

MYTHOLOGICAL JAPAN

THE SYMBOLISMS OF MYTHOLOGY
IN RELATION TO JAPANESE ART

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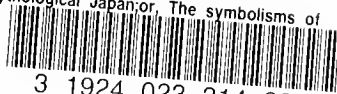
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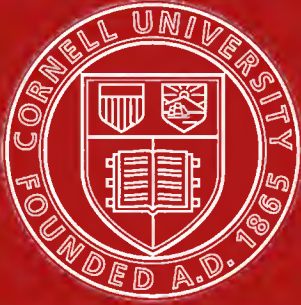
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CALIGRAPHIC SYMBOL OF
LONGEVITY.

十
二



Mythological Japan

OR

The Symbolisms of Mythology in Relation to Japanese Art

With Illustrations, Drawn in Japan, by Native Artists

BY

ALEXANDER F. OTTO

AND

THEODORE S. HOLBROOK

PHILADELPHIA

Drexel Biddle

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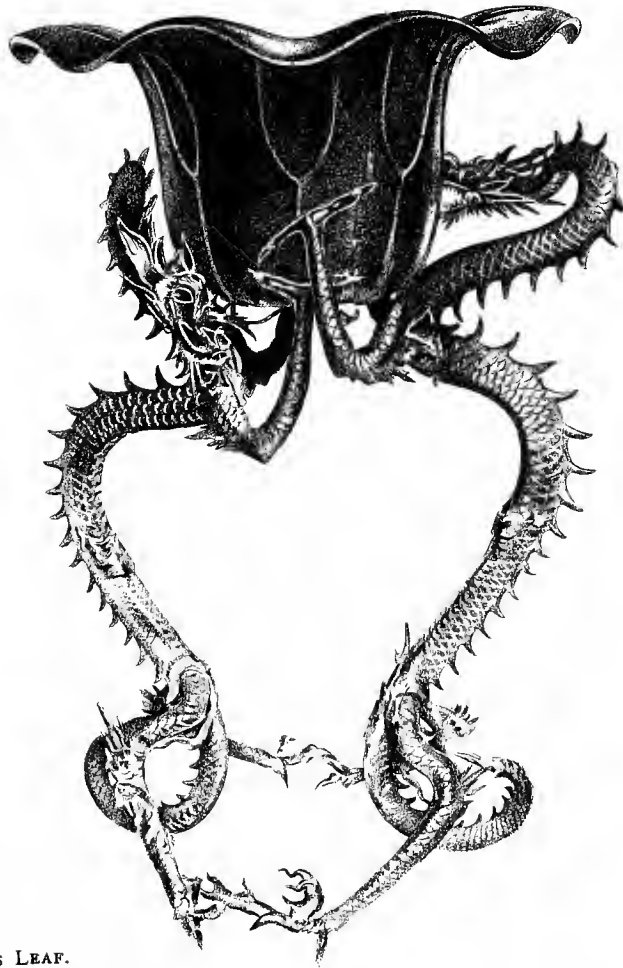
BY

ANTHONY J. DREXEL BIDDLE.

FOREWORD.

Having sought throughout the East, and especially Japan, for types of Oriental religious art, I always enjoy seeing in my mind's eye those mythological monuments which so often charmed me when it was my privilege to dwell among them. The authors having now shown me advanced sheets of their deeply interesting work, "Mythological Japan," I am convinced that those who have not the leisure or convenience to visit the charming country of the Mikados, are to be congratulated that in this exquisite work they may see that fairyland as in a mirror. The faithful and artistic manner in which many of the pictures are rendered is an important feature in this beautiful book.

MAXWELL SOMMERVILLE,
Professor of Glyptology,
University of Pennsylvania.



BRONZE LOTUS LEAF.

Supported by two dragons.
The lotus symbolizes purity,
the dragon, power.
From private collection.

MOTIF.

The instinctive desire to know the innermost meaning of things has always been an important quality in the mind of man, a quality particularly worthy in connection with the interesting lore of the East, where myths have ever held a sacred place.

From the first, the decoration of the ornamental wares of Dai Nippon have represented all the symbols sacred to Orientals, the purer porcelains often bearing the seal names of royalty. Delightfully poetic representations of the thoughts and beliefs, events both mythical and real, Nature's foliage and flora, and a great deal more that absorbs the Japanese mind, become willing captives in the hands of the clever artisans of Japan. The underlying motive in this inspired labor—to do homage to their beloved mythology—is apparent in all their works.

While collectors the world over revel in the magnificent colorings and forms of Japan's art objects, it is the mysterious and the mythical in their composition that most charms and captivates.

It is, therefore, with the interpretation of mythology's symbolisms employed in the beautifying of the ceramics, bronzes, carved and lacquered woods of Japan that the present volume has to do.

If, by its aid, the ornamental wares with which our eyes have already become familiar, and which have already been enjoyed and valued for their beauty of form and coloring—if these begin to have a renewed and deeper significance, this glance at Mythological Japan will surely not have been in vain.

The authors' personal investigations have been ably supplemented by much interesting data furnished by the various works on Japanese arts and beliefs; acknowledgment is also due Mrs. Grant B. Schley, Baronne d' Alexandry d' Oregiani, Messrs. A. A. Vantine & Co., Professor Maxwell Sommerville, Mr. James I. Raymond, Mr. Rufus E. Moore, and others, through whose courtesy many interesting specimens have been loaned for reproduction in the following pages.

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MONJU, AN INCARNATION
OF BUDDHA.

Seated on grotesque lion.
Emblematic of ecstatic wisdom.

From a specimen in carved wood,
lacquered in gold, two hundred
and fifty years old.

From the Buddhist Temple of
Prof. Maxwell Sommerville,
University of Pennsylvania.

FUSIYAMA.

Fusiyama, that stupendous triumph of Nature, towering with a majestic glory over the Land of the Dragon Fly as well as o'er the history of the people with whom it dwells—that mysterious, impressive, snow-peaked “Queen of Mountains,” to dream of which is an omen of good fortune—symbolizes to the Japanese, success in life and triumph over obstacles, whatever they may be. Artists and poets have drawn on noble Fuji for inspiration more than on any other object in the Island Empire, with the single exception of Buddha; mythology honors it with the recognition due its sublimity and magnificence; the traveler never wearies in describing its kaleidoscopic wonders. Can one question then, the sentimentality of the Japanese in making their Fuji the predominant note in literature, song and verse?

Mrs. Hugh Fraser's “Letters from Japan” gives Fuji one of the most exquisite settings ever bestowed on a gem of Nature—a setting from which we have gleaned, at times, in treating the present theme. The author speaks of this peerless mount as:

“A marble pyramid against a sapphire sky.

“Mists were gathered everywhere about its feet, as though the mountain goddess had but just dropped her robe that the sun might look upon her beauty; then invisible hands seemed to be raising the airy garment higher and higher, 'til the veil swept over the proud white crest and the vision was gone.”

It seems that of the thousands on thousands of pilgrims ascending Fusiyama, only a small number have been women, and they only of late years. Fuji San, the Goddess of the Mountain, was a destroyer of women, owing to her deep hatred of the sex, thus keeping female pilgrims away. She is supposed to have quarreled with all the other gods, and to now dwell in solitude on Fuji, her mountain throne.

As “the mists surround its snowy crest, so do a thousand and one quaint legends hover over Fuji,” one telling us in a fascinating way of Biwa, the Lake of the Lute, the discovery of which was simultaneous with the creation of Fusiyama.

From his Bridge of Heaven, the God Izanami created the “Islands of the Dragon Fly,” enriching them with verdure and foliage, while its water courses came from the tears shed by Izanagi, the consort of Izanami, who sorrowed long and deep at a rebuff from her lord. The land was a glorious one, and the people who came from the gods to dwell therein were indeed a happy people. But their halcyon days were destined to end: one night all Nature rose suddenly in revolt, and an awful quaking of the earth brought terror to the fair land. When morning came, blest with the sun of the Goddess Amaterasu, lo! there lay a lute-

FUSIYAMA.—CONTINUED.

shaped lake in the midst of Omi, a gift of liquid beauty, all the more wondrous for its sudden advent and sparkling purity. Because of the resemblance of its outline to the musical instrument of the Japanese, it was called "Biwa, the Lake of the Lute," and ere long, it became a place musical with the notes of many thousand festal times.

If the people of Omi suffered terrors during that awful night, they were not alone, for a place known as Hakone, many miles distant, shared Omi's fright and an equal surprise when daylight came. While Omi received its Biwa, Hakone awoke to find its Fuji, garbed in all its grandeur, a monument to the goodness of the gods, a symbol of enduring strength and power. The mountain received its name Fusi-yama, and, as the years passed by, the people became accustomed to their new neighbor; cosy hamlets and bustling villages soon nestled round it, the inhabitants dwelling in the "same fancied security as did the Pompeiians at the foot of Vesuvius, before Nature, in one of her angry moods, breathed fiery visitation over the city and its inhabitants."

It was during the Hoyei reign, 1704-1710 A. D., that the seemingly peaceful Fuji began to give evidence of internal unrest, followed by an awful visitation that destroyed scores on scores of villages and thousands of their people.

But, notwithstanding the many painful memories of Fusi-yama's disquiet and destructiveness, all seem to have been blotted out by the more potent power of its present glory, for in all Japanese literature nothing but terms of endearment and adoration are to be found, such as the "Beautiful Mountain," "Great Fusi-yama," or "Queen of Mountains."

MAKUDSU KOZAN.

A FOREMOST POTTER OF JAPAN.

Foremost among the more talented potters of Japan, and esteemed above all others for his wondrous creations that prove so instructive from a mythological standpoint, is one Kozan Miyagawa.

This "potter of a thousand themes," as one appreciative writer terms him, is a native of Makudsu-ga-hara, which probably accounts for the commercial name he assumed at the outset of his career. He first came into prominence in the early sixties, when he founded kilns at Oto, near Yokohama.

Makudsu's attention was primarily devoted to the imitation of Satsuma faience for export, and so faithfully did he accomplish his self-imposed mission, that even connoisseurs found it a task to distinguish between the genuine crackle faience and decoration and the Makudsu productions.

In common with other famous potters of the day, he did not sign his pieces, which so increased the difficulty of distinguishing between his handiwork and that which he copied, that many of the world's choicest collections contained his specimens—sometimes tea jars, sometimes tea bowls and koros—duly classified as "Old Satsuma."

But within the past twenty years, collectors have become expert enough to discern the slightest variations, readily recognizing a Kozan product on examination, though this ability is confined to the expert, amateurs still experiencing trouble in detecting points of differentiation so beautiful and characteristic of old Satsuma is this potter's handiwork.

But Kozan's creations have long been prized for their own sake; later on in his career, he won great distinction by reason of his wondrous and original "shadow treatments" of Japan's flora, storks and dragons, while his monochrome, flambe, crackle and other glazes instantly placed him on an enviable footing with the workers in porcelain and faience of the world—conspicuous evidence of royal appreciation being his official appointment as "Potter to the Emperor."

A KOZAN VASE.

In porcelain, showing design of bamboo in cobalt blue on ground of white, the bamboo symbolizing rectitude and long life.

A modern piece from private collection.



TSUKI-NI- HOTOTOGIS.

[THE MOON AND THE CUCKOO.]

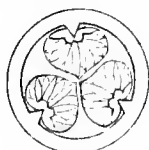
Some of Japan's finest decorative treatments show the Cuckoo flying across the face of the Moon.

In both China and Japan it is supposed that the Cuckoo's note is like the human voice; when its cry "fujioki!" is heard by the wayfarer, he instantly thinks of his home and dear ones, interpreting the bird's call, "return," as a note of warning that danger is in store for him should he pursue his journey.

Tsuki-ni-Hototogis has another interesting significance—that of temporal advancement and honor, owing to its identity with the legend of the archer Yorimasa, who was richly rewarded and honored by his emperor for destroying a fearful creature—part monkey, tiger and dragon.

MITSU-AOI.

The crest of the renowned Tokugawa family, representing three leaves of the kamo-aoi, or asarum.





SAKURA.

[THE CHERRY TREE.]

The Japanese have long regarded their beloved Cherry as the symbol of patriotism. Happy, indeed, a people with so delightful an incentive to loyalty as the unobtrusively fragrant, pink and rose-like blossom of the Cherry tree! Their artists delight to show it with the pheasant, whose brilliant plumage harmonizes so faultlessly with the Cherry bloom. In fact, all Japan unites in doing homage to this, its "King of Flowers," wherever the magnificent groves of Cherry trees are to be found; for they are cultivated for their blossoming features alone. The most famous Cherry grove is Yoshina, with its thousand or more trees, then comes the garden of Ugeno, for three centuries the pleasure ground of the people of Tokio, where the exquisite blossom-glow of white and pink recalls one of Nature's loveliest sunsets. Tokio itself has won renown as the "City of Cherry Blossoms"; row after row of trees have been planted with mathematical precision, and their laden boughs form an inspiring sight. When the breezes play wild havoc with the blossoms, and all the air is filled with fragrant petals, it seems as though glad Spring had forgotten its mission and that Winter had bestowed, with prodigal hand, a storm of snow-flakes on the land.





HOTEI, THE GOD OF GOOD THINGS.

With fan, the emblem of command.

A specimen in pottery and porcelain,
from collection of

Mr. Theodore S. Holbrook.

OSHIDORI.

[THE MANDARIN DUCKS, OR BEAUTIFUL DUCKS.]

The quaint legend of the mating of these inseparable turtle doves of Japan tells us that the drake could not find a suitable mate in his own flock, so wandered to a far-away land where he encountered one of a totally different species, from which he chose his affinity. Thus artists always show the male and female "beautiful ducks" together, the symbol of intermarriage and conjugal felicity.

Most Oriental study however, is bestowed on the duck Oshi Kamo, noted for its beautiful plumage, the neck and breast being red, while the head is crowned with a magnificent topping. Aside from its individuality in the matter of coloring, the position of the tail and wings gives it an unusually striking appearance.





FUJI.

[THE WISTARIA]

If one could be transported to the renowned Wistaria arbors of Kameido Temples, and there view the masses of delicate, purplish clusters of Wistaria, there would be slight cause for wonderment that this most impressive of Oriental flowers is emblematic of youth and Spring-time; for surrounded on every side by so gorgeous a display of Nature's flora, thoughts of life's glad morning with its buoyant love and happiness come most to mind.

When artists fondly couple the cuckoo with the Wistaria, it means the approach of Summer, as full bloom is reached in May; the purple Wistaria is often accompanied by the pheasant, the purple blossom being venerated more than the white, though both are conspicuous in Japanese decorative work.

The flower is highly prized by all classes, and April and May invariably find the people in the gardens indulging in gay festivities, drinking rice wine and writing prettily phrased verses in the Wistaria's honor, or in praise of Spring. The verses are attached to the budding clusters, the character of the blossoms' development being accepted as portentous of good or evil in their future married life: a beautiful and romantic custom, thoroughly typical of the quaint and fascinating folk-lore of Japan.



KAGI, THE KEYS OF THE GODOWN.

The emblem of wealth,
the godown or warehouse being
the repository of valuable
possessions.

SEKICHIKU.

[THE CARNATION.]

The Carnation is "The Little Darling" among the flora of Japan; wherever you see its beauty portrayed, in verse or in art, you may know 'tis expressive of the most endearing sentiments.

It has the distinction to number among "The Seven Plants of Autumn," and, like the morning glory, grows wild on grassy moors and in fertile valleys. The Garden-of-a-hundred-flowers, or the Hiyak-kwa-yen, is one of the delightful memories of the Island Empire by reason of its seven autumnal plants, which by the way, are often associated with the wild boar, horse and deer in Oriental decorations.



1881

MOMIJI-NI-SHIKA.

[THE MAPLE TREE AND THE STAG.]

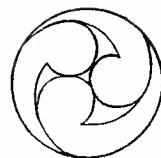
The Maple typifies sentiment, and the presentation of a branch of Autumn Maple implies that one's affections have changed like the leaves that Fall's relentless winds have blighted. The white stag and the Maple in association signify longevity, while the spotted stag symbolizes gentleness.

To appreciate the Japanese motive in bestowing a sentimental significance on the Maple, one should gain some notion of the gorgeousness of its foliage.

Few pens can adequately portray it's beauty and amazing variety. As Nature's pigments gradually tinge the Maple's myriad leaves, all their perfect symmetry of form and faultless division of color impress the beholder with unbounded admiration. Imagine, if you will, more than three hundred distinct species of a single tree, and you have a dim conception of the unnumbered beauties of Japan's flower-hued emblem of sentiment.

Carvings, porcelains and lacquers are enriched by its decorations, and artists often represent the falling leaf and running water, adhering with inimitable fidelity to every detail of coloring and form.





MITSU-DOMOE.

The triple form of the source of life is but one of the symbolisms given this figure ; it is also the representation of fire, air and water, Nature's three great principles. It protects the household from the evils of fire, flood and theft, and will be found many times in Japanese decorative work, as well as on the mallet of Daikoku.



YANAGI-NI-TSUBAKURO

YANAGI-NI-TSUBAKURO.

[THE WILLOW TREE AND THE SWALLOW.]

Another tree enjoyed and appreciated by the Japanese is the supple and graceful Willow ; that they understand its qualities is evinced by the symbolism they give it—considerateness and patience, attributes well earned by the Willow's gentle and yielding nature, obedient to every breath of wind. A swallow perched on its swaying branches typifies grace and docility.

MATSU-NI-TSURU.

[THE PINE TREE AND THE CRANE.]

We wonder not that the appreciative Oriental lingers so lovingly over the faithful and stately Pine ; he pictures it in verse and song and in works of art, knowing full well that it typifies stability of character and eternity. Living for centuries, ever green and ever stable, the Japanese have thought it worthy a saying all its own :

“Fu ro sen nen no aki.”
(It never fades even throughout a thousand Autumns.)

In a ballad, “The Spirit of the Pine Tree,” the Pine is pictured as emblematic of conjugal contentment and absolute happiness, which only comes where mutual sympathy reigns.

It seems that long life and happiness is implied when this faithful tree is coupled with the bamboo, crane or tortoise ; particularly so, however, when in company with the crane, a bird highly prized and venerated by the Japanese because of its supposed longevity.

As frequently as the crane appears in art, it has never been represented as inanimate, such a treatment being incongruous where longevity is implied.



ZENI.



An iron or copper coin of little value, emblematic of moderate wealth.

KANEBUKURO

A purse of money, symbolic of wealth.



FENG-HWANG.

[THE PHOENIX, OR HO-WO BIRD.]

'Tis no minor office that this most royal bird occupies in the sphere of art and tradition, but one as refined as it is exalted. Known as the sacred Golden Pheasant and the Heavenly Phoenix, it is the generally accepted symbol of rectitude, the male bird (Ho) and female (Wo) often appearing in art and in verse.

It is supposed to abide in the higher regions, only appearing on earth at the birth of an emperor, or as a portend of the birth of some great philosopher or law-giver.

It has the head of a pheasant, the beak of a swallow, the features of a dragon and fish; its plumage is magnificent with the gorgeousness of both peacock and pheasant, its five colors being symbols of the virtues—obedience, uprightness of mind, fidelity, justice, benevolence. While the numerous representations of its head, body and wings are usually alike, its tail is seldom portrayed the same—sometimes it is feathered, at other times it resembles beautiful scroll work.

The most perfect examples of the Phoenix in decorative art appear on antique specimens that were made for royalty, in all probability during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although for the past two hundred years it has frequently been employed in the ornamentation of notable porcelains and ceramics.

To quote a Chinese definition, "The Phoenix is of the essence of water; it was born in the vermilion cave; it perches not but on the most beautiful of all trees; it eats not but of the seed of the bamboo; its body is adorned with the five colors; its song contains the five notes; as it walks it looks around; as it flies, hosts of birds follow it."



IVORY TUSKS, HAND CARVED.

Dragon ornamentation. The specimen in foreground is conceded to be one of the largest pieces of carved ivory in existence.

Collection of A. A. Vantine & Co.



YANG AND YIN.

The white, feminine—the black, masculine. Symbolizing the origin of life on the earth.



101
121

FUDO.

[THE GOD OF PUNISHMENT.]

The sword and the coil of rope which the gigantic God of Punishment is bearing, is used to smite and bind the guilty; the brilliant halo of fire that surrounds his figure forms an appropriate setting, the flames suggesting the total destruction of the dross of mankind's guilt.

KOI.

[THE CARP.]

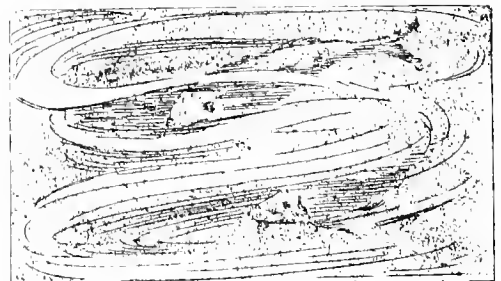
The Carp is essentially the mythological figure for perseverance. If you should chance to arrive in any one of the enchanting cities of Japan on a certain Spring day, you would note everywhere overhead the bright colors of gigantic paper Carp, in commemoration of the Boys' Festival, O Sekku, or Tango. The Koi is the symbol of the male child, an omen of luck, and on the festal day parents raise on a bamboo pole a large paper Carp of red, gray or blue, with glistening scales of silver, one Carp for each son; the younger the son, the larger the fish. As the wind distends the paper nobori, it vainly tries to free itself, thus inciting the child to an ambitious life that will be full of conquests as noble as that of the fabled Carp at the "Dragon Gate." Legends tell us that all fish try to reach this sacred gate by leaping the foaming cataract that intervenes. The Carp, by reason of his superior strength, alone succeeds in scaling the waterfall, and is caught up by a white cloud from heaven, and transformed into a dragon, living thereafter in the regions of happiness above.

Thus the fable of the Carp teaches the Japanese lad that by means of perseverance, pluck and activity he may surmount all the difficulties of life.



SANGOJU.

The precious coral,
emblematic of rarity.



URASHIMA.

[THE JAPANESE RIP VAN WINKLE.]

You have but to hear the dreamy legend of Urashima Taro to know the reason for its inspiring power over the artists of Fair Japan.

On one of the Dragon Isle's balmy days, when soft spring breezes listlessly floated over land and sea, an humble fisher-lad, Urashima Taro by name, left his native shores of Suminoye in his primitive fisher's boat. Intent on luring with temptingly baited line some prize from the laughing waters, he drifted, ere he knew it, far out to sea. The day was nearly spent in fruitless toil when, lo! he caught a tortoise. You must needs know, as did Urashima, that a tortoise is a sacred creature to the Dragon God of the Sea, destined to live a thousand years if its life be spared; thus it happened that the wise lad returned the tortoise to its watery home.

The boat glided on, and on, as Urashima kept at his labor, but naught did he find. At last, lulled by the rippling water and fanned by the softest zephyrs, he fell a-dreaming. And then it was the fair Daughter of the Dragon appeared to him in the form of a beautiful maiden, radiant in the sunset glow with a glory that belongs only to those of the palace of the great sea-god.

It seemed that the tortoise Urashima so thoughtfully released had been the dragon's daughter in disguise; inspired by deepest gratitude, she had thus approached Urashima, to whom she said, "Come home with me, to my father's castle beyond the sea, and if you wish I'll be your flower-wife, for this day you spared my life." Then Urashima's heart was glad, for never had he seen so lovely a being, and he yielded to her winsomeness right willingly.

So she called a great tortoise, which carried them to the Dragon's Palace in the Evergreen Land of perpetual sunshine and brightness, where they lived for centuries in joy and peace.

But the memory of his boyhood's home came back to him o'er and o'er. Try as he would, he could not cast it from his mind, so one fair day he said to the dragon's daughter, "I would go to my father and mother, if but for a moment's time; after one fond look on the dear ones, I will come again to thee and my Palace Beyond the Sea."

The Princess was greatly saddened at the words of Urashima, but she granted his wish, first giving him a casket that would protect him from all harm, providing it was not opened.

Then came the parting, and ere long he was on his way with a gladdened spirit and lightened heart, soon reaching his journey's end. Once in his native village, however, he felt that some great change had come about; his father's home was no more, the people whom he met were strange in features and in dress, even the fields once roved by his childish feet were gone—transformations great, indeed, since the day he had left it, but three short years before, as he believed!

None of the passers-by knew of his father or mother. In vain he asked for news of them, until at length he met an old, old man who said that when a boy he had heard his father tell how Urashima's parents had died of grief on learning that their loved and only son had been swallowed by the sea while fishing, just four hundred years before!

Then he knew he had been in a fairyland, living a charmed existence, with happiness and peace his daily portion. So he yearned long and deep to return to the Princess and his former life; but he knew not how to reach the Palace of the Dragon King, for in the haste of departure he had failed to learn the means. He sought the coast and waited for the tortoise that had brought him, all in vain; at last, in sheer despair, he thought of the box, the precious talisman the Princess had given him, and, forgetting her caution, loosed the silken cord that bound it, when out came a monstrous cloud of the fleeciest white, the very elixir of life and everlasting youth. As it escaped, slowly mounting to the sky, Urashima was transformed into a withered, enfeebled man; thus he fell lifeless to the earth—more than four hundred years of age.

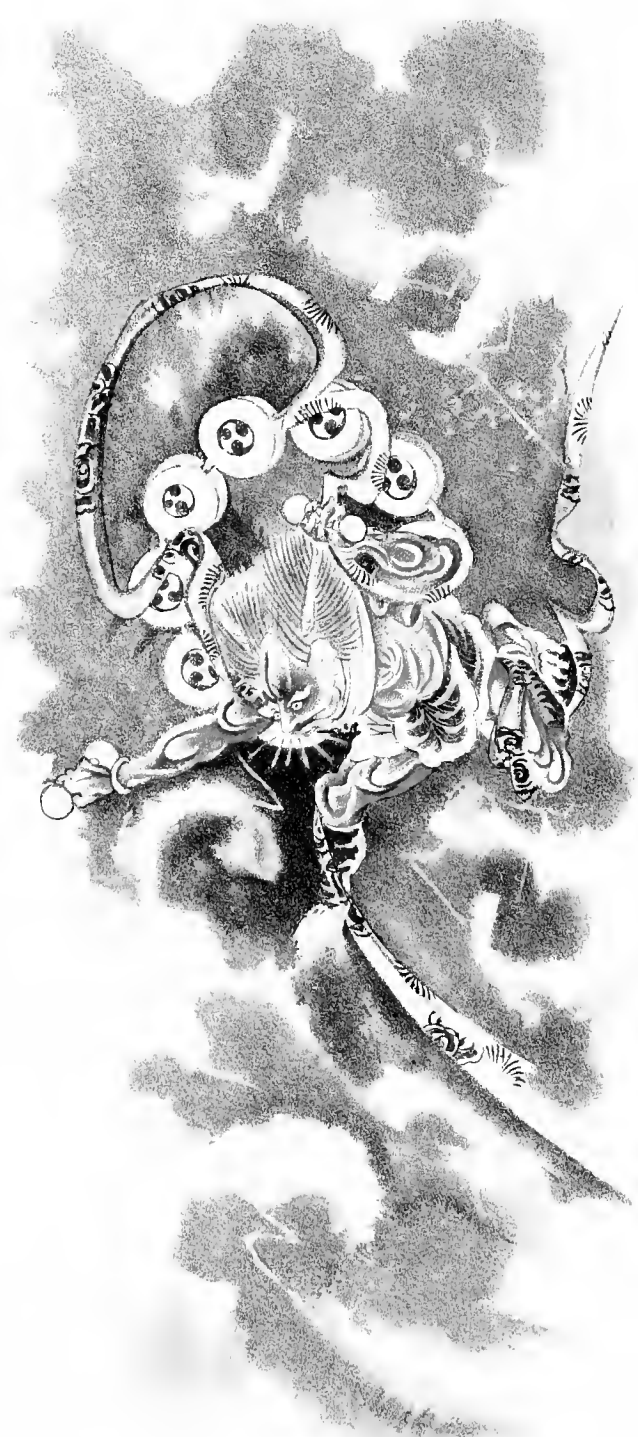


RAIDEN.

[THE GOD OF THUNDER.]

The fierce expression given Raiden, his two goat-like horns, and the semi-circular arrangement of the eight drums that surround him, present one of the most formidable figures in mythology.

Raiden is endowed with the power to produce thunder by striking the drums with more or less vigor, hence the appellation the Japanese have given him, "The God of Thunder."



IKARI, OR ANCHOR.

The symbol of security and safety.



UCHIWA, OR TOUCHIWA.

A fan-like object, used by ancient chieftains as an emblem of authority. Said to insure the safety of those who bear it.



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蓮花

HASU.

[THE LOTUS.]



The flower that blooms to live but a single day, so sensitive to Nature's breath, so timid with its exquisite fragrance, so immaculate in its purity—such is the beautiful Lotus of Japan. Though rising from a lowly bed of gruesome mud, the Lotus is untainted by the place that gave it birth, and is associated with the Spirit Land by the Buddhistic Faith. One of the Buddhist writings thus speaks of its sacred emblem :

"If thou be born in a poor man's hovel,
But hast Wisdom,
Then art thou like the Lotus flower,
Growing out of the mud."

The people of Flowery Japan look upon the Lotus as emblematic of purity, symbolizing the heart that remains unspotted by worldly influences, rising far above the sordidness of life.

The glorified Buddha is almost always represented seated on an eight petalled Lotus, and those of his disciples who gain admission to heaven receive the gracious reward of perfect repose on a pedestal of Lotus Flowers.

Although originally an importation from India, the Lotus is thoroughly Japanese, the people having embodied it in their art and traditions with that fascinating touch of poetic imaginativeness peculiar to their race ; two of the names bestowed upon their Fusiyama, "The Peak of the White Lotus," and the "Lotus Peak," offer picturesque similes too obvious to need comment.



AMATERASU, THE SUN GODDESS.

From a water color.

Collection of Mr. Alexander F. Otto.

AMATERASU- O-MI-KAMI.

[THE SUN GODDESS.]

The Heaven-Shining Amaterasu, ancestress by tradition of the Imperial Family of Japan, constantly concerned herself with the welfare of mankind, sending sunshine to light the day and make the rice fields flourish. Yet with all her goodness and power, she unceasingly encountered the animosity and jealous anger of her brother Susa no-o, the God of Storms; the more the good will and the higher the esteem of the people, the greater his fierce envy proved. When the rice fields were in the zenith of their glory, he would descend to earth with one of his terrific storms, destroying in moments what Amaterasu, with her warming rays, had spent months to accomplish.

Finally, on one memorable occasion, the vindictive Susa-no-o dashed into the presence of Amaterasu and her maidens as they were weaving, so frightening and angering her that she retired to a cave, leaving the earth in total darkness, for without Amaterasu, there could be no sun, and without the sun there could be no day. The people wept and prayed, beseeching her to return, but without avail; as a last resort they appealed to the gods for aid.

Touched by the supplications, Vulcan, the Blacksmith God, responded with his inventive genius, fashioning what tradition is pleased to call the first mirror, a huge disk of burnished metal, rivalling the sun itself in brightness. This was taken by the gods, in company with Suzume, the Goddess of Mirth, to the cavern of Amaterasu, where Suzume gave her famous Kagura dance, causing great hilarity among the gods. Lured by feminine curiosity as to the cause of such commotion at her sacred door, she peered out, and on seeing Suzume, asked why she thus danced and sang.

One of the gods made reply that they rejoiced in honor of a goddess more beautiful than she, and invited Amaterasu to come out and behold her. On advancing toward the mouth of the cave, she was confronted by the wondrous mirror and beheld therein a face of great beauty. Not knowing it to be a reflection of herself, and wondering who her rival was, Amaterasu left her cavern refuge, when suddenly the God of Strong Hands, the Hercules of Japan, rolled an immense boulder before the entrance. This of course prevented her return, and gave the people their glad Sun once more, which brought joy to the land and life to the fields.



BRONZE VASE.

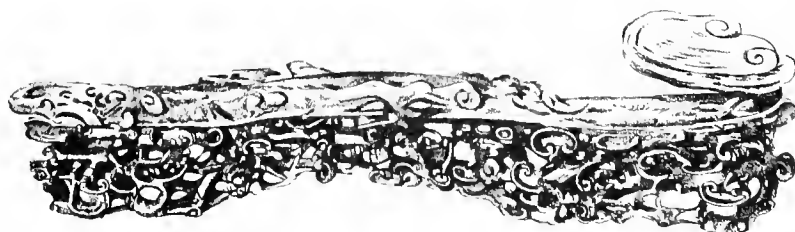
Illustrating one of many adaptations of the Dragon in Japanese art; notable for excellent workmanship and tooling.

Collection of A. A. Vantine & Co.

SHEPHERD'S WAND,
SYMBOL OF AUTHORITY.

Carved in Chinese Jade,
on pedestal of teakwood.

From collection of
Mr. James I. Raymond.



HARA KIRI.

[SEPPUKU, THE HONORABLE DEATH.]

One writer has very appropriately characterized this chivalrous and peculiarly Japanese observance as "A crimson thread running thro' the history of Japan."

Until a generation ago, according to Mr. James L. Bowes' "Japanese Pottery," Hara Kiri was in general practice; even now it is followed by those who adhere to the customs of old Japan, by whom it is regarded as an act as beautiful in execution as it is in theory. For more than six centuries the feudal classes resorted to this mode of self-despatch as an ideal way of avenging an insult, while others employed it when unwilling to survive some family disgrace, or as the surest way of winning posthumous fame.

The paintings, and the decorations on the potteries and porcelains of Japan often picture famous Japanese generals and their followers in the act of committing Hara Kiri, artists undoubtedly receiving their inspiration from countless occurrences—recorded in Japanese history—where this "honorable and dignified" privilege was enjoyed. In one instance more than six thousand of the Hojo army committed Hara Kiri after defeat by the adherents of the Mikado during the wars of the fourteenth century, it being a common circumstance for the followers of a fallen leader to "despatch" themselves that they might die with their master.

In another instance Masashige Kusunoki, Go-Daigo's faithful vassal, was finally defeated after a valorous career, and, feeling powerless to further aid his much loved master, he committed Hara Kiri, followed by one hundred and fifty of his retainers; such patriotism and devotion to his emperor won for him the title of the "Mirror of Stainless Loyalty."

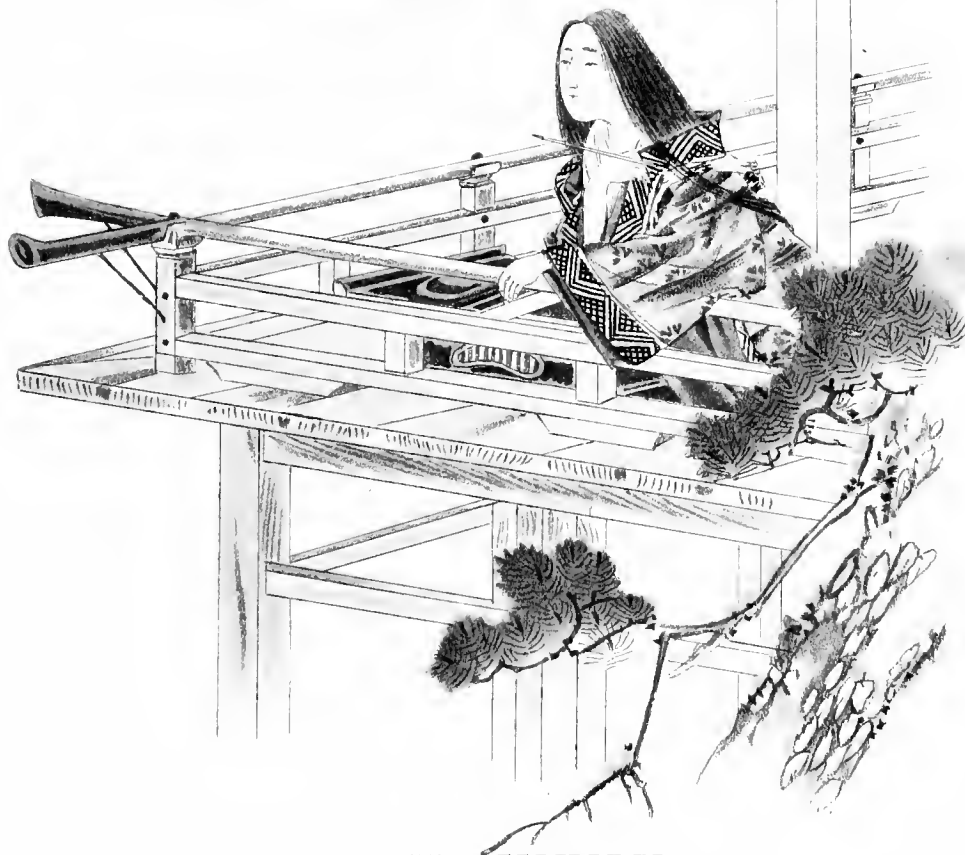
Yet these are only fluttering leaves from volumes of annals where Hara Kiri has played its part.

While somewhat suggestive of duelling, Seppuku differs from it in many essential ways—the Japanese, when insulted by one of equal rank, committed Hara Kiri, his aggressor subsequently doing likewise, rather than bear a stigma on his name.

On receiving the insult, the injured person holds a conference with the members of his family, advising them of the affair. Arrangements for the important ceremony are then made; the unmarried women of the family weave the fibres of the lotus plant into a rope of sufficient length to surround the house, thus preventing evil spirits from entering and carrying away the soul of the departed. A suitable apartment is then secured, the master's sword and a spotlessly white cloth being placed on a mat-like platform.

The ceremony, a beautiful one in many ways, is opened by a priest who bears in his hand a lotus flower, which he places on the sword. The master then ascends the platform, followed by his eldest son, who carries with due reverence the small sword known as wakazashi, with which the fatal act is performed. The priest then takes the lotus from the master's sword and tears it to pieces, scattering the petals over the kneeling man, upon whom he bestows a blessing. At this, the master carefully narates with all the poetry of his nature, the story of the insult, and as the address draws to a close he moves aside the Kamishimo, or ceremonial garment, arranging its folds for the final act. Unflinchingly he grasps in his left hand the wakazashi, and with one deft movement tears open his abdomen from right to left, making a large incision; at the same moment his next of kin takes the sword from the platform, and with one blow severs the master's head from the body.

Pursuant to custom, it now becomes the duty of the deceased's closest relative to inform the aggressor of the completion of the ceremony, through the medium of a missive enclosed in lotus leaves, on receipt of which the one addressed likewise performs Hara Kiri which terminates the family feud.



MURASAKI SHIKIBU.

[JAPAN'S MOST DISTINGUISHED AUTHORESS.]

If you were viewing the ancient temple of Ishiyama, very likely you would be shown the writing box and ink-stone of Japan's famous poetess, Murasaki Shikibu, whose masterpiece "The Genji Monogatari," is regarded as the greatest classic of its age. She is said to have composed her remarkable work in a single night, nearly a thousand years ago; her light was that of the full moon, her resting place a balcony in mid-air, her inspiration, the lovely Biwa, the Lake of the Lute.

As if to repay her in some slight way for so rich an endowment to their literature, the Japanese have immortalized Murasaki Shikibu in picture, verse and song.

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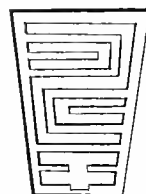
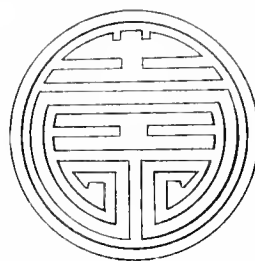
KIYOHIME.

[THE PERSONIFICATION OF
DISAPPOINTED LOVE.]

Europe may boast of her passion plays, but Japan glories in the national Drama of No, one of her dearest possessions. The characters impersonated—gods, goddesses, warriors, priests, demons, national heroes—are drawn from legend and history, while the costumes are more or less magnificent, often costing fabulous sums.

The carvings, lacquers, porcelains and ceramics of Japan are rich with decorative treatments suggestive of this drama, but probably none holds a deeper interest for the devotee of mythology than those of Kiyohime, the Personification of Disappointed Love, a monstrosity with distorted features and dishevelled hair, tusks projecting from her mouth, horns from her head, and feet terminating in claws

Legend holds that this creature was once a beautiful maiden who served as a waitress at the inn Chojaya of Shirota, where she attracted the attentions of Anchin, a young Buddhist priest of the Temple Dojoji. Calling daily in quest of his tea, he became interested in Kiyohime, and finally won her deepest affections, but as his vows prevented all thought of marriage, he took refuge in flight—loving the church more than the maid. Kiyohime, in the agony of her disappointment, fled to the mountains, where the violence of her passion robbed her of all beauty and transformed her into a haniya, or female devil. Her love turned to hatred and an intense longing for vengeance led her to relentlessly pursue the luckless Anchin to the temple Dojoji of Kumano. At sight of her, and fearing the evil spirit that dominated her entire being, Anchin secreted himself beneath the great temple bell, but the dragon-like Kiyohime remained undaunted; thrice wrapping herself around the bell, she struck it fiercely with a hammer which she bore, instantly changing it to molten metal, and reducing both the hapless lover and herself to a heap of cinders.



DIFFERENT REPRESENTATIONS
OF THE CHARACTER JIU—
LONGEVITY.



GUARDIANS OF THE TEMPLE.

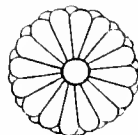
The figure at the left stands on an Oni, or demon.
 Both figures have a menacing attitude, to remind those
 who approach that the premises are sacred.

From specimens in carved lacquered wood.
 From the Buddhist Temple of Prof. Maxwell Sommerville,
 University of Pennsylvania.



KOROJI.

Emblematic of harmony.
 They form the bridges of the Koro,
 or Japanese harp, upon which
 the instrument's strings are stretched.



KIKU-NO-MON.

The Imperial crest
 of the chrysanthemum.

TAKE-NI-TSURU.

[THE BAMBOO AND CRANE.]

Could one conceive such an anomaly as the Land of the Dragon Fly without its Bamboo? The national tree of these fair isles, with hundreds of years as the length of its days, the very warp and weft of the tradition of the people, precious to them from a poetic as well as from a utilitarian standpoint, cannot be sundered even in thought, from the land with which it has so long been identified.

Japan's decorators and illustrators have few dearer themes. We find them portraying the Bamboo innumerable times in company with the Crane, symbolizing long life, rectitude, fidelity and constancy.

With the flying sparrows among its branches, friendship is implied.

There is a phrase often used in association with the Bamboo:

"Setsu ri ko setsu o miru"
(When the snow falls, its virtue stands aloft.)

implying that men of exalted character rise above the vices of the age in which they exist—a beautiful symbol, worthy this faithful tree of rectitude and constancy.

But art is not alone in its employment of the ubiquitous Bamboo, which has, in very truth, a multitude of offices to perform—flag staffs, scaffolding, water pipes, vessels and boxes of every kind, lattices and even deadly spears are made from it, while the earliest shoots are used as an article of food.

Long life to the theme of the Bamboo Tree!



TATSU.

[THE DRAGON.]

A fitting representation of power, symbolical of sovereignty, mysterious and omnipotent in its influence on the lives of men, is Tatsu, the foremost creature of Japanese Mythology. Its name Riyo or Riu is from the Chinese, meaning all powerful—and such it surely is; as one of the divinely constituted creatures, it has the faculty of making itself visible or invisible; of its own volition, it reduces itself to the size of a silkworm or enlarges to such proportions that all heaven and earth is filled with its presence.

Nor are the artistic and poetic conceptions of the Japanese narrowed down to a single dragon—there are many of them. The Celestial Dragon guards and supports the mansions of the gods; the Spiritual Dragon causes the rain to fall and winds to blow for humanity's welfare; the Earth Dragon defines the courses of rivers and streams; the Dragon of Hidden Treasures watches over the hoards of wealth hidden from mankind. All these various types are known by distinctive colors, with which the Oriental associates influences favorable or inimical to men. The white dragon's breath is believed to become gold, and the spittle of the violet dragon turns to crystal balls; but those best known seem to be the white, green, yellow, violet, red and black, and these appear innumerable times in the ornamentation of the porcelains, potteries, pictures, furniture and wood carvings of Japan and its temples.

Tatsu is often represented holding a jewel in the right fore claw, suggestive of one of the many legends that enrich Japanese Mythology, and explaining the dragon's association with the crystal ball.

This legend, well worth recounting, runs as follows :

During the reign of the Empress Jingo, the most noteworthy of all the women of Japan, ambassadors from an Emperor of China were sent to the Empress with three of China's much-prized treasures—a bell of metal and one of wood, and a beautiful crystal ball as clear as a drop of heaven-sent dew.

After a stormy voyage, they reached the Japanese coast, but alas, the crystal ball, their most precious gift, was not to be found! Their grief was dreadful indeed, being intensified by the mystery of the jewel's disappearance, as well as by the chagrin the situation was sure to cause. Much consultation, however, led to the conclusion that the jewel had been charmed from them by the Daughter of the Dragon, who was unable to restrain her ardent desire to possess it. The chief minister of the Empress, mourning the loss of the precious crystal more deeply than the others, and feeling the disgrace that had fallen on the ambassadors, resolved to recover it at any cost.

In an effective disguise he strolled along the shore, and soon met one of the fisherwomen of that locality. It was not long before he won her love and married her, shortly thereafter disclosing the burden of his heart, and begging her aid if she valued their future happiness. He promised that if she recovered the crystal, she would no longer be the poor and unknown ama, or fisherwoman, but a princess with



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a castle for a residence, nobility for her companions, and the gracious favor of the Empress for her reward.

The picture proved so winning a one that her support was gained at once, and preparations were begun for the important quest. Her life had been spent by the sea, and she could swim with the ease of a fish, and live under water as well as on land, so she agreed to dive to the Dragon Palace and seek the lost crystal.

On the completion of all arrangements, she bade her husband a fond farewell, and grasping a sword, dived into the sea, soon reaching the Dragon's Palace where she found the wondrous ball. Starting to return, she saw that she had been discovered by the Dragon himself, who lost no time in calling to his aid all the monsters of the sea in a vain attempt to capture her. Despite a desperate resistance, she saw that it was but a question of moments when she would be overcome, and suddenly remembering that the Dragon and his fellows dared not touch a lifeless creature, she thrust the sword into her bosom, placed the crystal in the opening, and signalled to her husband with the cord provided for such use in case of danger. He quickly drew it in, when he beheld, to his consternation, the lifeless body of the faithful ama bearing the coveted jewel in her bosom.

Thus the crystal ball was recovered and borne to the Empress who heard the tale as the legend gives it to us, and in token of her appreciation of so noble a sacrifice, honored the memory of the once humble ama with the name of Tamatorihime, the Princess of the Recovered Jewel.





TAKE-NI-TORA.

[THE BAMBOO AND THE TIGER.]

The crouching tiger in the bamboo thicket is by no means uncommon in the figurative art of Japan. One of India's ancient myths is the source of the inspiration, and the symbolic significance conveyed is safety from the fiercest dangers. When the tiger is hunted by the elephant, he seeks refuge in the bamboo jungle, knowing full well that the elephant cannot follow there.

Naturally, it is a subject of greatest interest, and the specimens on which it appears are held in high esteem.

SUZUME.

[THE GODDESS OF MIRTH AND
THE SPIRIT OF FOLLY.]

This good natured being with her long black hair, dimpled cheeks, and thoroughly sensuous expression, is not uncommon in the art of Japan, appearing often on its potteries and porcelains, its carved netsuke, (girdle buttons) and in illustrated Japanese literature. She is the fabled goddess whose dancing before the "cave door of heaven" helped arouse the curiosity and secure the return of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu, who had deprived the world of her welcome presence.

Suzume's fabled dance has been retained to this day as a Shinto Temple ceremonial, for which Nikko and Nara are famous.



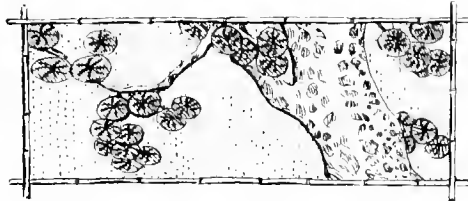
JU-1 (Shepherd's Wand).

Symbol of the power of faith.



THE KIRIN.

(From *Kilin*; *Ki* the male, *Lin* the female.)



If the fabled Pheasant is a prominent mythological subject, the Kirin is no less so, being next in importance to Tatsu, the Dragon, having the head and breast of a dragon, a horn upon its forehead, the body of a deer, flame-like wings and tail, and the legs of a horse. It is a creature that mythology clothes with one of the most beautiful of Oriental figures—that of absolute goodness. It is further regarded as the highest type of animal creation, said to live a thousand years, symbolic alike of benevolence and of mercy, because of its supposed tenderness and care in not treading on the most abject worm, or injuring the tiniest plant.

Its appearance on earth is regarded as an omen of the birth of those who will become great and good in the government of the people, and, like the Ho-Wo bird, it is conspicuous in Japanese art and literature.

Orientalists have even gone so far as to make this fabled creature the incarnation of the five elements—earth, air, water, fire and ether—of which all things are made: a generous endowment, surely!

BUDDHA.

From an antique bronze.
Private collection.



OUMAI-NI- UGUISU.

[THE PLUM TREE AND THE
NIGHTINGALE.]



When we remember that the exceptionally early advent of the plum blossom, as flaky as snow drops and quite as pure, means the first touch of Spring to the nature-loving Japanese, we wonder not that the Plum Tree and Nightingale form a favorite theme for artist and poet as the harbinger of Spring and anticipated happiness. True, the early plum blossoms linger but a brief while, falling long before the tree begins to show a leaf; but that one glimpse serves as a foretaste of balmy days and the many blessings of Japan's loved goddess, Amaterasu.

We are told that the Plum Tree was borrowed by the Japanese from China, where it was originally valued for its fruit alone, but the purity and beauty of its flower ultimately won for it an honored place in tradition and art. Unnumbered allusions are made to the Plum Tree by the saints and moralists in Japanese legends, and it has come to possess an almost sacred significance.

The blossom itself, often called "the elder brother of the hundred flowers," being the year's earliest bloom, has a peculiarly fresh and delicate fragrance which becomes almost overpoweringly heavy if confined to an apartment. The snow-blossom is not the only one that gladdens the Japanese heart; there are lovely double white ones, and those of pink and crimson hue, all beautiful, all finding a place in the art and verse of fair Nippon.

A combination of the plum blossom, evergreen pine and bamboo, known as Sho-chiku-bai, signifies enduring happiness and long life, an emblem frequently in evidence at wedding and anniversary fetes.

"O'er wooded landscape, shrouding all
In one soft cloud of misty white,
T'were vain almost to hope to trace
The plum trees in their lovely bloom."

TACHIBANA.

[THE ORANGE.]

Few things more effectually recall the past, with its joys or sorrows, than the distinctive odor of some one of Nature's flora.

To the poetic Japanese, the Orange in company with the Cuckoo, symbolizes that which has gone before, the fragrance of Orange blossoms mingled with the Cuckoo's notes being subtle reminders of former days.





四七

KARA-SHISHI.

[THE DOG FOO, OR CHINESE LION.]

Although one of the most ancient of mythological creatures, the significance of the Kara-Shishi seems to be unknown to the Japanese of to-day. Many authorities regard the Dog Foo as the Japanese conception of the Chinese lion, its head, mane and claws suggesting the king of beasts.

At all events, it is generally known as the Kara-Shishi, or Shishi Dog in the literature and art of Japan, though some writers allude to it as the Watch-dog of the Empire.



風神

FUTEN.

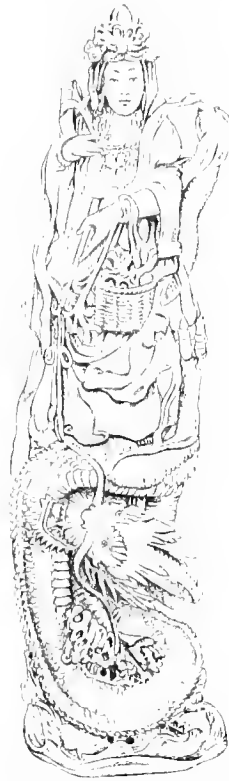
[THE GOD OF THE WINDS.]

Not only the awful storms of winter, but the gentle zephyrs of Spring are said to come from Futen's capacious bag, according to his caprice. His stern and grim visage makes him a formidable being—and such he is, whether portrayed in daintiest embroidery or on massive bronze.

KWANNON.

[THE GODDESS OF MERCY.]

The deity known as Kwannon, sometimes represented as a male, though more often as a female, is the personification, both in China and Japan, of Mother Nature, or the Beginning, being variously known as the Downlooking Sovereign, the Eleven Faced Kwannon, and the Thousand Handed Goddess—in the latter conception her many hands are extended in the act of granting bounties to all supplicants, while her sweet and gentle features betray great affection for mankind. Of course she is beloved by all; thousands of her shrines may be found in Japan alone, the most famous being that of Asakusa Temple, which is daily besieged by throngs of her adherents. The shrine at Kiomidzu Temple figures next in prominence, owing, no doubt, to its historic and legendary associations. Collections the world over are enriched with interesting specimens of this deity; the Kwannon and Child, reproduced on page 63 of the present volume, being an exceptionally rare conception.



KWANNON.

A Japanese carving in ivory.
From collection of
Baronne d'Alexandry d'Orengiani.



CRYSTAL BALL ON BRONZE STORKS.

The crystal ball, which is absolutely flawless, is the emblem of purity. When accompanied by the storks, it has the two-fold significance of long life and purity.

From the collection of
Mr. James I. Raymond.



DARUMA.

From a famous pottery.

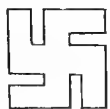
Collection of Mrs. Grant B. Schley.

DARUMA.

[A BUDDHIST PRIEST.]

Daruma, the Buddhist priest said to have sailed from Korea on a rush leaf, is almost invariably represented in a sitting posture, wrapped in a large red cloak. Owing to his extreme piousness, Daruma is supposed to have been seated in prayer and devout meditation for nine successive years, during which time his limbs withered away; on completing his long period of devotion he found that he could no longer stand, which accounts for the characteristic pose given him in decorative work. The representations of Daruma are not by any means confined to works of art, but often appear in the form of toys and novelties, much to the delight of the youngsters of Japan.

MANJI (Svastika).



The Buddhist cross of India. Symbolizing life, the four elements, and eternity. Used as a charm it assures good luck and exemption from evil. Traced to the 13th Century, B. C., and in evidence in the art of Greece, ancient Europe, English heraldry, Chinese and Indian ornamentation and symbolism.



KIKU.

[THE CHRYSANTHEMUM.]

If it be an honor to merit the favor of royalty, then the noble Chrysanthemum is indeed satiated with honor—for is it not the emperor's flower, preferred above all others? Symbolizing a gentle disposition, happiness, virtue and repose, and associated with longevity because of the extraordinary life of its bloom, it is naturally held in high esteem by all classes, particularly as the sixteen petalled variety forms the imperial crest of Japan.

We of the West can hardly conceive of what it means to assiduously cultivate over eight hundred varieties of a single flower, showing some two hundred and sixty-nine shades of color—yet that is what Japanese floriculture has accomplished with the regal Chrysanthemum.

Dango-zaka, quite near Tokio, is known far and wide for its Chrysanthemum gardens, containing countless groups of mythological figures, realistic representations of woven tapestries, and historic scenes, made entirely from living Chrysanthemums. Beautiful as are the Chrysanthemums of Dango-zaka, those of Aoyama Palace, at one time the emperor's residence, excel them in variety and pretentiousness. The emperor's birthday is celebrated among Aoyama's regal blooms, a fitting place for royalty, where every shade of rose, crimson, yellow, pale lilac and purple, vie with one another in honoring their ruler. This joyous gala time is known as the Festival of Kiku, and one of its customs is that of placing Chrysanthemum petals in the cups during the wine drinking, insuring long life and happiness.

According to one of the mythical tales of the Japanese Chrysanthemum, there is a hill far away in Kai, known as the Chrysanthemum Mount, which overhangs a river of crystal clarity. Those who drink from the waters of this stream after the Chrysanthemum petals have fallen in it, receive the boon of long life; hence the theme of many an artistic scheme showing Chrysanthemums floating in running water.





MOMO.

[THE PEACH TREE AND OXEN.]

The Peach originally came from China, and we are told that it symbolizes both longevity and marriage. A certain philosopher known as Seiobo, is credited with having been blest with long life on eating the fruit; while Japanese verse, in its own delightful way, frequently alludes to the Peach as a symbol of marriage.

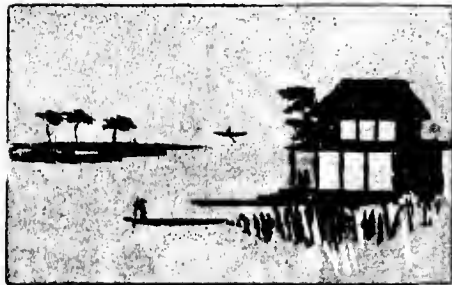
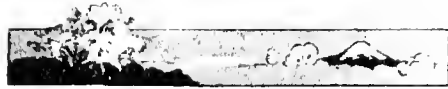
A familiar conception of the artist is that of Oxen in an orchard of Peach trees, an idea having for its origin a familiar occurrence in Chinese history, where the Emperor Bu, with a desire to inculcate a love of peace instead of war, disbanded his armies at the advice of his minister Taikobo, allowing his horses to wander at will over the mountains, while his oxen were sent into the Peach orchard of Torim.

THE TORII.

[SHINTO GATEWAY.]

The whispering voices of tradition—how we treasure them—tell us that the Torii, the stately, well poised gateway of Shinto faith, has an office that lifts it far above the commonplace. The Sun at divers times and places, comes down to earth in the form of the great and wondrous Ho-Wo Bird, or Heavenly Phoenix, using for its perch one of the many Torii Gates, which the good people of Japan have built and placed throughout the land for that most exalted purpose.

The traveller may still see the Torii at the entrance to the Shinto temple grounds, where it appears as the signification of the true gateway to a life of grace ; in art, it is used innumerable times in the decoration of Japan's fairest ornaments.



KARA-SHISHI.

The Chinese lion sporting with the sacred crystal ball ; frequently employed in Oriental art.

TAKARA BUNE.

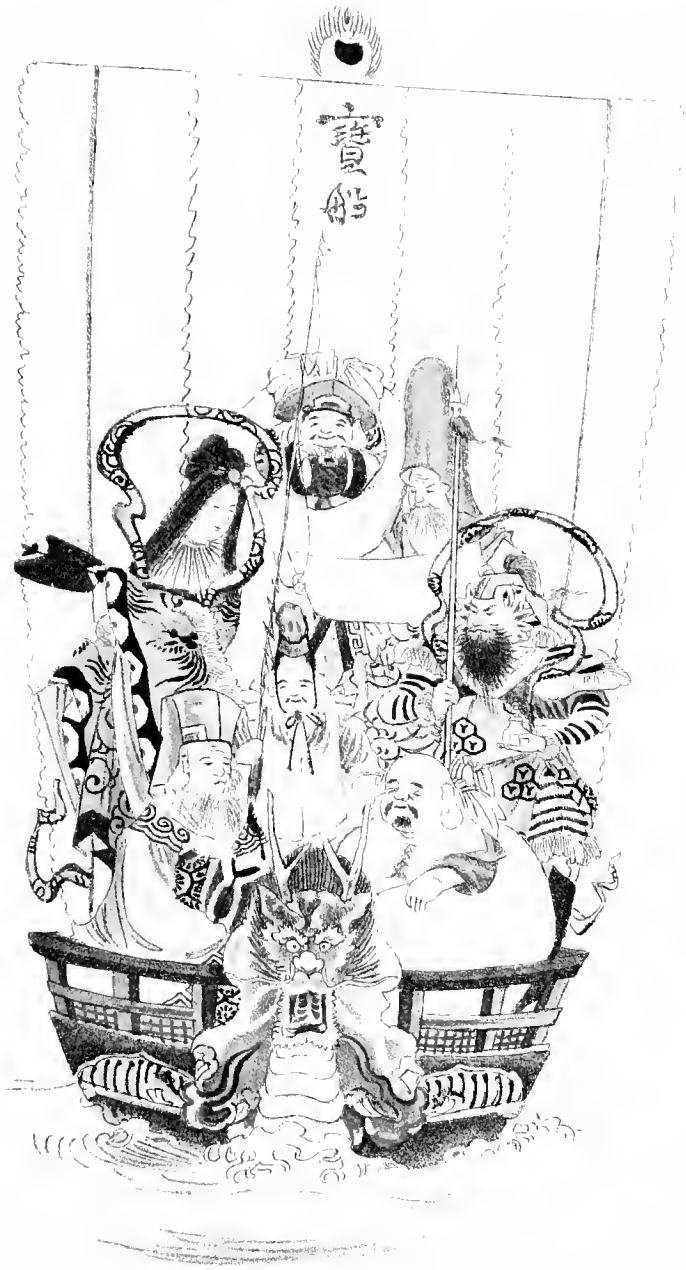
[THE SHIP OF GOOD FORTUNE.]

This vessel, with its sacred cargo of the Seven Gods of Fortune, may be seen floating gracefully on the surface of many a beautiful vase, or woven in rich-hued threads on the quaint squares of satin known as "fukusa" in Japan. It is a precious emblem to the Oriental—to portray the Takara Bune means to symbolize wisdom, happiness, long life and good fortune, wealth very properly coming last, inasmuch as wisdom and happiness are there.

It matters not how humble or pretentious the home may be, you will rarely find it without one or more of the Seven Household Gods, lodged in the tokonoma, where things of this nature are placed. The poorer classes have these gods in pottery and wood, while the more affluent show reproductions in gold, lacquer, and fine bronzes inlaid with gold and set with precious stones. Notwithstanding the high esteem in which these gods of the household are held, they are not worshipped by the people, but are regarded with feelings of reverence and honor, much the same as we look upon our Santa Claus and Saint Valentine—the former, the patron saint of the little ones; the latter, the adored of love-lorn youths and maidens.

In Japan the children look to Hotei, their Kris Kringle, for playthings most desired; the warrior calls on Bishamon, the God of Glory, for a victorious campaign; Benzaiten is besought of women who would be faithful and fruitful; the student turns to Jurojin and Fukurokuju for wisdom and many years; the famished and needy supplicate Daikoku for rice, and Ebisu for fish.

The attributes of these seven beings, or Shichi Fukujin, are individually described on the following pages.



EBISU.

[THE GOD OF PLENTY, AND
DAILY FOOD.]

Although Ebisu was disgraced and banished to a desolate and uninhabited island, he is the most popular of all the household gods, besought by all who hunger and are in need. He is said to have lived under water for days at a time, and artists picture him bearing a fishing rod and a large basket filled with Japan's favorite sea food, the red skinned tai.



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TSUKI-NI-USAGI.

The Rabbit is supposed to dwell in the moon, engaged in compounding the Elixir of Life.

DAIKOKU.

[THE GOD OF WEALTH.]

This stalwart being may be identified either by his bales of rice or his capacious treasure bag. Many suppose that the hammer in Daikoku's uplifted hand is filled with treasures for his supplicants, while others believe that wealth and happiness come only to those who wield it with care and diligence.

Daikoku is pictured here as shaking coins from his magic hammer, while the child at his feet is trying to catch them, illustrating the generosity of the god in his distribution of wealth and bounty.

With the Japanese, rice is almost always representative of wealth, and the rat that is often shown nibbling at the rice bags of Daikoku is very appropriately introduced as wealth's destroyer.



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BENZAITEN or BENTEN.

[THE GODDESS OF GRACE AND
BEAUTY.]

Benzaiten or Benten, one of the Seven Deities of Fortune, and the accepted type of ideal womanhood, is perhaps more familiarly known as the Tutelary Genius of Enoshima.

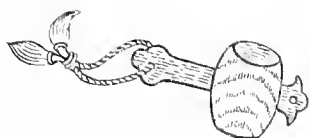
Artists portray this honored goddess with a dragon or a serpent as her steed; she is either playing a biwa, the lute-like musical instrument of Japan, or carrying a key in one hand and a priceless jewel in the other.

Most of the shrines of Benten are to be found on islands, Enoshima (the Island of the Tortoise) having the principal one. Legends hold that like snow-capped Fuji, this beautiful island of shells, tea houses and shaded walks was given birth in a single night.

However that may be, there is hardly an atom of its enchanted surface or mysterious depths that is not sacred to Japan's beloved Benten Sama, to whom Enoshima was consecrated long years ago.

Benten's most important shrine on the island was installed in a deep cavern with an opening to the sea. During the stormy season, this awe-inspiring place is closed by Nature's seething waters, which hide the entrance; even in calmer weather, when the tide is low, the pilgrim may enter Benten's cavern only after hazardous climbing along a precipitous ledge of rocks—but 'tis labor well spent, for wondrous indeed are the beauties of Nature which the Goddess of Grace so jealously guards in her cavernous home by the sea.





TSUCHI.

The hammer of Daikoku, the
God of Wealth.

FUKUROKUJIU.

[THE GOD OF GOOD FORTUNE
AND WISDOM.]

The name of this being, pronounced Fu-ku-ro ku-jiu, has an interesting significance—fuku, meaning luck and happiness, roku, wealth and prosperity, and jiu, longevity. Art presents Fukurokujiu as a man of many years, supported by a staff and accompanied by a crane; his fan is the symbol of power, while his maki-mona, the most ancient form of book, is the accepted type of wisdom; his abnormally long head is supposed to be the result of patient, untiring study. A Japanese riddle refers to this peculiarity in asking "Which is the longer—the head of Fukurokujiu, or a Spring day?" The wise reply is, "No one can tell, both are so long!"





SANGOJU, THE PRECIOUS CORAL.
The emblem of rarity.

BISHAMON.

[THE GOD OF GLORY.]

The stern Bishamon, with his unmistakable military bearing, is one of the Seven Gods of Fortune.

The impersonation of war, he is usually portrayed as a warrior clad in armor, with a spear in his right hand and a pagoda in his left—the pagoda symbolizing power.

Benten is beloved of women, Hotei of the children, and Bishamon is none the less dear to the soldier of Japan—a never failing source of inspiration and hope.

JUROJIN.

[THE GOD OF LONGEVITY.]

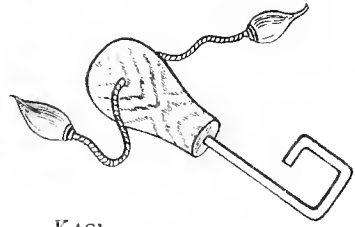
The serene and venerable Jurojin, with his snow-white beard, mitred cap and sturdy staff, seemingly holds a much favored place among the artists of Japan, for he appears many times on their objects of art as the signification of long life. He is occasionally shown in company with the stag, and sometimes with the tortoise or the crane, all three the emblems of longevity.



KAKUREMINO.

A rain-coat, symbolizing comfort and protection. The wearer of this coat is supposed to be made invisible to surrounding dangers, hence its signification of protection.





KAGI.

One of the Keys of the Godown,
symbolizing wealth.

HOTEI.

[THE CHILDREN'S PATRON SAINT.]

Hotei personifies the contented spirit in the midst of adverse circumstances. Jovial in the extreme, of goodly, rotund proportions, he is pictured as bearing with characteristic good grace, a bag of toys for children to whom he is a typical Kris Kringle. Another favorite study represents him with his bag over his shoulder, and children clamoring round and about him.

Credited with leading a roving, Bohemian life, "a dreamy, yawning, obese vagabond of the Diogenes pattern, minus his shorn philosophy," Hotei even vies with Buddha in his popularity with the artists of fair Japan. During the past five years the present writers have observed, by actual count, over seven thousand different conceptions of Hotei. Some are carved on netsuke of wood and ivory, others in the decorations of porcelains and bronzes; in fact, every form of ornamentation known to the Japanese shows representations of this favorite god of the youth of Nippon.



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KWANNON, THE MATERNAL.

The Eighth Form, holding a child—
rarely met with in Japan.

From a wood carving in the
collection of Mr. Rufus E. Moore.



**FUGEN, AN INCARNATION
OF BUDDHA.**

Seated on the sacred white elephant.
Emblematic of Meditation.

From the Buddhist Temple of
Prof. Maxwell Sommerville,
University of Pennsylvania.

