# THE REAL JAPAN

FROM THE STUDIES & OBSERVATIONS OF THE WORLD'S FOREMOST STUDENT OF MANKIND WHILE LIVING IN JAPAN AS A JAPANESE

By PROF. FREDERICK STARR

## AT KYOTO

Tokyo.—We have been to Kyoto. The world over, age gives respectability, and Kyoto rejoices in the respectability of age. Today she is a city of secondary importance, but her past was magnificent. Of course she considers Tokyo a mushroom. The present capital of the Japanese empire was a mere fishing village until 1603, when the great Ieyasu made it the Shogunate capital. Through its early history it was known as Yedo. In our childhood, we all heard of the marvelous city of Yedo; no doubt many of us have wondered that it no longer attracts attention, ignorant of the fact that it is the present city of Tokyo. It was the Shogun's capital from 1603 until 1868. During all that time Japan had two capitals, the old Mikado's capital of Kyoto and the new Shogun's capital of Yedo. Since 1868, with the restoration of the Mikado to actual power, the seat of his government has been shifted and today Kyoto lives upon its past glory.

In 1895 Kyoto celebrated its eleven hundredth anniversary by building a curious and striking building which is commonly known as the Tai-Kyoku Den. It was intended to reproduce the architecture of the time when the city itself was founded. At that time Japan was notably under Chinese influence, and the whole architecture and style of the edifice emphasizes that fact. There is a grand and massive wooden gateway, brilliantly covered, which gives entrance to an enormous courtyard in which is situated the Tai-Kyoku Den.

We arrived at Kyoto the afternoon before the procession was to take place, and our first visit was to the memorial building, which is the terminus to which the processional marches after it has passed through the main streets of the city. Instead of repeating it, and being given details of its history, we were taken to another building close at hand where a most interesting sight was witnessed. The building was the training-hall of the Butoku Kwai—which means, we suppose, "the Military Virtues Society." Less noisy than the fencing is the jiu-jitsu practice. Every reader knows that jiu-jitsu is a form of wrestling in which, yielding on the part of the assailed defeats the excess of force and power of the assailant. The more an enemy exerts himself the worse for him. It is astonishing to see some of the results, especially in cases where a child of eight years seemed to throw and exhaust a man of developed power.

The fact that photographing was not allowed is part of the general policy of the imperial government, where fencing also was witnessed anywhere without restriction. Teachers of fencing and jiu-jitsu abound and anyone may learn both arts if he will give the time and money necessary. But the fencing and jiu-jitsu of the Butoku Kwai is in a sense part of the governmental military preparedness, has certainly an actual value in training individuals for war, even in these days, when hand to hand combat is almost impossible. The quickness of eye and hand, the adroitness in attack and defense, the training of nerve and muscle—these are still worth while from a military point of view, and these to a remarkable degree are developed through the exercises of this society. Ah, well, everything connected with military preparation in Japan is to some extent grave secret and guarded from external observation. The photographer is any part of the empire must watch with care for the marks which indicate the so-called "fort zones" within which the use of cameras is not allowed. Even on shipboard placards are posted, warning passengers that in Japanese waters photographing and sketching are prohibited by law, and will not be permitted on the vessel.

Personally we never see or hear jiu-jitsu without remembering Lafcadio Hearn's comparison. For him the whole national policy of Japan is in the nature of jiu-jitsu exercise—the using of the enemy's force to his own undoing—he makes the claim that Japan is playing jiu-jitsu with all the outside world. She yields that she may gain; she abandons the unnecessary in her character that she may profit by the experience and wisdom of outside nations. To him the game was wise; he believed in its ultimate success.

While the Jidai Mateuri was celebrated both morning and afternoon we were assured that the afternoon performance would be far the best, and were invited to visit Kyoto-Fu-Cho in the morning. This famous temple, standing in architecture and position is situated upon a height from which one gets a lovely view over the city. The main temple is situated at the very edge of a precipice—in fact, it projects far out over what was the original margin, and stands supported in its projecting portion by a remarkable scaffolding of heavy posts and timbers—giving it the most astonishing appearance of being set up on high stilts. In approaching it one passes up an abrupt slope, closely built on both sides with little stores at most of which cheap potteries are sold. These shops are famous, but for us the shops of curios and knabbes were more interesting. It was Hideyoshi who carried the knabbes and the golden calabashes. It is fitting that Kyoto should surpass calabashes to this day. Turn off a little shop from whose ceiling hang bundles of gourds beautifully colored, dried and molded into fantastic forms; for the Japanese is not content with gourds as nature makes them. He is genuously ties or binds the growing gourds with cords in order that as to force them into forms of slender flasks, of snakes, of masses of intestines, of ducks and other birds. These are meant for vessels to carry fluid—especially the favorite sake or rice-wine. When one has selected some strange flask to suit him, he buys a little gourd for a cup, beautifully lacquered and adorned with gold and colors.

One reason why we wished to visit Kyoto-Fu-Cho was in connection with Alun History. In its precincts stands the figure of Bishamon, the god of war, who is said to have given the Japanese leader Tamura Maro a notable victory over my poor hunted aboriginal friends. A great picture, votive-offering given it commemorates the fact. We had gone in the temple and represented the feats of valor achieved by the imperial forces. In the same votive hall there are quaint pictures representing the coming of early Dutch vessels to the shores of Japan.

One of the most characteristic features of Kyoto is the slender partitions of school children with their teachers, which are met with at all times and everywhere. They go out to see blooming flowers and reddened maples whose leaves are compared to blossoms; they go to shrines and temples and the scenes of national interest famous in Japan history. We rarely go to any place of note without encountering such a party. So there is no surprise to find schools of children tramping up the great stairway to the main temple, visiting the votive hall and the temples in the rear and looking out over the ancient capital and through the lovely gorge clad in maples, which two weeks hence will be a flame of glory.

The lesser shrines are often quite as interesting as the main temple. Behind Kiyomizu-Dera there is a little shelter with its hundred stone figures of Jizo. Queer things they are, the shapes of little boys and girls devotion. On the base of many of them stand heaps of pebbles which have been piled up by kindly visitors. It seems that children after death are often robbed of their clothes. It is a male demon who sets them to work at piling stones on the bank of the death river. The task is endless, but the little ones are helped by all who come to the shrine of Jizo, the god of Jizo. Here, too, is a statue of Hinuru, worn smooth by the hands of those sufferers. I never tire of watching these figures; whether of wood or stone or bronze, makes no difference—their features and outlines are always worn smooth by repeated rubbing. I need only to stop to see some poor old woman tottering along, with a little stone on the back of her upon her lips rubs her hand over the head of the loved figure and then carries her hand to her lips; a mother brings her little one and strokes the image of the god which corresponds to the ailing member of the child, and then rubs the baby for healing; or some helpless person, afflicted with rheumatism or crippled, is brought by kindly hands to rub the figure and get relief from suffering.

From the platform of the great temple, projecting far out, are the precipitous back and supported on its stately crutches, the faithful it is said may practically themselves unharmed. In these days of doubt and unbelief the experiment is seldom tried, but not many years ago one bold devotee made the attempt. It is said that he was not successful; no doubt his faith was shallow. We did not throw ourselves from the platform, but took the more prosaic means of climbing down the back stairway, coming at last into the little grotto famous for its maple trees. It was a scene of life and action. Everywhere little platforms of bamboo were being erected or repaired. A few days from now, and all of them will be occupied by groups and parties of picnickers out will be unoccupied, and it is worth while to come here to see the joyous autumn foliage. Not an available spot to inspect the famous beauty of the scene.

But meantime we must not forget the Jidai Mateuri. It was really a fine procession. The streets approaching the Tai-Kyoku Den were crowded with people who desired to see the pageant as it approached its destination. The procession consisted of six sections representing definite periods of time from the date of the city's founding to the disappearance of the Tokugawa shogunate. Each section was gotten up with careful reference to historic accuracy; marvelous costumes, things almost inconceivable in these modern days were here to be seen. First came the civil officers of the Eurrakyu era on their way to the imperial court; then era extending from 782 to 806 coincides with the founding of the city. The second section represented military officers of the same era going to the front. The third represented civil officers of the Fujiwara dynasty going to the imperial court. The fourth group represented officers in procession going for shooting arrows—one of the most graceful exercises ever developed in Japan. The five sections were the officers of Nobunaga coming to Kyoto. Which is the greatest in the history of a nation—the originator of a policy, or the man who carries it into fruition? It is the old topic of the debating club: "Which was the greater, Philip of Macedon, or Alexander the Great? Which was the greater, Juarez or Diaz of Mexico? Three great men built Dai Nippon—Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, Ieyasu; which was the greatest? Well, it was Nobunaga's officers who were here represented. The sixth group showed the representatives of the Tokugawa Shogunate coming to Kyoto. They were the men who raised Japan with Ieyasu in 1868, when they fell, and their representatives ceased to go to Kyoto, the emperor removed to Tokyo and the capital was changed to Tokyo.

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Gateway of the Tai-Kyoku Den, Kyoto.

This society was organized in 1896 and is represented throughout the empire. Today it numbers over 1,000,000 members. Its purpose seems to be the development of military virtues, of bravery, of skill in defense and attack. In this great hall scores of persons daily engage in the practice of fencing and of jiu-jitsu. When we entered, we found the exercise in full swing. Half the hall was devoted to fencing, the other half to jiu-jitsu. We were warned as we entered the building that no photographing would be allowed, but that we were welcome to witness the performance. The thing which first impressed us was the fact that a sprinkling of the combatants actively engaged in fencing and in jiu-jitsu were mere children eight or ten years old. No one who has not seen the exercise can imagine the vigor and aggressiveness of Japanese fencing. The combatants are carefully guarded against injury by heavy protective coverings on the head and over the face, the chest, the arms and upper legs. The weapons used in fencing are like club swords or wooden slats, and not only thrusts but strokes of the most violent nature are given in the exercise. The noise made is astonishing, but more astonishing is the vigor of attack. Children were pitted against grown men in many cases, although it is clear that the older combatants in such pairing are not expected to use their powers to the utmost. At the same time, they do not play with their small antagonists, who in many cases make astonishing thrusts and show and force that skillful guarding is necessary for protection. In jiu-jitsu, Here too, in many cases children of eight or ten are pitted against well-


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Finally the train reached Bloomfield. Fritz still slept as it pulled in and his friend had to shake him into full him where he was.

"I tanks you," said Fritz, as he rose slowly to his feet. The open door of the car was directly in front of him. He walked straight out of it.

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