INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN JAPAN

BY PAUL S. REINSCH

THE Japanese have often been described as prosaic and lacking in imagination. In any inquiry as to how far they possess this divine faculty it is necessary that we should distinguish between the different modes in which imagination manifests itself. The constructive imagination which bodies forth before the mental vision new and original combinations of ideas wrought into organic unity appears not only in literature, philosophy, and the fine arts, but it also guides and inspires the scientific discoverer, the builder of cities, and the general who plans a battle or a campaign. The Japanese may not equal the Greeks and other more modern Western nations in the power to summon philosophical and poetical visions, but they have certainly exhibited the highest type of constructive imagination in other directions. In the Russian war they showed a grasp of detail and a power of combining and planning which proved able to cope with the greatest strategical and tactical problems that have ever confronted man. The extent of the battle line, the variety and novelty of the means of destruction, the new conditions and unaccustomed uses of each military factor—all these were wrought by the strategic imagination of a Kodama into a force of irresistible impetus. Such a vast complex of details had never before been carried in a human mind. Nor could the generals survey the scene from a high eminence; at the staff headquarters they received intelligence from all parts of the battlefield by telephone, and their orders flashed to the regiments and corps by electricity. Modern war requires in its generals the power of imagination in a far higher measure than did all former situations of military leadership. In the organization of the banking and credit system of Japan her statesmen and financiers have shown a similar grasp and com-

mand of intangible forces. Nor is the transformation of feudal loyalty and traditional authority into modern political power a lesser achievement. Indeed, the Japanese have abundantly demonstrated their powers of ideal construction. It would even seem that their imagination at times runs riot and pictures forth achievements that are not in accord with the normal laws of human activity. Their mercurial character renders them visionary. They see their nation as the Lohengrin of Asia; some bold individual may undertake to create a new religion; or, again, publicists will propose a diplomatic policy that rests on airy nothing. Yet this characteristic bears witness to the presence of a power of imagination which needs only sobering down by scientific training to make it effective in durable construction. As the Japanese learn to understand more and more the reign of law in nature and in human affairs the waywardness of their visionary nature will be disciplined to more substantial uses. Hearn, who observes in the Japanese a certain incapacity for abstract reasoning, looks forward to the day when they will produce " Napoleons of the practical applications of science."

In the field of fancy the Japanese are among the first. Their imaginative life is Ariel-like. It is a spirit world full of the unaccountable moods of ghosts and fairies, yet with a charm and sweet reasonableness all its own. What more awesome feat of the imagination than the belief that the myriad of ancestral ghosts are upholding the national life and fighting its battles; that the departed witness the action of to-day, glory in our triumphs, are saddened by our defeats! No metaphor here, no poetical fancy merely, but a deep conviction of spirit life, on the strength of which statesmen may build policies and risk the fortune of unequal war. And in its lighter moods, how fanciful is this same spirit world, how full of delicate suggestions and imagery all that is related to it. Mirrors are spirit haunts. Who could ever forget the pathetic story told by Hearn of the little maiden who held gentle converse with the reflection in her silver mirror in the belief that she saw before her the face of her departed mother? When shrines are erected to the greater among the spirits, it is not necessary to fill them with images and altars. The spiritual pervasion is sufficient, and to those who look in through the latticed sides the vacant space within is filled with a presence all the

more impressive, as no trappings distract the thought from the deep emotion of spiritual contact. All nature is alive with the essence of past generations. The spirits of the drowned move with the waters forever, and there are lord spirits of mountain, of river, and of soil. The soil of Japan is thus sacred in a sense most real and deeply felt by the people.

In its lighter moods, fancy is present everywhere—in the turn of expression, in the interpretation of feeling, in the description of common things. The Japanese are quick to discover the romantic in the ordinary, to catch unobvious analogies; they see existence with the eyes of humor and fancy. Oni, the goblins, and Sennin, the fairies, give their names to plants and insects. A snowy landscape is spoken of as "a silver world." As in their paintings and color prints, the Japanese interpret the beauty of snow in an unrivaled manner; so that they expressed its poetry in spoken words, as in the stanza written by a woman poet far back in the eleventh century:

> "To my lover
> I thought to show them,
> The sweet plum blossoms.
> Now snow is falling fast,
> Blossoms and snow are one."

Traditionally, poetical expression in Japan has been confined to the light lyrical touches of the Tanka and Haikai. These graceful and delicate sketches give mere suggestions to the mind, which imagination will expand into a more complete picture:

> "Morning-glories hold
> Bucket at well.
> I beg for water."

This may suggest a garden well overgrown with flowers in such profusion that water cannot be drawn without tearing away some of the blossoms, so the considerate maiden must go to the neighbors to ask for water. Such poetry does not stifle the imagination; it is a stimulus at the touch of which a fertile native fancy unfolds its powers. No two men would translate these little Japanese poems alike, because each would receive from them a different imaginative impulse.

Epic and narrative poetry did not exist in Japan; nor any poetry of extensive form, except the solemn and august hymns chanted in Buddhist and Shinto worship. Some of these are deeply effective in their stately cadence and the images shadowed forth in their language. But poetry in Japan has never risen to that height and that importance as an element in civilization which Western poetry achieved through Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe. In the whirl of modern change Japanese literary men have had little time to dream new visions of poetic beauty. In 1882 three authors published jointly a book on the *Poetry of the New Form* (Shintaishi Shu) in an attempt to break down the strict formal requirements of older Japanese poetry, and to introduce a greater freedom of movement and diversity of character. Many experiments have been made. Some writers have produced longer poems divided into stanzas. Others have even experimented with rhyme, but it is so entirely unadapted to Japanese diction that the syllabic cadence had ultimately to be retained. All the innovators favor the free use of Chinese words, which is not admissible under the traditional rules of poetry in Japan. The Japanese seem to have the same feeling toward Chinese words that we hold toward Latin derivatives. These appeal to the intellect and, naturally, well express logical operations, but of the feelings of the heart we do not like to speak in other than the words that have for ages been the mother tongue.

It is in connection with the drama that the power of Japanese imagination especially reveals itself. In our Western opera we let imagination rule and do not strive to reconcile the behavior of the beings on the stage with logical thought. But for a pure dreamland of historical romance and fairy frolic we must go to the Japanese theater. The older drama of Japan was poetical in concept and form. It still survives in the *No* plays, which are performed privately at court festivals and other pretentious entertainments. It is here that the splendor of feudal Japan unfolds itself in all its gorgeousness, as Heredia has pictured it for us in his brilliant sonnets. The resplendent procession moves across the stage to the sound of Old-World music, and with the accompaniment of classic dancing. Here all the traditions of medieval art are still alive. But the diction of the drama is in a classic style so remote from the present

vernacular that not even educated Japanese can follow the language of the play. It is no more intelligible to the audience than is the Greek of Æschylos to an American playgoer.

Popular play-acting was formerly looked down upon by people of social standing. Actors were despised as outcasts and plays were considered amusing only to the rabble. Yet gradually the drama has developed into an acknowledged institution in the national life. Its material is historical; the stirring life of old feudal Japan—of the daimios, the samurai, and their attendants—in all its brilliant coloring is unfurled before the large audiences of the popular theater. Turning aside from the cares of business, the din of machinery, and the street turmoil of modern Japan, the people here enter the portals of the romantic past and steep themselves in the traditional ideals and aspirations of their nation. Modern life impresses both playwright and theatergoer as essentially unromantic, and the art of the Japanese theater has not yet become realistic in structure and ideas. It still aims at edification rather than illusion. Nevertheless, in the portrayal of nature the most realistic effects are achieved. The waterfalls and snow-storms of the Japanese stage, produced though they are by the simplest of means, would be the despair of the Western stage-manager. There is thus a strange mixture of realistic detail with a dramatic structure that makes great demands upon the imagination.

In addition to the historical plays which are most popular, there are also performed fairy plays in which fire-spitting dragons, talking animals, and bold robber chiefs disport themselves somewhat after the fashion of the spectacular light opera in the West. Another class of plays, called Oiye-mono, deals with the affairs of some illustrious family, and usually portrays troubles between several of its members. Other plays deal with Geisha love.

That the national drama of Japan will develop along new lines is certain. Much that amused in the old theater is already becoming wearisome, and there is a great demand for a drama that will really hold the mirror up to Japanese life. The diction of the traditional plays is not at all intelligible, and acting reduces itself to pantomime. The demand, therefore, is becoming strong that the language of the stage should correspond to the spoken language of the peo-

ple. Dramas have been composed in accordance with these ideas by many prominent writers such as Tsuboüchi, Yamazaki, and Sano. Tsuboüchi's plays (for instance, " Maki-no-Kata ") are melodramatic, but contain forcible scenes and are notably free from the mannerisms and extravagances of the older drama. The actor Kawakami has been the strongest exponent in Japan of the tendencies of Western drama both in its classic and its realistic form, and his exertions have met with great popular applause. Some use has recently been made of novels as the basis for plays, but the dramatic sense of the Japanese is too keen to submit to such a practice. They demand truly dramatic situations, and the story of a novel developed through dialogue is not sufficient to satisfy them. As the life of modern Japan comes upon the stage its dramatic features will claim attention rather than the psychological analysis which would come out in the dialogues of a novel.

The literary history of the Meiji era may be divided into two completed periods and a third which has just begun. The first was the period of adoption of European models, which lasted for twenty years, until about 1888. At that time there took place a sudden reaction against everything Western, a reaction which in the political world led to a number of assassinations and attacks upon statesmen. The second period, an era of ultra-nationalism, lasted for about fifteen years, and in a sense it has not as yet passed. Since the time of the transition from century to century national thought has been controlled by a tendency called Nippon Shugi or Japonicism. This is a modification of the radical form of nationalism, inasmuch as it does not oppose entirely the adoption of foreign institutions, methods, and ideas, but insists on giving them the specific imprint of Japanese nationality. Thus if European Christianity, European jurisprudence, European literary methods are to be tolerated at all there must be infused into them the essential characteristics of Japanese civilization. During the last decade a great many new influences manifested themselves which have led to an individualization of thought. Realism and naturalism in art exert an individualizing influence. Added thereto came the overpowering impulse given to individualism by the study of Nietzsche. The present era in Japan is one of universal search and questioning: the need for positive beliefs and for constructive action is strongly felt,

but men are anxiously casting about for adequate ideals and principles. Thus every experiment is in order, any original solution is sure of an attentive hearing.

In fiction the differences in method which characterize European literary work are found also in Japan. *The Essence of Fiction,* a little work published by Dr. Tsuboüchi in 1885, had a profound influence in making writing more natural and observation more direct. Among realistic writers the lead is attributed to Koyo Ozaki, a man of wide culture and great literary power, while Takayama stands for naturalism, the later development of the realistic tendencies. On the other hand, Rohan Koda represents the idealists. His work is largely in the realm of historical romance, as, for instance, *Hige-Otoko,* a story of the civil wars of the eighteenth century. He is a master of the classical style, which he interweaves with colloquial forms. His descriptions are poetical, but the movement of his stories is slow and his discussions impress the Japanese as lengthy. Another idealist, Fumio Yano, gained surprising success, especially with his novel *Keikoku Bidan,* which dealt with life in Thebes at the time of Epaminondas. This historical novel sold in such quantities as to enable the author to buy himself a house and to take a trip to Europe. Dr. Yuzo Tsuboüchi, who in his *Essence of Fiction* had denounced the artificial style and morality of Bakin, himself produced a number of novels which contain graphic sketches, though they are not strong from the point of view of plot or portrayal of character. We could hardly expect vivid or searching characterization of individuals from Japanese novelists who are just beginning to train themselves in the careful observation of individual traits. The manner of psychological analysis which, with us is illustrated by George Meredith and Henry James is, however, being cultivated by a school of writers who are known by the name of Futaba-Kai. The principal among these is Soseki Natsume (Kinnosuke). Soseki is a thorough student of English literature and has, moreover, a good command of the Chinese language. This training has enabled him to enrich the Japanese language with many concepts and terms dealing with social and individual psychology. Like the writings of his American compeer, the novels of Soseki are caviar to many. His disquisitions on mental philosophy are understood with difficulty by the ordinary reader, who prefers small talk

and easy gossip to a psychological criticism of the follies and weaknesses of mankind. Soseki has especial regard for the fiction of English-speaking nations, and little sympathy for the productions of France and Russia, whose moral atmosphere he does not relish. Of late there has also been developed the purpose novel—the story designed to teach some social or political principle. Kinoshita and Miyazaki have been especially successful in this *genre*.

Mr. Rohan Koda has recently pronounced himself upon tendencies in Japanese fiction. He deprecates the loose methods of modern writers who, instead of polishing their style and putting a deep meaning into their language, write in a superficial manner so as to be intelligible at a glance. He believes that the lovers of really good literature have become less numerous. But he is especially out of sympathy with the realistic tendency to portray the deformed and abnormal. As the ordinary phenomena in real life are not interesting enough, novelists exploit the things which cause surprise or disgust. Another writer, in answer to Koda, admits that modern novels deal mostly with men or women who are in some way unbalanced—at the least nervous and hysterical — yet he takes comfort in the thought that the writers of these stories may be about to fathom the deeper problems of human nature and that the study of the abnormal may yield important results. He adds: "We who belong to a new era should go wherever men go and see all that can be seen." Many of the better class of novelists look upon themselves as public educators and attempt to inculcate ideals of devotion and duty by the examples which they depict in their novels. Yet there is also a class of popular fiction which for its interest relies entirely upon illicit and vulgar relations. A number of magazines are devoted almost entirely to this class of writing.

As already indicated, the indirect influence of foreign literature and languages has been very potent in Japan. Foreign models have been consciously imitated, although, as in the case of the drama, there is always a barrier to the full appreciation of Western fiction in the different attitude of the two civilizations to the problems of sex and of character development. The triumphs and defeats of a Becky Sharp, the simple but profound thought in Silas Marner, the tragedy of Tess—all these are so deeply founded in our own social experience that they bear but little meaning to

the Japanese. It is therefore natural that when drawing upon Western literature in translation they should choose stories of adventure, even cheap detective yarns, in preference to those writings which are the masterpieces of our literature. It is amusing to reflect that the first English novel which had the honor of being translated into Japanese was Lord Lytton's *Ernest Maltravers,* than which a weaker, more inane, or more artificial specimen of novel-writing could scarcely be found among books of standing in English. Yet it is on the basis of this that many Japanese formed their opinion of Western fiction. Among writers whose books have found special favor in Japan are Dumas, Cervantes, Rider Haggard, Jules Verne, and Anthony Hope.

It is interesting to note the connection of authorship with local atmosphere. Thus far the influence of the national capital has been all-important in Japanese literature. The life of Tokio has a *milieu* all its own. During the Tokugawa Shogunate it was the center of feudal life where congregated the daimios with their retainers. A type of character was developed which differs even more from that of the Japanese in general than metropolitan character is ordinarily distinguished from the national life about it. The Tokio townsmen, the Edokko, are popularly described as persons boastful in speech, presumptuous and quarrelsome in behavior, and improvident in the expenditure of money. These characteristics of the Edokko are explained as an imitation of the manners of the professional warrior class of feudal days among whom swashbucklers were not uncommon. These military men affected shortness of speech, abbreviating words, and speaking in curt phrases, resembling the *Schneidigkeit* of German officers. The lower orders, forced into a position of cringing servility, were nevertheless eager to pick up the manner of the superior beings. Native critics of Tokio further portray the populace as superficial, devoted to a shallow optimism, prone to conceal all real feelings, given to fickleness and levity, and deficient in stability of purpose.

Exaggerated though these characteristics undoubtedly are by novelists, for literary effect, their portrayal yet gives the dominant note to recent Japanese fiction. Thus in Tokio light literature finds its source and center. The scenes of novels are laid there, and the language employed is the Tokio colloquial. But it cannot be said that there has been

produced a literature with an effective grasp of a local situation even for the life of Tokio. The great importance of the capital is a result of the centralizing tendency through which all Japanese life has been unified and brought under one system. Uniformity of education and the imitation of foreign models have combined to neutralize local influence. The novels are all cast in one mould, local differences and the perception of individual traits are overridden by general ideas. The burden of the classicism of a past when men were not free to write as they pleased, but were obliged to follow models in a servile manner, also still weighs upon Japanese literary life. Yet Yanagawa feels encouraged to speak of the "new and strong freshness which fills the air of our literary world." Through the efforts and observations of the naturalist school, Tokio is certain to be ousted from the position of dominance which it has occupied, for writers are beginning to study their local environment and to give their novels a more individual character.

It is notable, in view of what has been said above concerning literary expression, that the Japanese nevertheless seem to have a delicate sense for the effects produced upon human character by different localities. One writer says that in Tokio it is easy to distinguish between men who dwell on the hills and those who live below amid the bustle and turmoil of the streets: "Though we may meet such persons only casually, we know from their behavior and their language where they come from." This is borne out by our recollection of the strife which arose between Confucian scholars who dwelt in the lower part of the town (Shita-Machi) and those who lived on the heights (Yamate). It has also been observed that books composed in the north of Japan are more gloomy and serious than those written by southerners.

In essays the favorite form is biographical. The careers of prominent men—writers, politicians, leaders in industrial life—are a never-failing subject of interest; foreign notabilities, too, are included in the repertoire—from monarchs and presidents to criminals and revolutionaries. The men who attain the greatest reputation and who are most worshipped by the public, and especially by the young, are, next to successful generals, the leaders in public affairs. Parliamentary life, though superficial in its influence, has yet made a striking impression upon the imagination of young men.

A method by which magazine editors have of late been trying to interest their readers and increase their circulation is in each issue to dissect some prominent literary man. Concerning the victim, other *litterateurs* of reputation are interviewed; and their opinions about his work and personality, the quality of his style, the points of strength and weakness in his methods, are published at length. This process of being laid on the operating-table is by no means grateful to men of sensitive, retiring dispositions; but there is no help for it, they have to pay the price of notability. It is unusual for prominent men of affairs to write for Japanese magazines, but a very popular way of bringing their thought before the public is to have them interviewed. From the standpoint of the subject of the sketch there is an advantage in that the editor alone is responsible for the exact expressions used, a specific statement to that effect being usually made. The Japanese statesman is, therefore, under no obligation to disavow any of the ideas in an interview which he may find inconvenient.

Among recent essayists, none has won greater consideration than Shuntei Toyabe. This notable writer, who died in 1908, made his style especially powerful through an intimate knowledge of Chinese, which enabled him to use old idioms and classical allusions in such a way as to express modern thought in a novel and striking manner. In his biographical essays, which were written with a masterly hand, he always took pains to give his subject a historical and literary setting. He saw in his characters the nobler side of human nature, although he dealt critically with the current action of public men. Thus he exercised a great influence upon public opinion, and it would have been possible for him to become a powerful factor in practical politics had he so desired. It is interesting to hear Toyabe say, "The four men whom I most admire are Chow Kung, Shakespeare, Emerson, and Carlyle." The deep meaning of Chow, the superhuman talent for character analysis displayed by Shakespeare, and the insight which distinguish Carlyle and Emerson, were what attracted him to these men. As an analyst of human qualities he may be compared with Macaulay, even in the brilliance of his style.

Among all forms of literary expression the newspaper press has received the greatest impetus through the changes introduced in the Meiji era. The Japanese are in general

not a bookish people. There is a common feeling that a wise man need not read, and there is little real taste for literature among the masses of the population. Books do not play the prominent part in Japan that is accorded them in the life of the West; but, on the other hand, cheap, light fiction and newspapers are read a great deal, and the public is large, as nearly all Japanese have a reading knowledge. Thus the press has become a great power in Japan both for good and for evil. And this even in its infancy, for it is almost entirely a creation of the Meiji era, though under the Shogunate news sheets (yomiuri) were given out. These, published as occasion demanded, were printed from blocks, although separate letters had been in use for some centuries, and were hawked about the streets after any event had occurred of sufficient note to warrant publication. A description of the deeds of the Forty-seven Ronin was circulated about the streets of Tokio within a few hours of their death. Sometimes the imagination was drawn on and events were reported before they had happened. Since the Restoration, journals have been established in increasing numbers, until they now form a cardinal element in Japanese civilization.

A distinct line must be drawn between respectable and yellow journals. The respectable press, which includes such papers as the *Asahi*, the *Jiji*, the *Nichi-Nichi*, and the *Kokumin*, compares favorably with the papers of other nations, although the foreign news service of Japanese journals is rather meager, since regular correspondents are maintained only in China and in a few of the most important Western capitals. The yellow journals are taken up very largely with personal notes and scandals. Their sole object is to make a sensation, and they are exceedingly unscrupulous in the manner in which they deal with private character. As a result, while they are read eagerly for the spicy information which they contain, they are not taken seriously by the public. Should they undertake to deal with important matters, no attention is given them, so that even a splendid " scoop " will hardly be believed and will receive no credit. But it is these papers that have the largest circulation. Several of them boast of one hundred and fifty thousand subscribers, while only one or two of the decent papers have over one hundred thousand, and most have to be satisfied with less than one-third that number. Several facts should be noted in explaining the success of the yellow

journals. On account of the difference in the literary style, the better class of newspapers is not readily understood by uneducated people. The small newspapers which cater to the wants of the masses are exceedingly cheap, being sold for but twenty sen per month, which brings them within reach of the poorest members of the community. The news items which give them their chief interest may suit the small-minded, but this press certainly cannot be looked upon as an educational influence. Its great success is not a matter for congratulation, as it stands for a wholesale contamination of the reading public. On the other hand, the serious press of Japan occupies a position of real influence through the moulding of an intelligent and responsible public opinion. Editorial writers, while poorly paid, are respected, and repeatedly men have, through their work in the sanctum, prepared themselves for performing the duties of high public office.

A condition has been established in Japan which makes the growth of a class of independent literary men possible. The development of a large reading public, which includes men of all degrees of culture and of all varieties of tastes, calls for special professional training on the part of writers. The returns, while still modest, are yet in many cases sufficient to enable a literary man to support himself through his writings. A poor man will naturally seek to connect himself with some journal or magazine so as to have steady occupation. Those who have gained more literary fame may be able to put forth individual works at a considerable profit. Some novels sell in tens of thousands, whereas thirty years ago no book would be issued in more than a few hundred copies. While the results of the literary democratization of Japan may not be altogether encouraging, since an impetus has been given to certain contaminating manifestations and enterprises, yet in all this activity there is enough of sound literary development to be full of promise for the future. In former years the writer who was not a priest or a samurai poet was looked upon as a man without a calling, and his life was indeed precarious and generally sad. Even now Japan has not as yet passed beyond the period of Grubb Street literary life. A great many writers of ability are forced to struggle with poverty and to live, however much they may dislike it, a bohemian life. As late as 1909 a prominent literary man, Bizan Kawakami, committed suicide be-

cause of poverty. Another martyr was Ryokuwu Saito, who died a few years ago. His novels, well designed and carefully written, are conceived in the spirit of realism. By temper he was a satirist, and his observations on character are keen and cutting. In his personal fortune Saito was most unhappy. His bad health was made more unbearable by his poverty. Though he was punctilious in social observances, he was perforce ultra-bohemian in his private life. Being improvident as well as poor, he resembled the eighteenth-century poets whose struggles and sufferings Johnson has described for us. Saito was forced to buy his food off stands on the streets. He shunned society and would not allow even his friends to know where he lived, mailing letters from offices distant from his place of residence in order to keep from them a knowledge of his abject poverty.

There are other authors in Japan who, while living in great simplicity, may be looked upon as enjoying the fullest happiness. Such was Fukuzawa. Adventuresome in his youth in the pursuit of knowledge, he braved poverty and danger in order to master whatever was accessible of Western learning. When the new era dawned the mastery he had acquired enabled him to become the great teacher of his nation, yet so narrow was the conservatism of the many that he was constantly in danger of violence. Meanwhile he worked on with might and main writing his books on European civilization, and through the columns of the *Jiji* bringing the light of Western thought to the educated people of Japan. His books had an enormous circulation. The *Gakumon-no-susume* had sold seven hundred thousand copies within five or six years of its publication, and altogether millions of volumes of Fukuzawa's works were sold. The income from these writings was invested in a great school, Keio Gijuku, where he gathered about him hundreds of promising men who carried his ideas to the ends of the country. The welding of a nation, the breaking down of distinctions between warriors and peasants, is the work which he promoted. No writer of Japan has wielded a greater influence. The man's great simplicity and his notable geniality of manner won the hearts of his students and enlisted their undying friendship. Very fond of traveling, he took numerous trips in company with members of his family and friends, sometimes going with a party of

twenty or more. On these trips he was satisfied to travel third class and to live on the ordinary fare at the inns. He was a good traveling companion and, though the leader, placed absolutely no restraint upon those with him, allowing his companions to arrange their life according to their own convenience. A tremendous walker, he even in his old age took trips in the mountains on which younger men could scarcely follow him.

Another type of Japanese intellect appears in Dr. Jiro Kitao who died in 1907. A very precocious child, he had mastered at the age of ten the Chinese classics and was able to write Chinese poetry. His prodigious memory was especially noteworthy. At the age of sixteen he went to Germany, where he stayed for thirteen years, studying under Helmholtz and other scientists. He later had a controversy with the great German physicist, because he claimed to be the original inventor of the lucuscope. After he returned to Japan he became a professor at the Imperial University and at the College of Agriculture. He always retained a great interest in German literature, studying Goethe, and himself writing a German novel, *Waldnymphe*. His chief scientific works on metallurgy and subsoil moisture were also published in German. When he first returned to Japan he had forgotten his mother tongue to such an extent that it was difficult for him to deliver his lectures. He soon recovered his mastery, however, and his wonderful memory made it possible for him to use the most difficult Chinese idioms to the constant astonishment of his students. He had also given much attention to Greek literature and was a lover of music. Though married and having a pleasant family life, he was a recluse, living day and night with his books. When he had worked for a long time over some difficult matter and finally a solution flashed upon him, he would shout *banzai* so loudly that every one in the house would be aware of his triumph. In his zeal for knowledge he neglected his bodily welfare; his nerves became overwrought, and toward the close of his life he at times went into a state of ecstasy.

Country life has a great attraction for Japanese authors, and many of them feel a powerful yearning for the soil. Thus Kanjiro Tokutomi has become a veritable Tolstoi, living on a farm and tilling the soil with his own hands. He says: "For a man like me to be living the life of a peas-

ant may seem a profitless undertaking, but I know of nothing comparable to what I feel when I tread the ground barefoot. Here it is that a man gets strength. It seems to me that those who are nearest the earth are nearest to heaven." He enjoys the quiet, simple life, the hard work of the field, the sound sleep with which it is rewarded, all of which refreshes his spirits, wearied with the distractions of modern city existence.

It may also be interesting to glance at the life of a publisher, Hanhichi Yoshikawa, who died in 1903. He began his business experience as an apprentice boy in a rice-shop. As the rice merchants resorted to underhanded means for making money he left his master and engaged under a confectioner. Finding the eating of sweetmeats bad for his stomach, he went on to a second-hand store; but he discovered that his master's profit came from the selling of counterfeit articles and did not wish to lend his assistance to such practices. He therefore determined to seek employment in a bookshop, considering that book-dealers trade for the benefit of their fellow-men rather than for personal gain. He began by hawking books about Osaka and Yedo. After he had established a shop of his own, he opened a reading-room, where for one cent per hour students were able to consult the best authors. Gradually he won the confidence of teachers and the public, and was intrusted with the publication of many important books, building up in this way a large and profitable trade. After his death his name was commemorated by his descendants through the republication of a valuable dictionary.

The types of experience above portrayed are taken from a great mass of material; the selection made does not necessarily imply exceptional prominence of the particular man in the intellectual life of Japan, but is intended to illustrate various phases of literary activity as well as the general conditions of life.

While the old class arrangement has nearly disappeared in Japan, newer social and professional distinctions have grown up which are quite as marked as were the older forms of social diversity. The different professional interests have very little in common. There are the land-owners and the priests, the class of public men, the class of literary men, and the class of merchants. Each lives in its own world and has little contact with or interest in any of the others.

It is not uncommon for a public official of high rank to show complete ignorance of what the literary men of Japan are doing. The latter on their side live in the world of imagination, and unless they are essayists like Toyabe interest themselves but little in current affairs. The literary statesmanship of the West, of which Guizot, Gladstone, Balfour, and Roosevelt are examples, is unknown in Japan where statesmen will not even write their memoirs. There are, of course, some exceptions to this. Thus while Count Okuma is not distinctively a literary man his connection with and interest in the world of knowledge are intimate.

The position of literary men in Japan differs in many essential respects from that which is accorded writers of prominence in the Western world. The individuality of literary fame and literary personality in its various aspects have not been developed in the Orient to nearly the same extent as in the West. The great books to which men return again and again for guidance and inspiration have been written thousands of years ago, and those men who earned fame thereafter won their laurels by writing commentaries upon the classics. No merit attached to originality. Moreover, most writings were anonymous. Especially if they were original was it advisable that the author should not make his personality too prominent. While learning was always respected, authorship never had the position in Japan and other Oriental countries that it has enjoyed in the West from the Greeks down to the present.

The Japanese mind will excel in the future in many directions, but the greatest development may be expected in those activities for which racial and social experience has best prepared the intellect. A strong but selective realism in literature, delicate word-painting, the successful search for mastery over the forces of nature, a grasp of social and political relationships—these are among the things we may expect from the Japan of the future. At present all is still in the turmoil and uncertainty of a Titanic struggle of opposing forces from which only gradually there emerging the mind and spirit of modern Japan.

PAUL S. REINSCH.