

# FIREFLIES

## I



I want to talk about Japanese fireflies, but not entomologically. If you are interested, as you ought to be, in the scientific side of the subject, you should seek enlightenment from a Japanese professor of biology, now lecturing at the Imperial University of Tōkyō. He signs himself “Mr. S. Watase” (the “S” standing for the personal name Shōzaburō); and he has been a teacher as well as a student of science in America, where a number of his lectures have been published,—lectures upon animal phosphorescence, animal electricity, the light-producing organs of insects and fishes, and other wonderful topics of biology. He can tell you all that is known concerning the morphology of fireflies, the physiology of fireflies, the photometry of fireflies, the chemistry of their luminous substance, the spectroscopic analysis of their light, and the significance of that light in terms of ether-vibration. By experiment he

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註 1. 渡瀬庄三郎氏なり。氏は米國 Johns Hopkins 大學卒業に

# 螢

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自

分は日本の螢の話を話したい。然し昆虫學的には無い。諸君が然かあるべきであるやうに、此問題の科學的方面に興味があるならば、目今東京帝國大學で講義をして居られる、生物學の一日本人教授に指導を乞はるべきである。その教授は Mr. S. Watase と自署される (S といふ字はその名前の Shōzaburō<sup>1</sup> を表はして居るのである)。教授は亞米利加で學生をして居られ、又教授もして居られた人で、その數々の講義が——動物の燐光、動物電氣、昆虫及び魚類の發光機官、その他生物學の驚く可き題目に就いての講義が——彼地で出版になつて居る。教授は螢の形態、螢の生理、螢の光度測定、その發光物質の化學、その光の分光器的分析、及びエーテル振動の語辭でのその光の意義に就いて知られて居る一切の話を語り得られる。溫度と環境との條件が尋常な場合には、日本の螢の或一種が出す光の脈搏は平均一分に二十六であると、此虫が捕へ

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て Doctor of Philosophy の學位を有せらる。

can show you that, under normal conditions of temperature and environment, the number of light-pulsations produced by one species of Japanese firefly averages twenty-six per minute; and that the rate suddenly rises to sixty-three per minute, if the insect be frightened by seizure. Also he can prove to you that another and smaller kind of firefly, when taken in the hand, will increase the number of its light-pulsings to upward of two hundred per minute. He suggests that the light may be of some protective value to the insect,—like the “warning colours” of sundry nauseous caterpillars and butterflies,—because the firefly has a very bitter taste, and birds appear to find it unpalatable. (Frogs, he has observed, do not mind the bad taste: they fill their cold bellies with fireflies till the light shines through them, much as<sup>1</sup> the light of a candle-flame will glow through a porcelain jar.) But whether of protective value or not, the tiny dynamo would seem to be used in a variety of ways,—as a phototelegraph, for example. As other insects converse by sound or by touch, the firefly utters its emotion in luminous pulsings: its speech is a language of light.....I am only giving you some hints about the character of the professor’s lectures, which are never merely technical. And for the best



註 1. much as = nearly as.

られて驚くと、俄にその率が上つて一分に六十三となる  
とを、實驗に依つて教授は諸君に示し得られる。それか  
らまた教授は、もつと小さい或る他の種類の螢は、手で  
捉へると、その光の脈搏が増して一分に二百以上にも上  
るとを證明し得られる。教授は、この光は、多くの厭はし  
い毛虫や蝶の『警戒色』同様に、此虫にとつて或る保護的  
價值のあるものかも知れぬ、螢は味はふと非常に苦いも  
ので、鳥は之を食へぬものと思つて居るらしいからと、  
斯う暗示される。(教授の言つて居られるに、蛙は味のま  
づいのに頓着はしないもので、蠟燭の炎の光が瀬戸の壺  
を透して明るく見えると殆んど同じやうに、光が腹を通  
ほして輝くまでにその冷たい腹へ螢を一パイに詰込むさ  
うだ。) 然し保護的價值があるか無いかは知らぬが、種々  
な方法で——例へば、光線電信のやうに——微少なダイ  
ナモが使用されて居るやうに思はれる。他の昆虫に音響  
で或は觸感で交話するものがあるやうに、螢はその感情  
を光の脈搏で發言する。その談話は光の言語である。  
……自分は決して純學術的なものでは無い教授のそ  
の講義の性質に就いて二三の暗示を諸君に與へやうと  
して居るだけのことである。そして此の自分の非科學的な

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2. photo=light, tele=afar, graph=write.

part of this non-scientific essay of mine,—especially that concerning the capture and the sale of fireflies in Japan,—I am indebted to some delightful lectures which he delivered last year to Japanese audience in Tōkyō.

## II

As written to-day, the Japanese name of the firefly (*hotaru*) is ideographically composed with the sign for fire, doubled, above the sign for insect. The real origin of the word is nevertheless doubtful; and various etymologies have been suggested. Some scholars think that the appellation anciently signified “the First-born of Fire”; while others believe that it was first composed with syllables meaning “star” and “drop.” The more poetical of the proposed derivations, I am sorry to say, are considered the least probable. But whatever may have been the primal meaning of the word *hotaru*, there can be no doubt as to the romantic quality of certain folk-names still given to the insect.

Two species of firefly have a wide distribution in Japan; and these have been popularly named *Genji-botaru*<sup>1</sup> and *Heike-botaru*:<sup>2</sup> that is to say, “the Minamoto-Firefly” and “the Taira-Firefly.” A legend

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註 1. 學名 *Luciola vitticolis* Kies.

隨筆の最も好い部分——殊に捕獲ならびに日本に於る螢の賣買に關した部分——は、教授が昨年東京で日本の聽衆に向つてされた面白い講演に負ふて居るのである。<sup>3</sup>

## 二

今日書かれて居る、螢(ホタル)といふ日本名は、表意文字學の方から見ると、虫といふ記號の上へ火といふ記號を二つ並べた字で出来て居る。しかしこの語の眞の起源は不明である。そして種々な語原説明がこれまで提出されて居る。古代に在つては此稱呼は『火の初兒』といふ意味であつたと考へて居る學者がある。一方ではまた、元『星』といふ意味の音と『垂れる』といふ意味の音と二つ合して出来たものだと信じて居る學者がある。遺憾ながら斯く提議されて居る二つの由來のうち、より詩的な方が一番尤もらしく無いものと思惟されて居る。だがホタルといふ語の最初の意味は何であつたにせよ、今猶ほ此虫に與へられて居る俗民間での三四の名前の性質にロマンティックなもの存して居るとに就いては何の疑も有り得ない。

廣く日本に分布して居る螢が二種ある。これは通俗一般にゲンジボタル及びヘイケボタル、即ち『源螢』及び『平

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2. 學名 *Luciola parva* Kies.

3. 明治三十五年六月發行の學藝叢談螢の話となつて世に現はれし講演を指されしなり。

avers<sup>1</sup> that these fireflies are the ghosts of the old Minamoto and Taira warriors; that, even in their insect shapes, they remember the awful clan<sup>2</sup>-struggle of the twelfth century; and that once every year, on the night of the twentieth day of the fourth month, they fight a great battle on the Uji River. Therefore, on that night all caged fireflies should be set free, in order that they may be able to take part in<sup>3</sup> the contest.

The *Genji-botaru* is the largest of Japanese fireflies,—the largest species, at least, in Japan proper,<sup>4</sup> not including the Loochoo Islands. It is found in almost every part of the country from Kyūshū to Ōshū. The *Heike-botaru* ranges further north, being especially common in Yezo; but it is found also in the central and southern provinces. It is smaller than the Genji, and emits a feebler light. The fireflies commonly sold by insect-dealers in Tōkyō, Ōsaka, Kyōto, and other cities, are of the larger species. Japanese observers have described the light of both insects as “tea-coloured” (*cha-iro*),—the tint of the ordinary Japanese infusion, when the leaf is of good quality, being a clear greenish yellow. But the light of a fine Genji-firefly is so brilliant that

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1. aver = affirm; declare.  
2. clan = family; tribe.

螢』と呼ばれ來つて居る。此二種の螢は古の源氏並びに平家の武士の幽靈である、その虫の姿形で居ても、かの十二世紀の恐ろしい氏族戦争を覚えて居て、毎年一度、四月二十日の晩、宇治川で大戦争をする、斯う或る傳説は斷言する。だからその晩にはその戦争に加はり得られるやうに、籠の螢は放してやらねばならぬのである。

源氏螢は日本の螢の中で一番大きなもの——琉球諸島を含めないで、少くとも日本々土での一番大きな種(しゆ)である。九州よりして奥州に至る日本の殆んど到る處に居る。平家螢はもつと北に互つて居て、殊に蝦夷に普通であるが、中部並びに南部諸國にも居る。源氏螢より小さくて、あれよりも弱い光を放つ。東京、大阪、京都その他の都會で虫商人が普通賣る螢は大きい方の種類である。日本の觀察者は、此兩方とも光は『茶色』(チャイロ)だと記載して居る。茶の葉の性質の善い場合には、普通日本で茶を湯に滲ました色は、澄んだ緑がかつた黄色である。然し立派な源氏螢の光は非常に光輝のあるもので、餘程眼の鋭い人で無ければ、その緑色は見分けられぬ。一

3. to take part in=to participate in.

4. rightly so named さいふ意の後置形容詞。

only a keen eye can detect the greenish colour: at first sight the flash appears yellow as the flame of a wood-fire, and its vivid brightness has not been overpraised in the following *hokku* :—

Kagaribi mo  
Hotaru no hikaru  
Genji kana!

“ Whether it be a glimmering of festal-fires [far away], or a glimmering of fireflies, [one can hardly tell]—ah, it is the Genji!”

Although the appellations *Genji-botaru* and *Heike-botaru* are still in general use, both insects are known by other folk-names. In different provinces the Genji is called *Ō-botaru*, or “Great Firefly”; *Ushi-botaru*, or “Ox-Firefly”; *Kuma-botaru*, or “Bear-Firefly”; and *Uji-botaru*, or “Firefly of Uji,—not to mention such picturesque appellations as *Komusō-botaru* and *Yamabuki-botaru*, which could not be appreciated by the average Western reader. The *Heike-botaru* is also called *Hime-botaru*, or “Princess-Firefly”; *Nennei-botaru*, or “Baby-Firefly”; and *Yūrei-botaru*, or “Ghost-Firefly.” But these are only examples chosen at random: in almost every part of Japan there is a special folk-name for the insect.

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註 1. 作者立圃。此句は「光る源氏」に掛けしものなり。篝火も光る源氏、螢も源氏螢、さいひしまでなり。

寸見ると、その閃きは木を燃やした火の炎のやうに黄色に見える。次記のホツクはその強い光を讚め過ぎては居ない。——

## 篝火も

### 螢もひかる

源氏かな<sup>1</sup>

源氏螢及び平家螢といふ名稱は今なほ一般に使用されては居るが、兩方とも他の俗名で知られて居る。方々異つた國々で、源氏はオホボタル即ち『大螢』<sup>2</sup>、ウシボタル即ち『牛螢』、クマボタル即ち『熊螢』、それからウジボタル即ち『宇治螢』と呼ばれて居る。これは普通の西洋人には面白味が分るまいと思ふが、コムソウボタル並びにヤマブキボタルといふやうな繪のやうな名稱は言ふまでも無い。平家螢はまたヒメボタル即ち『姫螢』、ネンネボタル即ち『ねんね螢』、それからユウレイボタル即ち『幽靈螢』と呼ばれて居る。だが如上はいゝ加減に選んだ見本に過ぎぬ。殆んど日本到る處に、この虫の特別な俗の名がある。

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2. 専門的にいへば大螢は源氏螢に非ず。學名 *Lucidina biplagiata* Motsch. なり。

### III

There are many places in Japan which are famous for fireflies,—places which people visit in summer merely to enjoy the sight of the fireflies. Anciently the most celebrated of all such places was a little valley near Ishiyama, by the lake of Ōmi. It is still called Hotaru-Dani, or the Valley of Fireflies. Before the Period of Genroku (1688-1703), the swarming of the fireflies in this valley, during the sultry<sup>1</sup> season, was accounted one of the natural marvels<sup>2</sup> of the country. The fireflies of the Hotaru-Dani are still celebrated for their size; but that wonderful swarming of them, which old writers described, is no longer to be seen there. At present the most famous place for fireflies is in the neighbourhood of Uji, in Yamashiro. Uji, a pretty little town in the centre of the celebrated tea-district, is situated on the Ujigawa, and is scarcely less famed for its fireflies than for its teas. Every summer special trains run from Kyōto and Ōsaka to Uji, bringing thousands of visitors to see the fireflies. But it is on the river, at a point several miles from the town, that the great spectacle is to be witnessed,—the *Hotaru-Kassen*, or Firefly Battle. The stream there

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註 1. sultry—oppressively hot.

三

螢で有名な處——螢を眺めて楽しむだけに夏時人が行く處——が日本に多い。往古はそんな場所のうち一番有名だつたのは、近江の湖水近くの、石山といふ小さい谷であつた。今でもホタルダ＝即ち螢谷と呼ばれて居る。元祿年間(一六八八——一七〇三)前には、蒸暑の時候のあひだ、此谷での螢の群集は、日本の自然的奇蹟の一つに數へられて居たものである。螢谷の螢は今でも大きいので有名である。然し、古の作者が記述して居る、その不思議な群集は最早そこで見るとは出来ぬ。現今螢で一番名高い處は山城の宇治附近である。宇治は、あの有名な茶處の中心にある小綺麗な町で、宇治川に臨んで居る。そしてその茶に名高いのに劣らずその螢で名高い。毎夏京都及び大阪から宇治へ特別汽車が發せられて、幾千といふ螢の見物人を運ぶ。だがその非常な美觀を——ホタルカツセン即ち螢合戦を——目撃し得るのは、町から數哩距つた處の、川の上である。川の流は其の邊は樹木に蔽はれた小山の間をうねりくねつて居る。そして幾千萬

winds between hills covered with vegetation;<sup>1</sup> and myriads of fireflies dart from either bank,<sup>2</sup> to meet and cling above the water. At moments they so swarm together as to form what appears to the eye like a luminous cloud, or like a great ball of sparks. The cloud soon scatters, or the ball drops and breaks upon the surface of the current, and the fallen fireflies drift glittering away; but another swarm quickly collects in the same locality. People wait all night in boats upon the river to watch the phenomenon. After the *Hotaru-Kassen* is done, the Ujikawa, covered with the still sparkling bodies of the drifting insects, is said to appear like the Milky Way, or, as the Japanese more poetically call it, the River of Heaven. Perhaps it was after witnessing such a spectacle that the great female poet, Chiyo of Kaga, composed these verses:—

Kawa bakari

Yami wa nagarete—

Hotaru kana!

—Which may be thus freely rendered:—

*“Is it the river only?—or is the darkness itself drifting?  
.....Oh, the fireflies!.....”*

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**註** 1. vegetation—plants collectively.  
2. from either bank—from both banks.

の螢が、兩岸から矢の如く飛び出して、水上で出會つてくつつき合ふ。時には非常に群れ集つて、見る眼には、光つた雲か、火花の大きな球かと思ふほどのものに成る。その雲は直ぐに散る、或はその球は落ちて流の表面で碎ける。そしてその落ちた螢は光りながら流れ去る。だが直ぐとまた別な群集が同じ場所で集まる。見物人は終夜河上に舟を浮べて此の稀有の光景を眺める。ホタルカツセンが濟むと、漂ひ流れる螢の猶ほ煌々(きらきら)と光つて居る軀(むくろ)に満面蔽はれて居る宇治川は、漢河のやうな、或は、日本人がもつと詩的に言うて居る天の川のやうな觀を呈するといふことである。有名なる女詩人加賀の千代が

川ばかり

暗は流れて

螢かな<sup>3</sup>

といふ句を作つたのは、多分そんな光景を見てからのことであらう。

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3. この句の意味を先生は正しく理解し居られざりしやうなり。この句の意味は It is in the river alone that darkness is drifting ;—[so luminous is all the other space by] the fireflies! なり。

4. この下三行日本文に復譯しては無味故省略。

#### IV

Many persons in Japan earn their living during the summer months by catching and selling fireflies : indeed, the extent of this business entitles it to be regarded as a special industry. The chief centre of this industry is the region about Ishiyama, in Gōshū, by the Lake of Ōmi,—a number of houses there supplying fireflies to many parts of the country, and especially to the great cities of Ōsaka and Kyōto. From sixty to seventy firefly-catchers are employed by each of the principal houses during the busy season. Some training is required for the occupation. A tyro<sup>1</sup> might find it no easy matter to catch a hundred fireflies in a single night ; but an expert<sup>2</sup> has been known to catch three thousand. The methods of capture, although of the simplest possible kind, are very interesting to see.

Immediately after sunset, the firefly-hunter goes forth, with a long bamboo pole upon his shoulder, and a long bag of brown mosquito-netting wound, like a girdle, about his waist. When he reaches a wooded place frequented by fireflies,—usually some spot where willows are planted, on the bank of a river or lake,—he halts and watches the trees. As

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註 1. tyro. tiro ことも綴る。初學者、未熟もの。

四

夏の間螢を捕りそれを賣つて生計を 營む人が日本には多い。この商賣は範圍が 廣いから一種特別な生業だと當然思はしめる程である。此の生業の主もな中心點は江州の、近江の湖畔の、石山附近で、——そこの幾軒かの家が、日本の方々へ、殊に大阪と京都との大都市へ螢を供給する。その重もな家では 忙しい折は一軒で六十人から七十人の螢捕を備用する。此の職業には 訓練が要る。未熟者は一と晩のうちに百匹捕へるのは 容易ならぬ事と思ふかも知れぬが、熟練家は三千匹は捕るといふ。捕獲の法は單純極まつたものだが、見ては甚だ興味あるものである。

日が暮れると直ぐ、螢捕は、長い竹竿を肩にかつぎ、鳶色の蚊帳布の長い袋を、帶のやうに、腰のあたりに纏うて、出かける。螢が能く往來する木立のところ——普通は川か湖水かの土手の、柳の木の植はつてるところ——へ行き着くと、立ちどまつてその樹を見守つて居る。こ

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2. expert—experienced, skilful, or practised person.

soon as the trees begin to twinkle satisfactorily, he gets his net ready, approaches the most luminous tree, and with his long pole strikes the branches. The fireflies, dislodged by the shock, do not immediately take flight, as more active insects would do under like circumstances, but drop helplessly to the ground, beetle-wise, where their light—always more brilliant in moments of fear or pain—renders them conspicuous.<sup>1</sup> If suffered to remain upon the ground for a few moments, they will fly away. But the catcher, picking them up with astonishing quickness, using both hands at once, deftly<sup>2</sup> tosses them *into his mouth*—because he cannot lose time required to put them, one by one, into the bag. Only when his mouth can hold no more, does he drop the fireflies, unharmed, into the netting.

Thus the firefly-catcher works until about two o'clock in the morning,—the old Japanese hour of ghosts,—at which time the insects begin to leave the trees and seek the dewy soil. There they are said to bury their tails, so as to remain viewless. But now the hunter changes his tactics. Taking a bamboo broom he brushes the surface of the turf, lightly and quickly. Whenever touched or alarmed by the broom, the fireflies display their lanterns, and are immediate-

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註 1. Conspicuous=open to the view.

れは好いと思ふ程その樹に光がちらつき出すと、その袋を用意して置いて、一番能く光る木へ近寄つて行つて、その長い竿で枝を打つ。その打撃で打拂はれた螢は、もつと活潑な虫が同じ事情の下でするやうに、直ぐに飛ぶとはせで、甲虫同様、意氣地無くも地面へ落ちる。そしてその光が——恐ろしいと思ひ 苦しいと感じた瞬間はいつも常よりか鮮やかなその光が——虫を目だたさす。四五秒も地面にじつと居らして置けば 飛び去る。然し捕獲者は、驚くばかりに迅速に、一度に両手を使用して、拾ひ上げて、手際能く口の中へ 投げ込む——一つ一つ袋へ入れるに要(かゝ)る時間を 費すことが出来ぬからである。口にもう入らぬやうになつて からやつと、何の怪我も螢に與へずに、袋の中へ吐き落とす。

斯くして螢捕は朝の二時頃——日本では 古から幽霊が出るとして居る時刻——まで働く。その時刻になると螢は樹木を去つて露に濡つた地面をさがす。人目に見えぬやうに、地面へその尻を埋めるといふとだ。だがさうすると捕獲者は兵畧を變更する。竹の箒で、軽くそして速く、芝生の表面を掃く。箒が觸れて驚くと、螢はいつもその提燈を出して見せる。そして早速摘み取られて袋へ

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2. deftly = aptly ; dexterously.

ly nipped and bagged. A little before dawn, the hunters return to town.

At the firefly-shops the captured insects are sorted as soon as possible, according to the brilliancy of their light,—the more luminous being the higher-priced. Then they are put into gauze-covered boxes or cages, with a certain quantity of moistened grass in each cage. From one hundred to two hundred fireflies are placed in a single cage, according to grade. To these cages are attached small wooden tablets inscribed with the names of customers,—such as hotel proprietors, restaurant-keepers, wholesale and retail insect-merchants, and private persons who have ordered large quantities of fireflies for some particular festivity. The boxes are despatched to their destinations by nimble<sup>1</sup> messengers,—for goods of this class cannot be safely intrusted to express<sup>2</sup> companies.

Great numbers of fireflies are ordered for display at evening parties in the summer season. A large Japanese guest-room usually overlooks a garden; and during a banquet or other evening entertainment, given in the sultry season, it is customary to set fireflies at liberty in the garden after sunset, that the visitors may enjoy the sight of the sparkling.

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註 1. nimble=agile, swift.

入れられる。夜明少し前に捕獲者は町へ歸る。

螢商店では、捕つた螢を出来るだけ早く——光の強い程價が高いから——その光の強弱に依つて擇(よ)り分ける。それから紗張の箱か籠かへ、その一つ一つに濡らした草を少し入れて、入れる。一つの籠へ入れる螢は、等級に應じて、百から二百だ。此の籠へ、購客の名——旅館の持主、料理屋の主人、卸し賣并びに小賣の螢商人、それから特殊の饗宴用に多量の螢を注文する私人、などの名——を書いた小さな木札を附ける。その箱をば——此種の荷物は通運會社へ依頼しては不安心だから——敏速な使者でそれぞれ宛名先へ急送する。

夏期、夜の宴會に、人に見せる爲めに、澤山の螢を注文する。日本の客間の大きなのは通例庭園を見晴らして居る。そして蒸暑い時候の時に行ふ宴會とか他の夜の饗應(もてなし)だとかの間、お客がそのきらきら光るのを見て面白がるやうにと、日没後庭園へ螢を放すのが慣習になつて居る。料理屋の主人が澤山に買求める。大阪の有名な道頓堀には、蚊帳布で取巻いた廣い場所に幾百萬と

Restaurant-keepers purchase largely.<sup>1</sup> In the famous Dōtombori of Ōsaka, there is a house where myriads of fireflies are kept in a large space enclosed by mosquito-netting; and customers of this house are permitted to enter the enclosure and capture a certain number of fireflies to take home with them.

The wholesale price of living fireflies ranges from three sen per hundred up to thirteen sen per hundred, according to season and quality. Retail dealers sell them in cages; and in Tōkyō the price of a cage of fireflies ranges from three sen up to several dollars. The cheapest kind of cage, containing only three or four fireflies, is scarcely more than two inches square; but the costly cages—veritable marvels of bamboo-work, beautifully decorated—are as large as cages for song-birds. Firefly cages of charming or fantastic shapes—model houses, junks, temple-lanterns, etc.—can be bought at prices ranging from thirty sen up to one dollar.

Dead or alive, fireflies are worth money. They are delicate insects, and they live but a short time in confinement. Great numbers die in the insect-shops; and one celebrated insect-house is said to dispose every season of no less than five *shō*—that is to say, about one peck<sup>2</sup>—of dead fireflies, which are sold to

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大 1. largely—amply, abundantly.

いふ螢を飼うて居る家が一軒ある。其處の購客はその圍の中へ入つて、一定の數だけ螢を捕つて持ち歸つてもいとにされて居る。

生きて居る螢の卸し値は、季節と品質に應じて、百について三錢から十三錢の間を往來する。小賣商人は籠に入れて賣る。東京では螢籠一つの値が三錢から幾圓まである。一番廉い籠で、螢が三匹か四匹しか入つて居ないのは、二吋四方を出ぬ位の大きさだが、高價な籠——竹細工の實に<sup>3</sup>不思議な品物で、美しい飾のあるの——は啼く鳥を飼ふほどの大きさである。形の風流な或は風變りな螢籠——家屋の模型だとか、帆船<sup>4</sup>だとか、お寺の提燈とかいふ——は三十錢乃至一弗の値で買へる。

死んで居ても、生きて居ても、螢は金になる。螢は一體弱い虫で、閉ぢ籠めて置くと暫時しか生きて居らぬ。虫店で死ぬる數は大したものだ。或る有名な虫屋は一と季節に五升を下らぬ——即ち一ペツク許りの——螢を始末

2. peck. 英量、16 pint にて我が五升四勺餘。

3. veritable = real, actual, genuine.

4. 底の平らな、東洋に見る、帆船を云ふ。

manufacturing establishments in Ōsaka. Formerly fireflies were used much more than at present in the manufacture of poultices and pills, and in the preparation of drugs peculiar to the practice of Chinese medicine. Even to-day some curious extracts are obtained from them; and one of these, called *Hotaru-no-abura*, or Firefly-grease, is still used by woodworkers for the purpose of imparting rigidity to objects made of bent bamboo.

A very curious chapter on firefly-medicine might be written by somebody learned in the old-fashioned literature. The queerest part of the subject is Chinese, and belongs much more to demonology than to therapeutics. Firefly-ointments used to be made which had power, it was alleged, to preserve a house from the attacks of robbers, to counteract the effect of any poison, and to drive away “the hundred devils.” And pills were made with firefly-substance which were believed to confer invulnerability;—one kind of such pills being called *Kanshōgan*, or “Commander-in-Chief Pills”; and another, *Buigan*, or “Military Power Pills.”

## V

Firefly-catching, as a business, is comparatively

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- 註 1. Branch of medicine concerned with treatment of disease and action of remedial agents in disease or health.

するといふ話である。死んだ螢は大阪の製造會社へ賣るのである。以前は糊薬や丸薬の製造に、それから又漢醫の使用に特有な薬品の調製に、現今よりももつと餘計に螢を使用したものだ。今日でも螢から或る妙な越幾斯を取る。その一種の、ホタルノアブラ、即ち螢脂といふのは、竹を曲げて造つた品物を硬ばらせる目的に、<sup>2</sup> 指物屋が今でも使用する。

古風な文學を學修して居る人が書いたなら螢薬に就いて頗る奇妙な一章が出来るかも知れぬ。此題目での最も奇異な部分は支那のもので、醫治よりも寧ろ鬼神學に屬して居る。家へ盜賊が入らぬやうにする、或はどんな毒でもそれを消す、或は『百鬼』を追拂ふ力があると主張されて居る軟膏を昔は螢で造つた。それから、切られても傷を受けない効能があると信じられて居た丸薬を螢から取つた物質で昔は造つた。そんな丸薬のうち一種に、カンシャウグワン即ち『監將丸』といふがあり、また、ブキグワン即ち『威武丸』といふがある。

## 五

螢捕は、職業として、比較的近代のものである。然し

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2. これは先生の思違なり。竹を曲げるに螢を入れた水で竹を煮ると自由に矯められるといふ。

modern ; but firefly-hunting, as a diversion,<sup>1</sup> is a very old custom. Anciently it was an aristocratic amusement ; and great nobles used to give firefly-hunting parties,—*hotaru-gari*. In this busy era of Meiji the *hotaru-gari* is rather an amusement for children than for grown-up folks ; but the latter occasionally find time to join in the sport. All over Japan, the children have their firefly-hunts every summer ;—moonless nights being usually chosen for such expeditions. Girls follow the chase with paper-fans ; boys, with long light poles, to the ends of which wisps<sup>2</sup> of fresh bamboo-grass are tied. When struck down by a fan or a wisp, the insects are easily secured, as they are slow to take wing after having once been checked<sup>3</sup> in actual flight. While hunting, the children sing little songs, supposed to attract the shining prey. These songs differ according to locality ; and the number of them is wonderful. But there are very few possessing that sort of interest which justifies quotation. Two examples will probably suffice :—

(*Province of Chōshū.*)

Hotaru, koi ! koi !

Koi-tomose !

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註 1. diverting of attention. だから pleasant distraction. 即ち recreation, pastime.

螢狩は、娯樂として、餘程古くからの習慣である。往古は是は貴族的な慰みであつた。大貴族は螢を狩る會合を——ホタルガリを——したものだ。此の多忙な明治の世にあつては、ホタルガリは大人の慰では無くて子供の慰である。然し大人も時に餘暇を見出してその遊戯に加はる。日本中何處でも夏毎に子供は螢狩をする。そんな遠征には月の無い夜を選ぶ。女の子は紙製の團扇を携へてその狩に隨行する。男の子は、尖端(さき)に新らしい笹把を結びつけた長い軽い竿を持つて行く。螢は、團扇や笹把で打たれると、實地飛んでるのを一度邪魔されてからは翅(はね)を立てるのが遅いから、容易に捉へられる。狩りながら、この光る獲物の心を惹くと想像されて居る短い歌を子供は歌ふ。此歌は地方に依つて異ふ。その數は驚く許りに多い。が此處へ引用して然るべき程の興味のあるものは甚だ少い。例を二つだけ出せば充分であらう。

(長門の國)

ホウタル、來い! 來い!

コイ點もせ!

- 
2. small bundle.
  3. suddenly arrest motion of.

Nippon ichi no  
Jōsan ga,  
Chōchin tomoshite,  
Koi to ina !

*Come, firefly, come ! Come with your light burning ! The  
nicest girl in Japan wants to know if you will not light your  
lantern and come !*

*(Dialect of Shimonoseki.)*

Hōchin, Koi !  
Hōchin, Koi !  
Seki no machi no bon-san ga,  
Chōchin tomoshite,  
Koi !  
Koi !

*Firefly, come ! firefly, come ! All the boys of Seki [want  
you to come] with your lantern lighted ! Come ! come !*

Of course, in order to hunt fireflies successfully, it is necessary to know something about their habits ; and on this subject Japanese children are probably better informed<sup>1</sup> than a majority of my readers, for whom the following notes may possess a novel interest :—

Fireflies frequent<sup>2</sup> the neighbourhood of water,



註 1. inform—acquaint with ; apprise.

日本一の

嬢さんが

提燈ともして、

來いといな！

(下の關の方言)

ホーチン來い！

ホーチン來い！

關の町の坊んさんが

提燈ともして

來い！

來い！

固よりのと、首尾能く螢を狩る爲めには、螢の習慣を幾分知つて居る要がある。そして此題目に就いては日本の子供は多分我が讀者の大多數よりも餘計に知つて居る。次記の記事は我が讀者に新らしい興味を有つて居るかも知れぬ。

螢は水の附近を往來して、その上を飛び廻るを好む。

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2. frequent—go often or habitually to.

and like to circle above it ; but some kinds are repelled<sup>1</sup> by impure or stagnant water, and are only to be found in the vicinity of clear streams or lakes. The Genji-firefly shuns swamps, ditches, or foul canals ; while the Heike-firefly seems to be satisfied with any water. All fireflies seek by preference grassy banks shaded by trees ; but they dislike certain trees and are attracted by others. They avoid pine trees, for instance ; and they will not light upon rose-bushes. But upon willow trees—especially weeping willows—they gather in great swarms. Occasionally, on a summer night, you may see a drooping willow so covered and illuminated with fireflies that all its branches appear “to be budding fire.” During a bright moonlight night fireflies keep as much as possible in shadow ; but when pursued they fly at once into the moonshine, where their shimmering<sup>2</sup> is less easily perceived. Lamplight, or any strong artificial light, drives them away ; but small bright lights attract them. They can be lured, for example, by the sparkling of a small piece of lighted charcoal, or by the glow of a little Japanese pipe, kindled in the dark. But the lamping of a single lively firefly, confined in a bottle, or cup, of clear glass, is the best of all lures.

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註 1. repelled by 忌 distasteful to なり、attracted の反對なり。

然し或種のものは不潔な水或は停滯した水をいやがつて綺麗な流川や湖水の附近だけに居る。源氏螢は沼や濠や不潔な堀割を避ける。が平家螢はどんな水にも満足して居るやうである。總じて螢は木蔭の草の生えて居る土手を好んで求めるが、或る木は嫌つて、或る木には惹きつけられる。例へば松の木は避けるし、薔薇へは下りぬ。然し柳の木——殊に枝垂れ柳——には群を爲して集る。時たま、夏の夜、枝垂れ柳が螢で一パイに蔽はれて光つて、その枝が『火の芽を吹いて居る』やうに見えるのを見るとあらう。煌々たる月の夜には、螢は出来るだけ影へ身を置いて居る。が追はれるといふと、自分の微かな光が前よりも容易に見つからないやうな、月光の中へすぐと飛び出る。ランプの光や、人工の強い光はどんな光でも、螢はそれを見ると逃げる。が小さな光には引き寄せられる。例へば、炭火の小さな片の光や、暗がりて點(つ)ける小さな煙管火にはおびき寄せられる。おびき寄せの一番好いのは綺麗なガラスの罎かコップの中へ、生き生きした螢をたつた一匹入れて置いて光らせた光である。

As a rule the children hunt only in parties, for obvious reasons. In former years it would have been deemed foolhardy<sup>1</sup> to go alone in pursuit of fireflies, because there existed certain uncanny<sup>2</sup> beliefs concerning them. And in some of the country districts these beliefs still prevail. What appear to be fireflies may be malevolent spirits, or goblinfires, or fox-lights, kindled to delude the wayfarer. Even real fireflies are not always to be trusted;—the weirdness of their kinships might be inferred from their love of willow trees. Other trees have their particular spirits, good or evil, hamadryads or goblins; but the willow is particularly the tree of the dead—the favourite of human ghosts. Any firefly may be a ghost—who can tell? Besides, there is an old belief that the soul of a person still alive may sometimes assume the shape of a firefly. And here is a little story that was told me in Izumo:—

One cold winter's night a young shizoku of Matsue, while on his way home from a wedding-party, was surprised to perceive a firefly-light hovering above the canal in front of his dwelling. Wondering that such an insect should be flying abroad in the season of snow, he stopped to look at it; and the

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註 1. foolhardy—foolishly venturesome.  
2. uncanny—weird; mysterious.

子供は定(きま)つて、明白な理由の爲め仲間を組んでなければ螢狩はせぬ。螢に關して氣味の悪るい或る信仰があつたが爲め、古昔は單身で螢狩をするのは向ふ見ずだと思はれたことである。そして日本の或地方ではその信仰が今なほ勢力を有つて居る。螢火と見えるものが、道行く人を欺く爲めに點もして居る、悪魔か、怪物の火か或は狐火かも知れぬ。本當の螢火でもいつも當てになるものとは限らぬ。螢の一族は氣味悪るいものだといふことは柳の木を好くのも察することが出来る。柳ならぬ他の木には、その特別な、善いのもあり悪るいのもあるが、魂があり、木神(きがみ)<sup>3</sup>が住んで居り、怪物が附いて居るが、柳は特に死人の木であり——人間の幽靈が好く木である。どんな螢でもそれは或は幽靈かも知れぬ。それは誰にも分らぬことだ。その上にまた、まだ生きて居る人間の魂が時に螢の姿になるといふ古るくからの信仰がある。下に記すのは自分が出雲で聞いた短い譚である。

或る寒い冬の夜、松江の若い士族が、或る婚禮の宴會から歸宅の途中、自分の住宅の前の堀割の上を螢が一匹飛んで居るのを見て驚いた。雪の季節に外(そと)を飛んで居るのはと怪みながら立停つてそれを眺めた。するとその光が突然その士族の方へスイと飛んで來た。杖でそれ

3. Hamadryad. 木に憑いて居て、木と共に生き死にするを信ぜられて居る nymph なり。

light suddenly shot toward him. He struck at it with a stick ; but it darted away, and flew into the garden of a residence adjoining his own.

Next morning he made a visit to that house, intending to relate the adventure<sup>1</sup> to his neighbours and friends. But before he found a chance to speak of it, the eldest daughter of the family, happening to enter the guest-room without knowing of the young man's visit, uttered a cry of surprise, and exclaimed, " Oh ! how you startled<sup>2</sup> me ! No one told me that you had called ; and just as I came in I was thinking about you. Last night I had so strange a dream ! I was flying in my dream,—flying above the canal in front of our house. It seemed very pleasant to fly over the water ; and while I was flying there I saw you coming along the bank. Then I went to you to tell you that I had learned how to fly ; but you struck at me, and frightened me so that I still feel afraid when I think of it....." After hearing this, the visitor thought it best not to relate his own experience for the time being, lest the coincidence should alarm<sup>3</sup> the girl, to whom he was betrothed.

## VI

Fireflies have been celebrated in Japanese poetry

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註 1. 冒険に非ず、a remarkable experience ; a noteworthy occurrence なり。

を見かけて殴つた。がその螢はついと外れて、自分の家の隣の屋敷の庭へ飛んで行つた。

翌日の朝、隣人朋友へ夜前の不思議な出来事を物語らふと思つて、その隣家を訪問した。處がまだそのとを口にする折を見つけないうちに、其家の長女が、此青年が訪ねて来て居るとを知らずに偶ま客間へ入つて来て、驚いて叫んで斯う言つた。『まあ！吃驚しました！あなたがお出になつてゐるつて誰も言ひませんでしたもの。それに此部屋へ入る時に丁度あなたのことを考へてゐたんですもの。昨夜私は實に妙な夢を見ましたよ！私は夢に飛び歩いてゐるのです——私の家の前の堀割の上を。水の上を飛びあるくのは大變氣持が好いやうで御座いました。すると、其處を飛んで居るうちに、あなたが土手沿ひに歩いておいでになるのが見えました。そこで私はあなたの方へ飛んで行つて、私は飛ぶことを覺えましたよと申し上げやうとしました。處があなたが私をおぶちになつたものですから、怖ろしくて怖ろしくて、今でもそのとを考へると恐い氣がします。……』。之を聽いてから此客は此の暗合を話せば自分が許嫁になつて居る此娘の心を驚かすであらうと思つて、當分自分が見た事の話はせぬがよからうと思つた。

## 六

螢は古昔から日本の詩歌に賞讃されて居る。初期の古

- 
2. cause to start with surprise ; give shock to.
  3. disturb ; agitate, excite, excite with fear.

from ancient time; and frequent mention of them is made in early classical prose. One of the fifty-four chapters of the famous novel, *Genji-Monogatari*, for example,—written either toward the close of the tenth century or at the beginning of the eleventh,—is entitled, “Fireflies”; and the author relates how a certain noble person was enabled to obtain one glimpse of a lady’s face in the dark by the device of catching and suddenly liberating a number of fireflies. The first literary interest in fireflies may have been stimulated, if not aroused, by the study of Chinese poetry. Even to-day every Japanese child knows a little song about the famous Chinese scholar who, in the time of his struggles with poverty, studied by the light of a paper bag filled with fireflies. But, whatever the original source of their inspiration, Japanese poets have been making verses about fireflies during more than a thousand years. Compositions on the subject can be found in every form of Japanese poetry; but the greater number of firefly poems are in *hokku*,—the briefest of all measures, consisting of only seventeen syllables. Modern love-poems relating to the firefly are legion;

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註 1. 源氏の君が、玉鬘の宮瑠璃を兵部卿に一瞥せしめる工ら  
みを書いた處なり。『御几帳のかたびらを、ひさへうちか  
け給ふに、あはせて、ざさひかるもの、しそくをさし出た  
るかさあきれたり、ほたるをうすきかたに、此夕つかたい  
さおほくつゝみおきて、ひかりをつゝみかくし給へりける

典型的な散文にも屢々その記事が載つて居る。例を挙げると、十世紀の末近くか、十一世紀の初に書かれた、あの有名な小説、源氏物語五十四帖の一つは『螢』といふ題である。それには螢を澤山に捕らへてそれを急に放すといふ策略を用ひて或る貴族が暗がりて或る貴女の顔を一瞥し得たといふ話を作者が書いて居る。<sup>1</sup> 螢に關しての最初の文學趣味は、支那の詩を研究して起つたのでは無いにしてもその爲めに促がされたものかも知れぬ。今日でも、貧乏の爲めに苦しんで居る際、螢を一パイに入れた紙袋の明りで勉強したといふ、あの有名な支那の學者<sup>2</sup> を歌つた短い歌<sup>3</sup>を知らぬ日本の兒童は一人も無い。が、螢が趣味を鼓吹したその本源は何であらうと、日本の詩人はこれまで一千年以上の間螢の句を作り來つて居る。此題での作物は日本の詩歌のあらゆる形式に見出し得ることであるが、螢の詩の大多數は ホツク——あらゆる詩形のうちの一番短いもの——で僅か十七の綴音から成つて居るもの——である。螢に關した近代の戀歌は無數にある。然し都々逸といふ二十六綴音の通俗な形式で書いたもの

を、さりげなくさかくひきつくらふやうにて、にはかにかくげちえんにひかれるに、あさましくて、あふぎをさしかくしたまへる、かたはらめいさをかしげなり』とあり。

2. 車胤。晉書に見ゆ。

3. 讀者は固より知り給ふ『螢の光』の唱歌を指されしなり。

but the majority of these, written in the popular twenty-six-syllable form called *dodoitsu*, appear to consist of little more than variants of one old classic fancy, comparing the silent burning of the insect's light to the consuming passion that is never uttered.

Perhaps my readers will be interested by the following selection of firefly poems. Some of the compositions are many centuries old :—

### Catching Fireflies

Mayoi go no

Naku-naku tsukamu

Hotaru kana !

*Ah ! the lost child ! Though crying and crying, still he catches fireflies !*

Kuraki yori

Kuraki hito yobu

Hotaru kana !

*Out of the blackness black people call [to each other] : [they are hunting] fireflies !*

Iu koto no

Kikoete ya, takaku

Tobu Hotaru !

*Ah ! having heard the voices of people [crying "Catch it !"], the firefly now flies higher !*

---

註 1. 作者は流水。

の大多数は此虫が無言で光を燃やして居るのを、口には一度も出さぬ身を焼くやうな情熱にたぐへた、古い古典的な一つの詩想の變體變形に過ぎないやうに思へる。

多分我が讀者は次に掲ぐる螢詩の撰擇したのに興味を感じられるとであらう。

## 螢 取

迷ひ子の

泣く泣くつかむ

螢かな<sup>1</sup>

暗きより

暗き人呼ぶ

螢かな<sup>2</sup>

言ふ事の

きこえてや高く

飛ぶほたる<sup>3</sup>

- 
2. 作者不詳。
  3. 作者は曉臺。

Owarete wa  
Tsuki ni kakururu  
Hotaru kana !

*Ah, [the cunning] fireflies! being chased, they hide themselves  
in the moonlight !*

Ubaiōte  
Fumi-koroshitaru  
Hotaru kana !

*[Two firefly-catchers] having tried to seize it [at the same  
time], the poor firefly is trampled to death !*

### The Light of Fireflies

Hotarubi ya !  
Mada kureyaranu  
Hashi no uri.

*Fireflies already sparkling under the bridge,—and it is not  
yet dark !*

Mizu-gusa no  
Kururu to miete  
Tobu hotaru.

*When the water-grasses appear to grow dark, the fireflies  
begin to fly.*

- 
- 註 1. 作者蓼太。  
2. 作者己百。

追はれては

月にかくるゝ

螢かな<sup>3</sup>

奪ひ合うて

踏み潰したる

螢かな<sup>3</sup>

### 螢の光

螢火や

まだ暮れやらぬ

橋のうら<sup>3</sup>

水草の

暮るゝさ見えて

飛ぶはたる<sup>4</sup>

- 
3. 作者柳居。  
4. 作者探志。  
3. 橋のうりさ原本にあるは橋の裏の誤植なり。

Oku-no-ma ye  
Hanashite mitaru  
Hotaru kana !

*Pleasant, from the guest-room, to watch the fireflies being set free in the garden !*

Yo no fukuru  
Hodo ōkinaru  
Hotaru kana !

*Ever as the night grows [deeper, the light of] the firefly also grows [brighter] !*

Kusakari no  
Sode yori idzuru  
Hotaru kana !

*See ! a firefly flies out of the sleeve of the grass-cutter !*

Koko kashiko,  
Hotaru ni aoshi  
Yoru no kusa.

*Here and there the night-grass appears green, because of the light of the fireflies.*

Chōchin no  
Kiyete, tōtoki  
Hotaru kana.

*How precious seems [the light of] the firefly, now that the lantern-light has gone out !*

- 
- 註 1. 可磨。  
2. 汶村。

奥の間へ

放して見たる

螢かな<sup>1</sup>

夜の更くる

程大きなる

螢かな<sup>2</sup>

草刈の

袖よりいづる

螢かな<sup>3</sup>

此處かしこ

螢に青し

夜の草<sup>4</sup>

提燈の

消えて尊き

螢かな<sup>5</sup>

---

3. 卜枝。

4. 鳳助。

5. 正秀。

1. の原意は For mere pleasure we have set the fireflies free in the parlour. Oh, they sparkle in the dark just as in the fields! なり。

Mado kuraki,  
Shōji wo noboru  
Hotaru kana !

*The window itself is dark ; but see !—a firefly is creeping  
up the paper pane !*

Moe yasuku  
Mata kiye yasuki  
Hotaru kana !

*How easily kindled, and how easily put out again, is the  
light of the firefly !*

Hitotsu kite  
Niwa no tsuyukeki  
Hotaru kana !

*Oh ! a single firefly having come, one can see the dew in  
the garden !*

Te no hira wo  
Hau ashi miyuru  
Hotaru kana !

*Oh, this firefly !—as it crawls on the palm of my hand, its  
legs are visible [by its own light] !*

Osoroshi no  
Te ni sukitoru  
Hotaru kana !

*It is enough to make one afraid ! See ! the light of this  
firefly shows through my hand !*

---

1. 作者は不交。

窓暗き

障子をのぼる

螢かな<sup>1</sup>

燃えやすき

また消えやすき

螢かな<sup>2</sup>

一つ来て

庭の露けき

螢かな<sup>3</sup>

手のひらを

這ふ足見ゆる

螢かな<sup>4</sup>

恐ろしの

手に透き通る

螢かな<sup>5</sup>

---

2. 作者は去來妹千子。

3. 作者は其禮。

4. 作者は萬乎。

5. 作者は吐月。

3. 此の句の原意は Oh! a single firefly makes the garden appear so dewy なり。先生の譯はやゝ不穩當か。

Sabishisa ya !

Isshaku kiyete

Yuku hotaru !

*How uncanny! The firefly shoots to within a foot of me,  
and—out goes the light!*

Yuku saki no

Sawaru mono naki

Hotaru kana !

*There goes a firefly! but there is nothing in front of it to  
take hold of [nothing to touch: what can it be seeking—the  
ghostly creature?].*

Hōki-gi ni

Ari to wa miyete,

Hotaru kana.

*In this hoki-bush it certainly appeared to be,—the firefly!  
[but where is it?].*

Sode e kite,

Yahan ho hotaru

Sabishi kana !

*This midnight firefly coming upon the sleeve of my robe—  
how weird!.....*

- 
- 註 1. 作者は北枝。  
2. 作者は月菓。  
3. 作者は貢雨。  
4. 作者は山幸。

さびしさや

一尺消えて

行くほたる<sup>1</sup>

行く先の

さほるものなき

螢かな<sup>2</sup>

はゞき木に

ありさは見えて

螢かな<sup>3</sup>

袖へ来て

夜半のほたる

さびしいか<sup>4</sup>

- 
1. 先生の英譯は誤れり。原意は How uncanny! In the course of its flight, the light is extinguished for the space of one foot. It makes its appearance again and is extinguished again. なり。 3. はゞき木(苜草)は葉を枯らして草蓆に用ふるもの。學名 *Kochia scoporia*. ホーキギさは讀まず。ハハキギなり。 4. 下五字原本 *sabishi kana* は *sabishii ka* の誤植。螢に向つてお前は淋しいから來たのかと云へるなり。先生の譯は不穩當。

Yanagi-ba no  
Yami saki kaesu  
Hotaru kana !

*For this willow tree the season of budding would seem to  
have returned in the dark—look at the fireflies !*

Mizu soko no  
Kage wo kowagaru  
Hotaru kana !

*Ah, he is afraid of the darkness under the water,—that  
firefly ! [Therefore he lights his tiny lantern !]*

Sugitaru wa  
Me ni mono sugoshi  
Tobu hotaru !

*Ah, I am going too far !..... The flitting of the fire-  
flies here is a lonesome sight !*

Hotarubi ya !  
Kusa ni osamaru  
Yoakegata.

*Ah, the firefly-lights ! As the darkness begins to break,  
they bury themselves in the grass.*

- 
- 註 1. 作者好秋。先返へすは吹返すの誤なるべし。  
2. 作者真久妻。  
3. 作者雪武。  
4. 作者怒風。

柳葉の

暗先かへす

螢かな<sup>1</sup>

水底の

影をこぼがる

螢かな<sup>2</sup>

過ぎたるは

眼にもものすごし

飛ぶほたる<sup>3</sup>

螢火や

草におさまる

夜明がた<sup>4</sup>

- 
- I. は先生の解釋不穩當なるべし。柳の枝の葉先を暗きの中を螢の飛べる様をよみたるまでのものなり。 3. これまた先生の解釋は誤なるべし。眼のつい前を過ぎ行く螢は見る眼にや、物凄き感ありとなり。 4. これに似し句にて、螢火や峰に靜まる夜の水といふが太祇にあり。

Love-Poems

Mureyo hotaru,  
Mono iu kao no  
Miyuru hodo!

*O fireflies, gather here long enough to make visible the face of the person who says these things to me!*

Oto mo sede,  
Omoi ni moyuru,  
Hotaru koso,  
Naku mushi yori mo  
Aware nari-keri!

*Not making even a sound [yet] burning with desire,—for this the firefly indeed has become more worthy of pity than any insect that cries!*

Yū sareba,  
Hotaru yori ki ni  
Moyuredomo,  
Hikari mineba ya  
Hito no tsurenaki!

*When evening falls, though the soul of me burn more than burns the firefly, as the light [of that burning] is viewless, the person [beloved] remains unmoved.*

- 
- 註 1. 作者は花讚女。  
2. 「哀なりけり」はあれど「哀なりけれ」にあるべきもの。作

戀の句

群れよほたる

物言ふ顔の

見ゆるほど<sup>1</sup>

音もせで

思にもゆる

螢こそ

啼く虫よりも

哀れなりけり<sup>2</sup>

夕されば

螢よりきに

もゆれども

光見ればや

人のつれなき<sup>3</sup>

---

者源重之。後拾遺和歌集所載。

3 「螢よりきに」は「螢よりけに」とあるべきもの。「けに」は「更に」といふ意味の古語。作者紀友則。古今和歌集所載。

Miscellaneous

Suito yuku

Mizu-giwa suzushi,

Tobu-hotaru!

*Here at the water's edge, how pleasantly cool!—and the fireflies go shooting by—suito!*

Midzu e kite,

Hikuu naritaru

Hotaru kana!

*Having reached the water, he makes himself low,—the firefly!*

Kuzu no ha no

Ura utsu ame ya,

Tobu hotaru!

*The rain beats upon the Kuzu-plant;—away starts the firefly from the underside of the leaf!*

Ame no yo wa

Shita bakari yuku

Hotaru kana!

*Ah! this rainy night they only go along the ground,—the fireflies!*

- 
- 註 1. 作者竹童。  
2. 作者東籬。  
3. 作者普成。

雜

すいそ行く

水際すいし

さぶ螢<sup>1</sup>

水へ来て

低うなりたる

螢かな<sup>2</sup>

葛の葉の

裏打つ雨や

さぶ螢<sup>3</sup>

雨の夜は

下ばかり行く

螢かな<sup>4</sup>

---

4. 作者不明。

3. 先生の英譯は誤れり。葉裏から螢飛出でしにあらず。風に葉裏を見せて戦ぎ居る葛のあたりを物淋しく螢飛びさまよへる様をうたひし句なり。

Yura-yura to  
Ko-same furu yo no  
Hotaru kana!

*How they swing themselves, to and fro, the fireflies, on a  
night of drizzling rain!*

Ake nureba,  
Kusa nomi zo  
Hotaru-kago.

*With the coming of dawn, indeed, there is nothing visible  
but grass in the cage of the firefly!*

Yo ga akete,  
Mushi ni naritaru  
Hotaru kana!

*With the coming of the dawn, they change into insects  
again,—these fireflies!*

Hiru mireba  
Kubi-suji akaki  
Hotaru kana!

*Oh, this firefly!—seen by daylight, the nape of its neck is  
red!*

- 
- 註 1. 作者楚流。  
2. 作者志澄。  
3. 作者阿音。

ゆらゝゝさ

小雨降る夜の

螢かな<sup>1</sup>

明けぬれば

草のみぞ

螢籠<sup>2</sup>

夜が明けて

虫になりたる

螢かな<sup>3</sup>

晝見れば

首筋赤き

螢かな<sup>4</sup>

- 
4. 作者芭蕉。  
2. 中七字『草の葉のみぞ』とあるべきを先生誤寫されしなり。

Hotaru kōte  
Shiba shi-go mai ni  
Fuzei kana !

*Having bought fireflies, respectfully accord them the  
favour of four or five tufts of lawn-grass !*

Song of the Firefly-Seller

Futatsu mitsu  
Hanashite miseru  
Hotaru-uri.

Mitsu yotsu wa  
Akari ni nokose  
Hotaru-uri.

Onoga mi wa  
Yami ni kaeru ya  
Hotaru-uri.

*He will not give you the chance to see two or three fireflies  
set free,—this firefly-seller.*

*He leaves in the cage three or four, just to make a light,—  
this firefly-seller.*

*For now he must take his own body back into the dark  
night,—this firefly-seller.*

- 
- 譯 1. 作者蝶羅。  
2. 作者吳竺。  
3. 作者古聲。  
4. 作者千士。

螢かうて

芝四五枚に

風情かな<sup>1</sup>

螢賣の句

二つ三つ

放して見せぬ

螢賣<sup>2</sup>

三つ四つは

あかりに残せ

螢賣<sup>3</sup>

己が身は

闇に歸るや

螢賣<sup>4</sup>

- 
1. 螢買ひて放つたが爲めに僅か四五枚の芝生の庭ながら仲々に風情があるさの意なるべし。 2. 先生の英譯は誤れり。人寄せの爲めか或はその飛ぶ風情を味はせん爲めか虫賣が二つ三つ螢を放して見せた、さいふ意なり。 3. He leaves にあらず Leave せよと螢賣に呼びかけしなり。

## VII

But the true romance of the firefly is to be found neither in the strange fields of Japanese folk-lore nor in the quaint gardens of Japanese poetry, but in the vast profound of science. About science I know little or nothing. And that is why I am not afraid to rush in where angels fear to tread. If I knew what Professor Watase knows about fireflies, I should feel myself less free to cross the boundaries of relative experience. As it is, I can venture theories.

The tremendous hypotheses of physical and psychical evolution no longer seem to me hypotheses: I should never dream of doubting them. I have ceased to wonder at the growth of Life out of that which has been called not-living,—the development of organic out of inorganic existence. The one amazing fact of organic evolution, to which my imagination cannot become accustomed, is the fact that the substance of life should possess the latent capacity or tendency to build itself into complexities incomprehensible of *systematic* structure. The power of that substance to evolve radiance or electricity is not really more extraordinary than its power to

---

註 1. 知らぬから盲滅法なとが平氣で言へるこなり。

七

然し螢の眞のロマンスは、日本の民間傳説の不思議な野原にもまた日本詩歌の珍奇な庭園にも見出さるべきものではなくて、科學の廣大な深淵に見出さるべきものである。科學に就いては自分は餘り知らぬ或は全く知らぬ。それが天使も踏み込むことを恐れる處へ自分が盲進することを憚らぬ所以である。若し自分が、渡瀬教授が螢に就いて知つて居られるとを知つて居るならば、相對的經驗の境域を跨ぐのにこんな氣易い思をしないことであらう。<sup>1</sup> 現に<sup>2</sup> 自分は敢て學説を立て得るのである。

生理的及び精神的進化の異大な假説は最早自分には假定とは思へぬ。自分は之に疑を挟むことを夢想だもしない。自分は所謂無生物からして生が生長し來ると——無機物から有機物が發展し來ると——を怪しまなくなつた。自分の想像力がどうもそれに慣れるとの出來ない、有機的進化の一つの驚くべき事實は、生の物質が、系統的構造の不可解な複雑なものへ出來上つて行く潛在的能力或は傾向を所持して居るといふ事實である。その物質が射光を或は電氣を開展して行く力は、それが色を開展さして行く力より、より以上に不思議なものでは實際無い。夜光虫や、光を放つ百足虫や、或は螢が光を造り出すとは、植物が青い花や紫色の花を造り出すよりか餘計に不思議

~~~~~  
2. as it is 實際、御覽の通りに、事實。

evolve colour; and that a noctiluca, or a luminous centipede, or a firefly, should produce light, ought not to seem more wonderful than that a plant should produce blue or purple flowers. But the biological interpretation of the phenomenon leaves me wondering, just as much as before, at the particular miracle of the machinery by which the light is made. To find embedded in the body of the insect a microscopic working-model of everything comprised under the technical designation of an “electric plant,” would not be nearly so wonderful a discovery as the discovery of what actually exists. Here is a firefly, able, with its infinitesimal dynamo, to produce a pure cold light “at one four-hundredth part of the cost of the energy expended in a candle flame”!.....  
...Now why should there have been evolved in the tail of this tiny creature a luminiferous mechanism at once<sup>1</sup> so elaborate and so effective that our greatest physiologists and chemists are still unable to understand the operation of it, and our best electricians impotent to conceive the possibility of imitating it? Why should the living tissues crystallize or build themselves into structures of such stupefying<sup>2</sup> intricacy and beauty as the visual organs of an ephemera, the electrical organs of a gymnotus,<sup>3</sup> or

---

註 1. elaborate であつて同時に effective な。  
2. stupefy = to make stupid or torpid.

だと思ふべき譯は無い。だが、それで以て光が出来る機械作用の此特殊な奇蹟をば、此現象の生物學的説明は依然としてこれ迄同様に自分を驚嘆したなりに残して居る。『發電装置』といふ専門的名稱の下(もと)に包含せらるゝ一切の物の顯微鏡的微細な運轉模型が此虫の體内に納められて居るのを見るときは、家地實際に存在して居るものの発見ほどに驚くべき発見では無いであらう。今現に此處に、その無限小的なるダイナモを以てして、『蠟燭の炎に費やさるゝ勢力の費用の四百分の一で』純粹な冷たい光を造り出し得る螢が一匹居るのである！ ………扱て、我々の最も偉大な生理學者及び化學者すらまだその作用を理解し得ない、又我々の最善の電氣學者すらそれを模倣するの可能なるを理解し得ないほど、それほどに精緻な有效な發光機械が、どうして此の小さいな動物の尻に開展進化するやうにされたものであらうか。蜉蝣の視覚器だとか、電氣鰻の電氣機官だとか、或は螢の發光機官とかいふやうな、實に人を啞然たらしめるほどに錯雜したそして美しいものを構成するやうに、生きた組織が何うしてそんな構造に固まつたり出來上つて來たりするのであらうか。 ………此の物の不可思議を思ふといふと、神さまが仕事されるのだなんかとは到底も自分には想像

- 
3. *Sternopygus* とも呼ぶ *Gymnotus carapo* さいふ electric eel.

the luminiferous organs of a firefly?.....The very wonder of the thing forbids me to imagine gods at work: no mere god could ever contrive such a prodigy as the eye of a May-fly<sup>1</sup> or the tail of a firefly.

Biology would answer thus:—"Though it is inconceivable that a structure like this should have been produced by accumulated effects of function on structure, yet it is conceivable that successive selections of favourable variations<sup>2</sup> might have produced it." And no follower of Herbert Spencer is really justified in wandering further. But I cannot rid myself of the notion that Matter, in some blind infallible way, *remembers*; and that in every unit of living substance there slumber infinite potentialities, simply because to every ultimate atom belongs the infinite and indestructible experience of billions<sup>3</sup> of billions of vanished universes.

---

註 1. Ephemerae 科のものにて、ephemerid とも day-fly ともいふ。英國にては、Trichoptera に屬するものにて、caddis-fly と呼ぶもの。

されぬ。蜉蝣の眼だとか、螢の尻だとかいふ斯んな奇怪な物は、ただの神さまなんかがいづまで経つても工夫の出来かねるものである。

生物學は次の如く答へるであらう。『斯んな構造が、機能の構造に及ぼす効果の累積に依つて成つたものとは考へ得られないにしても、適當な變形の逐次の淘汰がこんな者をつくり出したものかも知れぬといふとは考へ得られる』と。そしてハアバアト、スペンサの學説を奉ずる者は、これ以上遠くへさ迷ひ出るとを實際是認されないのである。が然し自分は、物質といふものは、盲目的に誤無しに、物事を記憶するものであるといふ意見、それからまた、あらゆる終局的な分子には悉く、幾億幾十億の消えた宇宙の、破滅され無い無窮な經驗が入つて居るからして、生きて居る物質の一々の單位には、無窮の潛勢力が眠つて居るのであるといふ意見、——これを自分は頭から離すことが出来ないのである。

- 
2. 生存に好都合な變種變態。
  3. 英國にては百萬の百萬倍の數。米國にては百萬の千倍の數。