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Significant books in English by Japanese writers

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Thesis

Significant Books in English by Japanese Writers.

by

Ella Malinda Gerrish

(B.A., Boston University 1925)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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1935.
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Introduction.

A. Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study is to discover what books of a fictional nature are available in English, either through translation or by Japanese writers in English, which interpret Japan to Western readers.

B. Justification of the study:

To the writer's knowledge no such study has been made before. The books are not well catalogued, and because so many titles are in Japanese, it is difficult to tell from the name the type of book. No list of fiction by Japanese writers, in English, seemed to be available.

The books are not well known, and unfortunately are not readily accessible. Some of them are now out of print, and most of them are on reserve lists in the city libraries. They may be ordered through any book store, but are quite expensive.

C. Sources of data:

1. Books included in the study:

Only books of a fictional nature, written either by Japanese in English, or translated, have been included.

2. Materials omitted:

Because of the variety of materials, good and bad, on Japan, it has been necessary to draw rigid lines to limit such a study as this. The following types of Japanese literature in English have been excluded:
a. Poetry:

The "tanka" (thirty-one syllable poem) is freely used in Japanese fiction, and so calls for an explanatory comment, but poetry as such is not considered.

b. Stories taken from the No Drama:

Many of these, not suitable for translation for theatrical productions, have been given in story form in English.

c. Legends and myths of the origin of Japan:

These are the stories for many years accepted as true by the Japanese, describing the origin of the country and descent of the people from Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess. They are still printed in the school history books without comment.

d. Fairy tales and folk-lore:

These are slightly different from Western tales of this nature, since they belong quite as much to adults as to children, and doubtless came through religious beliefs and ceremonies.

e. Semi-historical tales of Japanese heroes:

These are tales dealing with the prowess and might of time-haloed samurai warriors. They sound much like Old Testament stories, and fathers still retell them to children around the brazier, winter evenings. The moving pictures also reproduce them for Japanese audiences.

f. Stories intended chiefly to depict manners and customs:

The majority of these are written by Westerners, but
a few have been done by Japanese. Very little plot is used, except to name a few people who travel about becoming acquainted with the customs. Since they attempt to generalize instead of limiting themselves to time and space, they are soon out of date.

g. Stories of Japan by Westerners:

Most of these deal with western residents in Japan, not especially with the Japanese. Since one may live for years in Japan and not be of it, very few of these have real value as interpretations of Japan.

D. A Glimpse of the Historical Background of Japan:

Francis Xavier, in 1549, was the first foreigner to penetrate to the interior of Japan. A Jesuit, from Malacca, he brought other priests who began teaching Christianity. In a remarkably short time the southern island of Kyushu was dominated by the Christian feudal lords to such an extent that when Shogun Hideyoshi ordered all foreign priests to leave within twenty days and all the buildings to be razed, the order was disregarded.

Japan, at that time, was divided among the feudal lords (daimio), each practically king of his own territory. Because of the mountainous country traveling was difficult, and each fief had its natural barriers. The Emperor lived in seclusion in Kyoto, the old capital, and the Shogun was the real head of the government. Of these Shogun, the Tokugawa family was by far the strongest. The first of that family, Ieyasu, succeeded in uniting Japan under one rule. It was a masterly
bit of statesmanship that united all the feudal lords, in an almost bloodless revolution. These lords who surrendered peacefully, were allowed to retain their fief with the Shogun's consent, and subject to his orders. To discourage any counter-revolution, Ieyasu required that each lord should spend every other year in Tokyo (where he had transferred the capital, leaving the Emperor a practical prisoner in Kyōto), and when he returned to his fief, he should leave his wife and children as hostages. They were not allowed to visit the Emperor without his consent, and the Emperor was not allowed to leave the palace except to visit the Emperor who had abdicated. Every small detail of life was dictated by the Shogun, whose spies were everywhere, and one small digression meant revolution.

For awhile, the Tokugawas did not disturb the Christians, but gradually rumors of their political aspirations reached the ears of the Shogun. These rumors were started by Spanish Franciscans jealous of the Portuguese Jesuit power. A Spanish pilot added fuel when he told the Shogun that the reason for his King's vast territorial possessions lay in sending first priests to convert the people to his religion, then soldiers to unite with the converts! Soon after that, the Spanish began charting the coast, and Will Adams, a Welsh ship-wrecked pilot, kept as a prisoner-guest of Japan, told the Shogun that in another country this would be regarded as a hostile proceeding. All this finally led to the extermination of Christianity and Japan slammed its doors in the
face of the world in 1638.

For over two hundred years Japan remained isolated from the world. All ships, except small fishing boats, were burned. No one was allowed to enter the country on pain of death, and no Japanese was allowed to return who had left; even ship-wrecked sailors landing on another shore could not return. The samurai (retainers of the feudal lord) were greatly restricted in the use of their swords. Even the playful custom of cutting off a peasant’s head to test a new blade was sternly discouraged! A sword drawn must be used, and used wrongly meant hara-kiri or banishment for the swordsman.

Realizing that soldiers without promise of a war are dangerous, Tokugawa encouraged the fine arts: writing with the brush, poetry, painting, flower arrangement and so forth. Naturally artistic, these people soon excelled in these pursuits, and a long peace followed.

Peace with the outside world was accompanied by peace within the country. People lived and died in the town where they were born. Exile for any crime meant a miserable death, since penniless strangers to any town meant they must be criminals, so they were treated accordingly. The people, burdened with countless rules for behavior, lost most of their initiative and originality, and became machines with remarkable memories, concerned only with performing the right act, or producing the right phrase for each occasion.
The common people were treated to a rigid "justice"; torture, crucifixion, and decapitation being frequent sentences for them. The nobles were allowed the honorable right of suicide. With the women, this meant that the small dagger she carried might be thrust in the throat at the spot where the jugular vein would be cut. Every woman knew how to do this skilfully. It might also be used when her honor was at stake. The girl was taught how to tie her feet together with her obi (sash) so that even in death she would be modest and composed.

The men learned the fine art of hara-kiri, a ceremony. Mrs. Sugimoto (Daughter of the Samurai) gives a vivid description of her father's sentence to commit hara-kiri when he was taken prisoner. Being a noble, he had been treated as a guest, only his honor preventing his escape from the unguarded garden, his captor even playing chess with him to help pass the time. Then one morning his breakfast was served with the rice bowl placed on the right instead of the left, the chopsticks standing straight up as though placed in a shrine, and browned fish served with the head removed. Without a quiver, he ate his breakfast, then dressed his hair (worn in a loop at the back of the head), put on his white death-robe which every Japanese kept with him, and walked out into the enclosure where a circle of men sat to witness the deed.

This happened to be one of the infrequent cases where pardon was granted and arrived in time, but when it was not, the procedure was carefully prescribed by rule. The condemned
man might write a bit of poetry as his last words. Then he would sit down on his feet, lay his short sword in front of him, and bow to his "audience". Then he placed something under his heels so his body would not fall backward, (a disgrace) removed his white robe from his shoulders, stuck the knife in one side and drew it firmly to the other side, ending with a short upward stroke -- if there was time. In a public execution, a friend might be allowed to stand behind him and strike off his head to save further suffering. In his own home, if he were committing hara-kiri voluntarily as an apology to his lord, his son might strike off his head, placing it in a bucket and sending it to the lord to prove the deed had been done. All was done slowly and with dignity, no emotion of any kind being shown.

So during the reign of the Tokugawas, absolute obedience and loyalty to the superior were required, and individualism was reduced to a vanishing point. But being a naturally cheerful people, they did not become sullen, but accepted their fate and were surprisingly happy in a simple-hearted way.

During the two hundred years the Tokugawas had weakened, and the feudal lords had regained some of their power. There was a general restlessness, and one might hear hints of rebellion. This developed into open revolt, when Admiral Perry forced the country open to trade in 1854, and the treaty was signed against the will of the people, on an American warship. To show their disapproval, the minister who signed it was
assassinated, the rebels formed in the name of the Emperor, and in 1868, Emperor Meiji resumed the position as head of the government which his ancestors had lost. Since other countries had hastened to follow up the American treaty with treaties of their own, the world could no longer be excluded. Emperor Meiji, then, after the Restoration, urged the sending abroad of young men and women to learn western ways of education and warfare, so Japan would not be divided among the countries as China was being, but could maintain its independence. This has led to the flurry of new customs, ideas, and conventions that are struggling for adjustment in the paradox which is modern Japan.

E.Key to the pronunciation of Japanese words:

"The vowels in Japanese are pronounced nearly like the vowels in the musical scale, a as in fa, e as in re, i as in mi, o as in do, while u sounds like the oo in boot. The name Suzuki, for example, is pronounced Soo-zoo-kee, with equal stress on each syllable. In the diphthongs ei and ai, both vowels are pronounced, but very rapidly as one sound. The letter y is not a true vowel, but combines with the succeeding vowel in one syllable. Thus Tokyo is just two syllables; to (which happens to be long, as explained below) and kyo.

There is no accent such as is used in English, each syllable having practically the same value, except where certain vowels are prolonged. Long and short vowels in Japanese mean simply the length of time given them, not a difference in sound. For instance, in the name of the city Osaka, the O is about twice
as long as the other vowels.

An important point is that each syllable ends with a vowel, except when the letter n ends a word, or when there is a double consonant, as in Hok-kai-do. Double consonants are the result of elision (really Hoku-kai-do, but shortened to Hok'kai-do), and both consonants must be carefully pronounced.

Consonants have nearly the same sound as in English: ch as in child; g is always hard; l and r are lacking.¹

Using this key, the words in the thesis may be easily pronounced: Tokugawa (To-ku-ga-wa); Murasaki (Mu-ra-sa-ki); Aoi (A-o-i); Sei Shonagon (Se-i Sho-na-gon); Eiichi (E-i-ichi, sounding like a-ee-chi); and so forth.

Words like sake, samurai, shogun, hara-kiri, and so forth are found in English dictionaries.

¹ Taken from Suzuki Looks at Japan, by Willis Lamott.
Chapter I.

I. Translations of early classical writings:

A. "The consummate achievement of the classic age in prose": This is Clay MacCauley's (Japanese Literature) way of referring to the Tale of Genji by Murasaki Shikibu and The Pillow Book by Sei Shonagon, two Court ladies who introduced new types of literature. Since they deal with life in the Heian Court in the tenth century, a brief glimpse of it may be given here. For a summary of the seven periods of Japanese literature see the appendix.

Japan was separated from the rest of the world in a peculiar way. No armies had marched across her as they had the countries on the Continent. She had had little cosmopolitan interest, the world at that time consisting of China and Japan, with Persia vaguely situated somewhere between. No foreigners, except an occasional Korean or Chinese, visited her cities. Since 794, the Fujiwara family had dominated the country. The life experience of all was so similar that "a phrase, a clouded hint, an allusion half-expressed, a gesture imperceptible to common eyes, moved this courtly herd with a facility as magic as those silent messages that in the prairie ripple from beast to beast." 1. The civilization was entirely literary and aesthetic, its interest only in the present, with apology for the past. Mathematics, science, philosophy were not even discussed. Religious ceremonies were enjoyed from the

aesthetic standpoint, while the cult of calligraphy became almost a religion with them. "Often in Japanese romances it is with some chance view of the heroine's writing that a love-affair begins; and if the hero happens to fall in love with a lady before he has seen her script, he awaits the first 'traces of her hand' with the same anxiety as that which afflicted a Victorian gentleman before he had ascertained his fiancee's religious views. It was as indispensable that a Japanese mistress should write beautifully as that Mrs. Gladstone should be sound about the episcopal succession."1.

Because of the position of women, Japan was called the "Queen Country" by the Chinese. They were educated, allowed their share in the inheritance, and had their own houses. They produced the best literature of Japan at that time. Later Chinese and Buddhist influence completely submerged them.

Life centered in the Court, where poetry (the tanka with its thirty-one syllables) became so highly cultivated it need be only half uttered to be understood; where blending of perfumes became an art; and religion something to turn to for consolation when one wearied of life. To have to leave Kyoto was a calamity. Governors, exiled to their provinces, worried about the social prestige of their daughters. Always the country is referred to as wild, lonely, and desolate,

though flowers and autumn leaves are appreciated. After
the disappearance of Ukifune (in Vol.VI of Genji), Genji's son
is severely criticized for leaving her alone in the country
by that wild, terrifying river.

1. Genji Monogatari (Tale of Genji), by Lady Murasaki:
   a. Life of Lady Murasaki:

Murasaki was born about 978 A.D. Her father was
governor of Echizen, and later of Echigo. In 1016, he
took the vows. Murasaki married her kinsman, Fujiwara
no Nobutaka, a lieutenant in the Imperial Guard. She
had two daughters. After her husband died, she entered
the service of Empress Akiko, then a girl of sixteen.
She was a very serious person, allowing no flirtations,
and regarding persons who confess slight irregularities
as "monsters of iniquity". Her court, therefore, was
famous for its dullness. She loses some of her stiff-
ness as she grows older, and asks her ladies not to
hurt peoples' feelings by rejecting advances too curt-
ly. Meanwhile, they all envy the ladies of the rival
court, who are easy mannered, going flower-viewing and
for picnics. But while Empress Akiko will allow no
philandering, she does what the world would criticize
more harshly. She studies Chinese, with Murasaki as
teacher. The latter tells in her Diary how she happens
to know it.

The Tale of Genji was probably begun after her hus-
bond's death and finished in her spare time at Court.
b. A short summary of the entire story:

The Tale of Genji is divided into six volumes, the first four telling of Genji's life, the last two, of the affairs of his supposed son, Kaoru, and Niou, the son of the Akashi Princess. The volumes are named from some key-poem or theme in the story. For instance, The Wreath of Cloud (Vol. III) gets its name from the poem Genji composed after Fujitsubo's death: "Across the sunset hill there hangs a wreath of cloud that garbs the evening as with the dark folds of a mourner's dress." 1. The Blue Trousers (Vol. IV) came from the mourners' garb worn when To-no-Chujo's mother died. The Lady of the Boat (Vol. V) came from the girl's name, Ukifune, which means "floating boat". A short summary will be given here; for a more detailed one, see the appendix.

Genji, the Shining One, is a superb young prince, the son of the Emperor by a favorite concubine. He has many mistresses, according to the custom of the day, but unlike many of the nobles, he is very considerate and kind to anyone who has ever been kind to him. He treats even Rokujo, the jealous lady who causes the death of three of his favorites, with great consideration. He is always faithful to Murasaki, whom he adopted as a child, and after her death, he becomes a monk. He built a beautiful palace, with a wing especially designed

to suit the taste of each lady, and there in those gorgeous gardens many court festivals and ceremonies were held.

His life was not a mere round of pleasure, for he was exiled at one time and spent a very lonely year at Akashi. He also had the shadow over his life caused by his betrayal of the Emperor, the latter's supposed son, and the Heir Apparent, being Genji's son by Fujitsubo whom he greatly loved. He is in turn betrayed by Kashiwagi, who is the father of Kaoru.

The last two volumes deal with this boy and his friend, Niou. They are very different personalities, as is shown by their conduct when they fall in love with the two sisters in Uji, and again when they both fall in love with Ukifune, who finally runs away and becomes a nun.

c. Comments on the book:

Murasaki is a good story teller. She has a sense of the relative importance of scenes and events. Waley calls her construction classical, and speaks of the elegance, symmetry, and restraint of her style. Her characters are artistically introduced, their existence hinted at first before they are rushed on the stage. One feels their reality though they are probably not portraits of real people. They are always in character: Aoi is proud, Murasaki, long-suffering; the Lady of Omi, a loud-voiced, impulsive rustic. The author must
have kept a precise time chart by her as she wrote, for the eight hundred odd characters are always in the proper relation to each other, and of the right age. There is a tendency in the first four books, where the characters are connected only by their relation to Genji, to form a series of episodes. She evidently realized this and brought them together in Genji's palace, though many of these ladies, secluded behind screens never met each other.

Murasaki gives us a good picture of the day, with its humor and pathos, its superstitions and religious beliefs, its emotional responses so universal they give the writing a very modern air. Murasaki has a firm faith in good blood, and little use for low class people. Her noble heroines may have lived in the country, as Ukifune and Tamakatsura did, but they are never crude, fat, or ugly! Even the drab robes of the holy orders have a more graceful line when worn by a person of rank. Murasaki, while she evidently believed in the common superstitions of the day, such as spirit "possession" and so forth, is always severe with the clergy unless they are people of high rank. There is often a touch of humor in her description of a sick-room scene where priests have been used or charms recited. For instance, at the birth of Aoi's child:

"The Abbot of Tendai and the other great ecclesiastics who were gathered together in the room attributed her
easy delivery to the persistency of their own incanta-
tions and prayers, and as they hastily withdrew to seek
refreshment and repose they wiped the sweat from their
brows with an expression of considerable self-satis-
faction.\(^1\) And again when Yugiri is awakened by a
dream that troubles him, and finds Kumoi quieting a
crying child: "'Is anything amiss with the child?' he
asked, and to show his concern began scattering hand-
fuls of rice and reciting spells of protection; an
activity which, if it did not greatly help the child,
served at least to dispel the impression of his own
dream."\(^2\).

Her humor is shown also, in her humorous characters:
the Lady of Omi, the Lady with the Red Nose, and Tayu,
the sensuous villain who pursues Tamakatsura, his voice
when on love errands changing from a rough bass to
silvery fluting. But these and other comic characters
are used with great restraint, each in its proper time
and place, never exploited merely to cause a laugh or
arouse flagging interest.

The women in Genji are interesting ladies with minds
of their own in spite of their apparent shyness which
the men found so irresistible. They dwelt behind screens,
ever allowing their faces to be seen by men, -- well,
almost never! -- and conversing daintily in poetry,

but in several instances we find clever retorts that leave irritated husbands speechless. Yugiri, after many faithful years, leaves Kumoi alone while he seeks Ochiba in her mountain retreat. Thinking Kumoi knows nothing of the affair, he tells her a letter he receives is from the inoffensive old Lady of the Village of Falling Flowers. She mischievously hides the letter and when he demands it, asking how he can explain his delay in answering the old lady, she says he might tell her he was just recovering from a cold he caught by exposing himself to mountain air the other night!

The book is full of exquisite passages describing gorgeous court festivals, as in the Dance of the Waves of the Blue Sea, which Genji and To-no-Chujo do together; and in Murasaki's dainty reply to Akikonomu, to whom she sends little boys dressed as butterflies bearing spring flowers to invite her to her spring garden. The plan of the gardens at Genji's palace is so vividly described, without being heavy, that one feels its reality. Murasaki loved spring, so the view from her house was filled with spring beauty; Akikonomu loved autumn, so trees having the most beautiful leaves were planted where they could bring her pleasure. No lady could feel slighted for great care had been taken to suit her taste and wishes. The author's love of beauty and good taste are also shown in her description of
dresses with their careful color schemes and lovely patterns.

Of course, the book is liberally sprinkled with poetry and poetry contests. One light touch in this otherwise serious business is described in Vol. III when the scholars assembled for the contest to find that they are to be set adrift in boats on the pond, in order that their minds may be undisturbed. Since most of them had never been in a boat before their minds are anything but tranquil as they see the shore slipping away. But the tanka is not limited to scholars. A gentleman presents a poem to a lady and politeness demands an immediate answer, showing that she understands the hidden meaning. They may be original, or quotations from old poems. Thus when Genji sees some charming ladies peering from a country house in the early morning, he sends his retainer to pick morning-glories in their yard and try to find out who they are. A fan is sent from the house to hold the blossoms and on it the poem: "The flower that puzzled you was but the yugao (morning-glory), strange beyond knowing in its dress of shining dew." He answered: "Could I get a closer view, no longer would they puzzle me -- the flowers that all too dimly in the gathering dusk I saw." This invitation to become better acquainted was later accepted, Yugao becoming one of his favorites. When poems were sent from one house to another,
great care was used in selecting exactly the right paper and folding it in an interesting shape. Sometimes it would be tied to a flower spray, or to some twig having a special meaning. One rejected suitor sent a note tied to a bamboo spray covered with frost. Genji chose a wilted morning-glory to send a lady who repulsed him.

The importance of beautiful writing has already been mentioned. One cannot help feeling surprised at the invariable reference to it, in and out of season, as when Kashiwagi is dying, after he has betrayed Genji, and even then notices when he opens Nyosan's last note that the writing is unformed and childish, but has good points!

The book has been called immoral, but clearly the author had no such thought. She repeatedly states that Genji has done nothing for which he needs to be ashamed, except in the matter of Fujitsubo, the Emperor's consort. The shame and disgrace feared by parents for their daughters seem to be in being deserted by their lovers and so becoming a laughing stock. As long as their lovers visited them all was well, and having children strengthened the bond. The "kita-no-ka-ta" was the legal wife, but a man might have as many ladies of the wing as he could afford. Yugiri was regarded as queer because of his long years of faithful waiting for Kumoi, during which time he has only
one affair with the Goseichi dancer. The man kept his ladies in separate houses or separate wings, and they rarely saw each other. Only emotional difficulties, such as jealousy, could limit the number of favorites a wealthy noble might have. The danger of jealousy is emphasized in the book, Rokujo becoming, both before and after death, the cause of so much suffering, but the warning she sends to her daughter is to avoid jealousy no matter what her husband does, rather than warning him to be faithful to her.

Waley's translation: Doubtless much of the beauty, grace, and rhythm of the work is due to Waley's exceedingly careful and painstaking translation. His footnotes are very helpful in keeping the various characters in their proper relations, and he traces the puns, historical allusions, superstitions, and so forth in an interesting way, giving light without weight to what might become hopelessly involved explanations. He graciously gives Murasaki credit for the beauty of diction and fine choice of words, but much is doubtless due to his cooperation and understanding. His translation is founded chiefly on the Hakubunkwan edition, 1914, which may be traced back to the manuscript copy of Fujiwara no Sadaiye about the middle of the thirteenth century.

2. Makura no Soshi (The Pillow Book), by Sei Shonagon:

The Pillow Book is not a connected narrative, but a
notebook of stray impressions. Waley has translated about a fourth of the book, omitting, he says, only dull, unintelligible parts. Nobuko Kobayashi has also translated it, often duplicating Waley, but giving a fuller translation.

a. Life of Sei Shonagon:

She was born in 966 or 967, daughter of Kiyohara no Motosuke. She comes of a line of provincial governors, devoted to learning and literature, several of them being famous for their writings. After the death of her father, Sei Shonagon entered the service of Empress Sadako, her sketch-book covering her ten years of service (991-1000).

Little is known of her except from her diary and from the critical pen of Murasaki, who was an attendant in the same court, but to the rival Empress Akiko. The latter regards her as a most conceited person, proud of her sharp, gay retorts, and delighting in shocking people. She remarks that she will do anything to attract attention. Sei Shonagon, however, has told more about herself than others could tell. In her sketch-book, she shows herself from all angles and in all moods. She glories in her brilliant mind and quick recognition of fragments of poems, never missing a chance to tell us of a clever retort. But rather than conceit, one gets the impression of child-like delight in a stimulating game. She can be a most
formidable enemy, making cutting remarks and jokes to rout the most self-assured courtier. She is more vivacious than Murasaki, filling her anecdotes with a spicy interest in detail and a keener sense of wit. One sometimes feels that Murasaki does not fully appreciate her own humor, but Shonagon chuckles audibly. She enjoys picturing ridiculous figures and situations. In sharp contrast, is her sense of the beautiful, as she mixes in lovely poetic passages, such as the water flying in chips of crystal about the feet of the oxen as they cross a stream.

What happens to her after the Empress dies in childbirth, we do not know, but tradition tells of two courtiers passing a delapidated hovel and one of them remarking that Sei Shonagon, a wit of the last reign, lived there. Whereupon an incredibly lean old hag thrust her head out and cried, "Won't you buy old bones?" The allusion is to a Chinese story about race-horses so precious even their bones were worth preserving. So Shonagon maintained her reputation for repartee to the end.

b. Content of the book:

Sei Shonagon begins her work by telling us of her introduction at Court and her acute embarrassment. She creeps away into corners and hides behind her screens. When the Empress tries to talk with her, she cannot
find words to answer and marvels at the easy manners of the other ladies-in-waiting. Her distress reaches its climax when the Empress says, "Tell me the truth, do you really like me?" and just as she is hurriedly stammering her assurances of devotion, someone sneezes, proving her words to be a lie. "How I should have liked to get hold of the person who produced that unlucky sneeze." 1.

Gradually she becomes used to Court life and describes picnics, and flower-viewing parties, which always call for poems to be composed to amuse the Empress. During a visit from the Emperor, the ladies are requested to write a poem from memory, and she pleases him by quoting the poem:

"As the years pass
Age overtakes me.
But in gazing at the flowers
How should I grieve?"

"I wrote this, as I say, but I changed the line 'But in gazing at the flowers' to 'gazing at my Sovereign Lord', and when the Emperor looked at this he said: 'A lovely greeting! I wanted a chance of hearing your quick wit.'" 2.

Shonagon shows her sharp wit by playing a practical joke on Nobutsune, a man who writes badly. On a builder's plan he had written, "This is the way I want it done", in very slipshod, uneven characters.

She wrote beside it, "I should not do it quite in this way, or you will indeed produce a queer object." Many people in the house saw and laughed at this.

She lists many amusing comments under the headings, **Annoying Things**, **Anxious Moments**, **Enviable Things**, **Plump People**, **Things to be Ashamed of**, and so forth.

Under **Annoying Things**, she lists the position of a lady who has had a tiff about nothing with her lover and establishes herself on another couch. He tries to bring her back, but she refuses to be reconciled, whereupon he goes back to the warm bed-mats, leaving her to shiver in dignified silence. Finding the cold too much for her to endure, she is at last obliged to swallow her pride and creep back beside him, while he hard-heartedly advises her to sulk a little longer.

Under **Unpleasant People**, she describes a hateful man "who leaves his lady-love at dawn, hunting about for his fan and paper in the dark, and muttering, 'Strange!' At last he finds it and puts it noisily in his breast, and clacks his fan as he says good-bye, flapping it about. 'Hateful' is really not a strong enough word. He is absolutely revolting!' The really charming behaviour for a man leaving at dawn is this. He must be very sad to go, and rise very reluctantly, and must sigh when she says earnestly,
'Ah, this is shocking! It is getting quite light!' But still he must sit close to her and whisper, whisper, as they have been doing all night. He must be in no hurry to dress. When he has to leave, they go out together to the gate, and he says, 'How lonely -- how lonely is the day-time!' She will miss him terribly and ache that she must let him go. And yet it is just his way of doing things that impresses her, for if he scampers off in a rush, gathering up his things into his breast and tying the cords to a hair, she dislikes him then and there."

A Very Tiresome Thing is "When a poem of one's own, that one has allowed someone else to use as his, is singled out for praise." 2.

Speaking of Plump People: "Young men and babies should be plump. Governors of the country districts should be plump, also. If the people in such sorts of authority are thin and dry, other people are apt to think their characters are dry and irritable also." 3.

Shonagon also describes visits to temples and religious ceremonies in an original way. She is impatient with country people who sit so closely in front of her at the service that she can't see. She is tempted to roll them over sideways while they are prostrating themselves. She also says, "A Recitant ought to be

goodlooking. It is only if it is a pleasure to keep one's eyes on him all the time that there is any chance of religious feeling being aroused. Otherwise one begins looking at something else and soon one's attention wanders from what he is reading; in which case ugliness becomes an actual cause of sin.”

Later she repents of this blasphemy.

Her many-sided character is shown in her pity for the royal dog, who is exiled to Dog Island because he chased the royal cat. When he tries to come back he is cruelly beaten, but she sympathizes with him and saves his life. In contrast to this, when a poor man, whose house has been burned, comes to complain she writes him a cruelly clever poem that convulses with mirth those who can read, but leaves the ignorant old man to find someone who will explain it to him, thinking it is a paper that will right his wrong.

c. Comments on the book:

This started a new style of writing, known as Zuihitsu, or "following the pen", which rapidly became a conscious type. The name of the book may come from the fact that it was kept by the pillow, so these stray comments could be jotted down; or from a gift of paper given her by the Empress with the remark that she might use it for pillows.

B. Other translations of early works:

1. Tsure-Zure Gusa (The Harvest of Leisure) by Yoshida Kenko.

Translated by Ryukichi Kurata.

a. Life of Kenko:

Kenko was born A.D. 1283. His father, Kaneaki Urabe, is famous in Japanese history. Kenko himself was a court official, his name at that time being Yoshida no Kaneyoshi. He evidently lived an interesting and rather exciting life at Court until, at the age of forty-two, when his master died, he took the vows of a Buddhist monk. At that time he took the name of Kenko, which was only a slight change of his former name, the Chinese characters being the same. He lived alone in his mountain retreat, moving at times as hunting parties disturbed his tranquility, till he reached the age of sixty-eight. He died in 1350, and a friend, Imagawa Ryoshium, collected various slips of paper that were fastened to the walls of his hut, and put them in book form. These he called Tsure-Zure Gusa or Harvest of Leisure.

These papers were written as separate reflections and with no idea of a connected narrative, or any plan of work. One might picture Kenko sitting in his mountain retreat, idly jotting down some thought that occurred to him and sticking it in among the many others that dotted his walls. His "reflections short and long, are the natural effusion of a heart suffi-
ciently at leisure from itself to contemplate mankind
with serene impartiality, and himself as but an item
in the general score."1 In comparing Montaigne and
Kenko, the same writer (Beck) says, "--- he (Kenko)
is infinitely the more serene and detached, and has
a sensiti\nseness of spirit much surpassing that of
Montaigne, though he falls far below him in sustained
and constructive ability."2

He is in no sense a teacher, but merely a seeker
of solitude, whiling away tedious hours by writing.
He does not try to tell us he is a saint, or ever has
been. In fact, his writings come close to telling us
the opposite at times, but just as we near the solu-
tion or explanation of some subtle thought, he moves
away, always maintaining a certain reserve.

b. Content of the book:

Kurata has translated only what he thinks would
interest Westerners. The sections have been numbered,
and he follows the numbering in the original.

The first one is a discussion of mankind, and in
it he refers to Sei Shonagon's remark that "the monk
is thought about as attractive as a log of dry wood."
He replies that a "charming appearance is good, but if
it does not fulfill its promise, it causes disappoint-
ment."3 "To live devoted to the Lord Buddha in
the mountain solitudes is never wearisome, and it

drives away the clouds from the thoughts, leaving them clear and serene." 1. Again he tells of a sage who spent all his time meditating and would not listen to the pleas of people who came to him for help. By thus separating himself from the cares of this world, he feels sure he gained heaven.

He is not above seeing the humor in the incident of some saintly men who visited a temple and meditated upon the strange direction a certain lion is facing. They worked themselves into a sentimental ecstasy over it, then asked a passing priest to explain the deep meaning of it. He casually twisted it back into place, saying some mischievous boys had moved it. "The saintly tears of delight had been entirely wasted." 2.

His various comments on love are interesting. "Though a man excels in everything, unless he has been a lover his life is lonely, and he may be likened to a jewelled cup which can contain no wine." 3. Again he considers the power of love, from which none are exempt. "A mighty elephant may be bound with a rope made of woman's hair, and the deer in autumn can be summoned by the music of a flute made from a clog worn by a woman." 4. He recommends that husband and wife live apart to save their becoming tired of each other. He

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also thinks it is better to have no children than to risk having bad ones who will disgrace their ancestors.

He is not always sentimental about the ladies. In speaking of women confounding men with sudden questions, then laughing at their confused answers, he says, "Now one may well say women ought themselves to be perfection if they can reduce a man to this abject condition. Not a bit of it! Not one of them but is naturally as obstinate and contradictitious as she can be---1.

He tells many humorous and interesting anecdotes, and discusses many things we usually regard as rather modern ideas: the cruelty of keeping animals and birds in cages, "they who yearn for the fields, mountains, and the open skies!" 2. He also advises the winner of a game not to rejoice in the disappointment of others, and not to show off. He says never to tyrannize over inferiors. Never frighten children just to amuse yourself. And, most modern of all, "Disease is often the result of mental maladjustment."3.

In number 137, one might see a prophecy of the modern tourist: "Note that a man of true taste is never one who gorges himself with obvious beauty. He loves the more refined and intimate shades. You will find the lout fixed before the blossoms with gloatiinge

1. No.107,p.67.  2.No.121,p.73.  3.Page 77.
looks, exhilarated with drink, reeling off trick poems and heartlessly tearing off great boughs laden with bloom. You will find him dipping his paws in the purity of the flowing spring or tranquil lake. He will trample new-fallen snow and leave his hoof-marks upon it. Invariably he is unable to rejoice in beauty without pawing it."

C. Comments on the book:

Waley in the introduction to the Sacred Tree (Genji Part II.) points out that the fallacious air of modernity found in these works comes from the fact that Buddhism has many psychological conceptions current to-day: i.e. the conflicting elements in one personality; sub-conscious emotions unperceived by the person himself; the uncertainty of life; folly of money-getting; the virtue of being merciful to all living things, and so forth. Whatever it comes from, it certainly holds the interest of the present-day reader, though it cannot compare with Genji or the Pillow Book for depth, keenness of observation, or beauty of form.

2. Diaries of Court Ladies of Old Japan, Translated by Omori and Doi.

These three diaries, The Sarashima Diary, The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu, and the Diary of Izumi Shikibu, are well introduced by Amy Lowell, though she is not as scholarly

1. Page 80.
as Waley or Aston, who have studied the originals. She makes the interesting observation that these were written in the blackest of the Dark Ages in Europe. The Sarashima Diary was produced at the time King Canute was addressing the sea from his arm-chair. And "five hundred years later Columbus was sending letters into the interior of Cuba, addressed to the Emperor of Japan." The diaries are written following the type set by Sei Shonagon, but are much weaker in all respects. They lack the directness and intensity of the former writings. We will consider them separately.


Amy Lowell says the name of the author is unknown, but Aston in his History of Japanese Literature, gives it as Sugawara no Takasuye. She was the daughter of Fujiwara Takasuye, born in 1009. Her father was a governor, and the diary begins with a trip to Kyoto from his province. It covers a long period of the author's life, from the time she was twelve till she became fifty years old.

The opening passages show the loneliness of a little girl whose nurse is left behind as they travel towards Kyoto, of her fear of robbers as they cross the Hakone mountains, and of her delight in the beauties of nature. "The mountain range called Nichitomi is like folding screens with good pictures. On the left hand we saw a

1. Introduction, p.XIX.
very beautiful beach with long-drawn curves of white waves."

1. She speaks again of water, white as if thickened with rice flour. Once in Kyoto, the pestilence takes several of her acquaintances, leaving her very sorrowful. She is given *The Tale of Genji* to console her, and retires behind her screens as happy as a queen. She becomes so engrossed with the romances that she forgets her religious duties, until a sister dies, and her father has to go back to his province leaving her behind. She wants to go on a pilgrimage, but her mother, "a person of extremely antiquated mind"(2) is afraid to let her go. After her father's return, her mother becomes a nun and she, against her will, becomes a lady-in-waiting at the palace. She feels lonely and awkward. She has a wistful little love affair which fades quickly away. She, at last, goes on her pilgrimage where she joyfully identifies Uji and other places named in the *Genji* tale, which she evidently regards as historical. She marries and has several children. Her husband, a governor of Shinana Province, dies on his way there, and she abides lonely in her house. The tone of the Diary is melancholy.


(1) Content of the book:

Murasaki gives a good picture of all sides of court life, the beautiful and the drab, the gracious and

the cruel, the wise and the superstitious. Her description of the birth of the Empress's child makes one wonder how the lady happened to return to health. The room was packed with people dressed in the usual white costumes. There was hardly standing room and some were so dizzy they had no clear recollection afterwards of what happened. Even the experienced women were too excited to be much help. Scores of priests were shouting to frighten demons away, some so hoarse they could hardly make a sound, but each trying to drown the others out. Several ladies-in-waiting were lying behind their screens to deceive the evil spirits into attacking them instead of the mother. One priest was overcome by an evil spirit too strong for him. Everyone wept. The gentlemen with rumpled clothes wandered about with rice on their heads for good luck. The ladies spoiled their make-up with tears, but were unconscious of the damage till later.

Immediately following the birth of the prince, many elaborate ceremonies are given, gifts are scattered liberally, and the wine cup overflows. Murasaki peeping under the Empress's canopy thought the "mother of the nation" appeared weary. These ceremonies are marked by elaborate costumes and Murasaki is a master at describing color combinations and fine materials. She frequently mentions the
ladies' hair, which in the case of real beauties, swept the ground, being a foot longer than the lady herself.

A famous incident occurred at the ceremony of the fiftieth day. There was a great carousal, each noble priding himself upon his ability to empty the wine cup which held several quarts. Only the General of the Right passed it by. On seeing this one officer said, "I think Lady Murasaki must be somewhere here!" She listens, thinking, "How can she be here in a place where there is no such graceful person as Prince Genji?" Later she and Lady Saisho try to hide away from the drunken crowd, but are discovered and dragged back. It is doubtless this incident which gives her the nickname, Murasaki, after her heroine. The title, Shikibu, merely indicates her office.

Murasaki leaves the Court and returns to her old home for awhile, where she finds she has lost many of her old friends, and she is very lonely. She longs for her husband, and to the distress of her maids, reads some of his Chinese books. They tell her she will never enjoy old age if she becomes fond of books. She tells of how she happened to learn Chinese. She sat by her brother while he studied it as a child and soon could prompt him. Her father sighed that she was not a boy. But she learned to hide this disgraceful
knowledge as many people assured her that even boys become unpopular if it is known they are fond of books. She, thereafter, pretended she could not read the characters on the Empress's screen. She was also accused of knowing the "Ancient Chronicles" of Japan. The Emperor read Genji and praised her for her knowledge of it which showed in the tale. A jealous lady-in-waiting spread malicious gossip about her unladylike learning.

Empress Akiko's father, the Prime Minister (whose step-mother wrote the Gossamer Diary -- summarized by Waley in the introduction to the Sacred Tree) was in love with Murasaki, but got little encouragement. He sees a copy of Genji and "after the usual senseless jokes about it, he handed me the following poem, written on a strip of paper against which a spray of plum-blossom had been pressed. 'How comes it that, sour as the plum-tree's fruit, you have contrived to blossom forth in tale so amorous?' To this I answered: 'Who told you that the fruit belies the flower? For the fruit you have not tasted, and the flower you know but by report!'" (Meaning you have neither read the book, nor won my love.)

Murasaki draws an unflattering portrait of Sei Shonagon, saying she tries to be exceptional, scatters

her writing about, indulges in emotion with no self-control, and is surely piling up trouble for the future. She also criticizes Izumi Shikibu, saying her poems are interesting, show acquaintance with ancient literature, and have an interesting point always, but she is still not a true artist and should not pass judgment on the poems of others. (Amy Lowell hints that perhaps she has unfavorably criticized some of Murasaki's poems.)

(2) Comments on the Diary:

The Tale of Genji far out-shines the Diary. It is far superior in literary value, though the Diary tells of the Court as it is, and Genji describes it as Murasaki would like it to be.

Waley has translated only a few sample passages of this Diary, but his translation seems much smoother than that of Omori and Doi. Since both have done the incident of the Prime Minister's poem, it gives a chance for comparison. He seems to find a deeper meaning in the reply of Murasaki than they do, as they merely translate it: "No one in passing has ever broken the plum-tree, who then can know if it be sour?"

c. The Diary of Izumi Shikibu:

(1) Life of Izumi:

She was born in 974. Divorced from her first husband, she became the mistress of Prince Tametaka, till
he died. Then Prince Sochi fell in love with her and brought her secretly to the palace, but the Princess made so much trouble about it that it had to be given up. Later she married Fukiwara Yasumasa. In 1008 she came to the Court to serve the same Empress as Murasaki.

(2) Content of the Diary:

The Diary begins with the coming of Prince Sochi, and records merely their secret visits and notes exchanged, their plans for going to the palace and her hesitation lest she become a laughing stock. The usual lover's fears that she may have other friends constantly distress Prince Sochi, but always he finds his way back. At last she is taken to the Palace, but the Princess is angry and prepares to go to her sister. The Diary ends with her demanding a palanquin.

(3) Comments on the Diary:

The translators use the third person to indicate the shy reserve of the writer. Waley does not regard this as an authentic diary, but merely a romantic account of Izumi's famous love story.

3. Sumiyoshi Monogatari (Tales of Sumiyoshi), translated by Harold Parlett.

a. Summary of the story:

An official of the Court has two mistresses. He married one, the daughter of a former Mikado, and has
a beautiful daughter. The mother dies begging him to place her in the palace when she is grown. Later he married the other mistress, who becomes the cruel step-mother to Himegimi, who is more beautiful than her own two daughters. Because of her enmity, the father postpones presenting her to the palace. In the meantime, a Major-General has heard of her and besieges her with love letters. Since she will not answer, the step-mother tricks him into accepting her younger daughter, San-no-kimi, thinking he has Himegimi. He discovers the truth and manages to see her by hiding when the three sisters go to see the spring flowers, and spying on them.

At last the father makes ready to send her to the Emperor. The step-mother is jealous and convinces him that she saw an ill-looking priest stealing away from Himegimi's rooms at dawn. So the father plans another good marriage for her, and this time the step-mother plans to have her kidnapped by a vile old man. Learning of the plan Himegimi and her maid run away to Sumiyoshi where they live with an old nun. It is described as a most desolate place. Her former lover is granted a vision of her hiding place and finds her, bringing her back in secret as his bride. The old father is allowed to worry for years, never told that his daughter is well and happy lest the step-mother put a curse on the two children. When the boy is seven, however, the father is invited
to the initiation ceremony and is at last told the whole story. The step-mother is disgraced, her entire family deserting her, even to the servants. The others live happy ever after.

b. Comments on the story:

The cruel step-mother theme is very common, being popular both in story form and in the drama. The "desolate" country is not very convincing to us. In fact, this bit of seacoast sounds enchanting, with the old twisted pine trees and the waves dashing up on the rocks. Nor does the "hut" of the nun sound so bleak. There seem to be beautiful screens and hangings, and they all admit they leave it with regret.

This is a careful translation of an old story, but is not considered by scholars as the same Sumiyoshi Monogatari that Sei Shonagon mentions. Parlett gives no data of any kind concerning his sources or the authorship or date. It is merely printed in magazine form in the Transactions of the Asiatic Society, with no comment.

II. Summary of the first chapter:

Of these early writings, the Tale of Genji is far superior in form and content to the others studied. Its beautiful simplicity, lovely descriptions, and good characterizations deserve the place it still holds in Japanese thought. Mrs. Sugimoto (Daughter of the Narikon) describes a modern wedding where the decorations and seating plan are dictated by the Tale of Genji.
But Genji, being a romance, needs the diaries to give a picture of life as it really was and save us from idealizing too much. More practical minds will perhaps prefer them.

The Tale of Sumiyoshi, while inferior to the others, and probably of a much later date, is quite different from the romances which follow, and carries on the Genji tradition of gentleness and refinement, in spite of the cruel stepmother.
Chapter II.

I. "Near-Translations":

Note: There are several reasons why direct translation from the Japanese is very difficult. The older books were liberally sprinkled with Chinese phrases and allusions, making it necessary for the translator to be acquainted with Chinese literature as well as Japanese. Another difficulty comes from the necessity of explaining to foreigners historical allusions that need be only hinted to Japanese readers. This requires either bulky footnotes or vague parenthetical explanations calculated to drive the reader to a history. The most serious difficulty, however, lies in the fact that a country closed to outsiders learned to understand half-uttered phrases and gestures. An unfinished sentence may convey paragraphs of meaning to a Japanese, but leaves the average Westerner hopelessly vague. Even mere courteous phrases have undue weight when put in English, as with the overworked, "I am being very rude", a phrase equaling our careless "Pardon me". These difficulties led many people to retell stories instead of attempting translations. This avoided trouble over obscure words and phrases, and also allowed cutting the long moralizing passages of which the Japanese are so fond. Hence, this chapter is called "near-translations", and deals with carefully retold stories which follow the text in meaning.

A. Three books written for amusement:

1. A Captive of Love: Founded on Bakin's romance, Kumano
Tayema Ama Yo no Tsuki (The Moon Seen through a Rift in a Cloud on a Rainy Night); by Edward Greey:

A. Summary of the story:

Amada Buhei is a hunter. His gentle wife remonstrates with him, urging him not to take life, but he says he will only hang up his weapons in the temple of Kwannon (goddess of mercy) when he is so old that he can't pull a bow, and wine tastes like water. In spite of her distress, he boasts of his killings, especially of shooting the deer-of-five-colors. This beautiful deer was listening to a priest read the Scriptures and nodding its head as though agreeing. Amada waits till the priest goes away, then borrowing the Scriptures, reads till the deer comes to listen, then he shoots it. His wife listens with horror to this sacrilege, crushing her small son in her arms. When she puts him to bed, she finds that she has killed a baby hare he was fondling. Since she was born in the hour, month, and year of the hare, it is her protector. That next morning in the hour of the hare (between four and six A.M.) she dies. Amada sells the deer skin to a dealer, who sells it to a samurai.

Nine years later, Amada dies of a dreadful malady, urging his son to become a priest and pray for him. The boy, now twelve years old, is taken by the villagers to a temple of the Shinshiu sect. Here he stays till he is
nineteen, rising rapidly in favor, and ambitious to become Living Master. Realizing that he can never have the full respect of the people who know that his father was a hunter and is now, therefore, in jigoku (hell), he transfers to another temple farther away. Going as a pilgrim he realizes for the first time that the world contains charming women, and wishes the villagers had placed him in a temple of Shinran, who allowed his priests to marry, as well as eat flesh and fish.

Then one day in a temple service, he sees Hachisuba, a beautiful girl who wears a dress of five colors. Chance finds him at her gate one evening, and he yields to her urging, breaking his vows by drinking sake. Knowing he cannot return to his temple unless he undergoes penance, he starts out to enjoy himself in the "burning pit of five sins". He defrauds a salt-dealer of his ox, by telling him it is the incarnation of his father's spirit, and proves it by letting the ox lick his hands, (which he has previously soaked in brine). Touched by this filial piety, the dealer gives him the ox and some money. He promptly sells the ox to Takeakira, a cowardly samurai who ran away when his master was killed in battle, instead of committing hara-kiri, as the other loyal attendants did, and is now living as a poor farmer. Takeakira's older brother sends for him, and while he is gone, the salt-dealer happens to
see the ox and calls the police, saying he and the priest plotted together to rob him of the animal. The sick wife dies under the brutal treatment of the officers, and the two children are tortured, but will not reveal the father's destination. Their filial piety touches Yamada, who is "trying" them and he follows them after their release from court, coming in time to prevent their committing suicide, both "confessing" to stealing the ox to save their father. The father returns and is sent by Yamada to find the priest, while he takes the children, training them both with all sorts of weapons so they can kill the priest if they meet him first. In the visit to the elder brother, Takeakira has discovered that he has just married Hachisuba, who still secretly longs for the priest.

In the meantime, Saikei, the priest, has cleverly routed some ghosts from a temple and become Living Master, with the two robbers (the ghosts) for servants. He converts himself and his whole congregation to the more easy-going doctrine of Shinran which allows marriage, and watches for Hachisuba, whom he hopes to meet again.

The meeting comes about unexpectedly, when Hachisuba visits the temple with offerings from her husband who is sick. His death occurs shortly when an old servant accidently boils a lizard in the tea-pot. Saikei comes
to perform the ceremony of the seventh day (Buddhist memorial service) and is attacked by Takeakira, who recognizes him as the man who sold him the stolen ox. Unfortunately, it is Hachisuba who is killed, her spirit floating away shows in the center of the luminous matter a deer-of-five-colors. Saikei, taking the temple money with him, "eats the wind".

Since there was no witness, as the law required, to Hachisuba's death, Takeakira writes a full confession to the feudal lord, Kiga, and is granted the privilege of hara-kiri. By a favorite falcon of his brother's, he sends a message to his children to find the priest and kill him. When the falcon arrives, Yamada's skylark is caught by him, and the boy shoots the falcon, much to their regret when they find the message.

Saikei, who has been initiated into the mysteries of a thunder god, enjoys himself so much that he falls off his cloud, during a thunder storm that wrecked the salt-dealer's home and killed all his oxen. He is carried to Yamada's house, but escapes on a cloud when the boy shoots at him. From his mountain retreat, he plots to cause a drought till he can force the children to forgive him. He can work his spell only if wine, women, wood-cutters, and charcoal-burners are kept away. The girl, aided by the spirit of the dead falcon, changes her appearance to resemble Hachisuba, and with
her brother's aid, and Yamada's aid, overcomes him. He offers no resistance, but bares his neck to the sword and dies truly penitent.

b. Comments on the story:

The time of this story is about 1335 A.D. Bakin's many works are regarded as classics by the Japanese. He has a quaint, interesting style, and a good dramatic sense. He saves his moralizing for footnotes at the end of each section, when he deals with everything from filial piety, and the difference between false and true priests, to medicines and how to cure a "thunder-struck" person by applying a living carp to his chest. Since so many people wrote to ask what happened next, he has added a short section dealing out poetic justice to everyone: death and disaster to all who were connected with the deer's death, even to the samurai who bought the skin, and happiness to those who showed filial piety.

There are several interesting touches for foreigners which a Japanese would take for granted. When Takeakira prepares with great ceremony to commit hara-kiri, he is interrupted as he plunges the knife in his side by a messenger from Lord Kiga, who has sent in all haste, not to pardon him, but to ask if he knows his brother's secret herb that cures falcons. He courteously listens, regrets that he does not, but promises
that in seven days the plant will grow from the mound where he is buried. He calmly draws the knife to the other side, finishes with a deft upward stroke as the boy behind him strikes off his head. The Lord waits impatiently for the seventh day, when sure enough the herb is found. He performs many services for the two brothers and gives both posthumous honors.

Another rather surprising touch comes when the spirit of the falcon in the form of a goddess tempts the children to forgive the priest. She explains that the drought will cause great suffering to all that region. The children proudly refuse such a base suggestion, whereupon she congratulates them for their filial piety and helps them kill the priest. The moral seems a bit doubtful in a Christian country, but is commonly found in stories of this period.

One passing comment reminds us of Hamlet, when the girl sees the ghost and remembers that mortals must always speak first.

The story is packed with proverbs, perhaps the most surprising one being: "Do not hurry to rise early, as sleep confers many benefits." There seems to be no time either in ancient or modern Japan when this advice was taken seriously.

The story is, of course, in a Buddhist setting, so no explanation is given of re-incarnation, or charms,
spells, or ghosts. There is nothing extravagant, however, till Saikei becomes a thunder god, then we are treated to a small boy's dream of power. It is entirely in accordance with Buddhist doctrine that such a long trail of misfortunes should follow the killing of the deer, since he is an incarnation of some pious spirit. His very piety leads him to become Hachisuba and wreck the life of the son of the man who killed him. Bakin has created a thorough-going rogue in Saikei. He, like most Japanese writers, never presents the priesthood as infallible. They are as stupid and human as most people. In fact in his double moral he points out that he was teaching not only filial piety, but showing that even a bozu (priest) surrounded by so many safe-guards, may become a captive of love.

Edward Greey uses this phrase for his title. He states in the Preface, that he chose this romance "on account of its affording an excellent insight into the thoughts and methods of the Japanese about five hundred years ago, and for its interesting descriptions of superstitions not unknown to our ancestors". These latter are not very evident as one reads, but the whole setting is so Japanese in feeling one fails to make comparisons or even think of another country. He also says that, "--- this work, while not a translation, follows Bakin's charming romance as closely as possible.

1. Preface, p.3.
in his own quaint style, and contains many details that the author would have given had he written for foreign readers." 1. The work is so well done that one is not conscious of these "details" being added, but always feels in touch with the Japanese author.

A brief word concerning the life of Bakin might be given here. He was the son of a samurai, who ran away from home. He had a checkered career as fortune-teller and what-not. He finally became the adopted son of a shoe-dealer, whose daughter he married. He is said to have written two hundred ninety works. He has a reputation as a man of immense erudition, who couldn't resist showing it. He was not an amiable person, but quarreled with everyone, including Hokusai, the famous artist who illustrated some of his books. The illustrations have since been published separately. The quarrel was said to be the beginning of Hokusai's independent work.


a. Summary of the story:

Rokuizo, a servant of Saburozaemon, is foxed by a beautiful woman as he is climbing Kudan Hill in Old Yedo (Tokyo). After sweating under the huge bundle of groceries she has bought, he is entertained with feasting and wine at her home. The voices of herself and her sisters have a nasal twange, so we are not surprised when

1. Preface, p. 3.
Rokuzo awakes in a deserted field to find the lovely house and garden gone, and knows that he has been bewitched by foxes. He is sick for days whenever he thinks of the wonderful feast which was all filth. His lord cannot allow such a thing to happen so near his estates, so goes alone at night to see what disturbs this haunted ruin. He hears blood-curdling shrieks and is led to an upstairs room where the ghost of a young girl tells of her murderer. She was a humble person, taken as concubine by Shuzen, a lord, who is separated from his wife and never goes to her apartments. When Shuzen goes on a journey, the girl, being pregnant, is killed by the jealous wife's steward, and her body hidden in the wall. On his return, her ghost tells Shuzen the tale and also of his wife's relations with the head steward. He kills everyone, and commits hara-kiri.

The story of a talking horse, Kage, belonging to Okumura Shuzen, is interpolated here, its connection not being very clear. The spirit of a thief, accidentally entombed in a secret passage under a shrine, enters a horse, and there is high comedy till an abbot dislodges him with his rosary. The thief in desperation appears to the abbot in a dream, begging him to stop this praying which is threatening him with the insipidity of Paradise!

The real hero (or villain) appears at this point.
Aoyama Shuzen, a member of the Endurance Club (composed of warriors who keep up their battle-field vigor by treating summer as though it were winter and vice versa) hears Saburozaemon's story and after being bewitched twice, finally slays the tanuki (badger), and serves him up to the Club at their next meeting.

Part II begins with the story of Takata Dono, a lecherous lady, who lives in a house built on this haunted place. Always sleeves are fluttering from her windows, and a small army of men disappear within, only to have their headless bodies thrown down the well a few days later.

An involved story follows telling of the burning of Osaka Castle, the death of Sanhime's husband and her own rescue. She is important only to introduce Aoyama again, and be the background for a bloody fight.

The most sustained plot appears at this point. Aoyama is made magistrate, his work is to detect all sorts of crime. He orders his men to make arrests, the more the better. In fact, one who makes few arrests will be punished. The district is under a reign of terror. People are arrested and tortured on the least excuse, Aoyama himself being present and enjoying their agony. The tortures are described in minute, blood-curdling detail.

The author here takes us back to introduce us to
Jinnai, a famous criminal, who even as a child burned a temple, killing a priest. He enters the plot when he joins Dentatsu, a priest, and goes toward the capital dressed as his servant. He robs a money train on the way, murdering the people; then does not hesitate to burn a whole village to aid his escape. Proud of his success, he carries on operations in Aoyama's district under the noses of his officers. They lose him many times before he is caught at last in a mountain temple where he has been sick with ague. He is tortured, but never opens his mouth. Aoyama finally has him crucified, his agony prolonged as long as possible by giving him vinegar to drink. As he dies, he promises to dwell in that place where people may pray to him to cure ague, the disease that caused his downfall.

He has two beautiful daughters, and upon his death one is sold to a brothel for life, the other becomes a slave in Aoyama's household. The latter becomes scapegoat for the whole family, and suffers tortures from the jealous wife. Aoyama humiliates her cruelly, trying to make her his concubine. She admits to a husband and child, but instead of obtaining mercy, she is threatened with torture for them. The steward makes love to her, also, and enraged by her refusal, plots with the wife to break one of the ten precious
plates, heirlooms entrusted to them by the Shogun, which Kiku has been caring for. As she takes the plates out, counting to nine, then shrieking that one is gone, Aoyama tortures her by cutting her fingers off. (Japanese count by bending the fingers into the palm of the hand.) The mad wife tears the thumb off herself and dashes to her apartments, where a little later she gives birth to a child with no fingers, and dies in agony. Kiku is finally killed by Aoyama and the steward, and her body thrown in the well.

Sempei, the husband, hears of the murder. He plots with Yui, the sister, who kills the steward when he visits the brothel. Aoyama is constantly haunted by Kiku, who counts to nine, then moans and shrieks. That night he is killed by Sempei, the husband, who has stolen into the castle. After the truth is known, Sempei is allowed honorable death (hara-kiri), the boy is adopted by a good family, and Yui is freed from the brothel and becomes a nun.

Here the main story ends, but the author adds the final cleansing of the well and quieting of all these ghosts. Armies of priests are frightened away when the ghosts come swarming from the well and dance about, but one old man, who has a reputation to uphold, stays by, night after night, and finally solves the problem. When Kiku counts to nine, he shouts Ten, and holds out
the *junen.* (Just what this is, is not made plain, but it is evidently a sort of pun meaning *ten,* and also ten ideal thoughts, or ten repetitions of the name of Amida Buddha. Whatever it is, it is evidently strong magic.) Her spirit is satisfied and all the ghosts depart.

b. Comments on the story:

DeBenneville has used many sources for his story; puppet shows, street story tellers, and so forth; and has strung all his stories rather loosely together. It is confusing, though each incident is interesting in itself. He also goes into great detail describing the Yedo (Tokyo) of Ieyasu's day (about 1590 A.D.) and locating the places as they are to-day (i.e. 1921, before the earthquake). This is rather interesting for one who has lived in Tokyo, but must be very boring for other people. His long passages dealing with complicated historical incidents are tedious. He follows his originals much too closely, and is too specific about dates and places, to be interesting to foreigners. He also uses too many Japanese words, which leave only a blank in the minds of Western readers, unfamiliar with the language.

But on the whole the book is interesting, though rather horrible in places. The story of the ten plates has been told in many forms, the stage productions
being very famous. There is no lack of dramatic appeal or swift action once the story is off its historical ways. One wonders if Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado* were not inspired by Aoyama with his passion for arrests and tortures. If so, they have freed it from its horrible detail, making it light comedy.

The comic relief is furnished by the talking horse, and the thief threatened with Paradise, and also the meetings of the Endurance Club. These shivering, reluctant men, dragged out to a meeting in mid-winter, are invited to sit down in a wide-opened room, given ice water to drink and requested to remove any superfluous clothing. Their polite words are neatly contrasted with their real thoughts. At another time, they are invited in mid-summer to eat the *tanuki* (sort of badger), and must wear padded clothes and sit in a closed room over the fire. No one dares refuse to come since he will be unmercifully scorned by his more hardy comrades. A remnant of this club still survives in Tokyo, its members priding themselves on the temperature of the club bath, where they meet on hot summer days.

An incident, interesting to students of Ieyasu's day, is nearly lost in the details of the visit to the haunted house. Saburozaemon meets Isuke, a retainer who was also bewitched in the haunted house. Isuke
thinking it is a samurai wishing to test his sword, tries to run away, but once brought to his knees begs the honored master to spare his life, since his muscles are so soft it would not be interesting to cut him, it would be like cutting tofu (bean curd). After amusing himself for awhile with threatening him, the samurai makes his request to be guided to the haunted house. The incident refers to the custom allowed at that time when any samurai (two-sworded noble) might strike off the head of any humble person, just to test the edge of his sword. This would be regarded as high comedy by the Japanese readers.

The foxes and ghosts seem to be typically Japanese. Very often one is tricked into sympathizing with a person in trouble, only to discover that it is a fox in human shape. There are so many of these stories, that they may partly account for the "sympathy blind" attitude of the people. The tanuki (badger) is a favorite subject for children's stories and folk lore. He disguises himself as a loved member of the family and brings disaster to the house. The ghosts are different from the usual variety in that they can always be explained away as figments of the imagination. A man kills a ghost with his sword and discovers the body of a servant, or friend. The ghost looks out from his wife's eyes and rails at him, only to laugh from
the eves when she lies bleeding from his stroke. A maid rouses the house with her shrieks when the ghost is merely a sheet over a vase. Any person who dies with a grudge, becomes a malignant spirit and may enter animate or inanimate things and cause terrible calamities. The spirit can only be appeased by costly masses and many priestly prayers.

3. The **Yotsuya Kwai** or **O'Iwa Inari**: Retold from the Japanese originals by James S. DeBenneville.

a. Summary of the story:

This is a story of the origin of the shrine to the Inari goddess, a very popular one in Japan, as the gifts of charcoal, soy sauce, sake, and women's hair testify. This one is also well covered with pictures of women who have regained the straying affections of their husbands by praying here.

Tamiya Matazaemon, a minor official under the Tokugawas (about 1680), has a daughter who is most ill-favored. She is described as flat-faced, humped back, long-armed, terribly marked by smallpox, and with one eye gone leaving a white puffy eyeball horrible to behold. The children call her the fiend. She falls in love with Densuke, her father's servant, and becomes his mistress. When she becomes pregnant, they have to run away or her father will kill them both. They go to Densuke's uncle, a talkative old man, who describes
O'Mino, (the girl) vividly, not knowing she is standing outside. He tells of meeting her at dusk and "it was cold feet and chills for him for the space of seven days." When he hears that his nephew has committed the carnal sin with the demon, his first question is, "What did she pay you for it?"

She is disowned by her father for seven births (incarnations), and they live with the old uncle, till Densuke is forced by his employer, Takahashi, to dispose of the murdered body of a money lender. He tries to get rid of it, but finally brings it home saying it is a washing. While he is out, O'Mino opens it and out rolls a head. In a few minutes the neighbors are screaming that O'Mino has given birth to a baby and a head. She dies cursing Takahashi, and Densuke runs away. The baby, O'Iwa, is adopted by the grandparents, who spoil her, though she is almost as ugly as her mother. Her virtue of being amiable saves her somewhat from the scorn her mother endured. Takahashi is arrested for robbery and confesses to killing Densuke, who fled to him for help. Takahashi is beheaded, and his son placed in a temple. He later robs the temple strong box for money to spend on geisha.

When O'Iwa becomes of age, the grandfather goes to Rokurobe, a go-between, to find a husband for her. This is no small task, and the go-between accepts the aid
of Chobei, a pimp for the Yoshiwara (licensed brothel quarters). He succeeds in finding a samurai who is temporarily in financial difficulties and is telling fortunes on the street. He marries O'Iwa without seeing her, but is comforted afterwards by being reminded of her fine estate, and also of his own past.

Noticing the tablets in the family shrine, he asks about her parents and she tells him her one ambition is to find the son of Takahashi. "To seven births this Iwa will clutch and chew the wicked son of a wicked father". He hopes to conceal from her the fact that she has married the one she seeks. Dismissed from the temple he was telling fortunes for a living. A few days later, he went to Kwaiba's house where he met the girl, O'Hana, upon whom the temple money was spent. They all plot to discard O'Iwa, so he can have the estate and O'Hana. Iemon, (as he now calls himself) insults O'Iwa, trying to make her angry. O'Hana tries to poison her with cosmetics. Iemon beats her, kills an eel in the house, thus offending the Butsudan (Buddhist shrine) and forces her to cook it. When it is nearly done, he turns it all over her head. Going to another house, he sends to her for money till everything in the house is sent away except a few mats. The go-between comes with fake sympathy and offers a divorce, but she won't listen. Then Chobei comes say-
ing that her husband has been arrested for stealing money and if it could be repaid he would be freed. To save him, as she thinks, she consents to sell herself for awhile to the pleasure quarters. Chobei sells her for life as a street harlot. She is beaten and cruelly treated, but as a samurai daughter cannot submit to her master's orders. Finally a wandering dealer in toilet articles tells her that she has been tricked, her house is restored and her husband living there with O'Hana. She curses them all and drowns herself.

Then follows a series of nightmares for everyone connected with the plot. Chobei's wife kills and eats her own child. Kwaiba is afflicted with a loathsome disease, and after fighting off ghosts every night is finally killed and horribly gnawed by rats. His body is whisked away and found chewed by dogs in the cemetery. Chozaemon is found hanged on a tall oak. Everybody connected with the crime meets some horrible fate. Pedestrians fight each other at night, each thinking the other is an obake (malignant ghost). Finally the people complain and the Shinto priests are called. They reveal that a bamboo log of a certain size must be buried as a substitute for O'Iwa's body. This log is available only at the temple and for an exorbitant price. The prayers, also, take all the money Iemon can find.
For awhile all is quiet, till Goemon comes to borrow money, and enraged by Iemon's refusal, he digs up the bamboo log. He is found dead beside it next morning. The log is put in a closet, and when O'Hana opens the door a rat scratches her face. Possessed by O'Iwa's spirit, she raves at Iemon, who kills her, thinking it is the obake. Iemon is finally arrested, tortured horribly and crucified. A shrine is then built upon the confiscated estate to propitiate the fearful Lady of Tamiya.

b. Comments on the story:

This story, like the Bakemono Yashiki, has been retold from old tales and story-tellers' dramatic legends. It was written before the other, though it is of a later date, and is in better form. The story moves as a well unified plot and is easier reading. Westerners might be puzzled by the extravagant use of names and titles. DeBenneville has no mercy in this respect. He introduces a character by several names and uses them interchangeably later. This must be very confusing to one unaccustomed to Japanese names and titles, making it difficult to keep the characters straight.

The story is very effective as ghost stories go, and holds the interest of the reader with its touch of humor to balance the horror of the apparitions. Most
Western readers would welcome a little more restraint in the description of Kwaiba's horrible corpse, and Iemon's vision of the drowned bodies of O'Iwa and Chobei. The Japanese do not demand it, even to-day, being more used to seeing life in the raw.

A glimpse of the lowest side of life is shown in Chozaemon, who finds himself deeply in debt, and looks his wife over, moaning that he can't sell her since she has become too old even for a street harlot. He has already sold his daughter. This crude realism is a good contrast for Mrs. Sugimoto's more idealistic books of better class people, and a good complement to Kagawa's description of the slums.

There is a sarcastic note wherever religion is mentioned. Whether this comes entirely from the originals or not is a question. The footnote on page 116 says, "The characters of the Yotsuya Kwaidan move within the circle of this Presbyterian cult: i.e., Presbyterian in its stiff attitude of hostility and superiority to all other sects."

Since this is so evidently the author's prejudice, one wonders which story-teller is picturing Iemon's disgust with the clever priests who bleed him for money for the bamboo and for prayers. Describing the burial of the bamboo, and the stake which the priest carefully marks with the proper inscription, he says, "Neither he nor any present knew what the words meant,
or had a care as to their ignorance of this essential of religion." 1. This kind of sarcasm does not seem to me in keeping with the Japanese attitude as I experienced it. They seem more given to easy tolerance, ready to compromise with anyone who may be right, but seldom facetious about any religion. On the other hand, the author makes a clever, devastating remark about takuan (pickled radish) which has the same touch of sarcastic humor. He says of it in one stage: "Its presence always arouses suspicion of a pressing defect in the house drainage." Since this is his personal impression, it seems likely that some of the other scathing remarks may be, too.

B. Three books interpreting modern life:

1. The Priest and His Disciples: Glenn Shaw. Retold from Shukke to Sono Deshi, by Hyakuzo Kurata.

a. Summary of the story:

Hino Saemon, a hunter, resists his wife's pleading not to take life and argues that since his nature is naturally to be gentle, he must deliberately teach himself to be cruel or people will take advantage of him. He really hates killing things, but believes he must harden himself. That night when three wandering priests come asking for shelter he drives them out into the snowstorm, striking one so that a holy image which he

1. Yotsuya Kwaidan, p. 225.
carries in his box is broken. His wife pleads for them as she remembers that her mother expected to be re-incarnated as a priest and would come to her door. Before daylight, the husband relents and the priests are brought in to the fire. Later the little son goes to their temple as a priest and comes under the special care of the senior, Shinran Sama. He grows up with the new name of Yuien. Shinran's son, Zenran, has forsaken the way and spends most of his time with harlots. Yuien goes to talk to him, meets a beautiful girl, Kaede, and falls in love with her. She has been sold to this house, but he feels she is guiltless of any crime. They meet secretly, and plan to marry when he can get the money to redeem her. The younger priests hear of it and try to drive him from the temple. Their sect holds that marriage is permitted the priests, but not with a harlot, they say. Shinran talks with them a long time before they will consent to forgive him. To their insistence that he send Yuien away, he answers, "I can't put Yuien out either. What you say is, in short, that Yuien being an evil man, I should expel him out of the temple. I think that if he's evil, there's the more reason for not expelling him. If we cast Yuien, who's bad even in the midst of our love and protection, out among the indifferent people of the world, what'll become of him? Won't he simply get worse and worse?"
Won't he injure the people of the world? His badness goes without saying. Where's the man who isn't bad? We're all bad. Other reasons may be valid, but his badness is no reason. Anyway, in this temple. There ought to be nothing but bad men in this temple. Isn't that the difference between this temple and others.

The compassion of Buddha falls on the heads of us sinners like rain. You ought all to know this well. You know it so well you forget. Don't you?" 1.

He tells Yuien to pray that he and Kaede may be married. But though he forgives Yuien so easily, he will not forgive his own son for the same crime, because he loves him more. Yuien is constantly working to bring them together, but it is not till Shinran is dying that Zenran Sama finally is permitted to come. Yuien and Kaede have been married, and after Shinran's death, Yuien becomes head of the temple.

b. Comments on the story:

This is a story of religion and love woven about Shinran and his disciples. He was the founder of the Shin sect of Buddhism about 1173-1262. It is the most popular of the Buddhist sects, allowing a normal married life for priests and laymen. There are to-day over 19,000 temples, nearly 15,000 priests, and millions of adherents.

1. The Priest and His Disciples, p. 200.
But while the story is laid in the thirteenth century, it is actually a modern story, not even trying to be historically correct. Kurata has merely chosen a popular figure, and about him has woven all he can find in present day philosophy and religion that will help and comfort a people living in an unsettled land of change. He is trying not so much to present Shinran, as to present what he himself believes is a stable philosophy of life. His work is packed with errors of fact and anachronisms. Christians call part of the book deliberate steals; Buddhists avow that Shinran must be weeping in his grave at the picture of him Kurata has drawn. The following short excerpts from Shinran's teaching show this mixture clearly.

"Pure love is the love permitted to the children of Buddha. It's the love that curses absolutely no one. Neither Buddha, in the first place, nor the loved one, nor any other man, nor one's self."1.

"Shoshin (Kaede's Buddhist name) is reading to Shinran, who is dying. '----- But then if we continue to think, we become attached to things; and since this makes us pass through transmigrations, we must get rid of our hearts utterly. Because the heart turns into a demon and tortures us, it is indeed an enemy.'" 2.

"A man of genuine charity, when he sees another do evil, takes that evil upon himself and grieves,

1. Page 209. 2. Page 223."
and when he sees another do good, takes that good into his own life and rejoices. In nothing is he divided from others. He thinks no evil, nor does he slander others. He envies not. He speaks no hate. He encourages the helpless even with a single soft and gentle word. He helps men, giving them even a little from time to time. That is the service of the most merciful."

Shinran musing on his coming death, is afraid, but strengthens himself: "Then I must stand before the judgment. And I'll have a crown put on my head. I'll receive it kneeling down before Buddha. From that day, I'll be one in that noble host of saints. What peace! What glory! We'll pass our days, morning and evening, singing songs of praise to Buddha. Then not even the shadow of sin will knock at my heart. And I can save the most unfortunate mortals suffering on this earth."2.

His dream: "The unworldly Pure Land, bright with majesty and beauty, spread out before my eyes. My soul was filled with mysterious joy. The Amida Sutra says, 'All men of highest virtue come together in one place.' I was surrounded by a throng of saints. They all wore beautiful crowns. Abashed, I hung my head. When I heard that I had that day been added to that company, I wept for joy. Then looking, I saw that a

beautiful crown was set on my head as on the rest. Then far off in the sky began to sound ethereal music. To this the throng of saints joined their voices and sang songs of praise to Buddha. Then flowers fell from heaven, and all the air was filled with perfume. As I looked fascinated at the flowers raining down on the earth all covered with golden sand, I thought, 'Ah, these must be the lotus blooms of Paradise.'

This sounds to a Christian strangely like the book of Revelation, especially when a few pages further on, he speaks of the saints "washing their golden hair". Japanese saints!!

His last words to his disciples: "Bless everything. Endure your pain. To endure is to make virtue your own. Love your neighbor. Treat the stranger kindly. --- It's wrong for you not to treat others as you'd be treated. ---- Be servants of others. Wash their feet. Bind the thongs of their shoes."

Though the book is clearly intended for propaganda, the plot is well sustained and interesting. Westerners may find the translation stilted in places, due to the lack of emotion in Japanese phrases. They use language to conceal, not reveal, emotion, and in the most intense moments murmur what seems a commonplace remark. In the first of the book the repetition of ne! ne! be-

1. Page 229.
comes very tiresome. Shaw has faithfully translated it each time as "isn't it?" or "didn't it?" and so forth, when often it has little more meaning than an exclamation point. To the Japanese, it indicates spirited conversation; translated each time it sounds stilted to Westerners.

This story is a marked contrast to the three preceding. It is in the form of a reading drama, but is not nearly as dramatic as the others. He pictures religion in a dignified, reverent manner, quite different from the roguish priest of Bakin, or the greedy priests of DeBenneville's stories. It is doubtless touched with the halo of time, but avoids the superstitious vulgarity of the masses.

2. Kotto, Being Japanese Curios, with Sundry Cobwebs.

Collected by Lafcadio Hearn. Selection: A Woman's Diary.

a. Summary of the Diary:

This Mukashi-banashi (story of old times) is a short diary of the married life of a woman of the people, "old times", in this case, meaning merely past life. It begins with a graphic description of the marriage arrangement. Being of a poor family, the bride has no dowry. She is twenty-nine years old; the groom, a widower, is thirty-eight. He is a kozukai (sort of janitor and caretaker) with a salary of ten yen (five dollars) a month. Her lack of dowry is doubtless the
reason she has never married, but he needs someone immediately because of anxiety about his house being unoccupied while he is absent on night duty. The go-between approaches her father one morning, and that afternoon, she and her mother go for the omiai (first-seeing), she however, was "too ashamed" (shy?) to look at him. The date is set for the next night. The father thinks that is too soon and the direction is unlucky, but she replies that it would be a pity if a thief came in his absence; and if the unlucky direction causes her death she would not complain since she would die in her husband's house.

The next day is a busy one, making herself ready and calling on her relatives. Her brother asks what kind of person the husband is. To which she answers, "If I had felt myself able to look at him long enough to form any opinion, I would not have put mother to the trouble of going with me." 1. After supper, she goes with the go-between to the bridegroom's house where the wedding takes place.

A simple honeymoon follows, the couple going to visit temples and to theaters. She walks the proper four steps behind him until one day they are caught in the rain and must walk under the same umbrella. She fervently prays that none of her friends will see

1. Page 93.
A child is born and lives only a day. She composes a poem as a discipline against grief: "If I could only have known! Ah, this parting with the flower, for which I would so gladly have given my own life, has left my sleeves wet with the dew!"

A second child, Hatsu, lives only a few months. The mother composes a long poem addressed to the spirit of the dead child, showing her deep grief.

A boy is born and dies in eight days, with the usual pain in the chest. "I thought to myself that, even if this new misfortune did not cause my husband to feel an aversion for me, thus having to part with all my children, one after another, must be the punishment of some wrong done in the time of a former life. And, so thinking, I knew that my sleeves would never again become dry, -- that the rain (of tears) would never cease,-- that never again in this world would the sky grow clear for me. And more and more I wondered whether my husband's feelings would not change, for the worse, by reason of his having to meet such trouble, over and over again, on my account. I felt anxious about his heart, because of what already was in my own. Nevertheless, he only repeated the words --"From the decrees of Heaven there is no escape!"

---

The mother died less than a month later. The last entry was: "I wonder whether it was because of the sorrow that I suffered -- my face and limbs became slightly swollen during the fortnight after my boy's death. -- It was nothing very serious, after all, and it soon went away. --- Now the period of twenty-one days (the period of danger) is past ---."

b. Comment on the diary:

This is a simple, touching story of a simple-hearted, uncomplaining women. Hearn says the diary was found in a work-box after the woman's death and brought to him by one of his friends. He has translated only what might ethically be shared with the world. Though he is very vague about the whole thing it rings true as a near-translation, and shows a side of life seldom glimpsed by the stranger. In spite of her poverty, there is a dignity and refinement about the lady. Their position makes it all the more surprising to read of their visiting her father's home and spending the time composing poems!

Since Hearn feels that the moral is necessary he points it very nicely at the end, explaining what might be obscure to Westerners. "The brave resolve of the woman to win affection by docility and by faultless performance of duty, her gratitude for every small kindness, her childlike piety, her supreme unselfish--

--- Page 121.
ness, her Buddhist interpretation of suffering as the penalty for some fault committed in a previous life, her attempts to write poetry when her heart was breaking, -- all this, indeed, I find touching, and more than touching. But I do not find it exceptional. The traits revealed are typical, -- typical of the moral nature of the woman of the people. Perhaps there are not many Japanese women of the same humble class who could express their personal joy and pain in a record at once so artless and pathetic; but there are millions of such women inheriting -- from ages and ages of unquestioning faith -- a like conception of life as duty, and an equal capacity of unselfish attachment." 1.

3. Paulownia: Seven Stories from Contemporary Japanese Writers. Translated by Tarao Takeyomo.

a. Summary of the stories of Mori Ogwai:

(Hanako, being a sketch, is not included.)

(1). Takase Bune:

The Takase Bune is a boat that in the Kwansei period (1789-1800) carried prisoners from Kyoto to the island where prisoners were banished. The guard on the boat has heard many stories, but none like the one of Kisuke, his present passenger, guilty of fratricide. The strange calmness of the man is finally explained. For the first time in his life he will have a home, and he is free from debt, hav-

1. Pages 124-125.
ing two hundred pennies in his breast which the kind government has given him. He is perfectly contented. He and his brother were early left orphans, and have lived from hand to mouth ever since. When his brother fell sick he lodged him in an old shack, and cared for him. Coming home one night he found he had tried to cut his throat, but was in an agony of pain. He begged him to pull the razor out and let him die. Unable to resist the pleading of his eyes, he pulled it out just as an old lady came to the door, and ran out shrieking murder.

(2) The Pier:

This is the story of a woman going to see her husband off to London. He is a Count and goes on official duty. Crowds are at the boat to see him off. He goes ahead with his political friends. She, heavy with child, walks demurely with her maids. "The pier is long -- long--." Following always, she sees others talking to him, but they exchange never a glance. She returns to the pier, sees foreigners waving their handkerchiefs. She grasps her's, but cannot bring herself to do such an immodest thing. The boat turns and she starts back. "The pier is long -- long."

b. Comments on the stories:
These two stories show the extremes of social classes, but are strangely alike, with their calm acceptance of fate, their restraint of outward show of emotion, but the evident depth of feeling. Though the Takase Bune is laid in Tokugawa times it could just as well be called modern; poverty, suicide, and heartless justice are still common. The Pier is evidently a modern setting with a modest little lady as old-fashioned as the Tea Ceremony. She has never been touched by this rough, modern world, and would have died of embarrassment if her husband had glanced in her direction. I wonder if Westerners, reading the story, can ever understand that reserve, or if it will seem heartless or unfeeling -- or possibly, hopelessly silly. The author has shown the same skill in portraying her thoughts by inference and suggestion, that a Japanese painter shows when his pictures fade away into mist.

c. Summary of The Bill Collecting by Nagai Kafu. (His sketches of Ukiyoe, Japanese prints, are omitted.)

A little maid from an assignation house goes by street-car to collect a bill her mistress has against Mr. Inuyama. She has never been far from the house, and is confused by the street-car lines. She is crowded, pushed, and jostled. She realizes that her clothes are different from the other woman's on the car. She is thrown about by the jerking car, and embarrassed by the
coarse remarks of men who know her position by her
dress. Once off the car, she is lost in a maze of streets.
Laborers shout after her, soldiers crowd her from the
road, begging lepers frighten her. She spoils her
white tabi (socks) by walking up a side-road where the
frost is melting, leaving deep mud. At last she finds
the home of Inuyama, a former frequent customer of the
house, so proud he always came in a ricksha instead of
a street-car, and always demanded services of everyone.
He has ceased coming, and the little maid stands in the
mud before his house with a bill for two hundred fifty
yen. (§150). The house is not repaired, the screens are
broken, the mistress and maids are careless in dress.
The girl turns away without leaving the bill. It would
be no use. Her mistress will scold her for being late.

b. Comments on the story:

In a country where money is never discussed, and
never passed from hand to hand unless wrapped in white
paper, the task of bill-collecting is the most hated
and scorned. The poor collectors are repeatedly turned
away on the most flimsy excuses, and always wear an
apologetic, hang-dog expression. The author has been
very brave to choose one of these to portray sympathet-
ically. He has drawn a realistic picture of well-known
Tokyo streets, as plain as though he had traced it on
a map. Even a casual visitor to the city can follow him
on the car from the Ginza to Aoyama, and recognize his little maid on many cars. It is a well-known and well-drawn picture of modern Tokyo.

e. Summary of stories by Shimazaki Toson:

(1) A Domestic Animal:

An interesting story of an ugly little grey dog, despised, beaten, starved, but because she is a domestic animal, she cannot live away from people. Repeatedly driven away, she learns to trust no one, and never sees the smiles of humans till in a sheltered spot in a garden she has four pups. For the first time she is given food and knows kindness.

(2) Tsugaru Strait:

Two old people, half-crazed with grief over the loss of their only son, start across the strait from Aomori to Hakodate. The boy, discouraged, robbed of his faith in this new confusing world, has jumped over Kegon falls. His parents at last try to forget by taking this little trip, only to remember that perhaps his body was washed into this very ocean where they are sailing. There is a student on board who looks like their boy. He has formed a traveling acquaintance with an evil-looking companion. The mother gives them apples, and they tell the boy of the resemblance to their son. During the sudden confusion when Russian ships are seen trying for the
last time to run through the Strait, the mother is comforted by this strange boy. The Japanese fleet blocks the Russian navy, and they land safely. The boy's companion steals their bundle. The police take the boy's name, though both old people vouch for his honesty. They stand watching him as he disappears in the crowd.

f. Comments on the stories:

The first is a whimsical little story, not at all sentimental, dealing with a stray dog. The author makes no attempt to arouse sympathy, but merely gives us a realistic picture of what he sees. The incident might have happened anywhere.

The Tsugaru Strait is also a universal emotion in a Japanese setting. It is the time of the Russo-Japanese war, but that is only incidental to the story. The grief of the lonely parents is sketched with characteristic restraint, absolutely free from sentimentality. We are merely shown them, not asked to grieve with them, though no one could turn away from that pier where they are left standing without a sympathetic glance. The story of the son may be found in any newspaper.

C. Three books dealing with reform:

a. Summary of the story:

Nami-ko was left motherless when she was eight years old. Her father, General Kataoka, was very fond of her, but after the step-mother came, he had to be very careful not to show favoritism, as she abused the child if he did. At eighteen, she is married to Takeo, a young naval officer, of the Kawashima family, and for the first time since her mother's death knows real happiness. He is gentle and kindly, and they soon fall very much in love.

The mother-in-law, since her husband's death, had developed all the bad characteristics she had suppressed during his life. Besides a hasty temper much resembling his own, she was outdoing her husband in selfishness, suspiciousness, and narrow-mindedness. She is not well disposed to Nami-ko as she sees that her son is too fond of her.

Takeo's cousin, Chijiwa, a jealous, clever, scheming person, has by personal influence, succeeded in entering the Headquarters of the army soon after Military School. Here he learns secrets for which Yamaki, a contractor for provisions and uniforms, will pay high prices. Chijiwa speculates with his commission money. One of his ambitious plans for social advancement has been thwarted by Takeo. He had planned to marry Nami-ko; had even sent her a letter
before speaking to her father, a breach of etiquette that made her fear and hate him. Now, he is afraid that she will show it to her father and he will be demoted.

Takeo is called away on long cruises, leaving Nami-ko to wait upon his mother and bear her frequent scoldings as best she can. When he comes back from one trip, he finds that Chijiwa has forged his seal, (a seal is used by the Japanese instead of a pen and ink signature) and a usurer demands three thousand yen ($1500) of him. He pays it, but breaks off the friendship, and soon after Chijiwa is demoted. He thinks that Nami-ko has been slandering him, turning Takeo against him, and plans revenge. The opportunity comes when Nami-ko contracts tuberculosis after a bad cold. Chijiwa calls on the mother-in-law, sympathizing with her because she will now have no healthy heir, and probably will even lose her son from the infection. So the house of Kawashima will suffer extinction.

The mother tries to keep Takeo away from his wife, but he won't listen. Always a mild person, he tries to calm her, but "she would call him a fool, saying that he was disobeying his parent for his wife's sake!"

While Nami-ko is recovering in the sunshine at Zushi, his mother suggests to Takeo that they send her home

1.Page 141.
(divorce her). He is outraged at the suggestion. Send her home just because she is sick! She will die because of his unfaithfulness. The mother argues that it can't be helped, and since she has produced no heir, if her parents did the right thing they would have come for her before this. Takeo believes that those old rules should be broken in the interest of humane treatment. His mother storms and rages, then as a last resort takes down the ihai (ancestral tablet) and sets it before him.

"'Look here, Takeo, You made light of my words, but repeat what you have been saying before your father. Repeat it. The spirits of your ancestors are looking at you. Say it once more. You disobedient son!'"

'How am I disobedient?'

'How? Why do you ask that? Is it not disobedient, for the sake of your wife to ignore what your mother says? Is it not disobedient to think nothing of the body I brought up, and to ruin this ancestral house against my will? You are a disobedient son, Takeo, a violater of filial duties.'

'But humanity ---'

'Out with that word. Do you value your wife more than your parent? Fool! You talk only of wife, wife, but do you never think of your parent? You dog, always talking of Nami. We will disown you.'

1. Pages 161-162.
Just then a telegram comes, calling him back to his naval duties, and he leaves, bidding his mother do nothing till his return. He calls at Zushi, and bids Nami-ko a sad farewell.

While he is gone, his mother sends a go-between to Nami's family and has her recalled. When Takeo returns, he is wild with grief, but it is too late to mend matters. The young couple write once or twice, and see each other for a moment when their trains pass, but without their families' sanction they cannot hope to meet again. Nami finally dies, having no courage to fight the disease, and Takeo finds his only comfort in visiting her grave.

b. Comments on the story:

This story is as well known in Japan as Uncle Tom's Cabin is in America. The translators say it is "one of the most popular novels in modern Japanese literature. The reason for this lies in the absolute truth of the story, in the careful and unsophisticated working out of details, and in its series of faithful pictures of Japanese life of the present day."1. It is a favorite subject for impromptu dramatizations, as well as theater productions. It has perhaps influenced Japan more than any other story, in the breaking down of the stern family system, to a more humane consideration for the couple concerned. The

1. Page V.
family still may cause them to be divorced if it is for the good of the group, but it is a prerogative used very carefully.

Takeo's constant advice to Nami-ko to think more of his mother than of him, was a precautionary measure which might have saved the situation. Yamaki, the merchant, who sent his daughter to the house to learn good manners and proper serving, in hopes that she would be able to replace Nami-ko, warned her not to be too fond of Takeo, at least openly. "Quarrels between a mother and her daughter-in-law generally arise from the former's feeling of isolation on account of the too happy condition of the young couple." She was to remember that her mother-in-law is always right, and even though she is blamed unjustly, she must make no reply. (Even to-day, the young bride is advised to forget all she knows of cooking and sewing, so that her mother-in-law may teach her her way and be pleased by her rapid progress).

The comparison of the old time step-mother with Nami's step-mother is interesting. Since the Tale of Sumiyoshi, the country has been opened to Western influence, and Nami's step-mother has been sent abroad to study. Consequently, she is a very forward person, who corrects even her husband, and reforms the whole household to blot out all memory of the first wife.
Her mistreatment of her step-child is in the form of mental cruelty that makes the child feel she is a flower that grows always in the shade.

Not since Genji have we found such a lovable person as Takeo. He is more modern than the "Shining One", and so seems more human. Both he, and Nami's father, are gentle and unselfish people, standing in sharp contrast with the cruel, scheming, self-seeking world. This type of person seems to be found only in the Christian Japanese writers. Mrs. Sugimoto and Adachi, also, give us this type which seems to be unique, though it may be merely the difference in presentation. Their writings will be discussed in the next chapter.

There is little of interest for us in Tokutomi's life. He was born in Kumamoto, 1868, and educated in Doshisha, a Christian college in Kyoto. The story is not given at all as Christian propaganda. In fact, one is surprised when a "Yaso" (Jesus-person) is introduced near the end to save Nami from committing suicide by jumping into the sea. She gives her bit of comfort and leaves the story, but does not lower it to the plane of propaganda. But the whole philosophy of considering the individual before the family is undoubtedly Christian. Since the family system still prevails, its wide popularity is surprising.
2. The Cannery Boat: by Takiji Kobayashi; and other Short Stories:

a. Contents of the book:

This is the first translation in English of "the virile proletarian literary movement in Japan".1. It contains eleven short stories by various writers, and an account of Kobayashi's "murder" by the Police, on Feb.21,1933. "The stories are translated by various hands and give a clear view of its notable character. The movement has had to fight not only against disruptive ideological enemies in the same field, but also against bitter Government oppression, witnessed in the extreme case by the death of Takiji Kobayashi, recorded at the end of this volume."2.

The volume is openly Russian Communist propaganda from the first sentence in The Cannery Boat, "Hallo, we're going off to hell", to the "murder" of Kobayashi by the police, described at the end of the book. It would be useless to summarize each story as the theme is always the same: the workers mercilessly ground down by the selfish employers. The poverty, despair, dirt, and cruel tortures are powerful voices because their facts have the ring of truth. The stories deal usually with some special occupation: canning crabs, mending telephone lines, factory work, reeling silk

1. Publisher's note. 2. Ibid.
from the cocoons, etc. Many of them describe the workers struggling against oppression, dealing with false leaders who are betraying them to the capitalists, organizing strikes, and fighting with bloody hatred against the men who fatten themselves at the expense of the workers.

The Cannery Boat is the longest and most vivid of the stories. It deals with conditions among the men who are imprisoned on the boat, canning crabs off Kamchatka. Wretched food, brutal foremen, horrible filth, sickness, tortures, all are described in a way to rival the fiction in The Haunted House, and seem doubly horrible because of their evident truth. The story is broken off by Government censorship.

Another powerful story is The Factory in the Sea. To avoid strikes the mill-owner has built where the tide surrounds his buildings. The strikers finally storm it at low tide. When peace is at last restored, he brings another strike upon himself by accusing the women, who come to gather the coke raked out of the furnaces, of scheming with their husbands to rake it out before it is fully burned. They cannot stand being accused of thievery. "'It looks like another strike. Isn't there some way, some good way, of settling them!'" wondered Uematsu, amazed that such an agitation should spring so unexpectedly from so trivial a cause.
He felt a chill in his bones and a weight pressing down in him until his arms began to tremble.

'Isn't there some way, some good way? --- No matter how often you hit them, they never learn a lesson, the rotten swine!'

By degrees the trembling spread from the top part of his body, right down to his knees."

Perhaps the most telling of all the stories is The Man Who Did Not Applaud. Being only two and a half pages long, it has all the force of a blast of dynamite. The scene is one of the many protest meetings against the war in Manchuria. Police brandish their sabres when the speaker becomes too heated, but they are practically powerless. "The revelations of the speakers, their description of the colossal growth of armaments and the astronomical figures for expenditure on the war industry proved too convincing. Then they went on to expose the preparations being made for fresh bloodshed -- all carried on under the cover of pacifist phrases and paper pacts. This meeting of protest against the threatened war had turned into a trial of its instigators, with the crowded audience as jury. The heated addresses of the prosecutors, eagerly seized upon by the jury, left no doubt concerning the crushing verdict." 2. But of all that applaud-
ing, cheering throng, one man sits motionless, staring. His face is badly scared, apparently by shrapnel. "The scoundrel! Why does he stare so? Why does he glare at the speaker's face as if he were noting every detail?

It's plain, the last war did not decorate him enough! Just look at that mark, the mercenary dog! What more does he want! I am only sorry that the gun which sent millions of honest workers to their grave didn't consign the whole of your ugly mug to hell!

I looked at him challengingly and stubbornly. He didn't clap once the whole time, nor make a single exclamation. It seemed as if the orator's words had no effect on him.

A strange feeling came over me.

Either he is a novice in the spy business or else a hardened old wolf.

'Look here,' I shouted aloud, unable to hold myself and paying no attention to the speaker.

Just then a strange light seemed to shine in his eyes.

Funny! Surely the cur can feel something.

The man lifted his arm as if with the intention of clapping but it fell heavily on to his knees.

His eyes glared in the gathering twilight. In an instant the very blood froze in my veins.

On his knees were two artificial arms.
The man had no hands." 1.

b. Comments on the book:

The book claims to be the only one of its kind, and knowing the rigid suppression of "dangerous thoughts" in Japan, the surprising thing is that there is one! While it is openly Russian propaganda, the stories are so packed with facts which were printed in the newspapers, that they seem less like stories and more like mere accounts of incidents told from the labourers' viewpoint. Since the last one, Takiji Kobayashi Murdered by the Police, is admittedly that, it is puzzling to draw the line between fact and fiction.

Whether or not one believes in the Communists' solution of these evils, the stories must deeply move any reader. It would be impossible to discuss them impartially. One or two of them, such as The Efficiency Committee, deal with more "doctrinal" matters and the average layman could well spare them from the collection, but disregarding the propaganda, the reader is given a picture of the working man that no other authors have ever thought worth presenting. The visitor to the country can feel the tension in the air, but never comes to know the working man as he is, or his problems. Working for a pittance from early morning till far into the night, he travels about Japan's streets in his

1. Pages 64-65.
tight trousers and coolie coat, or squats in his shop, always working at something; stolid, or cheerfully joking his fellows, never apparently gloomy; polite to his superiors -- to their faces, at least,-- rude to his equals at times, he is always an enigma.

The book is in no sense a masterpiece, and will probably die a natural death in a few years. It is written for a certain purpose and time, and will not survive its age, but as a treatment of an entirely untouched field, it cannot be omitted from a study of books which interpret Japan.


a. Introduction to the book:

This is a long, rambling story, largely autobiographical in character. A comparison with William Axling's *Kagawa* shows how closely the author has followed his own experience. The book is a good introduction to Kagawa's more philosophical and theological studies now becoming popular in America.

It was first brought out in English under the title: *Across the Death Line*, but because of the misunderstanding the title aroused, it was revised by the same translators and re-named **Before the Dawn**. Thomas Satchell in the Preface explains the difficulty of direct translation and the different modes of expression of the two coun-
tries. "In these circumstances a literal translation, even if intelligible, serves only to give an air of quaintness, and as the Japanese themselves are not sensible of any such quaintness in their language, evidently a wrong impression would be created by any attempt at literality."1.

b. Summary of the story:

Eiichi Niimi, the illegitimate son of a Mayor, leaves Meiji Gakuin (a Christian college in Tokyo) and returns home because he hears his step-mother is abusing his sister, Emi. His father is living in a near-by town with Ume, a geisha, and here Eiichi goes first. He quarrels continually with Ume, and exhausts his father's temper by his morbid self-pity and socialistic ideas. He meets Tsuruko, a former playmate, and they fall quite violently in love. There is no hope of marriage, but they talk of committing suicide together. Finally Tsuruko goes to a kindergarten training school and gradually their letters cease as the school does not approve.

In the meantime, Eiichi has visited his step-mother's home (his father's legal wife) and has helped Emi run away. From the time he leaves her in charge of the boatman till she comes back many years later, he never hears of her, and apparently never worries about her fate.

Driven nearly mad by his emotional maladjustment to his father's world, he runs away to escape being put in 1. Page IX.
an insane asylum. Going to a cheap lodging house, he exchanges clothes with a ragged wanderer and feels very romantic and saint-like. He gets work at an agency carrying pig iron and cement, a slavery that makes him a "negative saint", too tired to have any desires. He lives in a miserable lodging house, with two men to one mat (Japanese mats are six by three feet), an electric light of five candle power, and a proprietor who takes nearly all his wages at the end of the month. He wants to revile society, but is too broken and beaten to do it, even if he had the paper and pencil, which he has neither time nor money to buy.

One day he meets a man from his father's business office (the Niimi Transport Co.) who tells him his father is dying of typhoid. At his father's funeral he makes a resolve. "As Eiichi listened to the mysterious funeral music, he made a resolve, -- that he would jump across the death-line and fight against convention, procrastination, tradition, and sophistry. Before him was the great world,-- the world which Eiichi had told his dead father was an enormous lunatic asylum, -- tormented by the paranoia of militarism and capitalism; -- a lunatic asylum co-extensive with the earth. Regardless of whether he or the world were mad, Eiichi determined that henceforth he would fight against those things."1.

1. Page 211.
His father left no will, and very little property that was not mortaged. Eiichi tries to carry on the Transport Office, but being unused to the business has little success. He helps in an election and is invited to a feast by the successful candidate. For the first time he sees geisha girls dancing at a private gathering. "It dawned upon him that people do not become dissipated wilfully." He visits geisha houses several times after that and becomes acquainted with Kohide, who fascinates him. At the same time, he begins going to a Gospel Mission Hall, and is torn between the two ways of life. He can find no reason for man's existence and for over a month he is in the slough of despond. Finally religion wins and he decides to leave the office to a manager and devote himself to religious work. He gets pneumonia while street-preaching in Shinkawa and falls in the street. No one offers to help him till finally a Mr. Williams rescues him and sends a woman to nurse him. He promises himself that if he ever gets well, he will go to Shinkawa, the worst slum in Kobe, to live. He has always felt an urge that way, but dreaded it feeling that their poverty would drag him down.

Upon his recovery, he rents a two-room house, supposed to be haunted, for two yen (§1) a month. He has to completely furnish it, even to mats and doors.

Immediately homeless men come asking shelter and he shares his bed with a man who has bad eyes, festering and bleeding hands. Another comes bringing quilts he has rented for two sen (1¢) for the night.

He is plunged into a nightmare of poverty. Men demand money, threatening his life; women adopt children for five yen, to let them starve to death, then ask Eiichi for money to have the bodies buried. He pawns his clothes to meet all the demands. His house is crowded with men, the last one being haunted by the ghost of a man he killed. He feeds them all on rice gruel, pickled plums, and bean soup. He sees more suffering than he had ever dreamed of. Men send their wives out on the street at night. People with loathsome diseases crawl away into this section to die. Vermin possess every house. Gamblers and criminals slink about avoiding the police.

Eiichi tries to hold meetings. They were frequently broken up by children shouting outside, or by men who sometimes upset his brazier, scattering burning charcoal all over the matting, breaking the flimsy doors, and so forth.

And in the midst of all this poverty, filth, and despair, Eiichi forgot his self-pity and learned to laugh! People in the slums always laughed at the least excuse. They had to.
Kohide, the geisha girl, seeks him out again and wants to marry him. He takes her to see his home, and she is so badly frightened she gives up the idea. He meets Tsuruko, the kindergarten teacher and former sweetheart. She thinks he is wonderful, but could never live like that herself. At a Christmas dinner served to the poor, he meets a Miss Higuchi, who falls in love with him, and for the first time he seriously considers marrying. But he is consumptive, now, and has become infected with trachoma, so it is unthinkable.

A Match Company goes on a strike and Eiichi tries to interfere in the interest of some of his boys. He is arrested, but later released. As he returns to the slums, the children run to meet him and suddenly he finds all the suffering and misery worth while.

Comments on the book:

The great popularity of this long, and at times, tedious story, is doubtless due, partly to its being the only one of its kind, and partly to its unprejudiced picture of life. Kagawa writes of his own experience, and neither idealizes the finer side of Japan, or exaggerates the coarse. The drab, tearful student life, which will seem strange to Americans is all too true of Japan. The gloomy lovers spending a pleasant afternoon weeping together will doubtless seem silly unless one follows the number of double suicides in the
newspapers. The horror of the slums may sound exaggerated, unless we visit our own.

Again, as in some of the preceding books, the conversation at times sounds stilted. There are many pointless and superfluous remarks. This is due to the Japanese long training in suppressing all emotion. Many readers will also be surprised by the formality of the greetings. Ume, the geisha, talks very informally with Eiichi when he first comes to his father's house, then much later suddenly exclaims that she has not yet greeted him properly, so kneels and repeatedly touches her forehead to the floor while she rehearses the formal phrases. "I have not had the pleasure of seeing you for a long time. I hope you have been well since we last met. I have been remiss in my conduct towards you. Your father has shown great kindness to me. Allow me somehow to find favor in your sight." Eiichi returns her greetings calmly, all being taken for granted in its Japanese setting. Later, at breakfast, the Mayor calls the maid to refill his rice bowl, and while he waits, she bows and greets each person in turn.

Kagawa unconsciously slips in quaint allusions that might pass unnoticed. When Eiichi puts his sister, Emi, on the boat, he asks the boatman to keep the matter secret from his father, "repeating this request many

1. Page 52.
times. The patience of the Japanese in listening to a request being repeatedly made, is astonishing to most foreigners, who usually make the bad mistake of making a request only once. Another remark that doubtless would not be understood is: "As Eiichi stayed in bed unusually late his father opened the shutters himself to say his prayers." The reason the shutters must be opened is that the father claps his hands and worships the sun. (This custom shows no regard for neighbors still trying to sleep!) When Eiichi first came home, his father was not present to greet him because he was saying his prayers. This seeming piety is not hypocrisy since it has nothing to do with his indulgences or taking of bribes. It is worshipping the sun and nothing more.

The frank curiosity with which a Japanese attends any religious meeting is interesting. There is nothing of the Puritanical, morbid dread, or the rowdy, smart-alex attitude. Since their background teaches them nothing of what we mean by Christian reverence, they make no attempt either to assume or violate it. They stop a moment to hear some new thing much as the Greeks did to hear Paul in Athens. So Eiichi's meetings in the slums, while they correspond somewhat to our Salvation Army street meetings, have an entirely different atmosphere.

The Japanese embarrassment about mentioning money is shown by the aunt who tells Eiichi of his father's taking bribes. She does not condemn the practice at all, that is part of the business of being Mayor, but instead of saying the word money, she makes the familiar Japanese gesture -- forming a ring with her thumb and first finger. One may see students doing that, making the gesture as furtively as though it were obscene. Again, when Shimoda, a business man, comes one morning to borrow a hundred yen ($50), he first jokingly offers Eiichi a place to teach ethics in a middle-school, inquires about a personal diary lying on the desk, asks an explanation of some writing Eiichi is doing, then falls silent for a few minutes. Finally he comes to the point. "----- the fact is that I called to see you to-day on a little business, if you don't mind my mentioning it."1.

This same gentleman has taught Rokuya, an office boy, some English, of which he is very proud. His rendering of it is a more clever touch than Westerners, unfamiliar with the syllabary, will appreciate. Since there is no consonant ending for Japanese words (except n or m) dog becomes dogu; launch, ranchi (there is no l), chimney, chi-mo-ni, etc.

To prove that small boys are the same the world around, one of Eiichi's Sunday schools was interrupted

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by a boy who stood outside, yelling, "Amen, so-men -- cold so-men!" (Initiating a street-vendor selling so-men, a sort of macaroni). Amen, being peculiar to Christian prayers, is a fascinating word for Japanese youngsters.

Eiichi's love affair with Tsuruko, carried on secretly would seem very uninteresting to Western young people. Feeling very discouraged and unhappy he calls on her one day, "Nevertheless Tsuruko was so dear to him, and there being no rival to interfere in their relations --- not even a father or elder brother -- (she lived with her grandmother) he went to see her every day and stayed late, talking and crying in a very delightful manner."1 When she is going away to school, he spends the evening with her. "About eight o'clock in the evening he went to Tsuruko's house and behaved for an hour like a lover who is about to be separated from his beloved one. Twenty minutes of the time were spent in silence, and the remaining forty minutes passed quickly in lamenting that they could not proclaim to the world that they were husband and wife. (That is, that they could not marry.) Nevertheless they found time to weep together."2

The reason for secrecy is shown in the description of the teachers' room in the school where Eiichi taught for awhile. The men and women teachers did not speak to

1. Page 161.  
2. P. 176.
each other. "Last year there had been a love affair in the school between a man and a woman teacher, which furnished the subject for much amusing talk among the teachers. The couple were now married and teaching at a school in a remote part of Mina district, but their fellow-teachers abused them as if they were criminals condemned to death."1.

Before the Dawn is intended, primarily, to interest people in work in the slums. Its startlingly large vocabulary shows its author's wide knowledge of many branches of study, and many languages. It is sincere and honest, including nothing that he has not known from personal experience. Though it is a Christian story, it emphasizes applied Christianity rather than doctrines, and is broad enough to welcome any religion that would be willing to relieve the misery he finds there. It has a well-developed, though rambling plot, and never descends to the plane of cheap propaganda.

II. Summary of the second chapter:

This group of "near-translations" whirls us swiftly from ancient to modern times. It falls easily into three groups: the first three trying merely to amuse, the next three, to interpret modern life, and the last three to reform. As John Erskine has said,"---- we are sometimes startled to realize how little we know of the inner life of Japan to-day. While

1,Page 141.
statesmen and diplomats agonize, contriving elaborate machinery for the restoration and the maintenance of international goodwill, it is in the power of any of us, by reading such books as this, to become better acquainted in a pleasant hour with our neighbor’s mind."1.

All these books have the advantage of being written for Japanese, so no attempt is made to Westernize or explain what they take for granted. While this makes harder work for the translator, it often gives a better perspective and truer picture of Japanese life to the foreigner.

1. John Erskine: Foreword of Paulownia (by Tarao Taketomo)
Chapter III.

I. Stories in English by Japanese:

A. For His People: Viscount Hayashi:

"Being the True Story of Sogoro's Sacrifice, entitled in the original Japanese version the Cherry Blossoms of a Spring Morn."

Note: This story has been retold, but does not seem to follow any original closely enough to be called a "Near-Translation".

1. Summary of the story:

Hotta Masanobu, lord of the castle of Sakura, spends most of his time in Tokyo, leaving his affairs in the hands of Danjo, a greedy steward. Danjo has taxed everything until the peasants rise in revolt. As the story opens, he and his men are talking of the property they have confiscated, and the taxes they have levied on the shoulder-poles used by the farmers to carry burdens. As they are talking, the peasants crowd into the courtyard demanding justice. Danjo dismisses them haughtily, bidding them be grateful for the protection of their lord. He gloats over the prospect of their appealing to Hotta in Tokyo, which will disgrace the lord's name, possibly losing him his fief, which may then come to Danjo.

The outraged peasants arm themselves and prepare for bloodshed. Sogoro, the headman of a village, advises
them to use peaceful means first, since the gendarmes, seeing them armed, will march against them and their lives will be lost for nothing. Life lost in a righteous cause is nothing, but given in vain is folly. So a group of headmen, including Sogoro tramp the forty long and dangerous miles to Tokyo. Day after day, they present themselves at Hotta’s gate, but are refused admission. They explain that they merely want to know if the taxes are levied with his knowledge, but the retainers have been ordered not to disturb him, so they are sent away.

There is but one course open, to appeal directly to the Shogun, a procedure leading to certain death, since he would be overwhelmed with petitions if he pardoned even one such offense. Sogoro points out that Lord Hotta’s anger at being thus publicly disgraced will doubtless lead him to demand crucifixion. They discuss the person best fitted to bear the message, each one bravely demanding the "honor", but Sogoro is at last chosen. They decide to wait till the day the Shogun is to visit the shrine at Ueno Park, then Sogoro, his petition placed in a cleft stick will hide under a bridge which is so narrow the Shogun’s attendants must step back to let his chair pass. As he is carried across, Sogoro is to jump out and push the stick between the curtains.

Having made their plan, the others go home and Sogo-
ro wanders about waiting for the day. Worried about his family, feeling the need of cheer, he stops at a tea-house. A woman with a baby on her back comes to beg. He recognizes her as the widow of a man whose property was confiscated by the wicked steward, Danjo. Thinking that a like fate may fall on his family after his death, he determines to risk a trip home.

He finds his wife already molested by a rascal who thinks her husband is as good as dead. He offers her a writing of divorcement which would save her life in case Hotta's vengeance should go so far, but she tears it up, saying she will share his honor. The oldest son bravely listens to his father's words, though he cannot restrain his tears. The mother hopes that their uncle, a priest, will care for the three children when the parents are gone.

Followed by spies, traveling at night and in disguise, Sogoro finally gets back to the capital. Here on the day of the Shogun's visit (1653), he hides as they planned by the bridge and thrusts the petition between the curtains, making no attempt to escape. Knowing the price of such a deed, the Shogun reads the message and calls Hotta to account. Hotta, smarting under the disgrace, rages at his attendants for obeying his orders so thoroughly, and not admitting the headmen. Still in a temper, he demands the death of both Sogoro
and his wife, by crucifixion, and death for his three sons by decapitation. This wholesale murder stirs the peasants who offer to revolt, but Sogoro again quiets them, lest his work be all in vain.

But when the execution day comes and the parents see their innocent little sons killed before them, they curse the house of Hotta and threaten to haunt it till it falls. A threat ruthlessly carried out, till every person connected with the family meets death, except Hotta, who goes insane, his fief being returned to the State.

2. Comments on the story:

This is a true story of seventeenth century Japan. Sogoro's tombstone still stands in Kodzu, a town about forty miles east of Tokyo. Some versions claim that the children were crucified, instead of beheaded, but the whole family was at least sacrificed for the sake of justice, and the peasants still keep the tomb as green as their memory.

The climax of the story lacks the dramatic power it might have. Hayashi tells it as a well-known story, making less attempt to make the action vivid, than to make the setting vivid. He gives a remarkably clear explanation of a feudal castle: its grounds and various gates. He describes the three mansions allowed each lord in Tokyo: the Upper Mansion, which was within the
Shogun's castle ground, where the lord was kept busy with court functions; the Middle Mansion in a distant part of Tokyo where he might retire in case of fire, or while the other was being repaired; and the Tower Mansion, a suburban residence where he might go with the Shogun's consent to escape the burdensome formality of the Court.

Since this is written for English-speaking people, Hayashi very frequently introduces historical events, interesting bits of description or explanation, much of which adds to the story even while it definitely interrupts it. As the story reaches the climax, however, the description seems a bit tedious, especially as he goes into detail about the unquestionably beautiful Ueno Park, past and present.

But as an attempt to present seventeenth century Japan to foreigners, it is very successful. Hayashi evidently knows both people well, and can be recommended to beginners trying to understand Japan.

B. Iroka: by Kinnosuke Adachi

1. Content of the book:

The word iroka is not easy to translate unless one descends to the slang phrase "what have you". It is a miscellaneous group of stories, each a fine piece of work, having no central theme except to show to Westerners the finer side of Japanese life. Written in 1900,
it was still near enough samurai days to feel the thrill of it, and sense the absolute obedience to honor which it demanded. On the other hand, the author, living at that time in California, and perhaps married to the beautiful Virginian of the Suwa-yama story, understands America and is attempting to introduce the two countries.

There are thirteen short stories in the collection and as each is a gem by itself, it would be impractical, either to choose, or to try to retell them here. A summary will be given in the appendix.

2. Comments on the stories:

The author, Adachi, is very clever with words and phrases. He uses interesting figures of speech. A cloud is just large enough to put two arms around, a perfect weed-growth of gestures follows an astonishing announcement, some battleships look as though Vesuvius and Asama had been turned on their sides and shot at the horizon instead of the sun. He speaks of a hair-stiffening ghost story. A girl looks up at her lover and the stars fall in her tears. Occasionally the figures are a bit overdrawn, as when he speaks of smoke enough to smother all the Klondike mosquitoes; and again, an artist is "one who foolishly insists and persists in insisting that this life of beefsteak and butter is a festival of the gods."

1. Since the Japan of his story knew noth-

1. Page 186.
ing of either the Klondike, or beefsteak and butter, the figure reminds us that we are Americans listening to a story of another country, a fact one otherwise forgets when reading. He also uses numerous allusions to the Bible, such as the painter's eyes being mounts of transfiguration for his subject, and so forth, which do not add to the effectiveness.

But he is very skillful in explaining in a few words Japanese customs that seem incomprehensible to Americans. For instance, Japanese lovers are a mystery. They are so undemonstrative that they seem inhuman. So Adachi describes the secret meeting of Yone and her lover, "No passionate embraces were exchanged -- for the hand of culture is very strong in Japan, even upon the fever heat of love."1. And at another time: "Japanese sentiment abhors loudness of demonstration."2. "How western lovers would have thrown themselves into each other's arms! But the Japanese lovers are a cultured set."3.

He gives a good picture of the finer ideals of the samurai, his love for his sword, -- the soul of the samurai, -- his sensitiveness to any insult being offered it, protecting its honor as a woman protects her virtue. He shows the samurai's scorn of trading. A chonin (merchant) was next to the eta (outcast) in the social scale. A samurai will not soil his hands with money. It

is this trait which makes A Samurai Girl such a pathetic, tragic figure -- secretly she has sold the family treasures to save the household from starvation, but she is as disgraced in her own eyes as though she had sold her body. (Even to-day in Japan money is placed on small trays in the stores, so it does not pass from hand to hand, and the women, being inferior to men, handle the money for the family.)

He also explains the Japanese reason for hiding their grief and often laughing when telling of some tragedy in their family. A young woman, whose husband was killed in a duel, shut up all the anguish in her heart and wore a calm face, "that she may not tear other hearts along with hers." 1.

Adachi has made some good psychological studies, and has done well in showing how the two countries are alike behind walls of custom and difference of expression, but he has neither boasted or apologized, he has not used ridicule for either nation, or tried to prove any superiority. This makes it an exceptionally fine book for study.

C. A Daughter of the Samurai; by Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto.

1. Summary of the story:

Etsu-bo's father was on the wrong side at the time of the Restoration. He believed that the Shogun should rule Japan, that the Emperor was too sacred. So he was exiled
to Echigo, a northern province beyond the mountains. Here he tried to be a farmer, but neither he nor Jiya, his trusted steward, knew anything of such matters. A clever agent got them into trouble by substituting mustard seeds for silk-worm eggs, and selling them to foreign traders. "It was known as 'the new way of making Japan strong, so the high-nosed barbarian could no longer beat the children of Japan in trade.' "

But since it had the family crest on the card, very soon, a "very tall, red-faced foreign man, in strange, pipe-like garments, called to see my father," and the money was paid, though neither the simple-hearted father or Jiya understood very well what it was all about.

Etsu-bo's brother had been disowned because he ran away just as his bride's chair was being borne in the gate. He went to America where he lived among tradesmen for many years. Consequently Etsu, who had been born with the navel cord around her neck and was therefore ordained by Buddha for a priestess, became the heir and received a boy's education. She was required to memorize pages of Confucius' doctrine, and was reproved for inquiring the meaning of it. But her childhood was very happy. She enjoyed the loving understanding of her father, whom she adored. The servants constantly did little things to please her, such as burning chestnut hulls to

make a fire pretty, and making straw snowshoes for her. Her old grandmother told her stories while she sat primely on the matting, not using a cushion in her honored presence.

But the one great sorrow of her life was her curly hair. The hairdresser always took her first when she called at the house, and saturated her hair with boiling hot tea and stiffening oil. "By that time my whole head was stiff and my eyebrows pulled upward, but my hair was straight for the time being ---"."How I envied the long, straight locks of the court ladies in the roll picture hanging in my room." Once when the pain of hairdressing was too great, she used "return words" to her nurse. Her mother called her into her room and said severely, "Etsu-bo, do you not know that curly hair is like animal's hair? A samurai's daughter should not be willing to resemble a beast.----- I was greatly mortified and never again complained of the discomfort of hot tea and scented oil."1. Once at her birthday party, she overheard her aunt say that it was too bad to waste pretty dresses on her because of her ugly hair. Her old nurse felt so badly that she cut off her own straight hair and placed it in a shrine, praying that it be transferred to her little mistress.

Etsu-bo was little more than a child when her beloved father died, and her brother returned. He shocked the

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1. Above quotations all from page 15.
family by doing all the ceremonial things too quickly. His way of looking quickly from one to another was startling. With his return, the sister's wedding was planned. Dressed in a white kimono, symbol of death to her family, with a red under-kimono, symbol of birth into her husband's family, she was carried away in a palanquin. Her main concern was to preserve her elaborate hairdress in the jolting chair. When she was carried in the gate, the curtain was nervously jerked up, for a second she had a glimpse of a pock-marked face, then a smart slap-slap of a fan on the top of the chair as a signal that the bridegroom accepted her, and she entered her new home.

Etsu's future was still unsolved, till one day the family council met, and after a long session she was called in to bow her thanks for their spending so much time on her. She asked no questions however. Much later, she discovered that she was engaged to Matsuo, a friend of her brother's in America. He is transferred to the east, so she must go to America for the wedding. To prepare her for this she is sent to a Christian school in Tokyo to learn English. The freedom of the school, the informality of the teachers, surprise and puzzle her. She learns to ask questions, like a boy!

At last, she starts off alone to America. An American woman has won the gratitude of her mother by offering
her home for the wedding. She sends her carriage to the station and Matsuo rides back with her. She had never been so near to a man in her life, and nearly died on that trip. They are taken into the home of a fine American lady and see a much better side of life than her brother did. Two children, Hanano and Chiyo, are born. Then Matsuo dies, and the widow takes her two little girls back to Japan.

She is greatly distressed, because Matsuo's people may separate her from the children if they wish. In the family council, she begs to be allowed to guide their education. Little Hanano, in the fullest American dress her mother can find, sits motionless on her feet for two hours, then one little cramped leg jerks and she involuntarily cries, "oh," Both mother and child retire disgraced, but the council finally decides that she is a reliable person to take care of two rough, American-trained children with their untrained feet, their flouncing garments, and their abrupt speech.

The little girls, homesick for America, gradually learn Japanese ways, with a very wise mother to explain the best to them. They visit her old home, and see what family treasures the sister still owns, hear stories of their family history, and become Japanese maidens, with two countries pulling at their hearts.

2. Comments on the story:
This is probably the best book on the market for explaining Japanese life. Its long popularity is due to its graceful style, intimate glimpses of the author's life, the dramatic and charming way of telling every-day incidents, and, perhaps most of all, to Mrs. Sugimoto's sincere love, as well as understanding, of both countries. While it has the form of a novel, it is frankly an autobiography, not even the names being disguised.

It is impossible to point out even the most outstanding explanations of Japanese customs. The book is packed with them from cover to cover. Beginning soon after the country was opened to trade, and before Western ideas had changed the age-long ceremonies and customs, the book is a gold mine of data, not only on Japan of yesterday, but, also, of to-day. Japan, in the process of being "westernized" is a mixture of the old and new. She (Japan) interprets what she sees of the West in the light of her past experience, often gaining very distorted ideas, and doing things Westerners find hard to explain unless they understand her background. Being the daughter of a samurai, Mrs. Sugimoto grew up with the best ideas and ideals of Japan, and fortunately became acquainted with the best in America through the kindness of the cultured home which received her. She is well qualified to explain one to the other.
While it is impossible to point out anything like a representative number of instructive passages, a few may be noted. Little Etsu-bo ("bo" is the usual suffix for a boy's name, while "ko" is used for a girl, but since she is receiving a boy's education she is called this half jokingly.) learns that absence of bodily comfort means inspiration of mind, so the colder the weather, the harder she must study. One day she finished her writing lesson in an unheated room, finding when she was done that her hand was frozen. (There is now a boys' school in Fukuoka which does not allow the pupils to wear stockings in winter, a rule based on the above belief.)

Shiro, her little white dog, fell sick, and she gave him her silk cushion to show her sympathy. Her grandmother reproved her, telling her that a white dog is the next stage lower than man, and by doing inappropriate things for him, she may be preventing his being born in human shape. This teaching, Mrs. Sugimoto says, is partly responsible for the "sympathy blind" attitude of the Japanese. The Buddhist doctrine teaches that hardship is either atonement for past sins, or education for a higher plane of life, and so humans must not tamper with the justice of the gods.

The ideas of the Japanese about the "tradesmen" of the West are very enlightening. Not only do they wear
queer, "coolie" clothes, have red faces and unruly hair, but they have "no heels and have to prop up their shoes with artificial blocks". (Today, children in rural districts will sometimes crowd around the foreigner to examine the heels of her shoes, especially the high French heels.) "It was said that animals were eaten whole by these strange people, and that the master of a lordly house often entertained his guests by cutting up a cooked eagle in their presence. It was also rumored that the cheap red blankets extensively imported at that time were dyed with the blood of stolen infants. One report, which was wide-spread, in city and country alike, was that the peculiar animal odour of foreigners was caused by the eating of flesh." Mrs. Sugimoto suggests this may have been the odour of damp wool, to which the Japanese were not accustomed.

As in all Japanese stories, the matter of repressing emotions is discussed. Mrs. Sugimoto explains it thus: "I explained as well as I could that for generations we have been taught that strong emotional expression is not consistent with elegance and dignity. That does not mean that we try to repress our feelings; only that public expression of them is bad form. Therefore on our stage the love scenes are generally so demure and quiet that an American audience would not be thrilled at all.

1. Page 62. 2. Ibid.
But the dignified bearing of our actors has a strong
effect on Japanese people, for they understand the feel-
ing that is not shown.

'What do lovers do when they are -- well-- very en-
thusiastic?' (A girl questions her)

'They gently turn their backs to each other.'

Everything is chained by politeness. "A merry girl
will laugh softly behind her sleeve. A hurt child chokes
back his tears and sobs out, 'I am not crying!' A strick-
en mother will smile as she tells you that her child is
dying. A distressed servant will giggle as she confesses
having broken your treasured piece of china. --- A dis-
play of one's own feelings would be rudeness." 1.

Of course, the horrifying spectacle of people kissing
comes in for its share. Her first introduction to it was
when a sweet, modest girl, whom she saw on the train was
met by her husband at the station. As she turned her
eyes away in burning shame for the girl, she remembered
what her mother had said when she started for America,
"I have heard, my daughter, that it is the custom for
foreign people to lick each other as dogs do." 2. This
was merely a statement. But she came to learn that kiss-
ing has its spiritual side just as bowing does. (!)

Since Matsuo, her husband, was an importer, she
visited his store one day, and was amazed at what he

sold, but more amazed to find that these strange things are marked "made in Japan". He explains that they are designed by Americans, made in Japanese factories, and shipped back. That is why she has never seen them. To her horrified exclamation that they are not really Japanese, he replies calmly, no, "genuine things do not sell. People think they are too frail and not gay enough." 1

Brought up by a devout Buddhist grandmother and mother, later becoming herself a devout Christian, Mrs. Sugimoto has the rare gift of understanding sympathy with both. She explains beautifully the O'Bon, (festival of the dead), the sealing of the shrine with white paper when there are events which the ancestors should not witness, the gay festival when the main beam of the new temple is drawn through the streets with a rope made of women's hair. And always she gives the spiritual meaning without sentimentality or moralizing.

Mrs. Sugimoto very wisely refuses to generalize. She tells of one place and one time, thus saving her story from becoming a cheap tourists' guide-book, and preserving the truth both of fact and spirit. The book will bear re-reading as a reliable source of information.

D. The Daughter of the Narikin: (Newly-rich), Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto.

1. Summary of the story:

1. Page 194.
This is a story of modern Japan. Mr. Toyama, a man of sound business judgment, and unusually fine artistic taste for a narikin has a beautiful home, a charming, modest daughter, Yukiko, and an ambitious, socially minded wife. Mrs. Toyama is his second wife, and as daughter of Viscount Oku, she feels that she has conferred a favor on Mr. Toyama by marrying him. Indeed such a marriage could not have been arranged with a narikin, had she not been sent home by her first husband, and had not the Viscount's wealth been exhausted. She dominated her present husband and tried to do her duty to Yukiko by introducing her at social affairs. Both Yukiko and her father are modest, unassuming people, and shrink from the slightly concealed contempt of people for the narikin.

Mrs. Ikeda, a genteel lady whose husband was killed one year in the military manoeuvres of his regiment, became acquainted with the family when Yukiko went to her to study flower arrangement. Their love for each other led Mr. Toyama to invite her to come there as a sort of housekeeper, and bring her little son, Masao. That was long ago, and the two children grew up together and it had been understood that Mr. Toyama would adopt Masao, and he would marry Yukiko. As the story opens, this arrangement has lately been upset by Madam Toyama, who wishes him to adopt her nephew, Minoru, and as usual
Madam has her way. Mr. Toyama writes to Masao, hinting of a new arrangement and offering to send Masao, abroad for study. He is a high-spirited boy and feels this is a bribe. His answering letter states that he is going to Formosa on a government commission, and feels that since he is an only son he should not allow himself to be adopted and give up his family name. Mr. Toyama is chagrined to have his plan so well foreseen, especially as it is always understood that one of the sons shall take the father's name so it will not be lost.

"These modern young people are beyond my comprehension," he muttered. "As to not wanting to give up the Ikeda name, that is nonsense. As his mother was willing to give her son to the Toyama family, what right had he to object? And since it was his mother who agreed with me that he should marry my daughter and thus take the name of Toyama, what right has Masao to interfere? Such advanced thoughts are all bosh and upsetting to law and order. I have never suspected Masao of such tendencies. The audacity of taking it into his own hands to break family arrangements."

If Masao and Yukiko had not been so deeply in love, the former might have been more diplomatic and tamed his pride. As it was, he understood the hint and took the initiative himself.
Madam's nephew, Minoru, grandson of the noble, but poverty-stricken family of Oku, had been teaching before he went to America to study. In the school, he had met Kotako Chiba, and they had become practically engaged. His letters from America had been less frequent lately, but she still trusted him. Her elder brother, Ken, was old-fashioned and felt that in not speaking to him first, Minoru had treated her like a geisha girl. But Kotako is a modern girl, with her own ideas. "'As for me, I will never surrender to these musty old marriage customs. --- I shall choose for myself, and the trials and joys of life shall be mutual----- not a one-sided, docile surrender.'"1.

Madam Toyama captures Minoru from the boat, and introduces Yukiko, by taking the young couple to the theater. Yukiko's heart has gone to Formosa, and she is so stiff and cold to Minoru that it is embarrassing for everyone. Madam realizing the danger, cleverly manages to set the wedding date forward three weeks, and the great day arrives with pomp and ceremony, Yukiko being managed like a puppet.

For their honeymoon, Mr. Toyama has chosen Nikko, a beautiful mountain resort. At the inn, Minoru's joking with the maids distresses Yukiko, and her dignity distresses him. By chance she finds Minoru reading a letter from a "fellow" he used to know when he was teaching.

and as he drops it on the fire she sees a picture of a girl.

Mr. Toyama is gradually forced to retire and turn all his business over to Minoru, who has many ideas, but not sound business judgment. Worried about his daughter's happiness, and suffering from heart trouble, he dies about four years later, and Minoru makes no secret of his frequent "business meetings" at geisha houses.

In the meantime, Kotako, the teacher, has gone to America as governess in the Kojima family. Here Masao, who has been transferred to New York, meets her at a Japan Society dinner. When he returns to Formosa, by way of Japan, he takes her with him as his wife. They stop at a temple in Matsubara for a memorial service to their ancestors, and find the priest assisted by Jo-setsu, a priestess, Masao and the priestess (formerly Yukiko) recognize each other, there is a strained moment, but they separate without speaking. The priestess chants many sutras that night before she finds peace again.

2. Comments on the story:

In this story, Mrs. Sugimoto gives us normal life in Japan to-day. The struggle between the old and new ideas, the modern and the old-fashioned girl, the newly-rich and the old nobility. She explains the misunderstanding between Christians and Buddhists. She describes geisha parties at gay inns, shows us quiet temple yards, and
takes us to meetings of Japanese in New York. She discusses the difficulties of parents bringing up children in a foreign country, and she shows us in Madam Toyama a typically modern matron in Japan. Her characterizations are remarkably varied and clear: quiet, lovable Mr. Toyama; modest, demure Yukiko; modern, progressive Kotako; dreamy, scholarly Mr. Chiba; spend-thrift, sensuous Minoru. She tells of the country girl who cheerfully chatted with Yukiko, explaining that she was the most fortunate girl in the world since she had drawn the lucky number in a lottery, getting money enough so her mother-in-law could go on the loveliest trip and bring them all souvenirs! She describes so well the pained surprise of the country folk at the old-home temple when Mr. Chiba becomes a Christian. Then shows the surprise of the priest when a memorial service is requested for the Chiba ancestors. Mr. Chiba talks with him till his resentment vanishes and he finally wins the people to his own liberal views.

Yukiko's wedding is described in detail from the beautiful trousseau selected by her step-mother, to the wedding gifts of gorgeous materials made up like a ship of good fortune with the Benten goddess standing in the center. The rooms, the reception, the ceremony itself, the bridal feast are described here as nowhere else. Because it is a novel, she can make it vivid by giving
details, which could not be done in a more general description. The way the guests were seated at the banquet is interesting: "The guests had no trouble in finding their places. Each table represented a volume of The Tale of Genji, a famous novel of fifty-four volumes written by a court lady in the tenth century. This novel is so well known throughout Japan that no public explanation of the cards was necessary. Each table was decorated in accordance with the poetic spirit of the book it represented, with a flower or sign, and each little beribboned card had on it a flower and a poem which directed the bearer at once to the proper table."1. During the meal, Yukiko makes no attempt to eat, but is led away several times to have her kimono changed, each one a dainty pattern also taken from the flowers in Genji. Mrs. Sugimoto, also, describes the building of the little house for the Tea Ceremony. It must be perfect in detail. The material must be of the best, yet give the appearance of refined poverty. As Madam Toyama dreams of her important guests, we are given a glimpse of what the Tea Ceremony really is.

We are also made acquainted with the procedure for a funeral. The various ceremonies and memorial services that fill in the forty-nine days while the spirit journeys from earth to Paradise, are skilfully portrayed. 

Yukiko's simple faith is well contrasted with Minoru's 

1. Page 114.
modern skepticism.

Mrs. Sugimoto, having lived through this period of transition in Japan, is well qualified to interpret for us the personalities caught by it. In *The Daughter of the Samurai*, she was more concerned with explaining customs and historical associations; in *The Daughter of the Narikin*, she explains the mental struggle of bewildered people torn between the past and the future. While giving us an interesting story, she has managed to give us an immense amount of worthwhile information.

II. Summary of the third chapter:

These four books are written especially for Westerners and so bring in old stories and legends, historical allusions, and explanations of ceremonies and customs that could not be found in books written for the Japanese. The last two are very clever in their weaving these inconspicuously into the details of the story, though the first two are interesting enough to be forgiven for occasional digressions. As John Erskine suggested (quoted above) these books are the most effective ambassadors of good-will between the two countries.
Summary of the Thesis

Since the purpose of the study has been to find an interpretation of Japan through her own writers, it might be well to summarize the various traits they have shown us.

A friend of mine once said, "No statement about Japan is true, including this one!" Acquaintance with the country and the literature strengthens my belief in his sagacity. It seems to be a hopeless paradox. A long, narrow island, its variety of climate makes the people of the snowbound north a different temperament from the hot-blooded southerners. Entirely isolated from the world for nearly three centuries, it developed a type of individual radically different from the present generation with its violent introduction to the West. Grandparents and children seem separated by endless misunderstandings; all the rigid rules of life, the code of honor, the slow, dignified ceremonies of the older generation are being modified or discarded by the modern young people. The very word "moga" (modern girl) causes a dismayed smile to disturb wrinkled faces.

But though generalizing is very dangerous, we may at least be permitted to discuss what the books have shown us. It is interesting to notice the contrasts brought out: the gentle, soft-spoken people who crowd around to see others tortured; the polite, formal rites of etiquette against the crude, raw details of low life; the self-restraint shown in hara-kiri, or in a duel, against the wild debauch of wholesale slaughter
which still packs movie houses and crowds book stalls. Apparently of a cheerful, easy-going temperament, thousands of them commit suicide every year. For centuries Buddhism has emphasized mercy as the highest virtue, but by its doctrine of re-incarnation has produced a "sympathy-blind" people. Famous for their restraint and simple beauty in art, they allow in writing and drama vivid descriptions of putrefied bodies, tortures, and violent deaths.

The contrast is seldom between social classes. The courtiers indulge in a wild orgy of drinking, disgusting Murasaki and her friend, (described in her Diary); a janitor and his humble wife spend an afternoon at a family re-union where they all compose poems (from Hearn's Kotto). A samurai daughter, who allows herself to be tortured rather than submit to selling her body, (Yotsuya Kwaidan) is no better than the tradesman's daughter who gives her own life before she will betray her lover even to save the family honor (Adachi, Iroka).

There are several out-standing characteristics that apply to the nation in general:

Gregariousness: Tokyo is, and has been from the days of Ieyasu, the center of the universe for the Japanese. No person would willingly live outside of Tokyo, but if one must, the next best is to live in a city, crowded as closely together as possible. Any house with a half acre of ground around it, is sabishi (lonesome). That is why Murasaki's heroine, Ukifune, comes to a sad end, she was left alone beside a river -- "a-
"lone" meaning in the midst of a small village, and with several servants in the house. For the same reason, the Sumiyoshi heroine suffers great misery, having fled to a beautiful seashore with two companions.

Dislike for discussing or handling money: Since the merchant class handled money, it was the lowest in the social scale. To-day the great department store heads, with their great wealth have won a social position for themselves, but they are still the *narikin*. A display of wealth is considered very vulgar, and discussing values of anything in money terms very poor taste. It is as bad to mention the lack of money as to boast of having plenty.

Since the first Westerners came as traders, the West was contemptuously referred to as a nation of tradesmen. The Japanese who traded with them and tried to copy their ways were scorned by both foreigners and Japanese. Mrs. Sugimoto (*Daughter of the Samurai*) gives a good picture of the helplessness of a samurai in money matters. He had never handled money, and had no idea how to keep accounts or make bargains.

Formality: Japanese politeness is not based on kindness, but on the reverence owed to the superior. Time is but a fragment of eternity and therefore valueless, so there is never need for haste. Long words are more polite than short ones; in fact, several meaningless syllables are often added to words to heighten courtesy value. So a "superior" may be kept waiting many minutes to glean his information from a
servant who bows many times and strings long words together. Eiichi's father (Kagawa, Before the Dawn) waits patiently for his rice bowl to be refilled while the maid bows to each person present and repeats the morning greetings.

This rigid formality is not confined to servants, but extends through every class of society. The best of friends greet each other very formally and gravely exchange greetings suitable to the occasion. When Yukiko is married (Sugimoto, Daughter of the Marikin), a school friend comes with a gift which she presents with all the solemnity of a public presentation, though the two girls are alone in Yukiko's home. This seems very stiff, and almost unfriendly, to Americans who save formal manners for strangers or public occasions. While they regard the Japanese with amusement as they slowly and gravely repeat set phrases, their back-slapping and loud-voiced greetings seem undignified to the Japanese, who would not expect such a thing even of a coolie. Any show of emotion is considered lack of good breeding as shown by Adachi's insistence (Iroka) that "Japanese lovers are a cultured set", when he is explaining their reserve.

Stoicism: Mrs. Sugimoto (Samurai) refers to the belief that absence of bodily comfort leads to inspiration of mind, so one who is studying should have as few comforts as possible. This is still practiced to a greater or less degree in schools to-day in Japan. The buildings are rather bleak, bare structures, well-lighted, but dingy, and always unheated, except in the
far north. The school uniforms are usually of cheap materials, not well cared for, and ill-fitting. It is considered almost bad taste to insist on clean, pressed uniforms, and bright cheerful rooms.

This stoicism also extends to home life, where it plays havoc with health rules. A meager, monotonous diet; sketchy, irregular meals; few hours of sleep, all are considered a mark of strength of character and self-control.

Lack of originality and initiative: Ieyasu's influence, even after several hundred years, still serves to crush out originality or individual self-expression. There are still so many set speeches to memorize, so many rigid ceremonies to perform faultlessly, that a deviation means ridicule, not praise. Each social class has its special rules for dress, house furnishings, gifts, and so forth, all made to their financial scale. They must not digress on either side. If a girl's dress is considered too gay for her years, a committee of friends will tell her so, and she must immediately change. Mass opinion is law and everyone is supposed to abide by neighborhood decisions, lest "they laugh at you" -- a most dire threat.

After trying for hundreds of years to become letter-perfect in following the rule-book, it is not strange that individual initiative has been well crushed out. If a radical movement is to be successful, it must have large numbers to back it. Very seldom does one leader stand out alone and different.
A new movement works underground till its numbers assure it a respectful hearing.

In school life, it results in memory work, with reasoning left undeveloped. On the playground, it leaves groups of bored children standing around helplessly, or playing a game under supervision. In the office, it is absolute perfection of routine; in the home unquestioning obedience to the "over-lord".

Artistic ability: Japanese gardens, paintings, poetry, flower arrangements, and so forth are too famous to need much discussion. Unfortunately only their coarser or corrupted forms find their way to America, so they are known only by reputation to most people. Their outstanding characteristics lie in their subdued colors, soft tones, simplicity of line, and lack of garish display. Gardens may be miniature reproductions of famous scenes, or imitations of wild, open woods; each grey rock, each leaf-strewn path, each waterfall arranged with infinite care to give the impression of a natural formation. Perhaps the greatest praise one can give it is that one seldom thinks of the gardener. Genji's gardens show the care given to detail; Adachi (Iroka) tells of the time and infinite pains required to copy nature.

Flower arrangement has less to do with flowers than with branches. If flowers interfere with lines, they are cut off. Paintings fade away into mist, and, as with poetry, seek to create a certain atmosphere or feeling. A study of their artistic ability, extending through all the classes, leads
one to agree with the sweeping statement that they are a nation of artists.

The Japanese standard of physical beauty is interesting and puzzling to most foreigners. Of course, straight, black hair is prized. Murasaki admires the court ladies' hair which was often a foot longer than the lady herself. Mrs. Sugimoto (Samurai) gives a humorously pathetic description of her agonies over curly hair. She also describes Yukiko (Narikin) as a girl who would have been pretty had not her eyes threatened to be round. Long, straight eyes, clear complexion, lips not too full, and almond-shaped face are the marks of beauty. A moon-shaped face is laughed at; big eyes are almost disgraceful, and dimples are not considered at all.

A young lady should be gentle and quiet, not vivacious or talkative. She should wear a composed, almost mask-like, expression, and seldom utter an opinion or attempt conversation, especially with men. She is considered very charming if she sits speechless and motionless, with down-cast eyes, moving only when necessary to serve tea, or gently fingering a fan. In Genji, the Lady of Omi is a highly farcical character because her face always tells her feeling, she laughs and chatters freely, and moves with surprising suddenness. While they laugh at her, they are disgusted with the girls who have studied abroad, becoming so free in their manners that they even contradict their husbands! (The step-mother, in Nami-ko, speaks much too freely to her husband.)
The power of the family over the individual is well explained in nearly all the books. The marriage arrangements are made for the sake of the family, the young couple submitting meekly in most cases. The bride is the servant to the mother-in-law, and has a low place until her first son is born. If she produces no heir, her family should recall her within a certain time, or she may be sent home. Namiko is a protest against this, its popularity showing how common the custom was.

Where there was no son, a grown man might be adopted to marry a daughter, one of his sons taking the name he forfeited. A far-sighted family often adopted a boy when the children were small and brought them up together.

The children born in any home are the property of the whole family-clan, and may be taken away from the parents if necessary. A son may be taken from a younger brother and given to an older one who is childless. This is at the discretion of the family. Mrs. Sugimoto tells of her fear that her two girls will be taken by her husband's family when she returns to Japan (Samurai), and her care after they are once entrusted to her lest the council revoke its decision.

Modern ideas are creeping in, probably stimulated by the movies, and young people are insisting on choosing mates for themselves. But with the older generation unable to guide them, and the movies of doubtful help in giving sound advice, it nearly always results in failure.
Perhaps a word should be said explaining the emphasis given to illicit love-affairs. It cannot, of course, be judged by a Christian standard. In Genji and the older writings, it is not considered a moral question. In Bakin's time, the husband was free as soon as his legal wife became pregnant. That has more or less persisted till the present day. The moral issue involved concerned robbing the family of descendants. Up to very recent years the men were expected to spend their holidays with geisha, and the wife who became jealous was making a ridiculous spectacle of herself. That is still generally accepted, but it is not uncommon any more to see families having a picnic together. A man too fond of his wife's society may be regarded suspiciously as being in love, a condition still frowned upon. In the old days, the wife might be sent home if her husband fell in love with her, since, being an outsider, she might influence him too much in family matters. While it is not so serious in these days, it is a sign of weakness and a hint of it would be hotly denied by most husbands.

The books have given us a great deal of information about religious beliefs, especially Buddhist doctrines. Shinto, having no system of ethics or way of life, confines itself largely to ancestor and hero worship. It is amusing to see how often the rites of both are observed when they are actually contradictory. According to Shinto belief the spirits of the dead are always present, while the Buddhist teaching is
that they journey for forty-nine days from earth to heaven, and then return at O'bon time to visit their homes. Many people appear to hold both beliefs at the same time. Re-incarnation, also, complicates conditions. If one dies with the heart too concerned for a loved one, his soul cannot seek Nirvana, but returns in another incarnation. That is why the recluse of Uji deserts his two girls and goes to a mountain temple for the last of his life, so that he can forget his worry about their future. Shinran (Priest and His Disciples) also says we must not think about things here or our heart becomes attached to them, causing us to pass through transmigrations. Kenko (Harvest of Leisure) praises the sage who refused to help people who came to him, thus separating himself from the troubles of this world.

Also because of the problem of incarnation, inappropriate things must not be done for animals or their progress may be retarded. So little Etsu-bo was scolded for giving her silk cushion to her little white dog when he was sick. His next incarnation should be in the form of a man, but by treating him too well she might cause a delay in his upward climb.

A person dying with a grudge might haunt the family, causing its entire destruction. "Till seven births" was a threat to make any murderer tremble, with good cause if one is to believe all the stories. However, Rokujo (Genji's jealous lady) does not harm him, but unconsciously caused spirit possession before her death, and afterward tells Genji in a vision that
any criticism of her makes her a mad fiend unable to control her fury till she has caused sickness or death to someone he loves. He has been especially kind to her daughter, hoping to appease her spirit, but she tells him that in the next world the ties of kinship are not so strong, and what he does for her child makes little difference to her now. She never attempts to hurt him, but causes the death of several of his favorites.

Besides the ghosts and malignant spirits (obake), the foxes and badgers harass people. They take strange shapes and mislead innocent people, causing disasters. Why they do it is never explained.

Both Shinto and Buddhist doctrines emphasize life after death. In fact, death in a Japanese story, is not considered nearly such a tragedy as in Western stories. If one dies with honor, it is a glorious end, and the post-humous honors awarded are very satisfying to the spirit. Speeches made at funerals to-day are addressed directly to the spirit, the speaker standing with back to the mourners. The sense of the presence of the spirit is very strong.

The deaths of the main characters seldom end a Japanese story. Either we are given a glimpse of their possible reincarnation, or perhaps awed by their terrible revenge, or given a picture of their future joy. Many of them, as with Jinnai (the robber in The Haunted House) or O’Iwa (Yotsuya Kwaidan) return to dwell in shrines and help people who pray
Mrs. Sugimoto (Samurai) has described the O'Bon festival beautifully. Once a year the spirits of the dead return to their homes. A fire is built in the gateway to guide them. Special preparations are made for them, and everyone is on his best behavior. A place is made for them at the table, and they are told all that has happened during the past year. After the three days are ended, a tiny boat loaded with fruit and food, is floated down the river, friends and beggars eagerly watching for the candle it carries to go out, meaning the spirit has left it, and the beggars may have the food.

While religion had a definite place in every home, it was not regarded as a joy and comfort. It was more of an insurance against future trouble. One only entered upon the religious life, as a monk or nun, when the world had nothing more to offer. It was a sort of suicide. They were deeply mourned by their friends, and prevented from taking such a step if it were at all possible. It meant renouncing the world and all its joys, and for women, -- oh, tragedy of tragedies -- cutting off their beautiful long hair.

Since the Cannery Boat deals with the subject, brief mention of "dangerous thoughts" should be made. Japan has been very much afraid of Russian propaganda and for years has been sternly repressing it. Troops of two or three hundred students have frequently been arrested and tried. Even those dismissed find their lives practically ruined because few
employers would risk hiring anyone who has ever been under suspicion. In spite of these harsh measures, the propaganda spreads, not only among the lower classes, but often young people of the best families are involved. Some years ago a revolution was predicted. Many people expected it at the time of the outbreak in Manchuria when protest meetings were held in so many places. Others say the danger of Communism is past, but a Fascist movement is now more to be feared. The tension in the air reminds one of that awful hush just before an earthquake.

Japan is our near neighbor. We know less about her than she knows about us. Our news items are copied over there, our prominent people are known by name, our history has been all too carefully studied. If we are willing to spend a little time reading her books we can soon discard the myth of the incomprehensible Oriental.
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APPENDIX:

The Seven Periods of Japanese Literature.
Summary of the *Tale of Genji*.
Summary of *Iroka*. 
The Seven Periods of Japanese Literature.

Japanese literature has been very imperfectly explored by Occidentals because of language difficulties, as well as differences of thought and interest. Comparatively little has been done in translating either ancient or modern works, though several writers have given us short sections that seem interesting to the Western mind. W.G. Aston, in his History of Japanese Literature, has been very generous in this way. He has also given the clearest outline of the seven periods of Japanese literature which we will describe briefly. The periods are named for the places where the capital was located while that particular government lasted.

Archaic Period: (before A.D. 700)

It produced only primitive songs and Shinto ceremonies. The Japanese were at that time a shifting semi-nomadic race.

The Nara Period: (A.D. 710-794)

This period showed a strong Chinese influence since the written language came from there. For years all serious books were written in Chinese. Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters) was the first written history of Japan in Japanese and came at this time. Also the Manyoshu, a collection of poems, from which Murasaki and Sei Shonagon quote freely, though apologetically, since the poems are "old-fashioned", was done in Japanese.

The Heian (Classical) Period: (800-1186)
This period gives us literature centering about the narrow Court circle of Heian (present-day Kyoto). The lower classes had no share in the literary pursuits of the time, and endured much misgovernment from the upper classes who were too engrossed in a life of ultra-refined pleasure to attend to matters of State. The Fujiwara Clan rose and fell at this time. They filled all the civil offices, while the Minamoto Clan (to which Genji in Murasaki's tale belongs) held all the military offices. Years later this led to civil war with the resulting Shogun rule and feudalism, but at this time they were merely hordes of nobles with plenty of time for poetry, matching exquisite colors in their costumes, and attending ceremonial functions.

The early part of the Heian Period is not so productive, but gives us the other collection of poems, the Kokinshiu, which, with the Manyoshiu, was a part of every lady's education, and figured in their writings. The Taketori Monogatari, a fairy tale of a celestial child discovered in a bamboo tree; Ise Monogatari, more fairy stories, anecdotes, and so forth; and the Ochikubo Monogatari (Tales of the Room Below Stairs), a cruel step-mother story, are, though retold in many forms in English, not important to this study. Waley says of the latter that its best point is its brevity; while he calls Utsubo Monogatari (The Hollow Tree; not translated) "unbelievably boring".1

The later part of the period, from about 1000 on, includes

Waley: Introduction to The Sacred Tree.
the books here studied. The *Suinyoshi Monogatari*, the present one being considered by many scholars a forgery, and not the one mentioned by Sei Shonagon in her diary; *Genji Monogatari* by Lady Murasaki, *Makura no Soshi* (Pillow Book) by Sei Shonagon, and the *Sarashima Nikki* (Sarashima Diary) by Sugawara no Takasuye. These will be discussed in detail later.

The Kamakura Period: (1186-1332)

This marks a decline of learning. Highly romanticized histories, such as the *Heike Monogatari*, appeared at this time.

Namboku-cho (1332-1392) and Muromachi (1392-1603) Periods:
(classed together by Aston).

These are known as the Dark ages, though the No Drama was produced at this time. It is important for this study only because of the *Tsure-Zure Gusa* (Harvest of Leisure) by Kenko.

Yedo Period: (1603-1867)

This is the time of the powerful Tokugawa Shogunate which lasted till Perry's arrival to force the country open to trade. In this period, Chikamatsu, sometimes called the Shakespeare of Japan, flourished. Its interest for this study lies in Bakin, the prolific writer, whose romance *Kumano Tayema Ama Yo no Tsuki* (The Moon Seen Through a Rift in a Cloud on a Rainy Night) is retold by Edward Crerey in *A Captive of Love*.

Tokyo Period: (1867-1899)

This is the last mentioned by Aston and gives us no trans-
lated works, though it might be extended to the present date, including both translations and works in English by Japanese writers. This period shows a marked European influence.
Summary of The Tale of Genji.

Vol.I. The Tale of Genji:

Genji, the Shining One, a prince incomparable for beauty, is the illegitimate son of the Emperor by a favorite mistress. He is much beloved by everyone, except perhaps his "kita-no-kata" (legal wife) Aoi, sister of his best friend, To-no-Chujo. She is older than he, and very proud and cold to him. Since Genji is young and popular, he is expected to indulge in a few escapades, and often might have been seen stealing home at dawn. For awhile he is madly in love with Yugao, a former mistress of To-no-Chujo's, who has run away from him. She, however, is withered by the jealousy of Lady Rokujo, a widow older than Genji, and dies in the deserted mansion where Genji has taken her. Sincerely grief-striken, Genji seeks the quiet of a mountain temple, where he sees a nun with a little girl. His fancy is taken by the child and he adopts her. She is the Murasaki of the story and from her the author's nickname comes.

In the meantime, the present favorite concubine of the Emperor, Fujitsubo, has a son which really belongs to Genji. Both parents are very worried, but the Emperor seems to see no strange resemblance. Fujitsubo is appointed Empress, and her son made Heir Apparent. Soon after this occurs the "clash of carriages" between Aoi, the true wife, and the jealous Rokujo, when both seek an advantageous place to watch Genji ride by in a procession. A few months later, Aoi dies in child-birth, "possessed" by the jealous spirit of Rokujo, who does not
consciously wish her harm, but has dreamed of maltreating her. Genji, saddened again by this calamity, thinks about becoming a monk and taking Buddhist vows, but there is Aoi's baby to plan for, and the little Murasaki, now twelve years old. He consoles himself by making her his favorite concubine, his attentions frightening and bewildering the child. The comedy of the book is furnished by Lady Suyetsumu, the Lady with the Red Nose, who is of high rank, but hopelessly old-fashioned in dress, and always chilly; and a Court lady of fifty-seven who tries to attract Genji. He and To-no-Chujo stage a rowdy farce in her house, pretending jealousy of each other. She takes it seriously. The lady "created the most astonishing spectacle as she knelt at the feet of the two young men in their 'teens beseeching them not to die for her". This is a joke between them for years.

Vol. II. The Sacred Tree:

Rokujo's daughter has been appointed Vestal Virgin at Ise, and Rokujo goes to live with her. Genji is caught making love to Oborozuki, a younger sister of Kokiden, a concubine of the Emperor's, and is exiled to Suma. Kokiden is jealous of Genji and Fujitsubo, who has been appointed Empress over her head, and wherever possible makes trouble for them. At Suma, Genji pine in loneliness, till a storm destroys his house, and the Recluse of Akashi takes him in. He falls in love with his daughter and has a child by her, called the Princess of Akashi. When Genji is recalled after three years, he urges the Lady of
Akashi to come to live at his palace, but because of her country training she is afraid she would be humiliated at Court and refuses. He places her at Oi, a few miles from the capital, where he visits her occasionally. Genji is famous for his thoughtfulness, never forgetting a person who has ever been kind to him, even treating Rokujo with the greatest consideration. She and Utsusemi, the wife of a governor, whom Genji has courted in vain, return to the palace, and the Lady with the Red Nose, again furnishes comedy.

Vol. III. A Wreath of Cloud:

Genji's son is now Emperor, (supposed by the world to be the Emperor's son), and after his mother, Fujitsubo, sickens and dies worrying about it, the old priest tells him that he is not lawfully Emperor. His sacrificing at the Imperial tombs is really sacrilege and the present strange signs in the sky and national calamities are due to this. He plans to retire as soon as it can be done without arousing suspicion.

Genji brings the Princess of Akashi to Murasaki to bring up, planning to marry her to the Heir Apparent. Rokujo dies, still bitter, and her daughter, Akikonomu, returns from Ise, and becomes Empress through Genji's influence. Aoi's son, Yugiri, is madly in love with Kumoi, To-no-Chujo's daughter, but the father has other ambitions for her and separates them. They have been playmates since they were babies. Genji builds a wonderful palace, with special apartments for all his favorites, planning the view from each one to suit especially that lady's
taste. A mystery is cleared up when Yugao's child is found. Yugao, the first lady killed by Rokujo's jealousy, had a daughter by To-no-Chujo. She had run away from him before meeting Genji, and after her death, the child was cared for by servants in a distant province. To-no-Chujo has searched for mother and child for years, but Genji tells him nothing of finding the mother. When the child, Tamakatsura, is finally miraculously discovered by Ukon, her mother's servant, Genji takes her into his own home, again telling Chujo nothing about it. She has had a thrilling escape from Tayu-no-Gen, a sort of Bluebeard. As she is very beautiful, everyone falls in love with her, including Genji. Chujo, in the meantime, has been repeatedly imposed upon by people claiming to be the long-lost daughter. The latest one is the Lady from Omi, a highly farcical character, rustic and impossible.

Vol. IV. Blue Trousers:

Genji plans to enter Tamakatsura at the palace, but discovers she is with child by Higekuro, whom she hates and fears. His mad wife furnishes comedy by helping him carefully perfume his clothes before calling on Tamakatsura, then when he is gorgeously arrayed, emptying a brazier over his head. The Emperor is greatly impressed by Tamakatsura, but finally allows her to go to Higekuro's house. Yugiri and Kumoi are at last happily married after years of faithful waiting. The Akashi princess is given to the Crown Prince, her mother at last
coming to the capital to stay with her. The Ex-Emperor finally persuades Genji to take his thirteen-year old daughter, Nyosan, as his "kita-no-kata". Murasaki, the favorite, cannot fill this place because of her low rank, and he has had no legal wife since Aoi died. Genji, now an "old man" of forty, is bored by the unformed, childish mind, and neglects her during Murasaki's illness, caused again by Rokujo, whom he has unwittingly criticized. When the spirit is finally dislodged, he discovers that Kashiwagi has betrayed him as he betrayed the Old Emperor. Kashiwagi dies of contempt for himself through loss of Genji's respect. When Nyosan's child is born, she is also attacked by Rokujo's spirit and takes the vows thinking she is going to die. Murasaki dies, and Genji is waiting till he can free his mind from grief so he can enter the holy life. And there the book leaves him.

Vol.V. The Lady of the Boat:

Kaoru, Nyosan's son, thinks Genji is his father. He is a fine youth, with a beautiful, natural scent that follows him everywhere, sometimes giving his escapades away. Niou, son of the Akashi Princess, is Kaoru's friend, and often, rival in love. After two false starts the story begins with the household of Prince Hachi-no-Miya in the country. He has two beautiful daughters, Agemaki and Kozeri. Kaoru, distressed about some mystery in his birth which he cannot understand, but which he feels may cause his downfall, is determined not to burden himself with a household, but to take the vows. Hearing
that Prince Hachi is learned in the Scriptures, he goes to Uji to study with him. The old man entrusts the girls to his care and retires to the mountain temple where he dies. Kaoru falls in love with Agemaki, who tries to give him Kozeri, so she will be cared for. To cut the ground from under her, Kaoru brings Niou, a notorious flirt, down for Kozeri. Niou is in love with her, but is forced into a marriage with Yugiri's daughter and his actions closely watched by her father. Agemaki, worried for her sister's welfare, repulses Kaoru and finally dies. Niou moves Kozeri to the city, but his wife allows him very little time to see her. Kaoru calls, is reminded of Agemaki, and tries to make love to her. The two friends are jealous of each other and Kozeri is miserable. She finally tells Kaoru of a half-sister, Ukifune, an unacknowledged child of her father's by an upper servant, who has recently been brought to her attention by the girl's mother. She is said to be the image of Agemaki, for whom Kaoru is pining.

Vol. VI. The Bridge of Dreams: (the second part of the Lady of the Boat; not divided in the original.)

Kaoru is married to the Second Princess, merely as a family arrangement. Kozeri's son is born and the Emperor acknowledges it as a grandson, much to the delight of Niou. Soon afterward, Ukifune, the half-sister, comes to live with Kozeri since her suitor has been basely stolen by her step-father and given to one of his own daughters. Here, while Kaoru procrastinates as usual, Niou accidentally finds her and her mother has
to spirit her away. Kaoru finds the hiding place and moves her back to the old country house in Uji, beside the rushing river. While he is still making love to her, Niou discovers her and takes her by storm. She is in love with him, but tied by gratitude to Kaoru. She disappears, apparently drowned in the river.

A mock funeral is held, the two lovers are quite desolate, but finally console themselves with other women. In the meantime, Ukifune is found by an old nun, Imoto, and taken by her to fill the place of a daughter who has died. After unsuccessfully trying to give her to the daughter’s fiance, Imoto goes on a pilgrimage, and Ukifune secretly takes the vows. After the terrible deed is done, Kaoru hears of this girl and wonders if she can be Ukifune. He seeks her through the priest, Sozu, who administered the vows. He promises to help release her since Kaoru is a nobleman. Kaoru sends her favorite little brother in hopes she will recognize him and return to the world. But she merely folds his letter and turns her head away. There is no answer.
Summary of *Iroka* (Tales of Japan)

Kinnosuke Adachi.

**Note:** There are thirteen stories in the collection, which I shall summarize briefly. These stories which seem gruesome and tragic in a short summary like this, are not so somber in reality. The Japanese have very few of the "lived happy ever after" type of story. Suicide is often a triumph, if it is honorable, and a person, faithful to duty, has a happy ending no matter whether he lives or dies. The Western romantic love story has no place in a land of arranged marriages. The Japanese have evolved their own type, which they do not regard as particularly tragic.

**I. Under the Cherry Cloud of Sumida.**

The author calls at a tea house, where a beautiful girl, as fair as the cherry blossoms, serves tea to the guests. As he is talking with her, she shows him a picture an artist painted of a girl serving tea to an owl. He recognizes the work as done by a friend of his, Asada, a man who paints to please himself and is very modest about showing his work. The girl explains that she did not at first recognize herself.

Gradually the artist rises to fame, and then as suddenly disappears from the world. The public cried for him as a baby cries for candy, soon becoming sleepy and dozing off. But his friend (the author) starts to look for him, and goes first to the girl's home. O'Chika's mother meets him and says they do not know where he is. He used to come often, and he sent
many pictures, which, since his disappearance, O'Chika has sold. O'Chika, returning from a picnic with a clerk from a clothing store, says the last time she saw Asada, he came suddenly upon her and the clerk as they sat on the grass talking and laughing. He had turned away without a word, but later he sent one more picture, his last. They show it. It was a picture of a dog listening like a potentate to the prayers of a ragged beggar.

The cherry blossoms come again and the author goes to Kyoto to see them at their loveliest. One of the temples is built out over the edge of a cliff, and as he stands near there, a ragged beggar throws himself over. When the mangled body is brought up, he sees that it is Asada. The world weeps and raises a stone to the dead artist. The writer, knowing why the tragedy happened, again seeks O'Chika in a vague hope that she will pray at his grave. She has married the clerk and he finds her in her home.

"She had grown very much stouter; her marriage with the clerk, her kitchen work and the long afternoons at her washtubs agreed with her perfectly. She gazed at me awhile, ransacking the bag of her memory. At last she recognized me. With both of her plump bare arms in the air, and her eyes merry and round with satisfaction at recalling a face of so long ago, she cried: 'A-ah, young master, I know you! --- I know you!'

I was shocked. But I had the foolhardy persistence to stick to my plan.
'Your friend, Asada -- do you remember him? He died yesterday in this city -- 

'He did! Is that so? Ha, ha, ha! Well, I'm sorry ---- he was such a funny man, wasn't he, though?'

(This is a rather subtle psychological study of a beautiful girl, very much bound to earth; and an artist, trying to climb, but unwillingly held back by her whom he recognized as his inferior. The picture of the beggar and the dog shows so clearly the position of both, and his inability to break away. She will never understand, or feel any responsibility for the tragedy.)

II. Sangatsu Sakurano Sakujibun
(The Third Month When the Cherry Blossoms Blow)

Yone, the daughter of a tradesman, meets Hosoi, son of a samurai, at a local shrine and they fall in love. Since the tradesmen were next the outcast class, such an affair was hopeless, though Yone prayed to all the eight million gods. They met secretly, till one night in climbing over the bamboo fence, Yone fell into her father's arms. He followed her next time and was dismayed and angry to find her lover was a Hosoi. This boy's grandfather had killed Yone's grandfather because he had touched the samurai's sword with disrespect. The sensitiveness of a samurai for his sword (called in Japanese, his soul) could not brook such an insult and in a flash the tradesman's head was off.
The next day, the girl's hands are bound behind her back and she is suspended by them, her body raised and lowered as her mother turns a wheel, trying by torture to force her to consent to lure her lover to the edge of the cliff and push him over, thus avenging her grandfather. At last, she promises, but with the reservation that her mother push him over.

That night, the lovers sit on the seashore, and Yone listens to Hosoi's plan for an elopement to a mountain cottage where he will work for her. Yone looks up at her lover and the "stars fall into her tears". At last they must part and she begs that he will lend her his sword and coat, as she will feel safer going home so late if she looks like a samurai. He is surprised, but loves her so much he will give her even his sword. After he goes, she cuts off her hair like a nun, caresses the sand where he sat, and buries her hair there. In her heart, she hopes he will follow her, but "with that transcendental logic of women" she prays he will live long and happily. Then she climbs the cliff and stands with the sword (her lover's soul) by her side. In a second, her body is hurled over the edge, leaving a mystified mother who thought she heard, "Farewell, Mother", as the "samurai" disappeared. Terrified she begins to search for her daughter, till she is at last found senseless on the seashore. She is restored "to the bosom of a Buddhist temple and to the hell of remorse."3.

III. A Samurai Girl.

1. Page 42.  2. Page 43.  3. Page 52.
The setting for the story is an old samurai castle, full of the history of the past, but gradually falling to ruin. The elder sister still manages the household; her younger sisters have all married and left. The servants gossip that she is stingy. The young brother idly wonders why she never married. They think she is old-fashioned and cannot adjust herself to modern ways. She lives in the past with the old family treasures, which she has carried one by one to her apartment. The last to be removed is the old armor box. The armor itself was too sacred to be seen, but the children have been brought up to bow to the box as it stood in the place-of-honor. When it is removed, the brother, full of curiosity and modern irreverence asks to see the armor, and is severely rebuked. One night he visits her apartment and a sudden jar loosens the lid from the upright box, it falls open. His eyes spring up to catch a glimpse of the famous armor, and hang there amazed. The box is full of receipts from a Kyoto dealer! She has sold all the family treasures to provide dowries for her sisters and to keep the household from starvation.

IV. A Japanese Garden.

In a mossy thatched-roofed cottage a man tells his wife that he is a failure. He learned once to dwarf trees, then later he learned from a monk how to make gardens look like nature. He broke his vows to the monk when he left the monastery to marry her. Now his money is gone and he is hopeless.
She reassures him, but every day he seeks work in vain till they are poverty-stricken. Then the Elder of the village brings him a message that the Lord Chancellor has sent for him. He brings home a bag of gold, but that night makes another confession to his wife. The Mikado has summoned him, having heard of his skill in garden making, to make a garden on one side of his palace, but he has been merely boasting and really knows nothing of the art. He is faced with sure death. Next morning, his wife and the bag of gold are gone. Half-crazed, he tries to kill himself, and is put in prison. After a second attempt on his life, he reasons why not try to make the garden, since nothing worse than death will follow anyway.

So for three years, he lives inside the temporary walls he has erected about the plot of ground. A thousand workmen are at his command. Forty-three of them never leave the enclosure, but gradually the others are released, dazed, exhausted, and speechless. He, himself, is seen one day, a ghost of a man, wild, unkempt, looking like a beast.

Then the garden is opened. The Mikado enters and stands on the marble dais to view it. There is no sound from anyone as they stand spellbound gazing at it. There are no flowers, but a jungle of trees from all parts of the country. It is no formal garden, but nature copied; wild mountains, rocks that fought, frowned, preached faithfulness, prophesied eternity. The Emperor's imagination ran wild. When at last he tore his eyes away, he held out the purple robe of honor, but his
gardener lay at his feet, his life fast passing into the marble dais where he crouched.

V. Aboard the "Akagi".

A story of a battle of the Yellow Sea.

This is one of the many stories clustering about the famous battle of August, 1894, during the Chinese-Japanese war. Two tiny battleships, the Akagi and the Hiyei, bravely try to cross the Chinese line. Their strategy calls for the admiration even of the enemy.

On board the Akagi, is a boy who intends to die for his country. When he went to bid his sweetheart good-by, she urged him to stay a few days longer. Because he could not resist her pleading, she is convinced that love for her will make a coward of him. She presents him with a beautiful short sword, a family heirloom. Before he takes it, she draws it out to caress it once more, and plunges it into her throat, praying him to fight valiently for his country.

His ship, the Akagi, follows to assist the Hiyei, which is being shot to pieces. The flag of the Akagi is shot down, and in rescuing it, he is killed, a circle of red showing on the back of his white coat -- the red and white of the Rising Sun flag.

VI. A Japanese Sword.

A samurai wife loses her husband, who has been killed in a duel. She shuts up her anguish in her heart, and brings up her baby boy to avenge his father. He swears before the shrine
that he will not live in the same world with his father's foe. He learns fencing from the most famous teachers till they can teach him no more. He finally goes to another teacher, Hida, who treats him like a son. The boy loves his teacher so much that he prays he may give his life for him. One day he tells him of his life mission. The teacher makes no reply, and from day to day puts off telling the boy that he is the enemy. Finally on his twentieth birthday, he gives him a fine party, and later alone in the summer house tells him. The boy asks for a month to prepare. Every night he studies the face of the sword. He dreams of his mother, who smiles and points to it. Then he sends the challenge to Hida to meet him at a certain shrine in the early morning. Hida waits, but the boy does not come. He walks about the shrine grounds and comes upon the boy's body. He has committed hara-kiri, leaving a note to say that he is a coward because of his love for Hida.

(Note: This is one of the extremely rare stories of forgiveness. Of the collection, the Japanese would doubtless consider this the most tragic, since the boy has disgraced the family name.)

VII. Hirata Kojiro: A story of Tokio Society.

This humorous story is a breath of fresh air after the tragic ones preceding. Hirata, a man so beautiful that all the women fall in love with him, decides to become a missionary. He begins with Count Yoshimori's young wife. He makes love to her and plans an elopement to America. On the fatal night, she
descends the ladder only to find herself in her husband's arms. Hirata walks out calmly from the shadow. He has planned all this with her husband to deflate her romantic ideas. He is a missionary to save husband's sweethearts. Romance dies, and she becomes a true and docile wife.

VIII. Kataki Uchi.

At the moon-viewing festival of a feudal lord, a drunken samurai boasts of a youthful conquest, and to prove his story, produces a delicate scent bag which he says the lady gave him. Kumando recognized it as a family treasure which he gave his wife, and one day returning from a picnic she says she has lost it. He draws his sword as the samurai finishes his story, intending to avenge her for the scandal the man is spreading, but his friends interfere, so his foe escapes. The penalty for drawing a sword in his lord's house is hara-kiri. Next day he prepares himself. His wife begs to be allowed to attend him on his journey over the mountain of death, but he reproves her saying his foe still lives. She begs his pardon.

After his death, she studies swordsmanship from her father, and one day sends a challenge to Kaneko, the samurai. Both dressed in the customary white death robes, they meet at the shrine and fight. Her sword breaks, but with a deft movement, she plunges the broken hilt into his heart and avenges her husband.

IX. The Death of a Ghost.

Himura, an artist, with an artistic imagination is wildly
jealous of his beautiful wife, O'Fuji. She admires his genius and tries to protect him from annoyances, especially about money matters. He comes home one day to hear a fragment of conversation between her and his brother, who unbeknown to him has been helping her settle some financial affair. Misunderstanding, he thinks she is false, and begins drinking heavily. One day he is brought home unconscious, and apparently dead. The heartbroken wife prepares to follow him. Dressed in the death-robe, she sits with the brother in the next room, and begins the usual speech to the spirit of the dead, vowing her endless love and faithfulness. The husband regains consciousness, thinks she is talking to the brother and enters the room, his face distorted with rage. The wife thinks it is his ghost, angry at her delay and quickly stabs herself. The husband springs at his brother, sinks his teeth in his throat, killing him, and falling dead upon his body.

X. A Dream on Suwa-Yama.

This is a glimpse of the author's own life. The son of a samurai, he and his mother retire after the Restoration to a mountain farm. One day, dressed just for fun in his samurai costume with his two swords, they are surprised by a Japanese lady entering their home, followed by a "red barbarian". The latter has come to Japan to study art and wishes to board with them. After much consideration his mother consents. The young man finds her gradually becoming beautiful in his eyes. She is a gentle Virginian, different from anyone he has ever seen.
Then one day, he finds her sitting on the mountain side where he has been piling some brush, and knows he is in love with her. Next morning she is gone, leaving a note and a picture. She has invited him when he is ready to come to California --- so they can talk over old times.

XI. In the Old Castle Moat of Kameyama.

Prince Akechi was building a castle. A man in begging rags walks boldly up and asks the privilege of building it. Amazed, the Prince consents. A wonderful castle of huge stones is raised, but at the dedication the tower is seen to lean. The architect will not be satisfied, and tears it all down.

While he is re-building, a Princess of Echigo comes seeking her husband. He is an architect and she has opposed his artistic talents, so he has disappeared. Prince Akechi urges her and her daughter to wait till the castle is finished, then at the dedication, he shall be restored in triumph to his long-lost family. The Prince does not realize the irony of his plan. When the castle is done, during the great celebration, the architect is led blindfolded to the vantage point to view his work. The bandage is removed, everyone shouts his praise, his wife and daughter cling to him. But he only stares at the tower. Again it leans. Without a word or a glance at anyone, he puts his chisel in his teeth and plunges into the moat.

There is now a catfish, with a chisel in its teeth that lives in the moat. Small boys mustn't fish there.
XII. A Geisha

O’Chika, a country girl who longs to be admired, goes to Tokyo and becomes a geisha. She poses for Kagawa Yuko, an artist, and they fall in love. His sister brings a group of friends for him to conduct around the capital, and when they leave, he is engaged to one of them. He doesn’t tell O’Chika till the picture is finished, then he explains that it was a family arrangement. At first, her face looked "like a shoji (paper door) screening a burning room". She threw the finished canvas to the floor and stamped it to pieces. Then begged forgiveness and asked only that she may go on loving him.

After his marriage, he returns to seek her and finds her one night hiding in the garden. She slips away promising to meet him to-morrow, but that night drowns herself in the Yotsuya moat.

XIII. Sakuma Sukenari

Sukenari was a famous outlaw. For years he had robbed the rich to give to the poor, and no one had ever succeeded in catching him. He lived simply and had only one wish, to see again his daughter, whom he had lost when she was a child. One night, he entered a wealthy man’s home and found a baby awake beside its young mother. For a long time, forgetful of his business, he played with the baby, who cried if he tried to go away. The mother murmured to it in her sleep, but did not wake. Taking a little chest as a souvenir of the happiest
night of his life, he slipped away at dawn. Opening the chest, he finds a tiny sack he gave his daughter with a lucky charm, and knows she is the young mother, the baby, his grandchild.

The police had set a price upon his head, and he has promised his life to the gods if he finds his daughter again. She is wealthy and happy, but he wishes she might be again raised to the rank of samurai from which he has fallen. Her husband is a chonin (tradesman). His plan finally evolves.

Going as a priest to the house, he asks the privilege of blessing mother and child, then tells the wife to send her husband to a certain shrine in the morning and he will have good luck. The chonin enters the shrine, passes the notice which says that anyone who delivers Sukenari, dead or alive, to the police will be rewarded and raised to the rank of samurai. Before the shrine is the dead body of the robber, the little sack still in his lap. The chonin tells his wife that doubtless he stole the chest hoping to find a treasure and was fooled. Neither know of his history or connection with them, but he accomplishes his purpose.