

two parts of the world, in this respect, is so striking, that it deserves more particular notice. I will take, as an example, Matsmai, where I lived two years. This town lies in the forty-second degree of latitude, that is on a parallel with Leghorn, in Italy, Bilboa in Spain, and Toulon in France. In these places, the inhabitants hardly know what frost is; and never see any snow, except on the tops of high mountains: in Matsmai, on the contrary, the ponds and lakes freeze, the snow lies in the valleys and the plains, from November till April, and falls, besides, in as great abundance as with us in St. Petersburg. Severe frosts are indeed uncommon, yet the cold is often fifteen degrees of

---

children, grand, and great grand-children of a single man then living, and all of them handsome, well made, polished, civil and possessing the manners of people brought up at court.

It seems, however, that little reliance can be placed upon the extraordinary boasts respecting the Japanese climate; since the Jesuits confess that the weather is very changeable; that the winter cold is intense and the fall of snow prodigious; that the summer heats are intolerable; that it rains often and at all seasons, the heaviest rains being in June and July, which portion of the year the Japanese distinguish by the name of the water-months; and that thunder and lightning are then extremely frequent. As a counterbalance to these inconveniences, the Jesuit writers whimsically throw into the opposite scale the *length of the winter*, which they describe as giving the weather time to purify itself, whilst the rains *resoften it*, and the various natural productions cause salutary exhalations; especially from the sulphur and the aromatic plants in which these islands abound.—Ed.