

ACROSS THE DEATH-LINE

BY

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(Translated by I. Fukumoto and T. Satchell.)

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TRANSLATORS' PREFACE.

TOYOHICO KAGAWA, the author of "Across the Death-line" (*Shisen wo koete*), was born in Kobe in 1888 and was brought up in Tokushima Prefecture in Shikoku. After attending the Middle School at Tokushima he went to Tokyo, where he studied at the Meiji Gakuin, a Christian College. Later he attended a private theological seminary in Kobe, and finally completed his theological education by spending two years in America, whither he went in 1914, studying at Princeton University and Princeton Theological Seminary and obtaining the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

It was in 1910, when he was only twenty-two years of age, that Mr. Kagawa went to live in the slums of Shinkawa, on what was then the eastern boundary of Kobe, and with the exception of two years spent in America he has lived there ever since. Although the labours of his pen have now brought him fame and fortune he has announced his decision that he will continue to live in the slums till he dies.

Mr. Kagawa is not merely a charitable worker and Christian teacher. He takes a strong interest in the Labour movement and is at present Secretary of the Japan Labour Federation. He was also second on the list of those nominated to represent the workers of Japan at the next International Labour Conference, a nomination, however, which he declined. In 1921 Mr. Kagawa took part in encouraging the men in the great strike at the Kawasaki Shipbuilding Yard at Kobe, for which he was arrested and detained, but released without any charge being brought against him. In regard to his political opinions Mr. Kagawa describes himself as a "Guild Socialist," but there is nothing militant about his Socialism. He is, to coin a convenient term, a "passivist," inasmuch as he adheres strictly to the