms raised, her hands busy at her head, and the reason of her perplexity was plain to the quick mind of the young Japanese.

"You need a hairpin? Excuse a moment!" he said, and, turning aside, thrust his hand within the breast of his exemplary waistcoat, and, withdrawing it with a slender object in its clasp, held it out to the girl.

She took it with a brief word of acknowledgment, and then, as the beautiful thing glittered in the lamplight, she caught her breath in ecstasy, and cried, "Oh, how lovely! But I mustn't take it, of course!"

"It" was a slender stiletto in a narrow golden sheath, with a hilt of costly jade representing a lotus bud, upon which was perched a little diamond snail. Her heart went out to it, her soul yearned for it, but she held it out to Oishi Yoshio. He drew back, extending his palms downward before him with a gesture of polite negation.

"Favor me by accepting! To make such presents to a lady—in token of respect—is a custom with the people of my country. Besides"—his voice became low and impressive—"that snail is a devil. It will work out a revenge for you upon this man with the name which is impossible to remember." He leaned nearer to Miss Darchfield, with gleaming eyes. "You have only to look happy—and to wear that dagger constantly in your hair. Do you see? He will notice it, and wonder who gave you that. He will get other people to put questions to you, but you will answer none of them; you will only look happy, and wear the dagger of the lotus flower with the diamond snail. And this man, who, like a person of no discernment, threw you—you who are so beautiful and so proud!—aside like a broken jar for the sake of a little, silly woman with a baby face, this man will become possessed with the Devil of Jealousy! There are many devils in Japan, but this one is to be found wherever men and women live under the sky—and it is the worst of all." Oishi's white teeth showed as he caught his breath; his slim, supple hand closed upon the girl's wrist as though the fingers were of jointed steel, and his dark eyes gleamed.

"He will grow jealous—and he will come back to you. Then you will say: 'William Wobnson-Jadley, you are nothing to me! The mat on which I wipe my feet is more honorable in my eyes. For your love—keep it, give it to whom you choose; I will have nothing of it. For I am loved by an honorable man, rich, not old, and very respectable—Europeanized Japanese, belonging to the American Evangelical Church, having favor in the eyes of authority as Second Secretary to the Legation of Japan, and with him I am about to contract a monogamic union.'" He released the girl's wrist, and pressed his palms together, bowing almost to the floor.

"Tell me, my almond flower, my delight of spring, is not that what you will say?"

Miss Darchfield hesitated. Then, "I'll try your prescription," she said, with a flash of her eyes and teeth. "I'll wear the dagger with the diamond snail every day."

She thrust the exquisite, deadly thing, with its golden sheath and jewelled hilt, through her wheat colored coils of hair. Oishi Yoshio, overwhelmed with a sudden dizziness, was aware only when the thing was done that he had kissed her.

"You wear the dagger—yes. But the words—will you not say the words?" he found himself pleading.

Miss Darchfield stood before him with eyelids that drooped a little shyly and a flickering smile hovering about her sensitive mouth.

"Of course, it's very sudden, and—and I couldn't dream of doing such a thing—without consulting Aunt," she said.

"You did not consult her in the case of this Jamjenwilbad—and the rest, whose name I utterly abhor and condemn as I loathe his despicable personality!" cried Oishi Yoshio hotly.

"True," said Miss Darchfield, drawing her furs about her. "But it is a little sudden—don't you think?" She thoughtfully put on one glove. "Love is always sudden," said the lover.

This was not denied by Miss Darchfield. "Good-by, and thank you so much!" she said, proffering the ungloved hand. "By the way," she remarked, with a studied appearance of casualness, "we live at No. 50 Clarges-st., and, if you should happen to be passing on Thursday at 4, Aunt would be glad to give you a cup of tea. It isn't Japanese, but she buys it from the importers. And perhaps you would like to hear"—she gave her head a little, curious movement, and the diamond snail upon the jade lotus sent out a white and crimson throb of radiance—"you might like to know how the charm works."

"Flossie!" called a matronly voice belonging to a stout lady standing with several other stout ladies near the door.

"I'm coming, Auntie!" responded Miss Darchfield in her shrill, fresh voice. She looked back at Oishi Yoshio over her shoulder, and the diamond snail gleamed again. "Don't forget the address—No. 50 Clarges-st!" she said.

Then she went away, and Oishi Yoshio, being a methodical young Secretary of Legation, made a note of the address, in Japanese, in his private memorandum book.

ARE THE FRENCH LATIN OR CELTS?

Letter in The Spectator.

In connection with the recent visit of the Italian fleet to Toulon there have been many references in the European press to a renewal of the entente cordiale between two "Latin" nations. It may be of some interest to inquire in what sense the term "Latin" can be correctly applied to the French, whom, almost in the same breath, many people are apt to describe as a "Celtic" people. One thing surely is certain, that in blood the French cannot be at the same time both "Latin" and "Celtic."

Yet the inconsistency does not seem to strike people. I think that, although outside Provence the French have little or no Latin—i. e., Italian—blood in their veins, the explanation of their being described as a "Latin" race is to be found in the fact that their language and civilization are both Latin. It seems no longer permissible to hold that the French are mainly "Celtic" in blood, the view being now generally accepted that the bulk of the population in France is of a pre-Celtic, and probably of Iberian or Ligurian, stock. And this view seems to hold good also of Ireland and Wales.



"I WANT TWA FARDIN' DIPS, MR. MACPHERSON."
"FARDIN' DIPS ARE UP TO A PENNY TH' NOO."
"AN' HOO'S THAT?"
"IT WILL BE OWIN' TO THE WAR, I'LL BE THINKIN'."
"DEARIE ME, AND ARE THEY FECTIN' BY CAN'LE LICHT THE NOO, MR. MACPHERSON."—
(Kling.)