

in sight. All were eagerly watching the beautiful scenery which from time to time presented itself, until at length we anchored off Kobe, in the Bay of Osaka. On either side were towering peaks covered with vegetation to their very summits, and shady groves, among which appeared temples, and pretty cottages, not altogether unlike those seen in Switzerland; while stretching along the bund before us is the foreign concession, with its hotels, clubs, and consular residences, its regular terraces and streets of prim stucco-fronted houses and villas, forming as great a contrast as possible to the surrounding scene.

It was high holiday during a portion of our stay here; everybody *en fête*. Opportunities were therefore presented to us of seeing some of the religious ceremonies and processions for which Japan is so famous. The streets were gaily decorated with flags and festoons of brightly coloured lanterns; little chapels, gilded and varnished, dedicated to local deities, and quaintly carved cars filled with musicians, whose drums and gongs sounded in harsh and discordant clashes, were carried by coolies on bamboo poles; vehicles drawn by girls and boys, gaily dressed, in which were local celebrities, priests and others; ladies and courtesans followed in palanquins, amidst a host of banners. These processions were kept up for several days, and the festivities continued until late in the evening, when the city was