

much pleased with his new tenants, who, in spite of their barbarous manners and dress, seemed good-natured and friendly. Often in the evening he and Omi would walk through the valley to their neighbors' house, and listen to them very attentively while they told them of their home in America, which they said was the greatest country in the world. After a time the strange men went away, though neither Sachi nor Omi forgot them, and very often they talked of them and of their foreign home. One day Sachi said very seriously to his friend:

"Omi, these strangers told us much of their strange land, and talked of the fine schools there, where all manner of learning is taught. What say you that I do send my unworthy son, Orito, to this America, so that he may see much of the world, and also become a great scholar, and later return to crave thy noble daughter in marriage?"

Omi was fairly delighted with this proposal, and the two friends talked and planned, and then sent for the lad.

Orito was a youth of extreme beauty. He was tall and slender; his face was pale and oval, with features as fine and delicate as a girl's. His was not merely a beautiful face; there was something else in it, a certain impassive look that rendered it almost startling in its wonderful inscrutableness. It was not expressionless, but unreadable—the face of one with the noble blood of the Shizoku and Samurai—pale, refined, and emotionless.

He bowed low and courteously when he entered,