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and of course different sizes of each, corresponding to our pica, brevier, long primer, etc.; and as the Chinese language contains between seventy and eighty thousand characters, when a character is not included in the ten thousand, that is, in the most common ones, it is specially cut in wood. Being able to recognize these characters by sight, or even to write them as they appear in a book, is a comparatively small part of the task. The real difficulty begins when you attempt to pronounce them as they are placed together even in an ordinary newspaper article. There are two different systems of pronunciation, the *Go-on* and the *Kan-on*, both imported from China at different periods, and, in addition, the same character may have several Japanese pronunciations. Even a simple character is called *Bei* or *Mei*, or *Kome* or *Tone*, according to the place in which it occurs. Indeed, it may have even more pronunciations, as I give this instance merely from memory. There are far more compound words in Japanese than in English, and just as it is improper to join a Greek to a Latin radical in forming an English word, so in joining a Japanese compound a word of Japanese origin must not be joined with one of Chinese. That is, although the characters representing the idea, and which you see before you on the book, are probably the same, the name of the same character differs according to its connection. It occurred to me that by making myself acquainted with the language of the uneducated, I should get a knowledge of original Japanese words, which they would probably use, and which would assist me in making the distinction between Chinese and Japanese pronunciations. But not at all. Centuries of disdain for their native tongue and tinkering with the Chinese characters and pronunciations has resulted in such a thorough mixture that even a coolie's conversation contains quite as many Chinese as Japanese terms. It has been already said that the same character may have several names, and

the puzzle becomes still more difficult when you know that in the case of the majority of characters, two, three, four, and sometimes even twelve, may have the same pronunciation. The result of this is that even a native Japanese scholar may hear an article read and perhaps not understand it, but would understand it fully should he read it himself. Or, again, when he sees on the map of Japan names of mountains, rivers, and places of which he has not heard before, he is often uncertain what to call each.

Before we go deeper into the difficulties of learning Japanese, the reader, at this point, will probably wonder how ever the Japanese themselves learn it. The answer is, first, they don't—well; and, secondly, centuries of poring over Chinese hieroglyphics has made the latter almost part of the Japanese nature. As the German mind loves philosophy, as most Italians are naturally musical, as the disposition of the North American Indian makes him fond of a roving life, so most of the Mongolian race, including the Japanese, take by nature to these difficult characters. And yet I have, on more than one occasion, been told by educated Japanese that the best Chinese scholars among them study the Chinese characters all their lives, and rarely does a man become distinguished for his proficiency in the Chinese under forty years of age, and often not till after sixty. From observation, I should say that the average Canadian boy of ten reads much more fluently than a Japanese boy of eighteen. Many of the educated among the Japanese themselves recognize this lamentable waste of the life and time of young Japanese, as well as the fact that, largely through these Chinese characters, Japanese matters are a mystery to the outside world. Many have been the protests made, many have been the societies, the newspapers, the magazines, set on foot with the object of abolishing the Chinese characters from the Japanese language, yet here they are to-day, and so far as one can judge here they, for a long time, at least, are likely to remain.

In the first days of your experience with a Japanese teacher you deserve sympathy from all. You sit at a table or desk with a teacher close beside you. Probably you take a Romaji Bible or Prayer Book, and with a view to acquiring a proper pronunciation ask him to read a few words, which he does from his Japanese copy, that is, one written in Chinese characters. You try to repeat the words after him, but, at first, everything, to your untrained ear, sounds alike. You go over the same short passage several times, and at last you think you will nail one word, or even one solitary syllable, and get that, at least, correct. Your teacher's pronunciation of this syllable perhaps sounds like "di," and, repeating this, you ask him if that is right. He nods in the affirmative. Still you are not quite assured, and you ask him if it isn't