



## SHIZU'S NEW YEAR'S PRESENT

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Drawing by Louis Betts



IT was New Year's eve. A gentle snow was falling everywhere and it was quite cold outdoors. Nevertheless, the people were laughing and chatting happily everywhere, and the fading sunset lingered lovingly about their happy, smiling faces.

The treasure vendor came proudly along on his cart, calling his wares aloud, and stopping every once in awhile to make a sale. A gay party of geisha girls, with arms linked happily about each other, passed down the main street, chatting and whispering and laughing together.

They were planning what they were going to do with the presents they had purchased, for they were just returning from a shopping tour. One of the girls hung somewhat behind the others, and there was a constrained, sad look about her face, which contrasted with the happiness visible in the others.

"Well, Shizu-san," said one girl turning on her sharply, "you have not purchased so much as a piece of candy. How could you be so stingy!"

The girl did not answer. Her face had flushed a hurt, painful red. The girls continued whispering spiteful little things to each other, as girls often do.

When they reached the tea garden, Shizu ran off by herself, and rushing to her little room sat down on the mats, burying her face in her hands.

"Oh, pitiful Kwanon," she said, "I have given all my money to my parents and now have not a sen left even where-with to reward the kind Americazan lady." She sobbed bitterly. After awhile another geisha girl joined her, and Shizu confided in and unfolded her trouble to her. The friend thought the matter over.

"You say you were starving, and the Americazan lady bought you food?"

The girl nodded her head.

"And she secured you this position?"

"Yes, but I have been here only one week now, and I have not saved anything."

Her friend thought the matter over, then she

said very gravely: "You certainly owe a debt to the Americazan, which it would be most ungrateful for you to neglect. Come nearer, Shizu-san, let me whisper in your ear, for I see some one's eye peering through the fusuma and know they will hear us."

So they whispered together for some time, and after awhile Shizu rose to her feet, her face grown suddenly bright and happy. She put her arms

On New Year's morning Mrs. Lennard got up very early, in order to see that all the presents for the children were in their right places and that no vagrant had been around to disturb them. After going carefully over them in the dining-room, she passed into the adjoining room where her servants were in the habit of placing their various little gifts for herself and family, for a Japanese servant never fails to present his master or mistress with a present at New Years.

The American lady's sweet face softened as she looked at the various gifts which were laid on the floor, some of them addressed to her personally, some to her husband and most to the children. The room was in semi-darkness, as the blind was down. As she crossed the room to lift it, her foot came in contact with something that made her pause for a moment in fright, for it did not feel like any ordinary toy. She stopped in the darkness and touched it with her hand. Then she rose shivering and pulled the blind high up.

Lying sound asleep in the midst of the presents was a little figure. She was dressed in a rose colored kimono, and there were imitation flowers and ornaments in her hair. Mrs. Lennard could see that she had taken especial pains to dress her hair well and look as nice as possible. At first she did not recognize her. Then she went close, and saw it was Shizu. She did not wake her, but stepping on tip-toe crept back to her own room.

"Walter," she said, shaking her husband, and then as he opened injured sleepy eyes at her, she continued: "What do you think! I could not sleep toward morning and so crept down to look at the presents. Shizu-san is lying sound asleep among them."

"She has been stealing, I suppose," her husband said with an angry look of suspicion. "That's all the thanks you get for helping those beggars."

"Don't, Walter, I can't believe it."

"Well, I'll go down, anyhow," he said, "and fix it so she can't get out when she wakes. She'll find herself in a trap and will have to account for it."

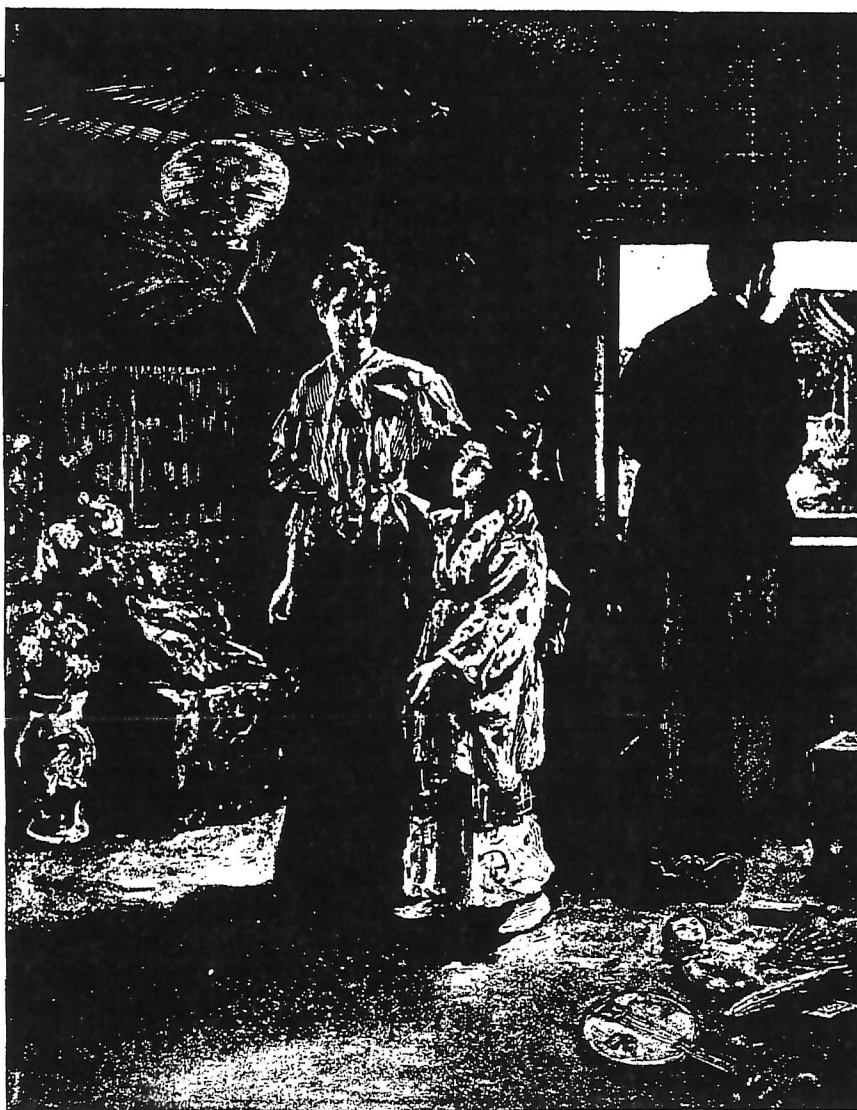
When Shizu-san awoke, she sat up blinking her little eyes at the bright

sun that was dazzling them. She fancied she had drawn the blinds down before sleeping. Then she looked about her, and as she half started to rise, she saw that both Mr. and Mrs. Lennard were in the room.

Her face suddenly broke into the most confiding, bewitching smiles. She crossed to where they were standing, and putting her little hands on her knees smiled with pleasure and assurance.

"You lig' me?" she asked.

"How did you get into the house?" Mr. Len-



"SHE PUT HER ARM AFFECTIONATELY AROUND SHIZU"

lovingly around her friend and thanked her for her kind advice.

Now the Lennards had lived in Japan so many years that many people regarded them almost as citizens. Therefore it was not at all extraordinary that instead of celebrating Christmas as they would have done in America, they kept instead the New Year holiday with the Japanese. So it happened that they spent a great deal of money in decorating the house with bamboo and pine and in making presents to their friends and servants.

DOLLY Madison's early life and advantages in no wise fitted her for the position she occupied in society in later years. From a quiet little Quakeress, whose face was every morning before she went to school covered with a white line mask to keep the sunshine from her complexion, whose sunbounnet was sewed on her head, and whose hands and arms were safely protected by long gloves, she passed step by step in the social evolution till she became first lady of the land. As we turn back again to that picturesque period of the times of Dolly Madison, we see this mistress of the White House through two administrations of President Jefferson and through the administration of her husband, shining like an