

"JAPAN AS IT IS."

Does it Imitate American Culture Without Undertaking It and Scoff at Native Writers?

Yone Noguchi, the celebrated young Japanese poet who, for ten years, resided in America and England, has lately returned to Japan to lecture on American literature in a Japanese university. Writing from Tokyo he contributes to the National Magazine a scathing indictment of literary and educational conditions in his own country. In part he says:

"Our Japanese writers are working under the most unfortunate conditions. They are not given a proper reading public, as in America—or the 'Western Sea,' as we say in Japan. Strange to say, in spite of the widespread report of the enlightened civilization of the Meiji Era, the truth is that not until lately is the general public beginning to recognize that culture, the feeding one's thoughts nobly, or the understanding what is human kind, is gained only through literature."

"Since the Restoration (1867), Japan was put in a forge of change—the most sudden and tremendous revolution ever known in the history of the world—whose tumult has not yet subsided. Spiritual peace is not yet attained. The builders of modern Japan, having been born in the disturbance of the destruction of the Tokugawa feudalism, did not get the perfect samurai education or gentleman's education of those days. They came to America instead. They saw and were astounded at the material civilization of telegraphs, steamers and machinery."

"The real American culture they did not have time to fathom; the spiritual civilization was a closed book. Only a few of them acquired superficial knowledge of Christianity, 'swallowed it,' as we say colloquially. They had neither the best of their ancestors' culture nor could they grasp completely the best essence of American civilization."

"Nevertheless, notwithstanding their poor equipment, these people form the educational structure of Ja-

pan today, and they belong to what are termed the upper classes. True literature they have always regarded as an imbecility. They are on speaking acquaintance with Shakespeare, Thackeray, Dickens and Hugo. But they do not know that English literature is 'built on the Greek or Roman. They do not know any of the present writers or poets of England or America, and furthermore they know not one of their own, but they denounce, without the slightest investigation, the modern Japanese literature as inferior."

"They have not read any of the best literature of our Japan of the early age, either; the books of Chikamatsu, of Saikaku, of Genji or Makurazoshi. And as for the modern masters, the late Koyo Ozaki, Rohan Koda and Ichio Higuchi, they never mention them."

"And the people under forty as a reading public? They also are a disappointment. And the source of the whole evil is in the flimsy education they have gained and are gaining. Our modern education is far too hasty; our common high school has too many courses of useless study and lacks the most important one for the nourishment of the human mind. The students are then moved into the higher middle school, where they are turned into a specialty all at once and are not given time for general knowledge or for gaining the cultivation worthy of a man. Then they enter the university, and with the exception of the students of the literary department, all show a terrible gap in human knowledge. As students of humanity, history and general culture they are poverty stricken. Their thoughts are not uplifting. Their ignorance of the purest literature lowers their ideals all but obliterates them. They become the most uninteresting persons. The children of such fathers will be bound to suffer. The family will be a tasteless gathering."

FARM LABORERS EXCURSION.

Notice to Intending Excursionists.

This year's wheat crop in Manitoba and the Canadian Northwest has matured early, owing to the very favorable conditions that have prevailed throughout the entire season, and will far exceed in quality and quantity that of previous seasons. It is estimated that not less than twenty-five thousand laborers will be required to assist in the harvesting and an additional five thousand as soon as threshing commences.

The farm laborers' excursion from the maritime provinces is the first excursion to be run this year, and laborers from our provinces will therefore have advantage over those from other sections—inasmuch as they will be the first on the ground, and will have the choice of positions and the longest period to work, and it is expected that the number to go from the provinces this year will far exceed that of previous years.

The object of this excursion is to assist the farmers of the Northwest in harvesting their crops, and incidentally to enable the excursionists to visit and look over the country—at the same time earning sufficient money to defray the expenses of the trip.

The excursion from the maritime provinces has been arranged as follows:—

From points in Nova Scotia East of New Glasgow, excursion will be Friday, Aug. 18th. An extra train will leave Sydney at 11.00 a. m., stopping at all stations between Sydney and New Glasgow to pick up excursionists.

From other points in Nova Scotia and from points in New Brunswick, excursion will be on Saturday, August 19th. The I. C. R. will start a passenger extra train from Halifax at 7.00 a. m., which will run through to St. John stopping at all stations to pick up excursionists. Business New Glasgow to Truro and Pictou to Oxford Junction will be carried on regular morning trains to main line Jct. points. From points north of Moncton to Campbellton, excursionists should proceed to that point by local trains taking Maritime Express from Campbellton.

From the Canada Eastern section, excursionists will be carried by regular trains to Fredericton.

From Prince Edward Island excursion will be on Saturday, August nineteenth, by regular trains from Tignish, Souris and Georgetown, with a passenger extra train from Charlottetown to Summerside, and during the evening the S. S. Northumberland will make a special trip to Point du Chene, from which point excursionists will travel by passenger extra trains.

Farm laborers' tickets will not be honored on any regular train on the main line of the Intercolonial between Halifax and St. John.

From Dominion Atlantic Railway points excursionists will travel on regular trains to Digby, and by S. S. Prince Rupert to St. John, thence by passenger extra trains.

From St. John N. B., and main line points west thereof, farm laborers will be carried on passenger extra trains. Tickets will not be honored on any regular main line train.

From Canadian Pacific branch line points, excursionists will be carried to main line junction points by regular trains.

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The Old Time Parlor.

The days of the parlor are fast going. There was once a time when every family, no matter how poor, had its parlor. And generally the parlor was a most useless place, but it was the pride of the housewife. The Observant Citizen remembers some time ago when the lady of the house insisted that he should see "her parlor." Her husband smiled good naturedly, and they both led the way to a big front room which was locked. The door was unlocked, and the parlor got its first fresh air in months. The little family had expended much money on the parlor. Everything was new but the stuffed birds under glass cases. The design of the carpet was wonderful in that it consisted of bright red roses. One felt like stepping into a bed of flames. A horse-shoe sofa, very erect, was the principal article of furniture, while at the windows were the stiffest lace curtains you ever saw. The room had a musty smell due to long confined air. It was "luxury imprisoned" on a small scale and the finest example of the old time useless parlor.

Shaved While He Slept.

"My first day in India," said the tourist, "I was surprised when I awoke in the morning to feel how smooth my face was."

"By Jove," I said, "how slowly my beard grew yesterday! I hardly need to shave today."

"It is, however, a matter of religion with me to shave every morning, and so I bade the native servant, a man provided by my host, to fetch my shaving things. The native smiled."

"But you are already shaved, sir," he said.

"Already shaved?" said I.

"Yes, sir," he answered. "I shaved you while you slept. That is the custom here."

"I found that he was right. I found that in India these wonderful native servants shave their masters in bed every morning without waking them. "All through my stay in India I was shaved like that. It was almost enough to keep me in that hot and torrid country forever."

Generous.

Nephew—Do you know, uncle, I dreamed last night you had lent me \$10! Uncle (generously)—Is that so? Ah, well, you may keep it, Otto.—Per- roquet.

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