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WORK TO DO.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

Take the spade of perseverance,
Dig the field of progress wide;
Every rotten root of faction
Hurry out and cast aside;
Every stubborn weed of error;
Every reed that hurts the soil;
Tares whose every growth is terror—
Dig them out, whate'er the toll.

Give the stem of education
Broader channel, bolder force;
Hurl the stones of persecution
Out where'er they block thy course;
Seek for strength in self-exertion;
Work and still have faith to wait;
Close the crooked gate to fortune;
Make the road to honor straight.

Men are agents for the future;
As they work, so ages win
Either harvest of advancement,
Or the products of their sin.
Follow out true cultivation;
Widen education's plan;
From the majesty of nature
Teach the majesty of man.

Take the spade of perseverance,
Dig the field of progress wide;
Every bar to true instruction
Carry out and cast aside;
Feed the plant whose fruit is wisdom;
Cleanse from crime the common sod,
So that from the throne of Heaven
It may bear the glance of God.

[From the Washington Union.]

JAPAN.

Extracts from two letters written by Townsend Harris,
American Consul, Simoda, July 3 and 6, 1853.

JOURNEY FROM SIMODA TO YEDDO.

"On the lovely morning of Monday, Nov. 23, I started for the long-desired goal of my wishes—Yeddo. Four lads, with small bamboo wands, led the way as harbingers, and their voices sounded quite musical as they sang the Japanese words for 'clear the way,' 'clear the way,' 'kneel down,' 'kneel down.' Next followed a Japanese officer, on horseback; then came a large lackered tablet, bearing my name and titles in immense Chinese characters. The tablet was supported by two huge transparent lanterns, which bore similar inscriptions. (When I halted, the tablet was placed in front of my quarters, and at night the lanterns were lighted and hung up over the gate of the house.) Next came a stout fellow, bearing the 'stars and stripes,' with four guards. I followed either on horseback or in my norrimon, and attended by twelve guards. Next came Mr. Heuskin (interpreter), and after him I do not recollect how it was arranged, except that the Vice-Governor brought up the rear.

For the first three days the route was entangled among mountains and deep ravines which compose the peninsula of Idsu. The path (for it could not be called a road) was narrow, and in many places was formed by cutting steps in the Jufa rocks, and sometimes it ran over mountains 4,000 feet high. On the second day I reached Ugasima, and as I emerged from the gorges of Mount Amagi I had my first view of 'Fust Yama,' the 'Matchless Mountain.' The sight was grand beyond description. As viewed from the Temple at Ugasima, the mountain appears to be entirely isolated, and shoots up in a glorious and perfect cone 10,000 feet high! It was covered with snow, and in the bright sunlight it glittered like frosted silver. In its majestic solitude it struck me as being even more grand and imposing than the celebrated Dwhalgiri of the Himala mountains.

For the first two nights I was lodged in temples, which had been fitted up for me, with new bath-rooms and other appliances to contribute to my comfort. On the evening of the third day I arrived at Missima, a town on the To-ky-do, or great East road, and from thence to Yeddo the road is wide and good. On the great roads of Japan nice buildings are erected for the accommodation of the princes when they travel; they are called Howjin; and it was in them that I had my quarters for the remainder of my journey."

"My first day's journey on the To-ky-do was over the mountain Hacone, which is some 4,500 feet high. After I had passed the crest of the mountain, and had descended about one-third of the way, I came to a perfect bijou of a rest house. Everything was in miniature. The house was new, and nothing could exceed its neatness. A miniature garden adorned the rear; the trees were dwarfed to the smallest of possible sizes. Here were tiny temples and grottoes, and bridges so petite that nothing heavier than a fairy could walk over them. A canal and fish-pond, paved with snow-white pebbles, were filled with water of crystal clearness; the gold and silver fish, however, were of enormous size, some being quite two feet long, and a gray-headed old carp appeared to be the patriarch of the funny family."

ROADS.

"The roads were all repaired and cleanly swept on the whole of my route before I passed;

bridges were put in order, and many new ones built; all travel on the road was stopped, so that I did not see those crowds of travelers, priests, nuns, etc., described by Kemper; the shops in all the towns and villages were closed (except cook-shops and tea-houses), and the inhabitants, clad in their holiday clothes, knelt on mats spread in front of their houses; not a sound was heard, nor a gesture indicative of curiosity seen; all was respectful silence. The people were ordered to cast down their eyes as I passed, as I was too high even to be looked at; but this order was only partially obeyed, for the dear daughters of Eve would have a peep, regardless of consequences.

The authorities of the towns and villages met me at their boundaries, and saluted me by kneeling and "knocking head;" they then led the way through their little jurisdictions, and took leave by similar prostrations."

YEDDO.

"On Monday, the 30th of November, I made my entry into Yeddo. My followers put on their camissimos, or dresses of ceremony, decorated with any quantity of eagles.

I should not have known when I passed the line which separates Sinagana from Yeddo had the spot not been pointed out to me, as the houses form a continuous street for some miles before you reach the actual boundary of the city. From the gate by which I entered the city to my quarters was about seven miles.

The streets of Yeddo are divided into sections of 120 yards by gates and palisades of strong timber. This enables the police to isolate any portion of the city, or any line running through it, and thus prevent the assembling of crowds or mobs. When we approached a gate it was opened, and as soon as the rear had passed through it was closed. The gates of all the cross streets were also kept closed. I could see immense crowds beyond the gates, but the people on our actual line of march were those only that occupied the buildings on the route.

Notwithstanding all this, the number that assembled was prodigious. The center of the way was kept clear, and the crowd kept back by ropes stretched along each side of the street. The assemblage was composed of men, women and children, of all ranks and conditions—the women being the larger number.

I estimated the two lines of people that extended along the way, from my entrance into the city to the place provided for my residence, to have been full 300,000. Yet in all this vast concourse I did not hear a word, except the constant cry of the Harbingers, Satu, satu!

You may think it impossible that silence could have been maintained among so large a number of women, but I assure you it was.

The house prepared for me was situated within the fourth circle of the most aristocratic portion of the city, and large enough to accommodate 500 persons in the Japanese manner."

DRESS.

"The usual dress of the Japanese nobles is of silk, but the court dress is made of a coarse yellow grass cloth, and for a coronet they wear a black lackered affair that looks like a distracted night cap. I did not see a single gem, jewel or ornament of any description about the person of the Emperor, neither about those who composed the Emperor's council."

JUGGLERS.

"The jugglers are very clever. One of them made two butterflies of common thin paper. He first raised one of them up in the air by the wind of his fan, made it flutter about his head, alight on his finger, his arm, and his face; he next set the pair in motion, and it was really wonderful to see how natural the action was. They chased each other through the air in circles, sometimes horizontal and sometimes vertical; they hovered over the water that was in a china bowl, and at last alighted on the rim of the bowl. The top-spinners would produce a sensation in New York.

For the amusement of your children, and especially for the amusement of the little lady that was so indignant at seeing my likeness exposed in the open air, I will describe the performance.

The exhibitor having spun a top, placed it on a board, where it revolved with great rapidity and steadiness; he then took it up and laid it on its side, where it remained without motion; he then talked to the top, and at the top; and, after making sundry flourishes with his fan, he again placed it upright on the board, and lo! it spun away as merrily as ever. Another top, when lifted by the spindle, made a noise exactly like your locust when held in the hand.

A top was declared to be a female, and having let it spin awhile, he took it up, shook it, and down fell seven distinct tops, all of which whirled merrily round. Another suddenly changed into a lantern, and, after whirling some time, the lamp in the lantern was spontaneously lighted. A piece of sewing thread about five yards long was held extended by two persons; the exhibitor put a top on this thread, and it ran from one end to the other, always upright, and constantly revolving. The same feat was performed on the edge of a sword; the top ran from the hilt to the point, and back again to the hilt.

I will only describe one more feat. In the

court-yard, where the exhibition took place, a pole some 30 feet high was planted in the ground; from a cross-bar at the top of the pole a small house was suspended (like your martin boxes), and from the door of the house a piece of twine hung down to the ground; the exhibitor placed a spinning top on the palm of his left hand, and seized the twine with his right, then tossing the top up in the air, he dexterously cast a turn of the twine around the lower spindle, and the top instantly began to ascend the twine, reached the door, which it forced open; entered the house, and then quietly laid down to rest! In all this exhibition there was neither trick nor deception; it was a plain exhibition of skill.

The distance from Simoda to Yeddo is 130 miles by land; by water it is only about 80 miles."

DESCRIPTION OF YEDDO.

"It was not until my second visit to Yeddo that I made any excursions in or around the city. I visited many temples, gardens, etc. The temples have nothing that arrests the attention in their structure or in their interiors, being in this respect less costly and ornamental than the Chinese temples. They are, however, kept much cleaner than the latter. They are usually placed in fine, open grounds and surrounded by noble trees. The grounds are neatly kept and are adorned with flowering shrubs and trees, among which the plum and cherry tree are to be remarked; they produce enormous blossoms, but, alas! like many showy men, they produce no fruit; rhododendrons of great beauty, and of the following colors, viz.: pink, scarlet, crimson, blue, yellow, violet and white.

The dwarfing of trees and distorting them into queer shapes is much practiced; and they cut the foliage into rounded forms like dishes. I saw a number of cedars whose trunks and branches might be taken as representing the braid of a vast epergne, while the foliage looked like emerald dishes.

The houses of the Japanese are of wood, and never more than two stories high; they are covered with thatch or tiles; the front and ends are closed by wooden window-sashes, covered with paper, which gives a pleasant light in the interior, and wooden shutters enclose the windows at night. The interior is divided into rooms by means of sliding partitions, made of wooden frames, covered with paper. These partitions can be removed in a few moments and the whole house thrown into one room. The floors are covered with straw mats some two inches thick; they are soft and fine, and are kept exquisitely clean. Neither chair, table, couch, nor bedstead, nor any ornamental article, is to be seen. The mat serves as a chair and table by day, and as a bed at night. This description of a house will apply to all, from the palace of the Emperor to the cottage of the peasant. In winter they are warmed by charcoal brasiers. There is not a chimney nor a pane of window glass to be found in the whole empire.

The gilded columns supporting the fretted ceilings, and golden roofs of stately palaces, described by the old writers on Japan, are not to be found, and I am assured by the Japanese that they never had any existence out of the 'Traveler's Tales,' which relate such marvels about Japan."

PEOPLE.

The Japanese are eminently genial in their dispositions, and there is a cordiality in their refined politeness that convinces one of their sincerity. They are frugal in everything, and utilitarian up to the standard of good and wise old Jeremy Bentham. Food is abundant and cheap. The beggars of Japan are mostly a religious class, and all are as fat as seals. Not one Japanese in fifty ever tastes of any animal food except fish.

Sugar is the only luxury, and yet I buy it here in Simoda cheaper than you can in New York. They are the best fed, clad, and lodged, and the least overworked, of any people on earth. God grant that future generations may not have cause to regret the hour I arrived in Japan! The usual dress of the Japanese of rank is of silk; but on the occasion of my audience the nobles wore dresses made of a coarse yellow grass cloth. This, as they say, is to remind them of the poverty and frugality of their ancestors. I have never seen a diamond, pearl, or ornament of gold or silver, worn by any person in Japan.

As you take an interest in the 'fair sex,' you will expect some description of the beauties of Japan. The women of condition never make visits (except the mother to a married daughter), have no assemblages of their 'dear five hundred friends;' nor do they assemble at the tea table, to hold high courts of censure on the manners and morals of their friends. They go out once or twice in a year to visit some celebrated temple, but their ordinary devotions are paid at a shrine within their houses, or at a pretty *miu* erected within the inclosures of their grounds.

The females of the laboring classes perform some portion of out-door labor; but they are not overworked as in China and other parts of Asia.

Polygamy obtains—i. e., a man may have any number of 'second wives.' When a female is selected as a first wife, she prepares for her 'change of condition' by smearing her

teeth with a horrid mixture which not only blackens them for ever, but also destroys a portion of the gums, and the lips sometimes remain permanently swollen. She next shaves her eyebrows and exterminates her eyelashes, and changes the fashion of her hair. She has now only to bring the knot of her girdle round to the front, and all the world knows that she is a first wife, the commander-in-chief of all the 'second wives,' and the undisputed proprietress of all the children born in the house. This last privilege reminds one of a similar right exercised by the wives of the respectable Abraham (Rachel and Leah). The second wives do not perform any of these absurd actions, consequently they are by far the best looking in the eyes of the To-jin or foreigners. A lady in full dress—i. e., made up for mischief—is worth describing. Her face is thickly covered with rice flour, on which rouge—real rouge—is prettily placed, while her lips are brought to that just violet tinge that drives the Japanese lover even to making poetry; her robes are numerous and clumsy, and her girdle is so vast in its amplitude, that it would make a robe for any ordinary woman; her head is bristling with metal ornaments that look like the grandfathers of all the tuning-forks; her really pretty feet are protected by neat straw sandals; when she walks she minces her steps as though her legs were tied together at the knees.

Did I ever tell you of the description a young Malay Tumangong, of Sumatra, once gave me of a young girl with whom he was in love? No. Then you shall have it now: 'Tuan,' said he, 'Tuan, she is high-bosomed and moon-faced; she has a mole on her cheek like a spot of ambergris; her lips are like the new-cut shell of the mangosteen; her teeth are whiter than the chamhaka flower; her breath makes the clove-tree die with envy; her hair is blacker than the night of separation to the distracted lover; her form is like a branch of willow, and as she walks her hips move from side to side!'

SIZE AND POPULATION.

Yeddo covers more ground than London, and its population is about two millions. The Japanese say that no census is ever taken in Japan; that returns are made of the numbers of certain classes; but as the nobles, peasants, mechanics and women and children are omitted from these returns, they do not serve even as a basis for estimates of population.

The Japanese gave me a map of the city, but as it is constructed without reference to a scale, it is of little value; even the compass-bearings of different points in the city are incorrect. The streets generally are of good width and are well sewered, but they are all unpaved. No carriages are seen; a few hand-carts are used to transport heavy articles; canals intersect the city in various directions.

The chief feature of Yeddo is the 'Castle,' as it is called. This consists of four irregular circles, or rather polygons, all surrounded with moats or ditches; the three inner circles have stone walls, or a bank of earth faced with stone, and varying in height from twelve to thirty feet, according to the nature of the ground on which they are built. The gateways through the walls open into quadrangles of fifty to sixty feet; the gate of egress being placed at right angles with the entrance gate. As a means of defense, the Castle is unworthy of its name, except against assailants armed with bows and arrows. The moats are fordable, and are some eighty to one hundred and fifty feet wide, spanned by neat wooden bridges. The inner polygon is occupied exclusively by the Emperor and his sons and families; the second, by the Council of State and Princes; the third and fourth polygons by the Dimios, titular princes, and high officers of the government.

GIGANTIC GRAPE VINE.—The Horticulturist for October, 1858, gives an engraved representation and account of a grape-vine at West Hill, near Burlington, that measures six feet and one inch around the trunk three feet above the ground, and three feet around at ten feet high. In extent, it is equally enormous, spreading over four large forest trees, one of which is a full-sized black oak—the largest tree being ten feet in circumference two feet above the ground. The monstrous vine is a male, of the wild grapes of the country; and, although regarded as a wonder in the youth of a woman of ninety-eight years, who lives near it, she has never known it to bear fruit. The circumference of the ground covered by the branches of this vine is over 100 feet. Vines are recorded of the known age of 600 years—Statues have been carved from grape-wood and pillars made from it; even the large doors of the Cathedral of Revenna are made of the grape tree. In some parts of Italy, says Miller, a vine is considered young at 100 years, and there are plants in existence which have been cultivated 300 years."

WHEAT SOWN IN HILLS.—A writer in the Tennessee Farmer says that he has tried the cultivation of wheat in hills, like corn, leaving the hills two feet apart each way, and two or three plants to the hill. And he reports of obtaining from a plat of ground a crop so large as to be equal to two hundred bushels to the acre. The soil is kept stirred and cultivated during the growth of the crop.