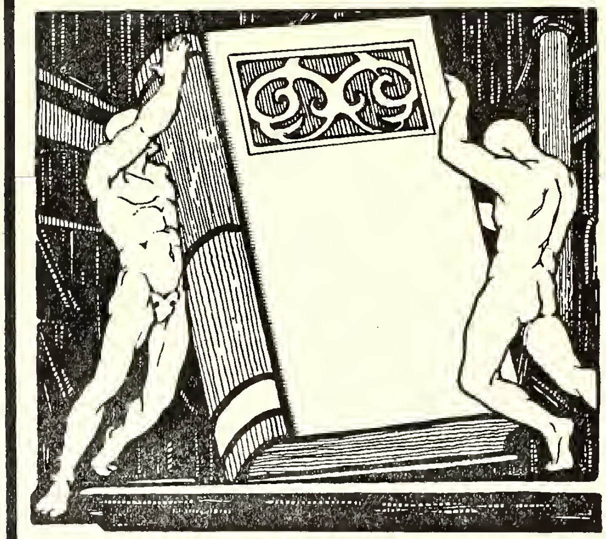
ARTISTIC JAPAN



ARTISTIC JAPAN.

ARTISTIC JAPAN:

Illustrations and Essays.

COLLECTED BY

S. BING.

VOLUME III

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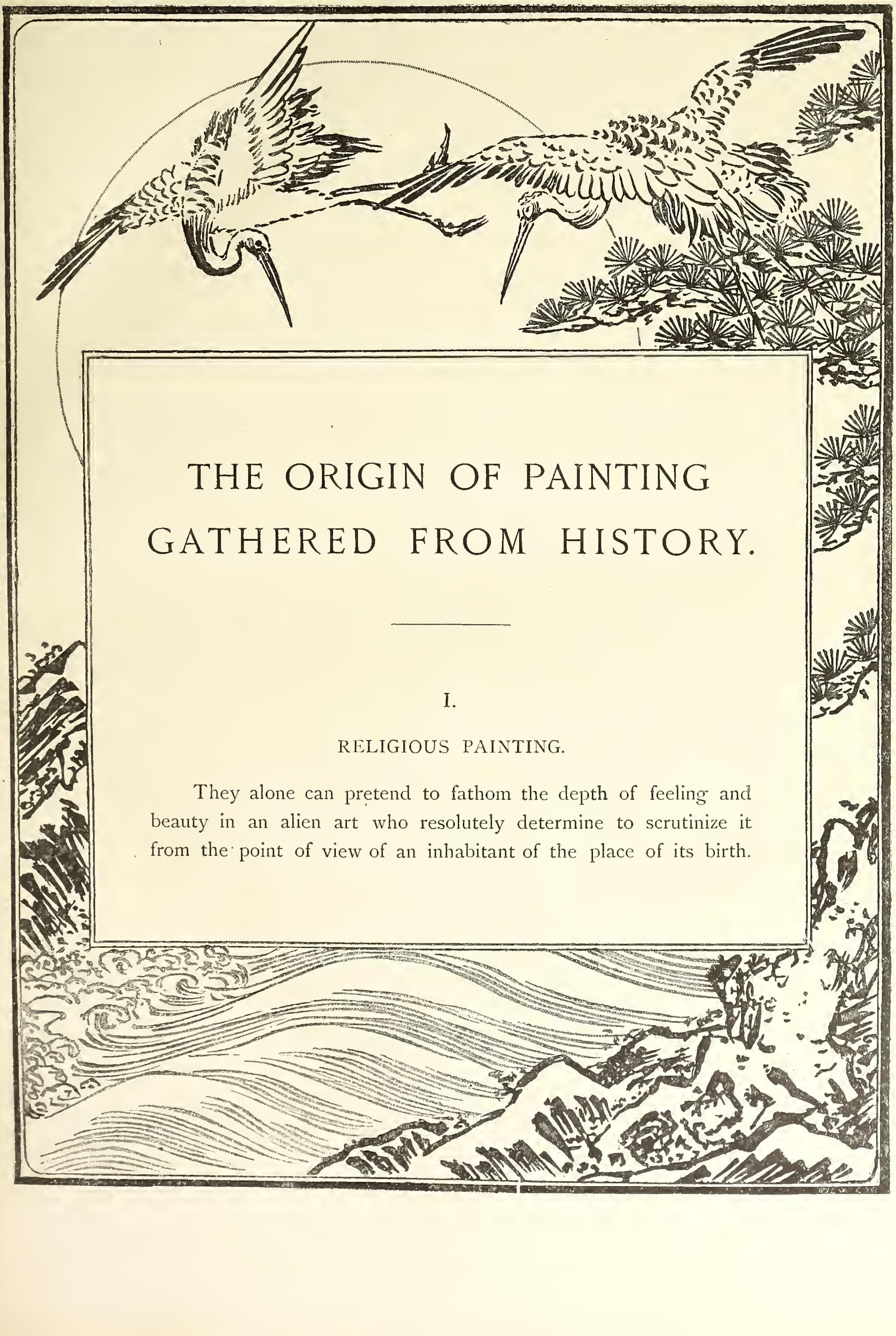
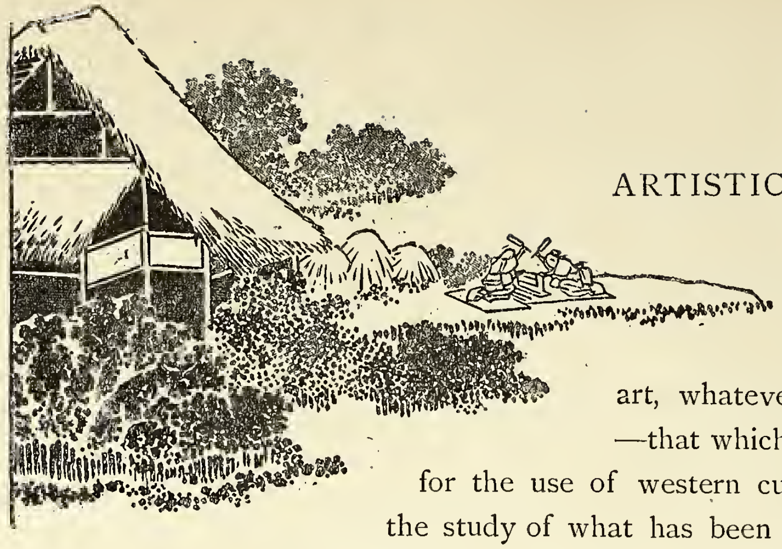


THE ORIGIN OF PAINTING GATHERED FROM HISTORY.

I.

RELIGIOUS PAINTING.

They alone can pretend to fathom the depth of feeling and beauty in an alien art who resolutely determine to scrutinize it from the point of view of an inhabitant of the place of its birth.



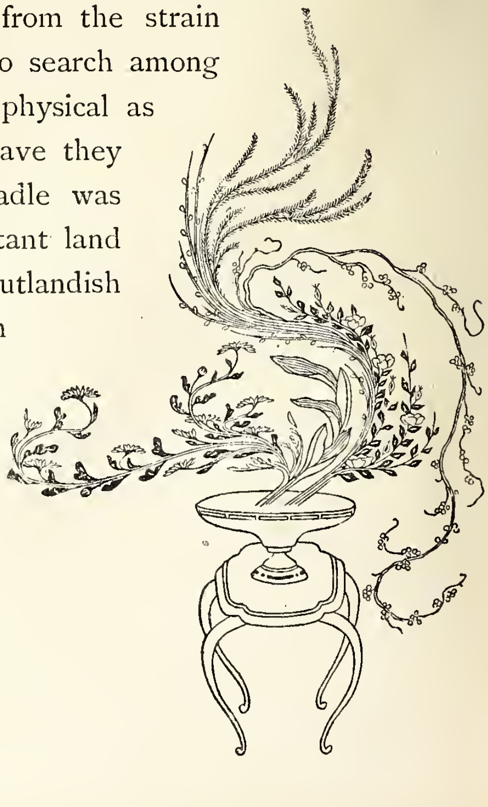
ARTISTIC JAPAN.

This is a primary condition. If submission to it be refused, if it be intended to refer all manifestations of art, whatever they may be, to a common measure—that which the centuries have fashioned specially for the use of western culture—it were better to omit entirely the study of what has been created away from ourselves. It is of but little use to look at an image if one fails to grasp its sense. Commentaries upon an art should be the outcome of the civilisation of which that art is the crowning outcome and the chief result. The causes of this civilisation, the geographical position of the country, its history, and the temperament of its inhabitants must not be lost sight of. One must follow the development of the country's manners and make oneself familiar with its institutions.

These are the principles which I would apply here to the study of Japanese Art. Unfortunately so extensive a programme is too large for the frame I have at my disposal. At the best I can but draw an incomplete, and therefore an unfaithful picture of a subject worthy of better things. I shall endeavour, however, to simply define the influence exercised on artistic development by the principal historical and social evolutions.

Just a word to commence with, about the situation and formation of the country. Its elongated shape, something like that of a narrow crescent severed from the Asiatic continent; its soil torn by numberless arms of the sea, both large and small; its coasts destroyed by the everlasting wear of the ocean—all has been favourable in the land of the rising sun to the development of an original culture distinct for ages from the strain of European contact, and obliging the inhabitants to search among themselves for the principal conditions of existence, physical as well as intellectual. But these inhabitants—whence have they come, if, as everything seems to prove, their cradle was beneath other skies? Leaving, perchance, some distant land in Eastern Asia, they reached in legendary time some outlandish point of the picturesque archipelago, driving back from the south to the north the aboriginal half-savage inhabitants, a few descendants of whom still survive in the island of Yesso.

What part of the globe saw the birth of this



privileged race, which held within itself the germ of a nature vibrating with life, fit for all refinements, and the noblest and most artistic sensibility? What magician could at one wave of his wand dissipate the darkness of century upon century, to reveal to us the evolution which has made of a race of nomads the people of refinement *par excellence*, the genial people, reflecting in a multitude of eloquent creations the emotion evoked in them by the smiling aspect of the country of their adoption. Most certainly such transformations are not the work of a day. The generous sap coursing beneath a rough bark would not have driven forth branches without first becoming strong and healthy after transplantation to a fresh soil. It was necessary before all else that they should be permanently established, in order that they could proceed to a political and social organisation. This labour of the very beginning we cannot follow—no history of it remains to us.

But I make a mistake. The history has been written, but by means of the fabulous forms of epic poems, reminders to us of our own antiquity.

The land of that period was composed as nearly as possible of the eight principal islands of Nippon, which Isanághi the creative spirit caused to appear, by plunging from the summit of Olympus eight times into the sea his ruby pointed lance. Filled by delight as he roamed over the domain which he had given himself, he desired further to make it fruitful, and his companion Isanami, then gave birth to a large number of spirit beings, and finally she brought into the world the wondrous Amatérasu, goddess of the sun, and Tsuku, the charming deity of the moon, her favourite daughters, to whom were deputed the government of earth and heaven, alternately by day and night. It is from Amatérasu that all those future sovereigns were to descend, who during the first seven generations of a thousand years each

will relinquish a part of their divine essence in order to devote themselves to the exclusive ruling of the earth.

The Japanese bible, the *kojiki*, describes minutely all the points of this period of infancy. We meet there a mythology perhaps not more complicated than our own, but which appears more diffuse and far stranger, for the reason that we have not been brought up with it. In the same way as in Art, one often unwittingly condemns a formula, for the only reason that it is strange to our education.

The Japanese Olympus presents the spectacle of a thousand heroic actions, confused with the most common passions and all the smallnesses of humanity, which the simple belief of people attributes to its gods, making them in its own image.

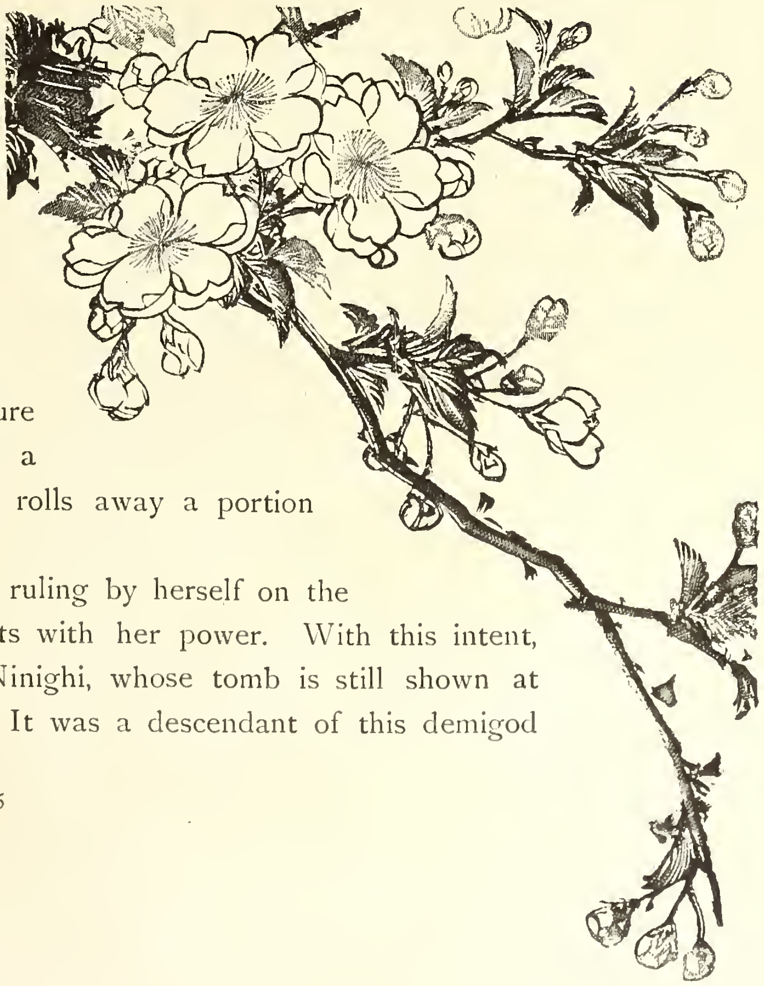
The legends have furnished to Art a fruitful source for picturesque and sometimes humorous composition.

The Goddess Amatérasu leaving her Retreat. (See page 155.)

The Son of the God Ninighi.

Here is one of the most popular episodes:—The goddess of the sun, the lovely Amatérasu, exasperated by the turbulence and disordered life of one of her brothers, makes up her mind to be sulky, and takes refuge within a cave. Thus was the universe hidden in darkness, causing dire consternation to all the gods. High counsel was held as to finding a means for enticing from her hiding-place the dispenser of light, supplications, promises, nothing has any effect. Then great concerts are organised around the cavern, and musical instruments bring forth charming melodies and seductive notes, poetical songs resound again, echoed by full-toned cadences. All in vain, the goddess remains unmoved by the appeals of pleasure, in like manner as she resisted plaintive wailing. Suddenly there steps forward young Uzumé, celebrated for the perfection and spirit of her dancing and singing. She flings herself, with ever-increasing delight, into a wild and fascinating dance, all the gods grouping themselves around her. The dance becomes general, whilst with her notes are mingled the sounds of loud laughter which echoes again in the air. Then they chant a carol in honour of Uzumé — "Glory, glory is hers, who surpasses in beauty and grace the haughty goddess, who but lately ruled the universe with her surpassing comeliness." Amatérasu, failing to understand how the general affliction could cause such reckless gaiety—above all, being unable to endure the thought of a triumphant rival—leans her head out of an aperture in the cavern, while at the same time a powerful god, seeing it at this instant, rolls away a portion of the rock, and daylight returns.

This goddess of the sun, weary of ruling by herself on the earth, resolved to endue younger spirits with her power. With this intent, she sent from heaven her grandson, Ninighi, whose tomb is still shown at Sendai, in the province of Satsuma. It was a descendant of this demigod



who became the first of the Mikados in 585 before our era, the year which saw the commencement of Japanese chronology. It was then that for the last time Amatérasu makes her appearance in person, and sending to the youthful emperor a sword and a metal mirror says—"Preserve this mirror, image of my glory, and your empire shall last while heaven and earth remain."

It is a fact that since then, during the course of twenty-five centuries, the imperial sceptre has never passed to any other dynasty: the only example in the world's history. Even to this day the emperor claims descent from his ancestor, the goddess Amatérasu. So it appeared in a proclamation published hardly twenty years ago. One sees also that the Japanese flag has for its emblem a red sun on a white ground, and the imperial armorial bearings, the chrysanthemum, is itself the symbol of a radiant star.

The mirror of Amatérasu was placed in a temple built in the province of Issé in honour of the goddess, a sanctuary most highly venerated, the point of destination for pilgrimages, which still draw thousands and thousands of the faithful.

Thus it was that the *Shintoist* religion was formed, based on the worship of ancestry and the *kamis*, genii, and forefathers of the royal house. The Shintoist cult has remained the official religion of Japan.

If I have expatiated at some length on the Japanese theogony, it is not only because it has furnished by its numerous and picturesque events, ample material for artists, but also for the reason that it seems to characterise faithfully the romantic and poetical temperament which have distinguished this people from its very origin. The *kojiki*, which first enumerates

The wife of Yamato-Daké throwing herself into the Sea to save her Husband. (See page 158.)

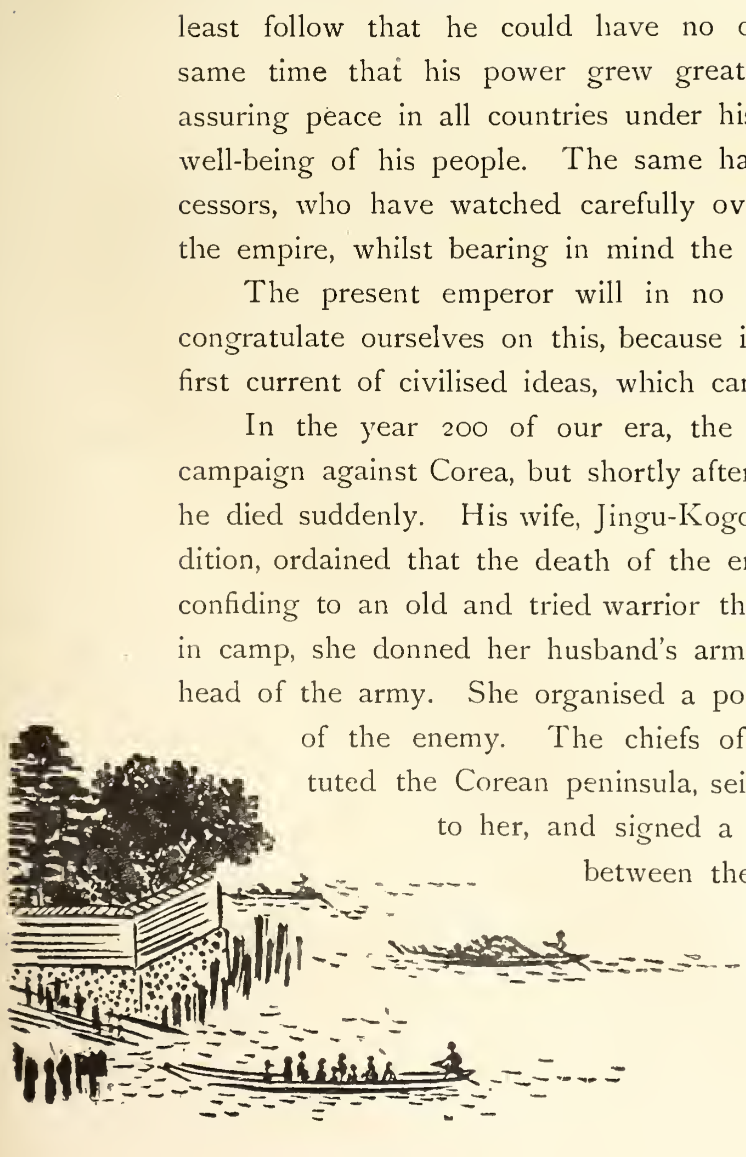
the events of the fabulous era, was written in the year 711 of our era. We find there the proof of a refined and subtle spirit, which has manifested itself from the earliest time, even before civilisation could have the least root.

The founders of the Imperial dynasty received the posthumous name of Jimmu-Tenno—Tenno means "King of Heaven;" a title which all his successors have taken before that of Mikado.

The first portion of the name "Jimmu" means "great genius of war." It is certain that war or rather conquest impressed itself on Jimmu as a necessity, for it was important that he should give his domain the extent and consideration necessary to constitute a viable state. But it does not in the least follow that he could have no other interest than fighting. At the same time that his power grew greater he showed an enlightened mind, assuring peace in all countries under his rule, and interesting himself in the well-being of his people. The same has characterised the rule of his successors, who have watched carefully over the independence and security of the empire, whilst bearing in mind the manly spirit of their subjects.

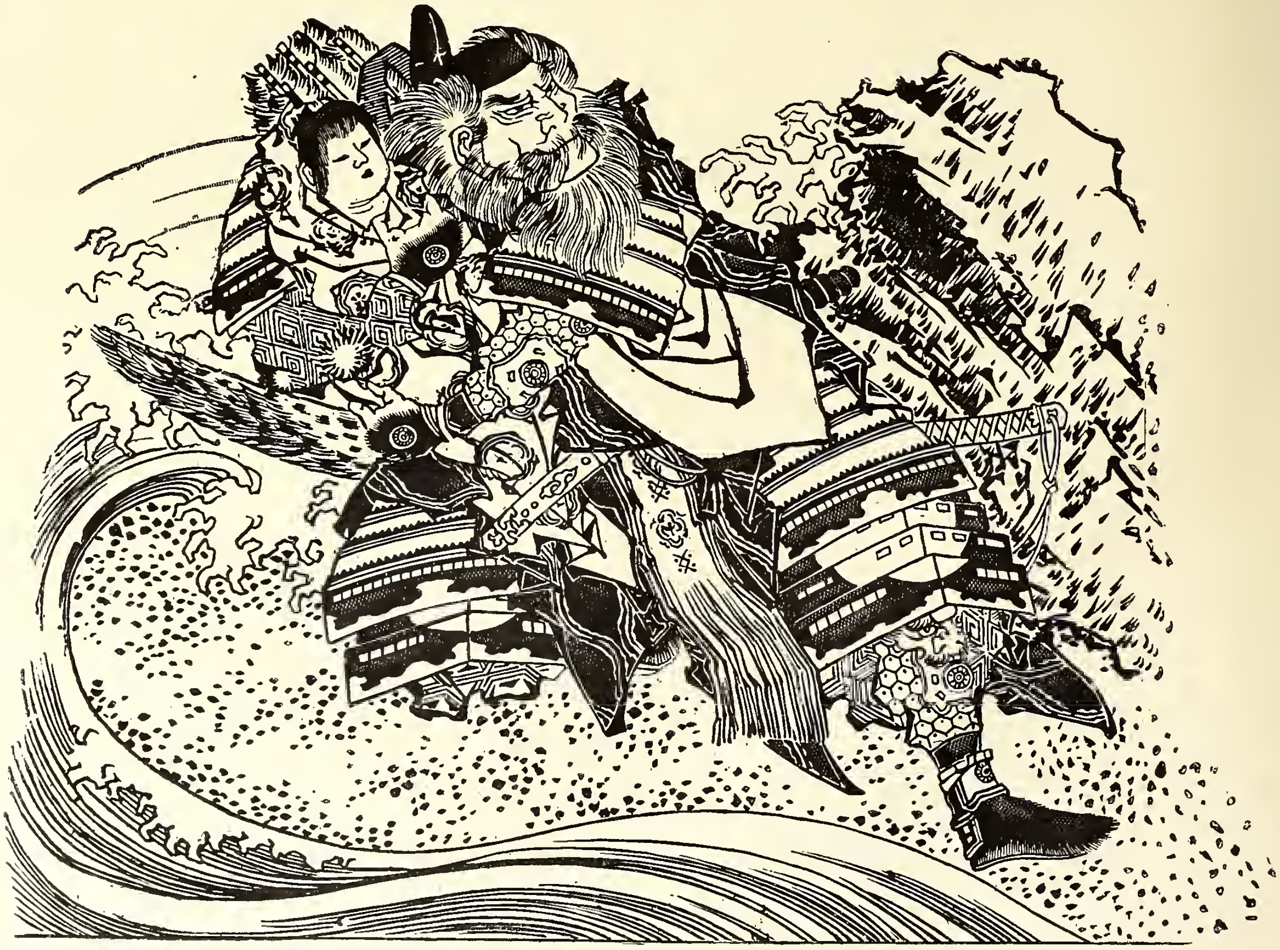
The present emperor will in no way jeopardise his country. Let us congratulate ourselves on this, because it is he who permitted passage to the first current of civilised ideas, which came from outside.

In the year 200 of our era, the fourteenth Mikado determined on a campaign against Corea, but shortly after his departure from Nara, his capital, he died suddenly. His wife, Jingu-Kogo, who accompanied him in this expedition, ordained that the death of the emperor should be kept a secret; and confiding to an old and tried warrior the charge of her child, but lately born in camp, she donned her husband's armour, and resolutely put herself at the head of the army. She organised a powerful fleet and landed on the coasts of the enemy. The chiefs of the various kingdoms which constituted the Corean peninsula, seized with terror, submitted themselves to her, and signed a treaty which assured close relations between the two countries—relations which were to have for Japan a weight almost



incalculable as regards its intellectual development. These consequences came less, however, from the Corean civilisation itself (the condition of which has never yet been definitely discovered), than from the *rôle* which, during some centuries, this advanced portion of the continent was to assume as an intermediary between the archipelago of the east and the great Chinese Empire—at that time in full possession of a flourishing culture.

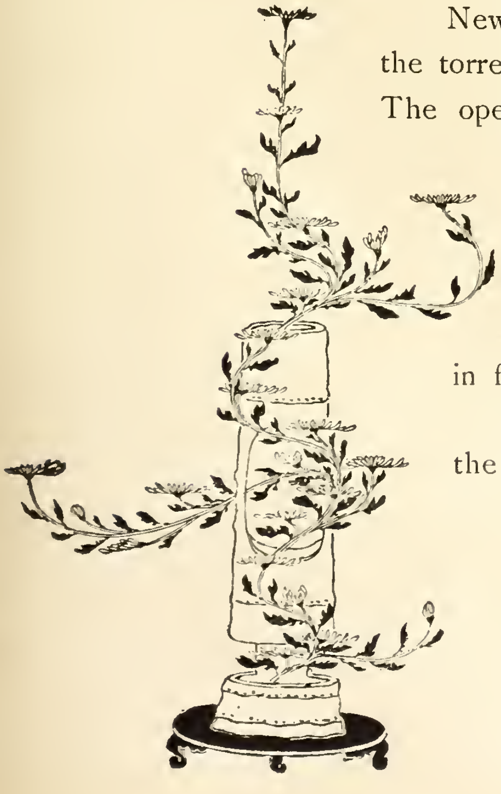
Before examining the sequel to these events, I may be permitted to draw particular attention to the heroic character which history and legend attribute on occasions to Japanese women. The scene where the empress Jingu entrusts her new-born infant to the rough and long-bearded old man, who receives it in his arms with the tender care of a nurse—this touching picture has become a motive for every painter. Another episode, doing honour to feminine virtue, has often inspired the artistic brush: this occurred also during the course of a warlike expedition, undertaken this time by the son of the twelfth Mikado, Yamato-Daké the popular hero, celebrated in a hundred tales. In crossing the Gulf of Yeddo, he had to fight against so furious a sea, that he despaired of reaching the opposite shore; when his lady love, beautiful



The Son of the Empress Jingu confided to Také-no-uchi.

Uzumé dancing. (See page 155.)

and noble beyond all other women, and desiring above all things to save the life of the prince, cast herself into the waves to appease the anger of the lord of the ocean (Compira). Yamato-Daké gave expression to his sorrow in a poem celebrated to this day, in which he names the newly-conquered region as *Adzuma-Kuni*—"the land of his well-beloved." The town of Yeddo which was built at the end of the bay, after a great number of centuries, inherited the poetical name of Adzuma in memory of this romantic legend. It was not immediately that the invasion of the Empress Jingu bore fruit. There was first a period of moral laxity in manners which deadened courage, and permitted Corea to free herself to some extent from Japanese supremacy. Towards the middle of the sixth century, and after some new expeditions, the bonds were renewed, and hence ensued an era infinitely fertile for art and letters.



New life galvanised a brain thenceforth ready to welcome the torrent of reformative ideas which were to arrive from Corea. The opening was made to allow for the advent of new moral doctrines for instruction of all kinds, the outcome of a secular civilisation. China passed on its secrets of political organisation, disclosed undreamt-of information in therapeutics, the priceless knowledge of its written characters, and of its ancient literature—it communicated, in fact, the example of its arts and its industries.

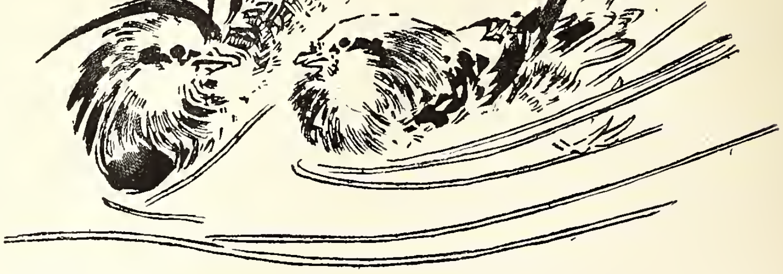
Those who make out the apostles of all the religions of the world to be opponents to the onward march of science and

Atskiki and Vani, Corean savants, who arrived in Japan, B.C. 200.

the murderers of all progress, will find here no argument in favour of their doctrines. It is the vast propaganda of Buddhist doctrines which has become in Japan the instrument for orientalising science and ideal speculation.

The emperor, at that time a fervent disciple of the national religion of the Kamis, was at first but moderately pleased on seeing the arrival of a crowd of bonzes bringing with them numerous cargoes of buddhist statues, books of prayers and temple ornaments. He demanded of his vassal the King of Koudara, in Corea, to replace this company of holy personages by men of science, philosophers, architects, astrologers, doctors, and artists. But it was not long before he perceived that those who brought the word of a new god were at the same time apostles of science and art. The name of the principals among them have transmitted themselves from generation to generation as benefactors to humanity. These men journeyed from town to town preaching everywhere and endeavouring with no less ardour to raise the intellectual level of the population. They constructed canals and bridges, made embankments, established potteries, kilns, and looms for weaving. They taught calligraphy, which in the extreme East constitutes the primordial form of drawing, for it emanates from the same technical execution, and aims at the same decorative effects.* They demonstrated also the great art of painting for the glorification of the saints of their religion.

The Japanese race is certainly too well endowed to let one suppose that without exterior impetus she would have remained inert. We have too high an opinion of her to judge her incapable of creating an art entirely original to herself. Her annals tell us at any rate of certain national painters who flourished before the end of the fifth century. But if it is beyond doubt that the soil was admirably prepared for the seed, it is not less certain that the first productions of a distinct value date from the epoch which followed the appearance of Buddhism in Japan. Some highly valuable specimens of Chinese painting had been procured, and following the example of the new religion itself, the art



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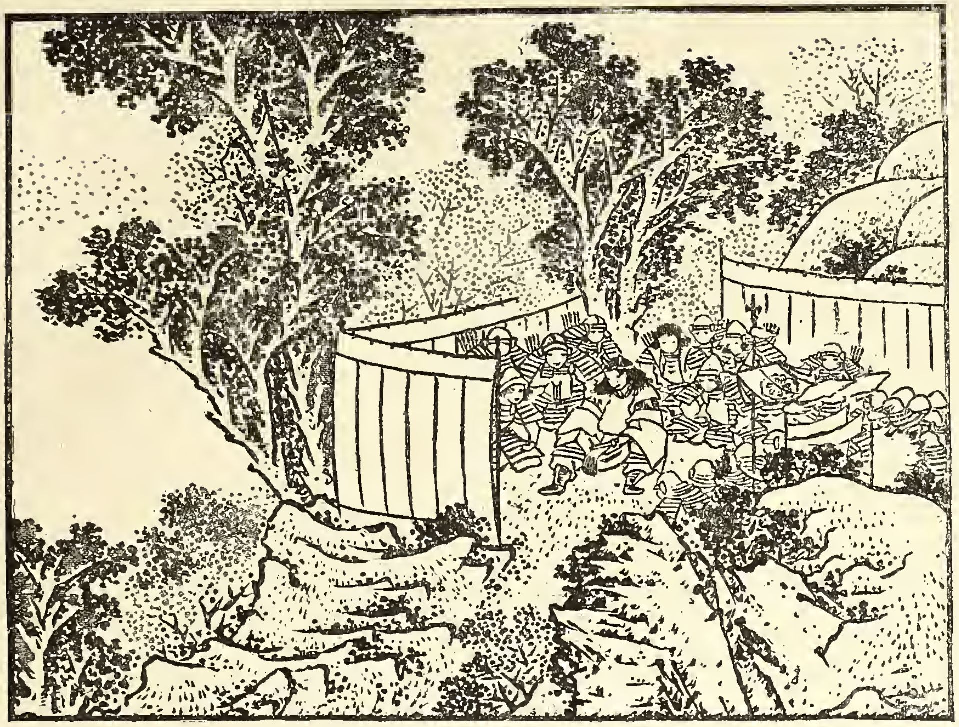
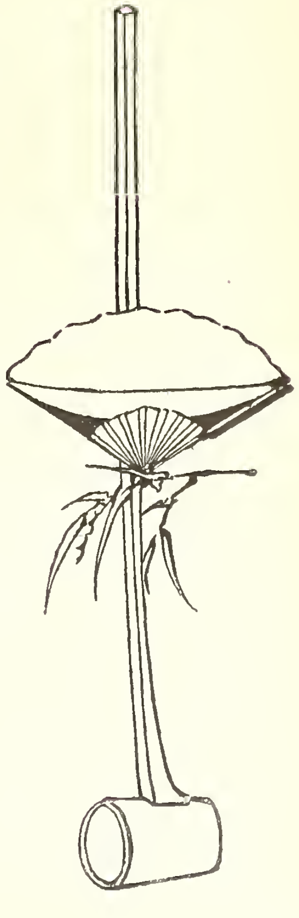
* The brush is the only instrument employed in writing as it is in painting, the pencil or the pen being unknown.



The Camp of Yamato-Daké in the Mountains.

which it inspired propagated itself rapidly, even amongst the highest circles of society. One finds among the celebrated painters of the date the son of an emperor, renowned also as a poet and a musician, and the most ancient portrait which is preserved to the present day represents a personage of very high position in the state, and a fervent propagator of Buddhistic doctrines. This picture dates from the seventh century and is to be seen in the temple at Nara. It is to be understood (let us remark, in passing) that when speaking of a *picture*, this word must not be taken in its absolutely literal sense; all the paintings of the most distant parts of Asia are executed, as is well known, on rolls of silk or paper, which are known in the Japanese language as *Kakémono* (that is to say, a thing to hang up) when the subject is upright, and under the word *Makimono* when it stretches itself out in a horizontal manner.

The earliest school of painting in Japan is therefore the *Buddhistic School.* It planted itself under the standard borrowed from the land of its origin, from the holy India which was the cradle of the religion founded by Sakya Muni more than 2500 years ago. Preserving in its style a changelessness which may be compared only to that of the dogma itself and its forms of ritual, this art had followed in its march the great religious *extension* from the west to the east, passing from country to country as far as the great watery barrier formed by the China Sea and the Pacific Ocean.



Kiokomi, a Japanese Commentator on Confucius.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

Thus it follows that in its migrations, the faith had lost none of its original intensity, in that it could yet inspire so powerfully the brush of the artist. Without showing such sublime nobility as certain similar works in China, Buddhistic painting in Japan has qualities which remain untangible to profane art. In it we have examples (perhaps unique) of a representation of the Divine Being which are utterly exempt from all passion, and regardless of human sorrows. Everything in the character of these figures tells of an existence which raises itself above the unhappiness of our own world. It evolves from it the sensation of an endless repose and an entire and beatified serenity. The technical execution manifests the deep sentiment which inspired the composition. It is earnest to the utmost degree, and, as it were, full of respect to the subject. Having accomplished simplicity and grandeur in the features, it allows itself full play on the accessories, and the vestments, in fanciful profusion, equal in splendour the marvellous ancient miniatures of India and Persia.

Unfortunately it is impossible to do justice in the reproductions of authentic specimens to the above description. Such works have become in Japan itself of such an extreme rarity, that their possession alone is worth a fortune, and they seldom if ever cross the ocean. There is one now in a Parisian collection. It is a remarkable work of the fourteenth century, executed in the traditional style, still reflecting the remains of that exalted fervour to which Art invariably owes its purest inspiration, but which puts an aureole of gold around the heads of Buddhistic figures of a primitive date.

S. BING.

(*To be continued in No.* 14.)

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate AFC is the reproduction of a kakémono by Ritsuo, to whose history Mr. Hart devoted his article in the last number of *Artistic Japan.* We see in the work before us the richness of decorative effect which has been pointed to as the most striking characteristic of the talent of Ritsuo. It is the portrait of the dancer Shirabioshi, who performs before the Shogun Yoritomo some portion of a Nô dance. Shirabioshi was betrothed to Yoshitsuné the Shogun's brother, a most noted warrior, who has become almost a legendary hero in the minds of the populace; Yoritomo quarrelled with him and had him assassinated.

This kakémono is treated in the delicate manner taught by the masters of the Tosa school, of which Ritsuo was a student, from which, however, he but rarely took inspiration. This work thus forms a singular contrast to the more roughly executed productions from the hands of Ritsuo, in the shape of lacquers, porcelain, or paintings. It is a very common peculiarity of the Japanese artists, as it is with all who excel in minute work, that they frequently take the utmost pleasure in reproducing the bold work which belongs more specially to the artists of the olden time. In the original the hair and the fan, with effects heightened by gold decorations, show strong signs of Ritsuo's handiwork as a potter and a lacquerer, so forcibly, indeed, as to be recognised at first sight by one who has any acquaintance at all with the master's work.

Plate AFH is the reproduction of a kakémono by Seisho, reduced to one half of its original size. It is painted on a white silk panel, which is toned down to a light brown tinge; worked in Chinese ink only, this painting is remarkable for the clever plan of leaving certain portions entirely unpainted. The Japanese have arrived at great perfection in this style, the effects of which are but little appreciated by our western artists; the painter in oils being unable to leave blank spaces on his canvas, and water-colour artists hardly making more than an accidental use of the style. The Japanese, on the contrary, have indulged in it with the utmost success; for instance, they often give the illusion of modelling by means of the entire absence of touches, as in the case of the neck and the breast of a bird. In this case the artist has made use of the silk ground itself to give a rendering of the whiteness of snow covering the landscape. The roofs, the tree, the bushes, and the tiny bridge to the right, seem to be smothered beneath the flaky mass, and the air itself is thick with the haze of a snowy day. Above one recognises with difficulty the outline of the hill which overhangs the two houses, and the grey sky over all.

In this landscape, so simply chosen, everything combines to give the feeling of sadness which must have inspired the artist, even as far as the two miserable birds perched on the tree's highest branch. The Japanese return with never-ending delight to the open air—now revelling in the luxuriant foliage of the spring-time and the wealth of the fresh leaves, and now in the full green of the summer time, or the brilliant hues of the sunsets, or the haziness and the flights of cranes seen in the autumn ; this time it is the melancholy of the land wrapped in its snowy shroud. The refined Japanese, when the hot weather comes, will give himself the feeling of coolness by displaying this snowy picture in the tokonoma, reserving for the winter time any painting which may represent green pastures or flowering cherry trees.

Plate ACE is a study of poppies drawn from life, by Sugakudo (1850), growing perhaps on the side of some bank among the grass and the dried-up stems of other plants. The open flower curves its stalk with supple grace, and the painter before the faded petals drop, has noted down their delicate forms.

Plate AJG shows in its left hand portion a picture of the *Ruticilla aurorea*, perched on a plum branch, and to the right, the fishing eagle or pygargus (*Halietus albicilla*), on a rock washed by the waves, watching for prey which may pass within its reach.

Plate AFB represents a bowl of brown earth without enamel, formed by a series of persons sitting round a great basket. On its edge a sort of large rosary sliding from hand to hand shows that these people are fulfilling a rite customary at funerals, and in memory of a dead relation : the merry aspect of the personages has little appropriateness with their sad occupation. One sees here an example of the light-hearted character of the Japanese, who allows himself to give way to good humour at the least comic incident even when seriousness would be more seemly. The author of this specimen is a celebrated female artist, Koren. Using her fingers only in modelling the earth, she endues her little figures with a singular vividness of expression. Everything she made has, combined with the easy look of a wax model, the decided marks of a persevering study of Nature, and a systematic aversion to idealization which would be entirely out of place in the popular types which she aims to reproduce in all their triviality, but with a truth which adds a high artistic value to her productions.

This specimen is reduced to half its original size.

The mask (Plate BB) in lacquered wood is one used for the Nô dances, and is similar to others which we have given in our illustrations. This face, toothless and wrinkled, would have a curious likeness to life when the eyes of the actor sparkled within the two wide round holes, which copy very correctly the eyes of some old men.

For the series of industrial models, we give in Plate AEC some geometrical designs and a decorative pattern of birds, butterflies, and climbing plants. In Plate ADJ the leaves and the tendrils of the Japanese hop (*Humulus japonicus*) are used in a very delicate decorative motive. The snow-covered bamboo in Plate ADH, on the contrary, furnishes a more solid and imposing effect.

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ADJ. **Decorative Design.** Hops.
ACE. **Study of a Poppy.** By Sugakudo.
AEC. **Industrial Design.**
AFH. **Snow-covered Landscape.** Kakémono. By Seisho. (Double Plate.)
AFB. **Specimen of Pottery.** Persons round a Cup.
AJG. **Studies of Birds.**
ADH. **Decorative Design.** Bamboo.
BB. **Nô Mask.**

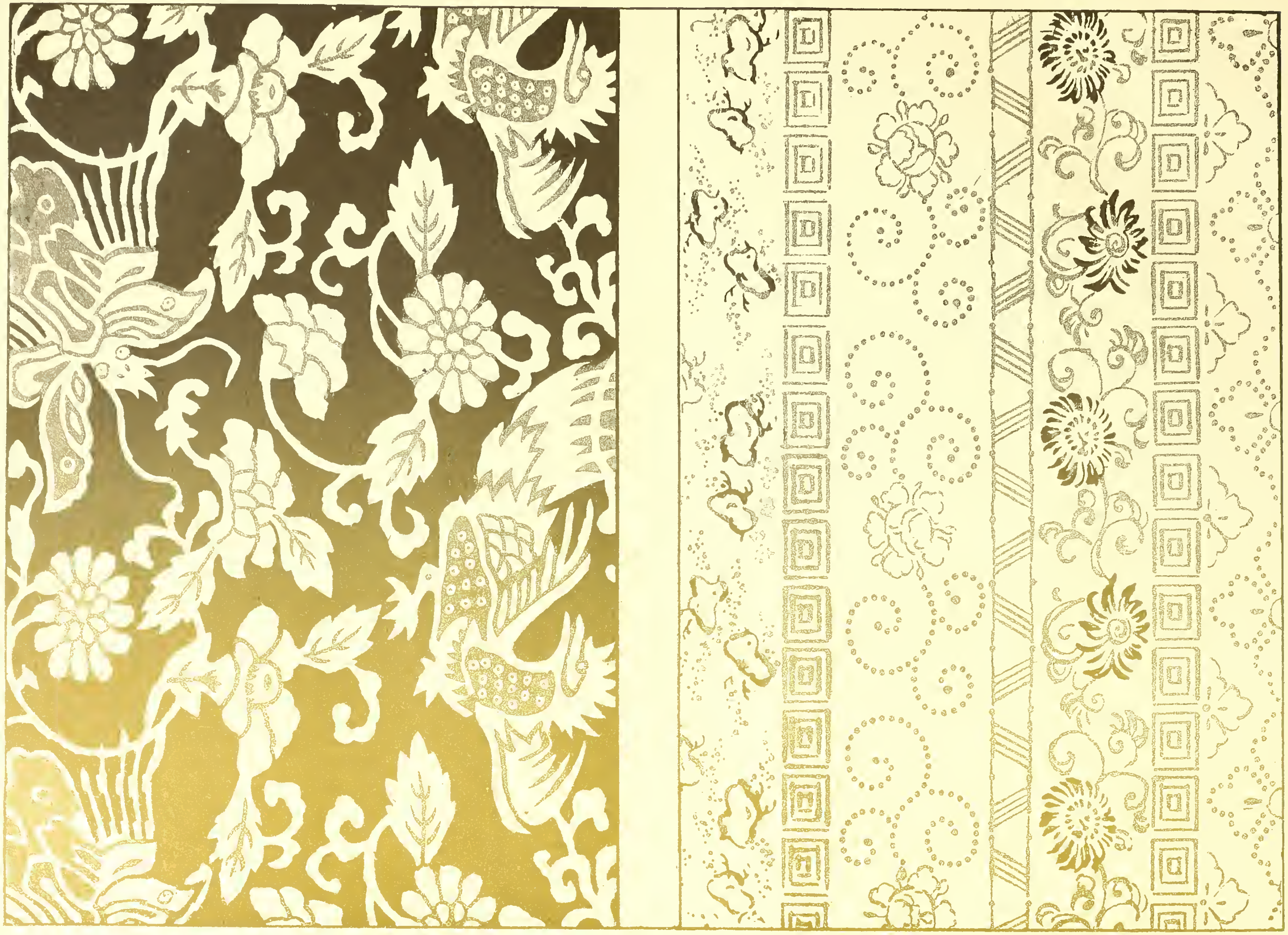
The Article in No. XIV. will contain the concluding portion of Mr. BING'S Paper on "*The Origin of Painting Gathered from History.*"


卯觀子笠翁行年七十九歲圖于夢中菴

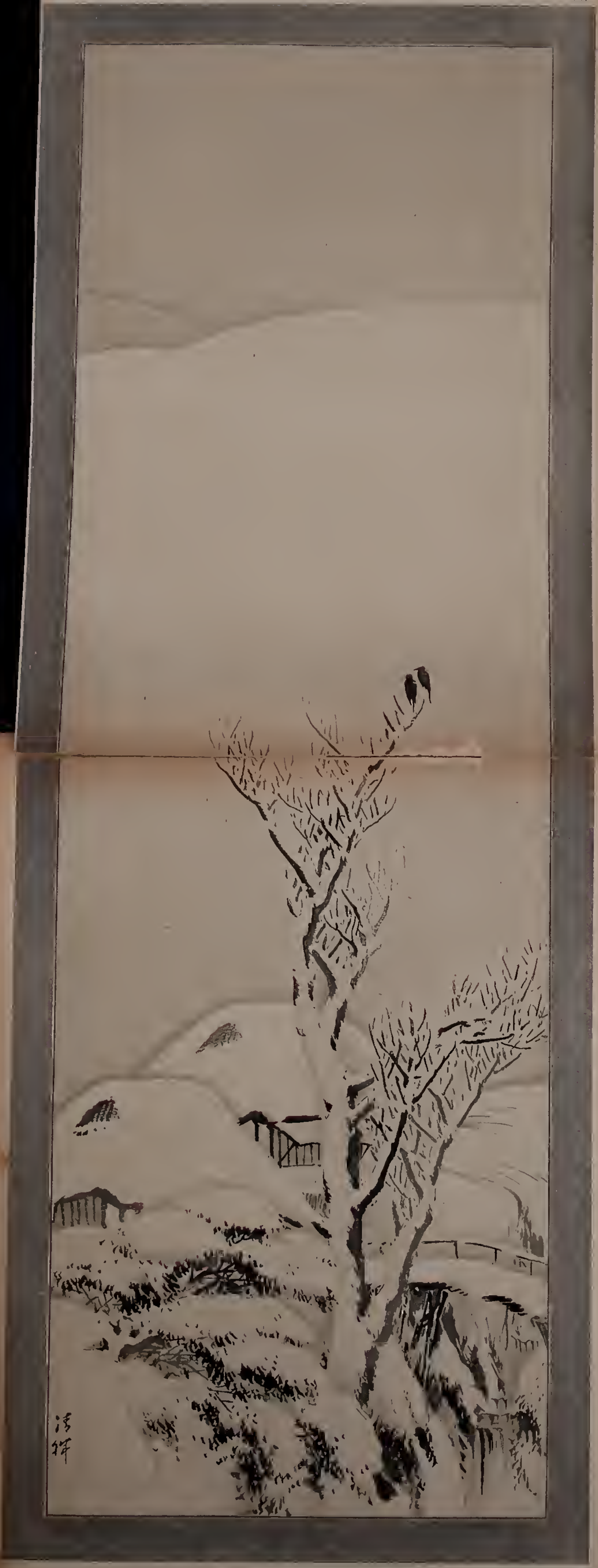
ADJ

ACE

AEC



AFH



GRAV. IMP. PAR GILLOT


AFB

ADH

BB

H. Guérard.

Grav. impr. par GILLOT

THE
ORIGIN OF PAINTING
GATHERED FROM HISTORY.

II.

THE TŌSA SCHOOL.

In 670, the reigning emperor, to lighten his own labours, and at the same time to recompense the services of a faithful friend, created in his favour an important office, which now-a-days would be designated by the title of "Prime Minister." According to the custom of the period, he conferred upon this personage, a man

Women of the Court of Kiyomori.

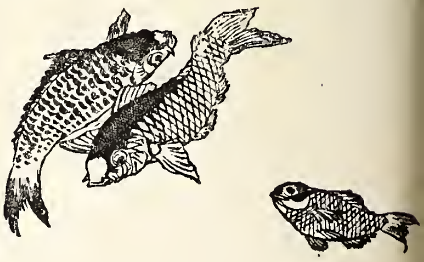
of superior wisdom and high birth, a name of his own choice for him and his family, a supreme and hereditary honour. This name, which was that of Fujiwara (field of wisterias), was destined to hold a leading position in the destinies of the country. It was not long before imperial power, which had been firmly sustained at the commencement by the favourite, was threatened by his descendants, each looking only to his own interests.

Gradually the Fujiwaras appropriated to themselves all the business of the State, completely substituting their own power for that of the sovereigns, who were from this time relegated into the background, and confined within the new capital of Kyoto, retaining only the useless title and official pomp belonging to their rank.

An old Japanese artist cleverly depicts the situation, comparing imperial power to an empty chest, whose key is jealously guarded by the Fujiwaras.

Thus it is that the Shogunate was founded, that duality in the Government which survived until the great revolution in 1868. If all the historical evolutions of a country have their counterpart in the history of its art, none other could be more fertile of effects from this cause. The influence of the new order of things was decisive from its very commencement, as it was also during the long and wearisome trials which were to burst upon the country from the eleventh century onwards. Like as the power of the Emperor had fallen little by little into decrepitude, from the incessant intrigues of the Fujiwara family, so in its turn this also became the victim of a like fate. Having no further obstacles to conquer, it lost all its energy, and in face of an ever increasing feudal anarchy, it preserved no more power than that found within the boundary of its own court.

There came upon the field two other rival families, of no less illustrious descent than the Fujiwaras, and almost as noble as that of the son of the Sun himself. These were the Minamoto and the Taira. These two families numbered among their scions numerous heroes of the past. They were not the outcome of provincial insurrections, or of expeditions to foreign lands, or their names would not have shone with such an unequalled brilliancy. They had on all occasions fought as loyal subjects with the utmost bravery, and had constantly covered themselves with glory. But in the higher circles all power had succumbed. The legitimate sovereign had been overruled by officials in



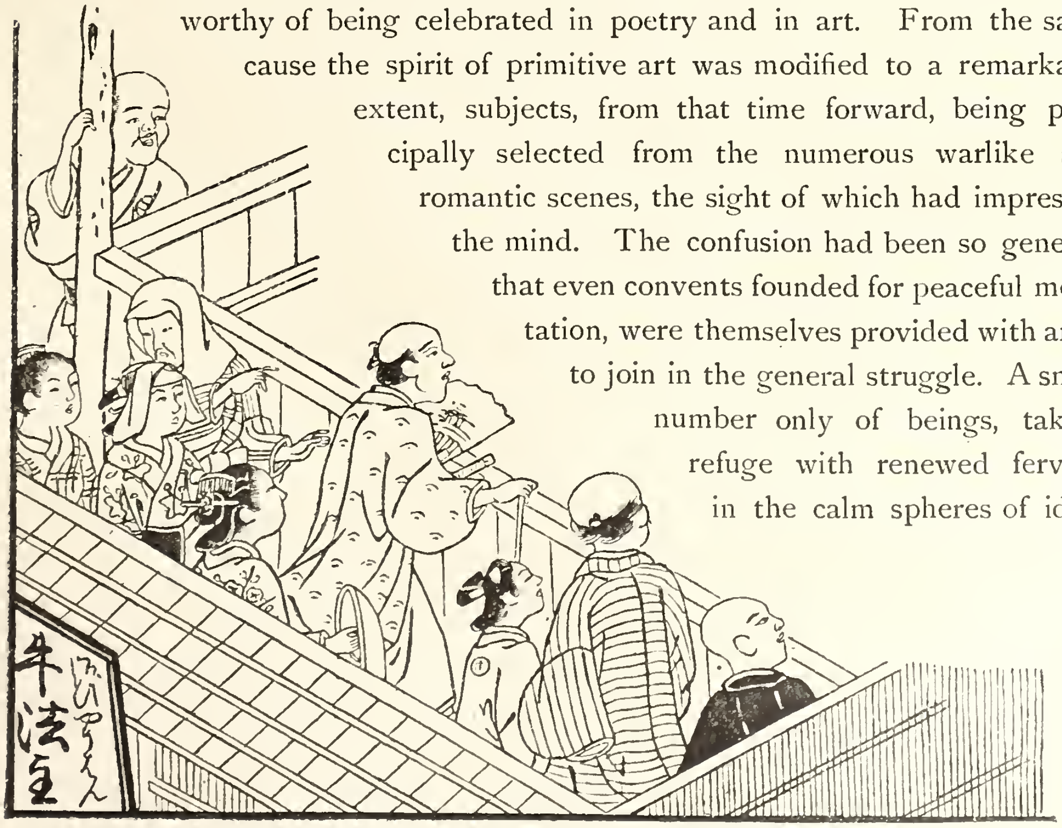
his own palace, who in their turn had lost all prestige, and knew not how to make themselves obeyed.

Portrait of a Daimio (twelfth century).

There naturally came a limit to this sort of thing, when disorder was general throughout the land, the strong oppressed the weak, the empire was unhinged, and authority had become no more than an empty name. None were more worthily entitled to take over the rudder of the State than the chiefs of these two houses, for none could equal them in birth, and among the feudal chiefs none had enhanced their glory by more brilliant feats.

But it was not in the nature of things for these terms of equality to continue, and the question soon arose which of the two was to submit to the other. It was impossible to decide, so forthwith there raged between them a bitter war. The struggles which were destined to throw the country into dire confusion, have been compared by numerous writers to those of the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, of the Armagnacs and the Bourguignons, examples which are hardly sufficient to depict the ferocity and to mark the duration of this bitter feud.

As might be supposed, so troublous a period, which handed over the country to fire and blood, was hardly calculated to give opportunity for leisure or æsthetic dreaming. But by way of retaliation, all the lyric effusions, which the events called for and were to see the light during many centuries, could not fail to prepare for the ages to come, a rich harvest of facts, worthy of being celebrated in poetry and in art. From the same cause the spirit of primitive art was modified to a remarkable extent, subjects, from that time forward, being principally selected from the numerous warlike and romantic scenes, the sight of which had impressed the mind. The confusion had been so general, that even convents founded for peaceful meditation, were themselves provided with arms to join in the general struggle. A small number only of beings, taking refuge with renewed fervour in the calm spheres of ideal

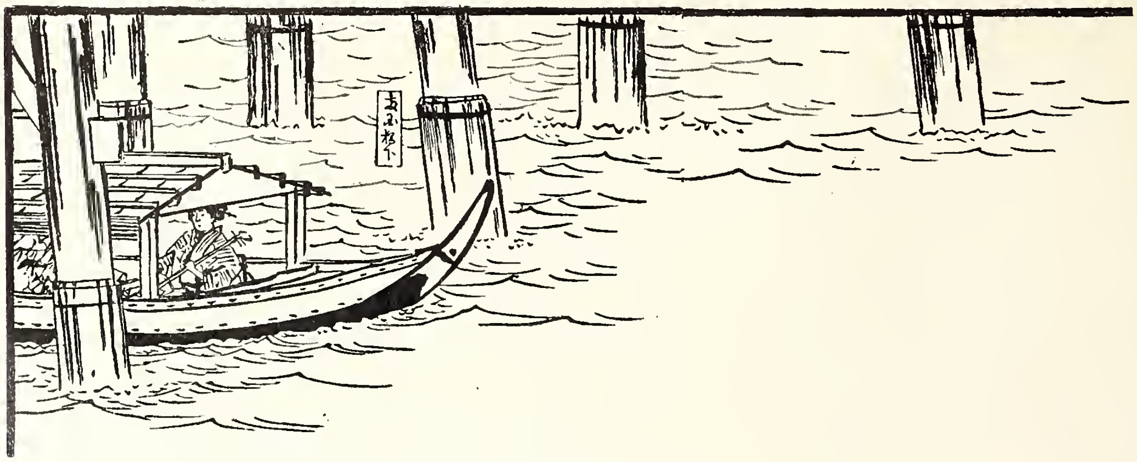


Daimio fighting with Rebels.

purity, constituted themselves faithful guardians of religious tradition in art. They have bequeathed to us numerous masterpieces.

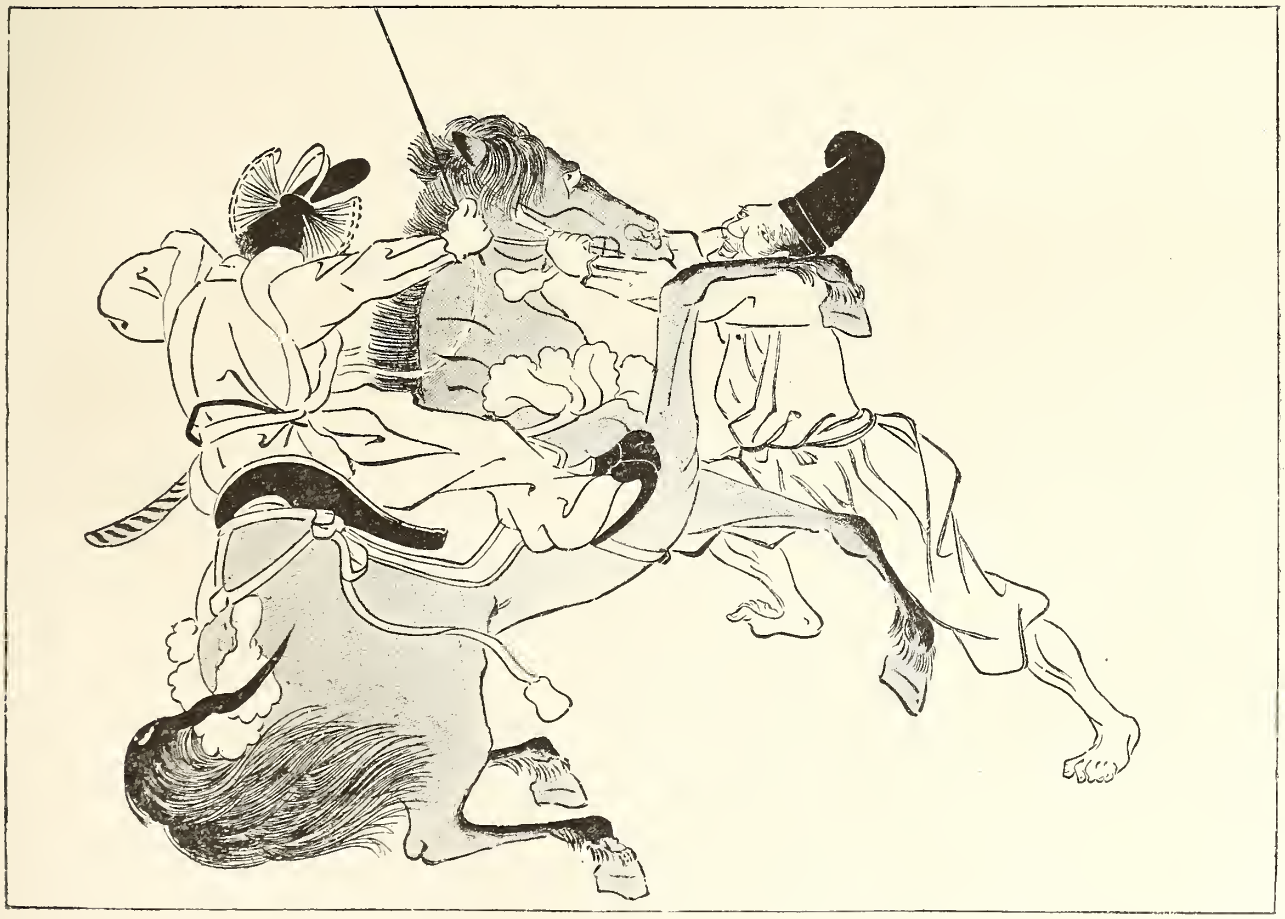
But if the terrible period was marked by furious combats and murderous scenes, if it gave rise to dark stories of vengeance, secretly planned and fulfilled by treachery, it must be added that more pleasurable spectacles were not wanting to tempt the brush of the artist. The spirit of chivalry had developed itself to an extreme point, and during this period of frenzy, the code of honour and the scorn of death arrived at that pitch which has caused the admiration of the universe and was maintained until the very last years of old Japan.

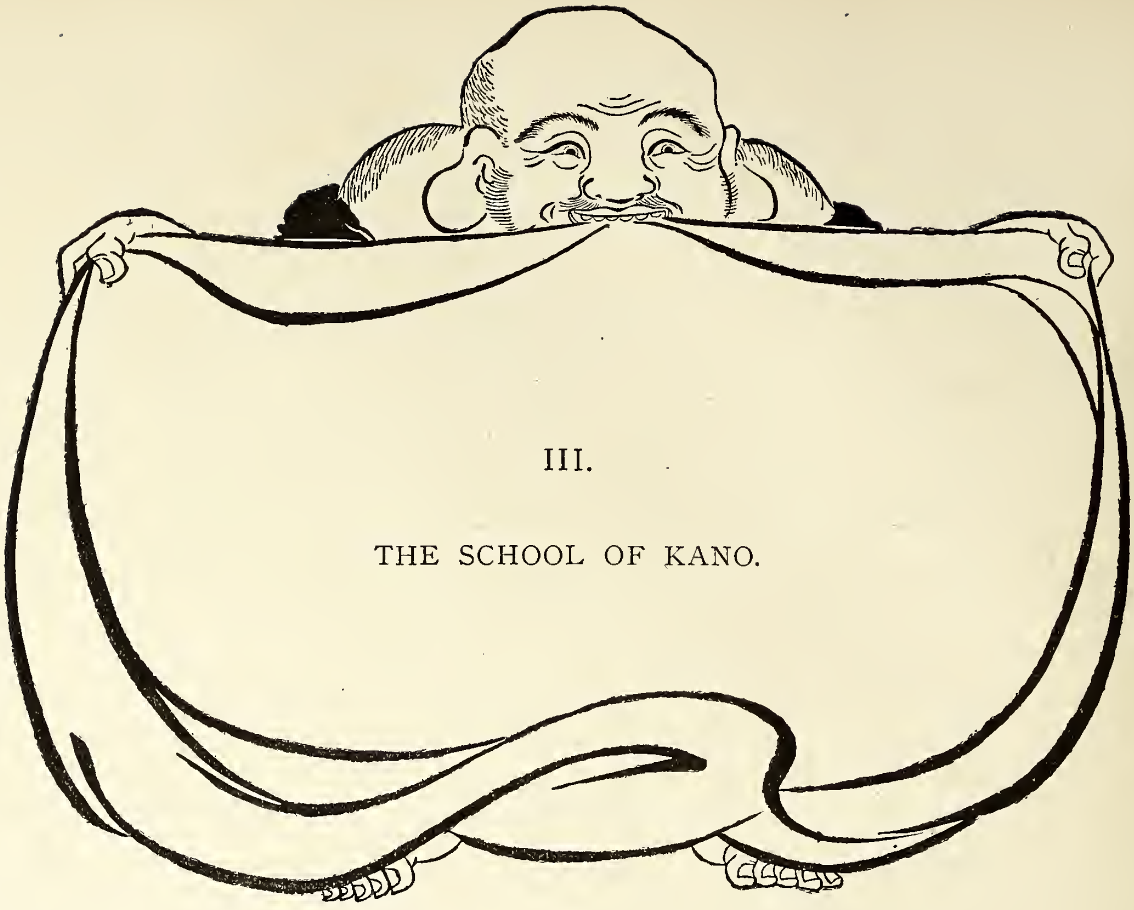
The school of painting which has represented these multitudinous phases of feverish agitation, the contests by sea and by land, the proud mien of warriors, the tournaments, the numberless crowd excited by wondrous sights—the school, in fact, which later on shows us the lord and master returned to his home in peace, and applying himself, in the bosom of luxuriant nature, to all the tender and poetic inclinations which a long period of ungoverned passion had been unable to banish from these most complex natures—this school is known under the easily remembered name of Tōsa. The denomination is thus derived: At the time when the Fujiwara family was yet influential in the State, it had produced some men remarkable in various directions. Several of its members had distinguished themselves in philosophy, literature, or art. At the commencement of the thirteenth century one of them was a noted painter. He was the originator of an artistic centre, which threw out branches far and wide in the country, and as he was under-governor of Tōsa, the name of this province remains attached to the new-founded school, and was adopted by all his disciples. It was extensively developed, and has remained up to the nineteenth



century under the same name, holding unchanged through centuries its original formulas.

The painters of the Tōsa school strike one by their bold character, and their spirit, which results from a fine sympathy between their choice of subject and method of execution. Grandeur of subject, faithfully carried out with refined workmanship, constitutes a style which, essentially aristocratic, becomes the art of high born society. The product of the national soil, and antagonistic to all exterior influence, it is Japanese, *par excellence.*





III.

THE SCHOOL OF KANO.

Subsequently to the civil wars occasioned by the rivalries between the Fujiwara, Taira, and Minamoto families, the country passed through various periods of vicissitude. After a century of calm prosperity, fresh storms burst with the advent of the Shogunate under the Ashikaga family. Nevertheless, the last of this name, Ashikaga Yoshimasa, took upon himself the charge of reviving the culture of letters, and the practice of every sort of art. Delighting in the utmost luxury equally with intellectual enjoyments, he built a splendid palace in the neighbourhood of Kyoto, and thither he drew around him eminent artists of every style. Lacquered objects which were perfected at this time, are absolutely unequalled in their beauty, the manufacturing of porcelain became a sort of passion at the Shogunate Court, and to such an extent was it carried, that the leaders of the empire, Yoshimasa at their head, knew no more fascinating amusement than forming with their own hand some delicate vessel destined to be exhibited at the tea ceremonies. These curious entertainments, which have so deeply interested lovers of Japan, were instituted by Yoshimasa. I devoted a chapter to them, in the history of porcelain which I wrote for *L'Art Japonais*, by M. Louis Gonse. One of the chief desires of Yoshimasa was to resume in a consistent manner friendly relations with China, which till then had never been more than of an intermittent character. Now is the time to say a word or two about that classic country, which the

Pilgrim resting.

Japanese venerate as the original cradle of their art, in the way that we do honour to Greece as the foundress of the fundamental laws of our æstheticism.

Several of our art critics have shown a decided tendency to minimise the part played by China in the growth of Japanese art. Led away by an earnest but exclusive admiration of the latter, they have been unable to admit that so much grace and freshness could issue from a series of productions which are taxed with dryness and *formularism.*

But penetrate into some noble dwelling in Japan, and you will be surprised to see there the place of honour decorated by an object of bronze or porcelain admired by all, an old heirloom of the family brought in early times by some hardy explorer in the Land of Marvels.

Whence comes then our disposition to rectify the judgment which the Japanese hold on their own status?

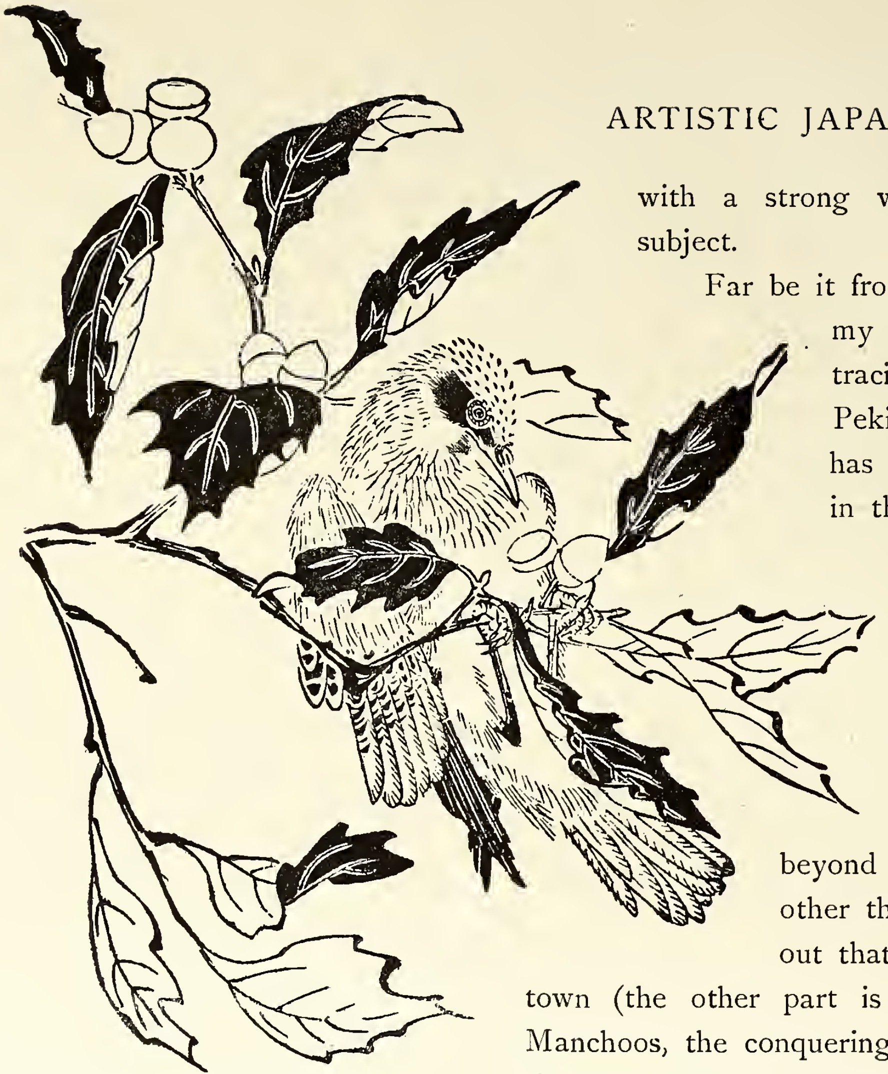
This is easy to see. The happy days when arts were at their greatest perfection in the glorious land of the rising sun, are not yet far distant. They came to an end in the most sudden manner, interrupted by unexpected events, and without giving opportunity for the poison of decadence to do its work. This fulness of bloom, stopped in its prime at the very moment of its greatest beauty, was powerless to leave behind it anything other than that which savours of youth and power.

It is entirely different in the case of China.

There ages and ages have passed since a wondrous early civilisation gave all which a fruitful soil was capable of producing. The seed since then has dried up gradually, slowly. The tree is still standing, a skeleton with bare arms, whose leaves have fallen one after another. In truth it has been fruitful, but when we take pains to discover what were its fruits borne in past time, one finds the productions of the latest period which alone may have been preserved at its downfall, full of weakness and foreshadowing total destruction.

It is from these productions of old age that China has been judged by our own critics.

As far as this concerns myself, I had some inkling of the real origin of things, and when, in 1880, I visited the capital of the vast Empire, I was inspired



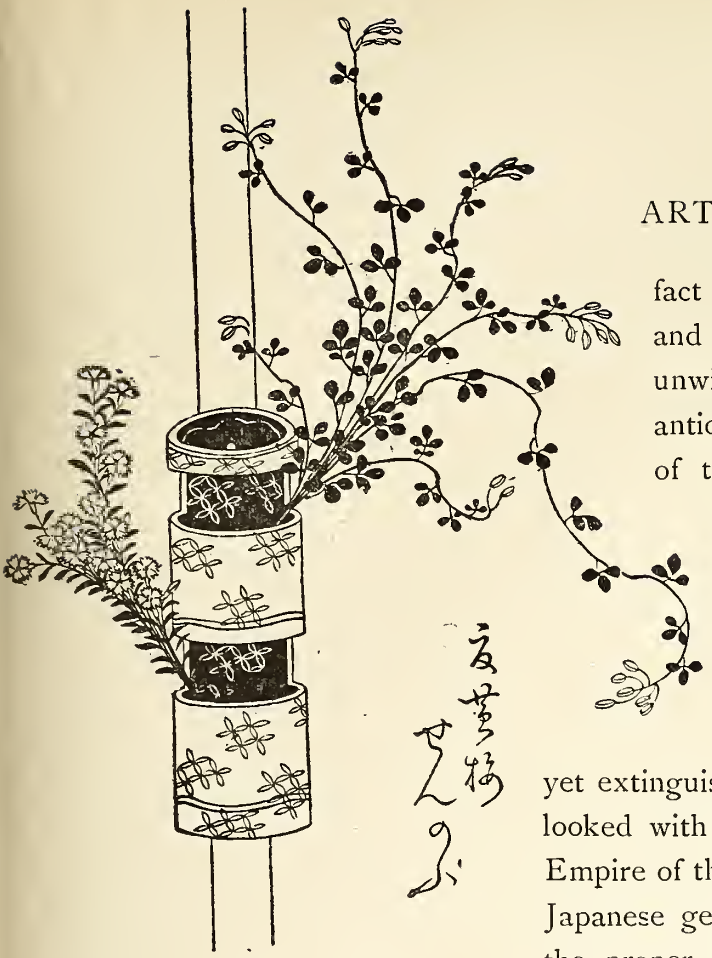
From a Chinese painting of the Sung period.

with a strong wish to be satisfied on the subject.

Far be it from me to insinuate that before my time no one had dreamt of tracing out these matters. At Pekin, the whole European colony has taken the most lively interest in the ancient art productions of the country. It has almost become a sort of sport, where everyone was searching to lay hands on rare objects. But in this hunt for curiosities, it is but seldom that investigations have been carried beyond curiosity shops. For me other things were necessary. I found out that in the Chinese portion of the town (the other part is inhabited principally by the Manchoos, the conquering race who took possession of the country in the sixteenth century), I knew in fact that in this ancient quarter, a certain street was entirely taken up by booksellers, and sellers of drawings, to which the students came to supply themselves before preparing for the great examinations which are the means for getting various degrees ; a quiet retreat also, whither the old Chinese of cultivated taste were wont to repair. In this place I established the head-quarters of my research. Week upon week saw me ever occupied in turning over great heaps of books and papers. Curious manuscripts and grotesque designs passed under my notice by the thousand. What I was obliged to look over of every kind of document having only the remotest connection with my object in view it is impossible to describe.

The harvest reaped was hardly over-abundant, but a small number of ancient paintings gave evidence of the early existence of superior works, certifying beyond doubt the origin of all the qualities of poetry and life-likeness which we were in the habit of considering as the exclusive belongings of Japanese productions.

One cannot be surprised at the rarity of these examples. Besides the

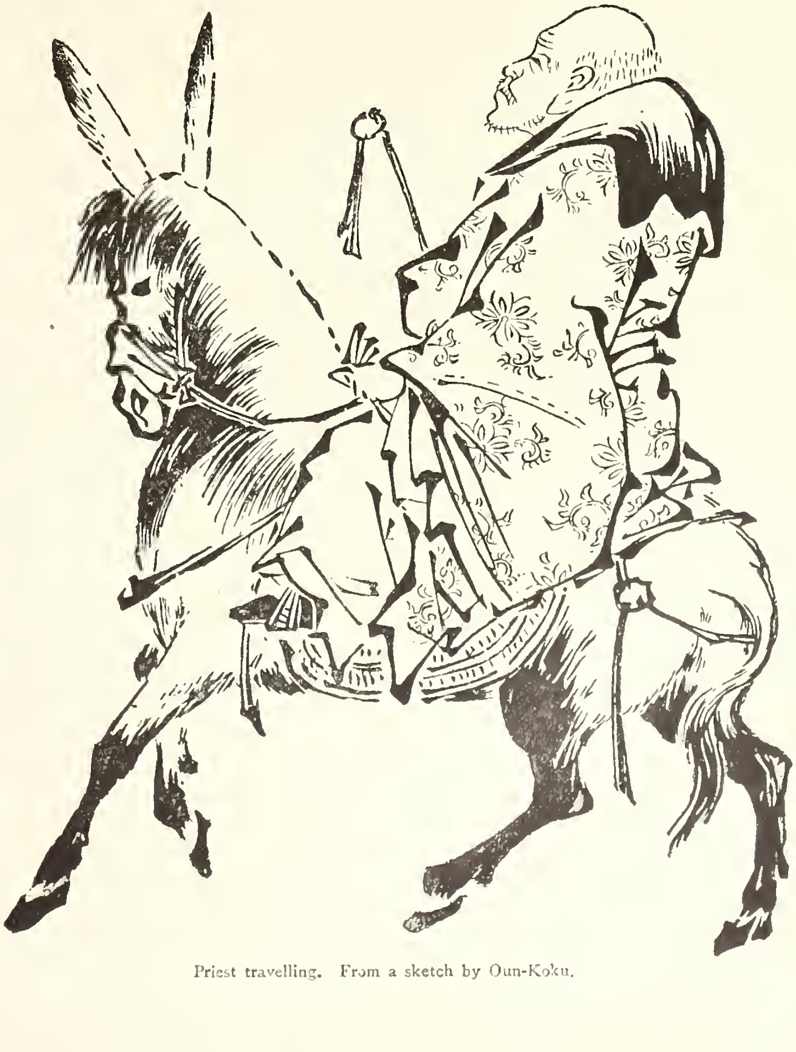


fact that the Chinese are very fond of them, and only allow them out of their hands very unwillingly, one must remember also their high antiquity. One hears sometimes the praises spoken of the Ming period (1368–1644) but as a fact, this was really a witness of undoubted decadence, at least in the art of painting, which had flourished to the utmost extent in the thirteenth century under the dynasty of the Sungs.

Nevertheless the great tradition was not yet extinguished when in the fifteenth century Yoshimasa looked with favour upon the alliance with the powerful Empire of the Centre; and this also was the moment when Japanese genius arrived at maturity, and only waited for the proper time to manifest itself through a numerous series of artists of the highest rank. One of them, called Sesshui, could not resist the desire to go and study the old Chinese masters in their native land. There he produced numberless works which have become greatly celebrated. Sesshui was ordered to the court at Peking to paint before the Emperor, and to the great surprise of the sovereign, it is said, he produced upon a piece of silk a dragon surrounded with clouds, with a few splashes of his brush filled with Chinese ink.

Such legends about wondrous feats accomplished by certain popular artists are numerous in Japan. One of the most often repeated, and interpreted by artists of every school, is the following. It is traced, if I mistake not, to Kanaoka, a celebrated painter of the ninth century:—

The ricefields were nightly devastated by some unknown horse, which by day could on no occasion be tracked.



Priest travelling. From a sketch by Oun-Koku.

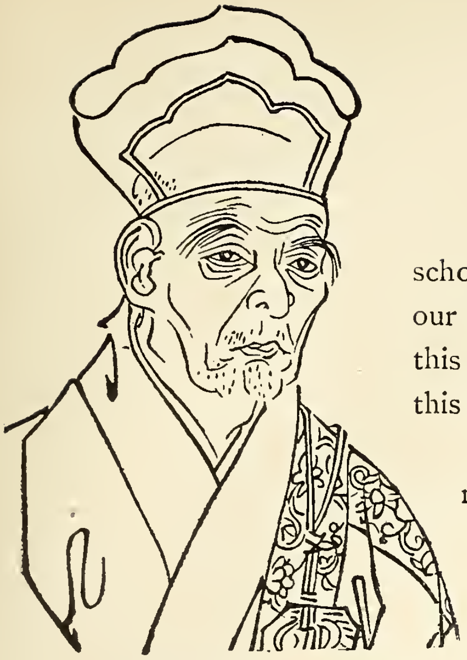
One night, however, it was resolved among the peasants to lie in wait for the animal. As soon as darkness came, it did not fail to make its appearance, but it was swift and artful, showing no willingness to allow its capture. Then a desperate pursuit commenced, which seemed to be without end. In the reproduction of this scene, one sees the horse galloping away, while behind him, in hot haste and breathless, all the people provided with torches, armed with sticks, follow until they can go no further. In the meantime the chase grows wilder and more furious; suddenly, however, the animal disappears through a temple door, his hunters follow him, they search everywhere around and cannot find him, until on the wall in a celebrated picture which hangs in its accustomed place, they see the fiery beast, who has just re-entered his frame, entirely covered with foam, and still panting from his frantic race.

The horse had been so wondrously portrayed by the artist, and indeed with such an appearance of real life, that he became a living thing, and returned each day to liberty amongst the fields.

But we must return to Sesshui, our traveller artist, who had caused surprise even to the old Chinese masters by the dexterity of his brush. Having stayed some years in the country, he returned to Japan, whither he transplanted the rules he had adopted as his own, and with which he formed a school. Some spirits, notwithstanding, revolted against an entire absorption of national art into the borrowed methods of a neighbouring country. Japan had already arrived at too decided a knowledge of her own power to resign herself entirely without effort. The foreign element might with some advantage be assimilated, allowing a certain amount of native feeling also with it.

Of a fusion thus arrived at a new school was born, for which a glorious future was destined. The artist with genius who first interpreted this sort of regeneration was Kano-Masanobu (1424–1520), founder of the celebrated Kano

Reproduction of Subject on a Knife Handle, made by Hirosada.



From a Kakémono of the period of Seshui.
(Portrait of a prince of Satsuma, who became a priest.)

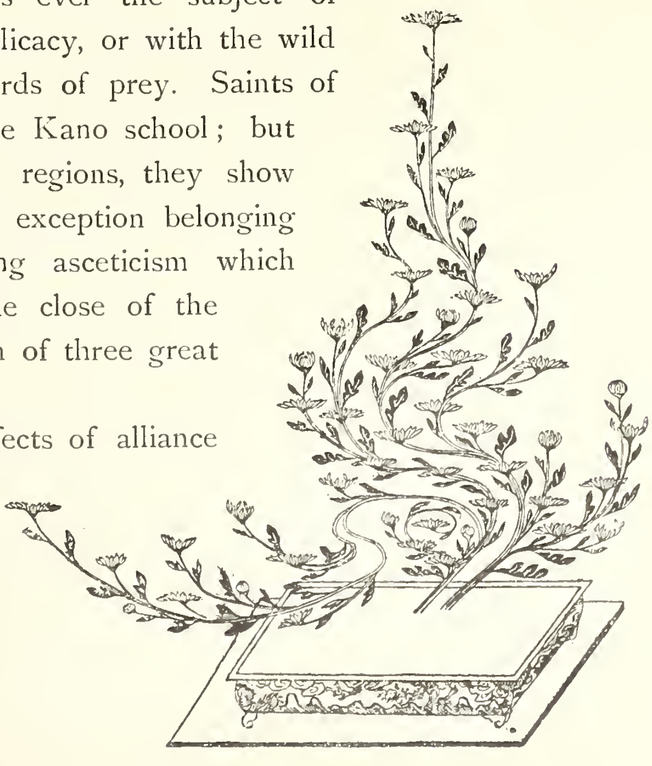
school, which has continued to flourish without interruption to our own times. We reproduce among the separate plates in this number a good specimen of the work of Motonobu, son of this Masanobu, the most celebrated of all the Kano family.

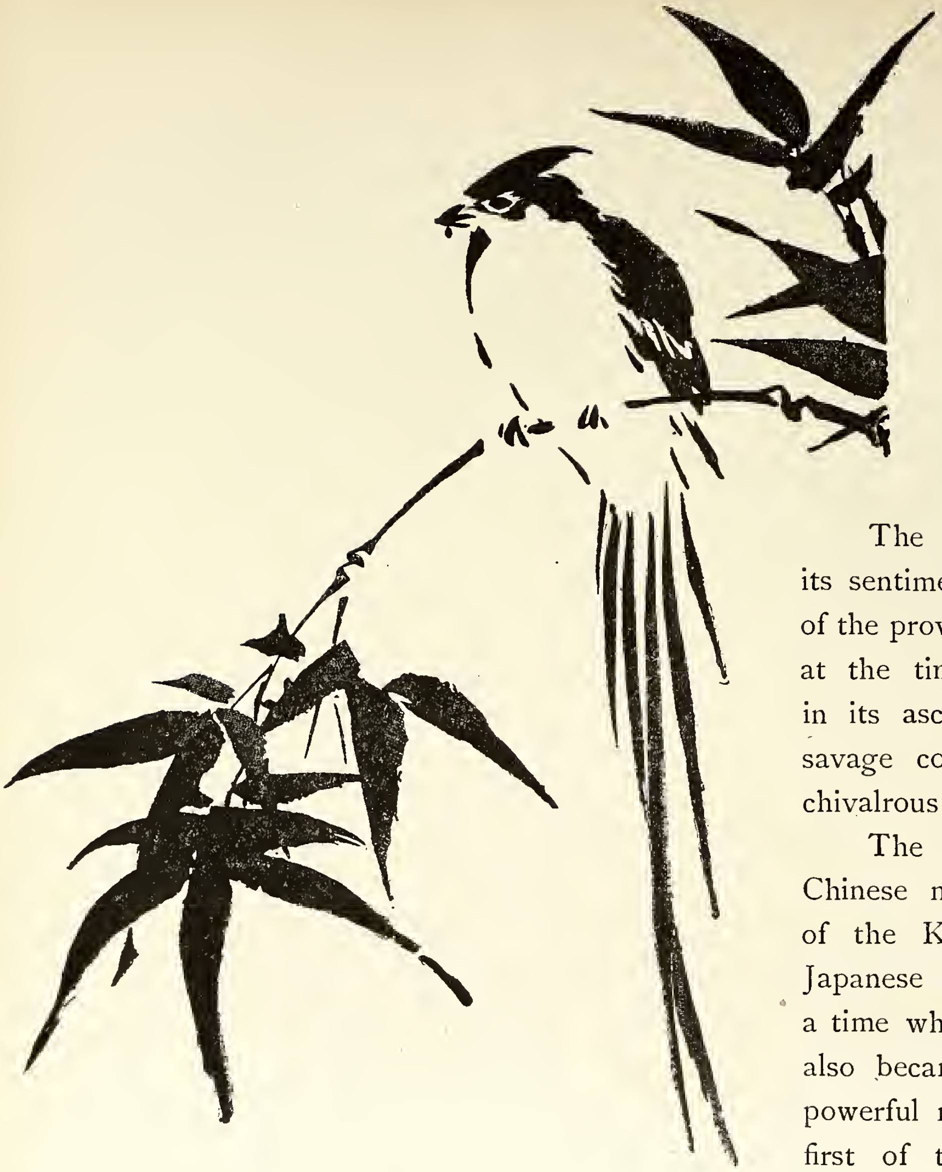
In spite of the pretension of having invented a new style, the art of the Kano school, in the main, proceeds from Chinese originals, whose *technique* and characteristics it borrows.

The execution is calligraphic, based on the laws applied to writing, which itself (as has been mentioned in these pages on former occasions) is no other than a sort of painting, An artist must be first a writer, for the use of the brush is identical in each case. The perfection in the manipulation of the instrument and the firmness of the touch make one recognise a master workman who should be able to charm the eye by the beauty of his lines, and by the ease and suppleness of his brush work.

The Chinese school and its outcome—the Kano school—are represented essentially by painting in black and white. The effect is sometimes heightened by the addition of bistre or some other faint tone of colour forming a sort of gradation. But it is Chinese ink which is always chiefly used, and the resources which Chinese and Japanese masters derived from it, are marvellous and unique. The art of representing shades of colours with such simple materials, can be carried to no higher perfection. The most usual subjects are those furnished by landscape, which freed itself little by little from a certain traditional conventionalism which characterised the Chinese decadence; then again, an extensive series of works is dedicated to fantastic or natural animals, among which the bird is ever the subject of special study, represented lightly and with delicacy, or with the wild strength of outstretched wings, peculiar to birds of prey. Saints of all orders find their place in the works of the Kano school; but instead of mystic beings, throned in ethereal regions, they show us a succession of gods commonplace without exception belonging to the common round of life, or affecting asceticism which appears far from austere. Here then, at the close of the sixteenth century, we find Japan in possession of three great schools of painting, each equally flourishing.

The *Buddhistic School*, risen from the effects of alliance





with neighbouring empires, an ancient school whose formulas of Hindoo origin were handed down intact from the earliest generations.

The *Tōsa School*, national and noble in its sentiment; under the patronage of a lord of the province of Tōsa, one of the Fujiwaras at the time when this powerful family was in its ascendency, and when the frenzy of savage combats was followed by the most chivalrous and noble deeds.

The *School of Kano*, springing from Chinese models, regenerated by the genius of the Kanos, Masanobu, and Motonobu. Japanese art was in its grandest period, at a time when the social state of the country also became steadily peaceable. Under the powerful rule of the great Shogun Iyéyasu, first of the Tokogawa family, civil wars became extinct. A settled quiet was for several centuries to take possession of the country, and would place under a well-planned hierarchy the different factions in the State. Feudalism was strongly established, but it paid regard to the lower classes, and was ardently careful of the artistic tendencies which had taken possession of the entire population. Nowhere was a prince to be found, who, if he did not work himself in some artistic way, was not proud to include among his vassals celebrated artists, who made it their glory to satisfy the refined taste of their master.

In the midst of such artistic fervour certain strong individualities could not fail to arise, determined by their original creations to avoid the hard rules of the three great schools of painting, which endeavoured to claim all art within their embrace. From these commencements novel manifestations have arisen, whose history should be studied step by step; but for fear of taking too much space, it is necessary to dismiss till a further occasion the continuation of this review. It will be shown then under what influences Japanese painting arrived at the latest expansion of its decorative beauties with Kôrin and his school; and also, how in modern days, the minute study of nature triumphs in the Shijo school. It will be my endeavour to demonstrate from what causes the *popular art* has arisen, which was created by the people for the representation of their particular life. It is this last form of art which will, in fact, lead us to the study of illustrated books and engraving.

S. BING.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate AGB. This landscape which is so severe in effect, is from the brush of Motonobu, a painter of the seventeenth century and the most celebrated of the Kano school.

The original has been endued by time with a rich tone, which it is almost impossible to reproduce. In this simple composition, with its faded trees beneath a thick fog which conceals the background, the work of a master-hand is seen wrestling with Nature itself, which is interpreted with an original effect. A saddened, and at the same time a life-like effect, is to be remarked in the desolate landscape which might be compared to pictures by some European masters who have represented Nature literally as she is. This kakémono, with its forcible work, strongly reminds one of certain of the canvasses of Diaz, and even more of Rousseau.

Plate AFG is a reproduction (two-thirds of its real size) of a page of studies by Hokusai, in which we see the artist in a studious mood, as it were, dissecting his model and searching for the most becoming mode of hair-dressing, and fascinating arrangements for the hair-pins. The representation of common ornaments seen in the profile of the shopman, is in strange contrast with the stately outline of the lady's head which is beside it. In this the graceful lines of the brushwork, and the somewhat plump neck beneath the mass of hair, bring reminiscences of the busts of Roman patricians seen in many a museum. The other female head is surely, also, worthy of comparison, if not with a more exalted style of art, with the light works of the masters of the eighteenth century; the roundness of the cheek and the pose of the chin, the arched nostril, and the high lights in the modelling, make this unquestionably like some of those faces in the painting of which Watteau and Lancret excelled. The woman with dark hair, lightened on one side by a half transparent portion which allows the ear to be partially seen, holds in her lips the little packet of paper handkerchiefs which is ordinarily kept in the girdle; it is a familiar act with the Japanese, and one often sees engravings which represent a woman who, while her girdle is undone, thus holds the paper leaves which take the place of our pocket handkerchief.

Plate AJF reproduces two studies of birds: to the right the coot (*Fulica atra*), a bird which inhabits marshes and ponds; to the left canary birds (*Serinus canaria*), which were introduced into Japan probably by the Dutch in the last century.

Plate AG is taken from the *Man-gwa* of Hokusai; it is a series of sketches from plants worthy of examination on account of the varied methods employed by the artist in giving the appearance of each kind of foliage with such remarkable truthfulness, that the naturalist does not hesitate to recognize each plant from these simple and rapid drawings. On the left hand page we find the lycopodium, the brake, the climbing brake (*Polypodium*), a species of grass (*Hemerocallis disticha*), the peony and the passion flower. On the right hand, hibiscus and Chinese primula (*Primula sinensis*), calystegia, caladium, and cissus (*Cissus thunbergii*). Each of these plants are no more than a few inches in height, and it must have entailed the utmost care on the part of the artist when he devoted his pages to these small plants.

Plate ABE. A bottle in Kyoto ware from the kiln of Midzoro whose mark it bears.

This kiln, like those of Kiyomidzu, Awata, Omuro, and many others, was founded by Ninsei, the celebrated potter, living at the end of the sixteenth century, who was the originator, not only of this style of decoration, but of all decorated pottery. On a cracklin ground of fawn colour, bamboos are drawn in the three medallions which compose the body. These bamboos are green and blue, a difficult combination of tints in which the artists of Kyoto have particularly succeeded. The neck is encircled by an ornament of silver, which leads one to believe that on some occasion the upper part has been chipped or broken. The reproduction is three-quarters the size of the original.

Plate AEI, is the reproduction, three-quarters its real size, of a piece of pottery in brown earth without enamel. It is an *Okimono*, an ornament, representing a bird of prey similar to the European sparrow-hawk, perched on a stump covered with rough bark. The piece is entirely modelled by hand, and some congenial implement has been used to endue the feathers, the bones, and the roughness of the wood with a vigour and a clearness of expression which would be unobtainable by the use of the wheel. The brown colour of the earth represents very exactly the plumage on the back of the bird of prey, and the breast as well as the underparts have been covered with a thin coat of light colour speckled with grey which gives a yet more striking life-likeness to the bird. This living look is heightened by the brightness of the eye, arrived at by a simple point of black enamel surrounded by yellow, instead of the added glass eye, which the Japanese understand so well the use of when they are disposed to show a look of great intensity. It is a curious thing that even the most experienced judge finds it impossible to ascribe this piece to any of the great and celebrated manufactories, and it is highly probable that it is the work of some private individual, a very common occurrence in Japan, where every distinguished person delighted in the potter's art, and amused himself by moulding earth, which he forthwith sent to some neighbouring kiln.

Plate AFA. Here a decorative design is made from the two imperial flowers, the chrysanthemum and the paulownia. There was some reason perhaps to show a subtle difference between the two. The chrysanthemum is the imperial flower, and the paulownia is the emblem of the reigning family; but one knows at the same time, that from the earliest known history of Japan, one single family has held the throne which it still occupies.

Plate AEB reproduces a variation of a subject dear to the Japanese, ever ready to borrow from Nature inspirations for decorative art—it is the rippling stream, the reflected cherry branch, and the roving butterfly.

Plate FG is a study of blossoming wisteria. The signature of the artist, Takeharu, is accompanied by a sort of seal drawn with the brush, and formed of two cranes whose breasts bear letters written in an ancient form.

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SEPARATE PLATES.

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AFA. **Industrial Model.** Chrysanthemums and Paulownia.

AFG. **Original Sketches.** By Hokusai.

AGB. **Kakémono.** By Kano Motonobu. (Double Plate.)

AG. **Two Pages from Hokusai's "Man-gwa."** Plants and Flowers.

AJF. **Two Studies of Bird Life.**

AEB. **Industrial Model.** Butterflies and Flowers.

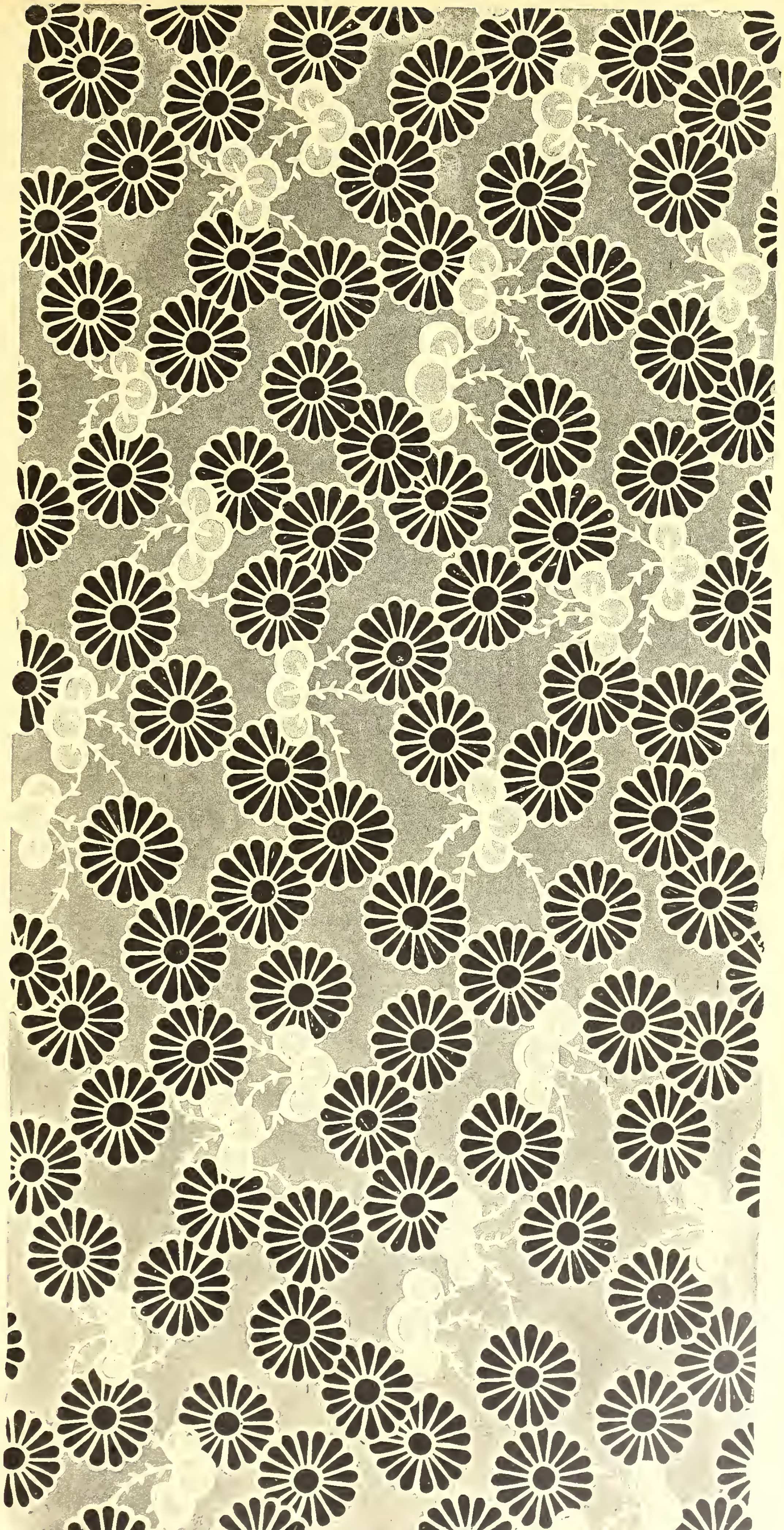
AEI. **Specimen of Ceramic Art.** Falcon.

FG. **Study of Wisteria Blossom.**

The Article in the Next Number will be by Mr. William Anderson.

ABE

AFA



AFG

AG

AGB

GRAV. IMP. PAR GILLOT.

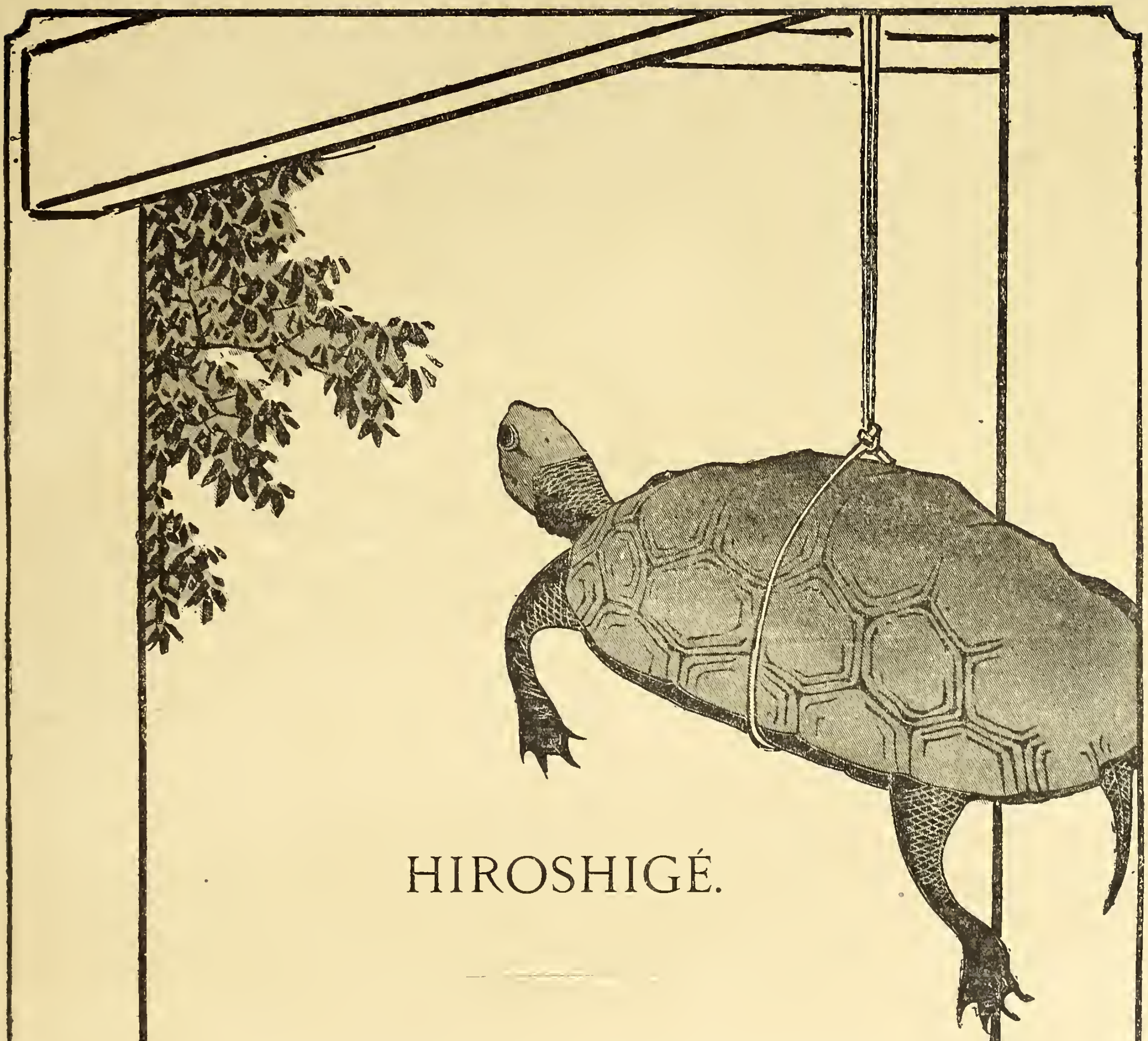
AEB

AEI

GRAV. IMP. PAR GILLOT.

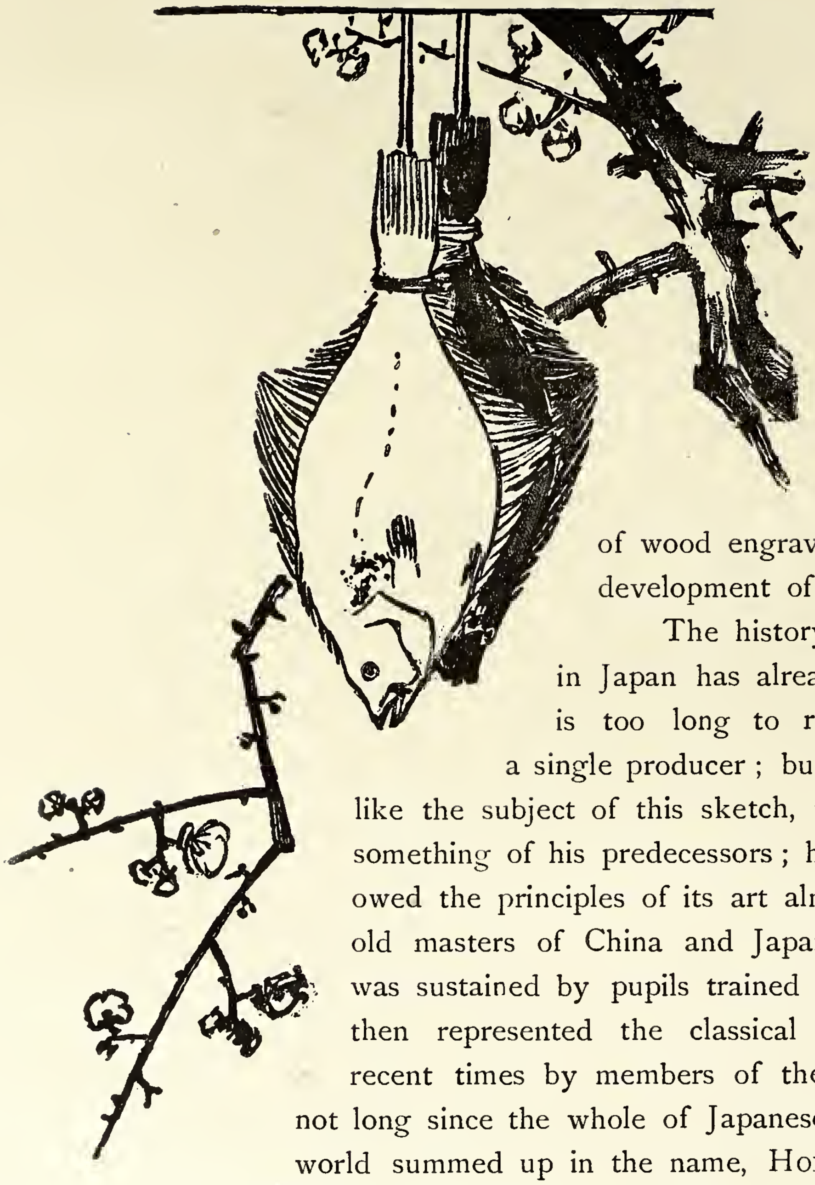
FG

Grav. impr. par Gillot



HIROSHIGÉ.

The illustrated books and broadsides of Japan have not yet received the degree of attention which their qualities fairly entitle them to claim. It is not difficult to find a justification for our past neglect in the want of opportunities for studying representative collections, and still more in the lack of information upon the subject; but these obstacles are now in course of removal, and the investi-

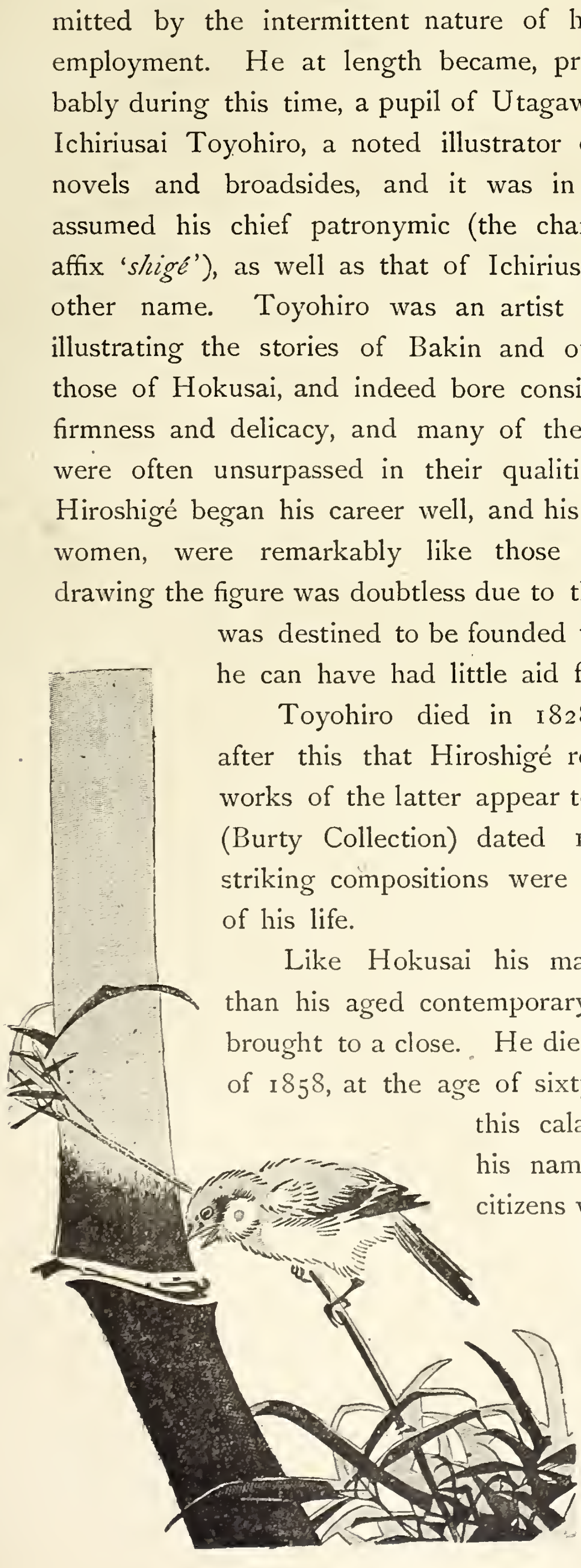


gator who follows the path opened for him will meet a liberal reward. For all who are interested in the far East, the volumes and single sheets offer a rich fund of information upon Japanese folk-lore, history and topography; and for those who are attracted by Art, there is furnished a missing chapter, one of the very first, in the history of wood engraving, and a remarkable phase in the development of pictorial representation.

The history of book and broadside illustration in Japan has already been dealt with elsewhere, and is too long to recapitulate in an article devoted to a single producer; but in estimating the labours of a man like the subject of this sketch, it is necessary that we should know something of his predecessors; how the school from which he sprang owed the principles of its art almost entirely to the teaching of the old masters of China and Japan; and how in its earlier days it was sustained by pupils trained under the Kanos and Tosas, who then represented the classical art of the country, and in more recent times by members of the Shijo naturalistic academy. It is not long since the whole of Japanese pictorial art was for the European world summed up in the name, Hokusai, and although none who have studied the life's labour of the genial "Ancient of a Hundred Centuries," will say that the eulogia lavished upon him are undeserved, it is possible by a too exclusive gift of appreciation to one person to inflict more than a passive injustice upon others. Just as our judgment of Hokusai ought to be preceded by a knowledge of what, in his own school, Hishigawa Moronobu, Tachibana Morikuni, Nishigawa Sukénobu, Katsugawa Shunsho, and others had done before him, and what had been done by scores of famous painters of the patrician academies before them, so must we see in Hiroshigé not an isolated figure in Japanese Art, but a follower of Hokusai and the Utagawas, and an inheritor of centuries of the sometimes precious, sometimes quaintly narrow art traditions of China and Japan.

Hiroshigé is the most familiar *nom de pinceau* of Kondo Jiubéï, a native

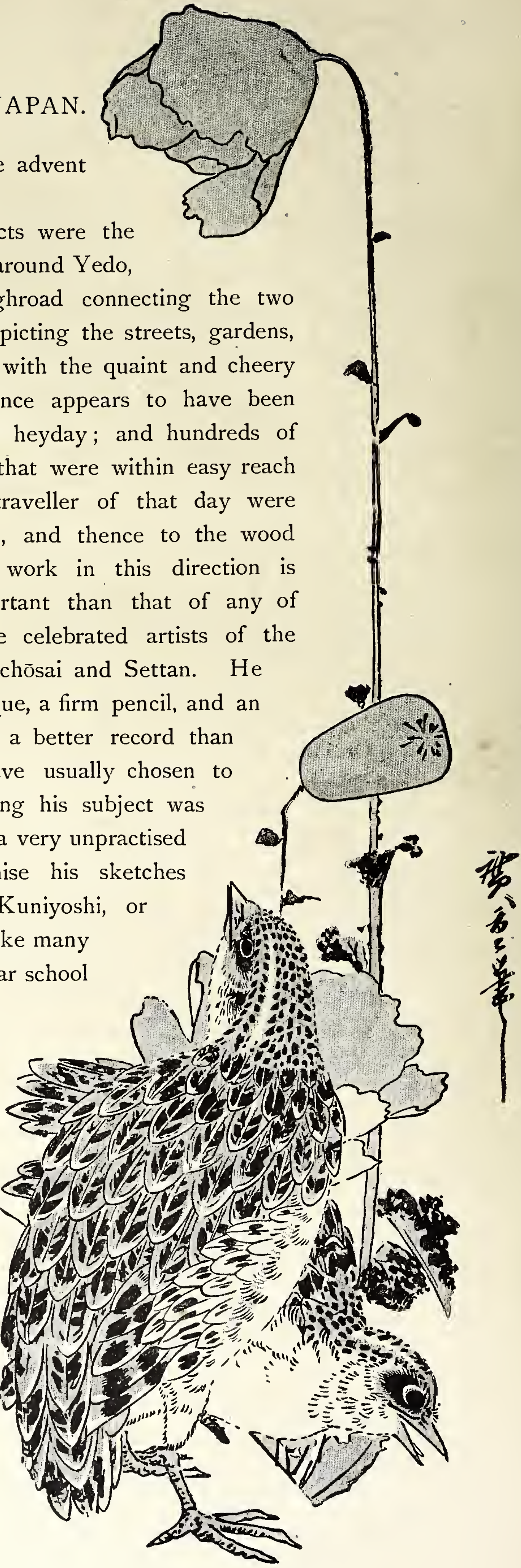
of Yédo, who was born in 1797. Of his early life we know little or nothing except that he was at one time a member of one of the numerous fire brigades of the capital, and that his first artistic efforts were made in the abundant leisure permitted by the intermittent nature of his employment. He at length became, probably during this time, a pupil of Utagawa Ichiriusai Toyohiro, a noted illustrator of novels and broadsides, and it was in compliment to him that Hiroshigé assumed his chief patronymic (the character '*hiro*' of Toyohiro with the affix '*shigé*'), as well as that of Ichiriusai, which was often prefixed to the other name. Toyohiro was an artist of remarkable merit. His designs, illustrating the stories of Bakin and other novelists of his period, rivalled those of Hokusai, and indeed bore considerable resemblance to them in their firmness and delicacy, and many of the chromoxylographs bearing his name were often unsurpassed in their qualities of colour. Under such a man Hiroshigé began his career well, and his earlier broadsides, mostly portraits of women, were remarkably like those of Toyohiro, while his power of drawing the figure was doubtless due to the same teaching; but his reputation was destined to be founded upon a branch of his calling in which he can have had little aid from his master.

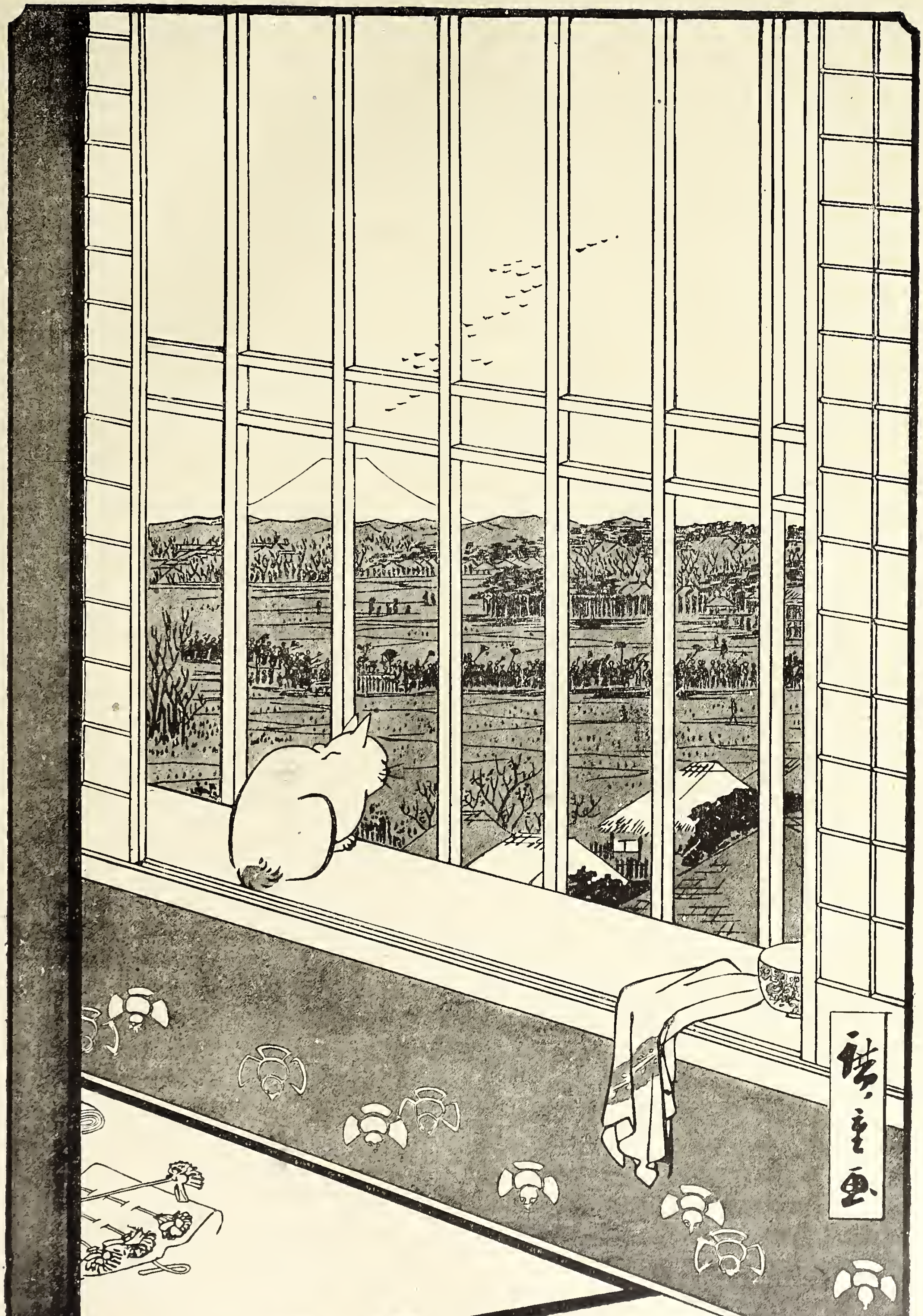


Toyohiro died in 1828, but it was not until many years after this that Hiroshigé rose into note. The earliest of the works of the latter appear to be a series of views of Mount Fuji (Burty Collection) dated 1820, but the majority of his most striking compositions were published after 1845, in the decline of his life.

Like Hokusai his maturity came late, but less fortunate than his aged contemporary, his term of years was prematurely brought to a close. He died of cholera during the great epidemic of 1858, at the age of sixty-one, and in the published account of this calamity (*Ansei Koréri riukoki*, 1859), his name figures in the list of prominent citizens who had fallen victims to the scourge. His death was a serious loss to the cause of popular art, and one that has yet to be compensated for by the advent of a worthy successor.

Hiroshigé's favourite subjects were the scenes of everyday life in and around Yedo, and along the picturesque highroad connecting the two capitals. He never tired of depicting the streets, gardens, and temples of his native city, with the quaint and cheery crowd of people whose existence appears to have been even during work a continuous heyday; and hundreds of the famous landscape beauties that were within easy reach of the necessarily deliberate traveller of that day were transferred to his sketch book, and thence to the wood blocks of the engraver. His work in this direction is more extensive and more important than that of any of his fellows, except perhaps the celebrated artists of the topographical handbooks, Shunchōsai and Settan. He had a keen eye for the picturesque, a firm pencil, and an instinct in colour that deserved a better record than his printers and publishers have usually chosen to give us. His manner of treating his subject was quite his own, and it would be a very unpractised collector who fails to recognise his sketches amongst those of Kunisada, Kuniyoshi, or any other of his countrymen. Like many of his fellow artists of the popular school he had picked up a few ideas upon the European theories of perspective, but he was more consistent in his use of the little knowledge he possessed than they were. Settan, Hokusai, and the rest knew at least as much of linear perspective as he, yet they frankly preferred to ignore it except when the limitations of the Chinese





The Suburb of Asa-Kusa, seen from the Window of a Tea House. (See p. 188.)

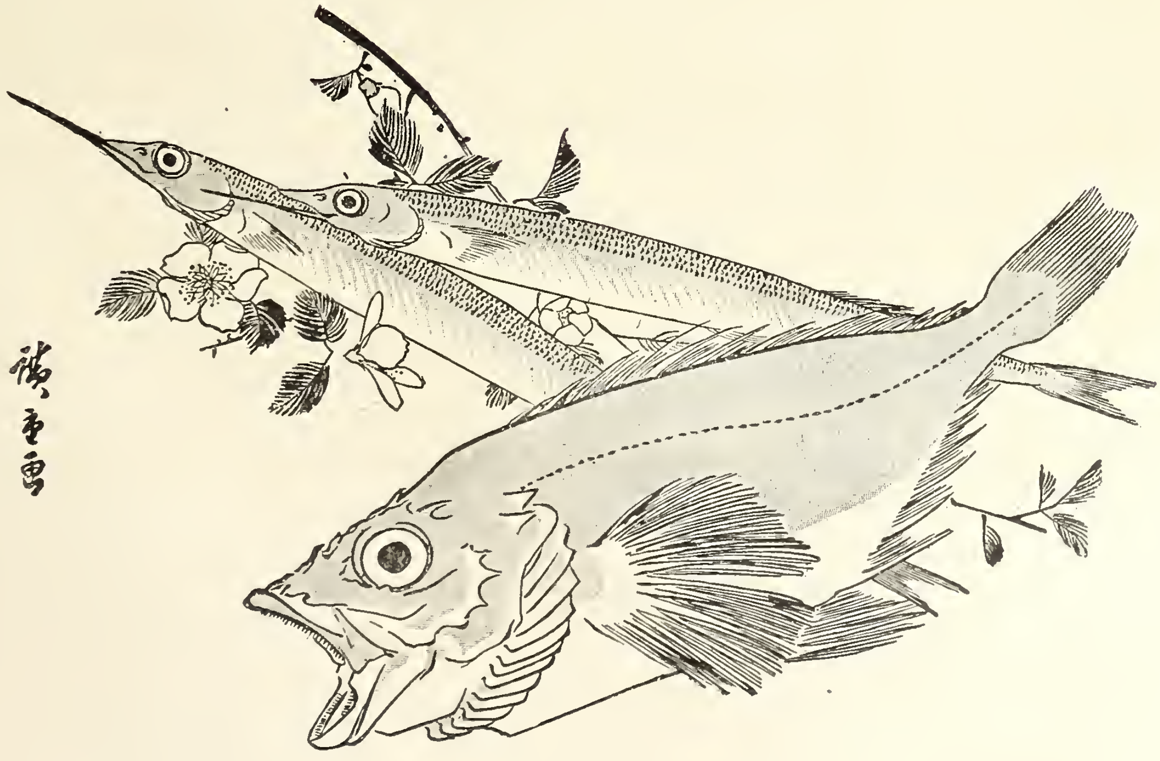
isometric system proved inconvenient for their purpose, and hence examples of European perspective are rare in the handbooks and albums of the first half of the present century. Hiroshigé, on the other hand, always, with very few exceptions, did his best to interpret faithfully his visual impressions of distance. His efforts were imperfectly successful, it is true, but they were honestly made, and their experimental realism sometimes produced curious results. His principal series of Yedo sketches are perhaps most prolific in surprises. In one picture, representing the mouth of the Sumida river taken from a house boat, his view had evidently been intercepted by the person of the oarsman; and true to his principle of drawing things as he saw them, he has spread the brawny limbs of the coolie with as much of the oar as the paper allowed across the entire scene, while sky, and earth, oppressed by the gigantic presence appear to recede discomfited into the far distance. In another sketch, a huge paper lantern, hung between the pillars supporting the porch of a temple, monopolises half the picture space, the perspective view of the snow-clad avenue of cryptomerias looking perhaps a little less imposing on account of the immense importance conferred upon the objects in the foreground. In another, and one of the most charming of his broadsides, we see the wall of a room in a tea-house, pierced by a latticed window; on the window-ledge is seated the most cosy of cats, and over pussy's arched back stretches out a deliciously impressive rendering of the suburban fields of Asakusa. In others the motive scenery is caught by the eye in broken glimpses through the branches of a cherry tree, or between the pendant blossoms of a great Wistaria; or as a background

to a game of battledore, and shuttlecock, the outstretched bats here intruding hugely and strangely from the extreme borders of the picture, while the players who wield them are left to the imagination.

So far, although his effects are often rather startling, we have no reason to object to his treatment of perspective, but if we analyse further we shall find his vanishing points lying anywhere except in the right place, and shall perceive that he had no real knowledge of the science. He was not, however, guilty of the absurd errors committed by some of his contemporaries, who did not scruple to introduce two distinct points of station for a single view, and intermingled linear and isometrical perspectives in the same sketch; and in the majority of his pictures, if not scanned too closely, the impression of distance is fairly satisfactory.

WILLIAM ANDERSON.

(*To be continued in No.* 16.)



DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate AHJ is the reproduction of an engraving by Hiroshigé. The artist devoted himself—as Mr. Anderson states in his article, commenced in the present number—to the representation of flowers, gardens, birds, fishes, and insects. The illustrations which are given in the text of this part, are all borrowed from his works,* and give ample demonstration of his style.. But as will be pointed out in the continuation of Mr. Anderson's article, the peculiar characteristic of Hiroshigé is his landscapist's temperament, fascinated by the open air, and it is thus that he appears in this plate, taken from the *Go-jiu-san Éki Tokaïdo* (53 stations of the Tokaido). This series constitutes one more variation of the everlasting theme to be found in portraying not only the most important, but also the most picturesque artery of Japan, which connects the two great rival centres, one Kyöto the classic capital of the Mikado, which personifies the past, the other Yeddo, during later centuries the residence of the more modern Shogunate power.

Every artist has painted the highway in his own manner. That which would strike Hiroshigé more than the halting places, which nevertheless give the title to this series, would be the great road itself with its landscapes, its great open spaces, its natural irregularities and its populous animation. The artist seems to have entered upon yet another interest, that of expressing on fifty-three pages fifty-three different effects of Nature, by bringing into his compositions all hours of the day, all seasons of the year, all conditions of the atmosphere according to the inclemency or the calmness of the season represented.

Japanese artists have more than any others manifested their love of such subjects, the Japanese people taking greater pleasure in them than any other nation. The great highway with all that passes down it plays an important part where everyone is not only more or less a traveller by temperament, but also where the extremely primitive means of transport give facilities for observation calculated to throw into high relief the minutest details. The chief and almost the universal mode of locomotion is walking. Pilgrimages furnish a never failing occasion—we were going to say pretext—for journeying down the roads or traversing the plains ; they are no more than happy companies, often formed in parties, for visiting celebrated places. Everywhere they leave traces of their passing, abandoning the love of scribbling, which is so prevalent with European tourists, for gay pictures printed expressly for the members of each party, whose designation it bears, portrayed in the most vivid colours.

We will only remark in passing upon the *Norimon*, a sort of sedan chair reserved for the aristocracy, but will at once proceed to the singular vehicle represented in the engraving. It is the *kango*, a veritable instrument of torture for all European travellers, but, as it appears, con-

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* With the exception of the large illustration on page 33, which is taken from the "*Hundred Views of Fuji*," by Hokusai.

sidered very comfortable by the Japanese, whose bones are from their early infancy used to the most remarkable squatting attitudes.* It is more particularly when traversing mountainous paths, that one is carried in these square boxes. The traveller represented here had without doubt counted on fine weather, having selected a box open on three sides, but the unfortunate being, overtaken by a violent storm, one of those fearful waterspouts which are unknown in our climate, has been obliged to conceal himself beneath the weight of some heavy covering. His carriers, accustomed to this sort of unpleasant surprise, appear happy enough, while the guide hastens onward, well covered in his straw cloak. Two labourers returning from the fields, hurry back to their thatched cottages. These whirlwind effects rank, with the winter scenes and the pictures of night, among the most characteristic works of Hiroshigé, and on every occasion he adds to the picturesqueness of his compositions and their reality, by the presence in the foreground of some figures, which give the value of anecdote, but which are also interesting because of their truthfulness and animation, particularly delighting the mirth-loving people which the artist more markedly intended to please.

Plate AH gives two further pages from Hokusai's *Man-gwa.*

Within this universal kaleidoscope, where every thing and every being jostles each other in a picturesque confusion; in this endless panorama where nothing escapes the keen analysis of the artist and the observer, the study of man naturally occupies a very important position. We have already seen him under various conditions; the moral being has been shown holding himself aloof from popular or familiar life, where every one freely gives himself up to his ordinary tastes and habits. Elsewhere the physical being has been depicted with the intention of placing in relief the various peculiarities of the human frame—sketches spiced with that almost derisive spirit which seems one of the most striking traits of the Japanese character. We have had the set of fat people, and likewise that of the thin beings, always described with the same good humour. Again it is with the same pleasantry that the page before us seems to speak. But from it we may learn a lesson, which is given—as we laugh. Was it Hokusai's intention simply to joke, when he sketched all the mysterious antics of which gymnasts and acrobats are capable? By no means—he has determined to note all the characteristic effects which are produced on the human form by different movements; the endless quantity of attitudes to which the body can lend itself, the play of the joints, the great tension of the muscles in work, the expressive character of the motions following the effort of pulling or springing, the modelling of the bones, and their changing attitudes according as the body finds itself suspended, bent, curled up, or extended.

Has the artist in these studies arrived at that correctness that our artists consider the most important aim of their efforts? We should hardly venture to assert this. But on the present occasion it is more than ever necessary to be mindful of the point at which one is apt to go astray, namely applying the same rules to two entirely different schools of art. Without insisting here upon the fact that in Japan there is no academy—taking that word in the sense of a study of the nude—(the theme is interesting and is worthy of being treated with all

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* The *jin-riki-sha,* a two-wheeled cart, drawn by a man, being a modern invention, did not exist in the days of old Japan.

the developments to which it leads) without delaying to-day upon a question which is out of proportion with the modest extent of these brief remarks, we consider that Hokusai has carried out in the most satisfactory manner the programme he set himself, namely, a decided and vigorous accentuation, with a note of voluntary exaggeration which to us almost seems a caricature.

Plate BH—two studies of plants taken from an album printed in colours by Keisai Kitao Masayoshi. To the left the bind-weed (*Pharbitis triloba*) which clings round a bamboo shoot; to the right the wolf's-bane (Fisher's aconite).

One may remark with advantage in these two pages, how simple is the method of working, the plant being treated almost in silhouette and with sketchy modelling—the idea which has inspired the artist being to grasp the movement of the plants, the appearance they present standing in the air, the curves of their leaves, stalks, and flowers. They are by no means drawings executed with a botanist's minuteness, but rather pages on which the artist has quickly expressed the general appearance of the plant.

More laboriously worked is Plate FI from the brush of Utamaro. It is borrowed from a series (whence we have already taken an example, Plate GJ, No. 5), the *Yehon Mushiyerabi* (book of insects). Here is an insect unknown in our climate which is climbing on the pumpkin which is familiar to us; by the side of this we notice three long yellowish pods, the fruit of a climbing plant, and the smaller brown and green pods of a pea cultivated in Japan for pickles.

Plate AAJ represents the golden pheasant, which is no longer unknown to the European. On this page the bird is shown naturally as a lesson in natural history; on frequent occasions it is employed in decoration, in company with the peacock and the Hô.

Plate AHE is taken from a work which contains, printed in black, reproductions of a large number of paintings by Hana-busa Itchō, an artist of the close of the seventeenth century. He is remarkable not only for the spirit and gaiety which is to be seen in a great many of his productions, like that to the right of our reproduction, but also for his method itself, in which one must admire the expressive use of the brush, by which the artist, having conceived the idea of painting an eagle's nest seen at the level of the eye, has been able to render the expression, at once savage and terrified, of the bird as it guards its offspring.

Itchō lived at the same time as Moronobu, of whom we have already spoken, and whose rival he was; but while Moronobu worked almost exclusively for book illustration, Itchō had no desire to multiply his productions. He applied himself entirely to painting. The work whence our illustration is taken was not printed until the eighteenth century, long after his death.

The three pieces of pottery on Plate AFI, are bottles of Bizen ware, of the eighteenth century. The manufactory of Bizen is one of the oldest in Japan. The potters of Bizen employed an earth of red-brown colour, which they more commonly covered with a glazing of the same tint. It happens sometimes, particularly with the most ancient specimens, that the glazing flakes off from the object itself on account of the heat of the fire, these earths being baked at an immensely high temperature, the glazing naturally then becomes very delicate, and its transparence allows the dark tint of the earth to be seen through.

Beside the red, there is a whole series of colours, of which the rarest are blue, slate grey, dark grey, up to an almost white tint. Certain of the Bizen grey pieces are covered with a green glaze, and occasionally these pieces are decorated with silver.

Beside the bottles and the tea jars, to which the Bizen potters gave such exquisite and simple outlines, one finds—always of pottery—*okimonos*, or ornaments, such as human figures, animals, birds, whose elegant shapes rival bronzes, which, from the brown colour of the glaze, they often resemble.

Plate AC. A mask in lacquered wood, different from those which we have already given, because of the utter absence of the look of antiquity, which one is accustomed to find in the masks made for Nô dances. This one is taken from a model of ordinary life, the face of an old woman with a pained and miserable expression.

In Plate HG the Japanese decorator has employed himself by conventionalizing leaves and branches to make a sort of arabesque design, upon which his fancy has caused him to put cranes formed of leaves and stalks, a strange, but graceful arrangement.

Plate AEH. Peony flowers combined with branches of plum trees in blossom.

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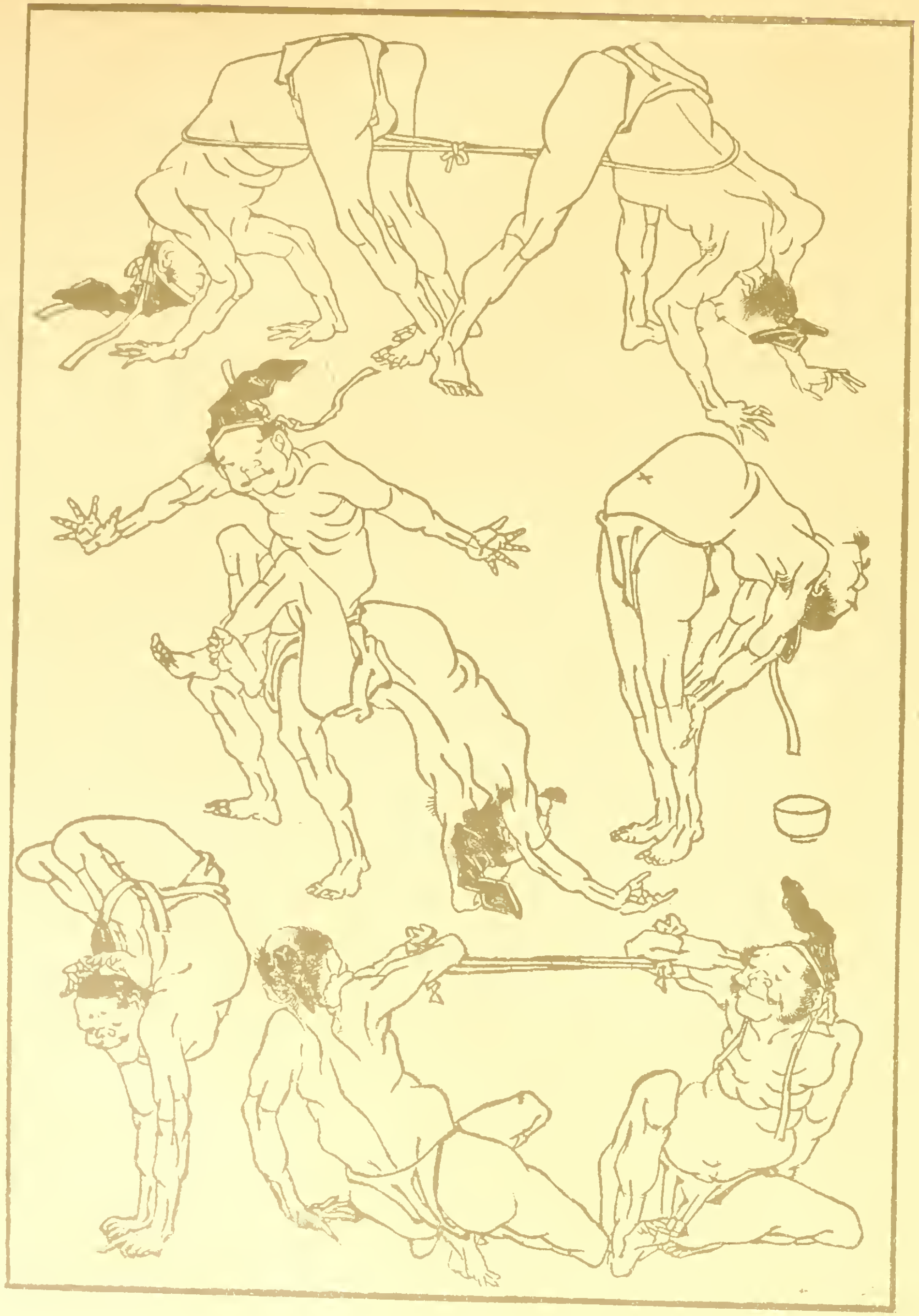
SEPARATE PLATES.

AHJ.	**Landscape.** By Hiroshigé.
AH.	**Two pages from the "Man-gwa."** By Hokusai.
BH.	**Studies of Flowers.** By Keisai Kitao Masayoshi.
HG.	**Industrial Model.** Leaves and Birds.
AAJ.	**Studies of Birds.** Golden Pheasant.
AHE.	**Two Sketches.** By Itchō.
AFI.	**Three Bottles of Bizen Ware.**
AEA.	**Industrial Model.** Peonies and Plum Blossoms.
FI.	**Fruits and Insects.** By Utamaro.
AC.	**Mask in Lacquered Wood.**

In No. XVI., Hiroshigé, by Mr. William Anderson, will be concluded.


廣重畫

AH



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HG

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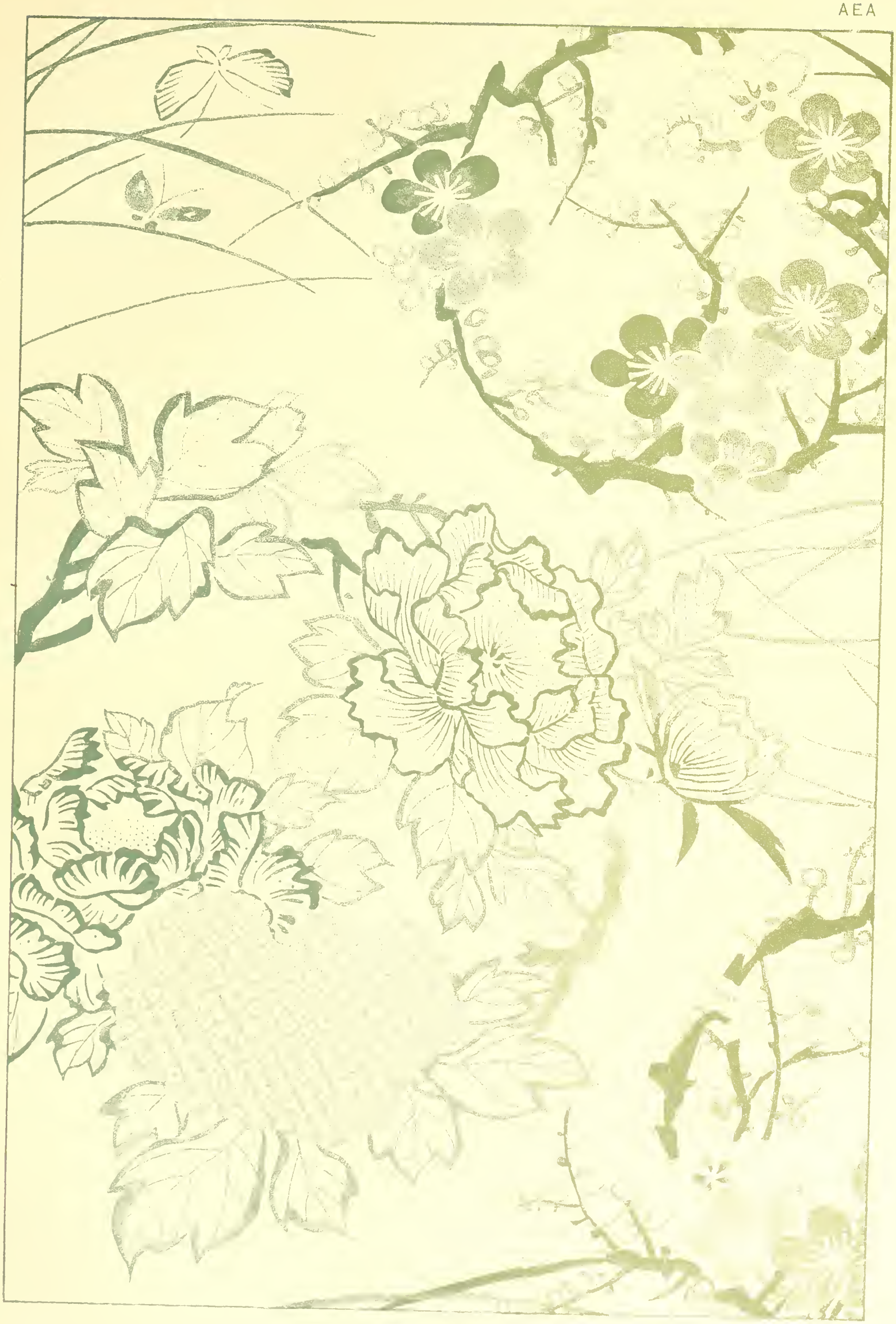

FI

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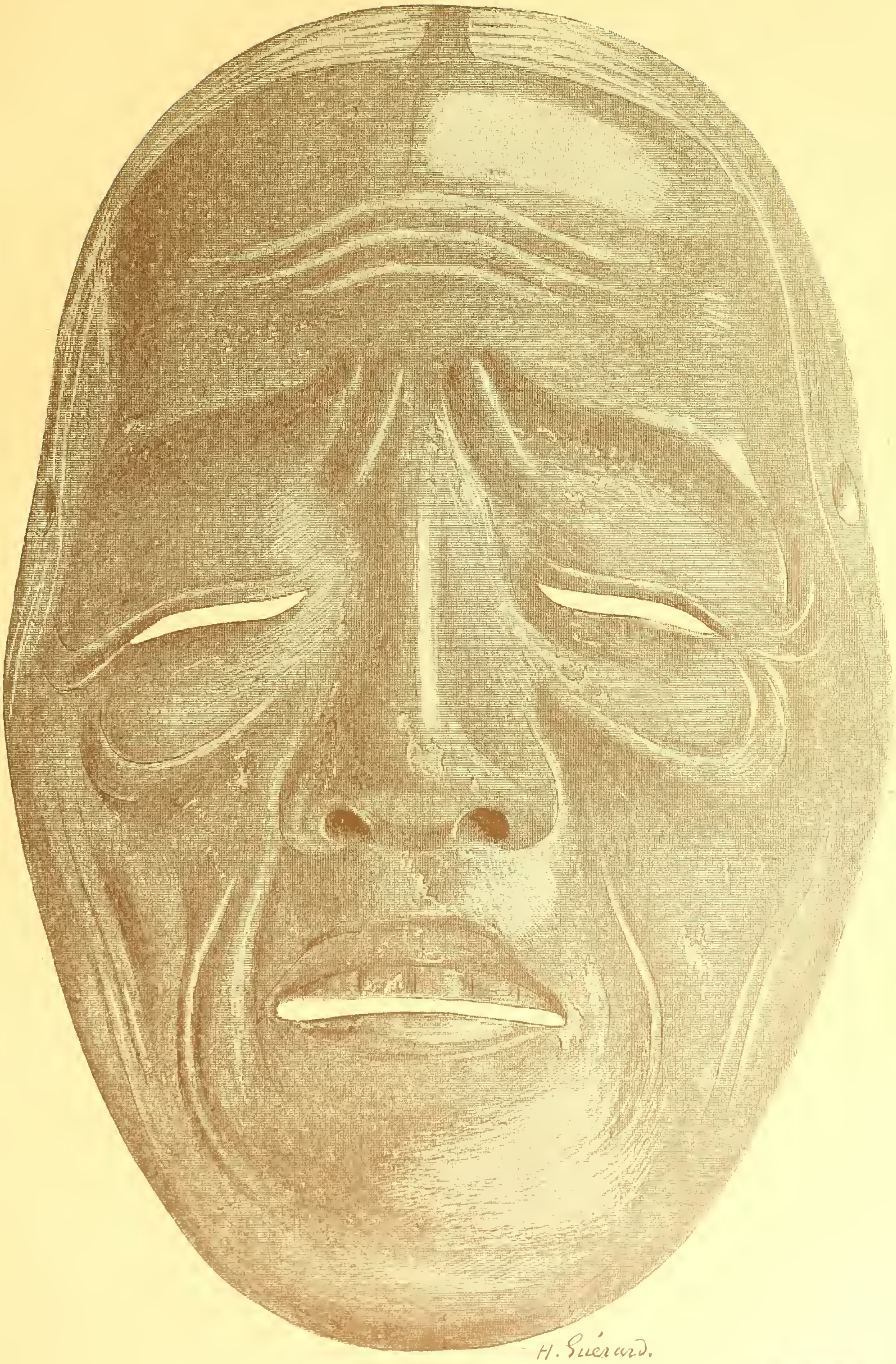

H. Guérard.

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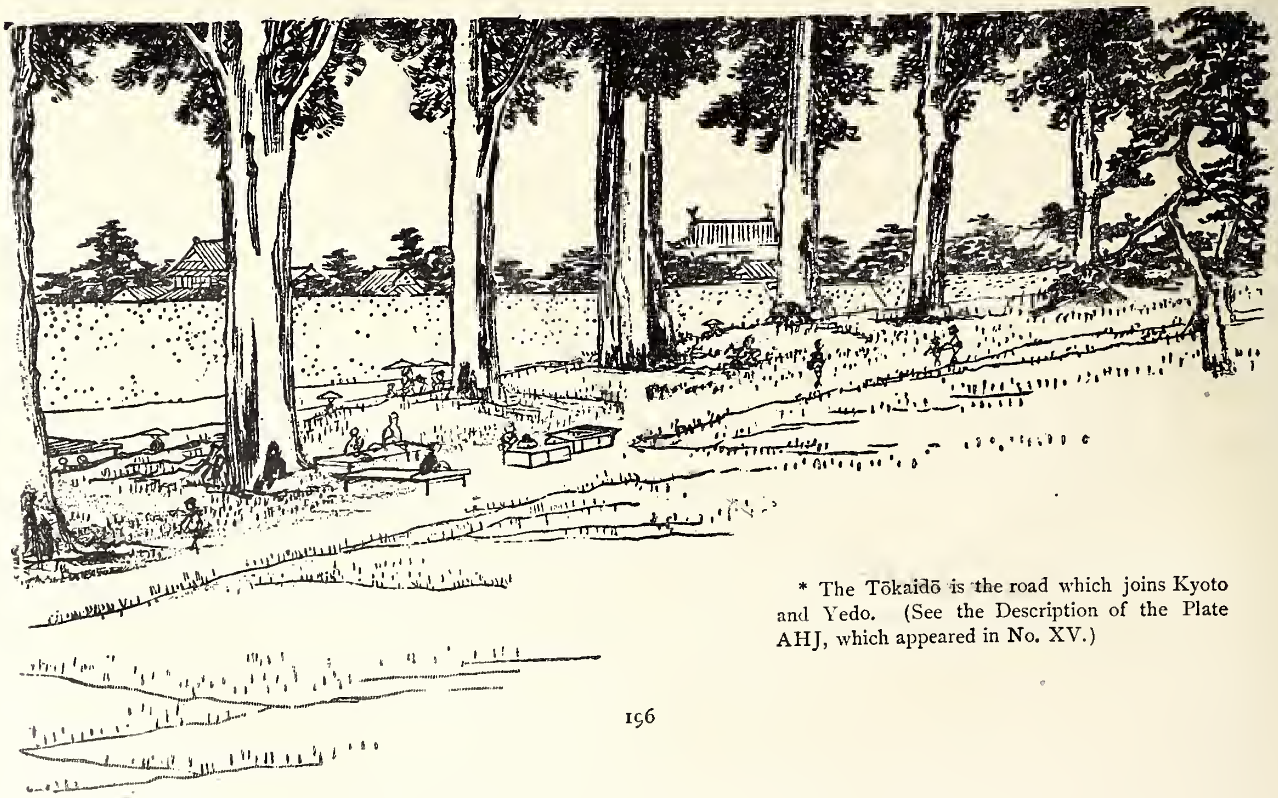
HIROSHIGÉ.

II.

Hiroshigé, not content with separating himself from Chinese doctrines—as, for instance, by the adoption of perspective—went farther, for he, and he alone, ventured to recognise the existence of projected shadows—hesitatingly it is true, and on very rare occasions. In one of his Tōkaidō series is a night scene, in which the moon casts shadows of the wayfarers, but

although the street is in perspective, the shadows are not, and the lanterns borne by some of the wayfarers are not allowed to share the privilege of the principal luminary.* The representation of reflections was also sternly tabooed by the older artists, unless the subject of the drawing made their introduction absolutely necessary. The moon, for example, might be mirrored (out of perspective) upon the surface of a lake, if the subject were a verse or anecdote that included any reference to the image, but the painter must not repeat in the same way a cloud, a tree, or any other object, whatever claim it might possess on the score of realism. Hiroshigé, however, has, in at least two of his broadsides, ventured to show a reflection of the trees fringing the river bank upon the smooth waters of the stream. But it is remarkable that, after having made such experiments once, he should have been content to try no more. For the Japanese art connoisseur he was already a Philistine; hence he had nothing to lose by insisting upon a proper use of his eyes, yet the influence of the time-honoured artistic conventions was too strong for him, and he dared no more to break entirely through the web with which tradition had fettered the mind and hand of the painter, than to question the divine origin of the Emperor of Great Japan.



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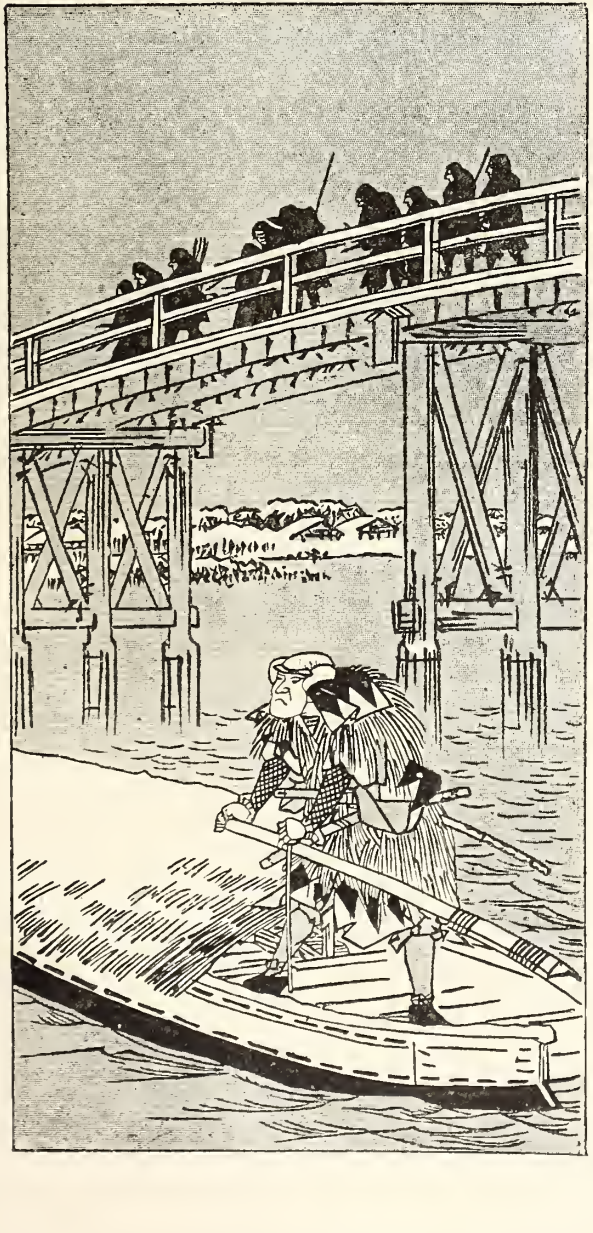
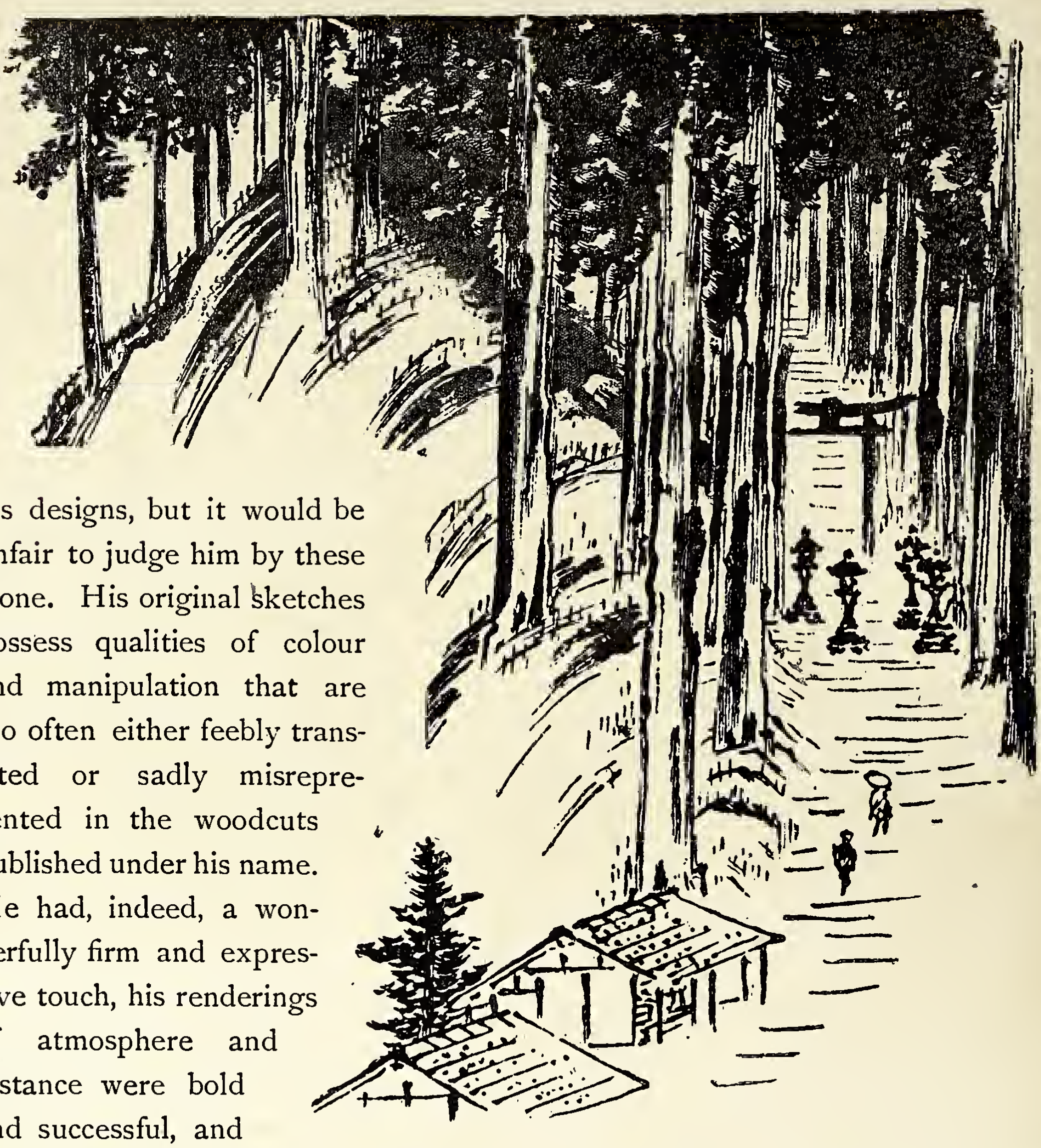
* The Tōkaidō is the road which joins Kyoto and Yedo. (See the Description of the Plate AHJ, which appeared in No. XV.)

Despite the incompleteness of his education, and the imperfection of his glimpses of the truth, he was an original artist and one whose work will have a permanent value for his countrymen and for all who are interested in his country. In all his landscapes, even after they have passed through the hands of the engraver and printer, the spirit of the locality is preserved with remarkable felicity. The appearances of rain, mist and wind, the frigidity of the snow-laden streets and fields, the sombre calm of night, were suggested so vividly that we care little to analyse the process by which the result was achieved. His brush, moreover, was not confined to pictures of scenery. He drew birds and flowers with a skill that would be remarkable for any but a Japanese artist, and his illustrations to legend and history are clever and spirited, although less forcible than those of some of his associates. He executed also a series of caricature broadsides, but probably to order, for they add nothing to his reputation, and are for the most part plagiarisms from Hokusai and others. Outside his landscapes, indeed, there was little in his work that would earn him high distinction in his school, but in his speciality he stands far above his fellows. It may be noted that he did not enter into rivalry with the Utagawas in theatrical portraiture, or in the illustration of novels, but he occasionally joined with Utagawa Kuniyoshi in supplying landscape backgrounds to figures drawn by the latter artist.



He is known in Europe almost entirely by the engravings after



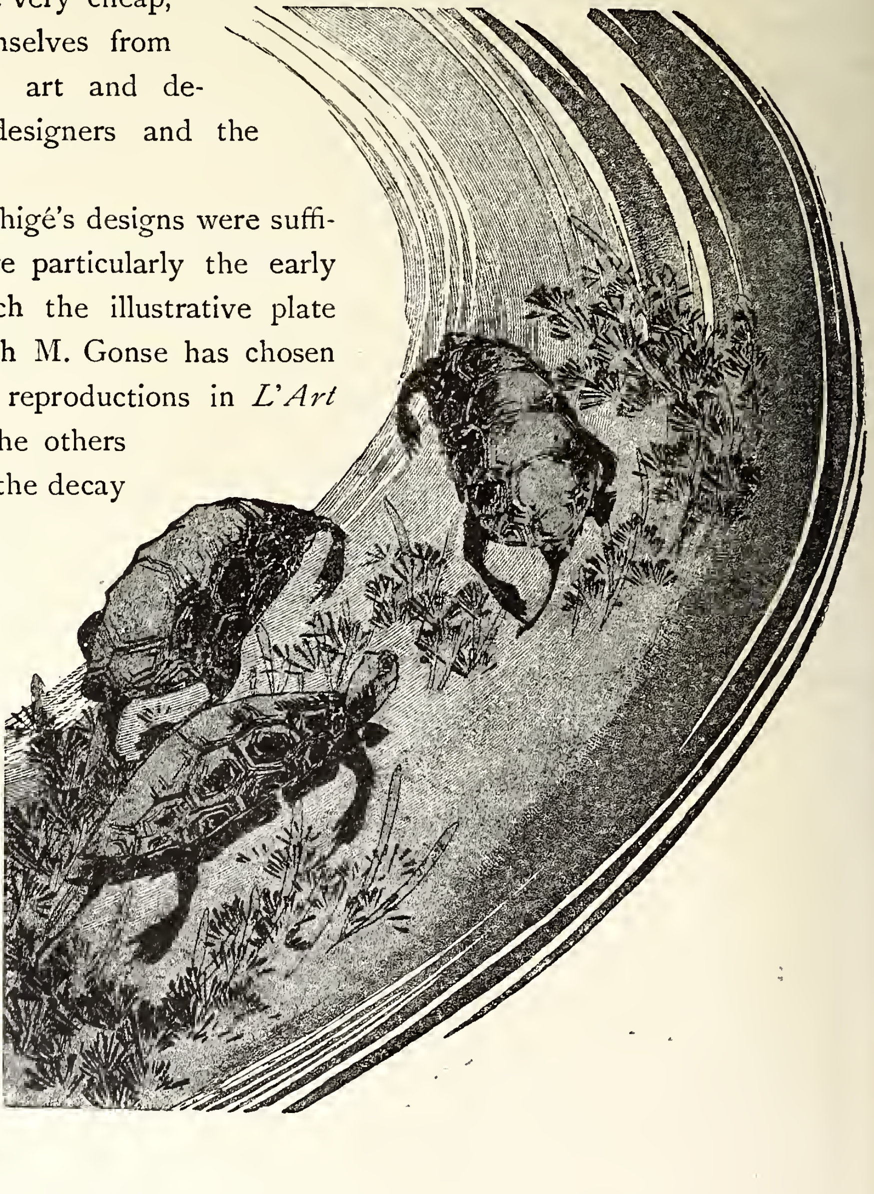
his designs, but it would be unfair to judge him by these alone. His original sketches possess qualities of colour and manipulation that are too often either feebly translated or sadly misrepresented in the woodcuts published under his name. He had, indeed, a wonderfully firm and expressive touch, his renderings of atmosphere and distance were bold and successful, and his colouring was often almost as tender and harmonious as that of the masters of the Kano school. Much of this is only hinted at in the chromoxylograph but his faculty for selecting the most effective point of view, his bold composition of foreground, and his happy grouping of accessories, gives a value to even the roughest reproductions. He was a man of exceptional talents, and although, with the advantages of a higher mental and artistic culture, he might have left compositions more worthily representative of his natural gifts, it is doubtful whether he would have achieved a life-work, at the same time so extensive in range, and so interesting to his contemporaries and to posterity.

It may seem strange that in a sketch dealing mainly with the subject of engravings, no special reference has been made to the engravers. There are two reasons for this reticence. One is that the engraver in black and white could display little of his own individuality. His function was

merely to leave intact the sharply-defined lines of the artist; he had nothing to interpret in tone or colour, and although his labour enables us to recognise the touch of the designer's pencil, it leaves scarcely anything by which his own hand can be distinguished. His work is an admirable example of painstaking and skilful labour, but it is little more. Where gradations of tone or colour had to be expressed, all that was special to Japanese engravings belonged to the printer, and the perfect harmony of the colour prints of the latter part of the last and the early part of the present century, was unquestionably due to the direct supervision of the artist, who was allowed to combine pigments with which he was perfectly familiar. The second reason is, that the decadence of chromoxylography began during the most busy days of Hiroshigé. It was then that the printers seem to have commenced to use, in place of the old native and Chinese pigments, the most crude and glaring of the blues, yellows, reds, and greens, that the European importer could furnish. They were very cheap, and they advertised themselves from afar, but they destroyed art and demoralised at once the designers and the public.

Some indeed of Hiroshigé's designs were sufficiently well engraved, more particularly the early Tōkaidō series, from which the illustrative plate is selected, and from which M. Gonse has chosen one of the most striking reproductions in *L'Art Japonais*, but in most of the others the collector has to mourn the decay induced by European contact with an art in which Japan had enjoyed a century of pre-eminence over the rest of the world.

A list of the engraved works of our artist would be too long for insertion here, but it may be sufficient to

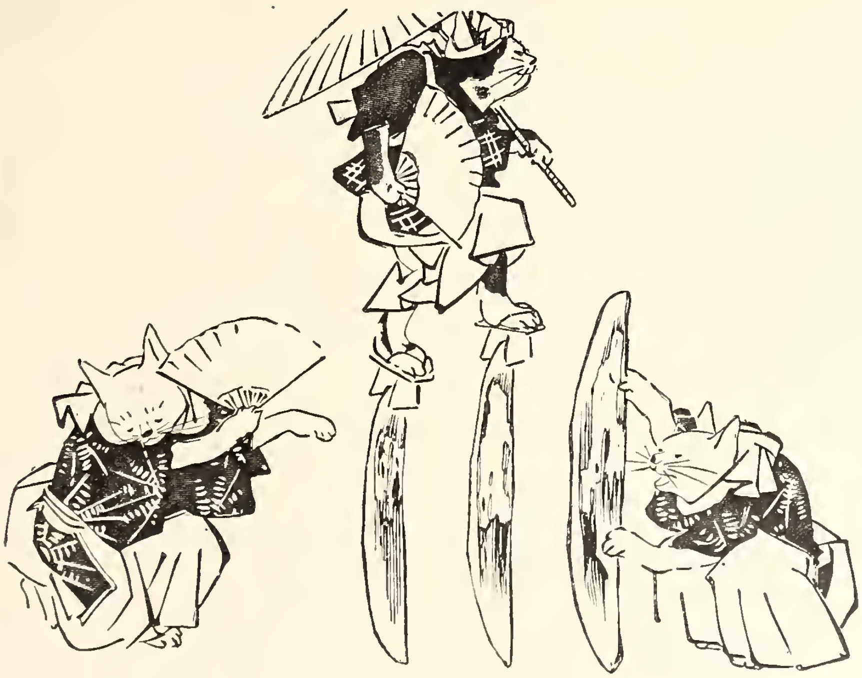


recommend the following as the most representative examples: — *Tōkaidō go-jin-san éki:* The fifty-three stations of the high road between Yédo and Kioto (Tōkaidō), oblong quarto, printed in columns, N.D. *Yédo hiak'-kei:* A hundred views of Yédo, quarto, printed in colours, N.D. *E-hon Yédo meisho:* Pictorial description of Yédo, 12 vols., duodecimo, printed in black and pale blue, 1851–2. *Tōkaidō fū-kei so-gwa:* Views on the Tōkaidō. Uniform with the last, 1851.

Many engravings bearing the signature of Hiroshigé, and traces of his manner, have appeared since his death. These are probably from the hand of a pupil.

WILLIAM ANDERSON.

Note.—The Illustrations to this Article are from the works of Hiroshigé, as were the View of Lake Biwa, Plate A, Part I.; Plates HI and IJ, Part VI.; two scenes from the History of the 47 Rônins, and the cover of this number.



DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate AFF. A Fukusa embroidered in gold and colours.

The Fukusa is a square of stuff measuring, as a rule, about two feet in length, and has the following origin:—

The Japanese used to follow the custom of taking to their friends, on the occasion of any great event in the family, such as a wedding, a birth, or a death, cakes specially baked for the purpose. The box in which these offerings were enclosed, was itself enveloped in this small embroidery called the Fukusa. It was not made use of in the earliest times: formerly the friends were invited to the house in which the sad or happy event had taken place, and a meal was served. Thus it happened, either on account of the accommodation being too small to hold all the guests, or that some were unable to attend at the ceremony, that for the former it was necessary to carry away their portion, to the latter their share was sent.

In the case of funerals, the distance of the cemetery, and the long hours which were taken up by the interment and all its rites, had made it the custom to serve the people present, not only with a simple cake, but a more substantial collation, and a dish of beans was often placed in the box, which was covered with a Fukusa. Originally the Fukusa was a very simple piece of stuff, often a large square of the strong and supple paper which the Japanese manufacture, and which takes the place of our linen in a variety of different uses, being considered sufficiently good. The daimios of the present day, jealously adhering to ancient customs, have kept to the simple paper, so carefully attending to tradition, however, that it does not envelop the box, but is simply laid on the cover, folded into four.

As the box and Fukusa itself were always a gift to the recipient, it gradually became the custom to make both real works of art and highly decorated.

They were at first ornamented with the coat-of-arms of their owner, which were painted upon them, then they were embroidered, and at the end of the seventeenth century the Fukusa had become a costly and beautiful accessory in the life of the Japanese. The Fukusa never does duty a second time, which explains the fact of there being such a great number of them in collections of this particular branch of Japanese decorative art. Some of them bear paintings, signed occasionally by celebrated artists, who did not consider it derogatory to decorate a simple object of use. Some are woven, others on a woven ground have embroidered ornaments worked; a different kind are entirely embroidered; and all have brilliant linings.

That which we reproduce, represents a horse richly caparisoned, tied to the trunk of a pine tree. We do not consider it necessary to draw attention to the uncommon length which the artist has given the animal; the manner in which the Japanese have interpreted living beings will form the subject of a special study in the near-future. The body of the animal is embroidered in white silk with a greyish tinge, and executed in a manner which renders very exactly the appearance of the animal's coat. In the harness and the trunk of the tree there are gold threads, which give to the whole an appearance of decided richness. Lovers of art in Europe consider Fukusas to be remarkably decorative, even framing them under glass, and treating them as real pictures.

Plate AHH reproduces a portion of a page, unsigned by author or artist, on which the rabbit has been studied in different aspects and with great ability. First there is the animal carefully taken from life, a study in which one can notice the effort to arrive at the proper attitude, and the corrections added to the original lines. Then we have the head separately drawn with the growth of the hair, and in a portion which it has not been possible to reproduce here, the artist has applied himself to drawing separately on a large scale the ear of the animal. This page shows the working of a conscientious draughtsman determined to thoroughly study the subject he has undertaken, and also the perseverance of the Japanese artists, who have undoubtedly attained a thorough knowledge of nature.

Plate GF, taken from the same book whence came Plate GD (No. 2, 1888), is an anonymous study of the flower called "Marvel of Peru" (*Mirabilis dichotoma*), a careful piece of work, even reproducing the holes which pierce the leaves, and having no little interest on account of its appearance of truthfulness to nature.

Plate AEF is a reproduction of two pages from Hokusai's *Man-gwa*, on which are thirty-two masks for the Nō dances—masks with exaggerated expressions, masks of demons or animals which take frequent parts in Japanese theatrical performances, grotesque masks of personages; they are admirably adapted to the humorous brush of Hokusai.

Plate IF is from a work by Hokusai, the *Shashin Gwa-fu*, whence we have already taken a specimen (see No. 7, Plate IC). This bird of prey is broadly treated and designed with the utmost simplicity. A singular effect of savage strength is given by the eye, the strong beak, and the powerful feet, one of which half hides itself in the plumage, while the other holds firmly to a branch.

Plate AHC. The subjects of the eleven Netsukés are taken from very varied sources which include animal life, legendary history, everyday existence, not even omitting representations of death.

First of all we have the singer squatting on the ground and marking time by beating with a fan upon the palm of his hand; then there is a fish curving itself in a very natural manner; next is the old poetess Komachi, degraded to a miserable existence and clothed in rags, who rests after her weary walks along the streets and the roads. From a block of ivory hardly bigger than a nut, an artist has carved with remarkable anatomical truthfulness—he has gone so far as to make his work almost toothless—a human skull. But he has taken pains at the same time to leave sufficient ivory to form the snake, which, having entered through the eye, lies lazily curled upon the top of the cranium. Is it simply to give a certain anecdotic feeling to his work, is it an embodiment of some sad philosophical thought which passed through the mind of the sculptor? It is impossible to say, but it is curious that our mediæval artists, with whom the religious mysticism of the date was tempered with a lively feeling for the picturesque and the unforeseen, had the same idea of the snake clasping the human skull.

In the middle of the page, Shoki, with his savage expression and hairy countenance (see No. 12, page 150), sharpens his sword before searching for demons.

Hard by a dormouse has climbed upon a chestnut; and then we have Nitan carried away on the back of a furious wild boar. He is in the act of drawing his sword to kill it.

A blind man shampoos another blind man. It has already been explained that the profession of shampooer is the only means of livelihood for the blind in Japan. As in nearly all popular subjects, the humoristic idea is prominent here, and is expressed by the association of two afflicted beings assisting each other.

A personage rubs a bell in order to make it shine. The comic side of this scene is expressed by the immense size of the bell, and the smallness of the being. After the fish taken from nature, we now have the conventionalised fish, making a seat for Shiyei, the sennin, according to a legend of primitive times.

Lastly, seated on the shell of a tortoise, which, somewhat alarmed, draws in its head and feet a monkey nibbles some fruit; the artist here treating two of the animals in the reproduction of which the Japanese excel—the monkey and the tortoise.

Plate ABH represents (four-fifths of its real size) a carved wood object, the subject of which is lost in the earliest annals of Japanese history. This piece is, on a small scale, the reproduction of a large antique statue in bronze which exists in the temple of Todaiji at Nara. It is the *Kitodai* or demon porter of the lantern (*ki* signifies demon), the table which he supports is for holding a lantern about a quarter of the height of the figure. The symbolical sense of this demon encircled by a serpent is difficult to discover now, it is certainly to be traced to an Indian origin, where Buddhism has been able to borrow from the religions which preceded it in the ancient peninsula. In any case, a strange and powerful effect of strength is noticeable in this mis-shapen dwarf. The muscles are so strong, the attitude of the short legs is so steady, the arms clasped together so energetically that it almost seems not only a lantern, but a world which might be supported by this Atlas of some forgotten legend.

Plate ACD. Here a decorative pattern is obtained by the symmetrical arrangement of lobsters in the midst of waves, the general effect of the decoration being added to and improved by dark masses of pine spines, which are supposed to float on the water. One may remark how much the two animals seem to have the look of life and nature, and how freely the brush has been used in their execution.

Plate ADA. Bamboo leaves gathered in masses and placed here and there, are connected by arabesques which, resembling the eddies in water, seem to remind one that the designer, when he drew this pattern, was inspired by a rapid stream washing the low branches of bamboo plants.

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SEPARATE PLATES.

AFF. **Embroidered Fukusa.**
AHH. **Study of a Rabbit.**
GF. **Flowers of the "Marvel of Peru."**
AHC. **Eleven Netsukés.**
ACD. **Industrial Design.** Lobsters. (Double Plate.)
AEF. **Nō Masks.** By Hokusai.
IF. **Falcon.** By Hokusai.
ADA. **Industrial Design.**
ABH. **Sculpture in Wood.**

An Article on Ceramics, by Mr. Philippe Burty, will be given in No. XVII.

AFF

[illegible]

AHH

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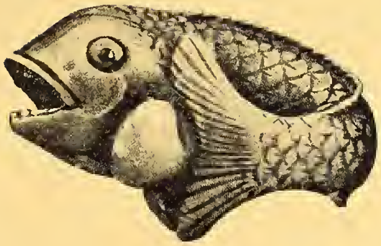
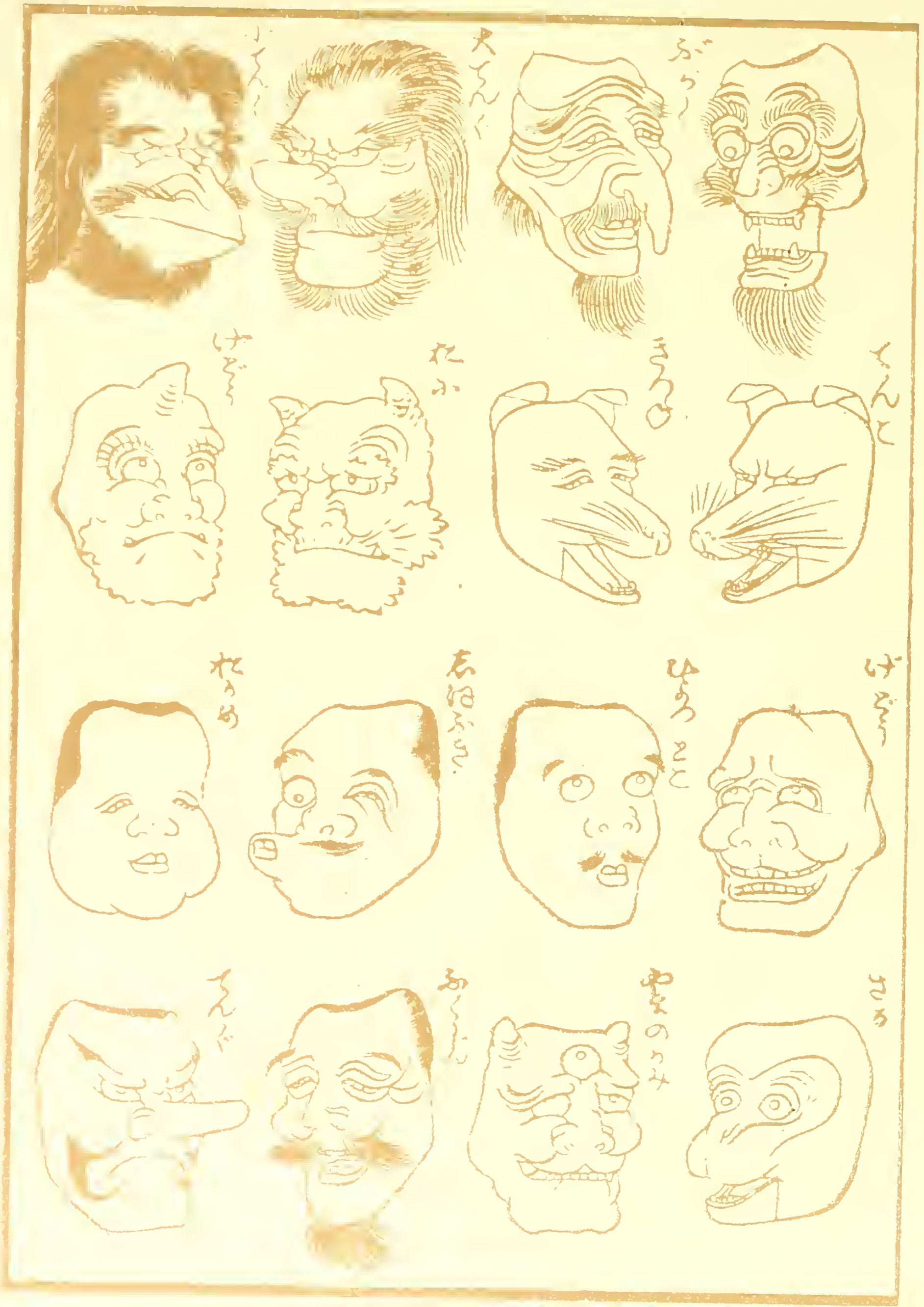
AHC



AEF



1F

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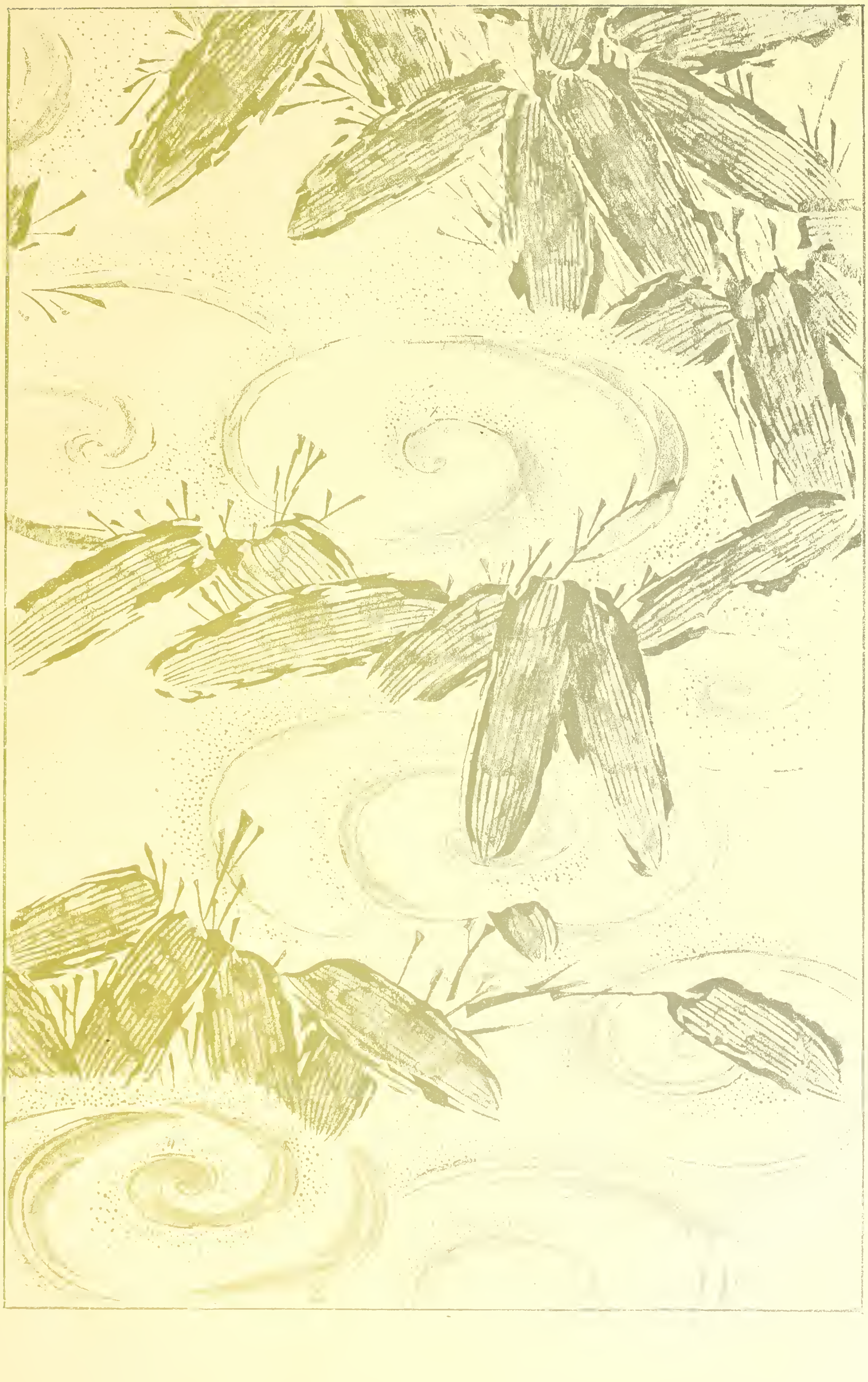
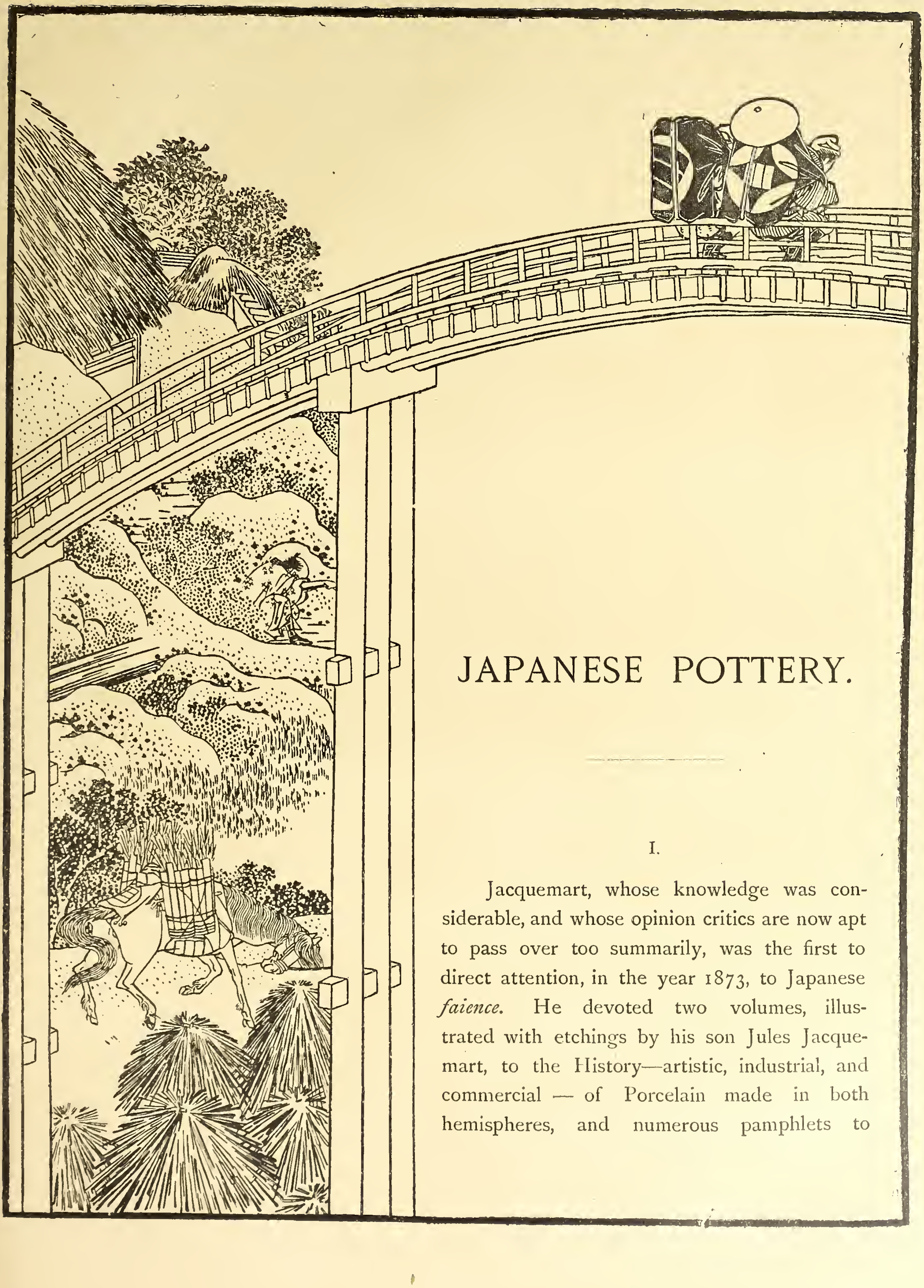


ABH



JAPANESE POTTERY.

I.

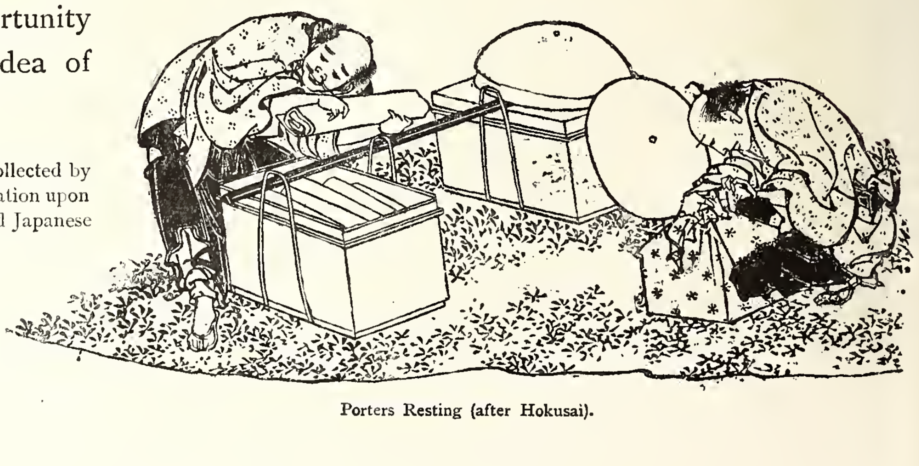
Jacquemart, whose knowledge was considerable, and whose opinion critics are now apt to pass over too summarily, was the first to direct attention, in the year 1873, to Japanese *faience*. He devoted two volumes, illustrated with etchings by his son Jules Jacquemart, to the History—artistic, industrial, and commercial — of Porcelain made in both hemispheres, and numerous pamphlets to

the products of the kilns of Italy, France, Persia, &c. To speak of the *faience* of the Far East, of which the Western world was in comparative ignorance, was indeed a new departure. During the eighteenth century no attention had been paid to the subject, and through the commercial expeditions, of which the Dutch had sole privilege, no more than a few specimens of unenamelled Bizen earth finely variegated had been imported.

Jacquemart broached the subject with no little circumspection, showed the gaps which existed, committed an error or two, and solicited information. In a word, he invited discussion upon a series of entirely new data. These transactions did not pass unnoticed; they were published in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (a publication already of some importance) on the occasion of the Exhibition held at the Palais de l'Industrie in Paris, of objects exclusively from the Far East, organised by M. Cernuschi.

The magnificent collection of bronzes, wood carvings and pottery, formed by M. H. Cernuschi during his travels in Japan, in China and Mongolia, in Java, Ceylon, and in India, excited the utmost enthusiasm. The collection became the subject of scientific as well as merely delighted comment. People had become only slightly acquainted with Japan, through the exhibits sent by the Prince of Satsuma to the Universal Exhibition of 1867. One or two lovers of curios had already seen albums printed in colours, brought back by sailors in their trunks. Figures of animals in white earth, delicately painted, had been imported by travellers, perhaps, but they had produced no feeling of interest.

A. de Longpérier, who was one of the cleverest and most energetic of scholars, pointed out, in connection with the Cernuschi Exhibition, the field which was shortly to unfold itself. Said he: "With regard to these Japanese objects, one was possessed of a certainty as to the geographical position of the land whence they came, borne witness to by travellers, and again as to their characteristic appearance, which will give the opportunity of forming a general idea of Japanese style."*



Porters Resting (after Hokusai).

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* Works of A. de Longpérier, collected by G. Schlumberger, I. p. 294: Observation upon some antiquities seen in Chinese and Japanese books.

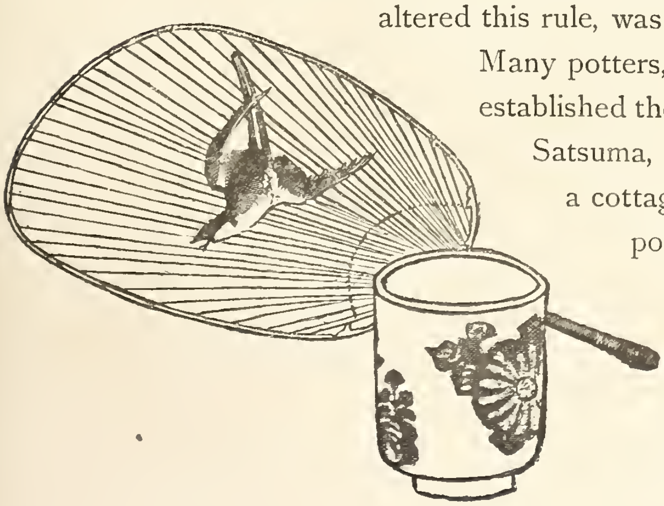
Water Carrier, by Hokusai.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

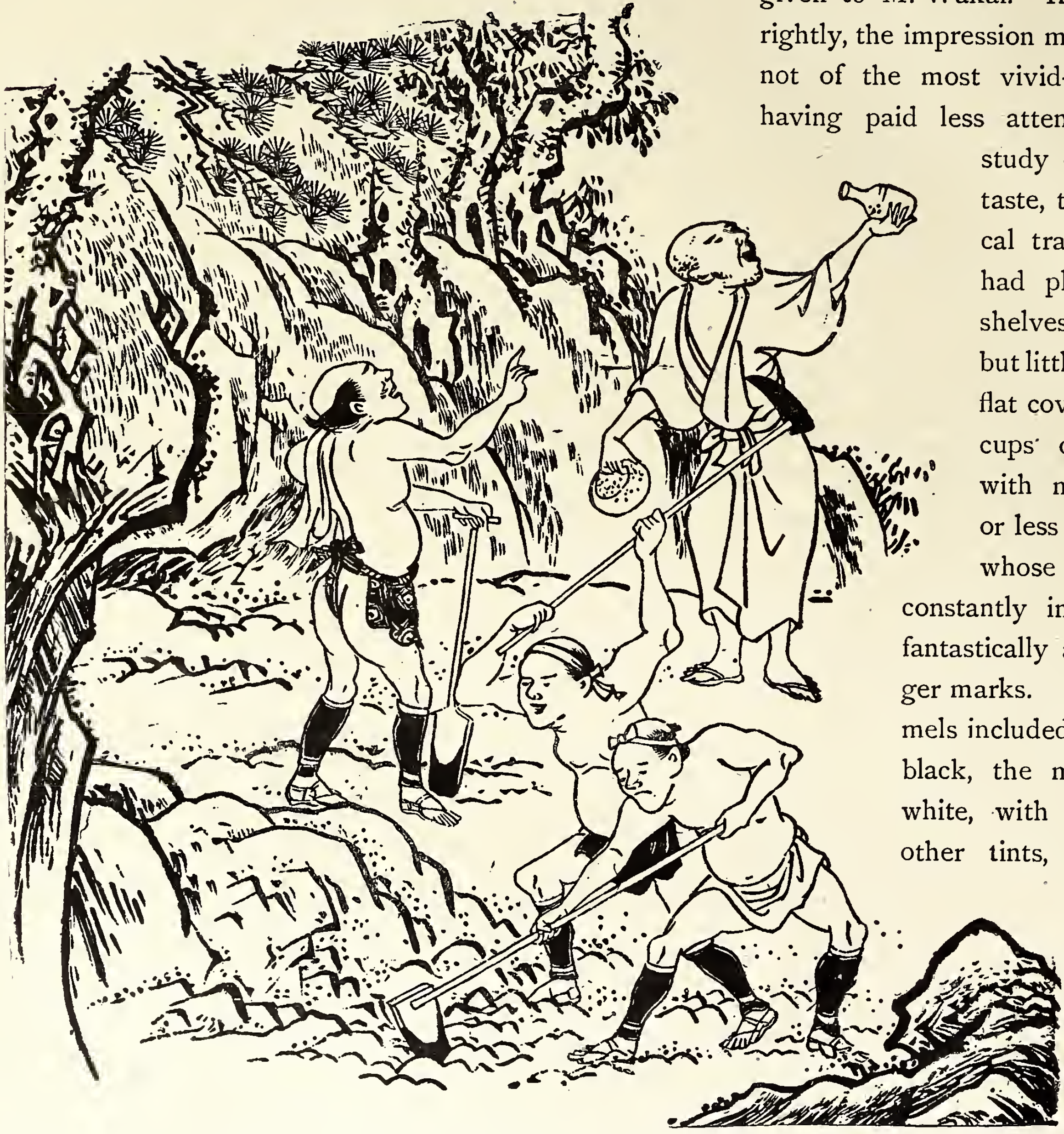
Japanese art received the freedom of the city of Paris simultaneously with its official passport. The delicate specimens of workmanship hitherto unseen even in museums, fascinated all those who set eyes upon them. The far East, known so far as "the land of Chinese curiosities," made its appearance under a new light: by means of colossal statues in bronze, such as the Sakya Muni in his pensive attitude, so full of nobility, wondrous objects for religious purposes, carvings in wood with exaggerated outlines, lacquer of the utmost perfection of workmanship. The earthenware, above all, engrossed both collectors and artists, accustomed as they were to the cold tints of European porcelain.

"We had arrived at the very moment to reap an unequalled harvest," writes the travelling companion of M. Cernuschi, M. Th. Duret, in his *Voyage en Asie* (Paris: M. Lévy, 1874); "the political revolution compelled the Daimios to get rid of the objects of art which were in their possession, and the downfall of the Tycoons, up to that time the most fervent Buddhists, caused the dispersion of numberless objects, which had hitherto been held sacred by their owners."

The collection, formed perhaps somewhat by chance, in the streets of the towns and villages, was completed in 1875, by the acquisition of a considerable quantity of objects also brought together in Japan by a merchant, M. Méazza. He had himself noticed, and had made a remark, which was confirmed later on by the following curious words of Ninagawa Noritané: "The manufacture of glazed pottery remained a long time without making progress (until the close of the eleventh century), for the reason that lacquer formed the material of most of the household utensils among the lower classes. The event which altered this rule, was the expedition into Corea of Hidéyoshi. Many potters, brought from that country by our army, established themselves in various provinces, Hizen, Hizo, Satsuma, &c. At the present day, there is hardly a cottage which has not its specimen of ancient pottery, while the household necessaries of the lower classes include more articles of lacquer than of porcelain or pottery."



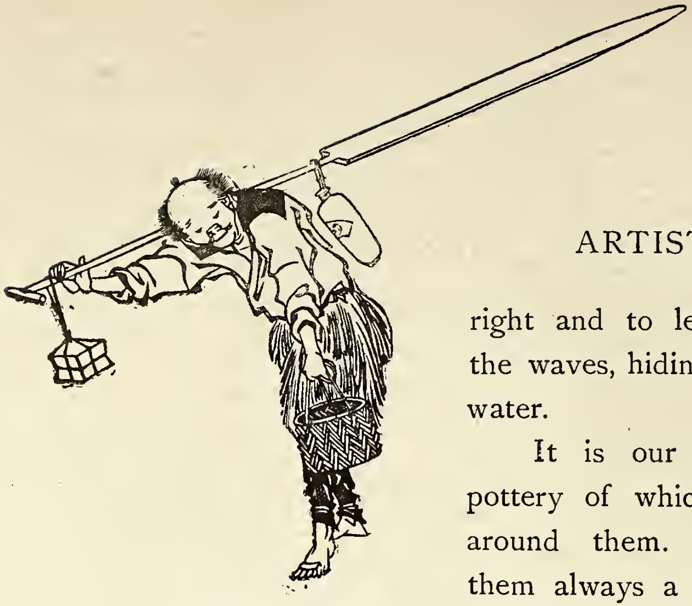
The Universal Exhibition of 1878 offered a good opportunity for discussing Japanese pottery. There, a special position in the Trocadéro was given to M. Wakai. If I remember rightly, the impression made then was not of the most vivid—M. Wakai having paid less attention to the study of European taste, than to classical traditions. He had placed on his shelves specimens, but little varied, with flat covers of ivory, cups of all sizes, with mouths more or less widened, and whose outlines were constantly indented with fantastically arranged finger marks. But the enamels included the deepest black, the most brilliant white, with innumerable other tints, from cream colour to wonderful crimson. The interest of the colouring drew one's attention away from the mediocrity of the shapes. But few Parisian collectors were attracted. Mr. Augustus Franks had however made a classification, and afterwards published two editions of his *Catalogue of Oriental Porcelain and Pottery*, a most admirable work, which he republished in 1880, having added an illustrated introduction.



Discovery of ancient Pottery by workmen making a road (from a *Meisho*, v., p. 215).

The Japanese have paid undivided attention to pottery. The map of Japan will show the reasons for this, which are determined by the formation of this picturesque region. It seems as if it might be some immense sea monster touching the bottom of the sea, whose back fin emerged from the waves. The island, or rather group of islands, is entirely volcanic in formation. From the Islands of Yesso which run up towards Russia, to the province of Satsuma, which ends the lower eastern portion of the Empire of the Sun, it is no more in reality than an unbroken chain of mountains. This rocky elevation or perhaps the endless wear of the encircling sea, has formed in the centre a kind of back-bone, from the summit of which to

Manufactory of Pottery (from a work on Ceramics).

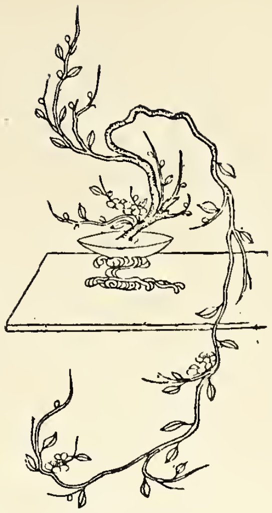


Boatman, by Hokusai.

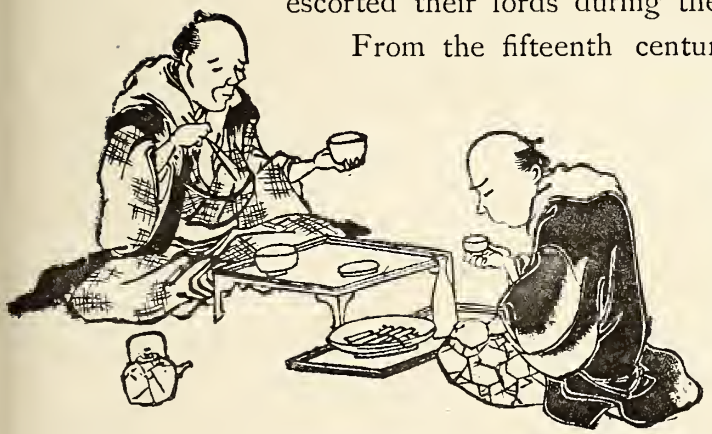
right and to left, deep valleys constantly run down to the waves, hiding in their depths tiny rivulets of rushing water.

It is our object to speak only of pottery, that pottery of which the Japanese found the elements all around them. The water-courses have carried with them always a great quantity of sand, this has become mixed with clay, and various ferruginous elements more or less delicate, more or less pure. Thus this nation of artists has been furnished with the numberless varieties of paste, by means of which they have obtained, through various bakings, enamelled coatings of countless vivid or delicate tints, to be used upon articles be they either for ornament or every day use. Porcelain does not lend itself to these interesting variations—a material entirely obedient, it answers with exactness to the ideal (in other respects far superior) of the Chinese. One can tell beforehand with what amount of decorative art they will be satisfied, what amount of labour they will expect. The Japanese mind goes further, and more quickly to its object—pleasure.

The history of Japan offers a problem still unsolved. At a date but vaguely determined by tradition, but which might be roughly stated as 2,500 years ago, a tribe, coming without doubt from the Liou-Kiou Islands, landed, and established itself first in the province called Yamato. I am under the impression that it was in Yamato that the conquerors disembarked, for Yamato preserves more markedly the most characteristic signs of one race being forced upon another. These victors without doubt drove out, or caused to retreat towards the north, the indigenous race, the Ainos. We know from the annals, or at least from legends, that this tribe was led by a chief, Zin-Mou, an undoubtedly brave general, and a



son of the Sun. We know that Zin-Mou and his captains were beset by the most serious obstacles. Zin-Mou would seem to have been a political power, as well as a dauntless adventurer. He won great admiration from the feminine sex, and was idolised by the daughters of the possessors of the land—the latter, it appears, having come at a far earlier date, from the continent which we now call Russia. Did these people, at this date, live solely in the mountains? They were fish-eaters, and were never far distant from streams affected by warm currents, and well filled with fish. Within the tombs of ancient chiefs, there have been discovered statuettes in terra-cotta, which must have represented the real corpses of servants and horses, who actually escorted their lords during the solitary journey of death.



Tea-drinking in Japan.

From the fifteenth century the articles of pottery used in the complicated rites of Tcha-no-yu (tea ceremony), attained a great value, either on account of their antiquity or their artistic qualities. These rites, which we shall again draw attention to, were originally borrowed from China.

The following appears in the *History of the arrival of the Japanese Ambassadors at Rome, after their departure from Lisbon, described by Gualteri* (Venice, 1586): "They provide themselves in Japan," says Gualteri, "with a drink of hot water mixed and flavoured with powder of a herb called *chaa* (tcha is the Chinese tea plant). This drink is so highly thought of, that there is never a house of any size which has not a chamber set apart for this particular purpose, and the gentlefolks themselves learn to prepare it very carefully with their own hand, when they receive any guest. As this drink is very valuable, so are all the instruments likewise counted of great worth; *and particularly so the jar in which the herb is preserved after having been made into powder, also the sort of pot or kettle of iron in which it is boiled, with its tripod, and the earthenware bowl from which it is drunk. All these, if they are modern and fresh, are considered of no more value than they would be with us, but all their price depends upon whether they have been manufactured by some ancient workman, and in the knowledge*

Girl carrying water.

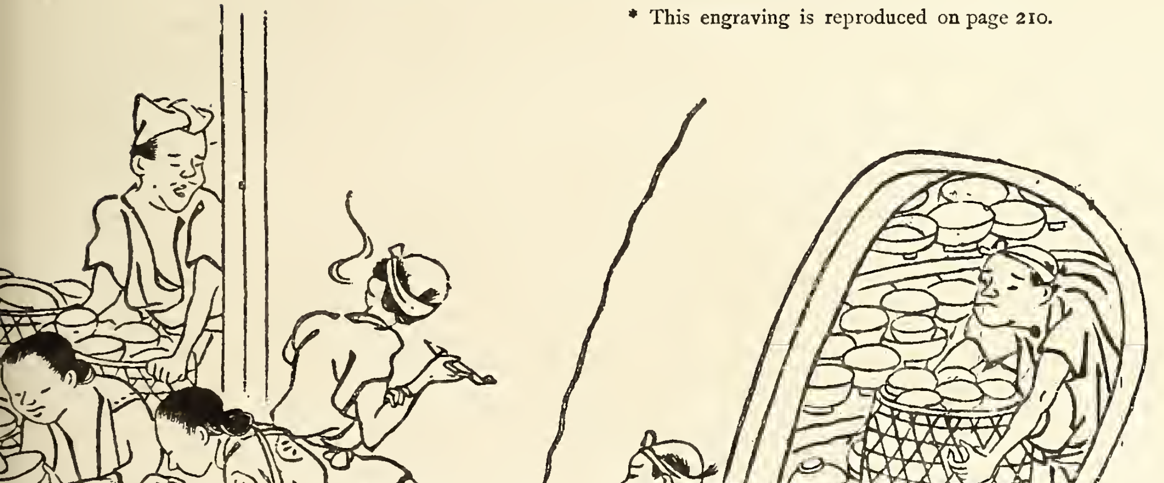
of this, people are very clever, and are expert valuers, just in like manner with our goldsmiths when they discern genuine or false stones. If the objects are ancient they reach an incredible high price. One can obtain for each, four or five thousand gold ducats or more; and not long since, the King of Bungo paid four thousand ducats for one of these jars, which was of a passing small size, and another nobleman of the town of Sakai, paid for one of these tripods which had been mended in divers places, four hundred ducats."

There have frequently come to light, in Japan, specimens of pottery of a very ancient date. Professor Morse was the cause of one of these discoveries, near Tokyo, at Omori. He has had copies designed, and coloured

Decorating Pottery after t

like the originals, and has added a description of them to his work upon all the chief manufactories and every known variety ancient and modern of pottery, which he promises to the public in the course of a short time. In one of the *Meishos* (illustrated guides), compiled by artists and scholars of note, in the *Views of Celebrated Places in the Province of Kawatsi* (about 1790), one sees four workmen digging, and calling to passers-by to show them what they have found in the earth :*

"On the banks of the river Korikawa, in the district of Taka-yanu, there are the 'Thousand Tombs,' in which there have been discovered different specimens of pottery of the period of Kami-yo. It is said that these are the work of Saruda Hiko-no-Mikoto," that is to say, of the time of the Kamis —genii who ruled with mortal kings.



a work on Ceramics).

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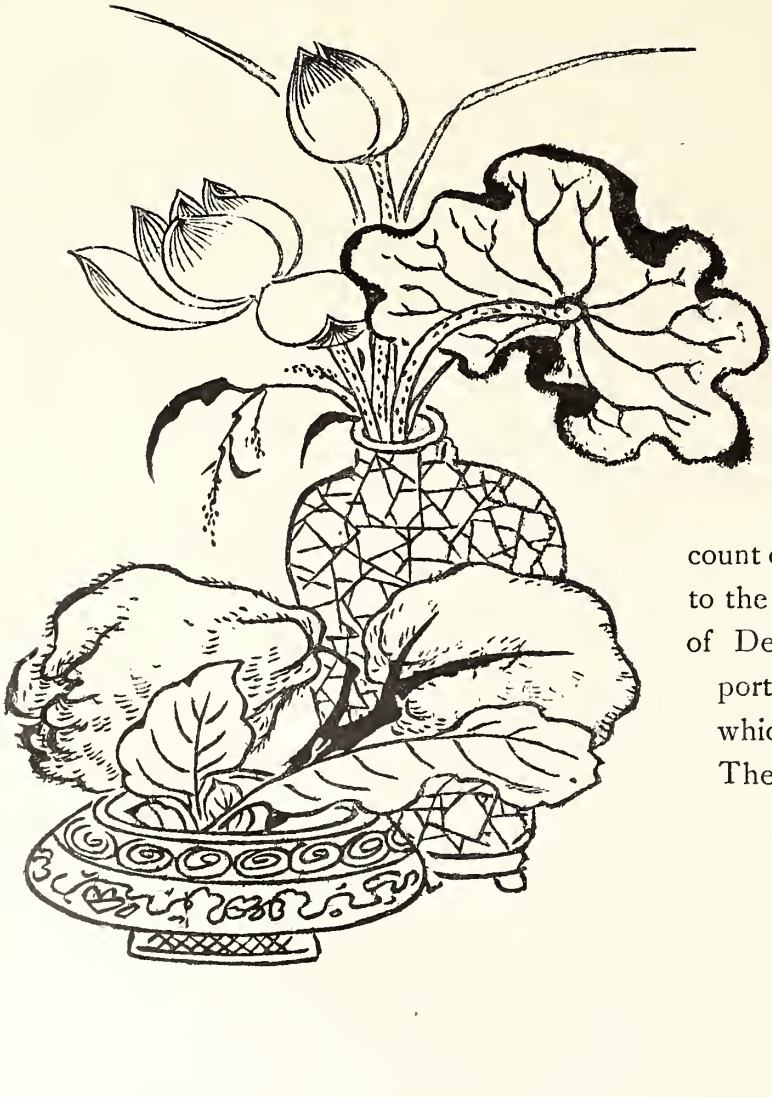
* This engraving is reproduced on page 210.

The Imperial commissioner from Japan to the Universal Exhibition of 1889, has published an explanatory notice of the objects lent by the Minister of Public Instruction at Tokyo. This pamphlet draws attention again and again to the importance of the ancient treasures preserved in the temples, and the pottery discovered in various districts; through, in one case, the workings for new railway embankments.

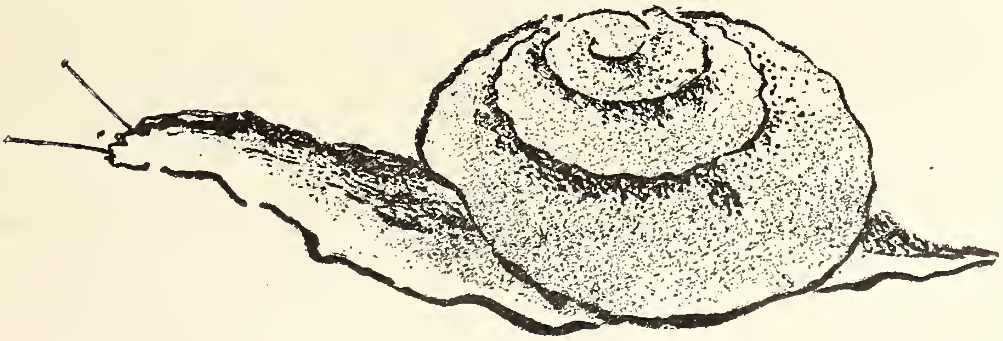
It would be interesting to show into what Parisian collections the earliest specimens of pottery passed. I will mention the name of Alphonse Hirsch, because he deserves to be classed amongst those who acted as advanced guard. Hirsch had the sense to appreciate all that was charming and of value in Japan in every branch of art. My friend Edmond de Goncourt bought, from the brothers Sichel, on their return from Japan (1874), the first Satsuma, which was then so rare. As for myself, I confined my attentions to Bizen, not less uncommon, when from the kilns of princes. M. Bing caused a revolution, which was in its turn brought into order through the aid of M. Hayashi. They caused to issue from darkness a wondrous series of specimens of the work of Raku, of Ninsei, of Kensan, and of all the list of noted potters. It was at this time that M. Louis Gonse, and M. Charles Gillot, devoted time to the study of Japanese art; their collections bear witness to the service they have rendered to the cause of Ceramics. M. Henri Cernuschi has left, when he dies, his collections of all sorts to the City of Paris. The Guimet collection comprises some specimens of ancient and recent pottery, which connect themselves, on account of their emblematical decoration, to the history of religion. The Union of Decorative Arts devotes an important space in the restricted area which it for the present possesses. The museum of the manufactory



of Sévres possesses some specimens of ancient workmanship, which are not to be looked down upon even by the very foremost potters of Europe. America has become deeply fascinated by Ceramic art. It is said that there, for exceptional pieces, high prices are paid.

PHILIPPE BURTY.

(*To be continued.*)



DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate BJB.* Two specimens of Japanese pottery which figure in the *Kwan-ko-dzu-setsu*—an historical and descriptive notice on the arts and industries of Japan—a large work, illustrated with coloured engravings, published at Tokyo in 1876, by a celebrated Japanese expert, Ninagawa Noritané, who died only a few years ago.

The portion of this valuable work which is devoted to pottery comprises five divisions, in which the engravings are accompanied with text, which has been translated into French in the form of five pamphlets which are added to the Japanese volumes. In these five books, and in a supplement of two books,† Ninagawa has given from original specimens he had before him, examples which cover the whole history of the potter's art in Japan—from the earliest date to the present time.

In contradistinction to most Japanese experts, Ninagawa took pains to collect descriptions necessary for such a publication. He was himself employed officially for the Japanese Government, as is shown by the following passage from his Introduction :—

"The collection of the Todaiji Temple consists of objects formerly possessed by the Emperors, objects of culture, musical instruments, and arms. The Court made it a custom to send once in every hundred, or fifty years, commissioners specially appointed to open the treasure-houses, which were as a rule sealed up—either to allow fresh air into them or perhaps to make repairs to the building. Thus carefully guarded, these wondrous objects have been preserved down to to-day. Four years ago the Government sent five commissioners to Nara, for the purpose of examining the collection there. But they were greatly hurried, and in the ten days they spent there, they were able to see only a half of what there was. Last year officials, again five in number, were once again sent upon the same mission. Half of the collection was exhibited to the public during the period of ninety days. For no other cause beyond taking out these treasures from the store, and replacing them at

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* We commence, as a rule, the description of the separate plates, with the reproductions of paintings and engravings, proceeding with modelled objects, earthenware, wood or metal, and then industrial designs. Pottery being the subject of the article in the present number, we have considered it appropriate to place foremost among our descriptions those which concern ceramic art.

† These volumes measure about 8 ins. by 15 ins., and contain each twelve pages of text and fifteen coloured reproductions. They can be procured at the offices of *Artistic Japan*. The price is £7.

the close of the exhibition, it was necessary to devote twenty days, so great was their number. Three of the officials, staying longer than the rest, were enabled to extend their examination to specimens kept in cases, which had never been opened till then. The author took part in these two expeditions, and had the opportunity of seeing objects of great rarity, which have been the source of numerous historical facts."

The entire collection of objects described by Ninagawa, with the exception of the antiquities belonging to the ancient treasure of the temples, has passed of late years into the possession of Professor Edward Morse, of Salem (U.S.A.), and form a portion of the celebrated collection of Japanese pottery gathered together by this learned collector.

The first of the two bowls represented in our illustration was described by Ninagawa, as the manufacture of an artist of the school of the celebrated potter Ninsei, who lived at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is for holding food, called *kata-kuti*. The second is a tea bowl, called *kibisu* or *tschawan*, made by Dōhati, a potter held in high estimation by Japanese collectors; he worked from 1820 to 1870. The form of the bowl is imitated from Ninsei. The two specimens are decorated with paintings in faint and somewhat faded tints.

Plate AHF is a reproduction of an unsigned painting, a simple study of a living lobster, rapidly executed with an evident intention to simplify to the utmost the drawing, which intention has caused the artist to depict by one stroke with a fully charged brush, the legs and claws of the crustacean. The draughtsman has not omitted to indicate both the articulations and the rough extremities.

Plate AIF is also an unsigned study, in this case representing a plant known in Europe as the *Ophiopogon spicatus*. One can follow with ease the method here employed to express the effect of growth at several levels of these leaves so delicate in form. The first are drawn with the brush fully charged with colour, and the same brush, half emptied, has, but weakly and with gaps, indicated the leaves at a lower level. In the midst is a cluster of buds, of faded pink colour, with but one blossom open.

Plate ABD reproduces a coloured engraving by Kuniyoshi (see No. X., plate ABB, and note concerning it). In a small boat called choki-buné, two women are being taken to an island—probably some haunt for pleasure parties—by a strong boatman who propels his craft with an oar at the stern. In the foreground the piles of a bridge make an imposing mass, which adds to the effect of the distance. In the article by Mr. Anderson, on Hiroshigé (Nos. XV. and XVI.) the author remarked upon the timidity of the painter when expressing shadows on water, which are prohibited by classical tradition. Here we see Kuniyoshi, of a somewhat later date than

Hiroshigé, freeing himself entirely of this superannuated rule. As to the importance intentionally given to objects in the foreground the effect which can be gained thus by artists was well-known to the Japanese, when we in Europe were but commencing to find out the merits of this style of composition.

Plate AHB reproduces an engraving by Shun-boku, an artist of the eighteenth century. It represents two squirrels clinging to a vine, thick with grapes, which the animals are busy pillaging. This engraving is taken from an antique painting, which was treated in the classical style originated in China. The artist has faithfully rendered the strength of the original with its vigorous and well-marked brush work, which is nevertheless modified when indicating the outline of the two little animals, expressed by means of light touches which render effectively the soft coat of the squirrel. We shall, later on, return to various series of engravings made by Shun-boku from very ancient originals, which are now, for the most part, entirely lost.

Plate AIB is an engraving by Hiroshigé, which reproduces in colours several fish belonging to the family of Salmon. Quantities of them are caught in Japan, when, as in our hemisphere, they pass up the rivers for spawning. The articles devoted to Hiroshigé in the last two numbers of *Artistic Japan*, obviate the necessity of making further remarks upon the productions of this artist.

Plate BJA. A scene in a theatre, taken from an old engraving in colours. We shall shortly dedicate a special article to the Theatre : so at the present time it will be sufficient to say that the engraving is by Katsugawa Shunsho (1770), familiar to our readers from a page taken from his work on the beauties of Yedo in No. III. of this publication. In the present specimen the same artist shows himself depicting theatrical subjects in which his genius has found a fruitful field of observation. We have previously remarked that the masters of the Shunsho school formed of their pupils a complete series of followers, all of whom appropriated from their leader the patronymic of *Katsugawa* (joined to their own), and each did honour to the theatrical gods, whom the populace daily worship. When passing through this innumerable series, a complete Pantheon of dramatic celebrities of the date, representing in a hundred different aspects the persons made famous by art and poetry—when unrolling the endless succession of so many strange figures constantly animated, apparently, by some frantic passion, one has before one no insignificant employment. We know not what drama of vengeance and hatred Shunsho gives a scene of here ; in the gloom of a winter's night, a grey-headed hag pursues with a gleaning-knife some young girl. It is to be hoped that at the right moment some good genius comes to ward off the fatal blow, and deliver innocence from persecution. In Japanese plays, as in our own melodramas, to which there is no small resemblance, virtue more often than not triumphs in the end.

Plate AHD. Two studies of birds unsigned by their artist. They are treated with the freest touch, and with even more rapidity than was shown in Plate AHF which we have noticed above. Each wing has taken no more than one stroke with a brush, but given with perfect certainty, and with entire knowledge of the flight of a swallow, seized at the moment of a change in its flight. The second bird, which we have printed below the swallow, but which in the original was on a separate leaf, is a hawk, and the smallest kind which is known in Japan, a species of shrike, constantly seen caged in the houses. The same remarkably strong brush work and bold simplicity is noticeable in this study.

Plate ADG. Chrysanthemum flowers twined into a circle, and cherry blossom treated in the same manner, without destroying their natural appearance, forming a motive of decoration.

Plate AEJ. Reproductions of two foundations for decorative designs. They are treated in a conventional manner.

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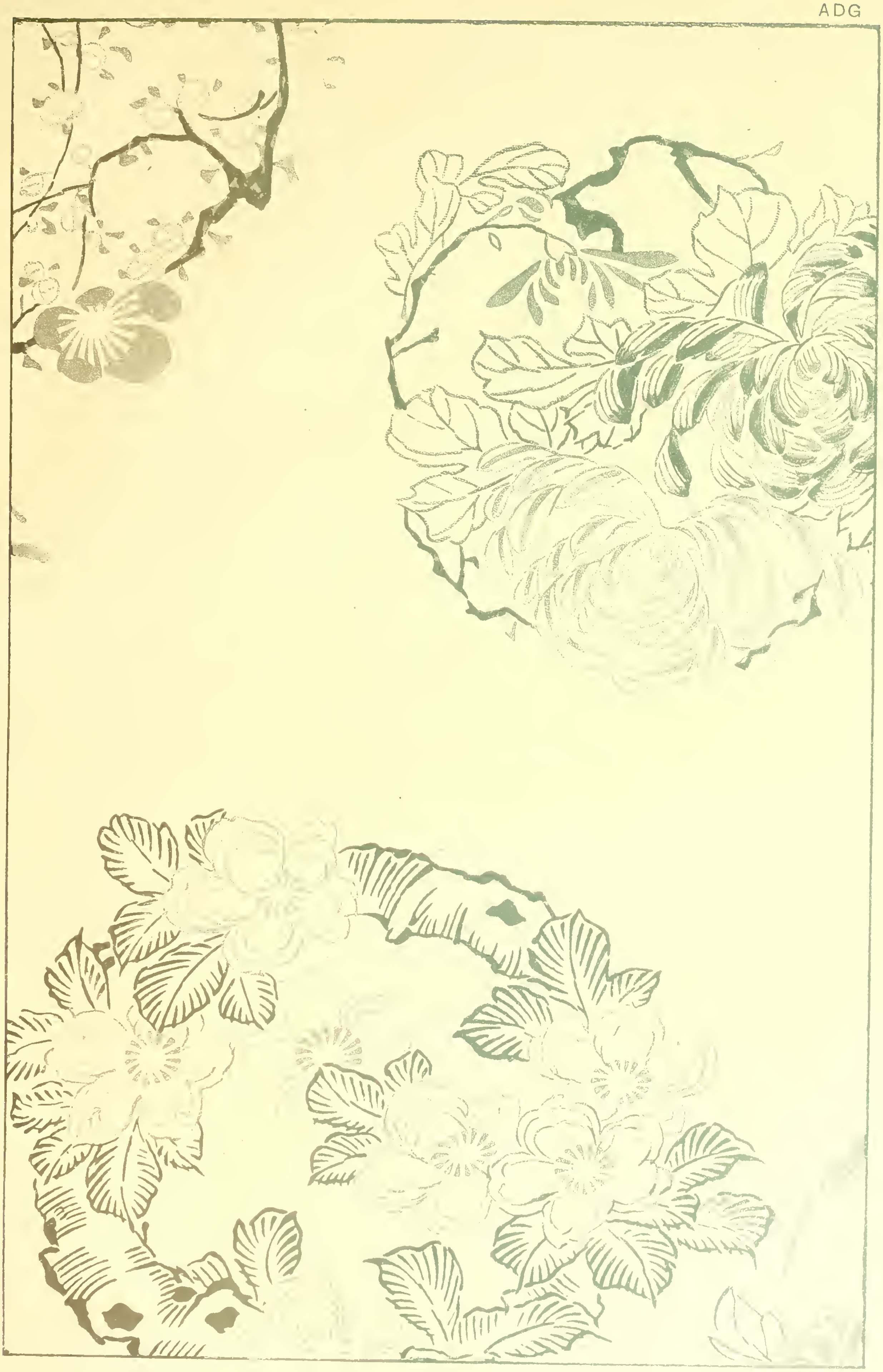
ABD. **Ladies Boating.** By Kuniyoshi.
AHB. **Squirrels on a Vine.** By Shun-boku.
AIB. **Fishes.** By Hiroshigé.
AEJ. **Industrial Model.**
BJA. **Scene from a Play.** By Shunsho.
AHD. **Studies of Birds.**

In No. XVIII. the Article on "Japanese Pottery," by M. Burty, will be concluded.

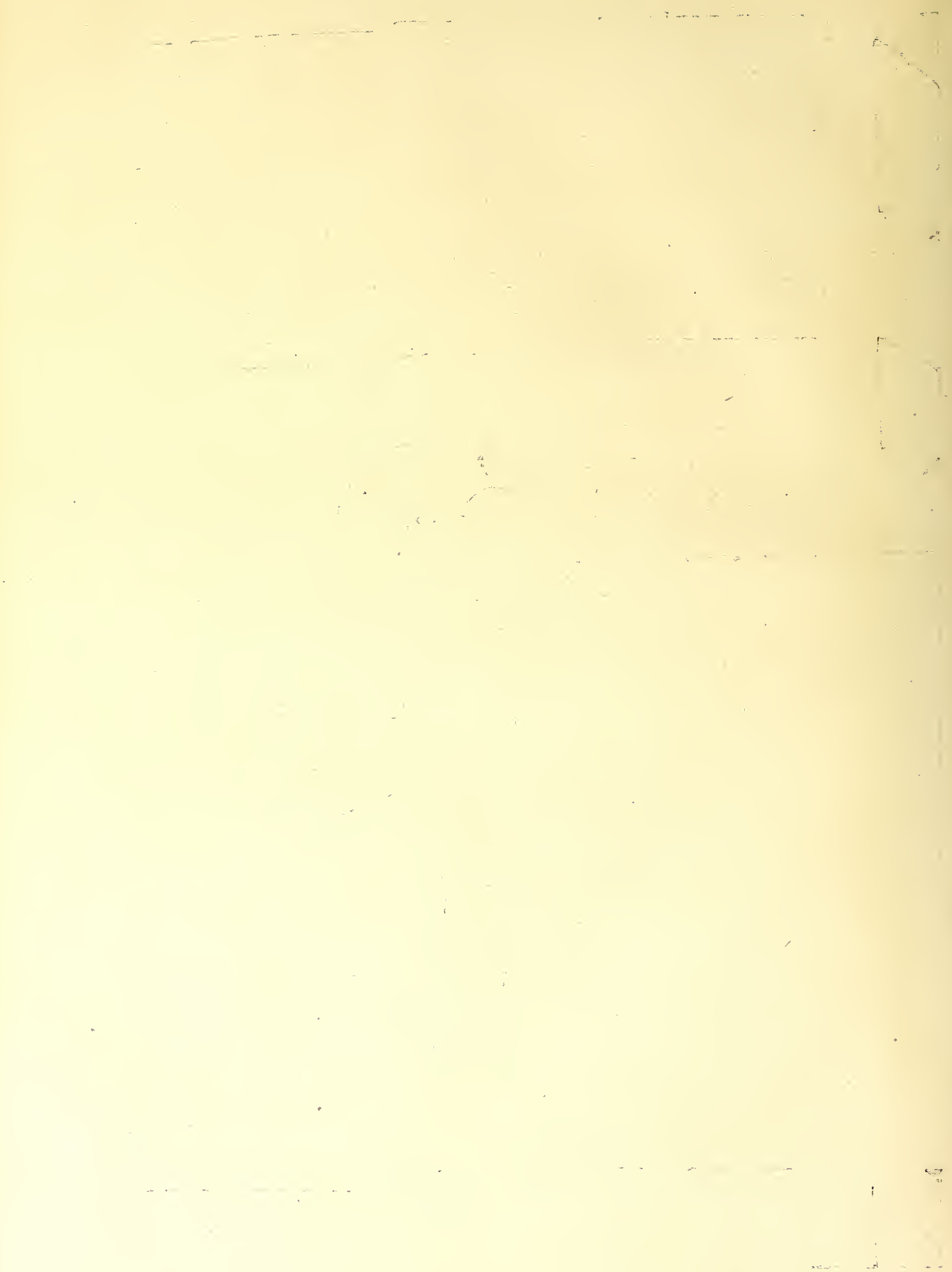
BJB

AHF

AIF



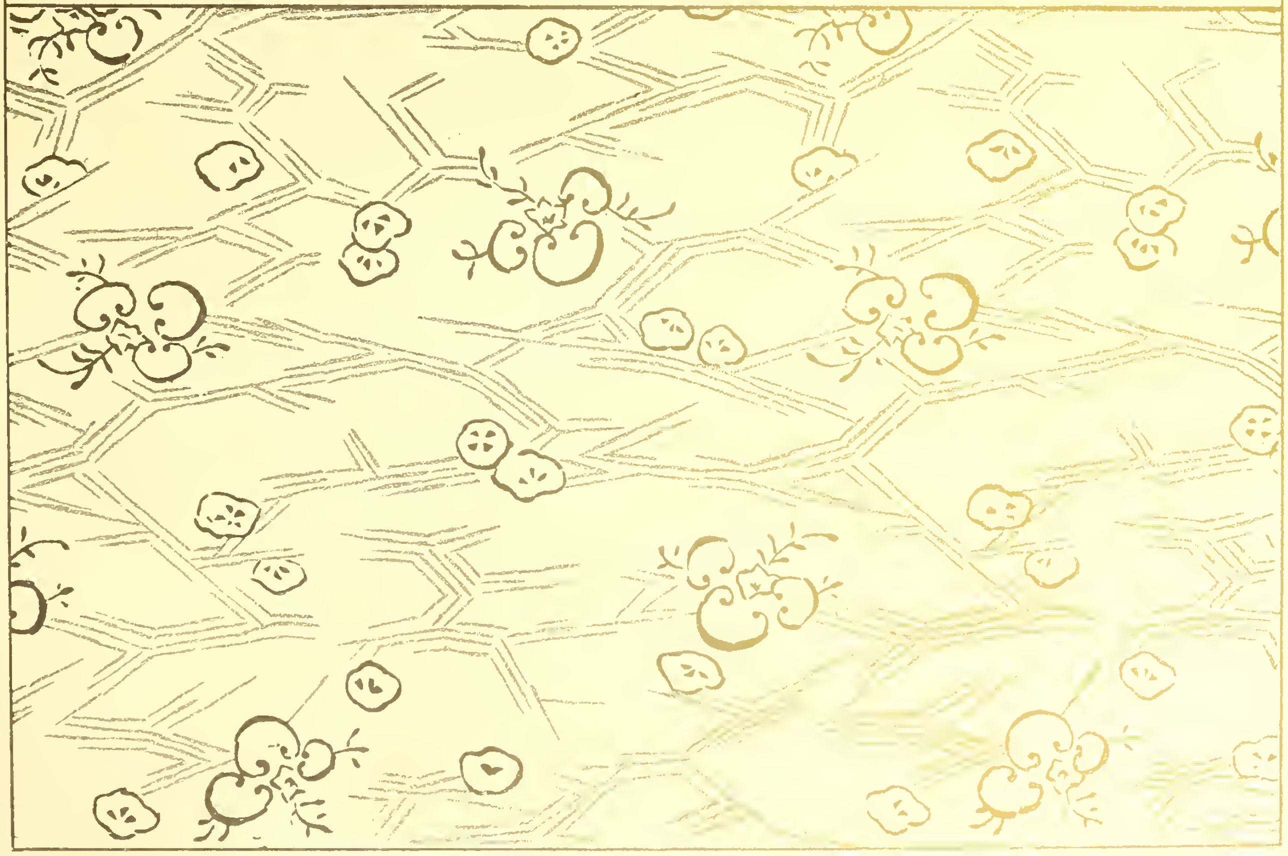
GRAV. IMP. PAR GILLOT.




ぶだうに
栗鼠

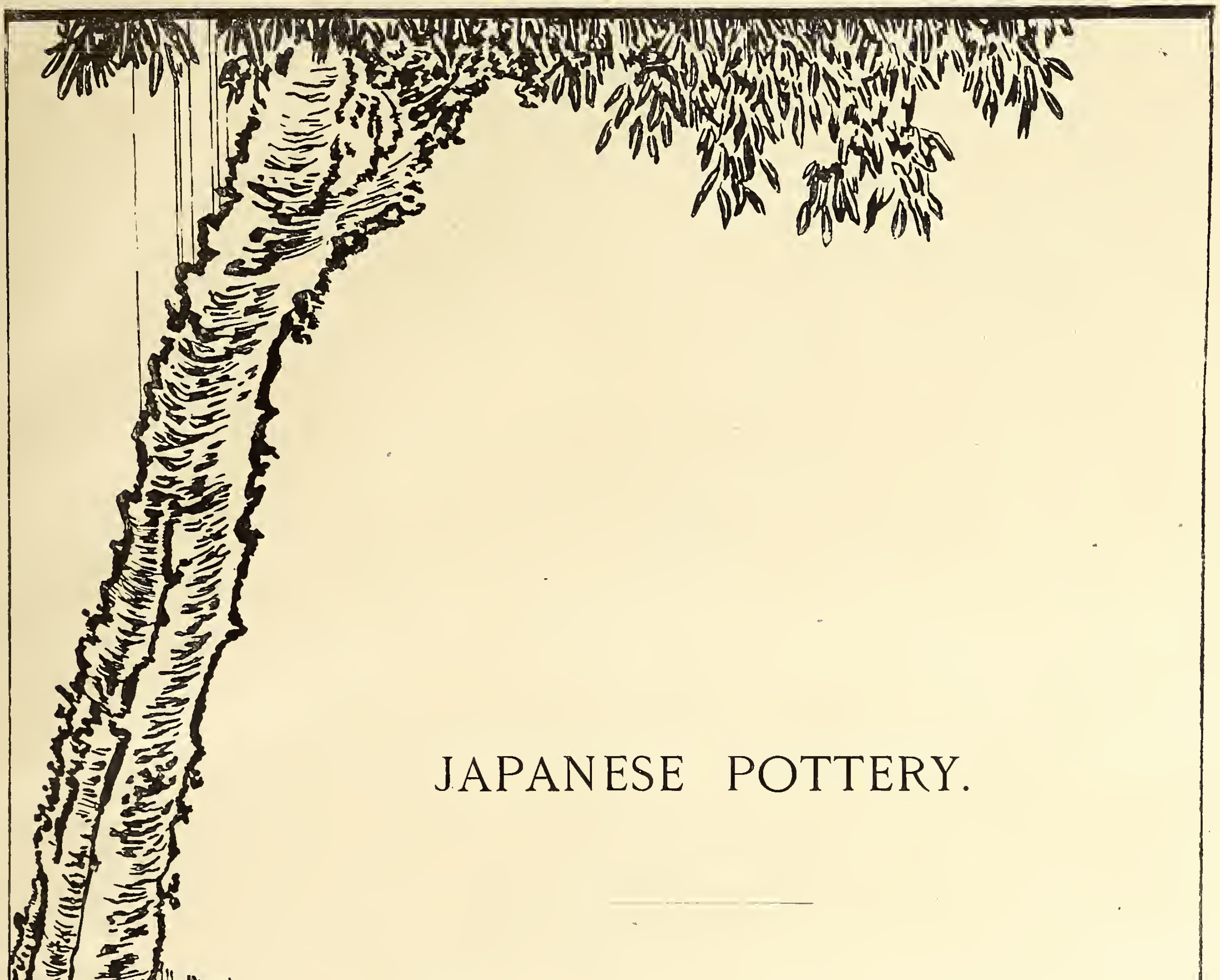
AIB

AEJ



BJA

AHD



JAPANESE POTTERY.

II.

Enamelled porcelains, stoneware glazed with a fine varnish, the earth dark of tone with surface cracks almost invisible (when the somewhat primitive methods imported from Corea prospered) attained perfection and caused the traditional lacquering which was adapted to common objects to be laid aside. During the period from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century, all the repertory of receipts was tried and put into practice. Of this there remain to us many proofs, thanks to the scrupulous care of the *tcha-jins.** The discovery of porcelain in Japan was, above all, a great commercial fact with a view to export. If it did not make its way to the popular classes, it did at least produce specimens eagerly disputed for—*okimonos* or pieces for what-nots.

Potter working in his House (engraving taken from a *Meisho*).

To the ceramic pieces originally derived from Corea succeeded the *ko-seto,* of admirable compactness, the numberless series of isolated kilns established in all the provinces, and particularly in the neighbourhood of Kioto, the capital of the Mikados. Then the fifteen families brought from Corea by Hideyoshi at the end of the sixteenth century spontaneously produced their fine pottery, of such distinction, so original, so rare: the Awata, the colour of coffee with milk, with archaic decorations, starchy blue, light green and red coral, all the charming work of Ninsei; the bold decorations of Kensan,

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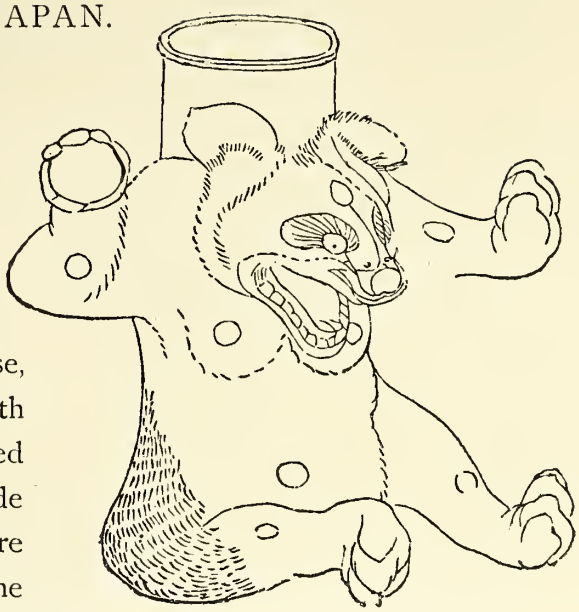
* I owe this spelling to the *Relations* of the Jesuit Fathers sent to Europe towards the end of the sixteenth century. It is to be regretted that a congress has not been assembled to deal with questions relating to the art and history of the far East, and particularly to discuss the reading of common words which is so diverse in France, England, and India, with a view to a common spelling.



Treasure Vase of the Emperor Kien-Long.

the younger brother of Kôryn; the Koutaini, marked by enamels not numerous but full of energy, with manganese, myrtle green, faded yellow, black, white, and enriched in the more valuable specimens by coatings of gold and silver. All these vessels for incense, these flower-vases, these bottle-cases with compartments one above another, succeeded *ad infinitum*. The decorations went side by side with the designs; storks of pure white with a touch of vermilion on the head, chrysanthemums with large petals, landscapes hit off with three strokes of the brush, bamboos with slender cylinders, materials of Court dress with grand and strong combinations, the three leaves and three flowers of the Kirimon, the *rakou*, black and rugged like shagreen.

Japanese pottery impresses by the freedom of the colouring and the character of the design. It retains the forms in apparent rusticity, and only accepts intellectual fineness in opposition to the academic conceptions of the Chinese masters, to the astonishing dexterity of the workmen painters. In studying the seven albums of Ninagawa, we take account of the intelligent fidelity with which this people has always adhered to its own ideal. It has never copied, but only interpreted. Its island is not easily approached, and the *shogouns* formerly did not permit the inhabitants to leave it. It has never been conquered by foreigners, thanks to the protection of the sea. The family of its emperors, sons and grandsons of the Sun, yet yields it emperors. It has undergone the ceramic influences of Corea, of China, of the religious Buddhists; but it has substantially remained intellectually independent.

One fact, seemingly trifling, was very influential with the upper classes, and in the sequel with all the nation. Tea produces effects which have been appreciated from distant times in the far East. China was the first to recognise them. India also was deeply penetrated, as is seen in the legend of Dharma, the legendary introducer into Japan of the Good Law proclaimed by Sakia Muni.

Dharma, seated on the dry ground of a hermitage, for fourteen years inured to all kinds of privations, watched over his senses to such an extent that his legs mortified without his noticing it. One night he went to sleep. At the dawn he awoke. Provoked at his unpardonable weakness, he seized a pair of scissors, cut off his eyelids, and cast them away. His eyelids took root on the spot, and transformed themselves into the tea-plant, whose leaves prolonged the dreams which arose in a night of meditations.*

The *tcha-jins*, familiar associations of distinguished men who bent themselves to the observance of rigorous rites, rapidly acquired great influence on civil manners, on education, etc. They mollified the rudeness which the race had contracted in the wars between the Taïra and Minamota families. A Buddhist father, Koben, extended the use of it, and the success of the divine infusion was so complete that all classes of society were subjected to its influence. Even at this day one must recognise that it is a people which is ruled by a perfect education.

Porcelain had been discovered at the middle of the seventeenth century, in the province of Hizen, of which Imari is the well-known port. It is for the *tcha-jins* that it perfected itself and attained its greatest value. We shall relate what the *tcha-jins* were in describing their ceremonies. Let us pause a moment over a book printed at their instance, which contains special chapters devoted to the ceramic art.

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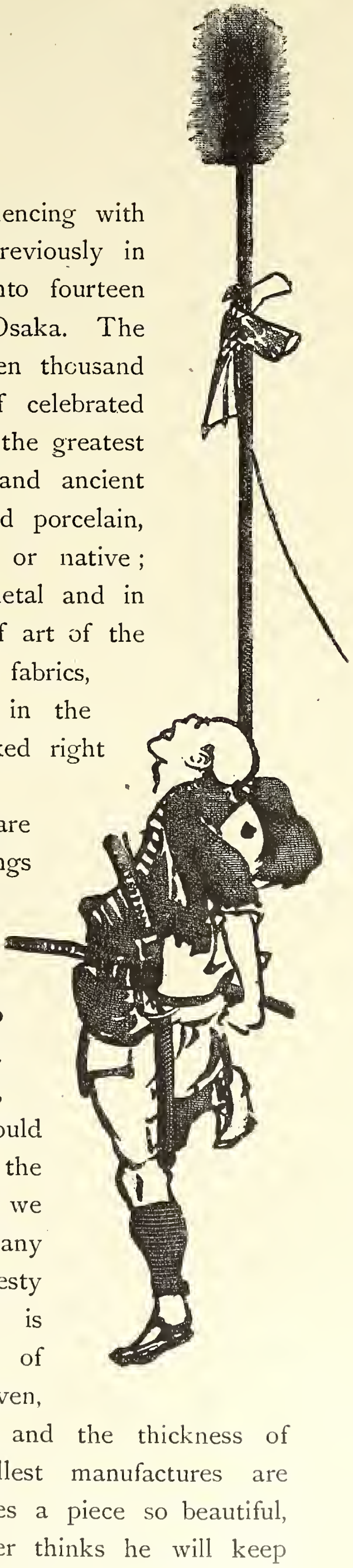
* The anti-soporific virtues of tea were thus described in a little volume with engravings, dedicated to the Marquise de la Vallière, entitled "*Curiosités de la nature et de l'art, rapportées dans deux voyages des Indes . . . et l'autre aux Indes d'Orient . . . avec une relation abregée,*" *par C. Biron, chirurgien-major . . . à Paris*, 1703. "It must, however, be acknowledged that tea carries the day over sage. It is not a prejudice in favour of foreign things—it is a truth clear as day, that tea has merits which cannot be gainsaid. Besides that, it has a smell infinitely more agreeable than our sage; it is a marvellous specific for cheering and restoring the spirits; it abates hysteria; it prevents drowsiness; it strengthens the heart and the brain; it repairs exhaustion after long and painful study; it aids digestion; it purifies the blood, and is an excellent remedy against scurvy." This naval surgeon-major was, perhaps, not learned in pottery. He cites among the curiosities he brought home "little cups of a species of white vitrifaction." They were probably porcelain.



Many editions were printed of this book, commencing with 1698. Notes had been taken for a long time previously in manuscript collections. The work was collected into fourteen volumes, printed under the care of one Aboshi, of Osaka. The title is *Bam-pô Sen Shio*—"complete collection of ten thousand jewels." There are signatures where the seals of celebrated painters of kakémonos, Chinese or Japanese—one of the greatest treasures which princes could possess—of curious and ancient coins, of blades of illustrious *katanas*, of pottery and porcelain, ancient or of celebrated potters, Chinese, Corean, or native; iron kettles for the *tcha-no-yu;* incense vessels in metal and in blue porcelain; flower-vases in porcelain; objects of art of the Nan-ban (that is, of foreign countries); lacquers, fabrics, *menuki*, *kogai*—by the Gotos, celebrated artificers in the ornamentation of sabres, and the *tsuba* in iron, worked right through the metal.

Sketches accompanied the information; the prices are indicated in gold-leaf, amounting to twenty-five shillings or thereabouts of our coin. Volumes X. and XI. are devoted to vases of Japanese earth, to designs of forty-seven teapots, to old and new porcelain, to Chinese cups of the *temmoku* epoch, to *sou-take* porcelain, to iron kettles for the *tcha-no-yu*. It may be imagined of what an interest, historical, technological, etc., a translation would be! In a partial translation of the chapter of the forty-seven teapots we read that the *izoun-nasou* (and many of them) belonged to His Majesty the Shogoun. A *tshoji-boro* is preserved in the temples of Nara. The dimensions are given, as well as the colours and the thickness of the enamels: the smallest manufactures are indicated. A prince desires a piece so beautiful, so unique, that the dealer thinks he will keep it for his own collection. Two years go by;

the prince returns, obtains it at the price of gold, and sends it to a friend, etc.

But space fails. I have only wished to show to what an incredible degree the love of the curious prevailed with this aristocracy. Let us pass on to the *tcha-no-yu* itself.

The primitive regulations borrowed from China under the Shogounate of Yoshimassa were changed. Later, Hideyoshi (better known to Europeans by his name of apotheosis Taiko-Sama) promulgated a code of etiquette which served as a standard for the social observances of the high aristocracy. The articles had been drawn up by a favourite, Senno-Rikiu, a great amateur of ancient pottery, who gave a direct impulse to Japanese ceramic art. Authoritative and sensible, they have been, with slight exceptions, accepted by five or six sects down to the present day. Discussions were strictly limited to art and archæology, politics, social questions, and personal recriminations were rigorously excluded. An expert in the ceremonial (*tcha-no-yu shi*) was attached to the society, and the president (*tcha-sei*) exercised a function much sought after and coveted. To judge from a wooden statuette

Soumidagawa by moonlight.

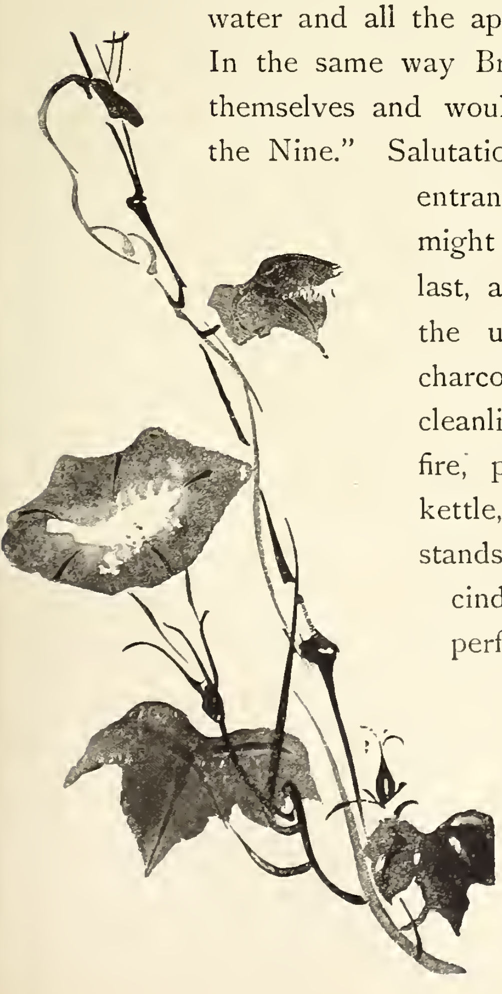
Decoration of a Teapot.

of the (*tcha-sei* reproduced in *L'art Japonais*, Vol. II., p. 61), they united a modest demeanour with dignity, subtlety, and wit. They were often poets, painters, ceramic artists, lacquerers, sculptors, or those who were skilled in forging blades or in chiselling the mountings of sabres.

The meetings were held in a special locality (*tcha-seki*), separated from the rest of the house. Most frequently a quiet corner of the garden was selected, or a place in the country where there was a nice view, near a cascade, or where a current of water furnished an oxygenated stream. The charming farm constructed in the middle of the Trocadero gave an adequate idea of it, and it did great honour to the taste of Mr. Maéda, *Commissaire-Général* of the section in 1878.

A *tcha-seki* comprised a room of about three yards, carpeted with *tatamis* matting, and absolutely without ornament other than a kakémono suspended on the wall and a bouquet of flowers and leaves. The guests were received in the ante-chamber. A cabinet (*midzu-ya*) contained vases for water and all the apparatus. The guests were not to exceed six in number. In the same way Brillat-Savarin imposed the rule, for diners who respected themselves and would talk—"more than the Graces, less in number than the Nine." Salutations exchanged, and the places indicated on the *tatamis*, entrance was made by a very low door, that the salutations might be, without affectation, low. The host passed in the last, and came out again in order to take from the *midzu-ya* the utensils in the prescribed order in a basket—pieces of charcoal of prescribed dimensions, a brush to ensure scrupulous cleanliness, a fan of three feathers (*mitsu-ba*) to quicken the fire, pincers (*hibashi*), movable rings (*kama-shiki*) to lift the kettle, a box of perfumes, and a great box containing ink-stands and papers; and, to conclude, a special bowl, with cinders still alive, and a stalk of metal to stimulate the perfumes, which covered the smell of the charcoal.

Then the guests asked permission to examine the box



of perfumes, verifying its age, beauty, rarity, etc. In summer it has to be of *faïence*, in winter of lacquer. Tea is served on a table of mulberry-wood—about two feet high. Powdered tea is steeped with a spoon of bamboo in an earthen vase with an ivory cover (*tcha-iré*) enclosed in a pocket of precious materials, generally made of portions of ancient and historic fabrics. An earthen pot containing pure water (*midzu*) is placed on the table, also the "*tcha-van*," in earth or in porcelain, remarkable for its antiquity, and often worth a considerable sum.* The emulsion of the powder in the boiling water is effected in the *tcha-van* by means of a small rod cut from the bamboo (*tcha-sen*).

Utensils of *Tcha-no-yu*, by Issaï.

The bowl is carried with deference by a boy to the chief personage of the company, who passes it to the second, who returns it. It is washed and wiped with a fabric of silk (*fukusa*), etc. The party separates. At the ceremony of tea in the leaf every guest drinks out of his own bowl.

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* We find this mention of tea in powder in the *Relazioni della venutà de gli ambasciatori Giaponesi*, 1586, p. 10 :— "Usati in quelle parti generalmente una bevanda d'acqua, come s'è dette, calda, mescolata e condita con polvere d' un' herba chiamada Chaa. . ."

The *tcha-no-yu* for women is nearly the same.*

The *sourimonos*, which are prints in colour, designed, printed, and distributed exclusively to members of the associations, have alone informed us as to the ceremonies. I do not know of a single book which has committed an indiscretion. But the utensils are often represented for us, especially by the painter Hokkei.

I have made the acquisition of a part of the apparatus of the *tcha-jins*—a lacquered box (*nassumé*). It contains charming utensils; but the description of them would take twice as much space as I have already occupied. I must, however, cite one or two pieces, which confirm the particulars above given. The general cover is made of a fabric in silk of the colour of dead leaves, with little figures in the tissue; it has seemed so typical as to be engraved in a catalogue which appeared in 1781—the *Shoken Kishô*. A little tube, containing the *fukusa* with which the bowls are wiped, is marked with the seal of Rakou. It is of green porcelain, with a coat of arms (*mon*)

Utensils of the *Tcha-no-yu*, by Issaï.

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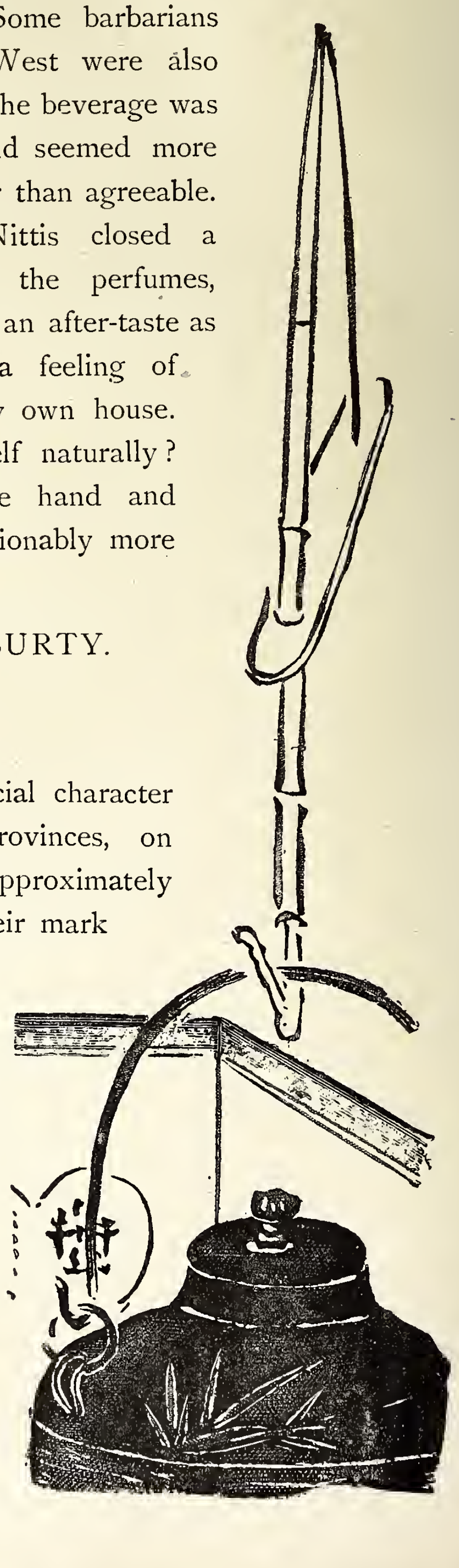
* The instruments of the *tcha-no-yu*, such as they have been represented in part by Issaï in this page and that which precedes it, are often repeated on the *tsubas* since the sixteenth century. See *Selections from the Descriptive Catalogue of Sword Guards in the Gilbertson Collection*, p. 88.

figured by three allied circles. The bowl, decorated in cobalt with masterly decision, bears, however, a signature of doubtful character, "made in the Hinen *atelier*, under the Ming dynasty."

One evening, during the *Exposition* of 1878, some Japanese friends who were at my house improvised a *tcha-no-yu*. Some barbarians of the West were also there. The beverage was tasted, and seemed more disturbing than agreeable. A De Nittis closed a nostril after inhaling the perfumes, declaring that they had an after-taste as of soup. I experienced a feeling of sadness. I felt myself suddenly a stranger in my own house. Does the charm only exist where it unfolds itself naturally? A cup of caravan tea, offered by a delicate hand and brightened by European conversation, is unquestionably more delicious in Paris, London, or St. Petersburg.

Ph. BURTY.

I have not been able to dwell on the special character of the eminent *ateliers*, on the names of provinces, on substances diversely employed, etc. In order approximately to fix the conditions under which they made their mark by forms and decorative effects, I must send the reader back to the examples already given in *Artistic Japan*:—Part III. A vase in terra-cotta of Ota; IV. *Midzu-iré*, a water-bottle in porcelain (eighteenth century); *Okimono*, a piece for a what-not in terra-cotta; VI. *Domburi*, bowl added to contain fruits, by



Kenzan; VIII. Bottle for *saké*, in enamelled earth of Seto; X. Pails with pulleys, for natural flowers, in Awata ware; XI. Stoneware enamelled vase of Kioto; XIII. Terra-cotta cup, with figures in relief, by Madame Koren; XIV. Bottle in Kioto pottery, by Ninsei; falcon resting on a stem, in Bizen stoneware; XV. Three bottles for *saké*, in Bizen stoneware; XVII. *Kata koutshi*, rice-bowl; *tcha-van*, bowl for tea, by Dô-Hatshi.

Ph. B.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate AFE represents a *surimono.* It reproduces it in all the richness, if not with all the prestige of technical execution, which the handling of a printer-artist in Japan alone can give.

Mr. Burty, in the study which he to-day devotes to the tea-meetings, makes a short allusion to this kind of fine prints. One must not, however, suppose that it has no other value than to flatter the ultra-delicate taste of that class of Japanese society which called itself *tsha-jin* (tea-man) and found in this manifestation of art merely a new element at the service of an existence entirely devoted to the enjoyments of an intellectual sensuality.

The *surimono* is the result, the characteristic manifestation of a state of things which rests on a larger basis, deserving our attention as an essential trait of the manners of the time. We refer to the fraternal relations, the constant and intimate intercourse between the popular painters (adepts of the Ukioye) and the poets, the dilettanti, and all the artists engaged in fostering the infatuation of the inhabitants of Yedo for things relating to the mind and to art, at least in a naturalistic sense.

The *surimonos* were in general the complement of amiable verses by some poet-friend, in which the text picturesquely blended with the illustration, flowers or birds, still-life, legendary stories; at other times a subtle allusion springing out of the design suited it to a special occasion, and it was circulated at the new year among the members of the *tsha-jins.* On other occasions the painters had to contribute their talent to some representation for a charitable object which stirred the whole city. Perhaps it was for the benefit of a famous singer, of an actor in vogue, a *guesha* who flattered the gilded youth of the day. Then some great *virtuoso* of the pencil (brush) was called upon to illustrate the programme and make of it a work of art to be coveted. The artist put forth all his inventive fancy, and the leaves, printed with the extremist refinement, were distributed to the members of all the associations which had presided at the organisation of the *fête.* Such was the celebrated engraving of Hokusai, now undiscoverable, composed for a solemnity of this kind, in honour of the fair Fujita Ohatshi, with the co-operation of three theatres, the corporation of the *guesha* of the quarters Yoshivara and Shinigava, a great number of citizens, and among the managers the names of the illustrious painters, Toyohiro, Toyokouni, and Boumsho. Are these not curious documents for giving an idea of the intensity of the movement which carried away the people of Yedo about 1800?

The *surimonos* are distinguished from other engravings by the introduction of all the elements which can enhance the preciousness of the print and contribute to the richness of its appearance.

Gold and silver are frequently employed, and the crimping in the texture of the paper, of which the earliest use dates much farther back, comes in with "effects" which are not to be surpassed.

The spceimen which we reproduce to-day is from the pencil of Hokkei, a pupil of Hokusai. Hokkei is the author of many of these precious prints. He flourished at the beginning of the present century. The artist's signature is found in the rectangle at the lower part of the picture. The first character reproduces the first syllable of the name of master Hokusai, Hoku, the "u" suffering elision as we have already explained. The name Hokkei should therefore, if the spelling which Mr. Burty desires to have settled were fixed upon, be written Hokukei. The second syllable "kei" precedes one of the seals of the author who, like almost all Japanese artists, used several. The subject of this *surimono* is taken from an ancient Chinese legend. We cannot exactly describe the personage who plays the flute near the red Imperial banner.

It is curious to note the dry and crushing way in which the drapery is treated. The Japanese, in their principles of design, had several ways of treating the folds of dress—the one, undulating, as the waves of the sea, the other angular, as the edges of rocks. It is this which the artist has set himself to exhibit here; and, the better to declare his intention, he has taken care to place the dancer in front of a great block of stone whose fantastic shapes are repeated in the ample Chinese costume of the figure.

The landscape, Plate BAC, is by Kitao Keisai Massayoshi, of whose flower-painting we have already given examples in Part III., Plate CB, and Part XV., Plate BH. In this page, as in those previously published, there is the same genial touch, careless of detail, raining down ink on the paper, which by mere certainty of hand gives the striking points and outline of the landscape. Massayoshi has left behind him, in a small number of volumes, a remarkable series of works. One volume is devoted to landscape, another to flowers, and a third to fish. Several others contain, in very animated outlines, all the sketches of personages of ordinary life which had formerly been attributed to Hokusai.

The page which we reproduce is treated in this large and comprehensive manner. It represents a lake from which issues a small river. Houses and pines are seen above the water, whose surface is traversed by some vessels. Overhead, the Fouji rears itself veiled in clouds. The whole, simple in composition as it is, profoundly affects the mind, when we consider the narrowness of the means which have united to produce it.

Plates AHI and AID reproduce two of the thousand anonymous studies of little corners of nature in which the observant mind of the Japanese disports itself, which he throws off without attaching importance to them, without thinking of appending a signature, in order to penetrate more deeply into the intimate life, the ways of a little animal, of a flowering plant. These two tints have sufficed to give life to the plant, which seems here treated in a manner superior to that for the little animal—indeed, the body of the rodent seems rather heavily designed.

In plate AID, the chrysanthemum and the bind-weed are painted in the most finished manner.

Plate AHG is taken from a volume of Ittsho. It depicts one of those exhibitors of marionettes who tramp among a population which passes almost all its time in the open air, at the threshold of their houses. He, with the hat of a Dutchman on his head (the Dutch and the Portuguese are the only nations which understand the Japanese), dances while shaking a screen with bells about it, and makes dance a marionette in European dress, with no more thought of mockery than we should have in seeing similar dolls in an exotic costume. The children run up delighted, the two boys imitating the showman as best they can, the little girl constrained to more gravity by the baby which she carries.

Plate AGG represents a fragment of material in figured silk of the seventeenth century. This fragment belonged to a lordly robe which must have been worn by some great personage; for its decoration is formed of the flower of *kiri*, the imperial *pawlonia*. We can indeed see the flowers stand forth in different colours from the five leaves disposed in the form of a star on a plaited ground. Our reproduction, although of modest dimensions, does nevertheless give some idea of the richness of the entire garment.

Plate AII is a reproduction taken from the work of Ninigawa, of whom we have spoken in our Part XVII. It is a bottle for *saké*, in Awata ware. Awata is a suburb of Kioto. Its furnaces owe their origin to the great potter Ninsei, who lived at Kioto towards the end of the sixteenth century. Ninsei was the creator of the pottery which is decorated by vitrifiable colours, and especially the inventor of the finely-spotted glazings which are adorned with blue and green enamel and set off by gold. The name of Ninsei is to this day used to designate this particular kind of work. Thousands of articles of much later manufacture bear even the name of the great artist engraved on the reverse—and indeed Japanese traders are not too particular about claiming illustrious authorship for many of these pieces. Genuine pieces are recognised by the perfect dexterity of hand, by the brilliance and the harmony of the enamels, and by the solidity of tone in the glazing.

The four guards of Plate BAI are in iron. The subject of the first is the flexible foliage and the flowers of the iris, which the workman has with ease inscribed on the circumference of the guard.

What delicacy of touch a Japanese ironworker can bring to the hammering and welding of iron is seen from our reproduction in silhouette. This guard is not signed. The second guard is formed of four butterflies symmetrically disposed. In the metal the wings are all worked in figures and encrusted. Author, Kinai, seventeenth century. The third, signed Oumetada, is traversed throughout the metal by a dragon whose head reappears above; each scale of the body has been chiselled, as in the two carps of the fourth guard, where the circle is formed of the two fish alone, by a masterly and yet natural curve of the two tails, one of which appears on the hither side of the guard. It is signed "Keiju, seventeenth century."

The decorative principle of Plate ADE belongs to a category of subjects dear to the Japanese—the elegant stork and clouds of a thousand shapes. One can see with what ease and speed a few strokes of the pencil (brush) have traced on the ground of cloud the differing flights of the birds.

In Plate DG geometrical figures alone are used to obtain a pattern suitable for textile fabrics.

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JAPANESE POTTERY (*concluded*), by PHILIPPE BURTY 223
DESCRIPTION OF PLATES 234

SEPARATE PLATES.

AFE. **Sourimono.** By Hokkei.

BAI. **Four Sabre Guards.**

AID. **Study of Flowers.** Bindweed and Chrysanthemum.

ADE. **Industrial Model.** Storks in the Clouds.

AGG. **Fabric in Worked Silk of the Seventeenth Century.**

BAC. **Landscape.** By Keisai Kitao Massayoshi.

AHI. **Field Mouse Nibbling at a Turnip Plant.**

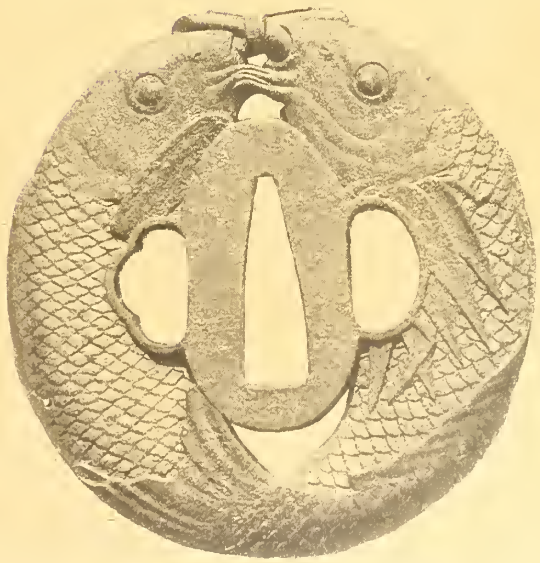
DG. **Industrial Model.** Geometrical Arrangements.

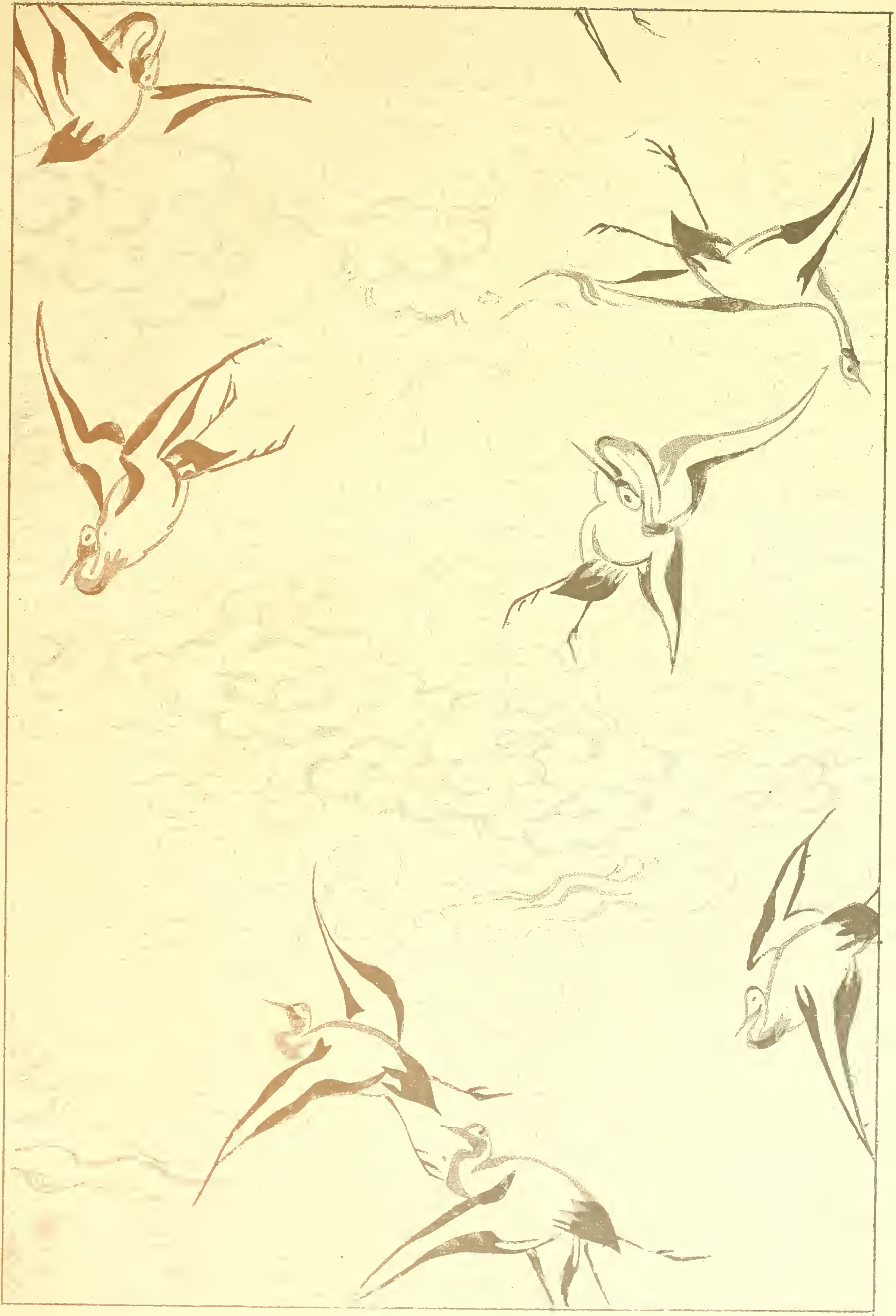
AII. **Bottle of Awata Ware.**

AHG. **Exhibitor of Marionettes.** By Ittsho.

AFE

BAI



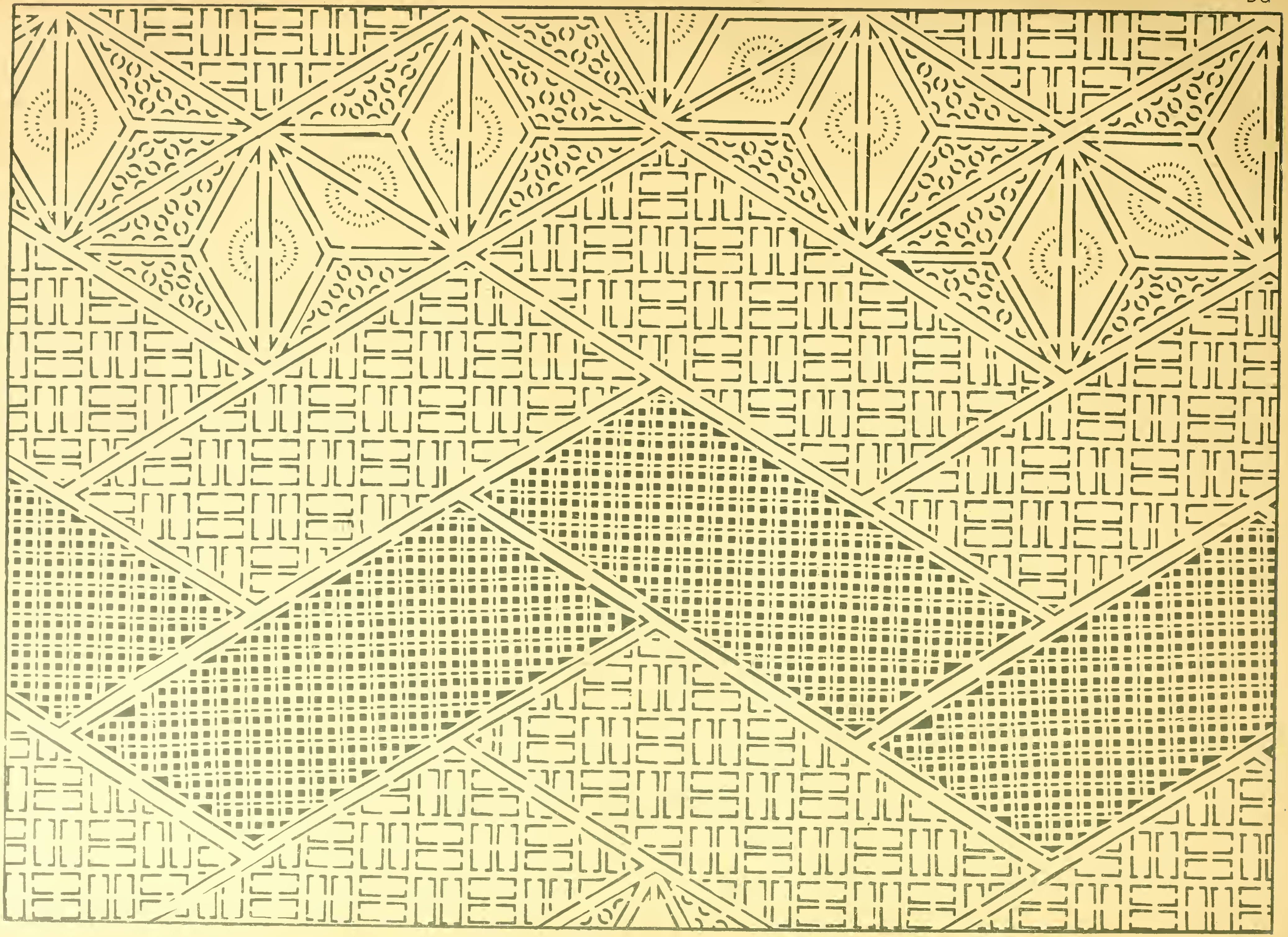


AGG

BAC

AHI

DG



Grav. impr. par GILLOT

A11

AHG