

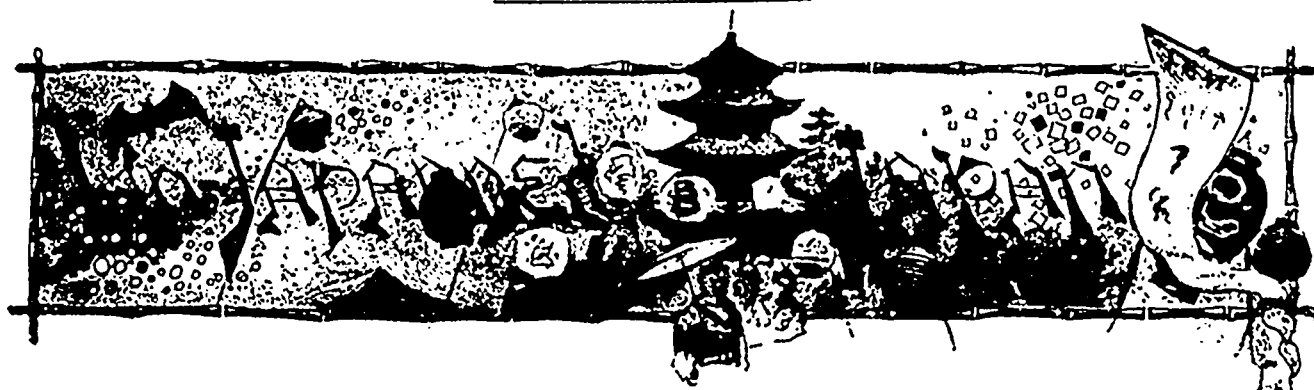
Christmas Eve.

The snow is white
On the roofs to-night;
The moon looks down with her silvery smile;
And the wind blows free
Thro' bush and tree,
And whistles along for mile on mile.
And ah! hark there?
On the midnight air,
Comes the faintest tinkle of fairy bells.
'They are coming near,
They are coming here,
And their sweet sound swelling of joy foretells.

So still he smiles,
And the time beguiles
Concocting schemes our hearts to cheer;
He loves us all,
And great and small
Regret that he comes but once a year.

It is Santa Claus,
And he cannot pause;
But down the chimney he quickly slides;
Each stocking fills,
Till it almost spills,
Then gayly chuckles, and off he glides.
How happy he,
The saint to be
Of all the girls and all the boys!
He hears his praise
Thro' the holidays,
As they eat their sweets, and break their toys.

Drake's Magazine.



A Land without Song of Birds or Perfume of Flowers.

BY CLEMENT SCOTT.

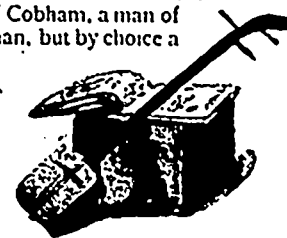


LUCKY it is for the hard-worked business men of Yokohama, the merchants, the shippers, and the "boys," or good fellows, of this ever lively port, that they have in their immediate neighborhood the glorious mountains where they can rest and reinvigorate themselves, and many a hillside hotel or cozy chalet to which they can retire when overdone with care or, what is still worse for them, the cherty duties of hospitality. For Yokohama, like Colombo, like Singapore, like Hong Kong, like Shanghai, like the hundred, and one halting places on our journey round the world, overflows with the milk, "and something stronger," of human kindness. The saloon bar and the "chit" system have much to answer for in the East. When men play dice for drinks and pay for them with a signed slip of paper, there is danger ahead for the weak and unwary. All through the week steamers are arriving and departing. There is no end to the welcoming and speeding of coming and departing guests. The glass of welcome and the stirrup cup are perpetually being filled and drained in the honor of a popular passenger. London itself, from Hammersmith to Highgate, knows no such hospitality or unselfish courtesy as the traveller finds whenever and wherever a ship touches port bound eastward or westward in these splendid days of travel. The accepted theory is that men do not drink rebellious liquor in the East. Don't believe it. They drink more than they do at home.

Yokohama, as you may guess, is a special centre for the amalgamation of nationalities. Here, in the corridors of the famous Grand Hotel, you find Englishmen from London, Anglo-Indians from Calcutta, tea planters from Ceylon, Australians from Sydney and Melbourne, residents from Honolulu and the lovely Sandwich Islands. Americans by the score, all being booked or rebooked by the P. & O., by the Canadian Pacific, by the Pacific and the Occidental, all passing and repassing along the great ocean highway of the world. There is a time when even the sightseer becomes weary of the gayety of the great seaport of Japan, when he has seen all that can be seen of the charms and allurements of Madame Chrysanthemum, Made-moiselle Nectarine, and their grinning companions, when the shops have all been ransacked for costly stuffs and "kimonos," when old Japan and new Japan, their treasures and their toys,

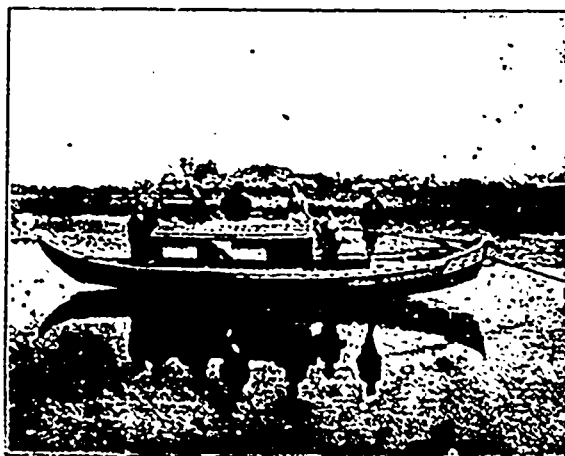
have been purchased or broken, when our letters of introduction have been presented and duly honored, and when the visitor to these hospitable regions seems to sigh for the keen, sweet air of Myanoshita, the Right Mountain of Japan, with its sulphur springs and hissing craters, its snow covered mountains and endless forest walks, its tortuous, heart-breaking ascents and consoling valleys. A time surely comes when the traveller sighs to be transported away over the saddle-back of hills to the magnificent view of the ten provinces that divide the peerless Fujiama from the warm plum-blossoming Atami by the sea, a lovely little village that reminds me of Ilfracombe or Lynton, seen at their best in a snowdrift of May bloom and the choicest flowers of spring.

At the well-known "Inn of Strange Meetings," on the wind swept bluff of Yokohama, I was lucky enough to meet and to gain the interest of one of the best of good fellows, a character in Japan, who is the guide, friend, and counsellor of the gay spirits and youth of this country. The son of a courageous old yeoman in Kent, who learned to ride and break a horse in the dear old Charles Dickens county of Cobham, a man of adventure and sport, in heart an Englishman, but by choice a naturalized "Jap," one of the bravest and most active mountaineers in all Japan, has elected to direct and manage a farmhouse hotel up in the mountains some three thousand feet above the level of the sea. This splendid specimen of English manhood, not yet in the prime of life, has had more adventures than Robinson Crusoe. He has hunted seals and otters in the Northern seas, he has been wrecked and left for lost on the Kamschatkan shores, he has meditated an expedition to succeed where Sir John Franklin and dozens of others have failed, he has been by turn sailor and sportsman, and now, any day, he may be seen racing down the precipitous mountain sides on a shaggy, sure-footed pony, or, swifter than any Swiss guide, climbing the highest hill with a pack of Gordon setters at his heels. Hoshino, as he now delights to be called, loves nothing better than to descend upon Yokohama and take



home with him to his farmhouse hotel in the mountains all who want rest, a pure, peaceful life, and change both of air and scene.

Every traveller to Japan knows Myanoshita, its beautiful hotel and baths; they have travelled up to it by rail and tram and rickshaw, by turns, and they have been sent on the usual round of walks and climbs and picnics, but they may not be so familiar with Kaikatei at Kowakidani, a good steep mile above the fashionable hotels, or know anything of the delightful life at a primitive mountain hotel in Japan. I received a pressing invitation to visit Kaikatei, and,



SUMIDA RIVER, JAPAN.