

The Dream-Gown of the Japanese Ambassador

By Brander Matthews

I

After arranging the Egyptian and Mexican pottery so as to contrast agreeably with the Dutch and the German beer-mugs on the top of the bookcase that ran along one wall of the sitting-room, Cosmo Waynflete went back into the bedroom and took from a half-empty trunk the little cardboard boxes in which he kept the collection of playing-cards, and of all manner of outlandish equivalents for these simple instruments of fortune, picked up here and there during his two or three years of dilettante travelling in strange countries. At the same time he brought out a Japanese crystal ball, which he stood upon its silver tripod, placing it on a little table in one of the windows on each side of the fireplace; and there the rays of the westering sun lighted it up at once into translucent loveliness.

The returned wanderer looked out of the window and saw on one side the graceful and vigorous tower of the Madison Square Garden, with its Diana turning in the December wind, while in the other direction he could look down on the frozen paths of Union Square, only a block distant, but as far below him almost as though he were gazing down from a balloon. Then he stepped back into the sitting-room itself, and noted the comfortable furniture and wood-fire crackling in friendly fashion on the hearth, and his own personal belongings, scattered here and there as though they were settling themselves for a stay. Having arrived from Europe only that morning, he could not but hold himself lucky to have found these rooms taken for him by the old friend to whom he had announced his return, and with whom he was to eat his Christmas dinner that evening. He had not been on shore more than six or seven hours, and yet the most of his odds and ends were unpacked and already in place as though they belonged in this new abode. It was true that he had toiled unceasingly to accomplish this, and as he stood there in his shirt-sleeves, admiring the results of his labors, he was conscious also that his muscles were fatigued, and that the easy-chair before the fire opened its arms temptingly.

He went again into the bedroom, and took from one of his many trunks a long, loose garment of pale-gray silk. Apparently this beautiful robe was intended to serve as a dressing-gown, and as such Cosmo Waynflete utilized it immediately. The ample folds fell softly about him, and the rich silk itself seemed to be soothing to his limbs, so delicate was its fibre and so carefully had it been woven. Around the full skirt there was embroidery of threads of gold, and again on the open and flowing sleeves. With the skilful freedom of Japanese art the pattern of this decoration seemed to suggest the shrubbery about a spring, for there were strange plants with huge leaves broadly outlined by the golden threads, and in the midst of them water was seen bubbling from the earth and lapping gently over the edge of the fountain. As the returned wanderer thrust his arms into the dressing-gown with its symbolic embroidery on the skirt and sleeves, he remembered distinctly the dismal day when he had bought it in a little curiosity-shop in Nuremberg; and as he fastened across his chest one by one the loops of silken cord to the three coins which served as buttons down the front of the robe, he recalled also the time

and the place where he had picked up each of these pieces of gold and silver, one after another. The first of them was a Persian daric, which he had purchased from a dealer on the Grand Canal in Venice; and the second was a Spanish peso struck under Philip II. at Potosi, which he had found in a stall on the embankment of the Quay Voltaire, in Paris; and the third was a York shilling, which he had bought from the man who had turned it up in ploughing a field that sloped to the Hudson near Sleepy Hollow.

Having thus wrapped himself in this unusual dressing-gown with its unexpected buttons of gold and silver, Cosmo Waynflete went back into the front room. He dropped into the arm-chair before the fire. It was with a smile of physical satisfaction that he stretched out his feet to the hickory blaze.

The afternoon was drawing on, and in New York the sun sets early on Christmas day. The red rays shot into the window almost horizontally, and they filled the crystal globe with a curious light. Cosmo Waynflete lay back in his easy-chair, with his Japanese robe about him, and gazed intently at the beautiful ball which seemed like a bubble of air and water. His mind went back to the afternoon in April, two years before, when he had found that crystal sphere in a Japanese shop within sight of the incomparable Fugiyama.

II

As he peered into its transparent depths, with his vision focused upon the spot of light where the rays of the setting sun touched it into flame, he was but little surprised to discover that he could make out tiny figures in the crystal. For the moment this strange thing seemed to him perfectly natural. And the movements of these little men and women interested him so much that he watched them as they went to and fro, sweeping a roadway with large brooms. Thus it happened that the fixity of his gaze was intensified. And so it was that in a few minutes he saw with no astonishment that he was one of the group himself, he himself in the rich and stately attire of a samurai. From the instant that Cosmo Waynflete discovered himself among the people whom he saw moving before him, as his eyes were fastened on the illuminated dot in the transparent ball, he ceased to see them as little figures, and he accepted them as of the full stature of man. This increase in their size was no more a source of wonderment to him than it had been to discern himself in the midst of them. He accepted both of these marvellous things without question — indeed, with no thought at all that they were in any way peculiar or abnormal. Not only this, but thereafter he seemed to have transferred his personality to the Cosmo Waynflete who was a Japanese samurai and to have abandoned entirely the Cosmo Waynflete who was an American traveller, and who had just returned to New York that Christmas morning. So completely did the Japanese identity dominate that the existence of the American identity was wholly unknown to him. It was as though the American had gone to sleep in New York at the end of the nineteenth century, and had waked a Japanese in Nippon in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

With his sword by his side—a Murimasa blade, likely to bring bad luck to the wearer sooner or later—he had walked from his own house in the quarter of Kyoto which is called Yamashina to the quarter which is called Yoshiwara, a place of ill repute, where dwell women of evil life, and where roysterers and drunkards come by night. He knew that the sacred duty of avenging his master's death had led him to cast off his faithful wife so that he might pretend to riot in debauchery at the Three Sea-Shores. The fame of

his shameful doings had spread abroad, and it must soon come to the ears of the man whom he wished to take unawares. Now he was lying prone in the street, seemingly sunk in a drunken slumber, so that men might see him and carry the news to the treacherous assassin of his beloved master. As he lay there that afternoon, he revolved in his mind the devices he should use to make away with his enemy when the hour might be ripe at last for the accomplishment of his holy revenge. To himself he called the roll of his fellow-ronins, now biding their time, as he was, and ready always to obey his orders and to follow his lead to the death, when at last the sun should rise on the day of vengeance.

So he gave no heed to the scoffs and the jeers of those who passed along the street, laughing him to scorn as they beheld him lying there in a stupor from excessive drink at that inordinate hour of the day. And among those who came by at last was a man from Satsuma, who was moved to voice the reproaches of all that saw this sorry sight.

“Is not this Oishi Kuranosuke,” said the man from Satsuma, “who was a councillor of Asano Takumi no Kami, and who, not having the heart to avenge his lord, gives himself up to women and wine? See how he lies drunk in the public street! Faithless beast! Fool and craven! Unworthy of the name of a samurai!”

And with that the man from Satsuma trod on him as he lay there, and spat upon him, and went away indignantly. The spies of Kotsuke no Suke heard what the man from Satsuma had said, and they saw how he had spurned the prostrate samurai with his foot; and they went their way to report to their master that he need no longer have any fear of the councillors of Asano Takumi no Kami. All this the luau, lying prone in the dust of the street, noted; and it made his heart glad, for then he made sure that the day was soon coming when he could do his duty at last and take vengeance for the death of his master.

III

He lay there longer than he knew, and the twilight settled down at last, and the evening stars came out. And then, after a while, and by imperceptible degrees, Cosmo Waynflete became conscious that the scene had changed and that he had changed with it. He was no longer in Japan, but in Persia. He was no longer lying like a drunkard in the street of a city, but slumbering like a weary soldier in a little oasis by the side of a spring in the midst of a sandy desert. He was asleep, and his faithful horse was unbridled that it might crop the grass at will.

The air was hot and thick, and the leaves of the slim tree above him were never stirred by a wandering wind. Yet now and again there came from the darkness a faintly fetid odor. The evening wore on and still he slept, until at length in the silence of the night a strange huge creature wormed its way steadily out of its lair amid the trees, and drew near the sleeping man to devour him fiercely. But the horse neighed vehemently and beat the ground with his hoofs and waked his master. Then the hideous monster vanished; and the man, aroused from his sleep, saw nothing, although the evil smell still lingered in the sultry atmosphere. He lay down again once more, thinking that for once his steed had given a false alarm. Again the grisly dragon drew nigh, and again the courser notified its rider, and again the man could make out nothing in the darkness of the night; and again he was wellnigh stifled by the foul emanation that trailed in the wake of the misbegotten creature. He rebuked his horse and laid him down once more.

A third time the dreadful beast approached, and a third time the faithful charger awoke its angry master. But there came the breath of a gentle breeze, so that the man did not fear to fill his lungs; and there was a vague light in the heavens now, so that he could dimly discern his mighty enemy; and at once he girded himself for the fight. The scaly monster came full at him with dripping fangs, its mighty body thrusting forward its huge and hideous head. The man met the attack without fear and smote the beast full on the crest, but the blow rebounded from its coat of mail.

Then the faithful horse sprang forward and bit the dreadful creature full upon the neck and tore away the scales, so that its master's sword could pierce the armored hide. So the man was able to dis sever the ghastly head and thus to slay the monstrous dragon. The blackness of night wrapped him about once more as he fell on his knees and gave thanks for his victory; and the wind died away again.

IV

Only a few minutes later, so it seemed to him, Cosmo Waynflete became doubtfully aware of another change of time and place— of another transformation of his own being. He knew himself to be alone once more, and even without his trusty charger. Again he found himself groping in the dark. But in a little while there was a faint radiance of light, and at last the moon came out behind a tower. Then he saw that he was not by the roadside in Japan or in the desert of Persia, but now in some unknown city of Southern Europe, where the architecture was hispano-moresque. By the silver rays of the moon he was able to make out the beautiful design damascened upon the blade of the sword which he held now in his hand ready drawn for self-defence.

Then he heard hurried footfalls down the empty street, and a man rushed around the corner pursued by two others, who had also weapons in their hands. For a moment Cosmo Waynflete was a Spaniard, and to him it was a point of honor to aid the weaker party. He cried to the fugitive to pluck up heart and to withstand the enemy stoutly. But the hunted man fled on, and after him went one of the pursuers, a tall, thin fellow, with a long black cloak streaming behind him as he ran.

The other of the two, a handsome lad with fair hair, came to a halt and crossed swords with Cosmo, and soon showed himself to be skilled in the art of fence. So violent was the young fellow's attack that in the ardor of self-defence Cosmo ran the boy through the body before he had time to hold his hand or even to reflect.

The lad toppled over sideways. "Oh, my mother!" he cried, and in a second he was dead. While Cosmo bent over the body, hasty footsteps again echoed along the silent thoroughfare. Cosmo peered around the corner, and by the struggling moonbeams he could see that it was the tall, thin fellow in the black cloak, who was returning with half a score of retainers, all armed, and some of them bearing torches.

Cosmo turned and fled swiftly, but being a stranger in the city he soon lost himself in its tortuous streets. Seeing a light in a window and observing a vine that trailed from the balcony before it, he climbed up boldly, and found himself face to face with a gray-haired lady, whose visage was beautiful and kindly and noble. In a few words he told her his plight and besought sanctuary. She listened to him in silence, with exceeding courtesy of manner, as though she were weighing his words before making up her mind. She raised

the lamp on her table and let its beams fall on his lineaments. And still she made no answer to his appeal.

Then came a glare of torches in the street below and a knocking at the door. Then at last the old lady came to a resolution; she lifted the tapestry at the head of her bed and told him to bestow himself there. No sooner was he hidden than the tall, thin man in the long black cloak entered hastily, he greeted the elderly lady as his aunt, and he told her that her son had been set upon by a stranger in the street and had been slain. She gave a great cry and never took her eyes from his face. Then he said that a servant had seen an unknown man climb to the balcony of her house. What if it were the assassin of her son? The blood left her face and she clutched at the table behind her, as she gave orders to have the house searched.

When the room was empty at last she went to the head of the bed and bade the man concealed there to come forth and begone, but to cover his face, that she might not be forced to know him again. So saying, she dropped on her knees before a crucifix, while he slipped out of the window again and down to the deserted street.

He sped to the corner and turned it undiscovered, and breathed a sigh of relief and of regret. He kept on steadily, gliding stealthily along in the shadows, until he found himself at the city gate as the bell of the cathedral tolled the hour of midnight.

V

How it was that he passed through the gate he could not declare with precision, for seemingly a mist had settled about him. Yet a few minutes later he saw that in some fashion he must have got beyond the walls of the town, for he recognized the open country all around. And, oddly enough, he now discovered himself to be astride a bony steed. He could not say what manner of horse it was he was riding, but he felt sure that it was not the faithful charger that had saved his life in Persia, once upon a time, in days long gone by, as it seemed to him then. He was not in Persia now—of that he was certain, nor in Japan, nor in the Iberian peninsula. Where he was he did not know.

In the dead hush of midnight he could hear the barking of a dog on the opposite shore of a dusky and indistinct waste of waters that spread itself far below him. The night grew darker and darker, the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. In the centre of the road stood an enormous tulip-tree; its limbs were gnarled and fantastic, large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. As he approached this fearful tree he thought he saw something white hanging in the midst of it, but on looking more narrowly he perceived it was a place where it had been scathed by lightning and the white wood laid bare. About two hundred yards from the tree a small brook crossed the road; and as he drew near he beheld—on the margin of this brook, and in the dark shadow of the grove—he beheld something huge, misshapen, black, and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveller.

He demanded, in stammering accents, "Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. And then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and with a scramble and a bound stood in the middle of the road. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions and

mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. Having no relish for this strange midnight companion, Cosmo Waynflete urged on his steed in hopes of leaving the apparition behind; but the stranger quickened his horse also to an equal pace. And when the first horseman pulled up, thinking to lag behind, the second did likewise. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground which brought the figure of his fellow-traveller against the sky, gigantic in height and muffled in a cloak, he was horror— struck to discover the stranger was headless!— but his horror was still more increased in observing that the head which should have rested on the shoulders was carried before the body on the pommel of the saddle.

The terror of Cosmo Waynflete rose to desperation, and he spurred his steed suddenly in the hope of giving his weird companion the slip. But the headless horseman started full jump with him. His own horse, as though possessed by a demon, plunged headlong down the hill. He could hear, however, the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt the hot breath of the pursuer. When he ventured at last to cast a look behind, he saw the goblin rising in the stirrups, and in the very act of hurling at him the grisly head. He fell out of the saddle to the ground; and the black steed and the goblin rider passed by him like a whirlwind.

VI

How long he lay there by the roadside, stunned and motionless, he could not guess; but when he came to himself at last the sun was already high in the heavens. He discovered himself to be reclining on the tall grass of a pleasant graveyard which surrounded a tiny country church in the outskirts of a pretty little village. It was in the early summer, and the foliage was green above him as the boughs swayed gently to and fro in the morning breeze. The birds were singing gayly as they flitted about over his head. The bees hummed along from flower to flower. At last, so it seemed to him, he had come into a land of peace and quiet, where there was rest and comfort and where no man need go in fear of his life. It was a country where vengeance was not a duty and where midnight combats were not a custom. He found himself smiling as he thought that a grisly dragon and a goblin rider would be equally out of place in this laughing landscape.

Then the bell in the steeple of the little church began to ring merrily, and he rose to his feet in expectation. All of a sudden the knowledge came to him why it was that they were ringing. He wondered then why the coming of the bride was thus delayed. He knew himself to be a hover, with life opening brightly before him; and the world seemed to him sweeter than ever before and more beautiful.

Then at last the girl whom he loved with his whole heart and who had promised to marry him appeared in the distance, and he thought he had never seen her look more lovely. As he beheld his bridal party approaching, he slipped into the church to await her at the altar. The sunshine fell full upon the portal and made a halo about the girl's head as she crossed the threshold.

But even when the bride stood by his side and the clergyman had begun the solemn service of the church the bells kept on, and soon their chiming became a clangor, louder and sharper and more insistent.

VII

So clamorous and so persistent was the ringing that Cosmo Waynflete was roused at last. He found himself suddenly standing on his feet, with his hand clutching the back of the chair in which he had been sitting before the fire when the rays of the setting sun had set long ago. The room was dark, for it was lighted now only by the embers of the burnt-out fire; and the electric bell was ringing steadily, as though the man outside the door had resolved to waken the seven sleepers.

Then Cosmo Waynflete was wide-awake again; and he knew where he was once more—not in Japan, not in Persia, not in Lisbon, not in Sleepy Hollow, but here in New York, in his own room, before his own fire, he opened the door at once and admitted his friend, Paul Stuyvesant.

“It isn’t dinner-time, is it?” he asked. “I’m not late, am I? The fact is, I’ve been asleep.”

“It is so good of you to confess that,” his friend answered, laughing; “although the length of time you kept me waiting and ringing might have led me to suspect it. No, you are not late and it is not dinner-time. I’ve come around to have another little chat with you before dinner, that’s all.”

“Take this chair, old man,” said Cosmo, as he threw another hickory-stick on the fire. Then he lighted the gas and sat down by the side of his friend.

“This chair is comfortable, for a fact,” Stuyvesant declared, stretching himself out luxuriously. “No wonder you went to sleep. What did you dream of?—strange places you had seen in your travels or the homely scenes of your native land.”

Waynflete looked at his friend for a moment without answering the question. He was startled as he recalled the extraordinary series of adventures which had fallen to his lot since he had fixed his gaze on the crystal ball. It seemed to him as though he had been whirled through space and through time.

“I suppose every man is always the hero of his own dreams,” he began, doubtfully.

“Of course,” his friend returned; “in sleep our natural and healthy egotism is absolutely unrestrained. It doesn’t make any matter where the scene is laid or whether the play is a comedy or a tragedy, the dreamer has always the centre of the stage, with the calcium light turned full on him.”

“That’s just it,” Waynflete went on; “this dream of mine makes me feel as if I were an actor, and as if I had been playing many parts, one after the other, in the swiftest succession. They are not familiar to me, and yet I confess to a vague feeling of unoriginality. It is as though I were a plagiarist of adventure—if that be a possible supposition. I have just gone through these startling situations myself, and yet I’m sure that they have all of them happened before—although, perhaps, not to any one man. Indeed, no one man could have had all these adventures of mine, because I see now that I have been whisked through the centuries and across the hemispheres with a suddenness possible only in dreams. Yet all my experiences seem somehow second-hand, and not really my own.”

Picked up here and there—hike your bric-à-brac?” suggested Stuyvesant. “But what are these alluring adventures of yours that stretched through the ages and across the continents?”

Then, knowing how fond his friend was of solving mysteries and how proud he was of his skill in this art, Cosmo Waynflete narrated his dream as it has been set down in these pages.

When he had made an end, Paul Stuyvesant's first remark was: "I'm sorry I happened along just then and waked you up before you had time to get married."

His second remark followed half a minute later.

"I see how it was," he said; "you were sitting in this chair and looking at that crystal ball, which focussed the level rays of the setting sun, I suppose? Then it is plain enough—you hypnotized yourself!"

"I have heard that such a thing is possible," responded Cosmo.

"Possible?" Stuyvesant returned, "it is certain! But what is more curious is the new way in which you combined your self-hypnotism with crystal-gazing. You have heard of scrying, I suppose?"

"You mean the practice of looking into a drop of water or a crystal ball or anything of that sort," said Cosmo, "and of seeing things in it—of seeing people moving about?"

"That's just what I do mean," his friend returned. "And that's just what you have been doing. You fixed your gaze on the ball, and so hypnotized yourself; and then, in the intensity of your vision, you were able to see figures in the crystal—with one of which visualized emanations you immediately identified yourself. That's easy enough, I think. But I don't see what suggested to you your separate experiences. I recognize them, of course

"You recognize them?" cried Waynflete, in wonder.

"I can tell you where you borrowed every one of your adventures," Stuyvesant replied, "But what I'd like to know now is what suggested to you just those particular characters and situations, and not any of the many others also stored away in your subconsciousness."

So saying, he began to look about the room. "My subconsciousness?" repeated Waynflete. "Have I ever been a samurai in my subconsciousness?"

Paul Stuyvesant looked at Cosmo Waynflete for nearly a minute without reply. Then all the answer he made was to say: "That's a queer dressing-gown you have on."

"It is time I took it off," said the other, as he twisted himself out of its clinging folds. "It is a beautiful specimen of weaving, isn't it? I call it the dream-gown of the Japanese ambassador, for although I bought it in a curiosity-shop in Nuremberg, it was once, I really believe, the slumber-robe of an Oriental envoy.

Stuyvesant took the silken garment from his friend's hand.

"Why did the Japanese ambassador sell you his dream-gown in a Nuremberg curiosity-shop?" he asked.

"He didn't," Waynflete explained. "I never saw the ambassador, and neither did the old German lady who kept the shop. She told me she bought it from a Japanese acrobat who was out of an engagement and desperately hard up. But she told me also that the acrobat had told her that the garment had belonged to an ambassador who had given it to him as a reward of his skill, and that he never would have parted with it if he had not been dead-broke."

Stuyvesant held the robe up to the light and inspected the embroidery on the skirt of it.

"Yes," he said, at last, "this would account for it, I suppose. This bit here was probably meant to suggest 'the well where the head was washed,'—see?"

“I see that those lines may be meant to represent the outline of a spring of water, but I don’t see what that has to do with my dream,” Waynflete answered.

“Don’t you?” Stuyvesant returned. “Then I’ll show you. You had on this silk garment embroidered here with an outline of the well in which was washed the head of Kotsuke no Suke, the man whom the Forty-Seven Ronins killed. You know the story?”

“I read it in Japan, but—” began Cosmo.

“You had that story stored away in your subconsciousness,” interrupted his friend. “And when you hypnotized yourself by peering into the crystal ball, this embroidery it was which suggested to you to see yourself as the hero of the tale—Oishi Kuranosuke, the chief of the Forty-Seven Ronins, the faithful follower who avenged his master by pretending to be vicious and dissipated—just like Brutus and Lorenzaccio—until the enemy was off his guard and open to attack.”

“I think I do recall the tale of the Forty-Seven Ronins, but only very vaguely,” said the hero of the dream. “For all I know I may have had the adventure of Oishi Kuranosuke laid on the shelf somewhere in my subconsciousness, as you want me to believe. But how about my Persian dragon and my Iberian noblewoman?”

Paul Stuyvesant was examining the dream-gown of the Japanese ambassador with minute care. Suddenly he said, “Oh!” and then he looked up at Cosmo Waynflete and asked: “What are those buttons? They seem to be old coins.”

“They are old coins,” the other answered; “it was a fancy of mine to utilize them on that Japanese dressing-gown. They are all different, you see. The first is—”

“Persian, isn’t it?” interrupted Stuyvesant.

“Yes,” Waynflete explained, “it is a Persian daric. And the second is a Spanish peso made at Potosi under Philip II. for use in America. And the third is a York shilling, one of the coins in circulation here in New York at the time of the Revolution—I got that one, in fact, from the farmer who ploughed it up in a field at Tarrytown, near Sunnyside.”

“Then there are three of your adventures accounted for, Cosmo, and easily enough,” Paul commented, with obvious satisfaction at his own explanation. “Just as the embroidery on the silk here suggested to you—after you had hypnotized yourself—that you were the chief of the Forty-Seven Ronins, so this first coin here in turn suggested to you that you were Rustem, the hero of the ‘Epic of Kings.’ You have read the ‘Shah-Nameh?’”

“I remember Firdausi’s poem after a fashion only,” Cosmo answered. “Was not Rustem a Persian Hercules, so to speak?”

“That’s it precisely,” the other responded, “and he had seven labors to perform; and you dreamed the third of them, the slaying of the grisly dragon. For my own part, I think I should have preferred the fourth of them, the meeting with the lovely enchantress; but that’s neither here nor there.”

“It seems to me I do recollect something about that fight of Rustem and the strange beast. The faithful horse’s name was Rakush, wasn’t it?” asked Waynflete.

“If you can recollect the ‘Shah-Nameh,’” Stuyvesant pursued, “no doubt you can recall also Beaumont and Fletcher’s ‘Custom of the Country?’ That’s where you got the midnight duel in Lisbon and the magnanimous mother, you know.”

“No, I didn’t know,” the other declared.

“Well, you did, for all that,” Paul went on. “The situation is taken from one in a drama of Calderon’s, and it was much strengthened in the taking. You may not now remember

having read the play, but the incident must have been familiar to you, or else your subconsciousness couldn't have yielded it up to you so readily at the suggestion of the Spanish coin, could it?"

"I did read a lot of Elizabethan drama in my senior year at college," admitted Cosmo, "and this piece of Beaumont and Fletcher's may have been one of those I read; but I totally fail to recall now what it was all about."

"You won't have the cheek to declare that you don't remember the 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow,' will you?" asked Stuyvesant. "Very obviously it was the adventure of Ichabod Crane and the Headless Horseman that the York shilling suggested to you."

"I'll admit that I do recollect Irving's story now," the other confessed.

So the embroidery on the dream-gown gives the first of your strange situations; and the three others were suggested by the coins you have been using as buttons," said Paul Stuyvesant. "There is only one thing now that puzzles me: that is the country church and the noon wedding and the beautiful bride."

And with that he turned over the folds of the silken garment that hung over his arm.

Cosmo Waynflete hesitated a moment and a blush mantled his cheek. Then he looked his friend in the face and said: "I think I can account for my dreaming about her—I can account for that easily enough."

"So can I," said Paul Stuyvesant, as he held up the photograph of a lovely American girl that he had just found in the pocket of the dream-gown of the Japanese ambassador.