

JAPANESE ROYAL WEDDING.

Crown Prince Akihito has married a commoner, Michiko Shoda, so breaking Japanese tradition of more than 2,600 years. The marriage ceremony, lasting only fifteen minutes, took place in Kashikodokoro, a wooden shrine within the walls of the Imperial Palace. There was no hint of any Western influence in the wedding ritual. In sumptuous robes, such as the members of the imperial family have worn for centuries the crown Prince and his bride were made man and wife.

Burdened by no fewer than twelve kimono, Princess Michiko took three hours to dress. The total weight was thirty-three pounds. Public enthusiasm, natural at a Royal marriage, was heightened by the fact that the crown Prince has married a girl of the people. Cheers accompanied them all the way, as they began their drive through Tokyo.

Now came the sensational incident that shocked the whole of Japan. A young man ran towards the carriage, flung a stone at the Prince and tried to grab the bride before police arrested him.

The assailant was nineteen-year-old Kensetsu Nakayama. He said he was an anti-royalist. Nobody disbelieved him. Quickly recovering from the shock the Crown Prince and his bride imperturbably drove on. Their calmness and courage were much admired. In Akihito's palace the newly wedded pair were received by the Emperor and Empress. For Japan and the imperial family it was an historic occasion.