

and in many old burial-grounds and other places in Japan, but have never seen any inscriptions in this character, though Sanscrit inscriptions are found in nearly every cemetery

"The first knowledge of Chinese writing was carried to Japan by a prince of Corea in the year 284 of our era, and then, immediately after, the tutor to that prince, a Chinese named Wang Zin, having been invited, the Japanese courtiers applied themselves to the study of the Chinese language and literature." In the sixth century, the missionaries of Shaka, having overrun nearly all Eastern Asia, even to Corea, crossed over to Japan and spread the doctrines of Buddhism. "Then every Japanese in polished society, besides being instructed in his mother tongue, received instruction in Chinese also; consequently read Chinese books of morality, and aimed at being able to read and write a letter in Chinese.

"The original pronunciation of the Chinese degenerated early, and new dialects of it spring up which were no longer intelligible to the Chinese of the continent; but notwithstanding that, the Japanese remained able, by means of the Chinese writing, to interchange ideas not only with the Chinese, but with all the peoples of Asia that write Chinese. The Chinese written language has become the language of science in Japan. It will long remain such, notwithstanding the influence which the civilization of the West will more and more exert there."\*

It will thus be seen that Chinese language and thought became imbedded in the greatly assimilated to the Japanese. For centuries it has been the sum of knowledge and culture to the educated classes. True it is, that the Dutch language was studied to a considerable extent, but it was "the monopoly of the fraternity of interpreters and a few literary men, who used this knowledge as a bridge, over which the skill of the west was imported and spread over the country by means of Chinese or Japanese translations."† The Dutch language was even for a time the court language of the country, and many Dutch words have become vernacular. From time to time the student is amused and surprised to find words which he may have casually heard along the Raritan or the Hudson, or read on the sign-boards of Amsterdam turning up in Japanese speech; while the names of chemicals, merchandize, etc., of Dutch origin are too numerous to detail. We have before us the catalogues of the schools and studies of the province of Yetsizen or Echizen, the foreign studies of which the writer has the honor of directing. There are three grades of schools, corresponding to our primary, grammar and high school. The Japanese boy is supposed to begin schooling at five or six years of age. He first learns the *kata* and *hira kana*, Japanese alphabets, which are respectively the text and the running hand. Each consists of forty-seven syllables, and though spoken of by the Japanese as "our kana," are altered or abbreviated from the Chinese. The Japanese alphabet, like the Chinese characters, is a syllaban. The hope of Japan spends five years in the *Sho Gaku*. During the first year he learns to read in their order, "Small Learning"—the moral duties of man; Confucius' Four Books of Morals; the Three-Character Book of Morals; the Book of Filial Duties; the Book of Great Lineage—ancestry of the Mikado; and the Entrance to Knowledge—duties of cleanliness, obedience, etc. By way of commentary, we may add, that the astonished polite urchins of Japan, returning home with their ink-bedaubed faces and bowing very low, as they invariably do to their foreign teacher, obey the precepts of obedience rather better than those of the virtue usually supposed to be next to godliness.

All these books are written in very easy Chinese characters. After being examined, the scholar begins his second year, the studies of which are: rudimentary Geography, a primer written in euphony; the writing of small Chinese characters; learning the names of all the Emperors of Japan, the names of the large cities, provinces and their local divisions, how to read the proclamations of the Imperial Government, the names of, and written characters for familiar objects; learning to write the characters of numerals, points of the compass, the seasons, names of countries, chronology, names of years, etc. It will be noticed that in the first year reading only is pursued. To go into a

Japanese school room, while the boys are learning their lessons, (study at home is a new idea in Japan) reminds one of the Congress at Washington or an hour on 'Change.

Our Jap, during the third year, learns the four fundamental rules of arithmetic and the use of the abacus; and here the mathematical education of most Japanese ends. He also reads the Book of Heroes—a reader containing accounts of model men and women, virtues and noble actions, etc. The third, fourth and fifth years are repetitious in kind of the first and second. Much time is devoted to the study of etiquette, how to walk, bow, visit, talk, etc. In this department we must confess the native of Japan is a peer to that of any other country. A peculiar fact which the American teacher in Japan notices, is this, that the keeping of discipline, which in America requires so much time, nerve-power and will, is entirely unnecessary in Japan, the boys being orderly and quiet to a remarkable degree.

The next school into which the pupil is now graduated, is the Middle School. It would be tedious to detail all the studies, but in substance, they are simply an advance in the same line of the studies of the small school. The scholars read the History of China, the Book of Rhetoric, or Composition in Chinese; a brief History of Japan, and a large "Book of Japanese Strategy," containing remarkable feats in war, narratives of heroes, etc. In writing, they learn the Chinese small text, and how to write private and official letters, both original and after models. In arithmetic, they again drill in the four fundamental rules and learn to solve problems, and to count large numerical quantities. They also read a brief universal geography, and study quite thoroughly the topography of Japan. The time occupied to complete the studies of the Middle school, is three years; during which time the pupil receives initiatory lessons in fencing, wrestling and riding.

Young Japan is now in his sixteenth or eighteenth year, and enters the Dai Gaku, or High School. Here he reads several histories of Japan; the first is from the Golden Age, and is to be brought down until "within the memory of men now living." The second is the history of ancient Japan, from the first Emperor, until the middle ages, and the third, written in very fine style, takes up the history of Japan at the middle ages, and continues it until the time of Iyoyas, in the early part of the 17th century. In arithmetic, vulgar and decimal fractions, the rule of three, involution, evolution, and progression are taught, together with a little algebra. Daily exercise in fencing and wrestling, and a monthly lesson on horseback, hitherto "completed" the education of the average educated Japanese. While many, by private study afterwards, far exceeded their school studies, the majority, especially in mathematics, never reached the maximum presented above.

Thus it will be seen that the entire education, as we out of compliment call it, of the Japanese boy was simply the knowledge of how to read and write Chinese, a few scraps of knowledge concerning other countries, the history of Japan and China only, a little of the simplest mathematics, and a pretty heavy dose of atheistic morals,—no education in its radical sense, only the training of the memory and the storing of the mind with a few facts and many precepts. We have every reason to believe that the state of education in Echizen, previous to the coming of a foreign instructor, was exactly the same as that in the best provinces of Japan. It must also be remembered that in many of the provinces, nay, in most of them, no government school existed, the few there were, being private; and further, none but the sons of the Samurari—the literary military class of Japan—were permitted to attend. Considering these facts, it is not surprising that although nearly every inhabitant of the cities in Japan can calculate on the abacus, can read and write the *hira kana* and *kata kana*, and read the government proclamations, yet concerning the facts and methods of the classified sciences, the normal Japanese was like a child that had not yet picked a single pebble from the boundless shore.

A single sheet of paper was recently made at Cohoes, N. Y., forty-four inches wide and a fraction over twenty-five miles long, and the weight was 10,050 pounds.

\* Introduction to Hoffman's Japanese Grammar.

† Ibid.