

The Exam

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EDWARD WHELAN]

This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

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MOON'S PHASES.—DECEMBER, 1856.
First Quarter 4th day, 11h. 14m. evening. W.
Full Moon 11th day, 3h. 50m. evening. N. E.
Last Quarter 19th day, 2h. 30m. morning. S. E.
New Moon 27th day, 4h. 32m. morning. E. N. E.

Literature.

FLOWERS.

BY PROFESSOR LONGFELLOW.

Spake full well, in language quaint and olden,
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars they are, wherein we read our history,
As astrologers and seers of old;
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars, which they behold.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written on those stars above;
But not in the bright flow'rets under us
Stands the revelation of his love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,
Written all over this great world of ours;
Making evident our own creation,
In these stars of earth—these golden flowers.

And the Poet, faithful and far-seeing,
Sees alike in stars and flowers, a part
Of the self-same universal being,
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.

Gorgeous flow'rets in the sunlight shining,
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
Tremulous leaves with soft and silver lining,
Buds that open only to decay.

Brilliant hopes, all woven in gorgeous tissues,
Flaunting gaily in the golden light;
Large desires, with most uncertain issues,
Tender wishes, blossoming at night!

These in flowers and men are more than seeming
Workings are they of the self-same powers,
Which the Poet, in no idle dreaming,
Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
Some like stars, to tell us Spring is born,
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn;

Not alone in Spring's armorial bearing,
And in Summer's green-embazoned field,
But in arms of brave old Autumn's wearing,
In the centre of his brazen shield;

Not alone in meadows, and green alleys,
On the mountain top and by the brink
Of sequestered pools, in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of nature stoop to drink;

Not alone in her vast dome of glory,
Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
But in old Cathedrals, high and hoary,
On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant;
In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers,
Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
Tell us of the ancient games of flowers.

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike credulous affection,
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

THE AMERICAN EXPEDITION TO JAPAN.*

Some years back the Americans determined to send an expedition to Japan, in order, if possible, to open commercial relations between the United States and that mysterious country. The result of their resolution lies before us in the bulky book compiled by Dr. Hawkes. Its size is royal octavo, it contains upwards of 600 pages, and it records with the utmost minuteness all that passed from the departure of Commodore Perry from the Chesapeake, in November, 1852, until his return to Brooklyn, in April, 1855. Dr. Hawkes's compilation is, therefore, a work of considerable pretensions; and as an edition of 5000 copies was printed by order of the Senate of the United States, our expectations were considerably raised. We are bound to say, however, that though no pains have been spared in making the book in every respect a magnificent one—though it is beautifully printed and remarkably well illustrated, and though Commodore Perry, his officers, and Dr. Hawkes, have done their parts with zeal and intelligence—we have seldom discharged a more laborious duty than that of reading through the result of their labours. The various persons concerned seem to have been so deeply impressed with the importance of their mission, and so fully persuaded that they were engaged in a great historical transaction, that they were afraid to leave unrecorded any of its details. The account of the voyage from the United States to Lew-Chew tells us little that is new, but occupies seventy or eighty pages of the narrative; and the account of the various negotiations between Commodore Perry and the Japanese is extremely wearisome. The truth is, the story is one which no art can make interesting. The extreme jealousy with which the Japanese regard foreigners, and the precautions which they employ for their exclusion from the country, almost entirely prevented the Americans from learning anything about their country which was not well known before.

What Commodore Perry actually accomplished may be told in a very few sentences. By making a skilful display of the force under his command, which consisted altogether of nine ships of war and three store ships, he intimidated pretty plainly to the Japanese that, in one way or another, he was determined to form a commercial treaty with their country on behalf of the United States, taking care, however, to show them, by

every means in his power, that he would much prefer doing so in a friendly way to the use of force. As far as we can form an opinion, he seems to have executed his purpose with much judgment and firmness, and to have estimated very properly the means likely to make an impression upon a nation which, though certainly far from barbarous, possesses a civilization of an altogether different type from our own. He succeeded at last in making a treaty with the Japanese Government, by which the ports of Simoda and Hakodadi were opened to American commerce, with power to the Americans to go where they pleased within a distance of some twelve or fourteen miles. Other articles provided that Americans shipwrecked on the coast should be properly cared for and given up to their countrymen. This is the pith of Dr. Hawkes's book. However valuable may be the results obtained by Commodore Perry, they hardly seem, at first sight, important enough to require so minute a record as they have received. There is, however, a good deal of miscellaneous information scattered through the book, some of which may interest our readers.

Dr. Hawkes's introduction contains an interesting second-hand sketch of the foreign relations, and of the domestic institutions, so far as they are known, of Japan. The country was first brought to the knowledge of Europeans by Marco Polo, who, however, only heard of it in China, and did not himself visit it. It consists of a great number of islands—it is said as many as 3850—of which the three principal are Kiu-siu, Sitkof, and Nippon, and its extent is about 160,000 square miles. The country is hilly, and contains at least one mountain 12,000 feet high, but most of the hills are covered with cultivation up to their tops. The political constitution of the country is very curious. There are two Kings of Japan. One, called the Ziogoon, is the real head of the Government, and commands the army—the other, known as the Mikado, is a sort of Grand Lama, who, though nominally the supreme and sacred head of society, is really a sort of slave, treated with superstitious and wearisome veneration. The country is said to be subject to a kind of feudal nobility, and the people are divided into eight castes, within which they are rigorously confined. A Council of Thirteen, perhaps hereditary, is at the head of the administration. It is presided over by a high official, something like the Grand Vizier, and has the most extensive powers, including even a qualified right of deposing the Ziogoon. Measures taken by the Council must be ratified by the latter. If he dissents from their proposal, the matter is referred to three princes of the blood. If they agree with the Council, the Ziogoon is deposed—if they agree with the Ziogoon, the member of the Council who proposed the measure is put to death, or more frequently, disembowels himself. The whole government of Japan is infested by spies—the Ziogoon has spies on the Council, and the Council on him. But the strangest illustration of the system is to be found in the position of the feudal princes, among whom the land is at least nominally distributed. Each of them has two secretaries, who are official spies. These secretaries serve alternate years, each leaving his family at the capital during his year of service, as a pledge of sincerity to the Government; and by this ingenious arrangement, the two become spies on each other. One consequence of this universal espionage is the destruction of all confidence, accompanied by a terrible severity of punishments. Every official miscarriage is punishable by death; and, by a strange inversion of feeling, it has become a point of honour with the Japanese officials in whose departments any violation of law has occurred, to anticipate their punishment by ripping themselves up. It may well be imagined that, under such a system, the laws become an unalterable tyranny; for every proposal to alter them is made at the risk of the life of the proposer.

The policy which the Japanese adopted towards foreigners until the treaty with the United States—which has been followed by other treaties with ourselves and the Russians—is well known. In the early part of the seventeenth century, there was an open trade with Japan, and Christianity had made considerable progress there. Owing to various quarrels which arose between the Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits, the Portuguese were expelled from the country, and the native Christians persecuted. The Dutch, it is said, had the mean wickedness to assist the Emperor of Japan against them, and received the wages of their iniquity in permission to share with the Chinese a monopoly of the Japanese foreign trade. They have, however, carried on their intercourse with the country under the most wretched humiliations. They have been confined to the island of Dezima, in the port of Nagasaki—a miserable little place, principally artificial, and no more than six hundred feet long by two hundred and forty broad. Even there, they are constantly subject to the inspection and interference of Japanese spies and officials, and are strictly prevented from leaving it, or holding any communication with the rest of the country, except under restrictions which almost amount to a prohibition.

The Japanese are good workers in metal. They have little iron, but plenty of copper, and not a little gold. Their greatest art is lacquering wood-work, in which they excel all the rest of the world. They also manufacture glass, very beautiful porcelain, and a remarkably soft, tough, and flexible paper, which they use for wrappers, handkerchiefs, and even, when oiled, for cloaks. Their best silks are said to be made by criminals of high rank, who are forced to work upon them when in confinement. They are indefatigable agriculturists, and understand perfectly well the use of manure. Their principal crops are rice and tea. They have no sheep, but sell some pork to the Chinese. Their only navigation is by coasting vessels, which are built with open sterns—it is said to prevent them from making long voyages. The country is stated to be populous to the greatest degree, the highways being "one continued line of villages and boroughs."

These, and some other particulars of the same kind, Dr. Hawkes seems to have collected from books already published. We must say that singularly little is added to them by Commodore Perry's personal observations. Indeed, the force of Japanese prejudices was so great, and his very reasonable wish to avoid shocking them so strong, that his intercourse with the people was almost entirely official. Nearly the only exceptions to this which we have been able to discover, consisted in a few short walks in the neighbourhood of the ships, under the constant supervision of soldiers and spies, and in a visit which two Japanese, seemingly of good station, contrived to pay to the ships at the hazard of their lives. The latter incident had some thing affecting in it. Two men, describing themselves as "scholars from Yedo," contrived to come on board the *Mississippi*, after sending the Americans a letter which gives a curious glimpse of the working of the system of absolute exclusion of foreigners:—

"Our attainments (they say) are few and trifling, as we ourselves are small and unimportant . . . in trifling

pursuits and idle pastimes our years and months have slipped away. We have, however, read in books, and learned a little by hearsay, what are the customs and education in Europe and America, and we have been for many years desirous of going over the five great continents, but the laws of our country on all maritime points are very strict; for foreigners to come into the country, and for natives to go abroad, are both immutably forbidden. Our wish to visit other regions has consequently only gone to and fro in our own breasts, in continual agitation, like one's breathing being impeded, or his walking cramped."

Commodore Perry did not feel justified in aiding his visitors in the accomplishment of their purpose, though he was most desirous to do so. They were discovered, and imprisoned in a kind of cage, where some of the American officers saw them, and received from them the following letter:—

"When a hero fails in his purpose, his acts are then regarded as those of a villain and a robber. In public we have been seized and pinioned, and caged for many days. The village elders and head men treat us disdainfully, their oppressions being grievous indeed. Therefore, looking up while yet we have nothing wherewith to reproach ourselves, it must now be seen whether a hero will prove himself to be one indeed. Regarding the liberty of going through the Sixty States (Japan) as not enough for our desires, we wished to make the circuit of the five great continents. This was our hearts' wish for a long time. Suddenly our plans are defeated, and we find ourselves in a half-sized house, where eating, resting, sitting, and sleeping are difficult. How can we find our exit from this place? Weeping, we seem as fools—laughing, as rogues—alas for us, silent we can only be."

In the observations which they were able to make at the port of Simoda, the Americans saw something, though very little, of the domestic life of the Japanese. They are, it is said, distinguished from most other Oriental States by their comparatively high estimation of women, which induces them to abstain from polygamy. The mass of the people are Buddhists, and must be very devout, after a fashion; for though the population of Simoda is only about 7000, it contains nine Buddhist temples. When the worship begins, a bell is rung to attract the attention of the idols; and the establishments are kept up partly by charitable contributions, for receiving which boxes are placed about the temple, with inscriptions informing the reader that, "For feeding hungry demons his merit will be consolidated." Sundry feasts, at which the negotiators reciprocally entertained each other, and a rather disgusting exhibition of prize-fighters, which was displayed before the Americans during one of their visits of ceremony, are almost the only transactions recorded in this book which seem to throw much light on the Japanese character or habits. Once, indeed, the squadron went up by sea to the neighbourhood of Yedo, the capital, of which they saw enough to convince them of its immense extent, and of the fact that its sea front is protected by a row of palisades; but their visit caused so much consternation and disgust that they withdrew for fear of causing a popular outbreak, which would have endangered the Government. It must be owned that it is not easy to investigate the character and habits of a nation so suspicious of strangers as to be in the habit of putting up enclosures of mats round the place of a friendly interview, to prevent their visitors from seeing the neighbourhood.

Commodore Perry visited Lew-Chew and the Bonin Islands, as well as Japan. The Government of Lew-Chew does not carry out to the same extent as the Japanese the system of isolation, and it is moreover too weak to enforce it. When the Americans landed at Napha, the people ran away, deserting the stalls and shops with such haste that in some instances the goods were left on them. By degrees, however, they became more used to strangers, and the officers of the squadron had opportunities of seeing something of their domestic arrangements. The floors are covered with thick mats, which form a carpet by day and a bed by night. The Lew-Chewans, who are very much more cleanly in their persons than the Chinese, never step on these mats with their shoes, which they leave at the door. The men pass their time in smoking through their noses, and drinking tea—the women work in the fields, or make cloth out of grass. This seemed to be the case with those who were in some degree removed from the very lowest class of all. As far as Commodore Perry could discern, the Lew-Chewans are divided into four classes—the high officers of state, the priesthood and men of letters, the under officers and spies, and the labouring class, including particularly the fishermen. Everybody seemed perfectly idle, except the spies and the labourers. The latter are the most wretched and degraded, probably, in the world. Commodore Perry says that, except in Mexico, he never saw such misery: "The poor naked creatures (he writes), who toil from morning to night, never know the relaxation of a Sabbath, nor the rest of an occasional holiday, generally granted by even the most cruel taskmasters. . . . It is surprising to see how soon the boys, for we see but little of the girls, are made to labour. In looking into a blacksmith's shop in Napha, I observed a father and two sons making nails; the elder son, probably ten years old, was using the hammer, while the younger, not more than five, was blowing the bellows, or rather moving the piston of a sort of air-pump, which required some amount of physical exertion. When we entered the shop, neither of the three took the slightest notice of us, but went on with their labour; even the little boy scarcely lifted his eyes."

The relation between the natives of Lew-Chew and the Japanese on the one hand, and the Chinese on the other, is very little understood. Dr. Bettelheim—a converted Hungarian Jew and naturalized British subject, who lived amongst them for some years—reports that, politically, they seem to form part of the empire of Japan, but that what little religion and literature they have seems to be derived from China, whither the richer classes go for their education. The language is apparently a dialect of Japanese; but of their two written characters, one is that which is in general use in China, and the other (used by the Lew-Chewans themselves only occasionally) is supposed by Dr. Bettelheim to be "the most ancient Chinese hieroglyphic, awfully crippled." For some years past there has been a Christian missionary in Lew-Chew. Dr. Bettelheim occupied the post for some years, and was succeeded by Mr. Moreton. It would seem that the missionaries did not meet with much success, as the natives entreated Commodore Perry to take them away:—

"We earnestly beg your excellency (they write), that to show compassion on our little country, you will take back to their own land Bettelheim and Moreton, who have remained here long. In the years 1844 and 1846 some French officers came, and the Englishman Bettelheim also brought hither his wife and children to reside; and they all required something to be daily given them, to our continual annoyance and trouble. . . . We lay before you our sad condition in all its particulars, humbly beseeching your kind regard

upon it, and requesting that, when your fine ships return, you will take both Bettelheim and Moreton away with you. This will solace and raise us up from our low condition, and oblige us in a way not easy to be expressed."

The Bonin islands, which formed the last subject of Commodore Perry's explorations, seem to form part of our own multifarious possessions, having been named and taken possession of by Captain Beechey in 1827. They were, however, visited by a Captain Coffin, whose name is, perhaps, some evidence of his American origin, in 1823; and it seems that the Russians also took possession of them in 1828. However this may be, they are of little actual value to any one, though there is a possibility that they may hereafter become valuable. They are three in number, and were named by Captain Beechey, Stapleton, Buckland, and Peel Islands respectively—a sin for which Captain Beechey may be forgiven, notwithstanding the sneers of Dr. Hawks at "the proverbial modesty and justice of English surveyors." We are very sure that neither he nor his countrymen can have the least objection to the substitution which the inhabitants are said to have made of the names of Goat and Hog for those of Stapleton and Buckland Islands. Up to 1830, the group was unoccupied; but in that year, five Europeans and several Sandwich Islanders settled there. At the date of Commodore Perry's visit, Peel Island only was inhabited; and its population amounted to thirty-one, of whom about four were Americans, the same number English, and the rest Sandwich Islanders. Peel Island is about six miles long. It is very fertile, and well fitted for the growth of wheat, tobacco, and the sugar-cane. The island is composed of trap-rock—it is very hilly, and seems to have been once the crater of a volcano. There are wild boars in the woods, and the coasts produce plenty of turtle. The value attached to the islands by Commodore Perry arises from the fact that they would make a convenient station for a line of mail-steamer to be established between some American port on the Pacific and China. This would complete the English and American mail route around the world, by way of Egypt, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, Hong-Kong, Shanghai, the Bonin Islands and Honolulu, to San Francisco and New York. By this line, two letters sent from Shanghai—west by Europe, and east by California—would respectively arrive at Liverpool and New York about the same time.

These are the most interesting pieces of information that we have been able to find in the thick volume before us. We cannot conscientiously recommend it to any one who does not take special and detailed interest in Commodore Perry's expedition, or in the negotiations between the United States and Japan; but we willingly acknowledge the zeal with which all the parties concerned have done their best to improve the opportunities which they enjoyed. Commodore Perry's objects were diplomatic and political, and he seems to have accomplished them with great tact and decision; but, with the best will in the world, he has not had the opportunity of furnishing his friend Dr. Hawks with the materials for a book as interesting as it is big.

A PICTURE OF KANSAS BY AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER.

Mr. Thomas H. Gladstone, of Stockwell-lodge, Surrey, has communicated to the *Times* what he himself saw while passing, this summer, through the territory, the name of which has become so notorious. His statements show that the Freesoilers have not at all exaggerated in describing the crimes of their oppressors. We give an extract or two.

"The period (he says) of my visit to Kansas was precisely that of the great outburst of violence in May last, which resulted in the town of Lawrence being attacked, the principal hotel being battered down and then reduced to ashes, the printing-offices of the Free State journals being burnt down, the type and presses being destroyed and cast into the Kaw river, and the city being given over to a merciless sack. On the same day, and by the same agency, occurred the firing of Governor Robinson's house, and the arrest of himself and others, without a legal warrant. Of Governor Robinson, we read in the intelligence brought this week by the *Arabia*, that, after four months' confinement, without trial, in the goal at Leecompton, he has at length been released on bail.

"It was a fearful night which followed the attack on Lawrence. I was in Kansas city, and shall never forget the appearance of the lawless mob that poured into the place, inflamed with drink, glutted with the indulgence of the vilest passions, displaying with loud boasts the 'plunder' they had taken from the inhabitants, and thirsting for the opportunity to repeat the sack of Lawrence in some other offending place; men of large frame for the most part, with red flannel shirts and immense boots worn outside their trousers, their faces unwashed and unshaven, still reeking with the dust and smoke and bloodshed of Lawrence, wearing the most savage looks and giving utterance to the most horrible imprecations and blasphemies; armed, moreover, to the teeth with rifles and revolvers, cutlasses and bowie knives. I felt that all my former experience among border men and Missourians was as nothing compared with this wretched crew, who appeared only the more terrifying from the darkness of the surrounding night. The hotel in Kansas city, where we were, was the next place, they said, that should fall; the attack was being planned that night, and such should be the end of every place which was built by Free State men, or that harboured 'those rascally Abolitionists.' Happily this threat was not fulfilled.

"A number of these men became my companions for the night, as I went up by one of the Missouri steamboats from Kansas to Leavenworth city, which, as the centre of operations, I desired to make my headquarters while investigating the condition of affairs in the territory.

"On the second morning, before I had left my berth many minutes, I was attracted by the blustering talk of one of my fellow-travellers—one of the most respectable merchants in Weston, as I was informed, but one who, as was evident, did not deny himself in the rum-punch, gin-sling, brandy-cocktails, and other compounds issued at the bar. This respectable merchant was surrounded, as he stood in the cabin of the boat, by a circle, whom I joined. Out of a side pocket protruded the head of a pistol; in his hand he brandished another, loaded, as he told us, and . . . With threatening aspect and attitude, . . . many oaths, of the following language:—

"I am bound to bring down . . . I tell you, by — I . . . stealing Free-soil . . . there's a . . . him, . . . into . . . look . . .

* Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, performed in the Years 1852, 1853, and 1854, under the command of Commodore M. C. Perry, United States Navy, by order of the Government of the United States. Compiled from the Original Notes and Journals of Commodore Perry and his Officers, at his request, and under his supervision. By Francis L. Hawks, D. D., LL. D. With numerous Illustrations. New York: D. Appleton and Co. London: Trubner and Co. 1856.