

little gardens with tea-houses, where breathing space may be had, as well as refreshments, a specialty of the place and season being a drink flavoured with cherry-blossom. It is a merry scene. The endless vista of over-arching boughs, as white as if laden with snow-flakes, each breath of wind scattering a shower of delicate petals, the cheerful crowd of holiday-makers moving quietly or sitting in rest-houses with their tasteful attire and winsome manners, the peals of laughter and fugitive strains of music, the tidy pavilioned pleasure-boats

the eastward to Kameido, sacred to the wistaria (Japanese *fuji*). Here there is a lake overhung with trellises of bamboo, from which multitudes of the tapering blossoms, so exquisite in form and tint and fragrance, droop like stalactites, making beautiful ceilings for the matted platforms on which groups of holiday-makers sit and feast and sound their praise. Your umbrella may not be long enough to measure some of these wonderful flowers.

Early in summer the peony attracts its admirers, and the artificial lakes at Horikiri



GIRLS AT HOME.

moored to the stakes which support the sedgy river-bank, one or two white sails of barges moving up or down stream, a glimpse of the upper reaches of the river, with its low, grassy banks and a reedy islet in mid-channel, cityward the pagoda and great temple roofs of Asakusa, and above the vast city, with its grey roofs, sprinkling of white walls, and wooded bluffs, the inspiration of Fuji, the Peerless. We are nipping ourselves to see if we are in the body.

A month later we will take a house-boat up the river and along canals branching to

bloom with three hundred varieties of irises. August brings the great pink or white bulbs of the sacred lotus, rising beside its immenso parasol-like leaves, on the waters of the castle-moat.

“ The waters are soiled and dark below—

(Beautiful bloom of the lotus flower !)

Why art thou fair as a flake of snow ?

(Beautiful bloom of the lotus flower !)

“ Over the waters thy lifted leaves—

(Beautiful bloom of the lotus flower !)

Thrill with the fragrance their heart receives—

(Beautiful bloom of the lotus flower !)