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ON PASTIMES AND AMUSEMENTS
OF THE JAPANESE,

by
Charlotte M. Salwey.
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If, in the pursuit of ethnographical investigations, we are to
gauge national traits of differing races by the manner in which
they employ their spare time, we must look deeper into the
subject of their amusements than we are usually wont to do.

It may be a trivial matter to the world at large how mankind
in general derives any pleasure out of life, but the proverbial
consequences of "all work and no play" can be applied uni-
versally.

Since man has inhabited the earth, his existence has been
varied with pastimes, as well as manual labour and mental
culture, for we learn from the Monumental History of Egypt,
the cradle of the human race, that amusements were organized
almost as far back as 3000 B.C. We are told that the youthful
aristocracy indulged in the pleasures of the chase, harpooned
the crocodile and hippopotamus, shot with arrows gazelle and
other game, trapped the hyena, netted fish and water-fowl, and
angled in pond and stream. The women sang and danced,
played on sistroms, lyre, cymbals, and other musical instruments,
petted and fed fish that had been captured in pond and basin,
and fostered with tender delight tame animals and reptiles.

Moreover, among sepulchral treasures have been unearthed
terra-cotta objects, which from their diminutive size proved them
to be toys that had been deposited with dead children, a careful
custom peculiar to the East. Dolls with movable limbs have
also been discovered, and the same form of plaything has been
mentioned by ancient Greek authors. These last-named objects
were exhibited as puppet shows and marionettes, and a studied
manipulation and movement of limbs and eyes fascinated guests.
and motley audiences. Besides these, articulated dolls, toy chariots, drafts, models of fruit, and other objects have been found in the tombs of the youthful dead. During the excavations conducted by Major di Cesnola at Salamis, in the Island of Cyprus, no less than 500 specimens, undeniably playthings of the past, were brought to light.

Travellers in Japan have hitherto been struck by the trivialities which seemed so readily to satisfy the people. Firefly-hunting versus Lawn-tennis appears a tame alternative, the first brought to perfection by the graceful yielding of an artistic weapon, the latter demanding mental as well as physical skill. Yet both these sports are exactly suited to the temperaments of the respective people by whom they are enjoyed. The model ships and mechanical objects made for English children, the tin soldiers of Germany, the toy millinery of France, the toy games of chance, competition, and speculation of America, interpret for the ethnologist the prevailing distinctions of racial disposition. The models of birds and flowers and almost every natural beauty, placed in the hands of youthful Japanese, express intuitive love of nature and excellence in Art. The climate of a country, as well as the child life and training, must be brought into consideration, as well as national characteristics which are immemorial, hereditary, and incapable of change.

Greatly to the honour and credit of Japan, there does not appear to have entered into the programme of her pastimes any counterpart of the magnificent fury of the Olympic Games of Greece, the excitable cruelty of Spanish bull fights, the barbaric living chess of Persia, or the inhuman shows of Roman gladiators. Sacrifice of life for mere sport was, I believe, unknown.

A typical fête is just over; the Festival of the Cherry Flower has passed away. The warm April sun diffused through the air perfumes and scented elixirs, stimulating devotees of Nature to raise orisons of thanksgiving to an omnipresent goddess, who gathered together the people to assist in her yearly coronation of their land. The flowery branches above, the admiring crowd beneath, both in spring attire, became gay in company, and for the time being mankind, setting aside his daily cares, completely surrendered to the force of a fleeting joy.

We have learnt that, with a few exceptions, it was not the ancient custom for, at any rate, the women of Japan to wander
beyond the limits of their homes, therefore pastimes were regulated to the house and its enclosures, which were totally unlike our own, being essentially Eastern and in no wise adapted for field sports, soft sand and stone being substituted, for example, in lieu of our velvet lawns. Pastimes were participated in which were solely of a graceful, refined, and artistic nature that gave sufficient opportunity to exhibit proof of educational rearing and skill, but as little show of exertion as possible. They were organized for the convenience of two or three players at a time, who sought to outrival each other in the presence of parents and assembled guests, by their ready wit, good memory, and lithe movements. On these occasions the use of poetry, proverbs, flowers, perfumes, and delicately manufactured accessories predominated. Beyond these simple methods for beguiling unappropriated hours, the professionals stepped in, and exhibited their trained services on payment of a suitable fee. Through these established modes of diversion, we learn how delicately Orientals handle the frailest materials, with what dexterity they carry through some trifling game—the welding of a paper fan—the floating of a miniature cup of rice spirit on a flowing tide—the throwing and controlling of many balls at one time without failure—the setting a top in motion in some perilous position—all proving what hours of patient labour the conjurer and juggler must have spent, to bring to perfection the mere accomplishment that wins the day.

In their subtle carving, embroidery, and other handiwork, we trace how the fingers were drilled for dainty work by the care bestowed upon the plaything successfully handled in the past. Possibly the minute intricacies of the Murata rifle, employed during the late war, would have failed to fulfil their deadly mission in hands less skilful than those of the Japanese.

Under the heading of Pastimes will be treated those forms of amusements in which persons of all ages and both sexes participated, either as spectators or performers.

The subject is wide, embracing ancient customs and modern practices, games, and sports, some of which have already found a way to our own land, as well as those of historical and local interest, entirely untried by us, peculiar to the country of their birth, either the outcome of certain political or industrial events,
or else purely original, suggested to suit some particular occasion
in the life of an exclusive race.

It has often been remarked that the aristocracy of Japan con-
sidered physical exertion for pleasure, though pleasing to the
eye, lowering to their position to witness in public; therefore
princes and nobles, who could afford the outlay, commanded
privately the services of actors, wrestlers, dancers, and conjurers
to perform specially for their benefit. In this manner their
patrons could not be classed, or marked in company with the
ordinary sightseer.

This evasion was, in a way, productive of good results; it
stimulated those who were adepts in such arts to a standard of
perfection only attained by contest and individual competition.

In describing organized games within doors, Ōyawase may be
mentioned first. This elegant and unique pastime was indulged
in by the dilettanti of mediæval Japan. It consisted in the burn-
ing of various kinds of scented woods in succession, and guests,
who assembled for the purpose, had to guess the name of each
bark reduced to ashes.

Sometimes the incense was prepared in the presence of the
party; sometimes it was all ready for immediate use, coarsely
pulverized, made up into several shapes, packed separately in
gilt paper bags, or sheets of bamboo tissue, in order to preserve
the aroma of each individual sample from affecting the rest.

When a selection from these packets had been made, the
powder was placed in a mica plate, and served out upon it with a
silver spoon. With the aid of forceps the plate was held over
the Kōro, or incense lamp, into which had been placed live
charcoal. The plate was held over the lamp until the contents
was reduced to ashes. The guests who were present had then
to state what wood had been employed. For this purpose
counters were provided, bearing representations of certain shrubs,
ten in number. The counter that corresponded as a sequel to
the decision was handed over by the guests, and deposited by
the umpire of the game upon a ruled board. Each burning
made the answer more difficult, as the room became gradually
impregnated with the co-mingling of many aromas.

For this pastime quite a long list of articles was required. They
were of choice materials and beautifully finished workmanship.
Card games were numerous, and offered many attractions. For these, the use of poetry, flowers, aphorisms, and classic quotations predominated [Plate I.]. The I-ro-ha Garuta, or Alphabet and Proverb game, was conducted as follows. One hundred cards were required, fifty being inscribed with proverbs, and the other half printed with pictures illustrative of the proverbs, selected to commence in rotation with the I-ro-ha, or Japanese syllabary. The players arranged themselves in a circle, and cards were dealt round. The promoter of the game took possession of the picture cards, shuffled them, and placed them face downwards. On turning them up, he held them one by one to view. The player who owned the corresponding card declared the proverb aloud, and the match was made. The last to hold a card was the loser of the game, which resulted in a forfeit, while a prize of toothsome food awaited the winner.

Another form of the above was Hana Garuta, played with forty-eight cards, four cards for each month of the year, these being distinguished by flowers that expand to perfection during the successive seasons. An extra value was attached to one in each month, and this was marked by a distinctive representation of bird or butterfly. The second prize card was inscribed with a special line of poetry referring to the hana, or flower of the month. Hana Garuta was provided with complicated rules, and at one time was so popular that gambling in connection with it was prohibited. Counters and a pool, as well as beautifully finished cards, were requisite for the carrying on of the game.

The Uta Garuta was of a literary description. One hundred cards, furnished with quotations from celebrated authors, were dealt round to the players. Half the poem or quotation was upon one card, and the other half upon another. Those who through ready memory could dispose of their hand the quickest won the game. Uta Garuta, or "Song Card," was more or less a refined edition of "Old Maid" as we play it in England.

Artistic parties, to which a select company was invited, were arranged in order that those present might witness an artist wield his brush and produce charming pictures before the eyes of an appreciative audience. These single sheets were called Surimono. The paper was often cut in the form of a fan face; it was placed upon the floor in view of the guests, while the
I-RO-HA GARUTA.

A Card Game.
artist knelt down in the usual fashion, one hand resting on the mat, while the other was free to manipulate the Fudé, or ink brush.

Albums and fans were presented either for signature or for a few strokes from the brush of the gifted draughtsman. When this was accorded, the painter set his seal upon his gift, which ensured his work being instantly recognized in the future.

The results of these friendly gatherings have been preserved for centuries—Kano, Korin, and others have memorialized their labours on Surimono for princely offerings.

_ōgi otoshi_, or fan target [Plate II.], was peculiar to these Orientals. A target called a _Cho_, somewhat in the form of a butterfly, was placed upon a low table or pedestal on the floor. The players sat at a given distance and endeavoured to hit the _Cho_ with a fan thrown with a sudden and peculiar turn of the wrist, which caused it to reverse in its passage through the air, and strike the target with the rivet end. The game was played by two people at a time, facing the target on either side. Bells were attached to the outside edges of the _Cho_, which sounded when a successful hit had been accomplished.

The method of arranging flowers amounted to a refined education, which often found its fulfilment as a graceful home pastime. As a paper has lately been delivered to this Society by Mr. Kajima on this subject, my description shall be brief.

Many religious tenets are silently expressed through the medium of branch, bud, and blossom. Every disposal of these works out its own symbolism. For instance, a spray of blossoming plum, cut from a bough with three distinct points, is often placed upon the _Tokonoma_. These three points differing in height signify Heaven, Earth, and Humanity. A branch pruned to five elevations was emblematic of the five essences, without which mankind cannot exist—fire, water, ether, air, and spirit.

The Japanese may be said to almost worship Flora's gifts. They often approach on hands and knees sprays and arrangements that suggest religious lessons. It was in ancient times the custom to remain silent in the presence of flowers, and never to use them as decorations for those rooms in which light conversation and merriment prevailed. After a feast, the most honoured member was requested to suggest some flower lesson, for which a tray, whereon was placed a vase, pair of scissors, and
a few sprays, was brought forward. When the host had repeated his request a sufficient number of times, the guests acquiesced, and silence prevailed. The vase being fitly supplied, all present retired to a distant part of the room, to admire and meditate on the hidden teaching so delicately conveyed.

Although the Tea Ceremony has lately received the special attention of Mr. Harding Smith, a few remarks must be made on the subject, since Cha-no-yu was a cultivated means of exhausting idle hours. A separate space in each well-to-do home was set aside for its full enjoyment, to which an uneven number of guests were invited. The room was often elaborately arranged, while precious objects were displayed on the walls, as well as spread upon the floor, for the delight of those favoured with an invitation. A strict code of etiquette was observed, choice archaic utensils alone made use of, which had to be admired with time-honoured set phrases of praise and gentle astonishment; while the chief design of the entertainment lay in the right naming of certain brands of delicate tea prepared for consumption. Any friend present fortunate enough to make a correct guess, was entitled to receive the most precious curio on view, which often went the round of these distinctly social ceremonials.

During this pastime, perfumes were often burnt, paintings displayed, and between each brand of tea partaken of, a summer house was resorted to while other utensils were selected, in order not to drink twice out of the same bowl. Cha-no-yu was patronized by the highest in the land, and to this day a modified form is represented, and indulged in by those who still cling to past and passing institutions of national interest.

The custom of domiciling gold-fish in the same manner in which we introduce birds into our homes must not be overlooked. They were tamed to such an extent that on clapping the hands, or on stirring the water in a particular manner, they instantly responded to the summons and appeared. In the summer hardly a Japanese home was complete without these bright, silent little creatures. Where space could not be afforded within the garden enclosure for a pond of any size, gold-fish lived and thrived in shallow basins of earthenware, clay, glass, or porcelain, if provided with a small amount of aquatic vegetation, and not otherwise overfed.
OGI OTOSHI.
The Fan-target Game.
The attention and observation given to these domestic pets occupied the quiet and restful inmates of a Japanese residence, who made such home attractions a delightful pastime, and thus kindness to living creatures was instilled into the hearts of little children brought up in the faith of Amida Buddha. The fish are varied in colour and form, their many differences being partly due to the mode of rearing, which is in itself a trade as well as an accomplishment.

Story-telling was a popular amusement. Professionals committed to memory the standard tales of Old Japan, of love, war, romance, and Fairy World fiction. The higher classes formed guilds for this purpose, and held Story meetings at their several homes, or went about themselves from place to place, obtaining many engagements. The tales recounted were usually in sets, repeated for a fortnight, and then replaced by another selection. A considerable number of guilds sprang up in large cities, the pastime being much favoured on account of its instructive as well as romantic nature. Adults often attended Story meetings, and enjoyed the relaxation. Grandmothers interested little folk on New Year's Day while closing round the brazier. Itinerants sat at street-corners, earning quite a respectable livelihood, and by this means the traditional literature was conveyed to the hearts and minds of the untutored members of the community, eager for historic information concerning their beloved land.

There was a game the Geisha, or tea maiden, studied to perfection, and at which few travellers could gain advantage except as a mark of special favour; it was called Forfeits, or Kitsune Ken. Upon the matted floor the players disposed themselves, and made in dumb show with the fingers signs which denoted, say, man, gun, fox, and so forth. These followed in succession as quickly as possible, but if the wrong sign was inadvertently made, a forfeit ensued. A man could use the gun against the fox, but the fox must attack the man, and not meddle with the gun. So that, to ensure the right succession of signs, which were to follow with great rapidity, the players had to be on the alert, and to concentrate their minds to make the required movement of the fingers without hesitation. That it is an ancient pastime is endorsed by the picture before us. Both the mode of dressing the hair and the costumes of those present are of a bygone age.
Another form is known as *Osama Ken*, in which boys representing various grades of society rise or sink to the highest or lowest rank, according to their skill and lucky advantage in faithfully depicting and mimicking the classes included in the rules of the game.

It will be impossible, within the limits of this paper, to describe all the minor national diversions participated in by the many classes, for this paper might be entirely taken up with national *fêtes* and street performances which take place throughout the year, such as the Lion Dance, the Manzai Strollers, flower-carts, the fireman's festival, etc. Then there still remain itinerants, who form for your delight sand pictures by the wayside; street jugglers, who perform risky and artistic tricks; conjurers, who impart life to paper butterflies and flowers; street musicians, and a host of other wandering beings who have perfected themselves in their special *rôles* to divert your mind, heart, and eyes in a hundred fascinating ways. There are also special festivals for boys and girls; on such occasions symbolic presents are put into their hands to fit them in after-years for their respective vocations [Plate III.]. The home games and
CHILDREN PLAYING WITH BALLS.
playthings, cheap and charming, must likewise be described on another occasion; folding paper in form of bird and beast and flower; shadows that clever fingers can manipulate into wonderful semblance of familiar forms;—all these go to make up the sum total of that synonym Japan has earned as the Children's Paradise, where tears are hardly known, and light laughter echoes all day long like the rippling waves of a far-off summer sea.

Proceeding to describe special out-of-door recreations, we come to the floating fan-and-cup game, particularly favoured by the Court nobles and ladies of Japan. The party assembled by the river, where each member launched upon the water a fan of special make prepared with varnish or lacquer to ensure buoyancy, and then set it free to be the sport of the stream. While the fan was thus jeopardized, the owner had to compose a verse or couplet of poetry before it regained terra firma. Sometimes cups filled with rice wine were substituted for the fans, but the same result was imperative. The educated classes were often gifted poets, and those who could clothe the ancient classics in new phraseology were considered equal to the authors of original musings. As a rule a Japanese poem is very short, brevity being considered the soul of poetry as well as wit. A single verse embodying a symbolic or allegorical metaphor was the highest ambition. One of the earliest literary works in the language, the Genji Monogatari, is full of beautiful and unique versification depicting the romantic life of Prince Genji. The book is dedicated to many beautiful women of Japan. A collection of poems may also be studied, translated into French by Professor Leon de Rosny, and into English by Professor Basil Chamberlain.

This poetry tournament, played either by the flowery margent of a winding stream in spring, or on artificial lakes and enclosures through changeful autumn afternoons, held out many attractions. It was annually participated in as a national institution, and the high-born guests essayed to linger, in their costly brocades and elaborately coiffured hair, till the early rising moon threw its opalescent light upon the scene, warning them to depart and await the presence of to-morrow's sun [Plate IV.].

The Japanese are lovers of the lantern and firefly, and choice legends have been handed on to us relative to these luminous hymenoptera. "The Prince and the Firefly Lovers," "The
Diary of a Convolvulus," are well known. Fireflies are caught and confined in delicately made cages of rattan, silk, and wire. They are petted and preserved in many ways. Their female captors love to watch the warfare waged by these denizens of the air in search of their mates. On still summer evenings they place these beautiful luminous creatures beneath the low eaves of their dwellings, and watch the suitors appear, by that mysterious power of seeking each other from afar which Nature has bestowed upon her winged and wandering offspring. These have been known to fly for miles in search of a wingless partner of the opposite sex. Fire-fly hunting, like the preceding, is another river pastime. With a flat waterproof fan fastened to a long pole, the ladies dislodge the flies and skim them off as they settle on the surface of the stream, or on the overhanging boughs of water-willows. Sometimes diminutive bows and arrows are utilized for this purpose, by which means the insects become stunned, and readily fall a prey to their fair conquerors.

Eagles created an important diversion in the aristocratic life of the middle ages, and falconry was a much-favoured sport. The birds were well trained to the pursuit of small prey of the higher flight. We come across many representations in bronze, ivory, porcelain, and pictures of eagles and hawks secured to perches and caparisoned. They were trained, as in Europe, by a lure, viz. a piece of leather or wood covered with the wings and feathers of a bird and attached to a string. Cormorants were also utilized for sport. They were captured by means of dummy birds, carved out of wood; these were half hidden in trees overhanging a river. When the ruse had succeeded, live specimens were substituted for the decoy. This sport was occasionally conducted by torch-light when practised as a trade, while for pleasure it usually took place in the day-time.

Before diving, a metal ring was passed over the neck of the bird, in order to allow it to swallow small prey only, while compelled to bring up larger and more valuable fish as spoil. Cormorants were trained not to injure in any way the prizes they secured, and after a short tuition the metal rings were withdrawn, and a good and ample supper provided. These birds of prey are intelligent, understanding the duties expected of them, and appreciating good treatment. I witnessed an exhibition of this sport in England some years ago.
THE FLOATING FAN GAME.
WRESTLING was in days of old much favoured by royalty and the upper classes, who commanded special displays of strength as a means of beguiling weary hours away. To the origin of this national custom many legends have been attached. The earliest historical instance known occurred during the reign of the good Emperor Suinin, B.C. 24, when KeJiaya, a noble of great stature, wrestled Nomi-no-Shikune, celebrated at that time for having invented clay effigies to be buried with the dead, in lieu of living retainers.

During the 8th century other famous matches are recorded. The throne of Japan was once contested for in this manner. The Emperor Buntoku died, leaving two sons who both aspired to govern. In the same century wrestling became a marked feature at the Festival of the Five Grains. Wrestling also formed part of religious services, and matches were contested at shrines of patron saints; they were also organized as a means of raising funds for the building of temples, and establishing other schemes for public benefit.

For this sport a goal with a canopy was erected, supported by posts. Bales of rice and precious grain were placed round the arena, over which the antagonists were not to step, or the spectators to intrude. An umpire, fan in hand, watched the perilous performance; and gave his veto when the contest had been sufficiently played out. In order to stimulate the muscles, the combatants clapped and lashed their limbs with little mercy, and ate salt before commencing the tussle. Bare limbs and gaudy loin-cloths, with a towel tied round the head, constituted the preparations. It was a mere exhibition of brute force, and was of no worth to any but the lower classes, who gave themselves up to the tedious training as a means of making a livelihood.

FOOTBALL was introduced into Japan from China in the middle of the 7th century. The Emperor Toba the second became an expert player, and in his reign a club was formed at the palace. During days of extreme poverty, an Emperor and his Court were said to eke out a scanty income by giving lessons in the art of football practice.

For musical recreations various instruments were used, the Samisen, Koto, and Biwa being the most general. Street singers drew appreciative audiences, and occasionally a fine voice was
developed from among the people. But the Japanese are not a musical race, and their harmonies do not arouse our enthusiasm. Like everything entirely different or new to us, it will take time to find out the charm of Eastern renderings, although some who have travelled thitherward have described certain ceremonies in which music and singing were introduced of a peculiarly sweet and fascinating character, a sort of magic witchcraft.

Describing the Bon Odori, or dance in honour of the souls of the dead, Lafcardio Hearn writes—

"There creeps upon me a nameless tingling sense of being haunted. But no, these gracious, silent, waving, weaving shapes are not the shadowy folk for whose coming the white fires were kindled. A strain of song, full of clear quavering, gushes from some girlish mouth, and then fifty soft voices join the chant; then male chanting breaks the hush; then sweet thin voices of older women follow; and song overtakes song, and hours pass by unfelt, unheard, while the moon wheels slowly down the blue steeps of the night."

He goes on to remark, "Melodies in Europe awaken within us feelings we can utter, sensations familiar as mother speech, inherited for all generations behind us; but how to explain the emotions evoked by a primitive chant totally unlike anything in Western melody, impossible to write in those tones which are the ideographs of our music tongue?"

This archaic singing and music fostered and memorialized in the peasant life of old Japan may some day appeal to us in its sweetness of tone and timbre as it did to Mr. Hearn. Music, it must be remembered, was mostly professional, or else of a deeply religious nature, in which instruments of great artistic merit and variety were used. Whether handled by the musume, or the devotee, an entrancing and characteristic picture of Japanese life claimed the admiration of all present.

The DRAMA was for the middle and lower classes, provided as a means of relaxation from long days of toil that succeeded each other without any sabbath break. At sunrise the beating of drums announced that a performance was about to commence, which would most likely continue throughout the day. An eager crowd soon enlivened the space available for its accommodation, which was round the platform, the pit being immediately before the stage, at a level just sufficient for the audience to peer up
at the performance. The sight-seers donned their best attire, painted their faces, and dressed their hair. They repaired to the theatre in flocks, whole families bringing viands and drinks, pipes and sweetmeats, in order to enjoy neighbourly picnics, while favourite actors were resting.

Tears and laughter were in turns wrung from the motley assembly, for the reward of virtue, the punishment of crime, the laudation of filial and patriotic devotion, were duly treated and emphasized. The rich merchant and the poor apprentice alike forgot their business and their cares, while in the most agreeable manner they learnt a wholesome sermon or a moral lesson to be pondered over during future days of useful labour. There was nothing fanciful or arabesque on the Japanese stage; each performance had a definite function or mission. The subjects chosen were chiefly historic, with a substitution of feigned names, but easily recognizable to the audience. Women's parts were always played by men; actors became great favourites, and secured many patrons ready to assist when funds were low. Many simple contrivances for trap-doors, revolving scenes, and good scenic painting were adopted. Of late years the Japanese stage has risen in popularity. If, by any sad mischance, an actor died upon the stage, two figures, hooded and attired in black, appeared to remove the deceased. In this costume they were supposed to be rendered invisible.

The No Drama was more exclusively the delight of the nobility. It was a classic exhibition performed on stages temporarily erected in palaces and princely households. The Emperor Yomei, who reigned 586-593 A.D., commanded the gods to be propitiated, when two performers, Taketa and Hattore, particularly distinguished themselves, and from that date the No Drama has received marked attention. Ancienly it was only interpreted by the Court nobles and feudal princes. It was divided into three sections; the first to propitiate the gods, the second to terrify evilly disposed persons, the third to exemplify all that was beautiful and delightful. Gorgeous costumes were always worn; also masks cunningly carved in thin wood lacquered over, some of which have been preserved to our day. Through their agency, mythological and uncanny creatures, demons, animals, heroes, and angels were impersonated. Flowing wigs dyed in a startling way heightened

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their effects. The drama was carried through in a most decorous manner. Scenic display was not obligatory, though later, open-air performances with suitable surroundings were not uncommon. The language of the dramatis personae was refined and cultured, and the nobility, who constituted the entire audience, took the matter seriously. As they listened they learnt the manners, customs, history, religions, and great thoughts of their land and its leaders. Many hours were thus passed away, while eyes were charmed with grace of movement, posture, and stately demeanour. The dignity of the No Drama stamped the ancient stage of Japan with a seal of culture and refinement which can never be forgotten.

Lastly, among all other means of speeding unappropriated hours, Dancing must take the palm [Plate V.]. It is the one accomplishment of all others that the Japanese have brought to perfection, and in which they need fear no rivalry. The well-known idyll of the Sun Goddess, and the caprices of the fair Uzume, to allure her by means of dancing from the cave into which the goddess disappeared in a freak of ill humour, is one of the first traditional gems of Japan, too well known to be repeated. From this being the Emperors of Great Japan claim a single dynasty, therefore the "divine" art of dancing is as ancient as the islands of the Extreme East. Dancing was often a religious exercise, utilized as a means for expelling disease and other public calamities, as well as for invoking all manner of blessings on the living, and peace and repose on the souls of the departed. In the sacred dances at Nara and Isé, men, women, and children alike participated in this peculiar form of religious demonstration, and gave expression to their prayerful appeals in rhythmic movement, with much waving of arms, posturing of feet, subtle grace of line and limb that wadded garments could not conceal. These facts have been handed down to us by the immortal delineations of artists and word-painters, and will throughout all time secure to Dai Nippon the Terpsichorean laurel.

All dancers, however, were not of this high order, though stage dancing was often demure and varied. The modern Geisha, or tea maiden, has lost much of primitive culture in her desire to emulate European canons of art. Grave and sweet she often is in her desire to please the eyes of fugitive guests, for whose sole enjoyment her trained services must be exhibited
A DANCER.
without reserve or measure. The Pine Tree dance is a speciality; the peculiar movement of pine branches is expressive of welcome, and in order to interpret the particular mission of these coniferae, the dancer may make use of many fans. These she will hold by hand or foot, or dispose about her, and, swaying in fitful rhythm, make you understand that your presence at her particular Cha-mise, or tea-house, is accepted as a marked honour. There are variations of this dance, in which the dancer can represent by each pose the foliage of the twelve noted Pine Trees of Japan. The Pine is an emblem of long life and happiness, and this dance is therefore usually reserved for special and festive occasions. The Samba, or opening dance that preludes the commencement of any theatrical piece, has a religious bearing, and is ancient in origin. It is displayed in order to absolve the actors from any sin inadvertently committed during the performance, such as accidentally injuring or causing the death of a contemporary artist. It was first performed when a plague broke out, owing to a pool of stagnant water, and to stay evil consequences the gods of health and long life had to be propitiated.

Beautiful trained little dancers are often known by floral appellations, dressed like flowers, gay and light hearted to all outward seeming, abandoning themselves to the checkered vicissitudes of life from youth to middle age.

In describing the above Pastimes and Amusements of the Japanese, care has been taken to make a selection of those which are essentially Oriental in character, in order to illustrate and endorse the prefatory remarks of this paper.

Many other ways of beguiling long hours, such as the games of Polo, Chess, Go-Bang, and so forth, more or less familiar to Western countries, are favoured, but there is not time this evening to give an account of the lengthy rules attached to them, which differ from our own plans of bringing them to a successful issue.

On some future occasion an extension of this wide subject may be acceptable for further discussion and study.

Note.—The legend relative to the beauty and power of Japanese dancing that was read at the conclusion of this lecture, will be found in full in "Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan," vol. ii., by Lafcardio Hearn.
Mr. Harding Smith, *Member of Council*, said that he noticed that Mrs. Salwéy had not mentioned polo: he believed that the Japanese used to play that game. With regard to the references to the Cha-no-yu, or tea ceremonies, he thought that the cases mentioned in which the rooms were decorated with curios, which were awarded to the fortunate guessers of the different brews of tea, were the debased forms of the Cha-no-yu, in which, in its original form, everything used was of the most simple character.

Mr. Charles Holme, *Hon. Sec.*, said that while he was in Japan some years ago he took a great interest in collecting games, and also in trying to learn how to play them, the latter being by no means an easy task, as all the Japanese games were very difficult to understand. One of their finest indoor games was Japanese chess; the chessmen were differently shaped to those used in this country, being flat wedge-shaped pieces of wood, although the relative value of men was similar to our own. One of the peculiar characteristics of the game was that whatever pieces were taken from one's adversary could be made use of against him, and the game was therefore more complicated and elaborate than the European method. He remembered a Chinaman on board one of the P. and O. vessels playing a game of chess; he assured his fellow-passengers that he did not understand the game, but, after being shown the moves, etc., he not only beat the man he played against, but everybody else on the ship. Another game played in Japan was Go-bang; it was much more difficult than the game which we knew by the same name, and a great amount of skill was required to play it properly. The game was played with round black and white pieces, and the object was to enclose the pieces of one's adversary. A very pretty game was played with shells, some two or three hundred being used, the object of the game being to take one shell from one part of the heap and match it from the other. It was a game that required a considerable sense of colour and good eyesight, and the game became very difficult when the shells to be matched were white and of about the same size.

Mrs. Archibald Little asked how far the games which had been mentioned were original to Japan. She had always been under the impression that most of the games which had been described were derived from China. Kite-flying had not been mentioned—in China it was quite an art. She had often thought that kite-flying had a religious origin, and would be glad to hear other people's views on the subject [Plate VI.].

The Chairman said that with regard to the origin of the games he thought that, like most things in Japan, they had come from China, travelling by way of Korea, and acquiring a good deal of the
BOYS PREPARING A KITE.
characteristics of the latter country. In Japan they had games almost identical with those of this country; the children played “five-stones,” which were thrown up and caught on the back of the hand, and many other pastimes such as might be seen any day in our streets. It was quite possible that kite-flying might have a religious origin; he had seen hundreds of kites of extraordinary shapes and sizes being flown, the seniors instructing the juniors and taking as keen an interest in the game as if they were boys themselves.

Mr. Y. Yamashita, Hon. Sec., said that Japanese chess was played principally amongst the lower and middle classes. The more refined classes played the game of Go, similar to that called Go-bang in this country. The game was played with 19 lines on each side, and about 360 squares, the men used being black and white stone. The game was a little complicated, the whole object being to appropriate as much of your opponent’s spaces as possible. The mode of doing so varied with the temperament of the player. Some tried fighting, and others did it in a more peaceful manner; when the ground was enclosed it became the property of the opposing party, and was their “sphere of influence.” Another way in which the game was similar to politics was that when one player got into an uncomfortable position he raised an issue on a different part of the board, and sometimes came out all right in consequence. He wondered why that game was not the favourite one in Europe at the present time.

Mr. C. Kadono, Member of Council, in reply to Mr. Harding Smith, said that polo was played in Japan, although not to any great extent on account of its expense. He thought the game of Go would be very popular if it was introduced into this country. As an instance of its fascination, he might relate the story of the doctor, who was engaged in a game of Go, when he was informed that a patient was very ill, and he was wanted at once. He replied that he would come as soon as he had ended the game. When the game was finished (in two or three hours) the patient was finished too.

A vote of thanks to Mrs. Salwey for her paper, which was unanimously accorded, concluded the proceedings.