

## FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION

“We should never write save of that which we love. Forgetfulness and silence are the penalties we should inflict upon all that we find ugly or commonplace in our journey through life.”

Ernes. Renan.

**I**T is now over 10 years since these notes were first published. This has been an eventful period, for on September 1st, 1923 the hitherto gay and prosperous town was almost entirely destroyed by the great earthquake, that accomplished its cruel work with such completeness that scarcely one stone was left standing upon another!

A brief account of personal experience may not be out of place here. The morning of that fateful September day dawned ominously in heavy clouds, and a promise of rough weather to follow—but this was not unexpected, as the next day being the ‘Nihyakutōka,’ unsettled climatic conditions generally prevail through the first, second, or third week of the 9th month; the farmers’ apprehensions for the welfare of their crops are not allayed until after the ‘Nihyaku hatsuka,’ or 220th day.

The sea—until then calm as a forget-me-not in its blue tranquillity—was angrily chafing, its surface fretted with choppy greenish-grey waves crested with Neptune’s white horses as far as the eye could reach the distant horizon. But alas for the blindness of mortals, the day being hot and oppressive, and no timely warning from the powers above having caused a thought of apprehen-

sion—as usual I donned my bathing-suit, and repaired along the shore to my customary haunt—the little bay of Iijima, incidentally the most dangerous part of the coast wherein to encounter the impending disasters—the steep walls of rock in the rear being impossible to scale, and rendering it a veritable death-trap.

Gaily I left our home near the beach, in blissful ignorance that it was for the last time, and that on my return from that dreadful expedition—after cheating Death by a hair's breadth—it would be a crumbling heap of ruins!

It was my daily custom to remain in the water until 12 o'clock; but on that morning a beneficent providence put it into my mind to return earlier, so some 20 minutes before midday I began to stroll along the beach in the shallow water, on my homeward journey. However opposite the cluster of houses—all situated upon high ground and tenanted by summer guests—a friend hailed me from the deeper part of the sea, where she was bathing amongst the heavy waves—and advanced towards me in the shallow water, where we were standing placidly engaged in conversation.

Suddenly, with an ominous roar, the floor of the deep seemed to rush up at us, toppling us over in an instant: there we lay, our trembling forms crouched upon the ocean-bed, grappling with the stupendous forces of Nature! Helpless as babes, and reposing upon the lid of a vast cauldron, the earth pumped away beneath us with hideous power—the regular hissing throbs of steam of that subterranean explosion being clearly audible to our terrified ears! With thunderous detonation, all the mountains enclosing the plain of Kamakura were riven asunder—the

loosened earth rising like masses of lurid red smoke: the great promontory of Reisangasaki—forming the western arm of Kamakura bay—being cleft almost in twain, the large white house upon the summit crashing down a thousand feet into the seething waves below!

To my numbed and stupefied senses it appeared that the last and dreadful Day of Judgment was upon us—all the things of this earth seemed to be doomed, and swiftly passing into eternity. Every house and building within sight had crumbled into ruins like packs of cards, and in many the fire-demon was raging fiercely—but after lying upon the pumping of that terrible cauldron for what seemed an interminable space of time, instead of the ground opening and swallowing us, as we confidently expected from the large rents and fissures that were appearing all around us—the mighty throbs at last began to slacken, and subsided into a shiver, broken at intervals by rumbling quakes, as the subterranean monster moderated his fury. From one fate, apparently, Nemesis had elected to spare us.

When it became possible to walk, with shaking limbs we struggled to our feet and emerged upon the beach, where my friend hurriedly ascended to the scene of her dwelling upon the cliff above. Suddenly, to my distraught wits it occurred that another danger was looming—the terrible tsunami, or tidal wave that so often forms the aftermath to a severe earthquake—so at full speed I climbed the high ground at the rear, leaping over the great cracks in the ground, and scaling the rocks like a mountain-goat; in these tense moments when life and death lie in the balance it is incredible what gymnastic feats of agility one is capable of accomplishing!

As I neared the highest point of the ridge, a fisherman, realising the peril of his boats below, uttered a shout of despair, and looking back, beheld the dreadful spectacle of the bare ocean-bed, with the sea completely receded for a long distance, in readiness for its fatal leap upon its helpless victims. Then the cruel wave began to roar back, hungry and inexorable to collect its prey: no one who has not actually witnessed a tidal wave can form any idea of how terrifying, and how relentlessly cruel a wave can be—it seems alive with the full determination of seizing and destroying every obstacle in its wild course, and gripping every hapless human wanderer within sight to his doom. In this case its mission of vengeance was amply accomplished, many victims being hurled to a dreadful death—but again my guardian angel did not forsake me; the foaming mass of water had wreaked the worst of its fury below, and satisfied with its harvest, the height was spared upon which I was awaiting the advent of ‘the pale Fury with the abhorred shears’—the waters dividing and passing around me on either side. The descent into the horror of the world below seemed to be a page from Dante’s *Inferno*, beyond the possibilities of ordinary language—a scene only a few minutes before so gay and smiling, and now plunged in the twinkling of an eye into a barbarous caricature of crushed and burning dwellings; maimed and shattered people, with blood streaming from great wounds; the ground torn and rent by seams and fissures, and everywhere water left by the invading wave.

In this world of ruthless injustice and incomprehensible sorrows, what could exceed the pitiless cruelty of Nature at the time of these mighty upheavals! Surely

no one that has had the misfortune to pass through a great earthquake will ever forget it; and if vouchsafed the mercy to escape from it unscathed, his motto, as of the gallant 'Six Hundred,' may well be "Out of the jaws of death, out of the mouth of hell!"

What a vast impression angry Nature, in her mood of fury and destruction, creates of the transitory character and impermanence of everything!

Man is verily an atom of the universe, vainly wrestling with the mysteries and many-sided problems of the enigma of life—crawling and revolving in a crucible of incredible change. Moreover these tragic days of wrath and judgment reveal the bewildering fact that the unchanging features of the landscape, as well as mankind, are no more stable than a withered leaf, blown by the winds of Fate. As the ancient Buddhist recluse of the 12th century, Kamo-no-Chomei, so truly writes from his mountain retreat:—"Of the flowing river the flood ever changeth; on the still pool the foam gathering, vanishing, stayeth not. Such too is the lot of men, and the dwellings, of men in this world of ours. Such is man's life—a fleck of foam upon the surface of a pool. Man is born and dieth: whence cometh he, whither goeth he? For whose sake do we endure, whence do we draw pleasure? Dweller and dwelling are rivals in impermanence, both are fleeting as the dewdrop that shines upon the petals of the morning-glory. If the dew vanisheth, the flower may linger, but only to wither under the noonday sun; the petals may not fade while the dew delayeth, but only to perish before the evening comes." To the pessimist the word 'Finis' might well have been the epitaph, traced in characters of blood and flame, across the heaps

of smoking debris that had been poor Kamakura. But the valiant inhabitants, worthy of the old traditions, rose to the occasion with fine patience and confidence in the future; in a short space of time buildings and reconstructions began to spring from the ruins, so that at the present day but few scars and mutilations remain as a memento of one of the greatest catastrophes of modern times.

Kamakura is indeed no exception to the universal decree of change, for as so often happens, a great calamity sweeps away much that is gladly missed; the narrow and lane-like main highways have been supplanted by modern thoroughfares, double in width, and many fine public buildings have been erected, including, in the vicinity of Hachiman, a large museum, the Kokuhokwan, which is dedicated to the safe keeping and preservation of the ancient works—some of almost fabulous antiquity—that are enrolled as ‘Treasures of the Nation.’

Since the convenience of comprising in one volume all information regarding the vicinity of Kamakura has been represented to the writer of these notes, a sketch is included in this new edition of the small island of Enoshima—that beautiful landmark which floats upon the horizon like a green-girt junk, manned by denizens of other spheres, and setting out upon a voyage to faery lands unknown. The goal of all wayfarers in the neighbourhood, it must surely serve as a reminder to the pilgrim that “this is a land where legend trembles in the flowers, whispers in the trees, is carried on the winds across the hill-sides, and lives again within the silver of the moon.”

I. M.

Kamakura 1929.