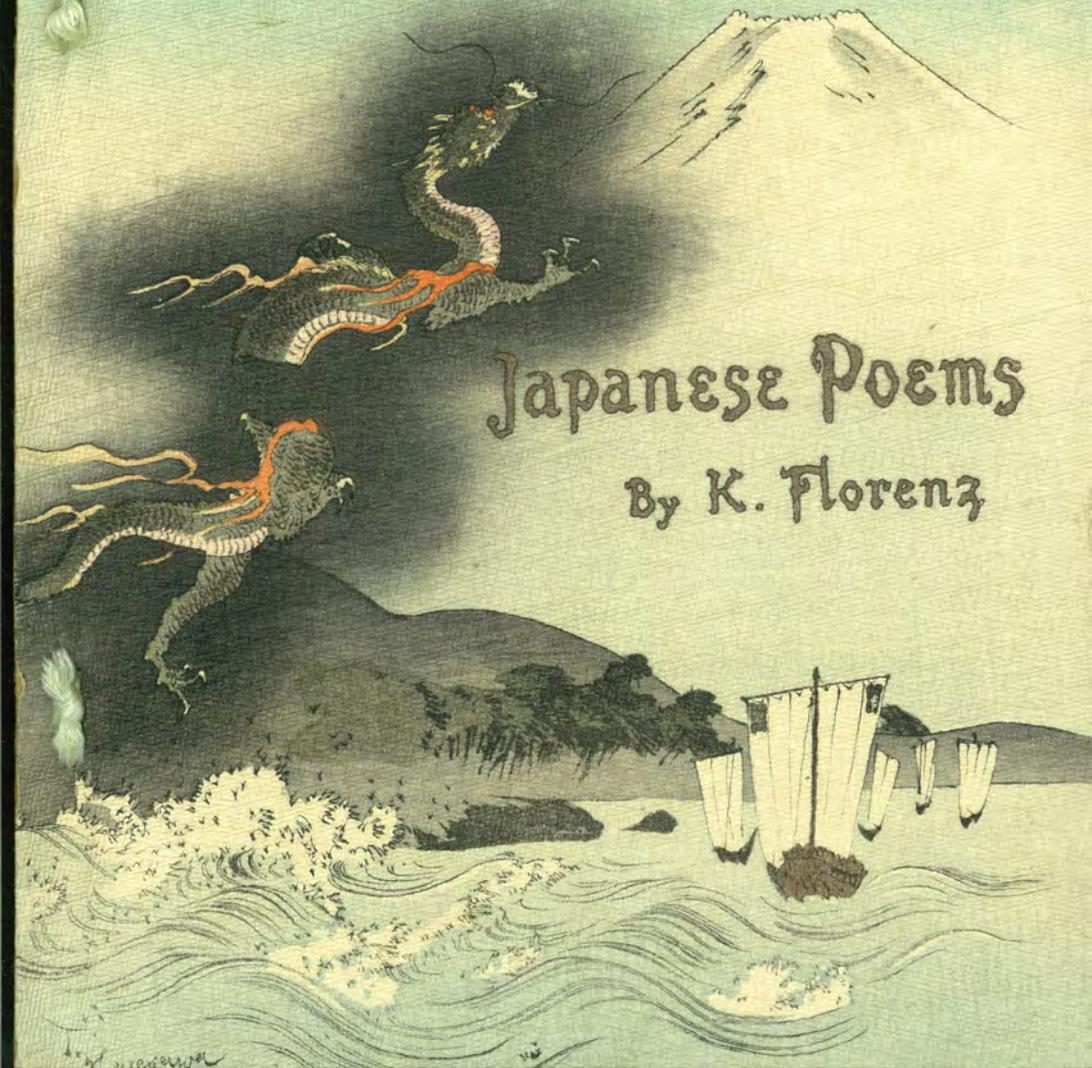


POETICAL GREETINGS FROM THE FAR EAST

Japanese Poems

By K. Florenz





POETICAL GREETINGS

FROM THE FAR EAST.



JAPANESE POEMS.

From the

German

Adaptation

of

Dr. Karl Florenz

by

A. Lloyd M. A.



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To the
MEMORY
 of
 Georg von der Gabelentz



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詩卷長留天地

問
 鄂伯廉先生紀念
 獨逸傳樂蓮題

甲午五月為



PREFACE.

Japanese poetry is extraordinarily rich in productions of the most varied kind, and one might therefore think that it is only necessary to put one's hand upon what is considered good by the Japanese themselves, and then to arrange the material with very little trouble into an anthology. But this is not so. The great majority of Japanese poems is of such a kind that very little remains if they are divested of their specifically Japanese expressions, especially as most of them have the brevity of aphorisms. The form outweighs the contents: unpoetical plays upon words and puns are wearisomely frequent; original turns of thought are indeed often found, but truly poetical contents are more rare. The richest spoils of true poetry may be found in the oldest collections, especially in the large one called *Manyōshū*, of which the present editor is preparing a critical edition and translation.

As for the lyrical poetry of the last ten centuries it must be said that nearly all productions worthy of notice are imitations of the older poetry in contents and expression.

The majority of the poems in the present collection belong to the first half of the eighth century, but there are a few which are quite modern. In selecting the poems, care has been taken to choose such as are

genuine representatives of the poetical spirit of the country whilst at the same time suiting in some degree our European tastes and habits of thought. The translation is on the whole as accurate as the fundamental differences between the spirit of the Japanese and German languages would allow; the notes contain only such information as is absolutely necessary. The illustrations have been specially designed for this book by several Japanese artists whose names are mentioned in the appendix. Mr. Hasegawa is deserving of our warmest thanks for their careful execution.

Tokyo, January 1896.

KARL FLORENZ.

English Translator's Note.

The English Translator can only express the hope that he has succeeded in some measure in faithfully reproducing Dr. Florenz' work for English readers.

ARTHUR LLOYD.

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LAMENT OF THE POET OKURA OVER THE PREMATURE
DEATH OF HIS SON FURUBL.

AN ELEGY.

Ah! what care I for the seven-fold treasure⁽⁶⁾
That fills the heart of poor men with joy?
My only desire, my heart's true pleasure!
'Tis thee that I long for, my boy, my boy.

No more, when the morning-star fades from the sky,
Doth he playfully leave my humble bed:
No more, when the evening-star flashes on high,
Doth he speak, with his hand in his father's laid:

"Dear parents, lie down to your sweet repose;
And I betwixt you all night will sleep,
Whilst your arms around me on each side close,
As the triple moss⁽⁹⁾ stems each other do keep."

'Twas thus he would chatter, and I, in my joy,
With dreams of the future my mind did fill:
How manhood awaited my darling boy
With omens of good, but no omens of ill.

As the seaman trusts to his argosy frail,
So I trusted to Fate as I sailed life's stream:
But, alas! on a sudden, with waves and gale,
A tempest disturbed my happy dream.

Then nothing availed in the hour of distress
From my bursting heart that the prayer forth-welled:
That I gathered around me the folds of my dress,
And in suppliant hands the mirror upheld.

To all the celestial gods I cried,
(And my words were low as became my worth);
To all the terrestrial gods I applied,
With my body prostrate on the cold black earth.



Yet long though I prayed, and hard though I strove,
To wrest from the gods an answer of joy,
No answer of hope was vouchsafed from above,
No earthly god would rescue my boy.

But, from day to day, his wasting frame
Showed how fruitless my prayers, my cries how vain:
His voice was a whisper: life's feeble flame
Sunk, flickered, and flashed, and sunk again.

And then I stood up with stamps and cries.
And vainly beat my bereaved breast,
Entreating heaven with tears and sighs
For the soul that had entered its early rest.

"Too young, too young! he knows not the road
That leads to the kingdoms beyond death's sleep.
O herald of Hades! O soul-guiding god,
Accept this my offering, my child's soul keep.



PATERNAL PRIDE.

What, to me, are diamond treasures?
Silver, gold, or copper pure?
Far nobler joys, far higher pleasures,
My boys and girls for me procure.



MOTHER'S LOVE.

The sea-god, in his deep-sea halls,
Below old ocean's countless smile,
Beholds with joy his growing pile
Of jewels sparkling on the walls.

But child, my love for thee excels
All price; nor can I tell the pain,
When in my dreams thou com'st again,
Teasing my heart with fancy's spells.

I see thy brow and youthful cheek,
As in the hour thou wentst so gay,
A bride, to Koshi's⁽¹⁰⁾ moorland bleak.

Ne'er shall I meet thee; for my day
Is past; my aged frame is weak,
Thy mother soon must pass away.

BOATMAN'S SONG.

Steering the boat,
Where the wild duck swarm
In the harbour of Ina!
Carefully, carefully,
Lest harm should befall her,
Lest harm should befall her!

For she carries my wife,
So tender and fair,
And she carries myself:

Let no harm befall her,
Let no harm befall her!



HUSBAND AND WIFE.

She. Husbands of other women ride
On prancing steeds the live-long day;
My lord goes weekly by my side,
O'er hill and dale, his toilsome way.

I grieve to see this toil and pain:
In my soft eye there stands a tear:
To suffer loss myself were fain,
If I my husband's lot could cheer.

The mirror that my mother gave,
As keepsake, when I said adieu,
The veil, likewise, she bade me have—
Take it—'t will buy a horse for you.

He. On prancing steed how can I ride
And see my poor wife walk below?
Nay, dear; we'll just walk side by side,
As comrades, chatting as we go.

THE COMFORT OF FLOWERS.

My lord has sent me to the furthest plains
Of bleak and barren Koshi, where the gale
Blows cold in winter, and the blinding storm
Fills with its snow-drifts every sheltered nook.

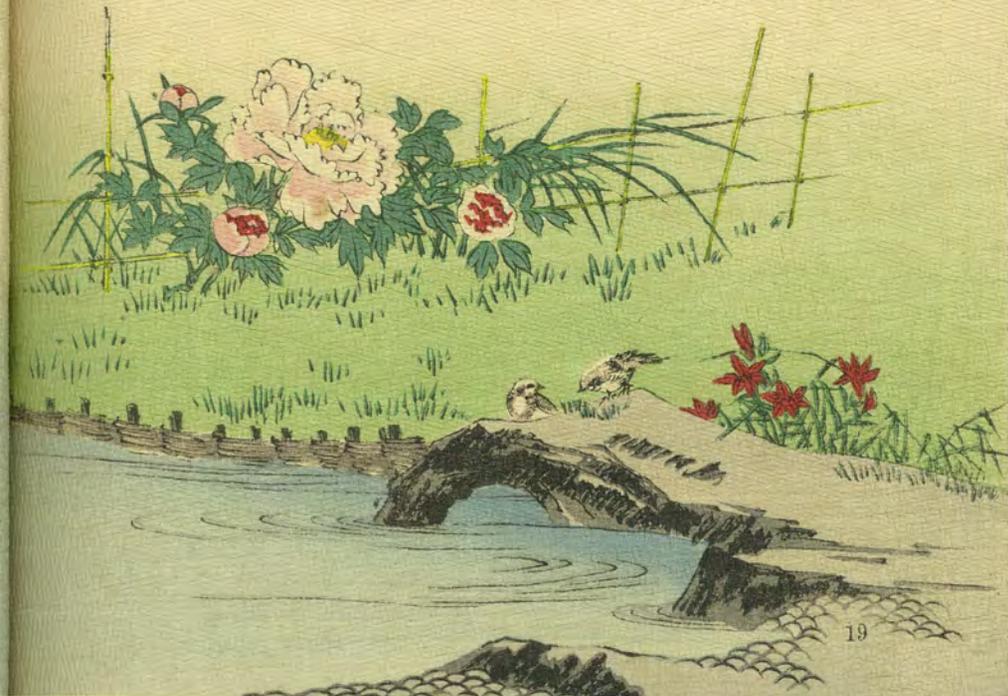
Five years have passed, since last my eyes beheld
My wife's dear face, since last I laid aside
My hip-encircling girdle, or in sleep
Pillowed my head upon her rounded arm.

One solace only soothes my lonely grief;
For yonder, on the moor, I gathered me
Lilies and pinks, and planted them with care
Beside my house-door. So whenc'er I walk



Forth from my home, and see them, in their pride,
Raising their dainty heads, I think of her,
That is the pink of all most perfect things,
The purest lily, my dear lily-wife.

Ah! had I not these sweetest dreams of love,
That nightly coming, ease my heart of pain,
Not for one day, not for one single hour,
Could I endure these melancholy wastes.



THE PEARLS OF SUSU.

The fisher maids of Susu, through the foam,
Dive to the lowest caverns of the sea,
From whence they bring their pearly treasures home.
Ah! would there were five hundred pearls for me.

For my true wife sits lonely and forsaken,
With tears upon the cheeks that were so red:
She thinks of that sad hour when I was taken,
And, sobbing, throws herself upon the bed.

No, more, when morning comes, with pale grey beam,
Doth she her raven locks arrange and dress;
But, sitting tearful, counts, as in a dream
The days, months, years of widowed loneliness.

Ah! had I but one single string of pearls,
I fain would send them to my mournful spouse:
That she might twine them in her raven curls,
And wreath with orange-blooms her milk white brows.



THE ONLY ONE.

Yamato's land hath many a band
Of heroes brave and free;
But I set no store by heroes galore,
For I long for only thee.

Oh! wert thou here, my dearest dear,
My love thou soon shouldst see;
Like the Fuji vine, round thee I'd twine,
To live and grow by thee.

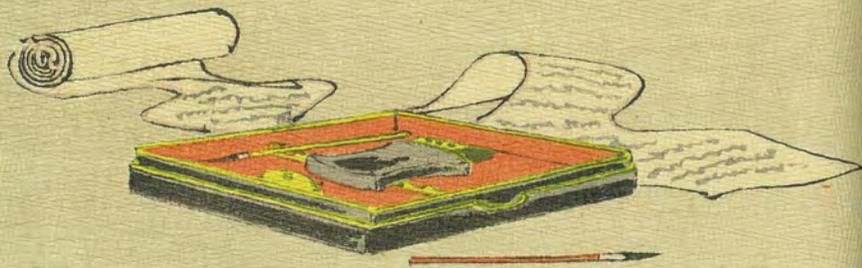
Yamato's land hath many a band
Of heroes brave and free;
But I set no store by heroes galore,
For my love is all for thee.

NO NEWS.

The year once more has come and gone,
Again we live in the days of spring;
But no message has come from my darling one,
So the winds this day with my murmurs ring.

As my mother's silkworms hidden dwell,
In the darkened web they themselves spin fine;
Thus I sit, and my grief to none can tell,
Though my eyes with oft-starting tear-drops shine.

When the shades of evening about me fall,
Like the pine on the mountain I stand and pine;
And the long white sleeves of my robe are all
Wet with those fast-flowing tears of mine.



EXPECTATION.

He cometh not: I wait in vain,
And list to the sad notes of the crane.
Wild and black is the night; the door
Creaks and groans the gale before.

Whilst thus I stand, the flakes do fall
Like silent tears from a mourner's eye,
Wetting my dress; and the snow-drifts high
Cover the hills with a velvet pall.

Too late! too late! he cannot come now:
Yet hope has not fled from my darkened brow,
As the sailor hopes in the raging storm,
So hope I still to behold thy form.

For if, waking, I ne'er should
see thee again,

Nor hear thy laugh, nor
kiss thy cheek;

Yet I know that in dreams
I shall hear thee speak,

And thy voice, sweetly lying,
shall cheat my pain.



LOVE SECRETS.

If in thy heart there burns the self-same flame
That tortures mine with never-ceasing pain,
What hinders thee to tell it? If there came
Some maid, and asked me to explain
Why so unquiet I remain,
What answer should I give that curious dame.

Perhaps my traitor blushes will reveal it,
Perhaps thy name will slip out all too soon;
Nay, nay! more skilfully shall I conceal it,
And say it is yon pallid moon
Behind the hills these nights of June.

My secret's hid and none shall steal it.

LONGING.

Alone on the mountains did I stand,
And thought, as I stood, of my absent dear:
And standing plucked with twitching hand
Leaves of the fading year.



ENDLESS LOVE.

Far away I see Mikane
Raise his towering peaks on high;
Here it rains without cessation,
There the snow falls ceaselessly,
As it rains without cessation,
As the snow falls ceaselessly,
So unending is my passion
Since thy face I first did see.





THE MAID AND HER DOG.

Silent stands the eager huntsman,
Waiting by the forest's edge
For the deer that slips unthinking
From its leafy hermitage.
So, by sunshine and by moonlight,
Wait I for my lover here.
Silence, doggie, make no barking,
When his coming steps you hear!

SECRET LOVE.

He. To Hatsuse's vale I came by night,
My love, to speak with thee;
Though the snow lay soft on the mountain's height,
And the rain fell drearily.
The pheasant's cry in the woodland's lone,
And the cock crows on the moor;
Night flees apace, it is now half gone;
Haste, love, and open the door.

She. To Hatsuse's vale you have come by night,
Through the rain and snow, to woo;
But my mother is sleeping at my right,
And close lies my father too.
Should I move on my couch, at once they would wake,
They would hear, if I opened to thee;
So I'll just lie still, for our dear love's sake,
For our love must secret be.

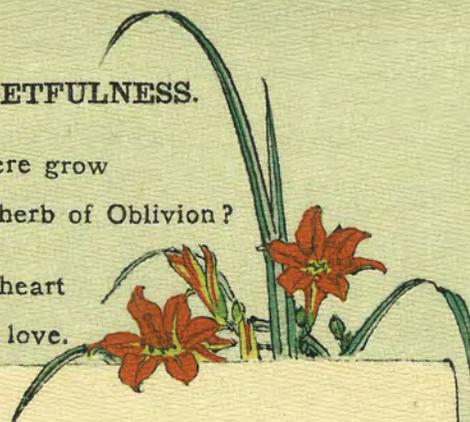


FAITHFUL THOUGHT.

Not e'en for one brief moment,
while the harvest lightning plays
'Midst the garnered ears of barley,
can my heart forget thy praise.

FORGETFULNESS.

Canst thou tell me where grow
the seeds of the herb of Oblivion?
Yes, they grow in the heart
all unaffected by love.



VANITAS VANITATUM.

Vain is the writing that marks
the foaming face of the river:
Vainer thy love, when the maid
never hath dreamt of thy kiss.



THE JEALOUS WIFE.

Yestreen at midnight you'd not come home:
And I watched and waited in vain for you,
When the morning dawned you did not come;
So I waited and fretted the whole day through,
I've made myself a pretty sight,
With crying and sobbing a day and a night.

Do you see the roof of yonder house
(I wish it were burnt upon my word),
Where vulgar men hold nightly carouse
Upon dirty mats? Oh fie! mylord;
They tell me that there all night you staid
Making faithless love to a peasant maid.

THE UNACCOMPANIED MAIDEN.

O'er the lacquered bridge, whose slender
Arch spans Katashiwa's stream,
Tripped a maiden fair and tender,
Fairer than my fairest dream.

Tripping lightly came she hither,
Brightly dressed in colours gay;
No attendant had she with her:—
If you know her, tell me pray.

Where's her house? What best can move her?
Is her heart yet whole and free?
Tell me, has she got a lover?
Or is there a chance for me?



ANTICIPATIONS OF SPRING.

Spring has awoke. Though the snow's white cloak
Is spread o'er the landscape fair,
Yet the spring's soft breeze, 'midst the waking trees,
Courts the nightingale forth from her lair:
And soon we shall know that the Sun's kind glow
Has melted her frozen tear.



THE COMING OF SPRING.

Winter has gone, the spring is seen,
In the morning dewdrops pearly sheen:
With fragrant lips, the evening mist
The darkening meads and fields hath kissed:
Already in Kaminabi's dale
Is heard the sweet voice of the nightingale.



SPRING AND AUTUMN.

Spring—joyous spring-time—cometh soon :
The flowers revive and bloom again,
The birds are trilling their ancient strain,
But alas! my heart is not in tune.

Now fain, o'er mountain, moor and dell
Free would I err with aimless foot :
But alas! the weeds and grasses shoot,
Making the paths impassable.

In Autumn my heart is glad and free :
Then can I make the hillside ring,
As I laugh with scorn at the youngster spring.
Would that the Autumn were here with me!

In Autumn I love to sit, and gaze
At the leaves all tinted with red and gold ;
If the inmost wish of my heart were told,
I would live in Autumn all my days.

THE FOUR

SEASONS.

The twilight gray of a young spring morn
Lies still on the hills around :
There's not a nook on their verdant sides,
But the white flower-clouds abound.

In summer, the scent of the orange groves
Is fragrant; the iris tall
Blooms on the roof; through the patt'ring rain
Is heard the cuckoo's call.

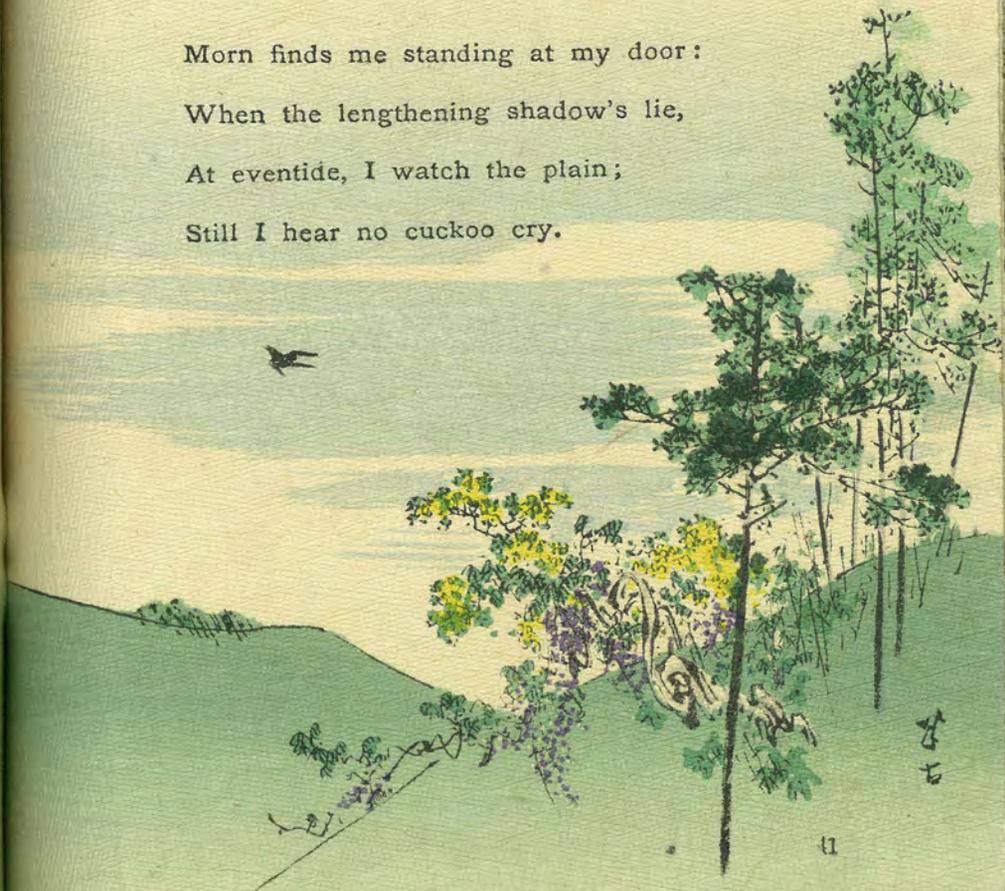
Now Autumn comes, with corn and fruit,
And the ending of the year;
As wanes the moon, as wears the night,
So my life, alas, is sere.

'Twas a bitter night; the dawn has come;
O'er the mountains, and through the snow,
My fancy would lead me, to unknown climes,
But no tracks the path do show.

EXPECTATION OF THE CUCKOO.

My cottage stands at the greenwood's edge,
Where the village lies still in the shade:
I listen and wait, yet hear I not
The cuckoo call in the glade.

Morn finds me standing at my door:
When the lengthening shadow's lie,
At eventide, I watch the plain;
Still I hear no cuckoo cry.

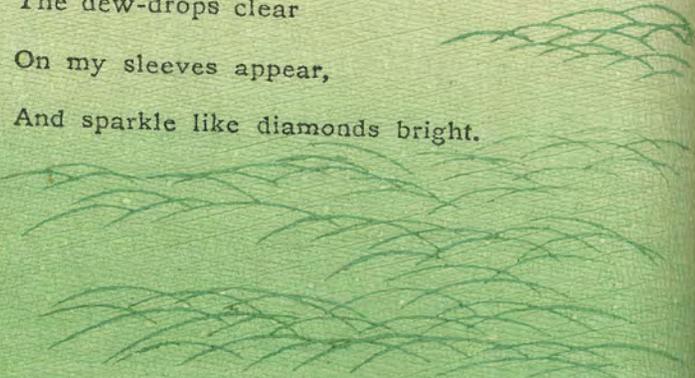


ON THE CUCKOO.

The noisy cuckoo I wishing to spy
Crept forth in the twilight cold;
But the moon's lone crescent, against the sky,
Was all I could behold.

MOONLIGHT NIGHT.

The moon above rides through the night:
I stand awaiting here:
Its splendour fills me with delight:
The dew-drops clear
On my sleeves appear,
And sparkle like diamonds bright.



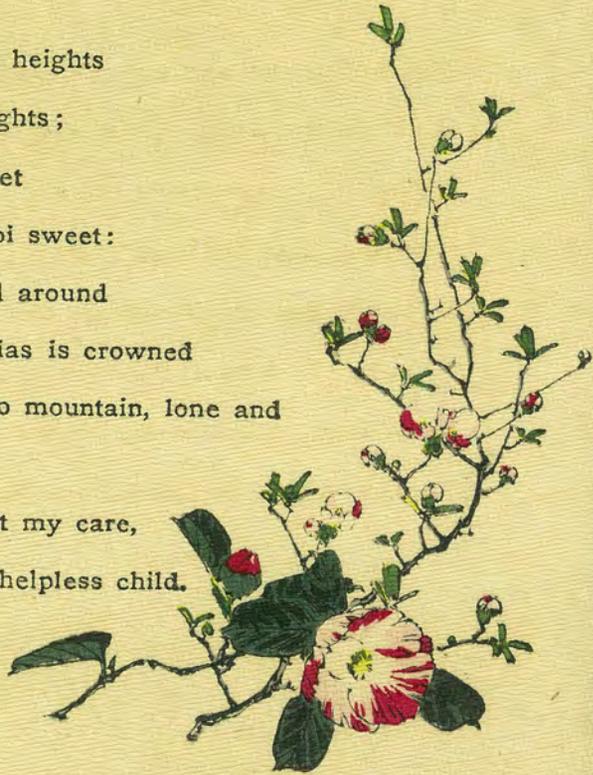
AN OCULAR DELUSION.

I watched a petal fall from the tree
It fell—but flew back again:
What could it be? I rushed to see:
There did I spy
A hovering butterfly!



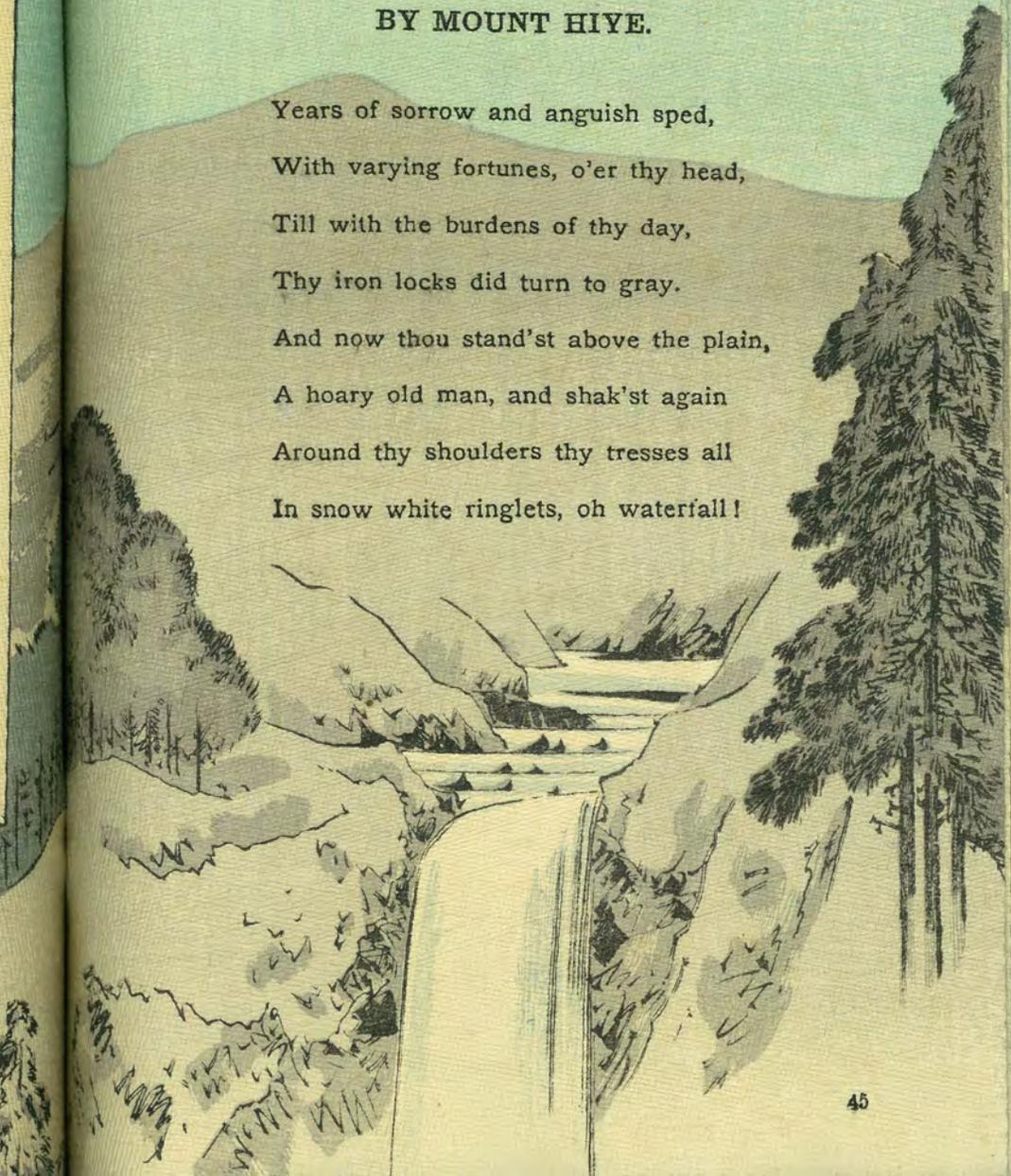
MOUNT MIMORO.

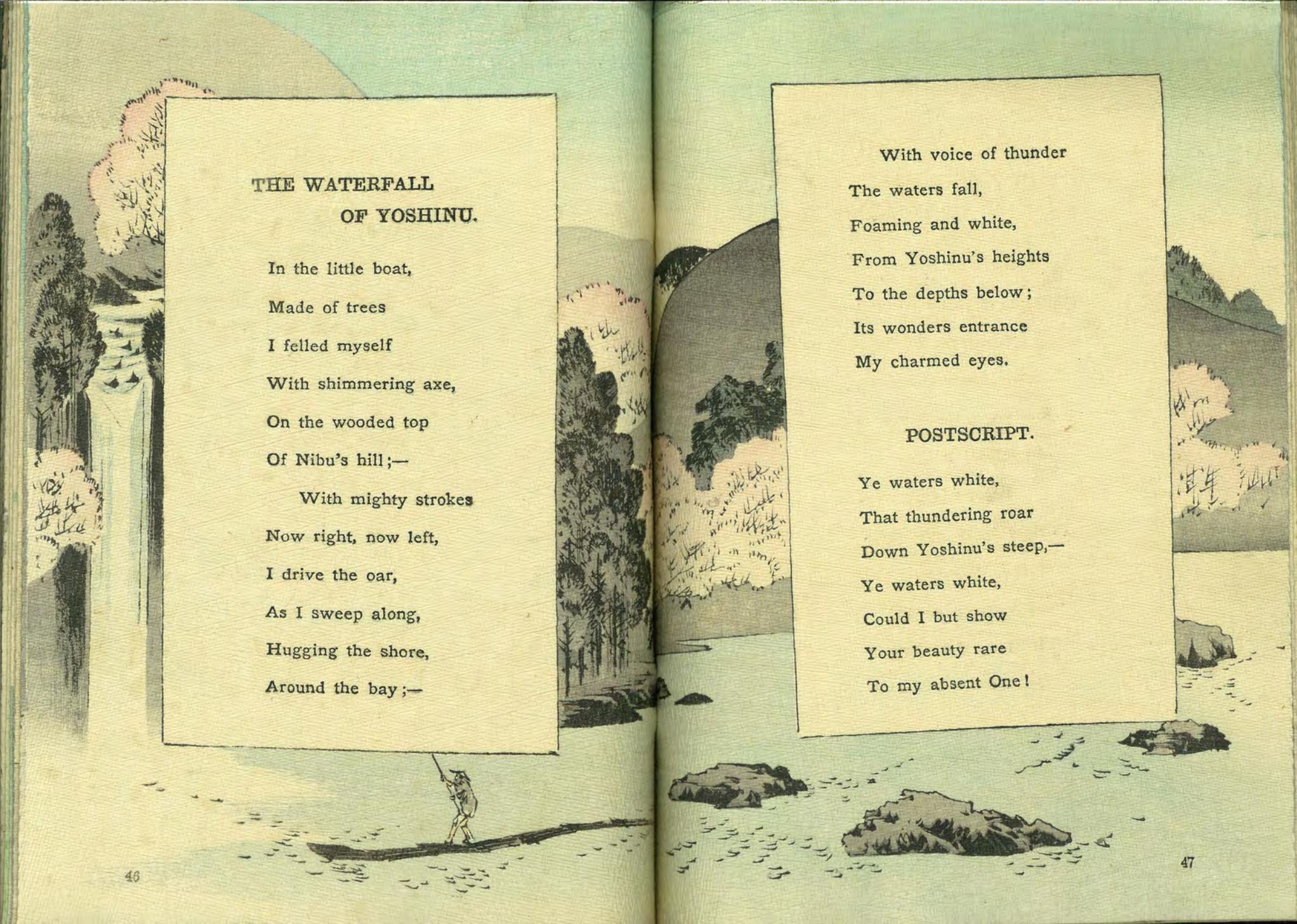
In Mimoro's heights
My eye delights;
For at its feet
Bloom Ashibi sweet:
And its head around
With Camelias is crowned
Dear Mimoro mountain, lone and
wild,
Thou needest my care,
like a helpless child.



TO THE WATERFALL OF OTOHA BY MOUNT HIYE.

Years of sorrow and anguish sped,
With varying fortunes, o'er thy head,
Till with the burdens of thy day,
Thy iron locks did turn to gray.
And now thou stand'st above the plain,
A hoary old man, and shak'st again
Around thy shoulders thy tresses all
In snow white ringlets, oh waterfall!





**THE WATERFALL
OF YOSHINU.**

In the little boat,
Made of trees
I felled myself
With shimmering axe,
On the wooded top
Of Nibu's hill;—
 With mighty strokes
Now right, now left,
I drive the oar,
As I sweep along,
Hugging the shore,
Around the bay;—

With voice of thunder
The waters fall,
Foaming and white,
From Yoshinu's heights
To the depths below;
Its wonders entrance
My charmed eyes.

POSTSCRIPT.

Ye waters white,
That thundering roar
Down Yoshinu's steep,—
Ye waters white,
Could I but show
Your beauty rare
To my absent One!

THE RAINCLOUDS.⁽¹¹⁾

From every part of those far-stretching lands
That owe allegiance to one Lord's commands;
Where'er the horse-hoof stricken rocks resound,
Or venturous barques transgress the horizon's bound,
With customary reverence, men do bring
Their first-fruit tribute to their lord and king;
Of rice before all others; but, oh woe!
In vain we ploughed this year, in vain did sow:
Day followed day, but still no showers fell
To fertilize the fields we tilled so well.

The tender blades stand withering on the field,
The parched gardens shrunken fruitage yield;
Sadly I look around me, filled with pain,
As a thin child its wasted hands doth strain,
To grasp its mothers breasts; so I, my hand
Raising, do pray that Heaven may showers command.
Oh may yon curling, feathery cloud, that lies
Unfolding on the mountain's summit, rise
And hasten to the world-encircling main,
The sea-god's castle—nursery of rain;—
There drink its fill of vapours, and returning
Pour forth the softening rain, for which the earth is yearning.

THE TRANSITORY CHARACTER OF EVERYTHING EARTHLY.

Since Heaven and earth first sprung to life
Complaints in every age are rife:
That nought endures upon the earth,
That all is passing and little worth.

I look on the Heaven's field of blue,
Where shines the moon with circle true;
To-night, it shines with full round face,
To-morrow, it 'gins to wane apace.

When spring time comes, the trees do bloom,
And odours fill the sunny room;
But Autumn comes with chilling breath,
And touches flowers and leaves with death.

'Tis so with man; his locks turn grey,
His cheek's red flush soon fades away;
In vain on withered lips you seek
The smile of morn at evening speak.

Dying and death around I see,
Tears flow from my eyes right copiously:
The world is a wind
that is seen of none,
A stream that is ceaselessly
flowing on.



THE TRANSITORINESS OF LIFE.

When I look round me in the world
Nature's eternity I see:
Eternal rise the mighty hills,
Eternal swells the restless sea:
Only the span of the life of man
Is branded with mortality.



THE TRANSITORINESS
OF LIFE.

Scent and colour unchanged remain,
As when first I saw the tree;
But he that planted this shaded plain:—
Can you tell me? where is he?
Swiftly passes our life of pain,
As the foam on the angry sea;
To-morrow the sun will shine again;
—But, it may be, not on me!

THE TRANSITORINESS
OF LIFE.

One thing I know—'tis far more frail
Than dry leaves on the wind.
Like the cloud-fleece melting to the gale
Man's life leaves nought behind.



MAN'S LIFE.

Years and months alas are fleeing,
Waters tumbling down the river;
Ever near and ever nearer
Comes our fate inexorable.

In the blooming of the spring,
Maidens deck their fairy forms
With bright gems from China's shores,
Romping gaily, hand in hand.

But the fair time passes quick:
Hoar-frost falls on raven locks
And the face, so plump and fresh,
Fades and wrinkles with the years.

Bustling moves the sturdy youth,
Thrusts his sword within his belt,
Takes his trusty bow, and goes,
Laughing gaily, to the chase.



Saddling now his happy steed,
Canters free o'er hill and dale!
But how long shall travel last?
Every pleasure hath its end.

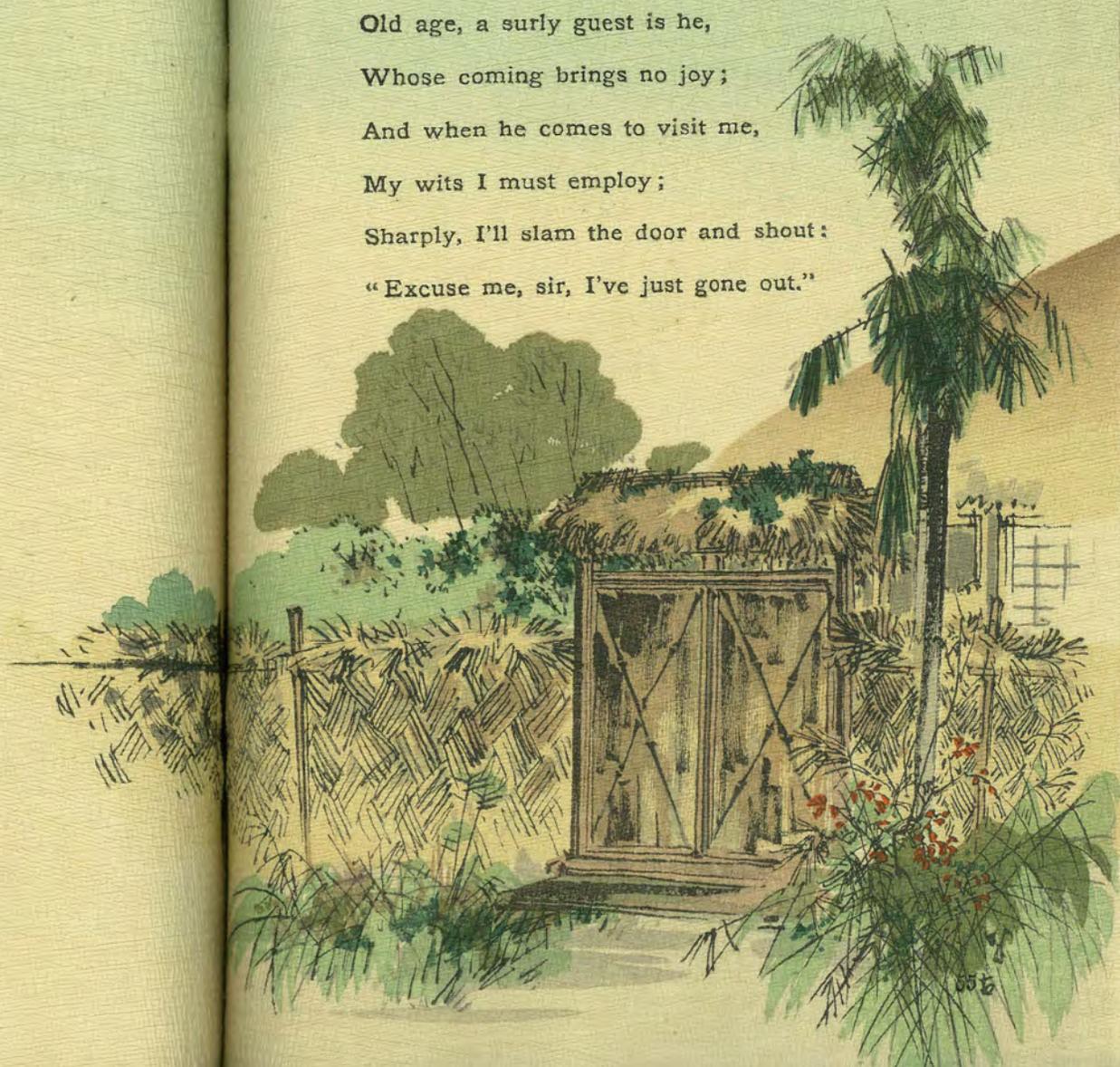
Bang and bar thy door, oh maiden!
Youth will gently push it open,
Noiselessly will gain thy chamber,
There to sleep upon thy bosom.

But those nights of love and pleasure
Quickly pass, too few in number;
Slow in gait, with painful motions,
Stick in hand, old Age comes creeping.

Now you laugh at age and mock him;
But this fate alike awaits you:
All resistance unavailing,
You must leave this world behind you.

THE UNWELCOME GUEST.

Old age, a surly guest is he,
Whose coming brings no joy;
And when he comes to visit me,
My wits I must employ;
Sharply, I'll slam the door and shout:
"Excuse me, sir, I've just gone out."



ELIXIR FOR THE EMPEROR.

Would that yon mountain ridge
Pierced in fact to Heaven's portals;
Would that a solid bridge
Hung betwixt sky and earth for mortals.
From the god of the moon, I'd crave a boon
Of ambrosial nectar, and give
This precious thing to my lord, the king,
That in youth he might ever live.



TO THE AGED PRINCE.

I.

As the sun at noon day high,
As the moon in midnight sky,
Is my lord to me.
But, alas! from day to day,
Weakening with slow decay
My dear lord I see.

II.

As sun and moon art thou to me,
As sun and moon I honour thee.
Wert thou as they!
They in their spheres unmoved abide,
But thou with every changing tide
Fadest away.

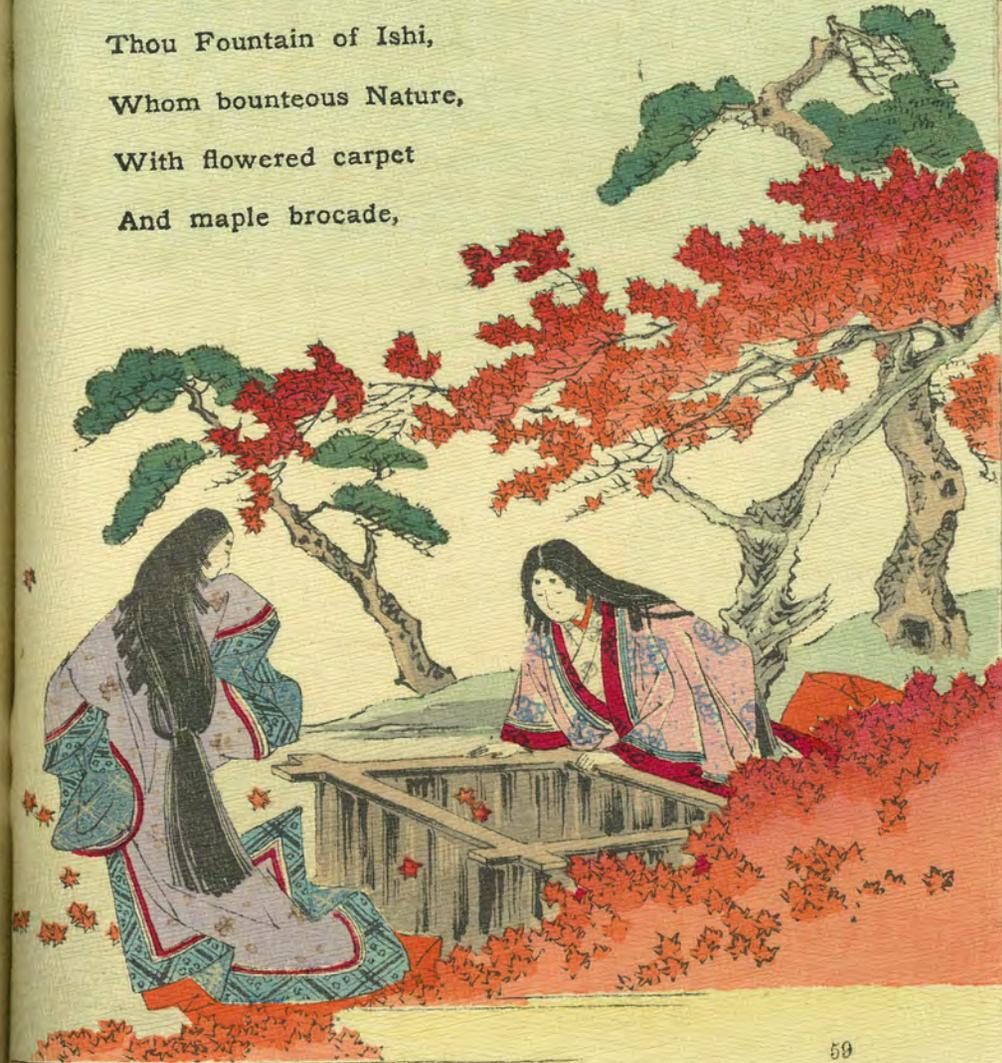
AT THE FOUNTAIN OF ISHI.

O lordly land !
Thou richly blest
Land of Ise !
Fanned by the winds of
the gods,
Ruled by the child
Of the burning Sun,
The mighty lord of
peace !
High and noble
Are thy hills ;—
Clear and pure
Are thy streams ;—
Far outspreads
The sea in thy bay ;—
Famed for beauty
Cluster thy isles ;—
Charmed with thy face

So fair and sweet,
The Prince here holds
His brilliant court,
On the meadows of Ishi.
As the morning Sun,
Lovely to view
Are the maids of the court ;
As the evening Sun,
Rejoicing the eyes ;
Kindly and gay,
As the hills in spring ;
Gaudily dressed,
As the autumn rocks.
Ah ! may they all
Live, and be bright,
For ever and aye,
As Heaven and Earth,
As sun and Moon.

L'ENVOI.

Thus do I hail thee, So gaily hath decked.
Thou Fountain of Ishi,
Whom bounteous Nature,
With flowered carpet
And maple brocade,



**TRUE WISHES FOR THE
EMPEROR.**

In the castle at Futangi,
Where lordly rules
Our godlike lord,
Softly rise
The swelling hills;
Gently murmur,
As they rush to the plains,
The water brooks.

So long as in spring,
The nightingale-sounding,
Woven-brocade-like,
Flowers and blossoms
Spring 'twixt the rocks
At the foot of the mount;

So long as in Autumn,
When the cry of the stag
For the hind is heard;
The ruddy leaves,
By showers of rain
Mortally, wounded
Flutter to earth;—

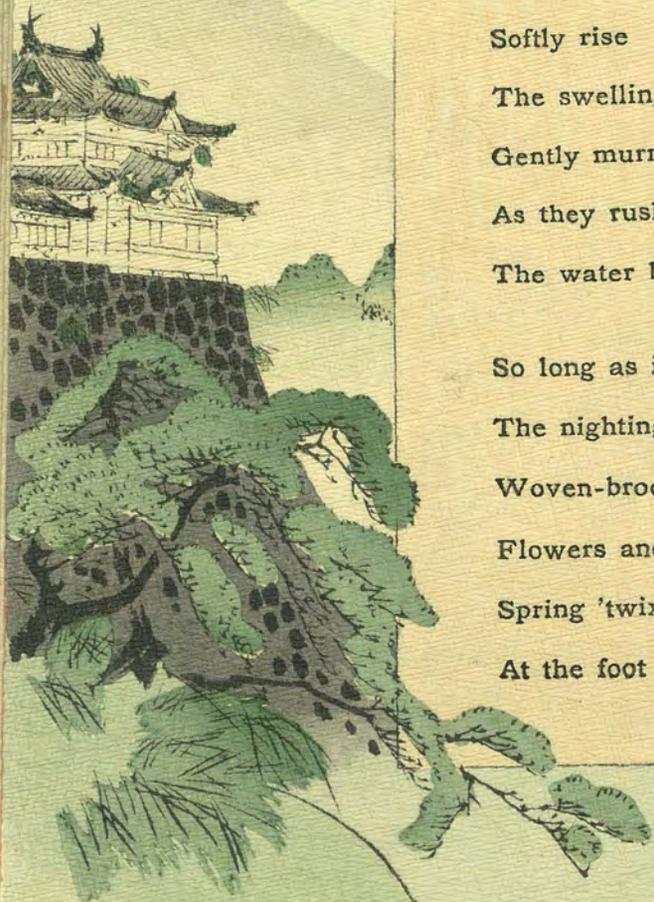
So long, and for thousands
Of coming years,
May last his life!
So long may he govern
His fellow men,
And rule with power
In his castle resplendent,
That was built to endure
For ages unending.

**THE DECEPTIVE
LOTUS-LEAF.**

Free from all sin and all
defect,
The Lotus lifts its head
erect:

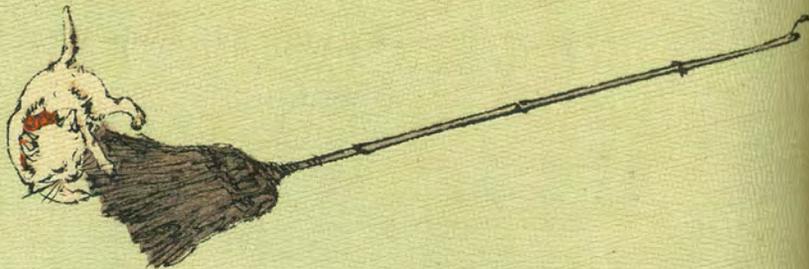
So men do say.
And yet the dew on its smooth
wide leaves
Sparkles like diamonds, and
deceives.

How's this I pray?



SWAN-SONG OF A
DYING POET.

Well-tasting dishes
I always ate:
In well-lined dresses
I warmly sate.
Seven years and seventy—
These are my days:
The Buddha unending
I therefore praise.



POPULAR DRINKING SONG.

Drink till you're full
The headstrong wine;
But then stand straight,
And toe the line!
Forwards march!
Straight and steady.
Boys! be ready,
Hurrah! Hurray! ⁽¹²⁾



TO AN OLD BESOM.

Of all the brooms thou art the best,
And by hard work hast earned thy rest;
No bristle mars thy head so bright,
So be a bald-pate eremite.

DEEP WATERS RUN STILL.

Uproar and noise
Mark not the mind's immeasurable depth.
Seest thou yon spot, where idle waves are shouting?
The brook is shallowest there.



POWERLESSNESS.

Why shouldst thou wonder, that the stubborn world
Should not be orderèd as thou wouldst have it,
When thy weak will hath not sufficient strength
To tame thy body?

TEMPTATION.

There is a tempter whom the heart of man
Seldom resists. It is the heart itself.
Therefore, weak heart, beware thou trust it not.

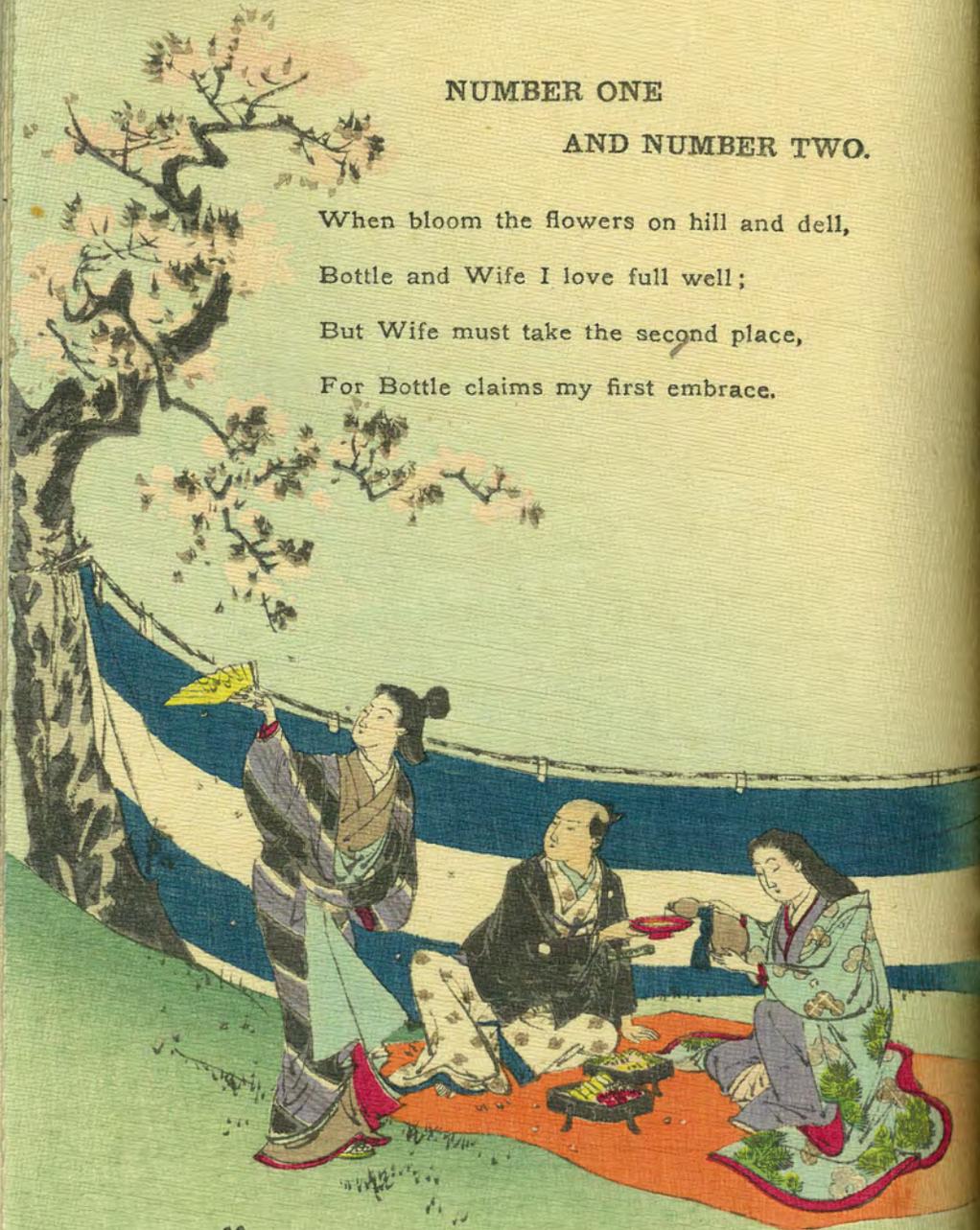
THE RECKONING.

Age draweth nigh: our hairs are grey,
Of years that fruitless passed away,
When age demandeth a strict account,
How the blush of shame in our cheeks will mount!

NUMBER ONE

AND NUMBER TWO.

When bloom the flowers on hill and dell,
Bottle and Wife I love full well;
But Wife must take the second place,
For Bottle claims my first embrace.



FALSE REMEDIES.

Out on you, Frogs! I sold my lands,
Because I could not stand your clatter,
But now that my field is in other hands,
Your croak has become a more awful matter.

CONFUCIUS MISUNDERSTOOD.

Confucius saith: For three years long, a son
Should mourn his fathers death, nor in those years
Begin new undertakings. Did he mean
That yonder fool, for three long years, should let
The rain come dripping through the unmended roof?



URASHIMA.

When the dull spring-days wove themselves in mist
Veiling their face—one day, with lonesome steps,
I walked along the Suminoye beach,
And watched the fishing-boats, that, here and there,
Moved on the waters. Then there came to life
An ancient legend, buried in my mind.

In Midzunoye's village once there dwelt
A fisher-man, Urashima by name:
His son was famed through all the
country side,
A skilful hand at catching lordly

Tai ⁽¹³⁾



And nimble *Katsuo* ⁽¹³⁾; but now seven days
Had gone, since last the boy, returning home,
Had seen his parents. He had rowed to sea
Over the dim horizon out of sight of land,
When suddenly—before him, from the waves,
Arose a maiden fair—the sea-king's daughter.
The ocean-maid, the youthful fisher lad,
Stood thus and gazed, and, in their hearts, the glow
Of love was felt—Exchange of kisses crowned
Their plighted troth. Thus happily they went
To the immortal isles. With arms entwined
The lovers entered by the lofty porch



That guards the sea-god's palace,—there to dwell
For ever, free from care, and free from change,—
Alike the change of age and change of death.
A few days passèd thus: and then the youth,
Unthinking, spoke in folly to his bride:
“Now let me to my home return awhile
To see my father and my mother dear.
To-morrow will I hasten back to thee.”



Thus he: but, as they parted, spoke his wife:—
“Think'st thou to this fair land to come again,
And live with me in love as hitherto,
Then take this casket with thee'—but beware
Thou ope it not”

—With that she gave
A lacquered box, carved and inlaid with gold,
And with repeated warnings bade him heed
To keep it tightly shut.

With eager haste
That marked not half her words, Urashima,
Burning to tell his strange good fortune, ran
Along the well known road:—but lo! a change!
The old familiar home he seeks in vain,
The old familiar village is no more,
And all his searching fruitless.

Then grim fear
Seized on his heart—“Can this be really so?”



That in the few years I've been living there
All here should thus have changed—, the house, the trees,
The very hedge?"—Then came the thought to him
Of that strange box his wife, with many words
Of warning, gave him, when he parted from her—
And thinking, "If I open it, I'll find
Some magic charm to guide me to my home,"
He raised the lid a space, when, slipping forth,
A thin white cloud passed from it through the air
Floating across the distant sea, to where
The immortal isles repose in verdant sheen.

But when the lad beheld the floating cloud
Moving away, he leaped and sprung at it
With clutchings ineffectual; then, with cries,
He threw himself upon the sand, and wept
Tears of remorse,—for now he knew
his loss.

Yet even as he wept, he felt the strength
Ooze from his bones and muscles, and the glow
Of youthful vigour fading from his frame.
The hand he stretched to heaven, was lean and dry;
His eye had lost its keenness; and the hair,
Which in his anguish from his brow he tore,
Was thin and white—; at last his aged frame
In lonesome weakness fell asleep in death.

Thus mused I, as I walked upon the shore;
And shed a tear for poor

Urashima.



THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1855.

No breath was heard: no murmur of the wind
Whispered on that cold winter's night: the stars
Sparkled in solitude, and in each breast
Reigned a dull sense of void.

The night wore on,
Folks left the streets and lanes,—and silence ruled
Save where in gardens, 'midst late lingering flowers
The cricket's chirp was heard, seeking the dew.

'Tis not yet midnight; but the workman, worn
With the day's varied tasks, has stretched his limbs,
Pleased to be free, and, in his freedom, sleeps
His first deep sleep.

By the uncertain light
Of dimly burning *Andō*, with his wife
Working beside him, sits the shopkeeper,
Casting the day's accounts,—and reckons up
The scant resources of his humble till,

Making his morrow's plans and wondering
'Will there be fuel for to-morrow's needs?'
Here sits the mother with her suckling child,
And lays him at her breast, and fondles him,
Stroking his little back, till, full of milk
He cuddles down to sleep. But mother's love
Thinks ever of her child's prosperity,
And in half-waking dreams she heeds it not
That half the night has gone.



In yonder house

Another mother-dwells—but not so blest:
For, full of care, she turns her to the gods,
And prays for Buddha's help,—with eager hand
Seizes the *moxa* and the medicine chest,
Hoping to save her child, for whose dear life
Gladly she'd give her own. But, all in vain:
Nor doctors' skill nor heavenly Love avail
To stay the hand of fate;—its days are run,
Its little living soul from living flesh
Is parted; and beside the tiny corpse
Hopeless on earth, she sits, and weeps in vain.

But, see, in yonder house, though late the hour,
'Tis bustle and confusion: man
and wife,
In loving emulation, strive to make
Fit preparations for the dawn of joy.
For, when the next day breaks, she whom
they love

As jewel of the house, and carefully
Tend as a flower, their only, lovely girl,
Shall leave her father's for her husband's home.
Slow drags the night for them: but slower still
It passes for the maiden, in whose breast
Sweet hope conflicts with virgin modesty,
With vigorous alterations—What she does,
By way of preparation for the morn,
Displeasing her next moment, is destroyed;
And done again, and once again undone.
Wearied at last, she lies upon the couch,
Yet sleeps not; for the approaching
change of life
Fills her with sweet surmises.

But alas!

We men are weakling creatures; though the night
Be not yet past, whilst yet 'tis called "to-day,"
We rest not in the present, but the heart
Seeks anxious for the coming morrow nor

Recks of foreboding evil! nay, we build
Air-castles for the coming years, nor fear
The ever present evil of the Now,
That waits on every moment, nor delays
Its stroke until to-morrow.

Not a breath,
No murmur of the wind was heard that night;
But, overhead, the lonely-sparkling stars
Kept silent watch.

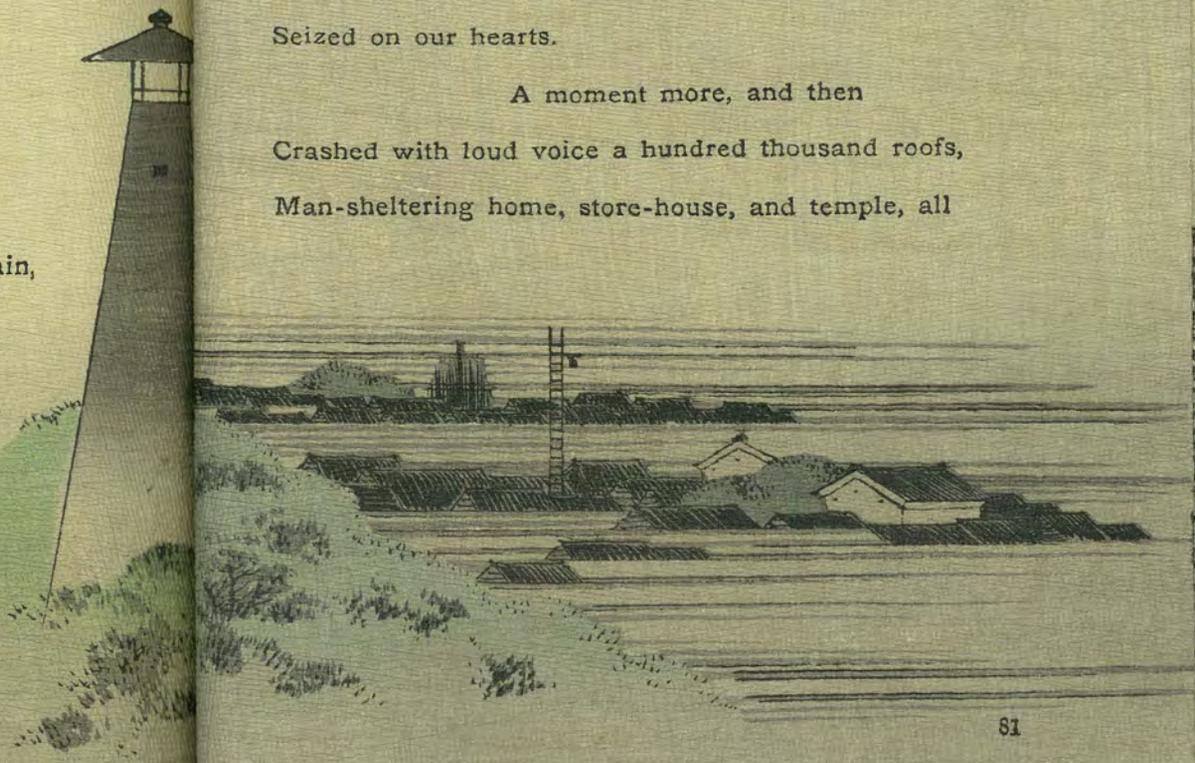
But, suddenly the scene
Changes, and what till now was Paradise
Becomes as Hell;—to them that wept just now,
To them that laughed, to them that groaned in pain,
To them that joyful held their peace, and them
That danced and sang for joy,—to all alike
Broke on the ear one sound, from depths of earth,—
A sound as though with cracking thunder-peals
A mountain burst asunder.

Mightily
Uprose the ground, and swayed the firm-set earth,

As when the stormy sea, angered by gales
Swells into breakers.

—Ne'er shall man forget
That dreadful midnight ('twas the second night
Of the tenth month of Ansei's second year) !
It was a night of pale and trembling horror,
As though the skies were falling and the globe
Were cracking into fragments; such a fear
Seized on our hearts.

A moment more, and then
Crashed with loud voice a hundred thousand roofs,
Man-sheltering home, store-house, and temple, all



Totter and shake, rise up and fall, at last
Collapse in ruin—: the pale inhabitants
Bleeding and mangled, lie beneath the weight
Of whelming roofs that should have sheltered them,
In countless numbers.

Can man's speech avail
To tell the chaos of confusion, when
Thousands of walls came toppling, and the tiles
Fell thundering from the gables? or describe
The terror shrieking from each ruined heap?

Then when the earthquake's strength was almost spent,
And the long waves came gentler, and the crash

Of falling homes and timbers ceased, there rose,
Like sound of ocean breakers, o'er the town,
A sea of human voices, cries and groans;
Here parents sought their children, and here babes
Were whimpering for their mothers; cries for help,
As from the grave—with slowly-dying strength,—
Rise from the mangled living, quick entombed,
In gruesome sepulchres, crashing beams
And jamming pillars, mixed with falling tiles
And showering rubbish.

Who can tell the depths
Of endless misery?—Deeper than these depths,
Behold a lower depth of
fear and woe.



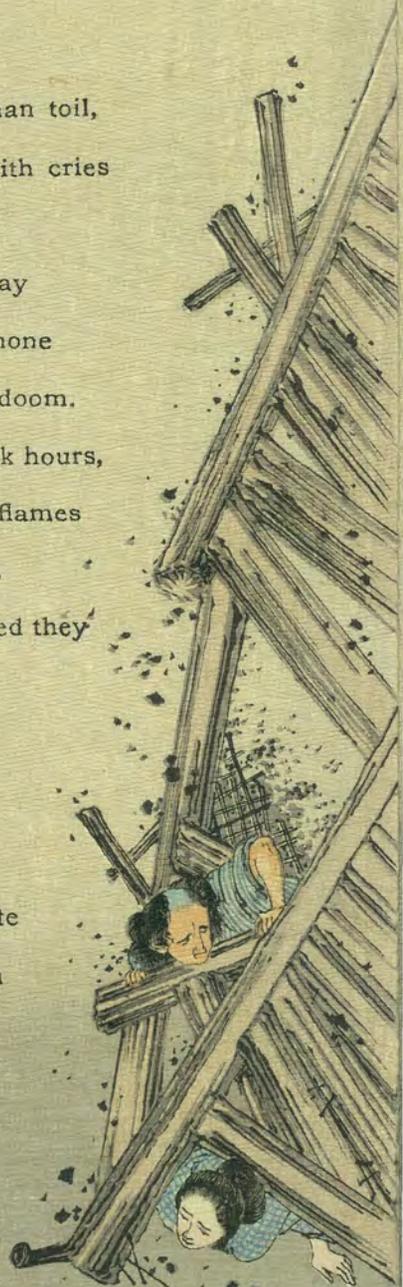
For scarce the earth, once more, had learned to stand
Firm and unmoved, when, lo! the sky around
Assumed a bright red garment, and the night
From blackest hue became as bright as day.
Yet 'twas no sun that shed its warming rays;
But, from the ruins of the fallen streets,
Broke forth fierce flames, and o'er the chaos-heaps
Raged with tumultuous speed; the waves of flame
Rolled upwards to the flaming vault of Heaven.
Here raged the sacrificial fire, and here,
Bound fast with cords of ruin, lay in
 pain
The tortured victims.

 As the flames approach,
The fear of death, with ever growing strength
Of scorching heat and choking smoke, lays hand
On each poor prisoner,—With
 desp'rate strain,
They strive to break the bands that
 fetter them,



Till, wearied with their more than human toil,
They cease the fruitless combat, and with cries
That piteous rouse the pitiless echoes, pray
For rescuing help. But rescue is there none
To step between the victims and their doom.
Unnumbered thousands in those few dark hours,
By falling beams, by choking smoke, by flames
Of hellish fire, met their wretched fate,
In helpless pain. Yet scarce less wretched they
That 'scaped the encircling death, and
 lived to mourn
Their loved ones' loss.

 Here man and wife
Sleeping in peace together, by swift fate
Are cut asunder; for the crashing beam
Crushing her spouse, the wife,
 through broken floor
Falling unscathed, from underneath
 the house



'Scapes danger. 'Neath the heavy rafters, groans
In pain a matron, whom her husband seeks
Distressfully to save, the ponderous tree
Mocking his feeble efforts.

Nearer still

Crackle the red-tongued flames: can
no god save?

Or must he see her—miserable sight!
Burning before his eyes?

From yonder house

With careful haste, they clear the
charred remains

Of tiles and timbers, seeking to release
Mother and children from the narrow
vault

Of cellar:—there she rests, faithful
to death,

Pale with death's anguish, but her
outstretched hand

Still grasps her infant's feet.



Thus cruel death

Conquers its thousands: some in midst of joy,
And some in grief and mourning; none of them
Foreboding change of coming ill, and none
Prepared for hasting death.

Now must I tell

A tale of wonder. Here the father, called
To nightly business, was away from home;
The mother watching o'er the house and bairns;
Two boys on either side of her were laid,—
The eldest,—whilst the third was fast asleep
In nurse's arms.

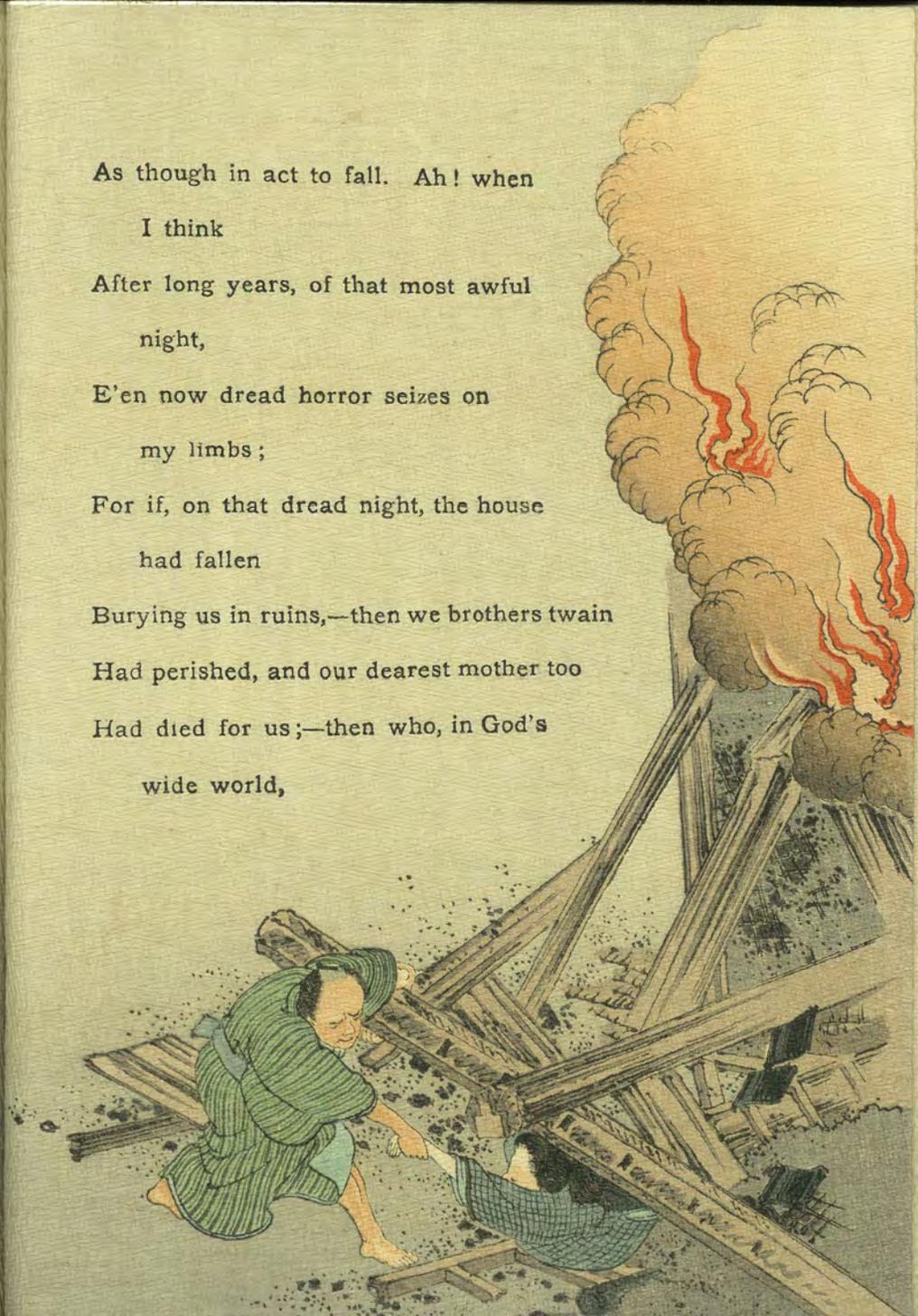
But when the dreadful cry
Of "earthquake!" loud was raised on every side,

The maid forgot her duty, thinking only
How to preserve herself, threw down the babe,
And hurried trembling from the tottering house.
But as it rocked, the mother seized the babe,
And, with repeated warnings, strove to rouse
The sleeping boys, whom, with one hand she shook,
Whilst with the other firm her babe she clutched.
Thus by the earth-waves was she tossed about,
Like skiff on ocean, for some time in vain
Striving to rouse their slumbers.

When at last,
Half wake, half dreaming, from the house they ran
After their mother, lo! the earth was still,
Though on all sides the purple-rising flame
Tinted the glowing skies.

“How marvellous
Our 'scape from nearing danger!—for our house
Stood where no house, save those of newer build
(Which ours was not), had stood against the shocks
Of tossing Nature,—stood,—but leaning on one side,

As though in act to fall. Ah! when
I think
After long years, of that most awful
night,
E'en now dread horror seizes on
my limbs;
For if, on that dread night, the house
had fallen
Burying us in ruins,—then we brothers twain
Had perished, and our dearest mother too
Had died for us;—then who, in God's
wide world,



Had known her sacrifice, that she
had died
With us, when but for us she might
have lived?

Oh! never never shall my heart
forget
That night of mother's love:
who thought of us,
Nor recked of danger to herself. O Love!
Love of a mother, thou art wondrous deep!

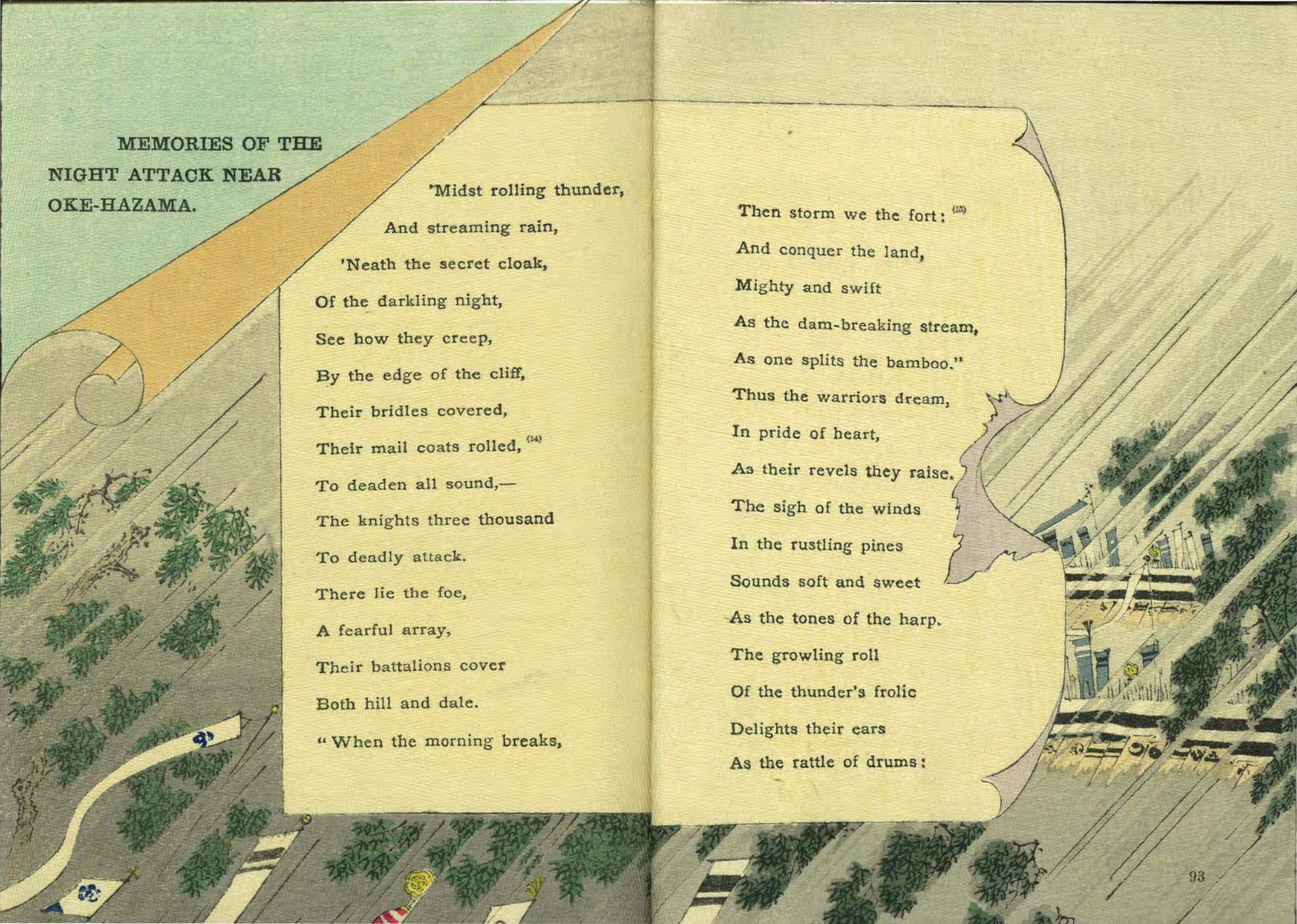
Not only on that night hast thou had care
For us and ours—nay, further, furthermore,
More often than my feeble tongue can tell,
Thy faithfulness hath watched and shielded us!

Of thee, my dear dead mother, must I think
Whene'er the earth quakes at my feet, and think
How many more perchance had lived, had they



Been blest with such a mother as thou wast,
Of thee, my dear dear dead mother, must I think
When e'er the earth quakes at my feet; and if
Again today, as on that dreadful night,
The ghost-like Horror should return on earth,
Then surely many a mother, for her babes,
In noble self-forgetfulness, would risk
Her life, as thou didst for us once. Oh Love!
Love of a mother, thou art great and deep;
Praised for ever be thy faithfulness."



The illustration depicts a landscape with a river in the foreground, a hillside with trees, and a fort on a hill in the background. The fort has several buildings and a flag. The scene is set in a valley with a river winding through it. The fort is situated on a hillside, and there are trees and a path leading up to it. The overall style is that of a traditional Japanese woodblock print or a similar artistic style.

MEMORIES OF THE
NIGHT ATTACK NEAR
OKE-HAZAMA.

'Midst rolling thunder,
And streaming rain,
'Neath the secret cloak,
Of the darkling night,
See how they creep,
By the edge of the cliff,
Their bridles covered,
Their mail coats rolled, ⁽¹⁴⁾
To deaden all sound,—
The knights three thousand
To deadly attack.
There lie the foe,
A fearful array,
Their battalions cover
Both hill and dale.
“When the morning breaks,

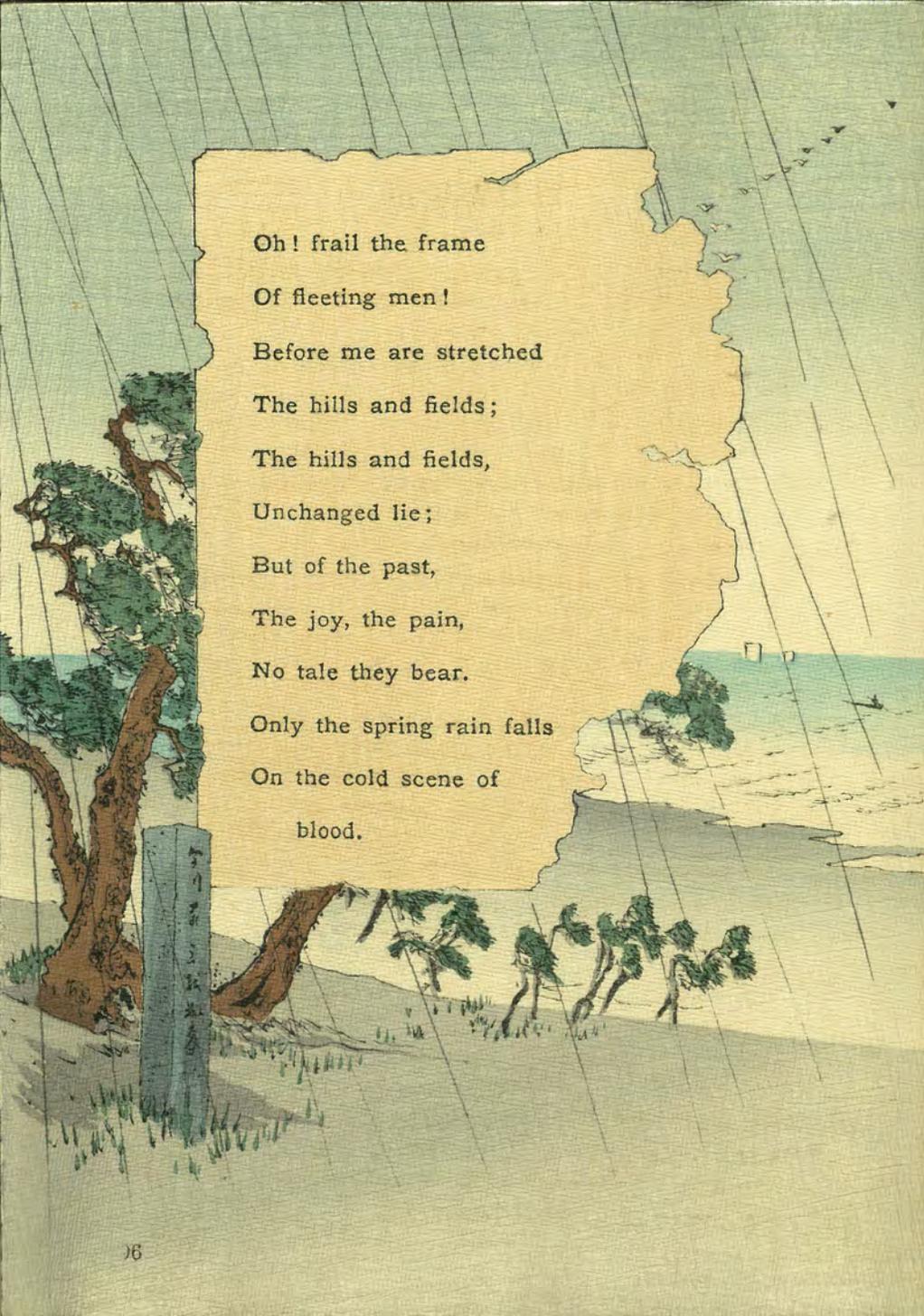
Then storm we the fort: ⁽¹⁵⁾
And conquer the land,
Mighty and swift
As the dam-breaking stream,
As one splits the bamboo.”
Thus the warriors dream,
In pride of heart,
As their revels they raise.
The sigh of the winds
In the rustling pines
Sounds soft and sweet
As the tones of the harp.
The growling roll
Of the thunder's frolic
Delights their ears
As the rattle of drums:

"Then fall to the feast,
Unloose the clasp
Of the sword-belt strong,
And dance and sing."

But as in the feast
They turned and sang,
And midnight brought
The noisiest dance,
A war-shout rose
Around their camp,
And e'er they could say
 "To arms! to arms!!
 'Tis a night attack;"
Spears whistled around them
Thicker than rain,
And the foeman's blade
Made wind in their ears.
Then fell the heavens,

And gaped the earth,
At the fearsome sight.
Quick as the lightnings
That pierce the clouds,
There fell and died
Two thousand knights,
As the pearly drops
Of dew on the grass.
Oh! futile is life,





Oh! frail the frame
Of fleeting men!
Before me are stretched
The hills and fields;
The hills and fields,
Unchanged lie;
But of the past,
The joy, the pain,
No tale they bear.
Only the spring rain falls
On the cold scene of
blood.

NOTES.

1. *Manyōshū*, "Collection of 10,000 leaves," the oldest anthology in Japan, consisting of 20 volumes, arranged A. D. 757.
2. *Kagura*, songs used at Shinto festivals.
3. *Yufu-ura*, "Evening Oracle." The chance words of persons passing in the evening were often taken as the answers to questions in the mind.
4. *Kokinshū* or *Kokin-wakashū*, "Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern," arranged A. D. 905.
5. *Saibara*, a kind of ancient popular lyric.
6. The greatest earthquake in modern times. Scene: Tokyo, where it is estimated that 104,000 persons lost their lives. The author is the Director of the College of Literature in the Imperial University at Tokyo.
7. The Battle at Okehazama, A. D. 1560, where Ota Nobunaga, with 8000 men, conquered his opponent Imagawa Yoshimoto, who, with 45000 men, lay encamped at Kutsukake, Otaka, and Kasadera, and slew him.
8. Gold, Silver, Emerald Ruby, Beryl, Coral, Agate.
9. *Sakikusa*, a kind of moss (*Lycopodium*).
10. *Koshi*, a province in the north of Japan.
11. Composed, 19. July A. D. 749, on the first appearance of clouds after a three weeks' drought.
12. In Japanese: Tanna tanna
Tariya ranna
Tarichiri ra.
13. *Tai*, sea-bream; *Katsuwo*, bonito.
14. The long skirts of the coat of mail were rolled up during a march to prevent their clashing together.
15. Nobunaga's castle of Kiyosu.

APPENDIX.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THIS BOOK HAVE BEEN EXECUTED BY THE FOLLOWING ARTISTS:

Title page, dedication page, pages 4, 10-11, 14, 16-19, 21-29, 34/35, 38, 44-51, 56-61, 96 and last page by **Mishima Yunosuke** 三島雄之助, art-name **Shōsō** 蕉窓 of Tokyo, pupil of the well known painter **Kikuchi Yōsai** 菊地容齋 (1783-1878).

Pages 12/13, 30/31, 32, 52/53, 62/65, 66, 67, 78/79 by **Suzuki Sōtarō** 鈴木宗太郎, art-name **Kwa-son** 華郎. School of **Yōsai**. Tokyo.

Pages 68/69, 70-75, 77, 80-91, 92-95 by **Arai Shūjirō** 新井周次郎, art-name **Yoshimune** 芳宗, *Ukiyo-e* style. Tokyo.

Pages 41-43, 54/55, 64 by **Kajita Teitarō** 梶田鼎太郎, art-name **Hanko** 半古, *Shijo* school, style of **Yōsai**. Tokyo.

Pages 36/37 and 39/40 by **Yeda Masajirō** 枝貞次郎, art-name **Sadahiko** 貞彦. Imitator of **Ōkyō** 應舉, the founder of the *Shijo* school.

The illustrator of page 31, an imitator of **Eitaku** 永濯 (1845-1888), wishes to remain anonymous.

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JAPANESE JINGLES.

OYUCHASAN with Music.

KOHANASAN „ „

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THE ONLY COODLES.

A NILE VOYAGE.

THE RAT'S PLAINT.

THE FAIRY FOXES.

JAPANESE TOPSYTURVY-DOM.

JAPANESE PICTURES OF JAPANESE LIFE.



