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AN ISLAND WITHOUT DEATH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF «JINRIKISHA DAYS.»

OF the *sankei*, or «three great sights of Japan,» Miyajima, the sacred island in the Inland Sea, offers more of poetry, legend, human interest, and association than either the «Thousand Pine-clad Islands of Matsu-shima,» on the east coast, or the strangely winding peninsula of «Ama-no-Hashidate,» on the west coast. All three of the *sankei* are remote enough from the main routes to protect them for a long time to come from the certain desecration and vulgarization of foreign tourist travel, and to keep their charm to the earnest pilgrims and landscape lovers of the land. The groves of Miyajima still tinkle with pilgrims' staffs, the lights of the great floating temple shine out over the water nightly, and about it lingers much of the spirit of the old, ideal Japan.

Topographically, Miyajima is an island midway in the Inland Sea, lying so far within the bend of the Aki shore that it cannot be seen from the route of the large ocean steamers that pass through those enchanted waters. To reach it most appropriately one must take one of the tiny coasting steamers from Osaka, and, touching at a dozen quaint little ports on the matchless voyage, at last see the mountainous green island, with temple roofs showing here and there through all the dense foliage of the heights, and, standing far out in the water, a heroic *torii*, fit gateway to that ideal place where death has never come; where religion and landscape loveliness, legend and poesy, still dwell; where the simple

villagers, the gentle old Shinto priests, and the tame deer, protected by the gods and loved by the people, maintain an atmosphere foreign to the busy new Japan of railroads, parliaments, imported military tactics, and modern war-vessels. Or one may take the railway from Kobe to Hiroshima, and then a *jinrikisha* for twelve miles along its bay, and be ferried across a narrow strait to this isle of the blest, which will impress the more with its Arcadian features when one comes to it from all the bugling, parade, and din of mimic war that goes on in the shadow of Hiroshima's picturesque castle keep, and at its port of Ujina, chief naval station of the empire, and, during that victory year of 1894, port of departure of transport ships to Corea and China. Then one can accept the legend that Miyajima grew from one of the congealed drops that fell from Izanami's jeweled spear, and that Itsukushima and her two sisters, daughters of the god of the sea, aptly chose it for their favors; that their temple rose from and floated in from the sea, and that the great water *torii* grew with the tides as naturally as any coral reef.

There is a small village at the foot of a green bank, but that is off by its commonplace, profane self, and the temple is embayed in an amphitheater of the hills, with a shore-and-water foreground all its own. On the shore-line at the edge of the village a noble *torii* of Oshima granite, each pillar and cross-beam a single stone, marks the entrance to sacred ground; and this road, following the

curve of the shore, is lined for a quarter of a mile to the temple with tall stone lanterns, the same alignment of votive lights continuing for half a mile along shore at the other side of the great shrine. The water torii is the unique and great feature of Miyajima's shrine, and one grows very familiar with it from its representations by Japanese artists in every line. The colossus is formed of great beams, each hewn from the single trunk of a camphor-tree, and strengthened at the base by cross-beams joining low parallel columns, which give it balance and solidity and most impressive effect. These beams are covered below the water-line with such a heavy growth of barnacles and marine plants that the torii seems very reasonably a part of the sea-god's kingdom and creating. This skeleton gate in the sea is so delicate and fairy-like in a first distant view, that one is not prepared for its great size, and the impressive sense of its proportions, when one floats in between its great camphor-wood piers, as massive and solid as masonry. Sculling through this noble gateway, and across the water court of approach, at high tide one may visit every part of the temple, and penetrate to the farthest labyrinth, passing beneath galleries and bridges, and floating before the open fronts of the great shrines. The galleries connecting the different parts of the temple have, strung along their eaves, hundreds of quaint little bronze and iron lanterns, all votive offerings, as also are the pictures that hang

in line above them and form a famous gallery of ancient art.

The founding of this curious temple of the sea goes back, of course, to the time when the gods were on earth, and Itsukushima and her mermaid sisters sang on these shores. In earliest times—in the sixth century, when the soberest traditions agree that a temple was built—it was a shrine of Shinto, that most formal, soulless cult of ancient Japan; but within two centuries it became a Buddhist fane, brocaded bonzes taught with book and bell, the altars were a blaze of gold, and incense dimmed the myriad lights. The temple became more and more a place of pilgrimage; emperors, shoguns, and daimios vied in their gifts, and this grew to be the richest and most splendid temple outside of Kioto, the western capital. In 1548 it was destroyed by fire, and all the precious records were consumed, which gives tradition and fancy freer play, and invests those earlier times with more of myth and sentiment. It was rebuilt on a more splendid scale, and Hideyoshi, the Taiko, assembled his generals here for the great Korean expedition of 1597. On the eve of departure the Taiko addressed them in magnificent conclave in the great «Hall of One Thousand Mats,» on the favored hill for «moon-viewing,» beside the water-temple. It was almost a coincidence that, three centuries later, the Emperor came to his new naval station of Ujina, opposite Miyajima, to consult with his generals, and speed the new



DRAWN BY HARRY FENN.

VILLAGE OF MIYAJIMA, WITH TORII, TEMPLE, AND SHORE LANTERNS.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

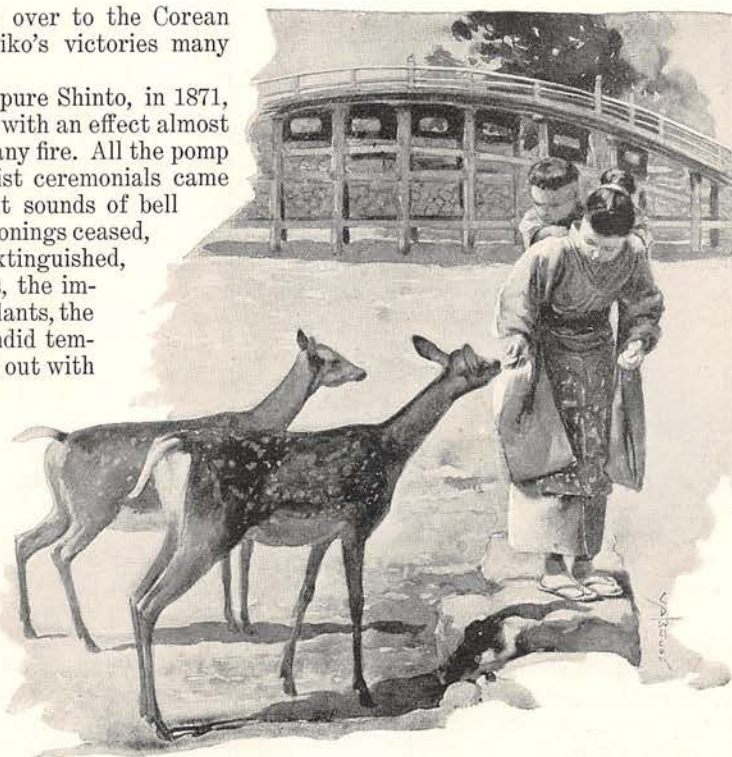
armada that, steaming over to the Korean coast, repeated the Taiko's victories many times.

With the revival of pure Shinto, in 1871, the temple was purified, with an effect almost as disastrous as that of any fire. All the pomp and splendor of Buddhist ceremonials came to an end, the incessant sounds of bell and drum and priestly dronings ceased, the myriad lights were extinguished, and the incense-burners, the images, the golden lotus-plants, the flags, banners, and splendid temple trappings, were cast out with the army of priests.

Many buildings were deliberately destroyed, and in the silent, empty temples the mirror and the wisps of *gohei*, or paper prayers, of Shinto succeeded to the splendor of the lotus. The great money-box, where mice still run in and out seeking the grains of rice that the worshipers give to the gods, and a few *tama*, or jewel-shaped frames for votive candles, are all that remain in the despoiled shrine. In 1887 another fire wrought great ruin, and now this precious relic of a temple is tended and watched more carefully, and its preservation is a matter of pride to all of Aki province.

The wooden structures rest on piers of the same fine stone of which the scholars' ink-slabs are cut, and the main, or central, shrine and four lesser shrines are connected by long galleries and arching bridges. At high tide the temple does indeed seem to be floating on the sea, and a twin temple of the underworld shows in the still, reflecting waters. At low tide there is less of poetry, perhaps; but even then—when crabs and strange sea things scramble over the rocks and swim in isolated pools, and the deer wade and wander at will in the sea-garden, and one may traverse on stepping-stones all the courts through which he rowed a few hours before—Miyajima is not without unique charm.

The local guides to the temple are insistent on a score of details. «Notice that there are eight planks between each pair of columns, and the cracks are left so broad that you may always see the water beneath»; «This fine stone water-tank was given to the temple one



DRAWN BY C. D. WELDON.

FROM PHOTOGRAPH.

MIYAJIMA TEMPLE COURT AT LOW TIDE.

hundred years ago»; «These tablets record the names of the imperial princes who have given one hundred *yen* and more to the temple,» etc., our guide recited. The guides revel in the galleries of votive pictures, showing first the series of portraits of celebrities of four centuries ago, which was sent to the Vienna Exposition in 1873 as part of the loan exhibit of ancient art. Among the thousand other odd pictures the most celebrated is by Sosen, in which one of his inimitable furry monkeys is riding a Miyajima deer, the keen little eyes of *saru-san* always following one, the guide says, wherever he may go in the temple. Next in favor is the creeping tiger by Kano Sozan; but the striped cat, advancing with such a stony stare, great as its fame was for terrifying pious pilgrims in the past, does not impress one in these modern, zoological-garden days. There are a carving of two warriors by Hidari Jigoro, the famous left-handed artist, and a giant mask of the long-nosed Tengu, as trophies of the sculptor's art. Ranku's portrait of the gentle old flower-painter, brush and chrysanthemums in hand, and Kano's tattered painting of Fuji-yama are most pleasing of all. There is a quaint picture of the first Dutch ship that came to



DRAWN BY C. D. WELDON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

MIYAJIMA BOATMAN.

Nagasaki, two hundred and fifty years ago, and a modern chromo of the Eiffel Tower. The city of Hiroshima has given a huge bronze compass, quaint roots in form of dragons and bow-knots have been brought to the temple by Chiushiu pilgrims, and fine examples of graceful brush-writing are shown in the many autographs and poems framed on high.

The galleries are inhabited by a colony of happy families, who sell photographs, shells, and souvenirs of Miyajima, and many kinds of deer food. One who stays for any time on the island soon falls into the Arcadian life, passes a little time each day with the temple circles of cheerful gossips and their children, and regularly buys rice-cakes and dough-balls for the pretty pets that, from antlered fathers to tiny fawns, will all come and nibble from the hand, crowd and rub against one, and plead with their large soft eyes if neglected. One antlered pensioner became so sure of his morning dough-balls that he would patter in on the wooden galleries to meet me half way, and be incontinently "shoed" out by the children, who would gently but seriously argue with these four-footed playmates on the impropriety of walking into the temple on such noisy *geta* (clogs).

The great *matsuri*, or annual festival, of Miyajima temple falls on the seventeenth day of the sixth moon, and each July there is such a water-carnival as repays a pilgrim for the longest journey. The priests lead the procession of thirty-six decorated boats, which correspond to the *dashi*, or cars, drawn through the streets at other *matsuris*. The great junk which leads the flotilla that sweeps with gongs and banners and shouting chorus through the torii sleeps in a far court for the rest of the year—a clumsy, primitive craft, transformed to a barge of splendor by brocade curtains, sails, and strings of lanterns. At high tide the jewels of the sea are cast from the central platform of the temple, and all Miyajima splashes about, waiting to dive for these sacred talismans. At night the eight hundred lamps of the temple, and the whole mile-long curving line of lamps outlining the shore, burn reflected, the interior of each shrine is a blaze of candle pyramids, and the water torii is a gate of fire between the dark heavens and the glittering sea. Whenever any pious one will make an offering sufficient to pay for the oil consumed, the thousand lamps of the temple and shore may be illuminated, and as such a fire-prayer must be offered at high tide, these movable feasts of lanterns often come at witching hours.

The green hill that separates the bay of the temple from the village and its commercial water-front is crowned by the Senjo Kaku, or "Hall of One Thousand Mats,"—
 «Really, there were never but nine hundred and twenty mats,» says our precise cicerone, —the vast audience-hall where the Taiko addressed his generals. Souvenir-sellers sit by their low counters, children run and tumble



DRAWN BY C. D. WELDON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

FIVE-STORY PAGODA AND TAIKO'S HALL, MIYAJIMA.

over the vast area, and from the galleries, hung with votive pictures, miniature junks, and seamen's offerings, one has a magnificent view of the straits and the opposite mountain shore. Besides, it is the hill for the «moon-viewing,» an eminence where the Taiko sat and watched O'Chiku San lift her smiling silver face up over the wooded ridge until the temple in the bay below him seemed to move and float over the rippling, shimmering sea; and

far ravine holds the Momiji, or Maple-leaf, Tea-house—most bewitching cluster of doll-houses in the most picturesque setting ever found in Japan. There is the usual large living-room, or office of the landlord, and a general «food-preparing» room for the establishment opening on the roadway; but within the gates one finds a deep, green glen, an awful chasm some fifteen feet deep and twice as wide, all filled with delicate, airy

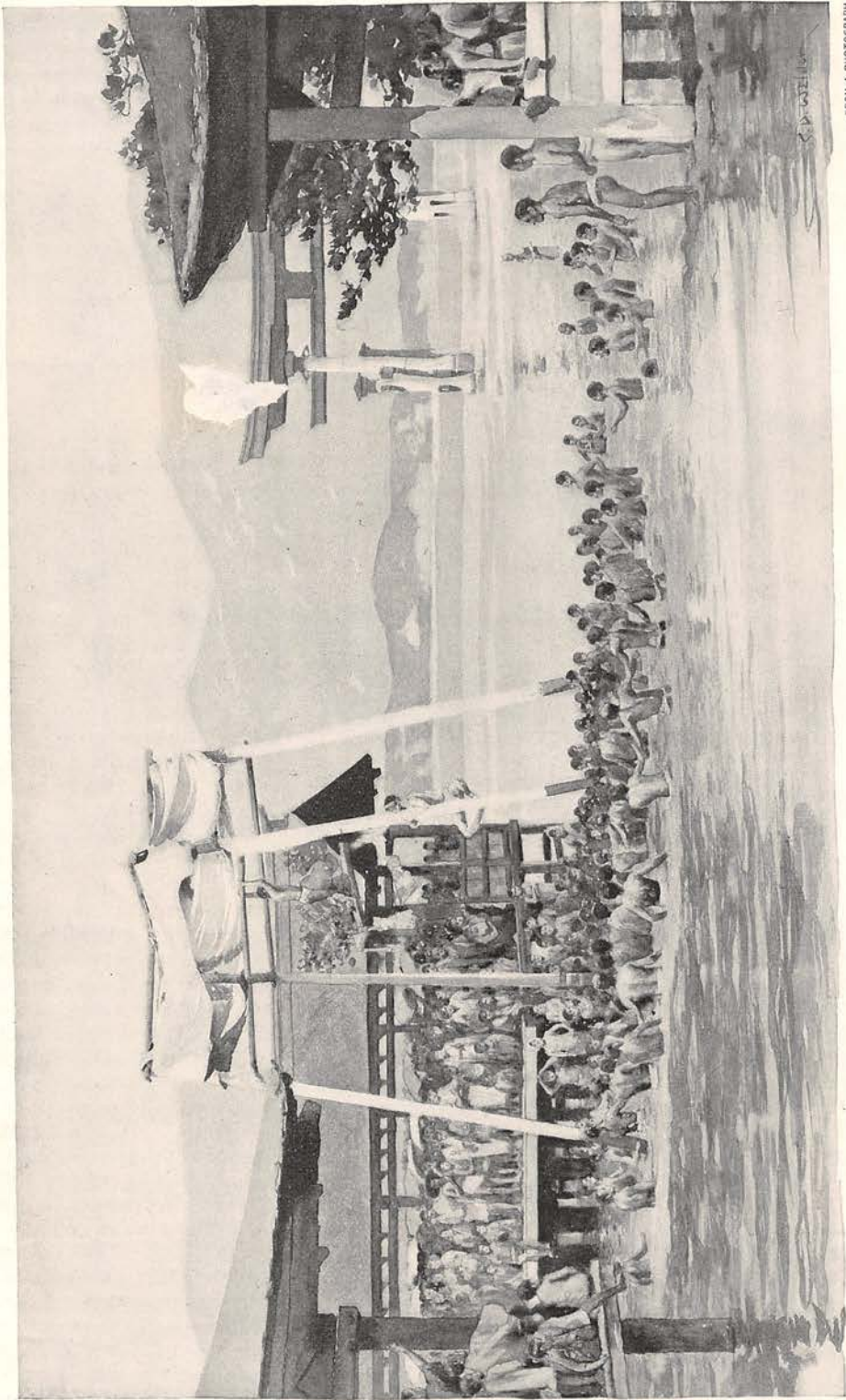


LANTERN PROCESSION. FROM A JAPANESE PRINT.

where moon-viewing and a murmur of solemn poems still go on every month in these modern years of Meiji. A monument to the soldiers who fell in the Satsuma rebellion crowns this view-commanding spot, and puts the new Japan in closer touch with the old. The quaint old Go-ju-no-to, or five-story pagoda, the tiered red roofs of which break the foliage of the hill with such fine effect, is the masterpiece of Takeda Banjo, builder to the Hojo shoguns, who, as well as the Ashikaga shoguns, were benefactors of Itsukushima's temple in the sea. The famous thousand-year-old pine-tree of Miyajima ended its life recently; and although one may no longer see this veteran with its wide-spreading arms, one may buy souvenir spoons and boxes and trays cut from its branches and very heart at every little shop in the village.

There is an isolated, aristocratic quarter of the village in the ravine behind the temple, inhabited by priests and superior folk; and the

branches of cut-leaf maples. A terrible torrent some two feet wide dashes madly down from the mountain-side, spreads out into a lake the size of a large dinner-table, with a wooden sauce-boat moored at one side. Each vantage-spot on the steep bank holds a one-, two-, or three-roomed doll-house—such dainty, exquisite little toy dwellings, with such fairy balconies, such spotless screens and soft, shining mats, that one hesitates to desecrate them with the clumsy, defiling, destructive appurtenances of the simplest foreign living; and as for himself fitting into one of these midget mansions, it is Gulliver alive among the Lilliputians. Our life in that glen of maple-leaves was full of interest, from the moment of slipping back the screens in the morning with some anxiety lest the mite of a glen and its midget lake were not there, or real,—rolled up overnight, and some other charming Japanese drop-curtain put in its place,—to the last banging of the *amadōs*, or wooden



DRAWN BY C. D. WELDON.

THE GREAT MATSURI.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

outer screens, at night. The deer were friends and neighbors from the moment of our arrival, coming to drink from the musical fountain-jet in our three-feet-square court of entrance, and then to the edge of our porch to bob their heads in well-mannered appeals for deer-cake. These pretty beggars, with their lovely eyes, their sharp muzzles, and delicate feet, seemed to know the value of their charms, and having no fear of man, had only to pose a few moments to move the stoniest and most indolent heart to wait on them. It was even more idyllic in the early morning to find some antlered friend, or an equally fearless doe and her tiny fawn, waiting by the lakeside to share our breakfast. After Miyajima one may well boast of having lived in Arcadia, and each day, more idyllic than the other, puts one in the better spirit for enjoying the rare Japanese charm of it all. The peace of the island is as perfect as its piety, and few sounds but the gently dashing stream and the flutter of maple-leaves disturbed our enchanted little glen. One spoke softly, as befitted a place of such perfect beauty. Neighbors came to the doll-houses across the chasm, but only the rat-tat of their pipes on the bamboo cups of the tobacco-trays was evidence of their presence there. One day a *cha-no-yu*, or ceremonial tea, was given in a pavilion the three-mat floor of which was built over the singing stream. Through the maple-leaves we could see the five augustly solemn tea-drinkers bending their fingers and sweeping the palms of their hands in and out, in accordance with the ritual of that long-drawn function of the Taiko's day. The ceremony and its setting were the ideal Japan of dreams; often birds fluttered in to drink fearlessly at the lake with the deer; and another day we hung excited from our fairy balcony, watching the long struggle of a turtle to ascend the «sliding fall»—a smooth silver apron of a cascade above the pool. *Kame-san* (honorable turtle) afforded us as admirable and inspiring a living example of perseverance over obstacles, and of success in life, as any delineation of the «ascending dragon» or the «waterfall-surmounting carp» in a great master's painting.

In that simple, intimate life there were no mysteries, not even of the menu. All the villagers who passed might stop and watch our cook making his highly colored curry for our midday meal; and the peddlers who came to tempt the tea-house maids with gay kimono patterns watched his strange concoctions, and sought pretexts to watch our further play with the knife and fork as we sat at least on our little veranda over the lake.

The small boy of the tea-house added the comic element, and his morning pursuit of our dinner chicken was always a feature. He would chase the angry hen around and around the lake, and when it fled cackling up the bank, a swift movement of his palm across the lake would spurt such showers of water on the ruffled fowl as might soon empty the whole vast deep and rob the ravine of its choicest landscape ornament. When the tea-house staff had combined against the hen, our majordomo would bring the captive to us in his arms and to play the fine «stew chicken.» There was a solidity and an adamantine fiber to Miyajima fowls that resisted ordinary cooking, and we commanded one day that the bird should be divided at every joint, the body quartered, and all kept stewing for the three hours during which we expected to be gone on an excursion. Summoned to see if all was right, we found the pallid, uncooked chicken dismembered to the last joint; but the whole puzzle had been neatly put together again, and the bird wound over and over with the closest network of fine spool-cotton—a strange travesty on that Gulliver to whom we were always comparing ourselves.

It is a strange little village, where no wheel ever turns, where no fields are tilled, and where the religious rules of so many centuries have forbidden deaths or births to occur, many a soul entering and leaving the world in the boat that hurriedly bears them over to the Aki shore. The tiny village of Ono, in a crevice of the opposite Aki hills, shows from the island its cremation temple and graveyard, where generations of Miyajima people have been laid away, and the little thatched dwellings where Miyajima mothers remain until their infants are thirty days old, when they may be taken back with rejoicings for their first ceremonial visit to the great temple.

They were such kindly village and fisher-folk that we soon grew attached to our neighbors, and one old *sendo*, or boatman, and his sons were our daily companions. They knew where to take us in the morning to see best the beautiful tangled and rocky shores, sculling the flat-bottomed sampan into caves and tunnels, and under arched rocks that framed charming pictures; and we never tired of floating about the colossal torii, the spell of which was stronger each day. The Miyajima urchins made water carnivals about us, diving and splashing tirelessly for the smallest coins, our sampan surrounded by these lively little brown frogs with bright, happy faces. On



DRAWN BY C. D. WELDON.

MIYAJIMA DIVERS.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

the night of the great «September moon-viewing» the sendo took us far down the shore at sunset, letting us see two of the ten forts of the island's defenses, their port-holes and casements masked in foliage, and looking innocently down upon the narrow, tide-swept strait that commands one entrance to Ujjina. Incoming junks seemed to reef their sails purposely for us, fishermen cast and drew their nets, and all of picturesque water-life showed until dusk. There was only a little time of darkening grayness and real night before a pale effulgence showed behind the heights, and O'Chiku San rose, tangled herself in a pine-tree's branches, soared clear for a while as she turned the whole bay, the temple, and the torii to silver, and then, like a true Japanese moon, barred herself across with narrow cloud-bands. There were quiet groups and solitary souls muttering under the breath on the hill beside the Taiko's hall, and looking down upon the temple, which seemed to be truly floating on a full-flowing silver sea; every court was a shining space, and no sound was heard save the distant hand-strokes of

those praying before the shrines. From this vision of enchantment we went by shadowy streets to our maple-leaf home, where the witchery of moonlight filled the little glen with more of fairy-land than ever. At our doorway a little altar-table had been placed, and two plates of the rice-dumplings symbolic of abundance and prosperity, and a vase of *Lespedeza* and the early «autumn weeds,» illuminated by the flame of a tiny wick laid over the edge of a saucer of oil, were set in silent offerings to O'Chiku San. A deer stood back in the shadows, gazing with shining eyes at this eloquent offering, but nothing disturbed the homely altar until dawn showed the saucer burned dry of its oil, and the greatest moon-festival of the year was over.

There are small «deer» on the island that arouse no poetry or gracious sentiments. The mice, those pests of Japanese tea-houses, raced through the doll-houses at will by dark, the ornamental traceries and designs pierced in the pretty wood panels above the screens giving them free range of every room. They ran over my face, scratched my pillow, nib-

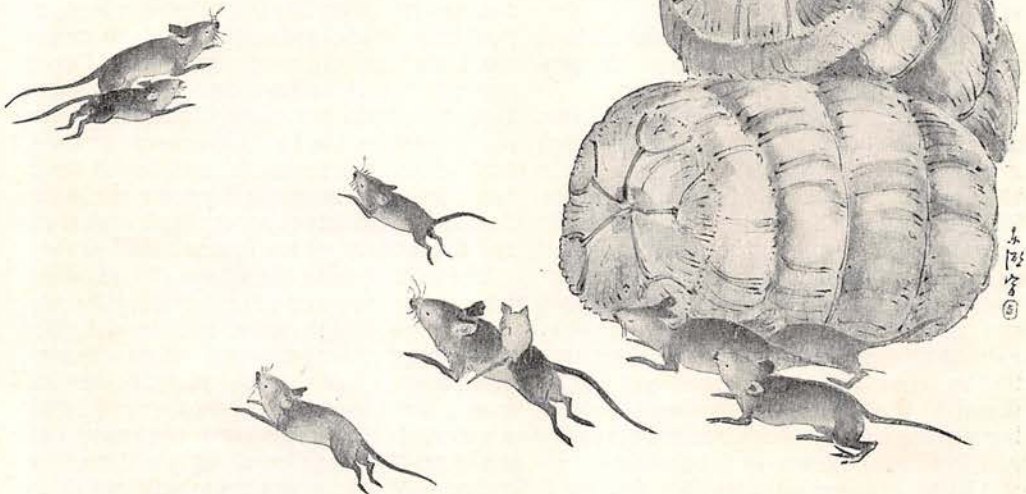
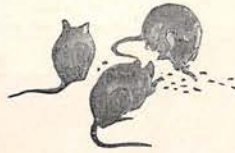
bled my fingers, and kept me awake night after night with their rustling and gnawing. On the third night of mouse carnival I called the servants and had lights brought. The landlord heard the sounds, and hustled across the court to see what the matter was. «I think there is a mouse in this house,» I said. «Oh, certainly, certainly, honorable lady,» he said, bowing low and proudly; «yes, indeed; I have *many, plenty of RATS* at the Momiji.» And he could not at all understand why we should make such trouble about so natural a thing, and object to these sure evidences of abundant prosperity, these companions of Daikoku, the god of plenty.

One drowsy noon the town crier came to the door, clapped two pieces of wood together, and in a long chant besought all people of Miyajima to come to the temple for a «speak-meeting» at two o'clock that day and for the five succeeding days, to hear read the official news from the army in Corea. We sent our agent to listen for us, and our erratic and only Inudzuka returned breathless, to tell, in excited Japanese, English, and jargon, of the victory of the Heijo. We had intended to make a farewell offering to the temple to secure an illumination as a fitting close to our stay in Arcadia, and here was an opportunity. In the shortest time Inudzuka was speeding back to the temple to beseech the high priest to have the thousand oil-saucers of the lanterns filled at once, the illumination to begin at dusk, without waiting for the midnight high tide. The priests shook their heads at such an irregularity, such a disregard of ancient custom

on short notice. «But this is an American matsuri, and in honor of the Heijo! How can you say you have any custom for such an illumination? And when did you ever illuminate at any tide for a battle won in Corea?» And the high priest said, «Surely, surely! Yes; for Beikoku [America] and the

Heijo we can do it.» And the circle of eagle-eyed, excited priests sprang delightedly to begin preparations.

Our joyous sendo was at the temple steps with the sampan as usual before the sunset hour, and he had not pushed off until he let us know that the village was agog at the double news of victory and the honorable illumination. We could see the lay brothers all along shore filling the oil-saucers, laying wicks, and pasting fresh papers on the tall stone lamps; and when we sculled back, long after sunset, lights had begun to twinkle under the temple eaves. A lantern came forth and went bobbing along the water-line, stopped a moment, and a second light shone forth, then a third and a fourth, and so on along shore, as the lamplighter went his way. Soon the whole curving bay from headland to headland was outlined in living lights that gleamed double and wavered in long reflections toward



MIYAJIMA HOUSEHOLD PETS. FROM A JAPANESE PRINT.

us; and the temple was a great set piece of fireworks, each shrine a sun goddess's glowing cave, with the many-jeweled pyramids of votive candles. The spectacle lasted in full splendor for more than an hour, the villagers flocking along shore, trooping through the temple galleries, and drifting about in boats to watch the splendid spectacle. Then lights dropped out here and there, and the glow of the rising moon made the firmament pale; but even when

to board a transport at any time. To such men of the standing reserve the government was to pay two yen a month, with pensions to their wives should they die in the Emperor's service, and rations to their families as long as they were under arms. They told us of the indulgences granted to all soldiers likely to go to Corea, and how they of the standing reserve could remain out of barracks until eleven o'clock, while young soldiers must

report at eight. When we asked with concern what would happen if they returned to quarters after hours, they answered: "Our officers will not punish us. They do not fear that we will run away like Chinese soldiers. We need only to report that we have remained at the temple to hear the news of the Heijo, and see the illumination in its honor, and it will be right."

All their hopes were centered on a speedy summons to the transport ships at Ujina, and



DRAWN BY C. D. WELDON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

SHRINE OF JIZO SAN, PROTECTOR OF LITTLE CHILDREN.

the shore-line was lost in darkness, Itsukushima's inner shrine by the sea was still aglow with votive lights.

Two soldiers from the forts, who came in to the "speak-meeting," heard of the proposed illumination, and remained for it. We noticed them pacing the temple platforms, and after the lamps were lighted sculled back and asked if they would like to come out in the boat and see the lights from the water. With many bows and expressions of thanks they dropped down into the sampan. It was as much our opportunity as theirs, however, and we plied them with questions through the interpreter. These soldiers of the legion had barely finished serving their time in the army, and had married and settled down as industrious citizens, when the standing reserve was called out, and they reported at Hiroshima. They were detailed to the island forts, but were thirsting for the fray in Corea, and expected to be ordered to Ujina

when the boatmen were about to take us in under the great torii I thought to sound the soldiers on other lines, and said, "Now, if you pray to the gods while you are under the torii, they will send you soon to Corea and give you victories there." Without protest or remark, but quickly, naturally, with all seriousness, the two soldiers rose to their feet, clapped their hands, and bowed their heads for a few moments in prayer, while the boat floated silently on under the giant shadow and the sendo stood motionless at his oar.

The next morning the village officers called "to thank your spirit" in celebrating Japan's victories; the high priest sent sacred gift-papers filled with rice, and asked for the honorable names in full, that they might be written among the temple's contributors; and when we went to the village every one bowed and made pretty speeches about the American matsuri. Weeks later a Tokio artist wrote in his quaint idiom that he had heard of my

«favorably presenting a great deal of money to the temple, praying for the war, and lighted the thousand lamps of Miyajima for the war. I seen it in our Japanese newspapers.» Surely never did one obtain so much pleasure and glory by an expenditure of four yen (two dollars in United States gold).

A real pilgrimage to Miyajima includes a round of the seven small shrines on the island, and a climb to the Oku-no-in, the sharp crest two thousand feet above the water-temple. A steep, stone-flagged path and long, mossy staircases lead up through the forest for two miles, passing closed, empty, or half-ruined temples, old pagodas, and deserted shrines, and the foundations of many other sacred buildings that were wantonly destroyed at the time the revival of pure Shinto put Buddhism under the ban, drove its priests to hiding, and reduced them to the most literal poverty and humiliation and involuntary fasting. Tiny fanes are scattered all the way, and one toy shrine to Jizo San, with cairns of stone prayers beside it, is niched under the great shelf of a boulder. Mossy Buddhas meditate in enchanted retreats, and one damp statue dreaming beside a fern-wreathed spring expects each faithful one to pray and then dash a dipper of water over his mossy old head.

There is a group of empty temples at a half-way station, and an airy *ta-te-ba*, or tea-booth, perched on a precipice's edge, lets one look almost straight down on the temple, the skeleton gate in the water, and out over all the blue beauty of strait and bay, and the great green ridges of the Aki hills. We met pretty village maids descending with huge bundles of twigs and firewood on their heads, quiet pilgrims with staffs and straw cloaks, and one charming Japanese woman of the upper class, whose sweet, velvet voice rang after us in warning of the danger of climbing a certain slope of coarse, crumbling granite in hard-heeled leather shoes, while we wondered how she ever passed the breakneck place in her shuffling straw *dzori*, held only by velvet cords between the toes.



DRAWN BY C. D. WELDON.

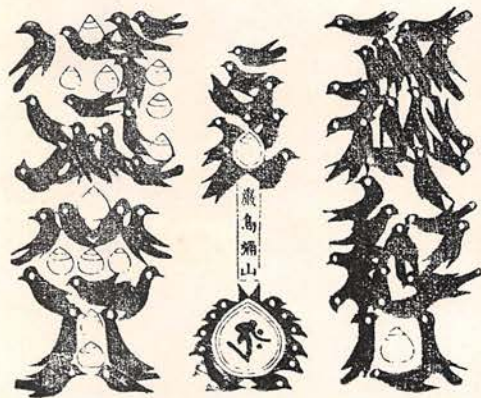
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

MIYAJIMA PORTERS.

The gods who built Miyajima had some titanic play with boulders at the summit, tilting and tumbling rocks the size of houses, building natural torii, and constructing grottoes and niches that a few gilded images and brocade curtains convert to full temples. Our ancient guide watched us closely in each such shrine, and, seemingly to prevent us from stealing the charming little altar images, hurried us out ahead of him as soon as we had tossed in our copper offerings. There is one miraculous rock with an aperture in its side, into which one may dip a finger and find it wet with the saltiest brine. The modern surveyor's beacon at the very summit is surrounded by a circle of gray, weather-beaten little shrines erected by the Tokugawa shoguns, and it was there that we discovered that our lean, bald-pated old guide had abstracted the coppers from each shrine as fast as we contributed them, and this was partly the reason for the glee and joy animating him when I besought him to clap and pray *Tento Sama* (the sun) to shine on my attempts at photographing him, and reason, too, for his driving us out of each temple in advance of him.

It was all sunshine and enchanted stillness on that mountain-top. The rustle of a pheasant and the movements of the deer, as they

sought ferny beds for their noonday rest, were the only sounds as we went from one deserted temple, mossy gateway, or bell-tower, to another. The people have lately restored the large temple where burns the sacred flame



A MIYAJIMA PRAYER-PAPER.

first lighted by Kobo Daishi after he had conquered the dragons on the opposite shore of Shikoku, and here a group of priests served us barley tea, and sold us, to wear as talis-

mans, prayer-papers on which the crows who stole the jewels of the sea and brought them to this temple were grouped to represent archaic characters. As reward to these birds, the gods permitted their descendants to come every year, raise their young in safety, and fly away, only two crows visiting Miyajima in a year. From all the high points and through each opening we had views on both sides of the island, and everywhere were wonderful billowy masses of green below us, and in the distance delicate, vaporous blue mountain shapes floated on a soft pearl-and-blue sea that was but a different presentment of the exquisite sky.

We went back to the prosaic outer world of our own with regret, really saddened at leaving this isle of the blessed, whence death and sorrow are so nearly banished, where there are many temples, but no tombs, where all of peace and poesy dwells, where one feels a century removed from progressive, modern Japan, and enjoys the charm of feudal, prayerful times, of those days when the gods were nearer the earth, and certainly made Miyajima a visiting- if not an abiding-place.

Et ego in Arcadia vixi.

Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore.

THE SILENCE OF LOVE.

OH, inexpressible as sweet,
Love takes my voice away;
I cannot tell thee, when we meet,
What most I long to say.

But hadst thou hearing in thy heart
To know what beats in mine,
Then shouldst thou walk, where'er thou art,
In melodies divine.

So warbling birds lift higher notes
Than to our ears belong;
The music fills their throbbing throats,
But silence steals the song.

George E. Woodberry.