

## VII.

## IN THE HEART OF JAPAN.

THE weather was rough as we embarked, late in the afternoon of February 22d, on the *Oregonian*, and steamed down the Bay of Yedo. At night, the fixed white light in the stone tower on Cape Idzu, visible twenty miles, reminded us of the new order of things. Of old a wood-fire blazed on the promontory. The *Nil* did not yet know the fate to befall her.\*

The next day was foggy, and *mal de mer* held high revel among the passengers. The *Oregonian* was true to the reputation of its namesake given by Bryant—"where rolls the mighty Oregon." My own thoughts were less poetic. My feelings are best described by the Japanese proverb, "A sea-voyage is an inch of hell."

About midnight we rounded the promontory of Kii, where Jimmu passed centuries ago. Its splendid light-house, on a promontory one hundred and thirty feet high, on Ō Island, holds a revolving white light, alternately flashing and being eclipsed during every minute. Ō is a good harbor for wind-bound junks, and the fishermen here are noted whalers, hunting whales successfully with nets and spears. The light on Cape Shiwo, one hundred and fifty-five feet above water, may be seen for twenty miles. Ships from China make this point night or day.

The three officers of our party had been empowered to take cabin passage with their foreign charge; but such a foolish waste of money was not to be thought of. To pay forty dollars for forty-eight hours, and three hundred and forty-two geographical miles of nausea in a state-room, was not according to their ideas of happiness. Far better

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\* On the night of the 20th of March, 1874, at 10.30 p.m., the French M. M. steamer *Nil*, having on board one hundred and eleven persons, and the Japanese articles on exhibition at Vienna, her engines being out of order, and the currents unusually strong, lost her reckoning, struck a rock near the village of Irima, in Yoshida Bay, ten miles from Cape Idzu, and sunk in twenty-one fathoms. Only four persons were saved. A marble monument was erected, and now commemorates the accident, which was robbed of many of its saddest features by the kindness and energy of the natives.

to take the steerage, save the money, and have a feast, dance, and song with the gay and charming singing-girls of Ōzaka. So to the steerage they went, and solaced their transient misery with visions of the Ōzaka paradise and the black-eyed houris. They suffered "an inch of hell" for a yard of heaven.

I woke on the second morning in the harbor of Hiōgo and Kobé (the Gate of God), the former the native city, the latter the foreign town. All around the land-locked water were bold walls of green hills. French, English, and American ships of war lay at anchor, and the clumsy junks, with their great, broad sails, plowed across the path of the dancing sunbeams. Native fishing and carriage boats were leaping over the waters, urged on by the stroke of the naked scullers. On shore, glorified by the mild winter's sun, rose the "model settlement," a fresh proof of Occidental energy on Oriental soil. Until 1868, the site of the pretty town, laid out in chess-board regularity, was a mere strip of sand.\*

Under convoy of Iwabuchi and an American friend, to whom I bore letters, I spent a day and a half in Kobé and Hiōgo. The latter city was erected in the days of Taira glory. Its name means "arsenal," but peaceful trade now rules its streets. Near it stands Kiyomori's tomb. On the site of the Taira palace stands a great brothel. At Minato gawa, near Kobé, Kusunoki Masashigé, the mirror of Japanese loyalty, welcomed death. A small temple stands as a historic monument of the act, dedicated to his spirit.

In the cheerful home of an American missionary, to whom I bore letters, I spent a few delightful hours. They seemed to have brought the freshness and fragrance of New England hills, as well as the energy and patience of their ancestors, with them. The time for active Christian labor had not yet come; but the language was being mastered, and his morning hours were golden in the study. In the afternoon, we together visited a famous temple, on the site of one first erected by Jingu Kōgō, on her return from Corea. Crowds of pilgrims, in white robes, with wallet, staff, rosary, bell, and memorial shell sewed to their sleeve, were on the route or return. We spent the evening at the house of one of the merchant princes of Kobé, in whose establishment Oriental luxuriance and American taste, barbaric pomp and cozy comfort, were combined.

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\* The figures of the official register of Kobé (May, 1874) are: houses, 3846; population, 8554; foreign residents, 332; in the foreign "concession," 67 houses.

Our party were early on the steamboat, which carried the Stars and Stripes at her stern, and was commanded by a Yankee captain. It was crowded with natives, who rode for *ichi bu* (twenty-five cents). The five or six foreigners in the cabin paid each two "clean Mexicans." These silver eagles are the standard of value in Japan and China, though Uncle Sam's trade-dollars and Japanese gold *yen* are now contesting their supremacy.

We steamed along the coast for three hours; passed the forts built in 1855, and well mounted and manned; passed the light-house of Tempōzan (Hill of Heavenly Peace), and at noon, February 25th, 1871, I stood in the city called, in poetry, Naniwa—in prose, Ōzaka.



Buddhist Pilgrims.

All the large daimiōs formerly had *yashikis* in Yedo, Ōzaka, and in Kiōto, as well as in their own capitals, for the use of the clan. They served as caravansaries, at which the lord or his retainers might lodge, when on business or travel, and be treated according to their rank. But one or two samurai and their families occupied the Echizen *yashiki* in Ōzaka, which could lodge a hundred or more men. A suite of rooms was soon swept and dusted out, rugs laid on the matting, and dinner, in mixed Japanese and American style, was served.

Ōzaka is a gay city, with lively people, and plenty of means of amusement, especially theatres and singing-girls. The ladies are

handsomer, dress in better taste, tie their girdles in a style nearer perfection, and build coiffures that are at once the envy and despair of Tōkiō damsels. Ōzaka has every sort of gay life. In all the large



The Shamisen.

cities there are *geisha*, noted for their wit, beauty, skill in playing the three-stringed banjo. The daughters of Kiōto and Tōkiō do excellently, but those of Ōzaka excel them all.

Ōzaka is also the greatest commercial city in Japan. I was interested in the metal refineries and foundries, where the rosy copper ingots were

cast, and brass cannon of elegant workmanship turned out. With Iwabuchi as guide, I rambled over the city, and stood on many a spot made classic by Nobunaga, Hidéyoshi, and Iyéyasū. Iwabuchi's fluent tongue and knowledge of history were as spectacles to me, enabling me to see the past as he summoned it from resurrection.

An officer from Fukui brought us word, February 27th, that we were to leave Ōzaka that night, and that at Fushimi an honorary escort of seven mounted officers of the clan would meet me, they having come down from Fukui, one hundred and thirty miles, to escort me. We were to proceed up the Yodo, the river that drains six provinces, visit the temple of Hachiman or Ōjin Tennō, dine in historic Fushimi, and thence proceed on horseback to Lake Biwa. The morrow was to be a red-letter day.

We left Ōzaka at night, about ten o'clock. It was very cold, and bright moonlight, but the boat was a "house-boat," and the cabin within was neatly matted, and with rugs and *hibachi* we kept up a genial temperature until bed-time. We passed hundreds of boats like our own, and after making our way through the city, that might be a Venice if it were not wooden, passed the long rows of fire-proof storehouses, and gradually emerged into the country, where, except a scattered village here and there, we saw only the grand mountains and pines, and the silent landscape. The boat was provided with four rowers, though after we left the city, the river being shallow, they had to pole along, like Mississippi flat-boat walkers. Throughout the frosty night we slept, waking occasionally to listen to the ripples under the bow. The *sendō* plied their poles, and at day-break we were

far from Ōzaka, with the classic ground of Kawachi on our right, and Settsu on our left.

The sun clothed the hills in light, revealing the landscape, and kindled the frost on our cabin-roof into resplendent prismatic. We were in the clear water of the Yodo River, which flowed at a gentle current between banks of undergrowth, with groves of firs and bamboo, and here and there a group of thatched villages, through which the Jesuits and Franciscans preached Mary, St. Peter, and Christ, over two centuries ago. Along the shores stood white herons, tall storks, and, occasionally, huge hawks.

While musing on the past, and imagining the Portuguese missionaries, crucifix in hand, preaching on that open space, or erecting a cross on that knoll, Nakamura came out and pointed out the villages of Hashimoto (foot of the bridge) and Yamazaki (mountain point), where, in 1868, the contest at Fushimi was continued. The Tokugawa army held Hashimoto, while the mikado's troops attacked them by land, and bombarded them from a redoubt in Yamazaki, until they fled, defeated and in disorder, to Ōzaka, when the shōgun notified the foreign ministers that he could no longer protect them. I enjoyed Nakamura's talk richly, and, refreshed by the "sweet mother of fresh thoughts and health," body and mind were ready to drink in the sweet influences of that glorious morning in the heart of Japan. But what of the boatmen?

After a hard night's toil, poling and walking in a nipping frost, I wished to see the breakfast by which they laid the physical basis for another day's work. At the stern of the boat, resting on a little furnace, was the universal rice-pot, and beside it a small covered wooden tub, full of rice. Some pickled or boiled slices of the huge radish called *dai-kon* lay in another receptacle. The drink was the cheapest tea. It may possibly be true, what some foreigners assert, that the lower classes in Japan feast on rats. "The daily ration of a Japanese laborer was one mouse per diem;" so I was once told in America. I never saw or heard of such animals being eaten during all the time I was in Japan; but I now looked for some stimulating food, some piece of flesh diet to be eaten by these men, who had to make muscle and repair the waste of lubricating their joints. But nothing further was forthcoming, and the *sendō* whose turn came first sat down to his breakfast. The first course was a bowlful of rice and a pair of chopsticks. In the second course, history repeated itself. The third course was a dipperful of tea, apparently one-half a solution of tannic acid,

in which a raw hide might have been safely left to tan. I wonder whether the disease of ossification of the coats of the stomach, so common in Japan, arises from the constant drinking such astringent liquor. The fourth course was a bowl of rice and two slices of radish; the fifth was the same. A dipperful of tea-liquor finished the meal, and the pole was resumed. I noticed grist-mills on scows or rafts anchored in the river, the current turning the huge wheels slowly to grind or hull rice. They were quite similar to those I had noticed on the Rhine and other European rivers.

At nine o'clock we came in front of the village Yawata, at which there was a guard-house, which we knew, at a distance, by its peculiarly shaped lantern and canvas hangings, like curtains, on which was the huge crest of the mikado—an open chrysanthemum flower. Our boat hove to, and Nakamura, the officer of the party, explained who we were, and what our business was, and we then landed in the village.

While our boat, with the servants, was sent ahead to Fushimi, we four wended our way up the mountain Otoko yama to the part called Pigeon-peak, where stands the great Shintō temple, on a site first built upon in 860 A.D., and dedicated to Ōjin Tennō, the son of Jingu Kōgō, who conquered Corea by the divine spirit bestowed on her then unborn son. It was made further famous by the gift from Hidéyoshi of a golden gutter, to collect the sacred droppings of the sanctuary. Ascending the last of many flights of stone steps, we stood upon a plateau. A long avenue arcade, with overarching pines, and lined with tall stone lanterns, led to the temple façade. Two priests, robed in pure white, with high black lacquered caps on their heads, were bearing offerings of fish, fruit, and other food, to place upon the altar, each article being laid on a sheet of pure white paper, or ceremonial trays. In the perfectly clean and austere simple nave of the temple stood an altar, having upon it only the *gohei*, or wands, with notched strips of white paper dependent.

There were no idols, images, or pictures, only the *gohei*, the offerings, and the white-robed priests at prayer. The impressive simplicity, the sequestered site on a lofty mountain surrounded with tall trees of majestic growth and of immemorial antiquity, the beauty, the silence, all combined to instill reverence and holy awe alike in the alien spectator as in the native worshiper. The head of the foreigner uncovered, and his feet were unshod simultaneously with the unsandaling of the feet, the bowing of the head, and the reverent meeting of the palms of his companions.

On the first advance, the Tokugawa men broke and ran; but, on the second, the fighting began on both the two roads, the Fushimi and the Toba, which lead to Kiōto. "Here," said he, "is where the rebels [Tokugawa army] were surprised while eating, at early morning. In that bamboo grove, our men [*kuan gun*, mikado's army] made an ambushade, and tore up the rebel ranks dreadfully." Then the village of Toba caught fire, and the rebels fled to Yodo, finding, to their chagrin, that the castle was barred against them. Fushimi was also burned during the fight. "There," said our guide, as we neared the town, "is where the fire began."

We walked up the historic streets in which the tramp of armies had so often resounded, through which Nobunaga, Hidéyoshi, Iyéyasū, and Xavier, had passed, in which the Jesuits had stood preaching to listening crowds of people like those before me. The town itself disappointed me. The feeling was the same as that experienced in Washington in 1865. I went thither to behold the demi-gods who, through a hundred battles, had borne the old flag to victory. I saw Grant's and Sherman's legions of one hundred and forty thousand men march up Pennsylvania Avenue. There was no halo round their heads. They were not giants. They were plain men in blue blouses. Fushimi, with all its history, was a poverty-stricken Japanese town.

Further recollections of Fushimi are mainly of vulgar and gastro-nomic interest. I remember that a certain man had climbed up a mountain, and then tramped down again at an appetite-sharpening pace, and that his special objects of interest and desire at that time were something to eat. Subordinate to these were a bath and a lounge. The hungry man had shed his tight-fitting skin of boots, coat, and hat, and was tranquil in looser robes over the soothing warmth of a cone of live coals in a bronze hibachi. The dissolving views of his reveries, compounded of what he had seen and yearnings of what he expected, were suddenly broken by the advent of a steaming and fragrant tray of food cooked by one of the best culinary artists in Japan, a native who had learned the art at the club in Yokohama. It is, of course, too well known to Englishmen and others that the American at his meals is an animal not to be lightly disturbed. After the feed is over, he is placable, and ready for business.

I was scarcely through my dish of lily-bulbs, and had not yet touched my rice and curry, and California canned-meats, when Iwabuchi, my interpreter, announced the arrival of five samurai from Fukui, who had traveled one hundred and thirty miles to meet the American,

and wished to see him immediately, to pay their respects, and announce themselves as my escort to Fukui. They would be in the room in a moment.

"Can they not wait a few minutes till I finish my dinner?" I asked.

"I am afraid not," replied he; "they are very eager to see you immediately. Such are their orders from their superior at Fukui."

"Well, but I am in *deshabille*. I can't be seen in this style."

"Oh! indeed, they won't care for that. Besides, here they are at the door. They merely sent me to announce them."

It was too late to stop the invasion, so the animal must forego his provender for a time. The paper sliding-doors were pulled aside, and five stalwart men entered and stood in line, eyes front, facing me. I mentally waited to see how the ceremonies would proceed. In the twinkling of an eye they all sunk on their knees, spread their hands prone before them, and bowed their heads for full fifteen seconds on the floor. Then, resilient, all sat in a row on their heels, and spread out their robes, with hands in their *hakama*. The leader then handed Iwabuchi an imposing paper to read, which set forth that they had been sent by the *daimiō* from Fukui, to bear the congratulations of the authorities, and to escort the American teacher to Fukui. This solemnly done, they bowed profoundly again and departed. It was all over within two minutes. The meal was finished in peace and abundance, and then began the preparations for the ride to Ōtsu, eight miles distant. The baggage and servants were dispatched by boat, and at half-past four all were mounted, and we started. Our cavalcade consisted of nine horses and riders.

The air was damp, and the sky was leaden, when we started. The whole household were at the gate of the court-yard, to bow low and cry "*sayonara*," and the whole village was assembled, and stood agape to see the foreigner.

Out past the shanties of the village, our path lay over a wooded mountain, and then the snow fell, turning to slush as it touched coat, horse, or earth. In an hour we were all white with cloggy masses of snow, and in places wet to the skin with the cold soaking of sleet. Twilight succeeded the day, and darkness the twilight, until only the gigantic forms of the firs bearded with snow, and so silent, were outlined through the slow shower of flakes. Far up into vague infinity loomed the mountains, occasionally a beetling rock thrusting out its mighty mass in a form of visible darkness. After five hours of such riding it grew uncomfortable. Every flake, as it fell, seemed to have



weight. To cold, wet, chattering travelers, what comforts could a Japanese inn afford?

The same difference exists in Japan as in highly civilized countries in regard to hotels and their keepers, as concerning unexpected or announced guests. To come suddenly to a Japanese inn in winter is to shiver, as in a refrigerator, and wait cheerlessly for an intolerably long time, and understand all about Greenland, before the fire and food are brought, the thaw sets in, and comfort is attained. At Ōtsu (now called Shiga), however, a blazing fire was ready as our party rode into the court-yard. Boots and coat off, I was led into the best room, on which a pile of silken quilts was spread for my bed, and in the middle of the room was that sum of delights, a kotatsū. Poor, civilized reader, or Western barbarian, you do not know what a kotatsū is? No? Let me tell you. In the very centre of the room lift up that square foot of matting, and you will find a stone-lined bowl, a few inches deep. In this the fat and red-cheeked chamber-maid puts a shovelful of live coals. Over it she sets a wooden frame, a foot high, called a *yagura*, after the castle-tower which it imitates. Over this she spreads a huge quilt. It is an extemporary oven, in which you can bake yourself by drawing the quilt about you, and find a little heaven of heat, exchanging shivers for glow. A kotatsū may be safely warranted to change a grumbler, who believes Japan to be a wretched hole of a barbarian country, into a rhapsodist who is ready to swear that the same country is a paradise, within ten minutes.

The next morning we were to take steamer, and cross Lake Biwa to Hanōura, at the north end of the lake. Kiōto lay but seven miles distant from us, and I could easily have visited the sacred city; but I was eager to get to my work. Besides, I wished to study it when I could best appreciate it, and see it with a knowledge of Japanese history for my spectacles. So I postponed the trip till three years later. I glance round Ōtsu in a short walk. Its name means Great Harbor. I saw some of the very places mentioned by Kaempfer and the Jesuits.

Our hotel was near the steamer's dock. At 9 A.M., our party, twelve in all, were on board, and a lighter, full of our baggage, was in tow. The little steamer screeched once or twice, ending in a prolonged squeal, and we were fairly out on the bosom of Japan's largest lake. It was a strange sight, here in Inland Japan, to see a steamboat pulsing over the water, and stretching its long scarfs of smoke in the pure air against the white snow and the azure of the mountains. The

Golden Age, always alloyed with poverty and ignorance and discomforts, was past for Japan; the Iron Age of smoke, of coal, of comfort, of wealth, was coming.

The Lilliputian steamer, compared with one of our Hudson River ferry-boats, was as a Japanese tea-cup to a soda-water tumbler, or a thimble to a gill. It was only—I am afraid to say how many feet short, and inches narrow. Its engines, like its entire self, were oscillating. Captain, engineer, fireman, and crew were all Japanese. The accommodations of the passengers were strictly graded. The cabin, in the stern, was ten feet by six, and four feet high. At one end, a platform, six inches high, three feet wide, six feet long, and covered with a rug, was the "first-class." At the side was a set of sword-racks. The floor of the rest of the same cabin, six inches lower, was "second-class." The promenade-deck was ten feet by six, two square feet being occupied by the refreshment-vender of the boat, who furnished tea, boiled rice, rice cracknels, pickles, rice rolls wrapped in seaweed, boiled cuttle-fish, etc., to those who wished refreshment. He seemed to drive a brisk trade; for, besides our party of eight, who occupied the cabin and deck, our servants and about a dozen other natives filled a hole in the bow, which was "third-class."

I preferred first-class air. I kept on deck, watching the snow-clad mountains, and the historic towns, castles, and villages, and now and then a boat under sail or oar. Biwa kō, as the natives call it, is as green and almost as beautiful as a Swiss lake. It is named after the musical instrument called a *biwa*, because shaped like it. Tradition says that in one night Fuji san rose out of the earth in Suruga, and in one night the earth sunk in Ōmi, and this lake, sixty miles long, was formed. The monotony of the voyage was broken at four o'clock in the afternoon, when the little boat swung to its moorings at the village of Hanoūra. The place reminded me of Kussnacht, at the end of Lake Lucerne. We stepped out into what seemed a village of surpassing poverty. The houses were more than ordinarily dilapidated. The streets were masses of slush and mud. The people seemed, all of them, dirty, poor, ragged. I had full opportunities of becoming acquainted with all of them, for every one quickly informed his neighbors that a foreigner was among them, and soon the color of his eyes and hair, his clothes and actions, were discussed, and himself made the nine days' wonder of the village.

I began to realize the utter poverty and wretchedness of the people and the country of Japan. It was not an Oriental paradise, such as a

reader of some books about it may have supposed. I had only a faint conception of it then. I saw it afterward, until the sight oppressed me like nightmare. At present, novelty lent its chromatic lenses, and tinged all my view. Then, too, I thought that the wretched weather and leaden sky had something to do with my feelings; and when the servant-maids brought water and waited on my companions, as they took off their wet boots, sandals, and socks, with such hearty cheer, merry smiles, and graceful skill, every thing looked as if sunshine had sifted through a cloud-rift.

I was quite restored to myself again by a sight that banished all disgust. A jolly-looking, fat girl was half hobbling, half staggering



Bringing Water to wash Travelers' Feet.  
(Hokusai.)

along on her clogs, her generous physique quivering like heaps of jelly. Her left hand grasped the cross-handle of a bucket of water, which was in a state of general splash, like herself. Her right arm, bared by her bag-like sleeves being bound to her armpits, was extended far over toward the ground to countervail gravity on the other side. I momentarily expected this buxom Gill to stumble and tumble; but not she. She knew her business too well. Her *tout ensemble*, her face reddened by exercise, her vigorous puffing, her belt flying in the wind, like Mr. Gough's coat-tails, were too funny to resist. My risibilities exploded; whereat hers did like-

wise. I cheerfully sat down, and let her wash my cold feet in warm water, which being over, I got up, entered the best room in the house, and curled up under a kotatsū.

We started off the next morning at eight o'clock. We were to walk eighteen miles before the end of our day's journey to Tsuruga, a sea-port town. Our party prepared for the journey over mountain-paths by taking off their riding sandals or heavy wooden clogs, and girding on the feet a pair of straw sandals, which they bought for eighty-five "cash" (less than one cent) per pair. For myself, a fine, large,

and very handsome *norimono*, borne on the shoulders of two men, was provided. It was a fine, large box, like a palanquin, except that the pole by which it rested on the two men's shoulders passed through the top instead of being fastened at the centre, as in India. The one I rode in was gold-lacquered without, and richly upholstered and papered within, with neat curtains of bamboo split into fine threads. Once inside, there was room to sit down. If one does not mind being a little cramped, he can spend a day comfortably inside. For high lords and nobles four men are provided, and the long supporting bar is slightly curved to denote high rank. I entered the *norimono* in the presence of the entire village, including the small boys. The

A *Norimono*.

ride of a few hundred yards sufficed for me. The sights were too novel to miss seeing any thing, and so I got out and walked. I was not sorry for the change. The air was bracing, the scenery inspiring.

A double pleasure rewards the pioneer who is the first to penetrate into the midst of a new people. Besides the rare exhilaration felt in treading soil virgin to alien feet, it acts like mental oxygen to look upon and breathe in a unique civilization like that of Japan. To feel that for ages millions of one's own race have lived and loved, enjoyed and suffered and died, living the fullness of life, yet without the religion, laws, customs, food, dress, and culture which seem to us to be the vitals of our social existence, is like walking through a living Pompeii.

Our path wound up from the village to a considerable height. On both sides of the mountain path and pass the ground was terraced

into rice-fields, which were irrigated by the stream that is usually found flowing between two hills. During the day we went through valleys of ravishing beauty. In them the ground was divided into irrigated rice-fields, which were now bare, and dotted with the clumps of rice-stubble as it was left when cut by the reaper's hook. At intervals were small villages, surrounded by the universal and ever-beautiful bamboo. On both sides of the valley, bold hills, thickly clothed with pine and fir and solemn evergreen, rose to the clouds. And all along, with a frequency like that of mile-stones, stood the *kosatsū* (edict-boards), on which hung the slander and prohibition against Christianity. We were still in the province of Ōmi.

Frequently along the road I observed large, square posts of new wood, plentifully ornamented with Chinese characters, which marked the boundaries of the province, subdivision, or district. At noon we crossed the frontier of Ōmi and entered the province of Echizen, and at two o'clock that division of it which was under the jurisdiction of the Fukui Han. Being now within the dominions of "our prince," we expected evidences of it, in which we were not disappointed. At every village the *nanushi*, or head-men, arrayed in their best dress, came out to meet us, presenting their welcomes and congratulations. Sometimes they would salute us half a mile or more from the village, and after welcoming us, bowing literally to the earth, they would hasten on before and conduct us through the village to the extreme limit, and there take their adieu, with bows, kneelings, and *sayonara*. Toward evening, having lunched and rested two hours at noon, we arrived near Tsuruga, and were met by the officers of the city, and conducted to the best hotel in the place.

My eight companions were unusually merry that night, and, to add to their enjoyment, Melpomene, Terpsichore, and Hebe, or, in other words, two *geishas*, were present to dispense music, dancing, and saké. Several of the samurai danced what might be called stag-dances, from their novelty and vigor. I occupied myself in making notes of the day's trip. Iwabuchi had pointed out many places of historic interest, the lore of which I was not then, but was afterward, fully able to appreciate. I found in the room I occupied a work in Japanese, treating of the Opium War in China, with vivid illustrations of the foreign steamers, artillery, and tactics. It was well thumbed and dog-eared, having evidently been read and reread many times. It had been published in Japan shortly after the war in China, and prepared the Japanese mind for what they had to expect.

Tsuruga expects to become a great city some day.\* It is to be the terminus of a railroad from Ōzaka and Kiōto. A canal is to connect its harbor with Lake Biwa—a scheme first proposed by Taira Shigémori, son of Kiyomori, in the twelfth century. It is to become the largest and wealthiest port on the west coast. I think there is good ground for these hopes. Its geographical position is every thing to be desired, and its harbor the best on the west coast.†

We made an early start. We were to reach Takéfu, a town about seventeen miles distant. We first walked down to the sea-shore, where I caught a splendid view of Tsuruga harbor, two-thirds of a circle of blue sea within rocky and timbered headlands. On the sandy strand were a dozen or more junks beached for the winter, propped and covered with straw mats. In one or two tall sheds made of poles and mats were the keels and frames of new junks, with new timber and copper lying near, and one nearly finished. They were all on the ancient model. Emerging into the road to Fukui, we came to the stone portal of a large Shintō temple.‡ Within a grove of grand old giant firs stood the simple shrine, without image, idol, or picture, save only the strips of white paper and the polished mirrors. My guards stopped, clapped their hands three times, placed them reverently together, bowed their heads, and uttered a prayer. The act was as touching as it was simple.

About seven-eighths of Echizen is mountain-land, and to-day was

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\* Tsuruga was made the capital of Tsuruga *ken*, including the province of Echizen, in 1873; thus becoming an official seat, leaving Fukui in the background.

† A Japanese gazetteer or cyclopedia, in describing a city, is especially minute in regard to the history and traditions. It describes fully the temples, shrines, customs, and local peculiarities, and usually winds up by recounting the "famous scenes" or "natural beauties" of the place, whether it be Kiōto or Fukui. Thus the "Echizen Gazetteer" says: "The ten fine scenes ('sceneries,' as the beginners in English put it) of Tsuruga are—1st, the red plum-trees in the temple grounds of Kei; 2d, the full moon at Amatsutsu; 3d, the white sails of the returning junks seen from Kiōmidzū; 4th, the evening bells at Kanégasaki; 5th, the tea-houses at Iro; 6th, the dragon's light (phosphorescence) on the sea-shore; 7th, the verdure at Kushikawa; 8th, the evening snow on Nosaka; 9th, the travelers on Michinokuchi; 10th, the evening glow at Yasudama."

‡ The gods worshiped at these shrines are—Jingu Kōgō, mother of Ōjin Tennō; Ukémochi, the goddess of cereals and food; Yamato Daké, conqueror of the Kuantō; Ōjin Tennō, or Hachiman, god of war; Takénouchi, prime minister of Jingu; and Tamahimé, sister of the latter. The large granite *tori-i* was erected by Hidéyasū, first of the Tokugawa daimiōs of Echizen. Near the city are the ruins of old fortifications of Nitta Yoshisada, and Asakura Yoshikagi, the foe of Nobunaga.

one of climbing. The snow lay eight and ten feet deep on each side the hard line of path. The path itself was only such as is made by the tramping of human feet and by horses. We were now in full force—foreigner, interpreter, guards, servants, and porters, about forty of whom carried our baggage. We were strung out over the white landscape in Indian file, numbering fifty-four persons in all. One coolie, the pioneer, had a can of kerosene on his back; another, my wraps and hand-baggage; another had his head under the seat of a rocking-chair, the space between the rockers being well packed. Others bore miscellaneous packages. When a box was too heavy for one man, it was slung on a pole and carried by two. The valleys were evidently, judging from their tracks, well stocked with rabbits and foxes, and in the rice-fields flocks of fat wild geese and ducks offered tempting marks, on which one of the samurai, who had a revolver, spent much vain powder. The white heron were plentiful, and occasionally we saw the huge storks, six feet high, stalking along the streams. On the hills where the path wound through the woods the snow had been disturbed by the wild boar. We stopped to rest at the house of a noted hunter, on whose floor lay three huge carcasses and tusked heads. He showed us his long, light spear, with which he had transfixed one hundred and thirteen wild hogs that winter. It had a triangular, bayonet-like blade. The village bought the meat of him, and what he had left over he sent to Tsuruga and Fukui. Monkeys were also plentiful in the woods.

In all the villages the people were on the lookout for the coming foreigner. The entire population, from wrinkled old men and stout young clowns, to hobbling hags, girls with red cheeks and laughing black eyes, and toddling children, were out. The women, babies, and dogs seemed especially eager to get a sight of the *tō-jin*, and see what sort of an animal he was. The village houses were built of a frame of wood, with wattles of bamboo smeared with mud, and having a thatched roof. Within, the floor was raised a foot or so above the ground, and covered with mats. When the rooms had partitions, they were made of a frame of wood covered with paper, and made to slide in grooves. In the middle of the floor was the fire-place. From the ceiling hung pot-hooks, pots, and kettles—one for tea, one for rice, another for radishes, beans, or bean-cheese. In these villages good-nature and poverty seemed to be the chief characteristics of the people. The old faces were smoke-dried and wrinkled, and the skin seemed to be tanned on the inside by long swilling of strong tea.

Amidst this monotony of ugliness, I was glad to see the merry, twinkling black eyes, and red cheeks of pretty girls, and the sweet faces of children, rosy and chubby, spite of dirt and slush, as they paused in their work of making snow-men, to gaze upon the stranger. Most of the people, in addition to the usual Japanese dress, wore long, high boots of plaited straw, admirable for walking in the snow, called "Echizen boots," the worth of which I proved.



Village in Echizen.

Our route for the next day lay through a lovely valley formed by a river. The rate of traveling had not been severe. The record of each day was very much like a page of the "Anabasis," and from two to four of Xenophon's parasangs were our daily journey. Long before I arrived at my place of destination, I found the way the Japanese have of doing things was not that of America, and that life in Japan would be a vastly different thing from the split-second life in New York. It took us three days and a half to do what I afterward accomplished easily, by the same means, in a day and a quarter. That large bodies move slowly is true, to an exasperating extent, in Japan. A journey of ten Japanese samurai means unlimited sleep, smoking of pipes, drinking of tea, and drowsy lounging. A little more tea, one more smoke, and the folding of the legs to sit, is the cry of the Japanese *yakunin*. Such things at first were torture, and a threat of insanity to me, when I found that time had no value, and was infinitely cheaper than dirt in Japan. Finally, I became, under protest, used to it. On this occasion I rather enjoyed it. My eyes were not full of seeing yet, and, though impatient to reach my field of labor, yet this was the grand manner of traveling, and best for heart and eye and memory. Besides, it would be undignified to make haste in the prince's own dominions, and the porters, under their heavy loads,



must not be hurried. It also gave me opportunity to learn from my interpreter every thing of historic, local, and legendary interest, and thus fit myself to appreciate what I afterward had read to me from the "Gazetteer of Echizen."

Twelve miles from Fukui, I found an officer of the daimiō, who had been sent to meet and welcome me. After being introduced, he offered me presents of a duck, and a box, handsomely wrapped in white paper, and tied in cord of red and white, and filled with gorgeously colored red, green, and yellow sweetmeats. We were to rest at Takéfu for the night, and next morning take horses and ride to Fukui. Meanwhile there was to be a grand dinner. Iwabuchi and I sallied out to see the town.

It was a poor place. It had formerly been of more importance, and named Fuchiu,\* but had declined. It numbered probably twelve thousand people, having thirty-four streets, and two thousand eight hundred and forty-nine houses, and, being a post-relay town, twenty-five houses were kept for hire to travelers. The streets were broad, and a stream of water flowed between stone banks in the middle of the street. There were many iron-workers; and broad knives, hoes, scissors, the rude plow-coulters, and the most useful articles of Japanese domestic cutlery were special productions. One of Nobunaga's most famous arrow-makers came from Takéfu. Macaroni and vermicelli, hemp and hempen cloth, were also staples. The Government edicts were posted up conspicuously on a stone platform, with imposing roofed frame of substantial timber. Two or three temples, with spacious grounds and lofty trees, the stone path flanked by two immense stone or bronze lanterns, were among the adornments of the place.

Familiarity, like a leaven, was breeding contempt, as I began to see what actual Japanese life was. I thanked God I was not of the race and soil. Was it Pharisical?

We returned to the hotel—not very inviting without, but attractive within. In two fine large rooms brilliant screens of gold and silver spangled paper, or depicted with battle-scenes, such as the destruction of the Mongol fleet in 1281, and the capture of Kamakura by Nitta

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\* Fuchiu, was formerly the general name of the capital of a province. The word means "interior of the government." After the Restoration, in 1868, the mikado's government changed the names of the many towns all over the empire, named Fuchiu, among which were those in Echizen and Suruga, the latter being called Shidzūoka (peaceful hill).

in 1333, and of Kiōtō court life, were ranged along the wall, and braziers of figured bronze shed a genial glow through the mellow-lighted room. They had placed a new-made table for the foreigner to eat by himself. The officers, now twelve in number, and the chief men of the town sat round the floor in an oval. Four girls, all of them good-looking, brought in, not the dishes, but each time a tableful of dishes, and set one before each guest. Forthwith the meal began.

On fourteen little tables, each a foot square, four inches high, made of wood lacquered black, and lustrous as jet, were as many pairs of chopsticks made of new, clean wood, ready bifurcated but unsplit, to show they had not been used. The maids attended, with full tubs of steaming rice and pots of tea, to replenish the rapidly emptied bowls. Fish, boiled eggs, lobster, and various made-dishes were served on enormous porcelain plates the size of the full moon. The nimble tapering fingers of the laughing girls handed out their contents. Then came the warm saké. The tiny cups circulated around, the girls acting as Hebes. Smoking and story-telling followed after the candles were brought in. In the evening, after each had enjoyed his hot bath, the quilts were spread, and the top-knotted heads were laid on their wooden pillows and paper pillow-cases, and sleep, dreams, and snores had attained their maximum of perfection before nine o'clock. In my dream, I was at home in America, but failed to catch the train to get back to Japan.

Twelve horses, saddled and bridled, were ready next morning, which was the 4th of March. After the last pipe had been smoked, the last cup of tea drunk, and the last joke cracked, with swords thrust in girdle, wooden helmet tied on head under the chin, and straw sandals in stirrup, the cavalcade moved. We started off slowly through the town and crowded streets, and out into the valley toward Fukui. It was a day of wind, light showers, and fitful flakes of snow, alternating with rifts of sunlight that lent unearthly grandeur to the wrinkled hills. A brisk ride of two hours brought us within sight of Fukui. We were in a level plain between two walls of mountains. Just as Nakamura cried out, "Yonder is Fukui," a burst of sunshine threw floods of golden glory over the city.

I shall never forget my emotions, in that sudden first glimpse of the city embowered in trees, looming across the plain, amidst the air laden with snow-flakes, and seen in the light reflected from storm-clouds. There were no spires, golden-vaned; no massive pediments, façades, or grand buildings such as strike the eye on beholding a city in the West-

ern world. I had formed some conception of Fukui while in America: something vaguely grand, mistily imposing—I knew not what. I now saw simply a dark, vast array of low-roofed houses, colossal temples, gables, castle-towers, tufts of bamboo, and groves of trees. This was Fukui.

As usual, officers came out at the city limits to meet us. We rode through the streets, thronged with eagerly curious people. The thoroughfares were those of an ordinary Japanese town, not of my ideal Fukui. In a few minutes we crossed a bridge over a river, suddenly stopped, entered the gate of a handsome court-yard lined with trees, and before the door of a fine large old house dismounted and entered. I was welcomed by several officers, all in their best silks, swords, sandals, and top-knots, with bows, and such awkward but hearty handshakings as men unused to it might be supposed to achieve.

I then entered my future abode. It was a Japanese house, foreignized by American comforts. All the partitions and windows were of glass. A Peekskill stove, with pipe and fire, was up, and glowing a welcome. I found a handsome bedstead, wash-stand, and good furniture. How did all this come here? I soon understood it, for one merry-eyed officer told me, in broken English, "I been in New York. I understand. You like?" I immediately seized the speaker's hand, and made him my friend. Sasaki (well named Tree of Help) was afterward my right-hand man. Then followed the dinner. This feature of foreign civilization was specially attractive to the Japanese. To sit at a huge table on chairs, with plates, knives, forks, casters, and *épergne*; to experience the pomp and circumstance of soup, fish, vegetables, flesh, and fowl, with the glittering gastronomic tools; to tickle the palate and gorge the stomach with meat and wine and luscious sweets, seemed to them a sure proof of the superiority of foreign civilization. Eight of us sat down to a foreign dinner of manifold courses of fluid and solid fare, my own cook having arrived in Fukui the day before. The officers left me, and I spent the day in unpacking trunks, and adorning my room so as to give an American home-look to my quarters.

In the evening I had a call from an officer who came to pay his respects to the foreign instructor. I invited him to stay to supper. He did so. Fortunately he understood a little English, having spent some time in Yokohama. He gave me much useful information. He invited me to make his home a place of daily resort. He offered to assist me in the choice of a good servant, a good horse, the best flow-

ers, pictures, curiosities, and whatever I might wish to buy. He also taught me the value, symbols, and denominations of the local paper money of Fukui. I was already familiar with the national kinsatsū (money cards). A fac-simile of a *nishiu* piece, worth about twelve cents, is given in the cut. The ten and one *riō* (dollar), and *bu* (quarter) pieces are much larger. The dragons with horns, hair, scales, claws, and mustaches, jewel and mikado crests, are very conspicuous. The Chinese characters read "Money, nishiu," and "Mim Bu Shō, Currency Office."



Fac-simile of Kinsatsū. Issue of 1869.

For centuries past, every great daimiō has issued paper money current only in his *han*. There are over one hundred local varieties in the empire, of varied colors, values, and sizes. The Fukui denominations were one-tenth, one-fifth, one-half: one, three, five, ten, and fifty cents. The designs on them are the God of Wealth, the treasure-ship which every Japanese hopes to have "come in," the pile of kobans (oval gold coins) which he expects to "raise," bags of rice—the standard of value—dragons, flowers, birds, and the zōōlogy of the zodiac.

The officer further said I must have relaxation. He offered to show me the fairest and brightest maiden, whom I might bring to my house, and make my playmate. I thanked him, and accepted all his offers but the last.

The night was clear and cold. The same familiar stars glittered overhead as those seen in the home sky. The wild geese sailed in the bright air, the moon bathing their plumage in silver. The temple-bell boomed solemnly as I lay down to rest.