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The Japanese
Move Out All the Walls
When May Brings House-Cleaning Time

By Sarah Field

FINEST weather in the whole year—just right for cleaning house! Neither New England nor Iowa has anything on Japan in May, for in the midst of roses and azaleas the whole nation turns itself out-of-doors and cleans its house.

It seems to me that the Japanese, however, miss something of the seriousness of the business in one way, for everybody seems to have such a good time out of it!

A municipal holiday is declared and father, instead of coming home at night to a belated meal, a soapy smelling house and a frazzled wife and family, stays at home and whacks happily at the thick, straw-stuffed floor mats. These with everything else, stand around outside in a terrible state of confusion, but father doesn't mind.

And the children love it. They, too, may stay at home from school on this appointed day to help, holding more and more junk out of the hidden corners of the house to add to the piles of furniture, dirt and rubbish. Maybe they, too, have heads tied up in gay towels and have bodies looking as if they were being scrubbed.

Bedding comes next—nice six-inch-thick silk-wadded floor mattresses buttoned and snapped into protecting, cotton-sheeting covers for their gay silk beds. Some of them are made with deep, wide "sleeves" to fit restless shoulders.

THOSE comfort-mattresses must be carefully folded away into a huge box called a "horse-coffin" by one irrepressible American. The summer thin ones go into one of the real closets, piled high on the shelf across its middle. That is where the floor-cushions go, too, from their airing on the verandah.

Time for them to put on their cool gray and blue linen covers now. And, like the fans, these are in sets of five, all alike, or in five different patterns. Heavily padded winter clothes, too, aired and sunned now, are folded away.

After the fresh-beaten mats, chests of drawers slide back into the house. They are the cupboards and closets of the house, and the menage revolves around them. In the kitchen they have sliding wire-screen doors, in the parlor gilt-painted paper ones and in Mother's room—the bedroom, where all the family sleep, the chest is a massive affair of long drawers for kimono and tall closets for Father's dress suit after the manner of the ancient wardrobe, built in great sections and covering one whole side of the room.

A story ostensibly told by a child in my Japanese fourth reader says that when his family cleaned house and moved the "chest of drawers" a rat jumped out and they found his nest made around the child's baseball bat that had been missing for months!

Such fascinating glimpses as one does get as one passes along the street—skeleton houses, bereft of every movable screen and wall, thus opened to all the sun and breezes; mother and the maids, skirts tucked up, scrubbing away at every inch of interior from shining lacquered tokonoma to the rough floors usually hidden by the mats. These latter must be inspected by the local policeman before the mats can be fitted back into place on them—wouldn't you know Japan would tie a neat bit of red tape on the tail of the house-cleaning dragon?

Flowers on the floor of the tokonoma, leaves on the godshelf but express in more concrete fashion the fresh cleanliness of the smooth mats and the soft-polished woodwork.

(End of page 10)
MRS. ELIZABETH MORILL GIBSON, who has served part time in the clothing and home furnishing department of the Extension Service, resigned May 15 to devote her time to her own home.

Gladys Adams, formerly home demonstration agent for 5 years in Linn County, began May 1 as clothing specialist in Mrs. Gibson's place. Miss Adams was a student at Iowa State College during the winter quarter.

Housecleaning

(Begins on page 1)

In this place, where every prospect now pleases, only man is vile, and he won't remain so very long. Already the bath is hot and Father has started his soaking. The rest will follow in order, appreciating more than ever the beauty of cleanliness. But appreciating more, perhaps, tired and hungry as they are, the call of the approaching supper hour.

The kitchen is so clean that nothing is left in it for supper. Besides, no one cares to make the effort to get it anyway! The thing to do is to send to the noodle shop on the corner. A steaming bowl of buckwheat strings in savory broth, with a relish of chopped onion sprouts, will fill those aching empty corners and give comfort and relaxation.

Pranks

(Begins on page 2)

"Lights out" is one of those phrases so meaningful to dormitory people, but it was brought about voluntarily by one little mischief-maker who swept all light bulbs from her neighbors and then collected them and herself under a bed to lie laughingly listening to their stumblings and mumbled threats, which she can assert were not in vain when at last she was discovered.

These and many more pranks, some more serious, some inconsequential, all go to make up a part of that life a college woman never forgets. It is as much a real part of her college days as Chemistry and English.

Alumni Echoes

(Begins on Inside Cover)

Eva Minton, '28, has accepted a position for next year as assistant instructor in the household arts department of Teachers College, Columbia University. Miss Minton has been studying at Columbia University during 1934-35 and was awarded the Lydia Roberts fellowship for next year but decided to accept the teaching position at Columbia instead.

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