NEW YEAR'S EVE

It is New Year's Eve. I sit by the open shoji And gaze into the night. I see the city of Moji Of the Kyushu Isle Bedecked with lights. Before me, the hills Like sparkling gems are flowered. For Moji is mountaneous. Across the Strait Kwanmon Shimonoseki lies. That city, too, is aglow Like stars in an autumnal evening. Reflecting in columnt irascible waters, Dance the lights to Trembleton To the rhythms of the waves. The columnts of the night Adds to its seauty. Far away, audible above Whispering winds A temple bell sends out its with solitary tone. Gong ... gong ... gong It is midnight! The arrival of the New Year is at hand. Gong ... gong ... gong The last reverbration is dying Then silence ... oppressive, omnipotent. The New Year is greeted

With reverence, with prayer And with respectful silence....

It was New Year's Eve.

Many times I pass the 'kyakuma'.

Many times I gaze over the 'tokoronoma'

And the serene 'kakeji'.

and when I stand and behold the 'kakeji'

I am awed.

For has it not heard the gossip of women?

for has it not observed the petty quarrels

Of sisters and brothers, husband wife?

For has it not witnessed men and women?

For has it not studied m n'and women?