

The  
HERITAGE  
of  
HIROSHIGE

DORLA ANSDEN  
with a MAPPER



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The HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

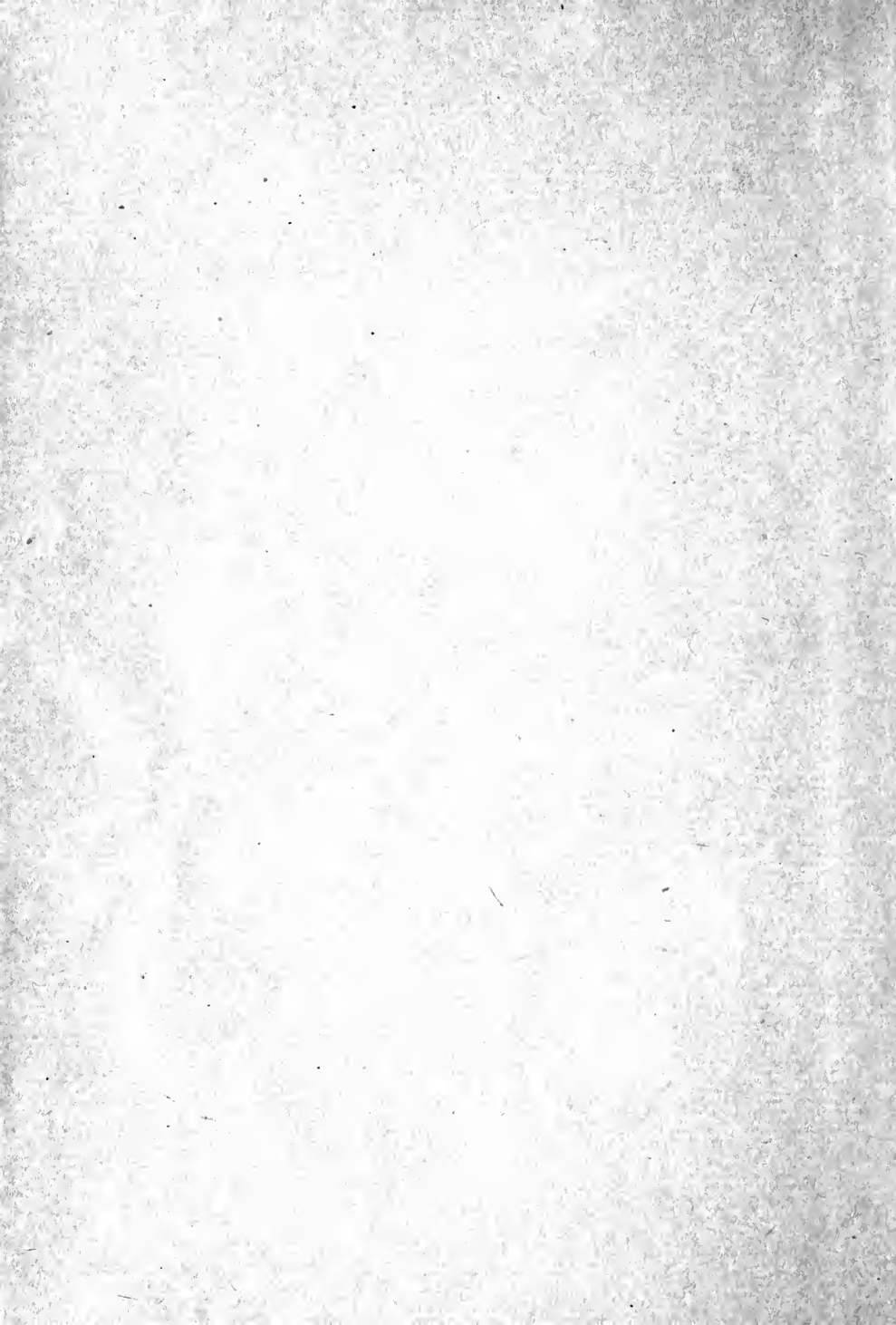
To  
Ethel M. Fryer  
from her appreciative friend

Lia Anshen

"A Thing of Beauty  
is a joy forever"

To select & assemble beautiful  
things is the gift of the  
true connoisseur, whose recog-  
nizes intrinsic values  
apart from mere outlines.

Berkely, 1941





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The Moonlit Saru Hashi  
(Monkey Bridge)  
"Long mysterious reaches  
fed with moonlight"



THE HERITAGE *of* HIROSHIGE  
A GLIMPSE AT  
JAPANESE LANDSCAPE ART

By DORA AMSDEN • WITH THE ASSISTANCE  
OF JOHN STEWART HAPPER • ILLUSTRATED  
WITH PRINTS *from the* HAPPER COLLECTION



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TO  
IRENE CARPENTER MERRIMAN

友人





# INTRODUCTION

**A**s a Preliminary Note to this little book, the following remarks of Mr. Happer prefacing the Catalogue of his Collection of Colour-Prints by Hiroshige, best interpret the authors' intention: "In collecting the Colour-prints of the Ukiyo-ye School, the work of Hiroshige early attracted the interest of the collector. Finding that there was more or less uncertainty regarding his work and that of two of his pupils, who used the same brush name, it was decided to acquire everything obtainable bearing his signature, in the hope that from numerous examples some definite knowledge of the artist might be attained. This purpose, kept steadily in view for years, was attended with unexpected success. By comparing thousands of prints, and by the careful scrutiny of every character and seal on each print, important data were obtained which are given to the collectors of the world for their information with the hope that the works of Hiroshige the Great will receive their proper recognition, his fame be enhanced and that he may be given a lasting place in the School of Ukiyo-ye as the greatest interpreter of Nature in all her moods."

Though timorous of the honour, the writer undertook the task of putting into shape the material Mr. Happer had collected but had not time to arrange for publication. Being permitted to come and go at will in the old Museum of Fine Arts at Boston, she followed in the footsteps of Mr. Okakura Kakuzo, named by the Nivedita Vivekananda as "in some sense the William Morris of Japan," who was arranging and classifying the treasures garnered from the Orient. When the custodians unrolled the masterpieces of Cho Densu of Motonobu and Okyo, the classic painters cast a spell; the walls lined with screens by Koyetsu and Korin were a delight and the flowers of Sotatsu strewed the path of Art.

So the claim for Hiroshige's genius of an inalienable birthright from these master painters, from whom alone says W. von Seidlitz



## I N T R O D U C T I O N

"the exact nature of Japanese taste can be studied," gave rise to our title, *The Heritage of Hiroshige*; and the endeavour is to give in condensed form the opinions of those who, like Mr. Okakura, are authorities on the early art of Japan. The Biographical information and Forewords were translated for Mr. Happer by Japanese scholars; copious notes and important details were supplied by him, and his *Seal Discovery* determines once and for all the attribution of the prints bearing the signature of Hiroshige.

"Tokaido" Hiroshige, magical impressionist! seizing as he travelled with his sketch-book, in storm and sunshine, the noted scenes, aspects and humours of the Great Highway; letting his brush play over birds, fishes and flowers, with dragon-fly flashes of iridescence. He "with the simple and restricted means of the Japanese colour-printer," says Mr. Arthur Morrison, "and a direct audacity of technique surprising to analyze, caused the natural aspect of old Japan to live before our eyes forever."

The writer here acknowledges her indebtedness to the authors included in the Bibliography; to Mr. Happer for his illuminating correspondence; to Mr. Elder, and to Irene Carpenter Merriman, who assembled the author's collection and, living in the Orient, by her discrimination and appreciation of Japanese and Chinese art methods, kept her friend in touch with the magic and charm of oriental art.

Dora Amsden.



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*The* HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE





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### NARA, THE CRADLE OF JAPANESE ART

**L**OVE of Nature, inherent and profound, gave to Japan her national religion, nourished her patriotism, and was the quickening source of all her art. "The spirit continually penetrated by Nature," says Michel Revon, "imitates her and reproduces her little by little. It deifies her benevolent powers, it would retrace the image of her beauty." Therefore, Religion and Art are born together.

In Nara, the ancient capital and sanctuary of Shinto, moss-grown before the foundation of Kyoto in 794, arose the national art. The glory of Nara has departed, but her beauty remains enhanced by time, and a peace as of Nirvana broods in the still glades, where votive lanterns, time-worn and gray, seem one with the stones scattered beneath the trees—sacred vestiges of temples and pagodas. The gentle deer pause, gazing questioningly at the passing pilgrim, and the vibration of the temple bells steals solemnly across the plain.

Yamato, the province in which Nara is situated, was the scene of many an old historical romance and mythological legend. Here flourished the princes Fire-Shine and Fire-Fade, the mysterious ancestors of the Mikados, and Yamato was the centre of the story of the gigantic crow and miraculous sword, told in the "Genji Monogatari" and immortalized by Hokusai in his wonderful surimono. The word signifies "great august country" and is the oldest name for Japan, still remaining the classic and poetic title of the "Land of the Rising Sun."



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Corea by reason of her proximity became the Gateway through which Art emanating in India and China passed to Japan, to a nation worthy to receive the sacred vehicle, and fostering it through the centuries, won for itself an inalienable, æsthetic birthright.

Yamato was the fountain of art and the cradle of freedom, for in her *Bushido* (chivalry) was born: and as the Grecian phalanx withstood the shock of battle "For Altar and Home," so faith in Yamato Damashii, the spirit of Japan—a sacred flame fed by mystic lore, by love of country and devotion to the sacred person of the Mikado—inspired the heart of the Japanese, making him invincible in war.

The symbol of *Bushido* is the cherry blossom, and as its perfume is distilled, filling the air with fragrance, so says Nitobe "it breathed into our nostrils the breath of life—*Yamato Damashii!*" An ancient poem, paraphrased by Sir Edwin Arnold, gives the beautiful significance of the Sakura (cherry bloom).

"If it shall happen that one  
Ask'd the Japanese heart  
How may we know it apart?  
Point where the cherry blooms wave  
Lightsome and bright, and brave,  
In the gold of the morning sun—  
There is the Japanese heart."

Though art entered Japan through Corea, its earliest remains at Nara show little trace of Corean influence. The wall paintings at Horiuji are grandly conceived and suggest a resemblance to those of Ajunta Cave in India, though they are more perfect in detail. Artists from India flocked to China and left their impression in the celestial soil, and through Corea the impulse was imparted to Japan.

Amongst these came the mysterious Sakya-Mouni, filled with occult power, and other great leaders both in religion and art who exerted an influence far-reaching and profound.



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Art in Japan was not of lowly birth. Her cradle was in palaces and priests and princes stood as her sponsors, as in Europe the grandest monuments were conceived under the inspiration of religion. Thus the building of the great temple of Saidaiji in Nara, before the foundation of Kyoto, was carried through on a wave of religious and artistic fervour. The court ladies, we are told by Mr. Okakura, carried handfuls of clay on their brocade sleeves, and they flung their choicest ornaments of gold and silver into the molten sea, stirred by the hands of the Empress Koken, which was to materialize as the guardian deity of the sanctuary.

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The priestly hierarchy reigned supreme, and for centuries dominated the art of Japan. At Nara, life was devoted to newly introduced Buddhism and to its service was consecrated everything that made living beautiful and poetic.

So the Græco-Buddhist art of India, infiltrated in its passage through China with her technique, principles and forceful conventions—the fusion of the majestic brush stroke of the Chinese with the grace and delicacy of touch of a people temperamentally æsthetic—created in the course of centuries the national art of Japan.

As in Europe, in these early days at Nara, landscape painting was a purely subordinate art, introduced incidentally as the background to portraiture, or as an accessory in some tableau of princely ceremonial. Yet in delicate precision of technique in trees and rocks, and strange convention of clouds, we see prefigured the later development, and in the early paintings where landscape was as yet only an episode in the drama of pageantry, or the half mystic environment of some pictured sage or seer, the discerning student may discover buds of promise that later were to flower into majestic beauty under the brushes of the artists of Tosa and Kano, of Korin and Shijo and the other great schools of painting in Japan.



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The Chinese and Buddhist schools of art dated from the sixth century, and in Japan the Emperor Heizei founded an imperial academy at Kyoto in 808. Religious fervour, glowing in the paintings of the Buddhist school, restricted the motives of its masters, but the Chinese range of subject was unlimited, including landscapes, birds and flowers conventionally painted in quiet tones.

At Kyoto the ninth century was made glorious by Kose Kanaoka, whose genius kindled a living flame which shrivelled the coldly spiritual art of priest-ridden Nara. Like Raphael he breathed into his portraits the breath of life; his touch was vital, and legends tell us how the horses of Kanaoka leaped from their kakemono—for thus an imaginative people love to wreath with imagery the altar of Fame.

The priestly hierarchy at Nara long dominated politics and art but in the dawn of the tenth century a revolt set in. The princes of the noble house of Fujiwara, which had steadily increased in power since the seventh century, became the patrons of art. In the Fujiwara period the national style asserted itself and the school of Yamato, founded by Motomitsu in the eleventh century, was the outcome of the movement which lead finally to the foundation of Tosa, the school which, with its august rival Kano, dominated for centuries the art of Japan.

The artists of the school of Yamato were ignorant of perspective. Their paintings showed weird mountains and castles in the air, the spaces filled in with lines of mist. They loved to travesty humanity and these quaint burlesques, in which animals and insects take the parts of men and women, reveal that rollicking humour, which is a national trait—the gift of laughter-loving gods to their joyous votaries.

National art with the Japanese is the materialization of faith. The religion of Buddha, modified to meet the needs of a sensitive and highly imaginative race, became the pro-



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foundest source of inspiration; and this adaptation of an alien faith was consummated by the guardians of the national religion, who, unable to resist the rush of Buddhistic tendencies, wisely temporized—this perhaps being the earliest manifestation of international jiu-jutsu (that ingeniously ironical system which utilizes the force of its opponent in its own defence).

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Through the medium of a "mysterious subtle vehicle," expounded to his disciples by the mystic apostle Kobo Daishi, the national gods became reincarnated in the Buddhist Pantheon, the alien doctrines became national, and throughout Japan Buddha reigned supreme, crowned with the lotus blossom of Art.

## Reincarnation

O Pearl of Faith! thou perfect Lotus bloom  
Rising to light from depths of slime and mire!  
Type of the Soul—that merged in sin and gloom  
Struggles to soar from higher slopes to higher:—  
Namu Amida Buddha.

Pure flower of Prayer, whose petals dare enthrone  
The Buddha and the Blest who sit at ease  
In Paradise—reaping the harvest sown  
On this earth journey—everlasting peace:—  
Namu Amida Buddha.

Blossoms that never more shall fade or fall  
Soul of the Lotus! Life that shall endure,  
And wing its flight from sphere to sphere, till all  
Is lost in Love and Bliss for evermore:—  
Namu Amida Buddha.



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### THE HIERATIC SCHOOLS OF JAPANESE PAINTING

**T**HE family of Fujiwara furnished the drama of Japanese history with many romantic episodes. A glamour is shed over this period and through the misty veil of the centuries gleams a vision of fair women, for from the famous beauties of Fujiwara the imperial consorts were chosen, and in an atmosphere of exquisite culture, Beauty and Love gave birth to Art and Song.

Then lived the poetess Komachi, the Sappho of Japan, and Murasaki Shikibu, whom the artists still love to depict as she sits by moonlight in the temple of Ishi-yama-dera, which overlooks Lake Biwa, weaving the romance of the "Genji Monogatari." In this romance the poetess lovingly dwells upon the charm of scenery, and landscape painting as an independent branch of art is magnified. The hero of the tale, Prince Genji, rhapsodizes over the beauty of the scenes which he beholds during his exile, endeavouring to reproduce every beautiful spot in the neighbourhood. The early lyrics of Greece find their counterpart in these classic tales, and like the Grecian lyre, the plaintive biwa or four-stringed lute was the soul of Japanese minstrelsy.

A lovely legend of the Biwa which furnished a subject for the painters is related by Mitford. In it he tells how the ghost of Tsunemasa, a hero of the twelfth century, plays upon a lute named the "Azure Mountain." At first its sounds are taken for a falling shower, but it is discovered that they proceed from the enchanted lute. "The sound of the first





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and second strings is as the sound of gentle rain or of the wind stirring the pine trees, and the sound of the third and fourth strings is as the song of birds and pheasants calling to their young."

The tradition of the schools forced the artist to ignore nature—"to create a world of frowning rocks and Chinese pagodas"—yet a love of the picturesque is innate in the nation.

When peace reigned the arts flourished, but, alas, these idyllic periods were of short duration. Fierce feuds and jealousies led to constant strife between the great rival clans, and art was tossed hither and thither on the shuttlecock of power.

Towards the close of the twelfth century the Mikado was forced into perpetual seclusion in Kyoto and became a mere sanctified puppet, and the Shogunate or military government was established by Yoritomo, leader of the Minamoto, at his new capital of Kamakura.

Art at Kamakura acquired a virile force. It was the apotheosis of war: To the strains of the biwa the minstrels sang of fierce conflicts, which the artists illustrated in gory pictures. Religion and art were tinged with blood, and the painters seemed inspired with the imagery of Hell. The votaries of war crowded the temple of Hachiman, the warrior god, and the reign of gentle Buddha seemed overthrown.

A lovely story of Arthurian legend survives, and seems to glow like the vision of the Grail through the carnage and cruelty of five centuries of strife. In it we are told of a sacred emblem only revealed to the pure and holy, the saintly initiate who could recite the title of the Scripture of the Lotus Flower, which alone could take away the sins of the world and grant the peace of Heaven. Fearing less sacrilegious hands should profane the sacred treasure, the lovely Empress, bearing it in her arms, plunged into the waves never to reappear.

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Yet the glory of Kamakura, grass-grown to-day, once a vast city, and the arena where so much blood was spilled, is the bronze figure of Dai-butzu. Enthroned upon the lotus, he sits, with cryptic glance, cynical yet sweet in its serenity, and into the colossal image, by some mysterious casting, the fierce passions and cruel despotisms of the centuries seem welded into majestic calm, the peace of Nirvana. In Egypt the riddle of the sphinx remains unsolved, its secret lies buried in the sands of the desert, but at Kamakura the spirit of the Orient is revealed. He who reverently views the great Buddha, or climbs the hill to Hachiman's Temple buried in cryptomeria, through which gleams the vermilion shrine, may realize the meaning of Shintoism. In that ancient place in imagination he sees re-embodied the dust of the departed, the "generation upon generation of souls" and in fancy he can feel the "thrilling of the spirits." Kipling realized this when he sang:

"And whoso will from pride released  
Condemning neither creed nor priest  
May feel the soul of all the East  
About him at Kamakura."

To the military court at Kamakura, and that of the veiled Mikado at Kyoto, flocked the artists, and in the religious houses they took refuge, painting on silk, kakemono for the temples, and working in bronze and lacquer, gold and silver for their adornment.

At Kyoto the *kyuge* or ancient nobility, dreading the usurping power, lived in seclusion guarding the sacred person of the Mikado. The early landscapes of Tosa reflected this atmosphere, seeming to breathe an air of sadness and resignation. We see wave-washed rocks and islands veiled in clouds, whilst priests and sages sit wrapt in contemplation beside rocks and waterfalls; fairy gardens through which streams flow, spanned by bridges and shrouded in pines that

Moonlight and  
Mist at Miyanakoshi,  
Station  
Thirty-seven on the  
Kiso-kaido







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show like sentinels through the sea mists. In some of these we see a foreshadowing of Hiroshige's landscapes, the artist of mist and rain.

The school of Tosa, though dominated by the priests and reflecting the mystery of *Shinto*, received its title from a temporal ruler, the painter prince Tsunetaka, who created an artistic centre. Tosa represented the taste of the court at Kyoto, and in this rarefied atmosphere, art became an exquisite vehicle of sensuous refinement. The vigour of China was barely discernible, but in some mysterious way the occult methods of Asiatic art were embalmed in the art of Tosa. Intricate designs, brilliant in colouring and microscopic in detail, point to the influence of Persia, and Byzantine art was reflected in the use of water-colours. The Tosa artists worked with fine pointed brushes and loved to use resplendent backgrounds of gold leaf, - molten sunshine glowing upon the flowers that sprung beneath the artist's fingers, so delicate in their manipulation that in a fretwork of leaves on a vine-clad trunk, the brush seems scarcely to have touched the golden surface, or, as M. de Goncourt says, with "le tenuité d'un cheveu."

In the fourteenth century Kyoto again became the capital and, under the domination of the family of Ashikaga, art assumed a new aspect. An era of costly simplicity was inaugurated. The artist rulers of the clan, Yoshimitsu and Yoshimasa, fostered art in every form. It was in the time of Yoshimasa that the stately ceremony of *Cha-no-yu* was introduced, the name which, ostensibly given to a gathering of æsthetic connoisseurs in the art of tea-drinking, in reality veiled opportunities for political reunions. Here met the princely amateurs in houses whose unadorned timbers were made of rare incense wood brought from India, and this severe simplicity was the objective symbol of the trend of thought. The Zen sect which influenced the Sung Dynasty

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in China instilled a new conception of Life and Art. In the endeavour to commune with Nature and to realize his ideals in her, the artist began to express himself through landscapes to the neglect of saints and seers. The subjective religion of Shinto, which ignored the use of symbolism save in its profoundest interpretation, conformed to the spirit of the age. The deity was conceived as being interpreted in nature. In communion with her, the human soul approached the infinite and eternal spirit of the universe, and Art, as a pentecostal flame, lit the torch of genius in her reverent votaries. They saw "the reflection of a tree in the depths of the human soul." Prayer was subjective, words were veils to thought and the suggestions of a landscape held more infinities than a finished picture. The spirit, not the letter of the scene, was sought. Thus the seeds of impressionism that flowered in the landscapes of Hiroshige were sown in these early days of Ashikaga art, and had for soil the ripe philosophy of Confucius mingled with the pure doctrine of esoteric Buddhism grafted on to Shinto.

In a Zen monastery at Kyoto, during the middle of the fifteenth century, lived Josetsu, the exponent of that forceful art which arose during the Ming Dynasty in China, a period of over two centuries of development. Josetsu has been called the father of ink painting in Japan. Towards the close of the fourteenth century he left his own country, bringing with him Chinese traditions, and founded a dynasty of artists whose descendants still represent the most illustrious school of painting in Japan—that of Kano.

Kano has ever been the stronghold of classicism, by which is meant adherence to Chinese methods, models and technique, and to this day Chinese masterpieces still occupy the highest place in the estimation of Japanese connoisseurs. The calligraphic stroke lay at the root of the technique of Kano, and to the art of writing, the Chinese and



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Japanese owe their consummate handling of the brush, an artistic inheritance—for the brush from being their earliest plaything becomes the magic wand with which they evoke at will scenes from nature or the weird creations of their oriental imagination. May the brush of the Japanese artist never be swayed by the ruthless breath of reform, nor a nation barter its birthright,—a language of pictures in solution,—for our practical yet soulless vehicle.

The art of Ashikaga was fortified by Josetsu, and its simplicity heightened by his love of monochrome.

The fifteenth century in Japan as in Europe was an age of revival and the most brilliant in history from the standpoint of Art. Then lived Cho Densu, almost contemporaneously with Fra Angelico, and to these æsthetic monks, with a world between, was given the colour vision, a benison of the palette.

In the translucent draperies of Fra Angelico's saints and angels appear the lovely gradations of colour that inspired Cho Densu, and through him, many centuries later, the artists of Ukiyo-ye. *Mourasaki*, that celestial purple, beloved of Utamaro, who gave its name to his studio; *beni*, the spirit of ashes of rose, and all the beautiful shades that stirred the colour sense of Parisian students when viewing the *nishiki-ye* (colour prints) were revealed first to the devout artist monks of Italy and Japan.

To them, seeing, as Ruskin says, with the "soul of the eye," colour was manifested—"sweet light and stainless colour—the necessary signs, real, inevitable and visible, of the prevailing presence with any nation or in any house of the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

After the death of Cho Densu early in the century, arose Mitsunobu, whose genius revived the school of Tosa at Kyoto. But the art of Tosa was overshadowed by the splendour of the style of Sesshiu who learned his art from Shiu-

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bun, the disciple of Josetsu. He it was who astonished the Emperor of China and his court, when summoned to give an exhibition of his skill, by evoking with splashes from a broom dipped in ink, a monstrous dragon, a feat of masterly leger-de-main repeated almost three centuries later by Hokusai in the courtyard of the great temple of Uyeno, where, before a delighted audience of his countrymen, he created a colossal figure with swirls of ink from his inspired brush. By these great expositions of the calligraphic stroke the fame of the artists will be handed down from generation to generation.

The artist who gave his name to the greatest school of painting in Japan was Kano Masanobu. His son, Motonobu, was one of Japan's most noted painters and received the honorary title of "Hogen," an honorific used by the sacerdotal class in which painters were included in feudal days and which means expert.

Although the calligraphic stroke, notably exemplified in the art of Sesshiu, distinguished the work of the artists of Kano they were noted not only for vigour and rapidity in execution but for complexity of design and splendour of colouring, a later development grafted on to Chinese monotony of monochrome. Yet the true genius of Motonobu is shown in the refinement and spirituality of his art. The magnetism of the artist's personality lives through the centuries, a spiritual efflorescence of art. The charm of his landscapes is not in brilliance of colouring, for they approach monochrome, but in incalculable harmonies. M. Gonse enthusiastically likens him to Corot in his landscapes "noyé de lumière et de transparence."

In a corner of the old Museum of Fine Arts in Boston could be seen a tender masterpiece of the great Kano artist. Across the hall, almost opposite, hung a large canvas by Doré, where gigantic lilies tall as the trees bloom in an





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enchanted garden amidst masses of lovely flowers. A mysterious cloud palace or magical mountain rises in the background. It is a garden of dreams but its charm is for the senses. There

"The scent and shadow shed about me make  
The very soul in all my senses ache."

To turn from Doré to Motonobu is to leave an earthly paradise and step aboard a barque which glides into the spirit world. The "Land of Heart's Desire" it is named, yet in it

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this earthly frame"

is absorbed into that atmosphere of peace, the twilight of the Gods, where the glamour of desire can never penetrate.

The old Kano artist breathes a benediction that Doré cannot bestow. He was one with nature, yet his art was crippled by centuries of monastic restraint. It is art ascetic—for the dead and not the living. Nearly a century later arose the popular school, quickening this lifeless art of the monastery and court and revealing the life of the people—the jesting, joyous, pleasure-seeking Japanese, who demanded to see their Emperor, veiled to them for centuries in his palace at Kyoto. The light thus cast upon the everyday, vulgar life of the nation hurt the eyes of the formalist aristocrats, and to this day many of them shudder at the daring attempts of the masters of Ukiyo-ye (the floating world of joy, beauty and desire), despised by the votaries of Buddha and Confucius, to reproduce through the medium of wooden blocks the variegated life of the city and that of the simple peasantry with their humble avocations and industries.

The *nishiki*-ye sown broadcast were the seeds which, fructifying in the heart of the nation, opened into fair flowers of progress, wreathing the chain of art which linked Japan with other nations.



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Although sacerdotal asceticism sapped the spontaneity of the early painters, art in Japan as in Europe owed her advancement to religion. The greatest masterpieces were inspired by the religious fervour of the priestly painters. In Japan as in China philosophy and faith were made perceptible in art. Thus for over two hundred years the genius of the followers of Katatshika, a painter in the thirteenth century, was consecrated to the work of beautifying the temple near Nara, which gave its name to the art of Kasuga. Later a painter of the popular school—emerging from exile brought upon himself by his dangerous love of satirical caricature, which had prompted a political cartoon—spread his artist wings in gladness at his restored freedom and signed his creations "Itcho" (butterfly), so giving its name to the beautiful temple of Itcho-ji near Yedo which became the nucleus of an art coterie influencing Yedo painting at the close of the seventeenth century. Gifted children of Nature, the divinest teacher, they "understood the mysterious charm of a landscape of the seasons and flowers, and they made of this divine spectacle the great feast of their souls."



## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

### THE RIVAL GLORIES OF TOSA AND KANO

**D**URING the military rule of Hideyoshi, the august Taiko-sama who solidified the empire, and that of his successor, Iyeasu, the first *Shogun* of the great dynasty of Tokugawa, who won the battle of Sekigahara, the most decisive battle in the history of Japan—a Napoleon who knew no Waterloo—the Kano school reached the summit of its glory. Before the bold and gorgeous court painter Yeitoku vanished the refinement of Ashikaga art, and the ascetic restraint taught by the leaders of the Zen sect, whose landscapes were more suggestive than real—ethereal trees and dream pagodas, floating between earth and heaven, filmy materializations of esoteric philosophy.

Gorgeous and outspoken colours, bold designs, deep reds and golds and living figures filled the great wall spaces in the palaces of those Soldiers of Fortune, the conquering Tokugawas. The movement of colour effected by the painters under Yeitoku influenced the national art. Tosa reflected its effulgence and a new school arose which led to the sumptuous art of Korin, the great artist and lacquerer. Koyetsu headed this movement and towards the middle of the seventeenth century Sotatsu, the flower painter, studied with him, their work rivalling the early screens of Tosa. From a background of gold dulled by the centuries into an incomparable medium, an atmosphere shot with sunbeams, glowing coppery through the mist, flowers are flung in endless variety and purest colouring.



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Here a ravishing ultramarine or *bleu foncée* of convolvulus winds as a river of life through fields of blossoms. Sotatsu loved the contrast of relief, setting embossed flowers in pale neutral tints amidst the blooming parterre, a captivating caprice of art that so often delights us in the *nishiki-ye*, the "*gauffrage*" or dry printing which enchanted M. de Goncourt.

To study the evolution of the schools of art in Japan is a task to make even the most ardent student pause, for every artist endeavoured whilst following the prescribed course of training laid down by his master to stamp his own individuality upon his work, and so give his name to another school.

In endeavouring to epitomize, the schools of Tosa and Kano may be compared to two streams of art, gathering force and volume through the centuries. The imperial school founded by Heizei was the source of Tosa, given its title by the artist-prince Tsunetaka, and fed by the genius of Kanaoka at Kyoto and the art of Fujiwara. Into it flowed the still waters of the national school founded by Motomitsu in the eleventh century and the ascetic art of Kasuga Temple at Nara, gaining its full strength under Mitsunobu in the fifteenth century. The Spirit of Ashikaga Art moved upon the face of the waters of Kano, whose source was in China. Fed by the genius of Josetsu, of Masanobu and Motonobu, Kano became a mighty torrent, enriching the art of Tosa which long flowed in a sluggish stream, with waves of glorious colour. In Korin "*the quintessence of Kano and Tosa*"—"*le plus Japonais du Japonais*"—the streams united, widening into Ukiyo-ye, the river of life.

The tide of art ebbed and flowed through the centuries, the golden colouring of Fujiwara eclipsing ascetic Nara art, and itself shadowed by the force of Sesshiu and Sesson, and the early leaders of the Kano school inspired with the pure



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idealism of Ashikaga art. Fujiwara and Tosa were later strengthened and vivified by the force of Kano.

Was it a jest of Kipling with the unerring pen or a tribute to the unity of stroke of the masters of Kano when he said: "Two or three hundred years ago lived a painter man called Kano. Kano R. A. had rather a large job!"

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Percival Lowell in that prose poem, "The Soul of the Far East," voices the subtle psychological influence that Buddhism apotheosized in Art exerts over the pilgrim at the shrines of the *Shoguns*. "As you gaze amid the soul-satisfying repose of the spot, at some masterpiece from the brush of Motonobu, you find yourself wondering in a fanciful kind of way whether Buddhist contemplation is not, after all, only another name for the contemplation of the beautiful, since the devotees to the one are such votaries of the other."

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century flourished Tanyu. No artist has been more frequently copied than he, and his followers in the endeavour to emulate him, forsook the traditions of their individual schools.

His influence consolidated the school of Kano and invigorated the national art. Upon the semi-transparent *fusuma* or sliding partition screens of some great temple we find the stamp of the magician's brush or, treading reverently with muffled footsteps upon polished lacquer, come across one of his marvellous landscapes half-hidden in the dusky corridor.

The shrines of the *Shoguns* are the greatest monuments to the painters and devoted artist-artisans of Japan, yet the lover of the mystery that shrouds Shinto may rather feel it at Kyoto where the Mikados rest beneath simple mounds, their sacred dust mingling with mother earth. True votaries were they of "The Way of the Gods;" desiring no temples glowing with vermilion and gold. In the calm of the landscape they sleep upon the breast of nature. This is *Shinto*—



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the merging of self with those who have passed away. To others may come this vision sought by Japanese saints and sages, emperors and painter-priests. Lewis Carroll prefigured it when he interpreted in verse the mysterious vision which appeared to a friend:

"I see the shadows falling,  
The forms of old recalling;  
Around me tread  
The mighty dead  
And slowly pass away.  
For here, in Dreamland's center,  
No spoiler's hand may enter.  
These visions fair,  
This radiance rare  
Shall never pass away."

Another great Kano artist was Yeshinn, whose landscapes are unique and powerful in style. He died in 1685, three years before the Genroku period, 1688-1703—a golden era of peace in which all the arts flourished under the fostering care of the Tokugawa *Shoguns*. The popular school was in its incipiency. At the close of the sixteenth century the school of Tosa had disowned Iwasa Matahei, whose genius soared above its conventions. He and Moronobu, the real founder of Ukiyo-ye Ryu (the School of the Floating World) realized the æsthetic charm of the everyday life of their countrymen and made it the motive of their art, thus adjuring classicism.

The enthusiastic joy of a people with an instinctive art craving at seeing their daily life thus spiritually rendered caused Moronobu and his followers to throw off hasty sketches and reproductions of paintings termed *Otsu-ye*, which were received with enthusiasm by the masses and gradually led to the development of *nishiki-ye*, or brocade pictures, now known to the world as Japanese prints.



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### INFLUENCES THAT LED TO COLOUR-PRINTING

**P**RINTING had long before originated in China, and through Corea had reached Japan, but had been confined to the service of religion. To supply the ever-increasing demand for pictures, Moronobu conceived the idea of using the form of book illustration just coming into vogue to set forth the life of the people. Besides painting and illustrating books, he began printing single sheets, adding to the printed outlines dashes of colour. Gradually schemes of colour were developed by use of the colour-block, and nearly two centuries after the revolt of Iwasa Matahei, Suzuki Harunobu, about the year 1765, focused the achievement of his brother artists of Ukiyo-ye, and solved the problem of uniting the skill of the engraver with the full palette of the painters of his school, calling himself "*Yamato Yeishi*," the title assigned to the great court painters.

At the close of the seventeenth century many forces were at work to enrich and influence the art of the popular school. Hanabusa Itcho, the "Butterfly," inspired the artists of his time, notably the brothers of Moronobu, seeming to have caught upon his palette colour harmonies from the insects that flitted about him beguiling the weariness of his exile. The artists of Ukiyo-ye embalmed his art in their *nishiki-ye*,—modulating upon the theme whose rainbow motive in the wings of butterflies and beetles and the darting Toyoakitsu (dragon fly), one of the names given to the Empire, stirred the colour sense of Itcho.



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The old brocades of Japan, which gave the name *nishiki-ye* (brocade pictures) to the colour-prints, display the butterfly motive. In these Moronobu delighted, being originally a weaver of tissues. His compositions are said to have the plasticity of bas-reliefs, yet he learnt his art first in the looms of Kyoto.

Korin was a contemporary of Itcho. The vigour of his style delights the initiate who feels the occult appeal in archaic design. Of late the style of Korin has been freely translated by the French artists who understand his aim. C. J. Holmes says of Kenzan, the brother of Korin, whom he terms the exponent in pottery decoration of the Korin school: "Like his brother he was a true impressionist, who sought in decoration for effects beyond mere mechanical detail of form, effects resulting from contrast, or from harmony of colour or material, from balance of composition and distribution of parts, or which exhibited power and freedom of the hand; and, above all, in which there was ever present the exalted poetic feeling characteristic of the master Art-work of Japan."

A modern interpreter of the school in quaint Anglo-Japanese diction says: "Its characteristic distinction is the elegant and exquisite touch of lines and the conventionalism in most sublime simplicity,—plants, birds and flowers on land and water."

Set in the glaze of a bowl by Kenzan are the blurred branches of cryptomeria we so often see in a misty landscape by Hiroshige, and on a tiny lacquer saké cup appears a fairy vignette, harmonious in colour and microscopic in detail, with rocks and waves and cloud-capped mountain ranges of golden dust.

Yedo was now the capital of the *Shoguns* who encouraged art in every form. To Yedô went Moronobu and Itcho, and there the school of Torii flourished, the printers'





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branch of Ukiyo-ye, founded by Kiyonobu in 1710. Enthusiasm for the portraits of actors displayed by the populace at Yedo hastened the development of colour printing.

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The theatre though frowned upon by the aristocracy was adored by the people, and the school of Torii became the exponent of the drama. When Danjuro, one of the first of the great dynasty of actors who took this name, appeared in the veritable coat of mail worn by Kuranosuki, the chief of the Forty-seven *Ronin*, the audience went wild with delight, but the usurping *Shoguns* suppressed the feudal drama of devotion, dreading that it might arouse a popular outburst in favour of the secluded Mikado. The portrait of Danjuro by Kiyonobu was sold for five cash in the streets of Yedo.

Harunobu, the rightful successor to the printer, Shigenaga, his master, perfecting the art of xylography about 1765, discarded the Torii tradition by rejecting stage motives.

He declared himself a national painter, following in the footsteps of Shunsui, the successor to Miyagawa Choshun, from whom he stole exquisite secrets of colouring. Modesty and delicacy breathe in the idealized forms of Harunobu's women, charming petite figures in ravishing draperies framed in charming interiors that open upon fairy gardens, with vistas of snow-capped mountains. The printers of Torii ignored landscapes, but Harunobu and his followers delighted in charming backgrounds aiding the development of the *nishiki-ye* which, under the brushes of Hokusai and Hiroshige, were to exert so potent an influence upon landscape painting in Europe.

A leader for the actor designers arose in the person of Shunsho, the pupil of Shunsui and sometime master of Hokusai. By adopting the tradition of the Torii painters he bridged the chasm that threatened the unity of the popular school, changing places with its rightful leader, Harunobu.



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The portraits of actors are the most noted masterpieces of the school of Shunsho.

From 1765 to 1780, as stated in "Impressions of Ukiyo-ye," the school of Ukiyo-ye was dominated by four great artists and creators of styles: Harunobu succeeded by Kori-usai, taking for motive the subjects of Shunsui, the painter; Shunsho, leader of the school of Katsukawa (changed by Shunsui from its former title of Miyagawa), upon whose shoulders had fallen the mantle of Torii; Shigemasa working upon Shunsho's lines, but breaking into a rival academy, the Kitao; Toyoharu, pupil of Torii Toyonobu, founder of the school of Utagawa, whose pupil was Toyokuni, the brother of Toyohiro, Hiroshige's master.

Toyoharu, founder of the school of Utagawa about 1772, developed landscape painting in the medium of the *nishiki-ye*. He studied landscapes introduced by the Dutch and in his work and that of his pupils and successors the Dutch influence is strongly discernible, notably in the use of perspective. His pupil, Toyohiro, followed him and Hiroshige, taking the last half of his master's name, absorbed the traditions of the school and glorified it by his genius. The dramatic force of Toyokuni, the brother of Toyohiro, obscures his love of nature. His actor scenes fire the imagination and in endeavouring to unravel the tragic web of the dramas illustrated in his *nishiki-ye* we overlook the exquisite details of scenery forming the backgrounds, which are also seen in the work of his son, Gosotei, and his pupils, Kunisada and Kuniyoshi.

Landscape painting as an independent branch of art owed its development in part to the people's growing love of travel. The returning pilgrim longed to impart to his friends the charm of the scenes he had visited and topographical handbooks printed in colour were the very things he needed. Viewing these pictured scenes of their own



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country awoke a desire throughout the nation to see other lands and stirred the international consciousness. Every city now had its own handbook—pictorial descriptions of noted places. Folding books opening into long strips, named *Orihon*, from the praying books, folded like the suppliant's hands; *Shomotsu*, sewn volumes; *Makimono* or rolls; *ichimai-ye*, single sheet pictures, flooded the country. The "Meisho Dzu-ye" or illustrated guide books indicated all the beautiful places throughout the land. They also contained records of noteworthy objects preserved in the neighbourhood, and scientific notes upon the flora and fauna, with hints to husbandmen and merchants—in fact, they were current encyclopedias.

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The influence of the Dutch was not confined to their little colony at Nagasaki but affected the whole nation, and to them was due in great degree the desire to disseminate universal knowledge through the medium of guide books.

Amongst the most noted of these books were the "Miyako Meisho Dzu-ye" or "Views of the Western Capital" (Kyoto) by Shun Chosai, in 1787. Sukenobu, a prolific artist, brought out charming views at Kyoto, and Settan at Yedo worked in the same field.

At Kyoto towards the close of the eighteenth century arose another great school, whose destiny was bound with the art of Ukiyo-ye. Then lived Okyo who, leading his disciples to Nature, taught them to follow her at first hand, not through the medium of copy books prepared by dead and gone masters in tradition. The story of his sleeping boar has furnished the theme for many an artist. Imagining a wild boar to be asleep he painted it with perfect exactitude, when a naturalist student upon examining the picture affirmed that the animal was dead, which, proving to be the case, enhanced the fame of the master's unerring brush. In the grand painting of a fox, treasured in the Boston Museum,



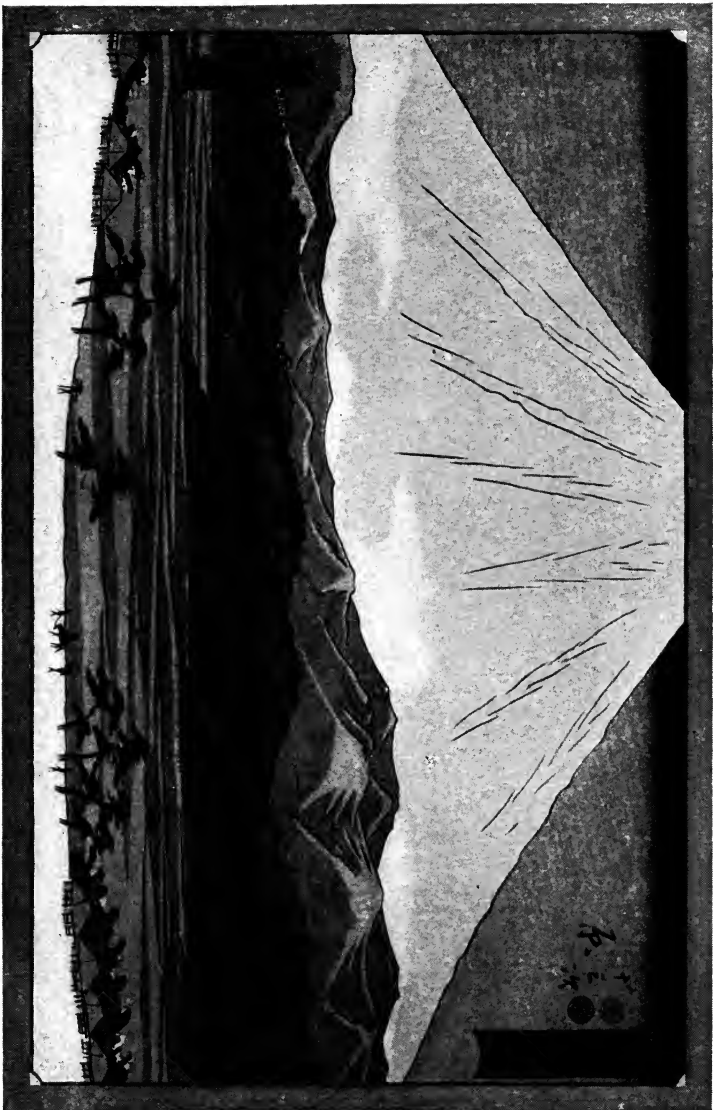
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Okyo surpassed all animal painters. When the great kake-mono-bordered in exquisite brocade whose shades melt into the picture—is unrolled all the magic and mystery of the Orient is revealed, and we are ready to accept the Japanese belief in fox-possession—*Kitsune*, the cunning and treacherous, assuming the form of a lovely maiden to lure and bewitch mankind, which drives the votaries of Inari (the Fox-God) to propitiate him at his shrine by offerings of rice.

Out of a background, gray-white, vast and mysterious, steals the apparition of the fox that lived a thousand years, the age when it becomes a celestial being. The experience of ten centuries lurks in his crafty, compelling eyes that bewitch the beholder. The genius of Okyo's brush lives in his luxuriant coat of silky fur, enervating even in imagination to the touch, and the swirl of his mighty brush is full of majesty, whilst across it wave two or three reed-like grasses, lines of contrast rendering the colourless masses even more spectacular. It is superstition apotheosized.

Maruyama Okyo, besides being the greatest naturalist, was an inspired landscape painter. His brush paid tribute to the art of China in its majesty and force, and he had absorbed the style of Kano, studying the masterpieces of Tanyu and Tsuenobu, whose works have served as models for sincere students in every school. Yet a true lover of nature, he made convention his servant; and the art of Maruyama, like a breeze from Heaven, dispersed the academic mists which veiled the genius of the Kyoto painters, who now began to design birds, flowers, grass, insects, quadrupeds and fishes from nature. To his disciples he bequeathed his gifts—one of them, Goshin, originating the school named Shijo, after the street in which the master lived. The catholic spirit of Okyo's art is seen in his use of perspective, showing that like Toyoharu he had familiarized himself with the Dutch landscapes scattered through the Empire.



Fuji no Yama  
A view of Mount Fuji  
from Hara,  
Station Fourteen on  
the Tokaido.  
Published by  
Maruzei





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Branches of cryptomeria dense and mysterious sweep the foreground of a great kakemono by Okyo; flights of storks melt into shadowy distances, where the sun declines behind Fuji, through ethereal spaces towering upon the horizon. The sacred mountain is thus apostrophized by Yone Noguchi:

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■ \* \* \* O, Matchless Sight!  
O, Sublimity! O, Beauty!  
The thousand rivers carry thy sacred image  
On their brows;  
All the mountains raise their heads unto thee  
Like the flowing tide,  
As if to hear thy final command.  
Behold the seas surrounding Japan  
Lose their hungry-toothed song and wolfish desire,  
Kissed by lullaby-humming Repose,  
At sight of thy shadow  
As one in a dream of poem.  
We being round thee forget to die;  
Death is sweet;  
Life is sweeter than death,  
We are mortals and also Gods,  
Innocent companions of thine,  
O, eternal Fuji."

The seductive charm of colour printing, now fully developed, fired the genius of the painters. Kiyonaga, the classic regenerator of Torii, designed *nishiki-ye* which in simplicity and dignity compare with the panel pictures of the early Italian masters, the delight of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. To his studio flocked the artists, forgetting their own tradition in the mad predilection for the sweeping curves of Kiyonaga's brush. Yeishi, forsaking academic Kano, worked there, as did Utamaro whose genius called from M. de Goncourt the title "*Le Fondateur de L'Ecole de la Vie.*" Kiyonaga inspired the early and most beautiful designs of



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Utamaro, and he in his turn influenced Yeizan, Toyokuni and Yeisen, who also worked with Hiroshige.

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Space forbids any attempt to set forth the genius of the other masters of Ukiyo-ye or to analyze the charm which so profoundly influenced European and American artists. Whistler, the first devotee to Oriental art, ignoring the protest and clamour of Philistinism, learnt from the Japanese.

"Before France knew there was such an island called Japan on the art map," says Arthur Jerome Eddy, "Whistler was playing with the blacks and grays of the master of Madrid and with the blues and silvery whites of the porcelains of the Orient." And it was Whistler, "the American, who turned the face of France towards the East, and made her see things in line and colour her most vagrant fancy had never before conceived." Later Manet and Monet and the Barbizon school submitted their colour sense to Oriental guidance, until the blue of Heaven, seen with the soul's eye, transfused the shadowy spaces of gloom.

The actual process of wood-cutting seems a simple art but a close study of the making of prints will show the consummate skill required to produce them.

The artist's design is transferred to tracing paper, then pasted face down on the finely prepared cherry-wood block and the block-cutter with a sharp knife follows the lines and with gouges and chisels hollows out the intervening spaces, using so much skill and following the design with such fidelity that the block when finished is a work of art.

After the block has been inked the sheet of dampened paper—prepared from the bark of the shrub, *Kozo*, diluted with the milk of rice flour and a gummy decoction extracted from the roots of the hydrangea and hibiscus—is laid upon it. The back of the paper is then rubbed with a flat pad covered with the husk of bamboo till the impression is uniformly transferred. The artist plans his colour-scheme, using





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separate blocks for each colour, and each successive impression is registered with absolute nicety by notches in the lower edge of the block. Every colour is thus transferred to the single sheet, and the final impression in black from the original or key-block completes the proof.

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The colouring matter laid upon these early blocks was extracted by mysterious processes from sources unknown to the Western world which, alas, by supplying the Eastern market with cheap pigments, led to the deterioration of art in this essential particular.

For various causes, notably a demand for the bizarre and fantastic by the populace of Yedo whose thirst for realism had vitiated public taste, a degeneracy in art set in at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The school of Ukiyoye seemed sinking into oblivion when two prophets arose—Hokusai, the great artist-artisan, teaching the beauty of the gospel of work, a Japanese Ruskin; Hiroshige, who turned the people's eyes from the mirk of cities to the never fading fields of landscape, luring with his compelling brush the spirit of the atmosphere, of mist and sunshine, snow and rain.

Hokusai and Hiroshige were the regenerators of the school which, through the national stage passion long held in check by military despots, had given itself up to theatrical portraiture. These two artists led their æsthetically gifted countrymen into the pastures of landscape art, reveling in colour through the medium of the block, yet retaining the restraint and simplicity of the old masters, the force of Sesshiu and the luminous tranquillity of Motonobu.

They rejected academic fetters, but the spirit of the old painter-priests and founders of schools still shed a benediction upon these humble votaries of art. The aristocracy disowned this plebeian outburst, but the men of letters and refined amateurs treasured the lovely first proofs we so seldom come across, in which artist, printer and engraver had



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worked in eager collaboration, their genius almost interchangeable. These treasures were reverently passed from hand to hand, and many wrapped in silken folds were laid away in lacquered coffers only to be revealed after nearly half a century to delighted amateurs and collectors from abroad. When thus carefully treasured, one hundred years may pass and the colours remain as fresh as when first struck off the block.

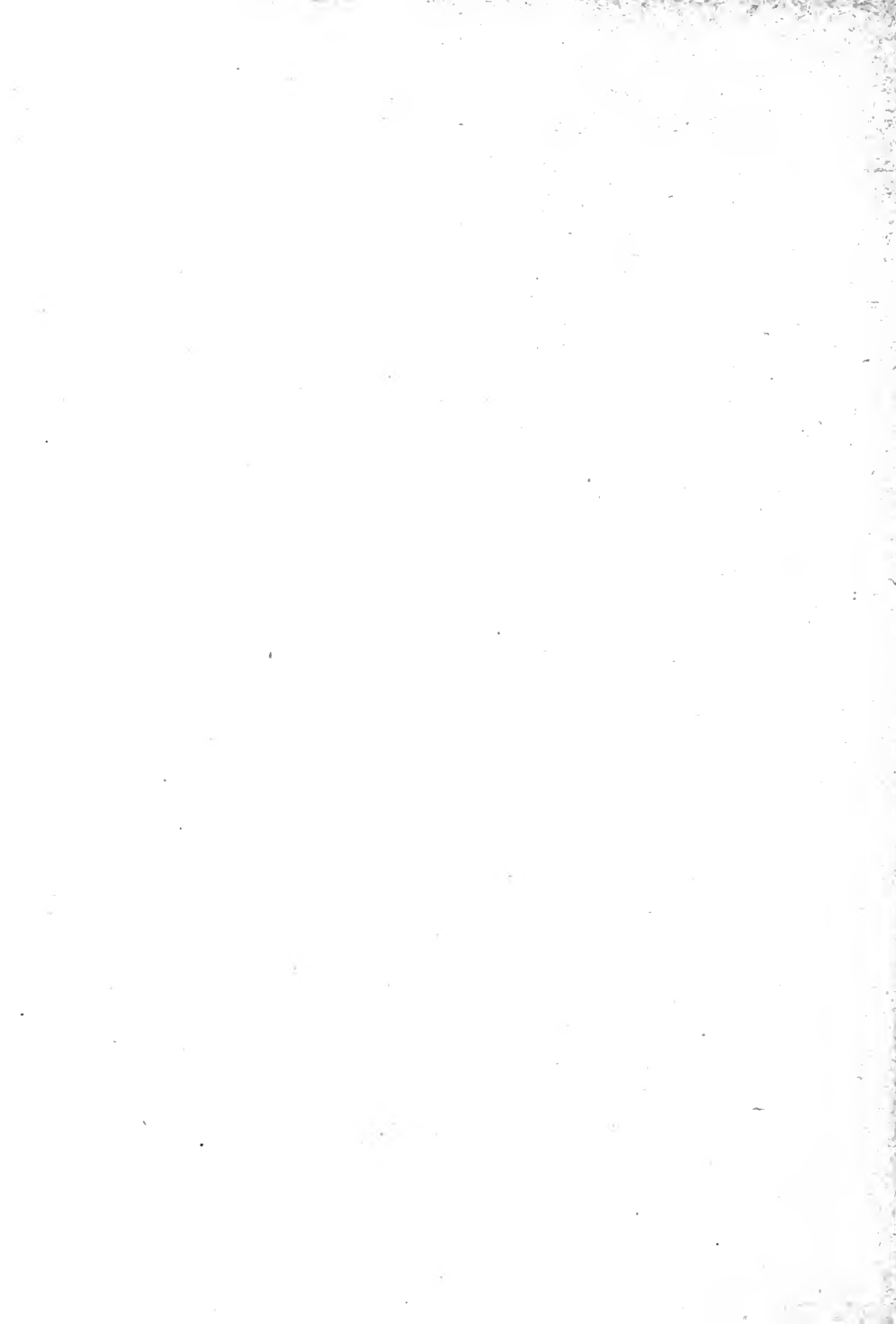
Those who are familiar with technique can tell us of the balance and proportion displayed in these *nishiki-ye*, and how "notan," the judicious "spotting," enhances the value of the colours employed. Yet the charm of Hiroshige appeals to those who love art simply and sincerely, like children who delight in trees and flowers while ignorant of their mysterious processes.

In winter scenes Hiroshige surpasses all other painters. His snow, soft and luminous, is piled upon the ridges of temples and the roofs of peasants' huts. With such simplicity yet certainty of touch he has attained his results that we can see the outline of the trees beneath their white burden and feel the icy chill of blue-black rivulets, half frozen in their course through some narrow gorge between frowning cliffs snow-covered. Who like Hiroshige can summon the spirit of the mist, calling up phantoms of trees in the humid atmosphere? Mornings in spring, seized at that ineffable moment when the beauty of dawning life is at its zenith, when we know that a day even may efface the magic of evanescent shades in budding leaves and dewy colours held half in solution—the hour, which, "sent from beyond the skies," gives earth-bound mortals for one all-illuminating instant a foretaste of the Light of Paradise.

Hiroshige triumphed over the limitations of his medium with arrangements of balanced colour that suggest light and atmosphere, and by infinite skill in selection he revealed



The Snow Gorge  
A view of the Fuji River  
in winter





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the salient features of the scene, making it all felt all feeling. This is the true meaning of Impressionism. The painter forgetting his technique—the mind of the brush, trained in severe restraint—spontaneously reveals the spirit of what he sees. His brush is his servant and epitomizes in one stroke centuries of scholastic effort. Therefore, the art of impressionism is the concrete symbol of absolute art knowledge, and the disciplined artist alone should dare to break the fundamental laws that govern art.

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The master of design, Hiroshige is also the "musician of the rainbow;" colour revealing itself to the eye of the painter as music to the ear of the musician. The souls of the old masters were in tune with celestial harmonies, the rhythm of the universe revealed to their colour sense. Intervals of the same chord which, vibrating in the soul of Milton (who, visually blind, perceived spiritual colour harmonies), were expressed by him in melodious verse—divine poesy, one with harmony, colour and light—the music of the spheres. So sang the seer:

"Ring out ye crystal spheres,  
Once bless our human ears  
If ye have power to touch our senses so;  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time  
And let the bass of Heaven's deep organ blow."



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### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES UPON HIROSHIGE

A true biography of Hiroshige is difficult to obtain, for few details of the lives of the artists of Ukiyo-ye have been preserved; the most enlightening notes on Hiroshige, from the Japanese Biographical Book, "Ukiyo-ye Bi Ko" (notes on Ukiyo-ye), are thus translated:

"Hiroshige. Surname, Ando. Given name, Tokutaro, then Juyeimon, then Tokubei. *Nom de pinceau*: At first, Ichi yu sai Hiroshige, then Ichi ryusai, then occasionally Ryusai. He belonged to a Samurai family. He early showed decided talent. In the eleventh month of Bunkwa, 3 (1806), when he was about ten years old, an embassy from the Riu Kiu Islands arrived in Yedo, and he painted the procession in such a lifelike manner, with such good colours, that it was worthy of many a more well-known artist. He then definitely decided to make a profession of art, and one Okajima Rinsai befriended him. At the age of fifteen he first sought instruction and applied to Toyokuni, but Toyokuni had so many pupils that Hiroshige was refused. Through the kindness of a book-stall keeper he was received into the studio of Utagawa Toyohiro. Unfortunately Toyohiro died soon after this, and Hiroshige decided to follow his native talent and have no other teacher; so, taking under his care Toyokuma, the grandson of Toyohiro, he started his own studio. At that time, however, Toyokuni's actor prints and figure pieces generally were all the rage, and the young artist had a hard struggle to make a living. Fortunately for him the



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yearly embassy from the Bakafu or *Shogun's* Government to Kyoto, to present a horse to the Mikado, occurred soon after this, and then came his opportunity. He was attached to the retinue in some capacity, and going and coming along the Tokaido, he filled his sketchbook with the studies of that wonderful highway." (This must have been after Toyohiro's death, therefore, after 1828-1830). "With his Tokaido pictures and his peculiar landscapes, he quickly gained reputation and renown for his studies, so much so that many others forsook the figure school and imitated him. It is recorded that he was very fond of the style of poetry called *Kioka*, short stanzas, so that among his friends he was nicknamed 'Tokaido Uta (poem) shige,' a double reference to his pictures of the Tokaido and to his skill in poesy. He also illustrated many poems. At one time he lived in Tokiwamachi, afterwards moving to Nakabashi Kano Shionmichi ni. He died of a virulent (or epidemic) disease (probably cholera)."

Biographical  
Notes  
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Hiroshige

The notes on Hiroshige in Sekine's "Honcho Ukiyo-ye Jinden" ("Biographical Notes of Ukiyo-ye Artists") agree in most particulars with the "Ukiyo-ye Bi Ko."

As to his style this chronicler remarks: "It is hard to believe that he studied the 'Kano' style from his friend Okajima Rinsai (a fellow official), although this is stated in the book, 'Zoho Ukiyo-ye ruiko.' His best works are: 'Tokaido Go ju san tsugi,' 'Shokoku Hiak'kei,' 'Yedo Hiak'kei,' which are much admired among his other illustrations; many also admire the 'So Hitsu Gwa fu.'" In the fourth month of Meiji, 15, a number of his followers erected a monument in the grounds of Akiha shrine, Mukojima, Tokyo; Hiroshige, the Third, writing out the farewell poem of Hiroshige, the First, for engraving on the monument.

In the course of his long life devoted to art, the versatile painter adopted several styles and varied his signature, as



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Mr. J. S.  
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Seal  
Discovery

did Hokusai, whose changes of brush title perplex the student. This alteration in style and signature gave rise to the supposition that two or more artists designed the prints signed Hiroshige. The most important of Hiroshige's followers, whose work has been confounded with the master's, was a pupil who, amongst other brush names, used that of Shigenobu, adopting also at times his master's cast-off pre-nomen, Ichiyusai, which may be found upon the great artist's early "Toto Meisho" series. In 1859, the year after Hiroshige's death, Shigenobu signed himself Hiroshige the Second, and during that year dropping the Second, gradually assumed the full title, Hiroshige Ichiryusai.

The identification of the great master's work has been a task of much difficulty and perplexity to the connoisseurs. Mr. Happer after diligent research, however, discovered a clew which, hitherto having escaped even the keen eyes of his Japanese confreres, leads beyond controversy to the right attribution of the prints signed Hiroshige. This important discovery is a date-seal—a cipher engraved upon the impressions—giving the actual year of their publication.

In order to elucidate the discovery, some explanation of the Japanese method for measuring time becomes necessary, which is given succinctly as follows: Time in Japan used to be measured in cycles of sixty years. Also there were *Nengo* (year periods) of arbitrary length, determined generally by the reign of a sovereign. The present period, "Meiji" (Era of Enlightenment), which began at the restoration of the Mikado in 1868, is an example of an arbitrary year period. Two series of symbols were used for the construction of the cycle—one consisting of ten, the other twelve signs.

The "Ten Celestial Stems," borrowed from Chinese astrology, were obtained by dividing each of the five elements—Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water—into two parts termed, respectively, "Elder" and "Younger" Brother (E. and To.).





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The latter series, with which we have to do, consisted of the twelve signs of the Zodiac, arranged in the following order: 1, *Ne*, the Rat. 2, *Ushi*, the Bull. 3, *Tora*, the Tiger. 4, *U*. (*Usagi*), the Hare. 5, *Tatsu*, the Dragon. 6, *Mi*, the Serpent. 7, *Uma*, the Horse. 8, *Hitsuji*, the Ram. 9, *Saru*, the Monkey. 10, *Tori*, the Cock. 11, *Inu*, the Dog. 12, *I*, the Boar.

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The two series, "Celestial Stems" and Signs of the Zodiac, being allowed to run on together, their combination produces the cycle of sixty years, as sixty is the first number divisible by both ten and twelve. The first year of the cycle is *Ki* (Wood), *no E*. (Elder Brother), *Ne* (Rat)-Wood, Elder Brother, Rat. Thus the cycle continues until the sixtieth, *Mizu no To. I* (Water, Younger Brother, Boar), is reached, when another cycle begins.

Mr. Happer made the important discovery that on most of the prints issued between probably 1844—certainly 1848—and Meiji (1868) there is a small, round seal which gives the zodiacal signs above mentioned to designate the year and a number showing the month.

The *Nengo* (year periods), which establish the date of discovery, are *Kaei* (1848-1854) and *Ansei* (1854-1860). *Ansei*, 5, the date of Hiroshige's death, was the "Year of the Horse" (1858). Taking this year as a guide, with the aid of the zodiacal characters, it is easy to identify the dates in the cycle-cipher within the seal stamped upon the prints. Usually these seals are upon the margin of the impressions, and the collector should avoid cutting off any portion of the margin if the identifying seals are placed there.



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### MEMORIAL PORTRAIT OF HIROSHIGE [BY TOYOKUNI]

**I**N the Happer collection is a Memorial Portrait of Hiroshige by Kunisada (Toyokuni) with an inscription giving in full the date of his death, the sixth day of the ninth month of *Ansei*, 5 (Year of the Horse, 1858), and also the seal with the cycle-cipher (Horse, 9), thus fully establishing the seal discovery. Upon some of the impressions both characters composing the cycle-cipher appear, when the date is absolutely proved, but the twelve signs given above are commonly used alone.

Inscription on the Memorial Portrait of Hiroshige: "Ryusai Hiroshige is a distinguished follower of Toyohiro, who was a follower of Toyoharu, the founder of the Utagawa school. At the present time Hiroshige, Toyokuni (Kunisada) and Kuniyoshi are considered the three great masters of Ukiyo-ye; no others equal them. Hiroshige was especially noted for landscape. In the *Ansei* era, 1854-59—from *Ansei*, 3 (Year of the Dragon, 1856,)—appeared the 'Meisho Yedo Hiak'kei' ('One Hundred Views of Yedo'); which vividly present the scenery of Yedo to the multitude of admirers.

"About this time also appeared a magazine entitled, 'Kiooka Yedo Meisho Dzu-ye' ('Sonnets of Yedo Scenes'), a monthly, illustrated by Hiroshige, and displaying his wonderful skill with the brush to the admiration of the world. He passed away to the world beyond on the sixth day of the ninth month of the year 1858, at the ripe age of sixty-two (sixty-one by our count). He left behind him a last testament or farewell sonnet: '*Azuma ji ni fude wo no-koshite*



上

芝の松を泳あふ

Toyokuni (Seal)

Toyokuni (Seal)

松重子秋門家の  
 五香乃孫子子一七  
 辰乃高貴なり今此世の  
 風流とて好世治とてけ之人  
 之の如く者那ー常比山多のり一  
 之のあぬ三原の年よりけり百未成  
 くれ目のち一甚り一と伏るる  
 行又程より那る所用舎伏探と  
 以用代れと一より共居く  
 何れとて出枝格との男取人  
 事のとて成感給せり振所  
 ける月の二の家の治とて湧り月と  
 一ゆ一神せとてよとふれり年  
 二十つ伏け母の別とて死出の山出へ積  
 せられ居の共一とてれとてせとてらり  
 一りと

東 唯 子 代 の う へ

読 の せ せ

西 の み 玉 け

名 と ころ 城

足 岸 彦 主

下 丁 的 老 人 ち け せ 神 代  
 ち け て ま げ と

Seal

The Memorial Portrait of Ichiryusai Hiroshige in priestly garb, showing the gauze of his outer garment. Over Toyokuni's signature are the words, "While thinking of him we shed tears."





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*tabi no sora: Nishi no mi kuni no meisho wo mimu.* ('Dropping the brush at Azuma (Eastern capital) I go the long journey to the Western Country (Buddhist Heaven is in the West), to view the wonderful sceneries there; perchance to limn them too'). This by Temmei Rojin, Picture by Toyokuni."

Memorial  
Portrait of  
Hiroshige by  
Toyokuni

Date: Year of the Horse, ninth month (1858, ninth month).

The inscription on the Memorial Portrait of Hiroshige thus establishes some important biographical facts with regard to the artist. It gives us his age, the date of his death, and shows that in his later years he often signed "Ryusai," dropping occasionally the more formal "Ichiryusai."

It also proves that the "Meisho Yedo Hiak'kei," the vertical set of Yedo views, so often ascribed to his pupils, were by the master; the preface to the original edition of this work confirming the attribution. His love of poetry and probable skill in writing sonnets are confirmed by the mention of the "Kioka Yedo Meisho Dzu-ye."

The date theory as propounded by Mr. Happer receives in this inscription absolute confirmation. *Ansei, 5*, was the "Year of the Horse," according to the Japanese cycle, and on the portrait is "Horse, 9," which means the Year of the Horse, ninth month, corresponding with October, 1858. There are many proofs of the seal theory but this is a most important and striking one. The Fifties are the debatable years, during which it is most difficult to determine the work of Hiroshige, but since we know his death date to be *Ansei, 5* (Year of the Horse), ninth month, 1858, then we may exclude every print issued after that date. An important point, however, must be taken into consideration. The zodiacal characters appear every twelve years, hence we must fall back upon the work for a final judgment. There is little difficulty in determining this question however, as, for example, a work by Hiroshige printed in 1845 differs



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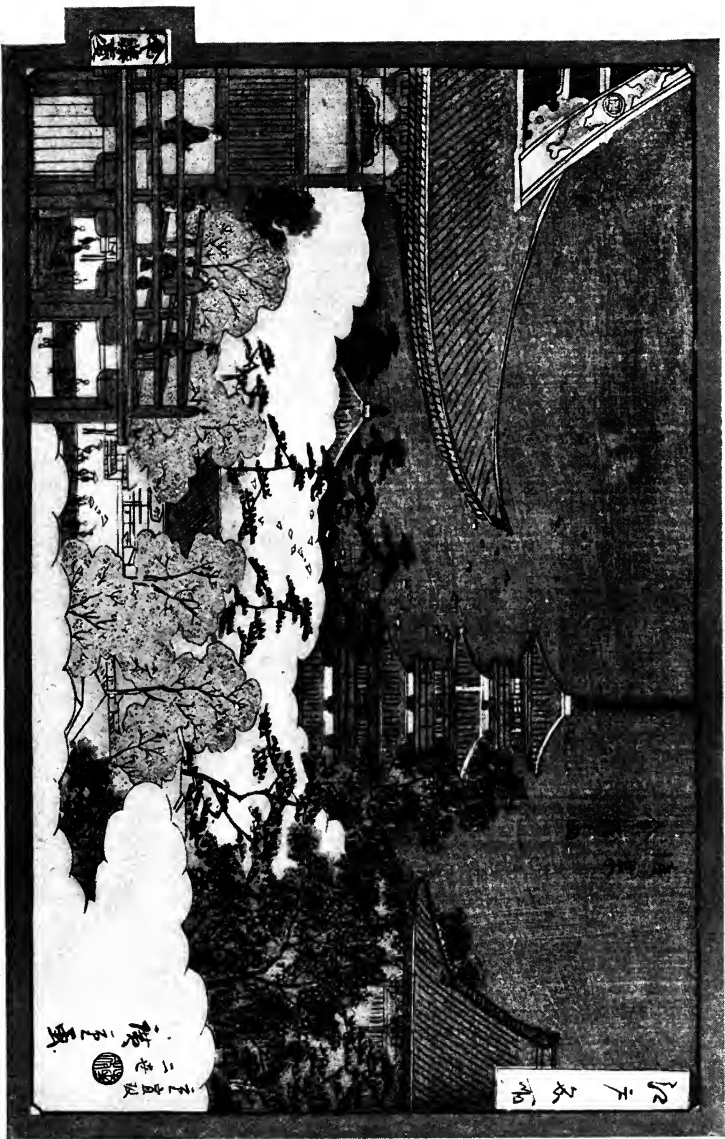
essentially in style from one of twelve years later. (Note the "Tama River" example with seal-date, certainly 1845).

When a date is written out, as in the inscription upon the memorial portrait, and the seal agrees the proof of the date discovery is positive. The writer of the preface to the vertical views of Fuji, dated 1859, declares them to be the final work of Hiroshige. The plates have a date seal, "Horse" (1858), and the preface sheet has on the margin its date seal, 1859.

Not only does the seal give positive information but its absence, in conjunction with other confirmatory evidence, suggests a period prior certainly to 1848. (The vertical style came into vogue about 1850). Hiroshige, the First, was, therefore, the artist who worked on up to the ninth month of 1858. It is stated in the biographical notes that Toyohiro died soon after Hiroshige entered his studio, and most of the books give the date of his death as 1828, but in two as 1812. If the latter date be correct we may antedate Hiroshige's work sixteen years, giving him thirty-seven years of activity, during which long period he naturally varied his style and treatment.

An argument based on the signature alone must fall to the ground. In a set like the celebrated Tokaido, as great variations in the form of the signature can be found as are exemplified by some critics in proof of the ascription of work to Hiroshige, the Second. Again, in large sets, for example the "Roku-ju Yoshu," there were five different engravers employed and, when to variations in calligraphy due to mood or nervous tension or haste you add the factor of varying engravers, the proof afforded by a signature is of the slenderest character and can only be adduced as a last resort.

The conjecture may be hazarded that, as his early treatment was more natural and spontaneous than his middle period, the study of perspective may have cramped his



Asakusa Kimryusan,  
with the signature,  
Shigenobu aratamete ni  
sei Hiroshige  
(Shigenobu, changed to  
Second Hiroshige.)







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style. The conclusion is that there is only one Hiroshige the Great, and all work bearing his signature dated up to the ninth month—*Ansei*, 5—is his, save in large sets like the "Yedo Meisho Hiak'kei," when Hiroshige, the Second, may have collaborated, as Hokusai's pupils collaborated with "Man-gwa."

Memorial  
Portrait of  
Hiroshige by  
Toyokuni

From the date seals it is certain that all the vertical sets of importance are by Hiroshige, the First, and as his drawings were doubtless completed some time before his death, the date of publication being later does not interfere with their authenticity. The unevenness of many of these sets is due greatly to the engraver, as, for instance, the beach at Maiko in the "Sixty Provinces," which is by a master engraver who only engraved two or three other plates in that set.

Of the many triptychs designed in collaboration with Kunisada, many are by the old master as the date shows, but when Kunisada adds his year ('70-'77) they are usually the work of Hiroshige, the Second. The student may by examining the seal characters on his prints differentiate the artists. The archaic characters in the seal forms are those most commonly met with.

Shigenobu closely followed the master's style and during the Forties, or at least some period prior to the seal-date period, used Hiroshige's abandoned prenomens, "Ichiyusai," which was used by Hiroshige in his very early days; for instance, on the early set of "Yedo Meisho," whose notable characteristic is the red cloud dominating the sky, and on two or three other sets, but which was abandoned by him certainly before the issue of his celebrated Tokaido set.

Ichiyusai Shigenobu is the long-sought-for Hiroshige, the Second. We find many bird and flower panels signed Shigenobu which distinctly recall his master's style, and on one plate in a set of "Yedo Meisho" (a view of Asakusa Kinryu san, given here) is the full signature: "Shigenobu Ara-



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*tamete ni sei Hiroshige gwa;*" that is, "Shigenobu; change the name to Second Hiroshige." This particular sheet is dated 1859, second month; that is, within five months of the death of Hiroshige. With this important link, looking back over the work we find in the years prior to the date period, say before 1842-1844, some figure sketches signed Ichiyusai Shigenobu.

Next we find a set of the "Yedo Meisho Hiak'kei," figure and landscape, signed Shigenobu without the prenomem, and many others, but coming to the dated years one example will suffice, and that is a set of "Yedo Meisho" published by Yamaguchi, with the date 1858, eleyenth month, which shows that up to that time, two months after the death of the master, the pupil had not taken the formal title. The missing-link sheet shows that in the second month of 1859 he signed the transition signature and in the same month we have a set of "Omi Hakkei," lateral, where "Nisei Hiroshige" (the Second Hiroshige) appears alone.

By careful study of seals the student who desires to pursue this subject further can accurately catalogue the work of the Second Hiroshige by ascribing to him every print dated between the second month of 1859 and some time in 1865, when a third Hiroshige appeared on the scene whose work is so positively banal and unmistakably recognizable by wretched analine colouring that, so far as any artistic merit is concerned, we do not care to recognize his right to the honoured name.

To find the names of Hiroshige's publisher, engraver and printer is sometimes like playing at hide-and-seek, for the artist seems to have enjoyed concealing them in the most ingenious and unexpected places. In the print, Goyu, Station Thirty, on the Tokaido, may be discovered the names of the engraver, printer and artist's title (Ichiryusai) on the boards hanging in front of the tea-house, usually



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inscribed with advertisements, beneath which the footsore pilgrim is taking a refreshing bath. The publisher's name is half hidden in the large, white circle by the post near which a *nesan* or house-servant, with elbows on the sill, unconcernedly rests her head upon her hands watching the scrimmage in the street, where two buxom tea-house employées are struggling to secure by main force guests for their rival establishments.

The lack of information with regard to the engravers of the *nishiki-ye* is unfortunate, for we would dearly like to know more about the personality of these rare artist-artisans, upon whose accuracy and sincerity in carrying out the artists' schemes depended the ultimate perfection of the work. Many of the artists were also expert engravers, Hokusai, for example, who jealously superintended the engraving of his designs pasted upon the wooden block. In the print just noticed the engraver's name is given upon the bill-board, and beneath the signature of Hiroshige in a red seal is the publisher's given name, Takeuchi. It is interesting to note here that in the Tokugawa period the *heimin* or ordinary people had no surnames. Hence, for euphony's sake, for luck or for identification some high-sounding firm name was adopted. Thus Ho-yei-do is the trade name of Mr. Takeuchi; *do* meaning hall or fane—a more grandiloquent title than place, house or shop. As the Japanese despise uniformity and love playing upon words, they delighted to vary these stamps, ringing the changes on cryptic characters, abbreviations, monograms, et cetera. *Take-uchi* means "bamboo within;" hence the monogram Take, within a circle.

There are plates with Ho-yei-do han—from *han*, an engraved block or plate, here equivalent to the publisher or owner of the plates. *Han-ya* means the place where the blocks were produced, paid for and owned, or the person who undertook the publication; therefore, the publisher in

Memorial  
Portrait of  
Hiroshige by  
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most cases is the correct translation. There is, therefore, first the *han-ya* or publisher, next the *hori-ya* or engraver (sometimes designated cutter), thirdly the *suri-ya*, the printer or rubber (*han wo suru* meaning to print on a block), and lastly the artist, usually designated *fude*, also pronounced *hitsu* (brush) and *gwa* (picture). The term *fude* seems to have been applied to comparatively simple work; when the composition was more or less complex and pretentious, then *gwa* was used. The modesty of a great painter often prompted him to sign his masterpieces *fude*.

The statements here given with reference to date, seals, et cetera, are supported by documentary evidence—the three thousand prints by Hiroshige in the Happer Collection besides many others from which he adduced these facts.



# THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

## FOREWORDS TO SOME OF HIROSHIGE'S BOOKS

A study of the forewords to the illustrated books and sets of impressions is almost indispensable to the student of *nishiki-ye*, for they explain the master's methods and intentions, casting many biographical sidelights eagerly sought for, as no precise biographies of the artists are to be found. The prefaces to a few of Hiroshige's most important works are given here in the order of their publication.

In 1851 two small volumes appeared entitled, *Tokaido Fuukei Dzu-ye* ("Scenes on the Tokaido," or, to translate freely, "Sketches of Life and Scenes on the Tokaido"). This work might be called a reproduction of his sketch-book, filled with rapid outline studies jotted down from life, forming the basis of his full coloured work.

Journeying along the Tokaido, or road of the Eastern Sea (a glorious chain of scenery that links far Kyoto with Yedo, the Eastern capital), the genius of the young artist first found expression and his magic brush, like the genii in the Arabian Night's tale, wrought for him the sketches whose subtle charm has astounded and influenced the masters in landscape art.

Hiroshige allowed his pupils free access to his sketch-book and seems from his own words in the preface to the "Hundred Views of Fuji" to have delighted in providing models for copyists, and we may readily believe that the disciples following in his footsteps and after his death using his signature left many designs that bear the stamp of the



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master, and so have passed for originals. Those, however, who truly perceive the genius of the great landscape painter, can readily detect the works by his followers, even as the finest copies of the masterpieces of Europe preserve the sacred lines but cannot reflect the spirit of genius, which is an incommunicable, subtle gift.

As originally published these volumes were four and seven-eighths inches in width by seven and three-eighths in length and half an inch in thickness. The cover is a thick, steel-blue paper, upon which two crests are heavily embossed. One is the Hiroshige monogram, used so often as a seal. It is composed of the two Kana syllables, *hi* and *ro*, the first within the latter, and is known as the Diamond Seal.

The other is a wreath of conventionalized vine, the significance of which is not known.

The title on the cover is printed in blue ink on a white label bordered with two faint lines. The Japanese abhor uniformity and a variation in character in the sets of impressions is almost always found. In a work of three volumes the first title will be in the common style of character equivalent to our ordinary Roman; the second may present a slight variation (as in our Italic capitals), or possibly be in the cursive style or script, whilst the third is in a more cursive or even cryptic style equivalent to Old English or Gothic.

In these two volumes the difference may be compared as that between Roman and Italic. On the inside cover of the first volume the title is repeated in black ink with:

"Before Volume added with Ichiryusai Hiroshige Fude," and the publisher's trade name, Sho rin do. In the lower right-hand corner are two pine trees freely sketched, and a similar inside cover page is found in the third volume, with drooping wistaria in place of the pine trees.

Following the cover title in the first volume is an ordinary title page, where the title appears in white on the black



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page—this being absent in the second volume. The "make up" of this work is elaborate and shows that the intention was to give it an elegant dress, suitable to the high character of its contents.

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The first volume has a four-leaved preface ornamented with conventional clouds of reddish-brown which drift across the top of the page, whilst green pine needles are strewn beneath. This preface is thus translated:

"Travelling is one of the greatest pleasures. Every year have I wished to start on a tour, but my daily duties have not yet allowed me to realize my desires. This work is by the famous artist, Hiroshige. In careful detail are views of over fifty villages (stations) between Kyoto and Yedo, the well-known seas and mountains, Mount Akika of Omi Province, Horai-ji Temple in Mikawa, and the various routes leading to the great shrines of Ise. Looking at these pictures is even greater pleasure than travel itself! Those who have never travelled will find instruction in these pages, whilst those who have visited these places will be vividly reminded of them and their associations. Ignorant as I am of drawing, I dare say that with dark and light shades of ink—its fragrance and charm—this work is not inferior to the work of any old master. This by Ryu katei Tanekadzu, Spring, 1851."

Following the preface are four pages of figures, isolated or in groups. These are the people we see en route, and they are all designated with titles, as Samurai, Religious Pilgrims (of which there are several types), Priests, Hotel Runners, Courtesans, Postmen, Coolies, Patent Medicine Venders, Inn Maidens and Pleasure Seekers. Small thumb-nail sketches these, but, as the preface truly says, those who have travelled in the country in Japan may recognize at once the various types, so instinct with life are they.

On the tenth page is shown a group of porters who ford the river with the traveller borne upon their shoulders. They



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shout and brawl, whilst the head man holds out bits of cord to determine the requisite number from the mass of applicants. A man with a basket of fish introduces us to the first station, Nihon Bashi (bridge) Yedo, at that time famous for its fish market and the "Hub" of Japan.

The following views have only one colour besides the black of the key-block—a steely blue which gives atmosphere, life and even a subtle fragrance to the impressions. Hiroshige did not confine himself in these sketches to the Highway proper but wandered from side to side at his will, as his artist soul prompted, and after Hodoga ya we find Sugita, celebrated for its flowering plum trees which herald the Spring with a glorious wash of rose colour. Before returning to Totsuka we are taken to Nokendo, situated on the spur of one of the hills which separate Yokohama from the quiet inlet of Kanazawa, a bird's-eye view of which lies before the pilgrim and rewards him after his toilsome ascent from the beach below.

Kanazawa was beloved by Hiroshige, and he immortalized it in the "Eight Views" and the "Moon" triptych. The naval station at Yokosuka is close to Kanazawa, and the officers stationed there often spend their holiday hours on the lovely inlet. The spirit of Bushido was nourished in such divine retreats. At beautiful Kanazawa the hero, Takeo Hirose, mused, and mastered the tactics of war-like so many of his ancestors, loving Nature ardently, and in times of peace giving himself to contemplation and to the study of her varying moods. Before his glorious death at Port Arthur he dedicated a poem to the Sun and Cherry Blossoms of his beloved land. After death he was apotheosized, and now he has joined the ranks of the great Gods of War.

Student, soldier and artist are often synonymous terms in Japan, and the arts of war and peace thrived simultaneously, fed with the fire of patriotism. "The student," says





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Nitobe, "dwells in castles of air and feeds on ethereal words of wisdom. In his eye beams the fire of ambition; his mind is athirst for knowledge. Penury is only a stimulus to drive him onwards; worldly goods are in his sight shackles to character. He is the repository of loyalty and patriotism. He is the self-imposed guardian of national honour."

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A rearword of five pages presents great difficulties in the translation, so full is it of homophonous word play and running allusions, almost unintelligible to one ignorant of Japanese. It concludes as follows:

"These words are for the teacher, Hiroshige. Leaning on my desk and looking over the first drafts I find the pine forests of Hodogaya, the plum thickets of Sugita, the sea-girt shore of Kanazawa and Kamakura, the residence of Kagekino, the Horai Temple, Otsuta Temple, Yokkaichi, the clear waters of the Isosuzu river, Asama mountain and Futami ura. Towards the Western Capital (Kyoto) are Higashi Yama, Kiyomizu Temple, and the Sanjo Bridge is at the end of the book. The brush with great speed covers over one hundred *ri*, like a fox borrowing the might of a lion. I have the honour of placing this rearword to finish the book. On a rainy day, at the beginning of Spring, 1849. This by Tanekadzu, at the north window of the house styled Ryukatei."

The rearword seems to have been designed for a preface, and was doubtless written before the plates were engraved, after viewing the rough sketches. On completion of the blocks the preface in the volume was composed. At the back is an advertising page:

"So Hitsu Gwa-fu, Zen pen" (Before Volume). Second Volume. Utagawa Hiroshige. "Tokaido Fukei Dzu-Ye, Zen pen. Go hen" (After Volume). Complete in two volumes. Script for the preface and descriptions by Ryukatei Tanekadzu. Kaei, 4 (Year of the Wild Boar, early Spring issued).



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Toto (Eastern Capital, synonymous with Yedo) Plates. Publisher, Sho rin do; or the proprietor's name, Fuji oka ya; Kei ji ro of Tori abura cho, the name of the ward. Then follows a list on the back cover of publishers or booksellers of the San To, the three capitals, Osaka, Kyoto and Yedo or Toto.

"So Hitsu Gwa-fu" ("Hurried Brush Picture Book") or ("Hasty Sketches") is the title of a collection of dainty pictures of which there are five volumes. The book is a good example of the printer's careful work. It is bound in heavy paper with an embossed design. The title, "Ryusai, So Hitsu Gwa-fu," is in blue on white paper on the outer cover and the title page is ornate with green ink. Taking the date of publication to be the same as the date of preface, it was printed in Ka ei (the year of the Monkey), which is 1848. The preface, written by Ryukatei Tanekadzu, is as follows: "So Hitsu Gwa-fu" ("Rough Brush Sketches") by Hiroshige. Preface to the first volume:

"What is *So*? It is said to be a running hand [that is to say, sketchy]. This is true; for as I look through the book I find that the movement of the brush is a rapid one. Even the swiftness of a giant or the sturdy legs of Shingyo Taiso [a character in the 'Sui Koden,' a book of legendary heroes] cannot keep up with it. Landscapes are a favourite subject of Ichiryusai. In this book are illustrations of the famous bridges of Tendai, the bridge over the Kiso gorge, together with migration of wild geese and the swallows, and views of autumnal maples. Though the illustrations are many in number the brush strokes are few. Without doubt students of this book will progress with equal rapidity [here we have a pun on 'So Hitsu Gwa,' running brush picture] and will become equally famous artists. Even I—usually slow of pen—have written this preface with a running pen. Ryukatei Tanekadzu. Beginning of Autumn, 1848."



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The illustrations in these books, small as they are, seem instinct with life and fidelity to nature. As the size of the block is about four by six inches, and usually there are three subjects on a page, such wonderful effects in a small compass challenge wonder and admiration.

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Three blocks were used for these illustrations; the key-block, one for steel-blue and one for orange-red. Sometimes only the blue and black appear. The only double-page illustration is at the beginning, a view of Kanazawa "Hakkei," a moonlight nocturne in which the red is omitted. The pages are divided between landscapes and figures and close with a plump and saucy Ota-fuku San, with Hiroshige's signature and seal, Ryusai, in black.

In the second volume the cover title is practically from the same block as the first, violating the usual custom of variety in cover design. The title page is also printed in green ink with a slight change in design. The preface is in ruled columns with a background of alternate steel-blue and red. (In later editions the background colour is omitted). It is dated Kaei, 3 (Year of the Dog); that is, 1850, early Spring. The translation says:

"So Hitsu Gwa-fu: Hiroshige." Preface to Volume Two.

"As there are three styles in art, there are also three styles in man's costume. A man in full dress is *Shin* (formal or classical). When dressed for a neighbourly call it is *Gyo* (easy or free). At home lounging it is *So* (careless). To change the figure and compare it with drinking: New Year's ceremonial drinking or the solemn nuptial rites are *Shin*; a convivial bout at a tea-house is *Gyo*, and the quiet nip at home is *So*. Recently when taking a quiet cup at home, Mr. Fujioka came, asking me to indite a preface to the second volume of 'So Hitsu Gwa-fu.' He has had great success with the first volume and, as a drinker of wine not satisfied with one drink, wants another. Mr. Hiroshige was a friend



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of my father, and so for two generations our family has enjoyed his friendship. I am skilled in wine-bibbing but not as clever at the pen as my father. So, after my friend left me, I turned to my cups and was more or less in liquor for thirty days. One day opening this volume I came suddenly to my senses and dashed off this preface. The views are true to nature but so lofty in conception that they make us feel like denizens of another world. Ichiryusai is a great man and a wonderful artist. Autumn of 1850. Honcho an Kosamma. (In his cups)."

As in Volume One, there is only one double-page illustration, "Omi Hakkei." The book closes with an actor in ceremonial dress salaaming a farewell. The signature and seal are the same as in the first volume. These two volumes were also published by Sho rin do Fuji oka ya Kei ji ro, who also brought out the Tokaido series. We noted that at that time the common people had no surname, but were known by their shop title, so that Fuji oka ya may mean mine host of Fuji, alias Sho rin do, name Kei ji ro. On the back cover of both is the same advertisement.

The third volume was in keeping with the other two, but it was published by Ebisu in 1852. This volume completes the "So Hitsu Gwa-fu" as originally published. In a later edition on poorer paper and with very poor printing, there are five volumes, but the fourth is a reprint of "Ryusai Hyakudzu" and the fifth volume is a reprint of the "Te Biki Gusa." The preface to the third volume is of little interest.

A very rare book in the original edition is a companion volume to "So Hitsu Gwa-fu," the full title of which is "Riaku Gwa Korin Fu, Ryusai Hyakudzu" ("Ryusai's Hundred Sketches, cursive style after Korin").

The inner cover title-page has a gourd and vine upon which this title is displayed. On the only copy available for scrutiny the publisher's name does not appear, but our



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old friend Tanekadzu contributes a preface in his usually comic vein. Like the "Gwa-fu" it has double-page illustrations at the front and back—the emblems of longevity, the pine, turtle, crane, bamboo and plum, and an elephant—whilst in blue and red are printed pages of rapid impressionistic sketches, which are suggestive of Korin but more truly resemble the "Riaku-gwa" of Keisai Masayoshi. They all bear, however, the stamp of the master's genius, an individuality which is unmistakable even in the tiniest sketch. From the date of the preface this work appeared in 1851, and in later editions is entitled Volume Four of "So Hitsu Gwa-fu," though the translated preface is as follows:

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"The night procession of a hundred giants, a work of the Tosa school, reminds one of Raiko's killing a fiend; and the picture of a woman by Hokusai calls to mind Genji making a choice of fair women. You may talk of ghosts and demons all you please but do not lose your head looking at pictures of beautiful women. The cranes, turtles, flocks of birds and the flying Phoenix depicted in this book call to mind joyous occasions, and we wonder whether the birds are holding social gatherings. Were I to begin the description of butterflies and plants presented here, this preface would be too lengthy, even longer than the chatter of a hundred sparrows. Some time ago Ogata (Korin) of Kyoto drew a large number of pictures of various subjects and called the book "Korin Hyakudzu." Some might think Hiroshige an imitator of Korin by thus publishing a similar book, but I assure you he has his own talent, ability and characteristics, and the reputation of this work will doubtless travel with race-horse speed—even a thousand *ri* a minute. Spring of 1851. Ryu katei Tanekadzu." "Ye hon Te biki gusa." Kaei, 1848-1853. ("Picture Book, Guide to Plants").

This volume is uniform in size with the "Tokaido Fu kei." It is marked on the title page "First Volume," but no



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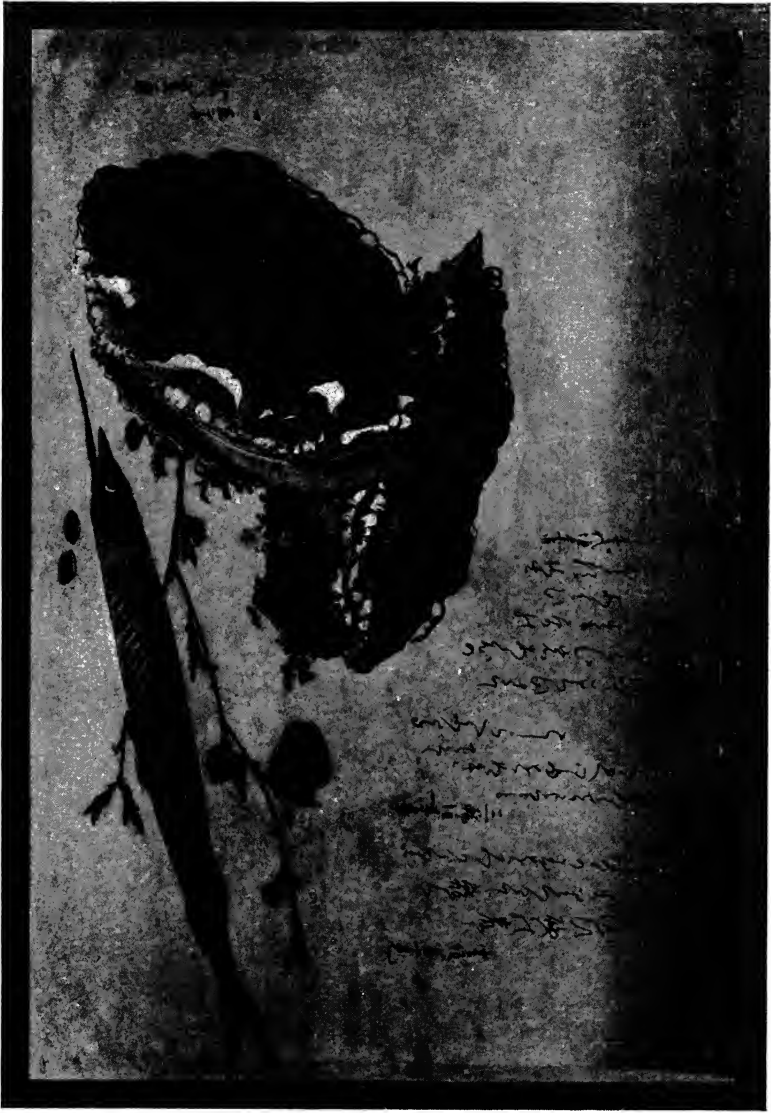
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second volume has come to light. In a later edition of the "So Hitsu Gwa-fu" it is reprinted as Volume Five, and it is fair to infer that this work, though projected in several volumes, for some reason was given up after the first volume appeared. The make up is similar to the Tokaido volumes, without crests on the cover. The date is that of the era only, Kaei (1848-1853). It contains pictures of plants and fishes in many colours, with a double-page illustration of Fuji from the beach, next to the last page.

Looking at these marvellous studies of fish, we might almost believe that the master had actually viewed the submarine world. He shows us the fairy land beneath the ocean that may be seen through a glass-bottomed boat in crystal waters. Weird sea growths are here; his fishes breathe in their native atmosphere. We feel the strange, unearthly swirl and surge which sway "the flowers that blush beneath the ocean green," a rhythmic motion not of earth. This is the genius of the Orient, which reflects life in all its varied forms. Hiroshige and Hokusai made all things to live and breathe in their proper medium, defying with their virile touch the cold, dead tradition and convention of the aristocratic schools.

Could any artist in our schools crowd into a panel six or eight inches wide the suggestion of infinities that Hiroshige does, yet without forcing his limited medium? Herein lies the magic of the Japanese draughtsman who plays with balance, rhythm and proportion—his inherent knowledge of art enabling him to gauge instinctively the capacity of cramped spaces.

Who but Hiroshige and his school could suggest in such small compass the majesty of the ocean? In a tiny panel of goldfish the wave follows the sweep of the master's brush in a swirl of indigo and aqua-marine and recedes in liquid tones of tenderest blue. Goldfish sport in the tossing foam



'In the Shallows  
of the Sea'  
One of the grand  
series of fishes







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and flash through it streams of vermilion light. Here and there a pine needle has fallen and is caught in the maelstrom. It is vital art—realism, impressionism, a poem and a marine—all in a few spaces of vibrating vegetable fibre and pure, pulsating colour harmony.

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Another spectacular effect is a huge moon in a sunset sky, out of which three wild geese rush towards a wave whose crest seems breaking into foam in sheer delight at their approach. Again, we see a pale moon indigo-rimmed sinking towards the horizon, whilst sea-birds whirl through space towards a shore dimly outlined in spectral green.

The magic and mystery of such scenes and their effect upon the imagination are interpreted by Yone Noguchi, in orientalised English:

"I was as in the mazy sweet,  
I knew not why. I smiled unto the moon;  
The moon understood me; the silence was profound.  
On the sea-face unearthly dreams  
And greenly melancholic autumn voicelessly stepped.

A sea-bird suddenly sprung from the wave  
Scattering sea-pearls with lavish wing."

In this picture guide Hiroshige, like his contemporary, Hokusai, exemplified the various styles of brush play. He shows us the *Shin*, formal and dignified, an offshoot of the classic; the *Gyo*, where hilarity reigns, reckless in its abandon to gaiety, enhanced by joyous company and the wine cup; and *So*, the free-and-easy, the gentle atmosphere of home, requiring no effort, blent with domesticity and simple, wholesome ease. Hiroshige illustrates both *Shin* and *So* styles, with branches of plum blossom even as the Japanese connoisseur in floral decoration places boughs of flowering cherry or plum trees, according to the rules which have been handed down through the centuries. The first editions are rich and beautiful in colour. The preface reads as follows:



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"It is said that Cho Densu's image of Fudo [a god surrounded by fire] emitted actual flames; and the brush with which Domo no Matahei drew his own portrait petrified and pierced a stone. A work of art executed with all the energy and spirit of man is often imbued with life—actually lives. Several instances have been heard of where drawings or sculpture turned into animated beings, forsaking the paper or stone. This work, the result of much ability and careful study, contains the drawings of plants; of roaring Naruto (rapids); the carp of Ryusa; the cherry blossoms of Yoshino; the plum of Taiya—without regard to origin, whether Japanese or Chinese, the result of Chinese brushes and Japanese ink! When placed on your desk should some pictures crawl out of the book, as the Kichizan Fudo and the Matahei portrait, let the fishes swim in the Black Sea of your ink-well and put the flowers in the water-holder on the desk. January of Kaei (1848-1853). Ryu ka tei Tane-kadzu."

It is an invariable custom in Japan for the traveller upon his return home to bring souvenirs to each member of his family, including the servants. These gifts or *Miyage* were selected with a desire to give those at home an idea of the locality visited and, as Yedo was the most important city in Japan, views of the capital made charming mementoes and served the purpose of our photographs and postal cards.

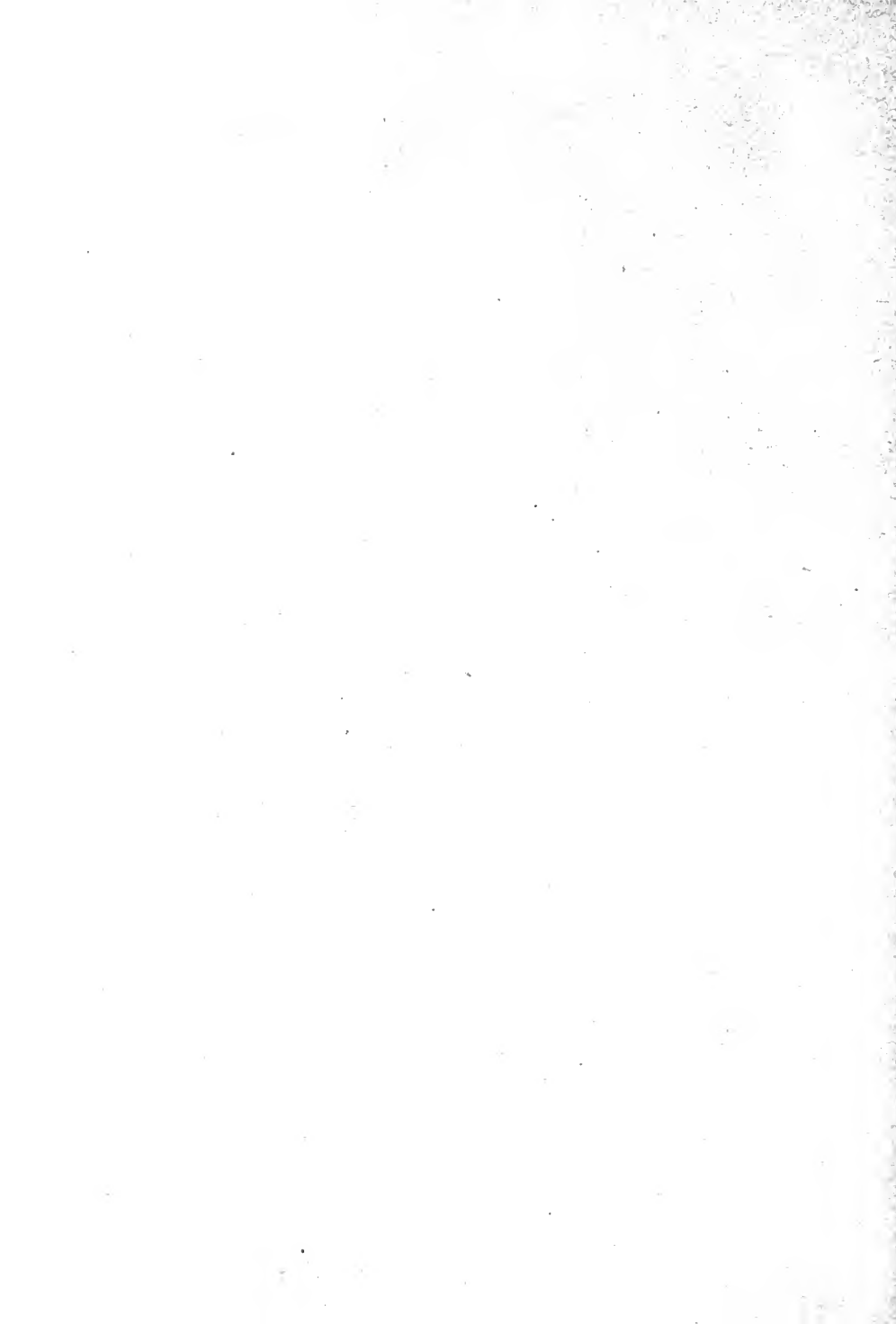
The "Yedo Miyage" ("Souvenirs of Yedo") is a set of small books illustrated by Hiroshige, of the same size and general makeup as the "Hundred Views of Yedo." The set is usually spoken of as complete in twelve volumes, but not all are by the master.

"Meisho Yedo Hiak'kei" (One Hundred Views of Yedo): There were actually 118 plates in this work, dating from 1856, second month, to 1858, tenth month: In 1856 thirty-eight plates; in 1857, seventy, and in 1858, ten. This is



The Eagle. From the  
One Hundred Views of  
Yedo

"Falling somewhere  
out of the sky;  
Hollow and weird is  
the eagle's cry"





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perhaps the most important work of Hiroshige, if we take into consideration the number of plates, the variety in composition and the subject—that populous capital, Yedo, which was thronged half-yearly with the visiting Daimyo and their retinues.

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As we see from other important works of his, such as the "Views of Sixty Provinces," during the Fifties he practically abandoned the lateral plate for the vertical one, just as many photographers, having exhausted the resources of competition in the photograph whose largest dimensions are from east to west, have turned to the upright camera and taken vertical views. This fact enables us to judge fairly correctly regarding some sets where the date of the work is not sufficiently distinctive to place accurately in the chronological bibliography.

To sum up:

First. We find in the memorial portrait a statement issued over the publisher's seal that Hiroshige's "Hundred Views of Yedo" was one of his masterpieces which appeared during the Ansei era.

Second. On examining the seals on the margins of the complete work as originally issued, we find that the plates were dated from the second month of 1856 to the tenth month of 1858.

Third. In addition to the seal date on the margin there are two plates where the date is embodied in the picture and written out in characters, and that date agrees with the seal date.

Fourth. In plates 5, 56, 63, 102 and 107 the cycle seal for 1857 is followed by an abbreviated character meaning "intercalary" and then the numeral "5." In looking up the chronology we find that in the year 1857 the intercalary, or extra month necessitated by the old calendar, was the month following the fifth month, that is, the Intercalary Fifth; so



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we have here a double check on the date, as there was no intercalary month in 1845.

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It is hard to pass with transient praise Hiroshige's fairy book, the "Fuji mi Hiak'kei." (One Hundred Views of Fuji). Everything about the tiny volume de luxe is in keeping—even the delicate writing upon the prefatorial page, sprinkled with blots of pale pink as if confetti had fallen, though the writer-artist no doubt intended showers of the peach. Perhaps Hiroshige, in sweet symbolic fashion, prefigured himself in the old man opposite the title page, holding an infant in the crook of his arm; maybe a fairy child he has found in the bamboo thicket.

Everywhere there are elfin touches and the boldness of brush stroke in the Yedo Views melts into tenderest manipulation. It is Elfin Land—"a sweep of lute strings, laughs and whiffs of song"—borne upon the incense of scattered peach blossoms from orchards bordered by pines, while Fuji omnipresent fills the horizon. The foreword is by Ryusai (Hiroshige), and the plates bear the seal-date, "Serpent 11, 1857."



Midnight at Tsukudajima  
One of the Totto Meisho  
"Sweet night on an  
island enchanted;  
And skiffs that are  
freighted with dreams"







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## NOTES UPON HIROSHIGE'S MASTERPIECES

TO give a complete history of the works of Hiroshige is beyond the scope of the present book. We can only enumerate the principal sets of Impressions, and notice a few of the most important. The "Yedo Meisho" (Famous Localities of Yedo) is a subject which appealed with peculiar force to the inhabitants of the Eastern Capital, Yedo (named Toto or Yeto). Nearly fifty different series of these sets, of unknown number and in plates of various shapes and sizes, are known—all by the first Hiroshige. If carefully compared the differences in shape of border, location of title, signature in frame or without justify this statement. The set of most uniform excellence was probably one of the earliest in the middle period and is entitled "Toto Meisho," with the publisher's stamp, Kikakudo, on the margin in red. Sometimes Sanoki in black is found in place of the red stamp.

A beautiful example of another set shows the yearly festival at Asakusa Temple. The red of the temple against the snow is very striking. This print is the usual full-sized horizontal plate, but we find an upright panel where, in the smallest compass, we get a suggestive view of the district of Asakusa, with a glimpse of the Pagoda and the celebrated Temple of Kwannon. In the courtyard happy people come and go incessantly, and the ring of the coppers falling in the boxes placed for offerings mingles with the clapping of hands in invocation to Buddha who looks down from the Place of Prayer. Pigeons strut confidently between the feet



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of pilgrims. Within the Temple is the Hall of the Golden Dragon and the atmosphere seems bathed in sunbeams, for yellow light is believed to permeate the regions of Amida Buddha. In this panel we see the tropical rain pelting upon the Temple roof and the Pagoda beyond, darkness shrouds the Dragon Hall, and the golden utensils of the Buddhist ceremonial glimmer faintly before the shrine of Amida, the All-Merciful.

The illustration shows us Tsukudajima, a small panel of the "Toto Meisho" (Yedo Views). It is a lovely little nocturne, perfect in its composition and perspective; the rich reddish-brown and yellow of the junks in the foreground relieving the somberness of the sleeping village, lapped in moonlit water.

One of the finest series of panel plates is entitled "Mu Tama Gawa" (Six Tama Rivers). The six rivers of the same name in various provinces furnished another favourite set of themes for poetry and art. Often and in many forms do they appear, but the series of full-sized lateral prints published in the middle period by Tsutaya is incomparably the best. The first plate, entitled "Settsu Koromo Uchi" (Cloth Pounding), might have suggested to Whistler the title, "A Nocturne in Blue and Silver." Save a faint band of green at the picture's base and touches of colour in the dresses of the little women fulling cloth by the river, only two tones are used. But how the great artist plays with his theme; what an orchestration he gives in two shades. The moonlight has aided the master, softening the sombre mountain with patches of silver and caught in the meshes of the reeds by the river's brink. A tropical brilliance floods the swift stream, but the shadows rest in shades of indigo. A flight of geese, arrow-like, crosses the moon's face and a distant range of hills fades mysteriously into the night. The ideographs, almost like another flight of birds, tell us poetically how

Seal with the Cycle-ciphers Sei and Snake

紀伊高野

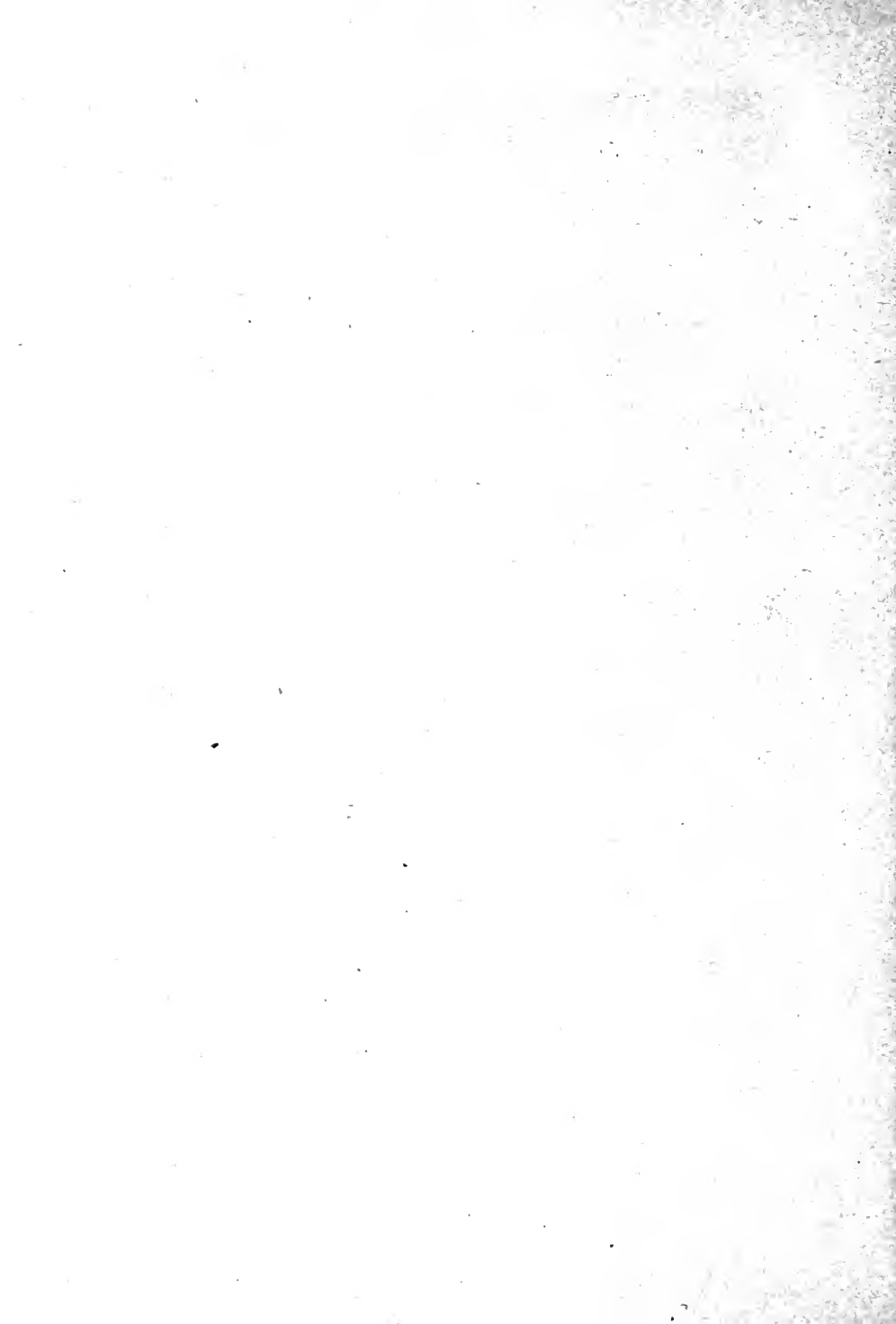
風雅集

宣法

古れや  
波もあはれ  
旅人の  
おの  
玉門の水



Pilgrims gazing at the  
poisoned stream near the  
Koya Shrine  
Seal-dated with the Cycle-  
ciphers Sei and Snake  
(1857)





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the busy little women choose the moonlight hour to full cloth by the lovely Tama River.

The plate given here is entitled "Kii, Koya" and shows us the dread waters of the river whose source was near the famous Koya shrine in the mountains of Shokoku. The two pilgrims gaze at the sparkling stream in dread, for it is poisoned by the ashes of the "Fox-Woman" buried near by.

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Upon the margin is the seal-date, "Snake," 1857. After the announcement of the seal-date discovery in the catalogue of the Happer Collection, the noted expert, Mr. W. H. Edmonds, commented on the date, 1845, ascribed to the three celebrated triptychs—the Awa Whirlpool, the Kiso Gorge and the Kanazawa Moon. He stated that the Ansei era was clearly indicated on the print. On inspection it was found that the round seal by the side of the oval seal was Sei, an abbreviation for Ansei, and the year is therefore 1857. Following this discovery of Mr. Edmond's, the Sei was found on most of the prints which appeared during the era of 1854-1859; in fact, the absence of the Sei seal may be taken as negative evidence that any given print antedates that era. It was found also that in work dated 1859 and in subsequent years the Sei appeared included in the animal seal. This combined seal afforded an easy method of determining the work of Hiroshige, the Second, for on all prints that have been examined the Sei appears in the seal. The Sei seal appears also upon the panel just described, dating it in the Ansei era. We hope more light may be shed upon the subject by the study of seal dating.

Before developing his genius for landscape Hiroshige for a while followed his contemporaries in depicting women. The artists of the popular school were vowed to the worship of the Eternal Feminine. The Ukiyo-ye print was frowned upon by the military aristocrats who, in revolt at the profligacy of the Genroku era (1688-1703), had instituted a



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Puritanical reaction, but the pleasure-loving populace welcomed with delight this reflection in the mirror of art of their favourite pursuits and pleasures. The lofty standard of the Samurai and the fact that many of the old masters were priests make it easy to understand why to this day the art of Ukiyo-ye—the floating world of pleasure and desire—is discredited by the aristocracy.

In a set termed "Soto To Uchi Sugata Hakkei" (Indoor and Outdoor Eight Views) Hiroshige compares women with scenery. One fine plate shows a beauty of the Yoshiwara awakened by the evening bell. The small circular view shows the wild geese coming to rest in the fields adjoining "The Nightless City." Professor Fenollosa said of this plate: "It makes us think in its intense feeling of Sir Joshua Reynold's subject: Mrs. Siddons as the 'Tragic Muse.'" The whole attitude of the slender figure speaks of weariness and depression. Perhaps the beauty of the moonlit Sumida has filled her with sadness. The soul's desolation of these frail flowers of the Yoshiwara is often expressed in little poems written upon the impressions. One of them is here freely translated:

### The Song of Miyako.

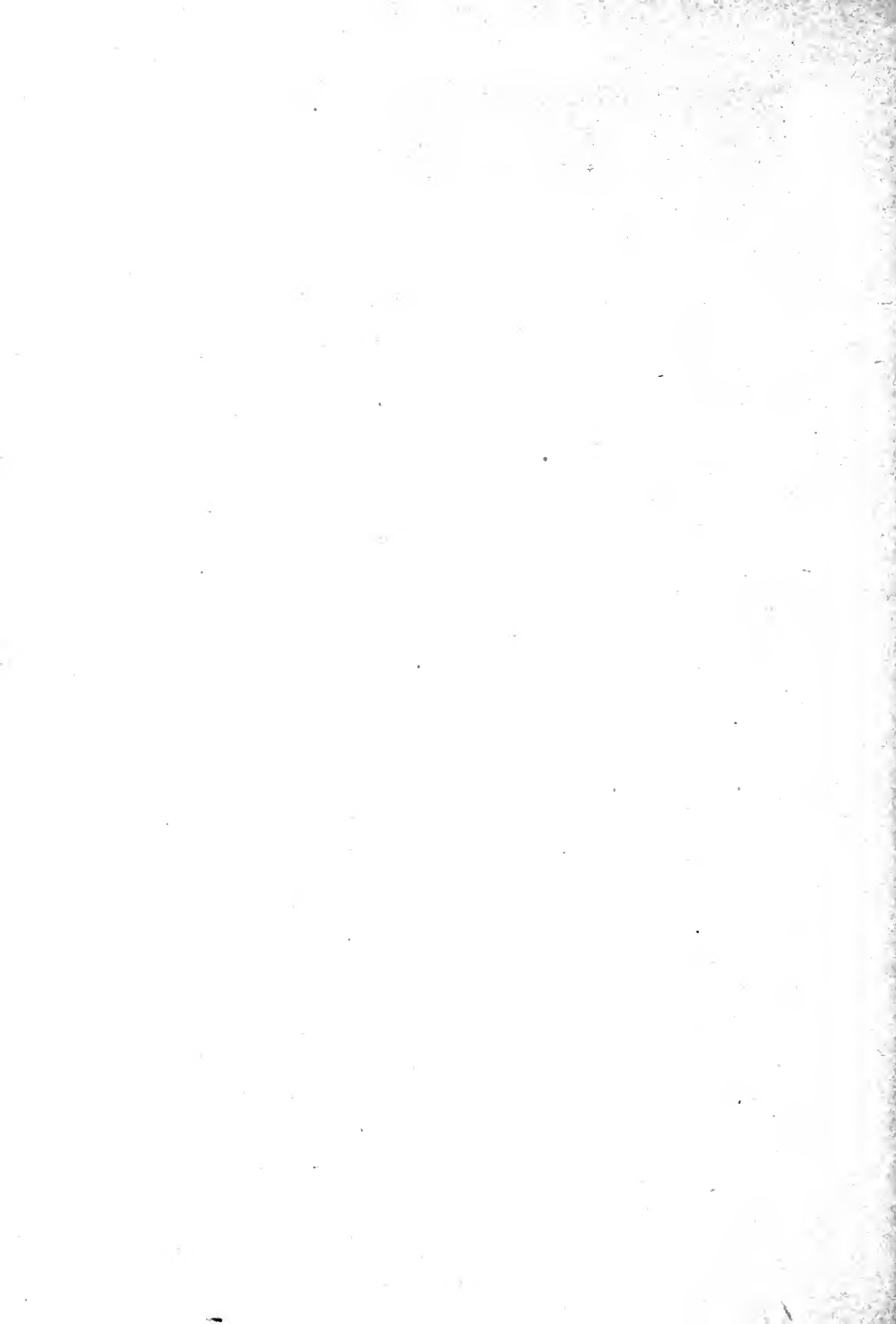
Though I am nothing—  
Naught but a plaything,  
Loved for a moment,  
Breathed on, then broken.

Yet for me too  
Shines the sweet moon;  
Sweet rays, consoling,  
Lighting my heart—  
Me, hapless one.

In the "Kwa Cho" (Birds and Flowers) series the versatile artist was especially successful. His love of poetry is also shown in these rare prints, a short poem being inscribed



The Siesta  
One of the Kwa-Cho  
(Flower and Bird)  
Panels







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upon them interpreting the artist's intention, and he doubtless indicted many of the little sonnets to his own birds and flowers. Quails and poppies are always combined in Japanese art, and on a page belonging to an early set of "Kwa Cho" there is a rare print devoted to them. Tender and alive are the little brown quail, and what a sweet vanishing of colour in the leaves of the poppy. The faint brush strokes on its petals give that velvety sheen the flower possesses. The syllables of the *kyōka* (poem) "Aki no Yume Mite Ya Nakidasu Mugizura" are thus freely translated by Mr. Happer: "Gazing at Autumn-dreamy beauty-hark; the cry of the quail."

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The illustration given is one of a series of large, vertical panels which belong to his earlier period. The plates bear the seal of "Jaku Rin Do," and are variously signed. The descriptive poems are in Chinese, showing that the author was familiar with the classics. The perfection of these first impressions de luxe has never been approached elsewhere and exemplify that *tirage d'Art* about which M. de Goncourt and the connoisseurs rave.

Birds whose plumage transports us to a tropical forest, the colours held in the "vibrating tentacles of vegetable fibre," are subtly enhanced by that cunning device of relief-embossing or dry printing—said to be accomplished by the pressure of the printer's elbow upon the engraved lines on the block. The secrets of these artist-artisans were their own—alchemists in colour and wonder-working wizards of the block. Hiroshige vied with Hokusai in his treatment of birds. His golden pheasant seems flying amidst the pines on the mountain side; the exotic, long-tailed bird shown in the illustration sways sleepily with the blossoming plum bough, whilst the peacock choosing his perch amongst the bright maple leaves completes the grand orchestration in colour.



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Hokusai and Hiroshige rivalled the old Chinese and Japanese masters in their bird panels. Little did Hokusai dream, still less might he have cared in his passionate devotion to art for art's sake, that the "birds upon the fan of Hokusai stand with the marbles of the Parthenon for the concrete expression of artistic beauty." Those who love the memory of the old artist will feel their hearts glow, knowing that his name engraved in stone upon the Whistler memorial at West Point will go down to posterity with that of the great Western artist who first bowed to oriental influence—modelling the figures in his nocturnes and symphonies after the sweeping lines of Kiyonaga and studying impressionism from the landscapes of Hokusai and Hiroshige.

Another fascinating little panel shows us a cuckoo flying by night above a stream shadowed by pine branches. A magic dwells in the picture. Is it the sweep of the cuckoo's wing who, these children of nature declare, loves the moon or is it diffused through the pine needles swaying above the blue water? Who can say? It is part of the charm which once felt for *nishiki-ye* can never be effaced—the virile touch of the master artisan engraver.

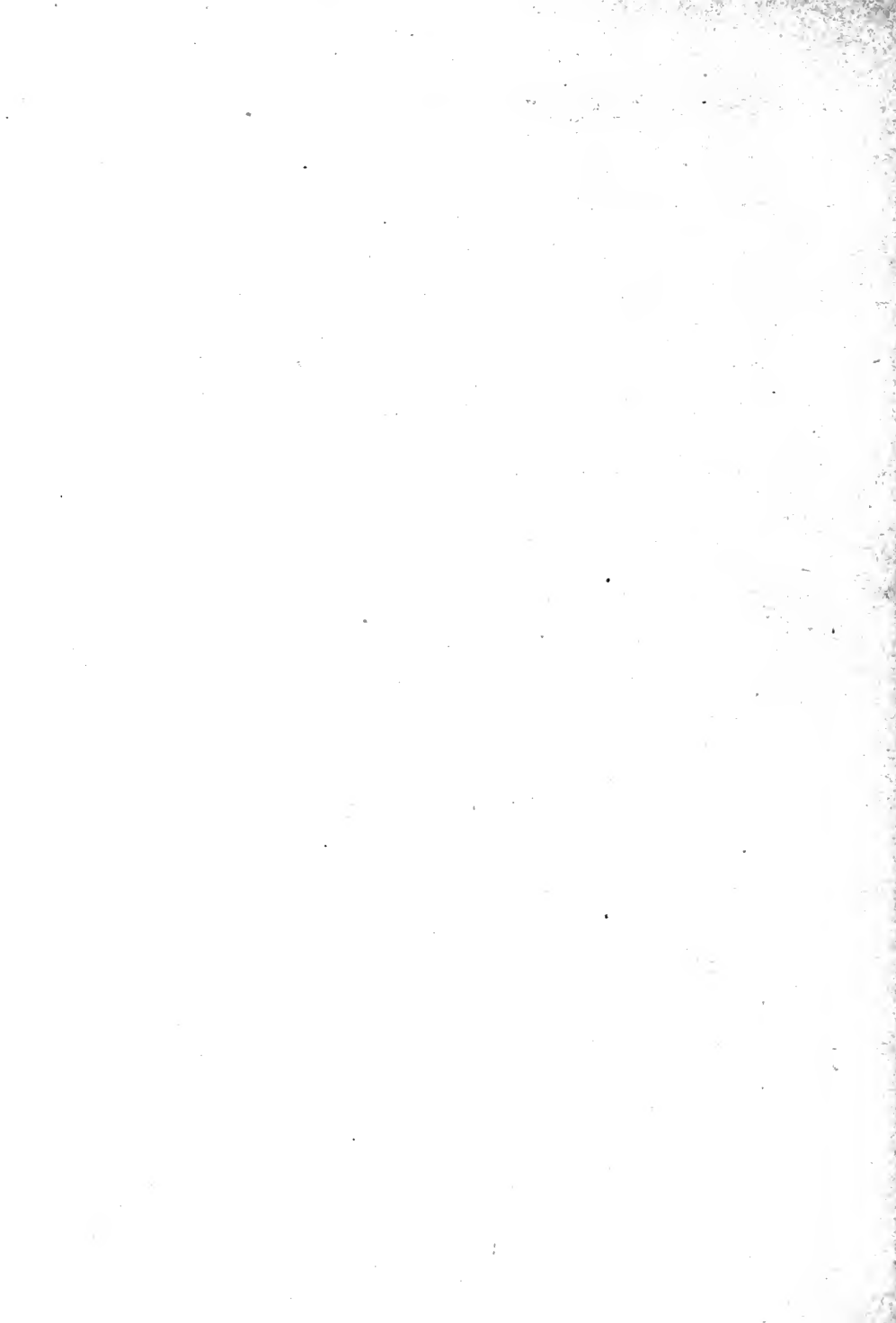
Of the sets of Impressions by Hiroshige, illustrating the historical and legendary tales of his country and of China, one of the most beautiful is "Yoshitsune Ichai Dai Dzu Ye" (Incidents in the Life of Yoshitsune). He was the most striking figure in Japanese history and romance. There are ten plates in the set and the most beautiful is the first, in which we see Tokiwa, the young wife of the murdered Yoshitomo, toiling through the snow—flying from the sensual Kiyomori, leader of the Taira clan, who long terrorized Japan. With one arm she clasps her baby to her breast whilst holding the hand of her youngest child, and she turns her head to cheer with encouraging words the brave boy who, bearing his father's sword, struggles with the wintry blast which



土怪八回  
 石怪乃社牛  
 池海定封衣

夜半月

The combat by  
 moonlight between  
 Yoshitsune and  
 the robber,  
 Shirikawa no Tankai,  
 on the steps of the  
 Goji Shrine,  
 Kyoto





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sways the snow-laden bamboos. An icy rivulet impedes the way but bravely she faces it, little knowing that the baby in her arms will one day become the "Bayard of Japan," of whom Mr. Okakura says: "In the midst of an age of epic heroism looms large the romantic figure of Yoshitsune, of the house of Minamoto, whose life recalls the tales of the round table and is lost like that of the Knight of Pendragon in poetic mist, so as to furnish the imagination of a later day with plausible grounds for identifying him with Genghis Khan in Mongolia, whose wonderful career begins about fifteen years after the disappearance of Yoshitsune in Yezo. Yoritomo, the elder brother of Yoshitsune, aided him in avenging his father's murder and became the first hereditary *Shogun*, the title being conferred upon him in 1190." It is interesting to note that these great heroes were contemporary with Richard the Lion-hearted, and the siege of Ascalon took place within two years of the assumption by Yoritomo of the title of *Shogun* (Sei Tai Shogun) or (Barbarian-subjugating Great General). The adventures of the two brothers have been favourite subjects for Japanese artists.

In the illustration given we see Yoshitsune in deadly combat with the robber, Shirakawa no Tankai. The contrast between the slender youth and the ruffianly murderer suggests a parallel with David and Goliath. The full moon, half shadowed by cryptomeria boughs, lights up the young hero's face and the mysterious shadows cast by the trees which enshrine the temple add intensity to the drama. Each plate is signed Hiroshige, with the seal of Sen Kakudo.

The "Chiushingura" (Drama of the Forty-seven *Ronin*) is full of dramatic power and picturesque scenes. He designed several sets of this popular subject.

The Popular School under Okyo and the School of Ukiyo-ye, though breaking the bonds of classicism, still loved the consecrated formula of expression. The "Eight Views"



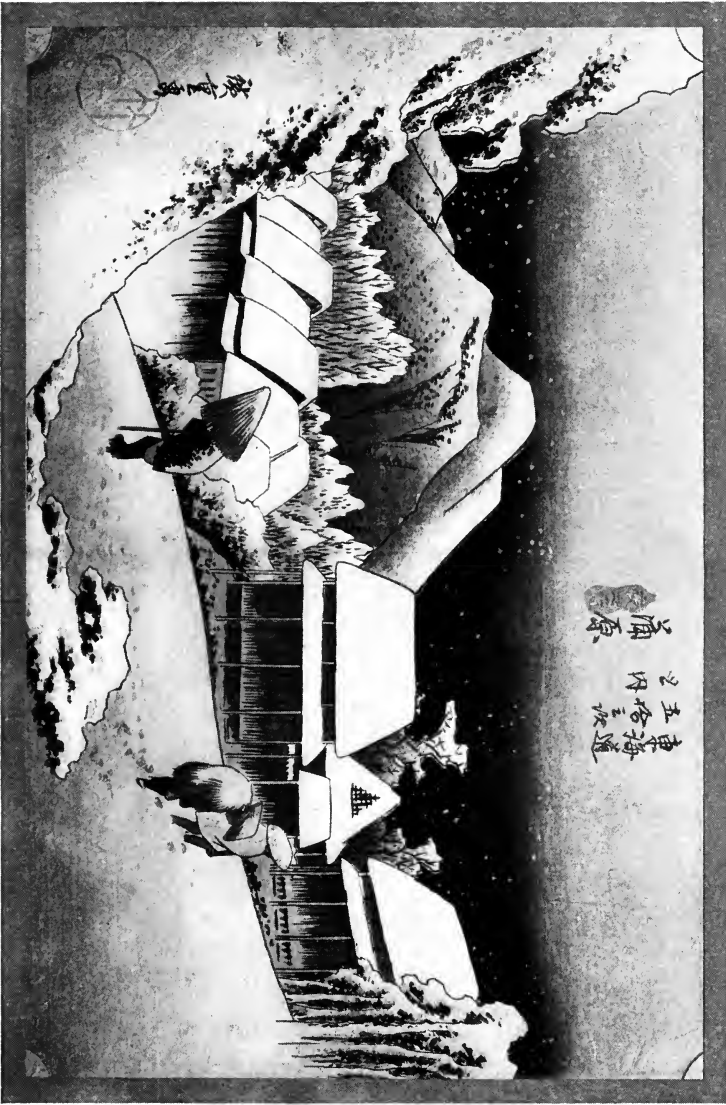
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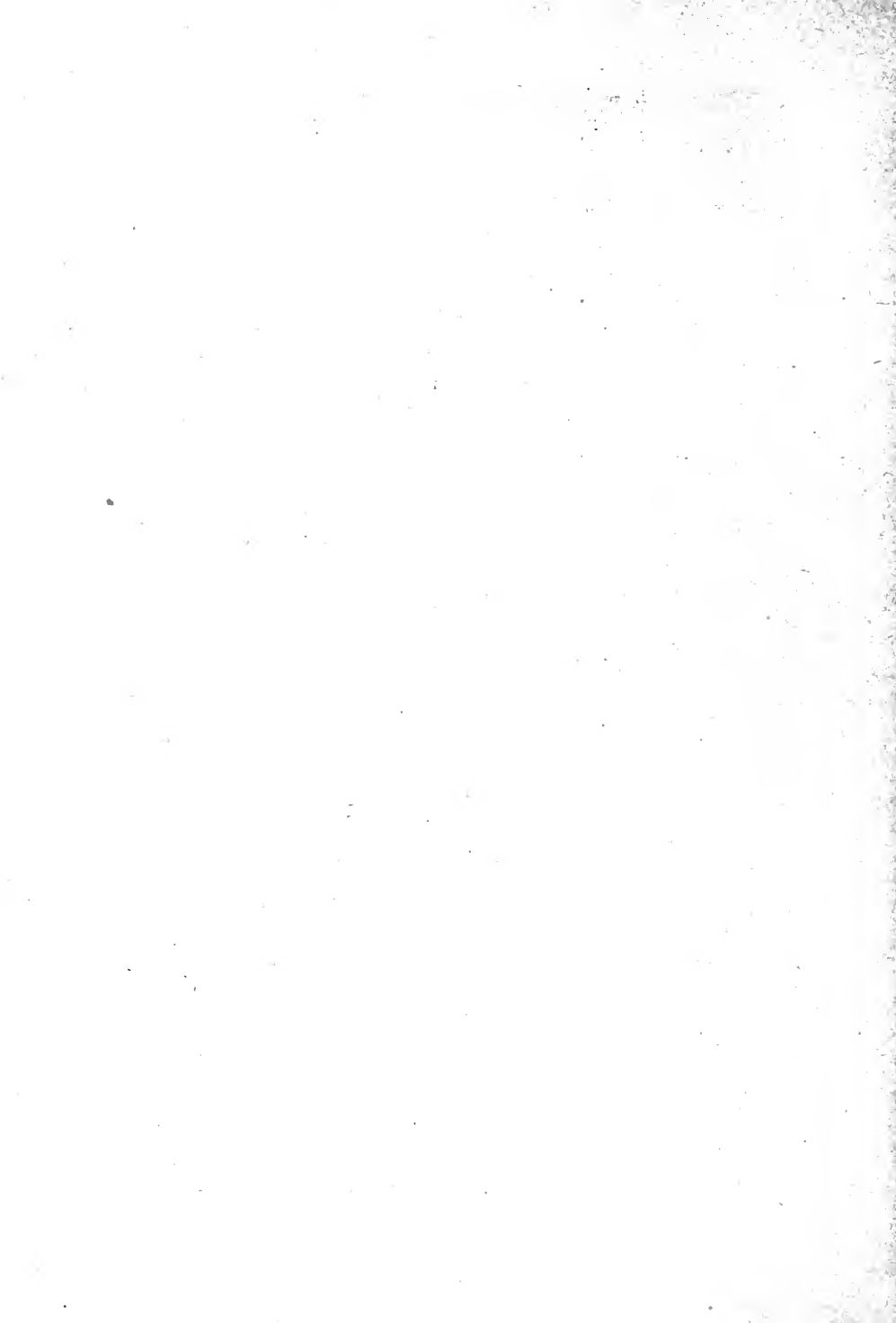
(Hakkei)—originally subjects of Chinese poetry, celebrating aspects, seasons and hours—were adopted and ascribed to various picturesque scenes in Japan. Kyoto loved the appropriate setting afforded by Lake Biwa, named "Omi Hakkei" (Eight Views of Omi), the province in which the beautiful lake is situated; Yedo claimed equally noteworthy scenes in its vicinity; while both admired Kanazawa, the land-locked inlet in Yedo Bay.

Hiroshige designed many series of "Hakkei." The finest are the "Omi Hakkei," the "Yedo Kinko Hakkei" and, above all, the "Kanazawa Hakkei." Of his many triptychs the moonlight view of Kanazawa is the most beautiful. It is signed and sealed and dated "Snake year," having also the Sei seal, making the date 1857. The "Kisoji no Yama Kwa" (Mountains and Streams on the Kiso Highway) triptych is the largest snow picture by Hiroshige. A slate blue is the only colour, the translucent white of the paper representing the snow. It has the same year date as the Kanazawa triptych. He also designed various Hari-maze (Mixed Pictures). One set of the Tokaido in this form is full of little gems, the initial sheet bearing the stamp of Maruzei.

Charming *surimono* and "Fan" prints are his—the latter in two shapes, the *Uchiwa*, non-folding round fan, and the *Ogi* or folding fan. Another classicism was the naming a series of three pictures "Settsu Gekka" (Snow, Moon and Flowers), called the "Three Friends of the Poet." The moonlight "Saru Hashi" (Monkey Bridge)—our frontispiece—is a *take-mono-ye* made by joining two full-sized vertical plates, and was published by Tsutaya—whose seal device is an ivy leaf under a triple-peaked Fuji—in the artist's middle period. It is considered one of the finest landscape prints of the Ukiyo-ye school, in its masterly design and poetic feeling challenging comparison with the work of the old landscape painters of Japan.



Evening Snow at  
Kambara,  
Station Sixteen on  
the Tokaido







## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

Notes Upon  
Hiroshige's  
Masterpieces

The "Snow Gorge," which is given here, is a companion piece to the "Saru Hashi," and the Japanese believe that there was a third plate, "Cherry Blossoms," making a "Settsu Gekka." This impression was published by Sanoki and is a bold and beautiful design, the colouring mainly blue and white—snow-capped rocks and sapphire stream.

Of all the landscapes by Hiroshige the most familiar are the "Tokaido Go-ju-san Tsugi" (Fifty-three stations of the Tokaido or Eastern Road), published by Takeuchi Hoyeido in the early Thirties. Another full-sized Tokaido series was published by Maruzei in the middle period, and the set is noticeable for extreme delicacy in execution. From this series was selected the view of Fujiyama given on a former page. The contrast between his work in this Tokaido set and in that of Hoyeido shows how the master's style varied. We might almost deny that the two sets were the work of the same brush. The slender, miniature trees in Maruzei's edition remind us of the fairy plates of the "One Hundred Views of Fuji"—that rare little *chef d'oeuvre*.

The standard Tokaido by Hoyeido is the most popular, containing as it does the "Rain" at Shono, the "Wind" at Yokkaichi showing the wind sweeping across the rice field and the coolie chasing his hat. Then Station Nineteen, "Kameyama Snow," where coolies are climbing up an almost perpendicular hillside, the road hidden in snowdrifts; what a fascinating conception! In the foreground two trees are locked in a wintry embrace and a few lines show us the village roofs, snow-burdened, and beyond the whiteness lies a glory of roseate sky (in the best impressions) where the sun sinks below the horizon.

"Evening Snow at Kambara," given here, is a lovely subject. It is the Sixteenth Station and shows a village almost buried in snow, suggesting winter in Switzerland rather than in semi-tropical Japan. So it is a relief to come to Station



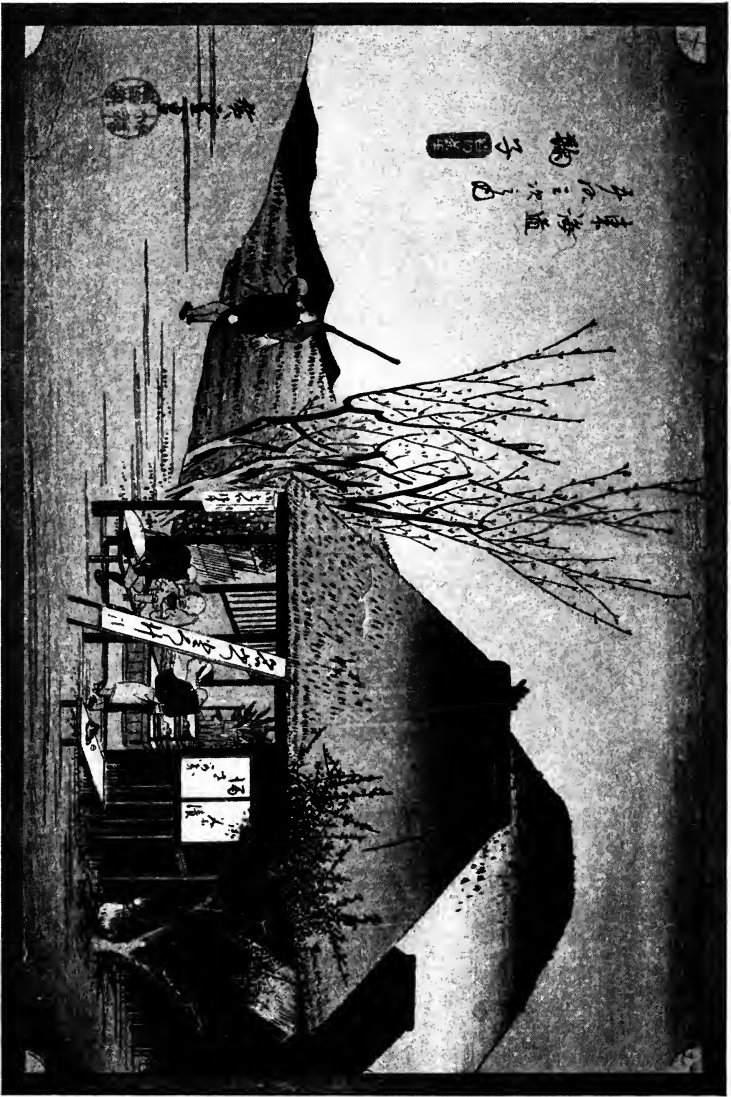
## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

Notes Upon  
Hiroshige's  
Masterpieces

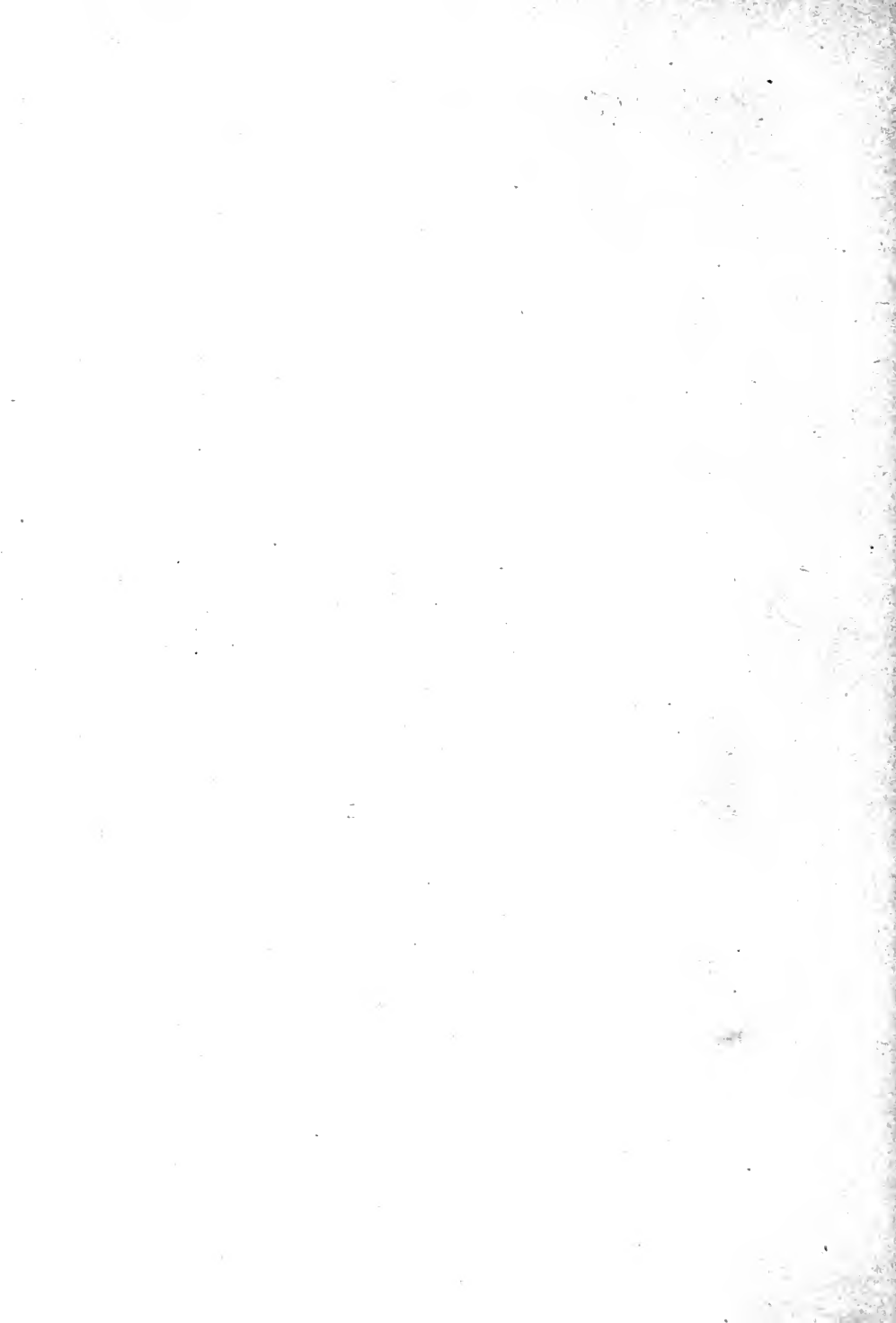
Twenty-one (see illustration) where we see the early blossoming plum. The long, bare branches with touches of rose peeping through their wintry darkness—for not a leaf is yet visible—look like wonderful fairy wands bewitched into blossoming. The veriest coolie in Japan loves the awakening of Spring, and the uncouth, bare-limbed travellers who are enjoying rest and refreshment in the little wayside inn no doubt have paid tribute to the flowering trees and maybe the hostess, with her baby shyly peeping from the folds of her blue kimono, will bring the tea in a tiny Banko pot where, half concealed amid the flowering plum branches which decorate it, are picture letters assuring the traveller that joy shall blossom in his heart, like the plum flowers in the first day of Spring.

Mariko is close to the bay and a few turns more will bring the fisherman, who may have just disposed of the fish we see hanging at the entrance to the inn, within view of the water. The background flushed with pink, shading into a deeper tone skywards, is merely a pretty convention, enhancing the suggestion of Spring.

In the various sets of the Tokaido, Nihon Bashi, the famous bridge at Yedo, from which in olden time all distances in the empire were measured, marks the commencement of the route. Like the old saying, "All roads lead to Rome," in Japan the bourne of the pilgrim is the Western Capital, Kyoto, that sacred heart of Japan where for many centuries the emperors lived in seclusion—sanctified puppets—almost as passive as Buddhist divinities. Clad in cumbersome ceremonial garments, which enhanced this aspect of sacred immobility, they worshipped their imperial ancestors, feeling themselves mysteriously united with the spirits of the past, a devotion partly egoistic; for they knew that they, too, participated in this sacred symbolism, foremost of the occult mysteries of Shinto.



Mariko,  
 Meibutsu Cha-ya  
 (Souvenir Tea-House),  
 Station Twenty-one  
 on the Tokaido.  
 On the Teapot:  
 "May your life be  
 bright as the  
 plum-blossoms of  
 Mariko!"





## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

In "The Sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaido" or inland road running through the centre of the island between Yedo and Kyoto, Hiroshige collaborated with Keisai Yeisen. Twenty-three of the plates in this series are by the latter artist. The work was published by Takeuchi Hoyeido, the publisher of the standard Tokaido, and Ise Iri-Kinjudo. We have shown Miyanokoshi Station as an example of the finest picture of mist and moonlight of any known print. Only an artist-poet could thus indelibly fix the evanescent scene. This plate is signed Hiroshige and Ichiryusai is given in the seal.

Notes Upon  
Hiroshige's  
Masterpieces

"Roku-ju Yo Shu Meisho Dzu Kwai" (Views of the Sixty Odd Provinces) is a series of full-sized vertical plates which were brought out in a double-opening album, as were also the Tokaido and Kisokaido sets, the "Hundred Views" and others. This work is dated "Ansei, 3, Dragon, Autumn, 1856," with seal-date "Dragon, 9;" the publisher, Koshimuraya Heisuke.

The "Kyoto Meisho" (Celebrated Views of Kyoto) is a set of ten prints in lateral form, signed Hiroshige, with the stamp of the publisher—on some, Kawaguchi; on others, Yeisendo. One of the most charming of these shows us Kiyomidzu Temple standing high on a hillside, partly hidden by cherry blossoms and sombre trees outlining the hill against blue and golden clouds; in the foreground a tea-house, the balcony decorated with lanterns.

The "Yedo Hiak'kei" (Hundred Views of Yedo) was issued by the publisher, Uwoya Teikichiji, in 1858-9. Following the full title of the artist on the title-page is the phrase "Issei Ito" (the greatest of his age). The "Hundred Views of Yedo" have not the grace and delicacy that we find in the earlier work by the master, and the introduction of cheap pigments, deplored by the artist, with the haste in production caused by his immense popularity, led to a



## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

Notes Upon  
Hiroshige's  
Masterpieces

deterioration in colouring and finish. Yet the boldness, ingenuity and impressionism of these designs startled the artists of Europe. His studies of Yedo opened the eyes of Parisian students to oriental methods, and emphasized the charm of Impressionism. Hiroshige, perhaps more than any other disciple of his school, was the exponent of the fundamental doctrine of Japanese art, "the expression of the inward spirit through rhythm."

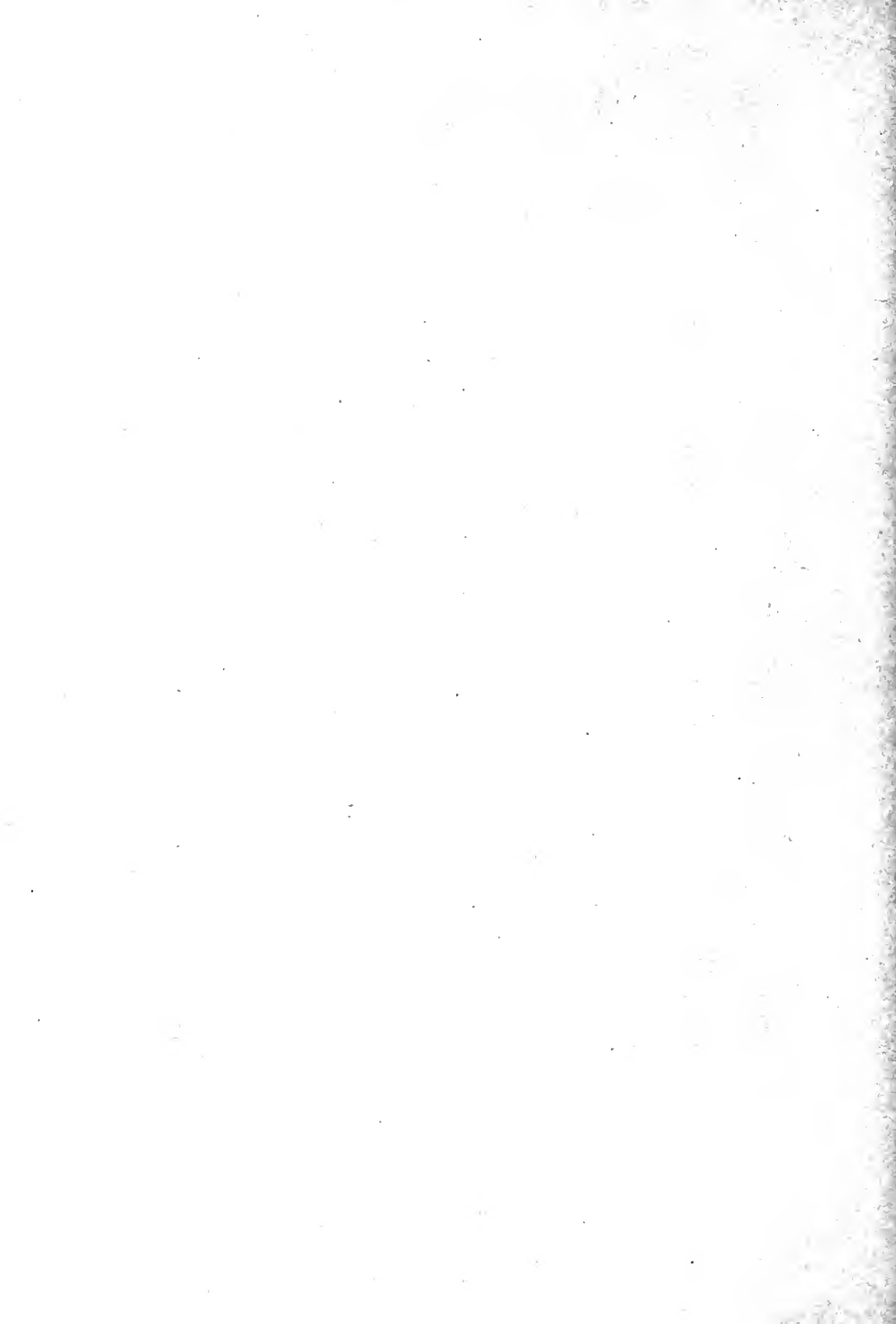
An example from the "Yedo Hiak'kei" is "The Eagle." We feel the rush of the great wings which frame the distant range, the familiar outline etched in a steel-blue sky, snow-flecked; surely a grand study in Impressionism.

The "Hundred Views" give us the story of the daily life of the people in and about the Capital. We see old moated Yedo under every conceivable aspect and in all seasons of the year. The life of the people is made manifest: Sweet children of nature who love the unsullied snow, hating to mar its purity; who hang poems upon the boughs of flowering cherry trees; who apostrophize the shadow of the pines cast upon the *fusuma*, the semi-transparent paper screens that take the place of windows in Japan; idyllic lovers of flowers, feasting their souls with lotus blossoms that flush the moats with pink and white glory; making festival for the wistaria blossoms and watching in Autumn the dance of the whirling maple leaves. In Chrysanthemum time the whole nation makes holiday.

"In the third month," M. de Goncourt tells us, "when the cherry buds begin to show, the trees are taken up and planted on each side of the 'Middle Street' (of the Yoshiwara) so that it resembles an alley in the park more than the streets of a city. And through the glades of this impromptu forest coming and going in endless procession are beautiful figures, the great courtesans with their attendants, exquisitely dressed young girls. Hardly can they force their



To the Falling Cherry  
Blossoms in the Woods of  
Sui Shin, by the Sumida  
"Rakkwa eda ni  
Kaeru to mireba  
Kocho kana"  
"I saw—as a fallen blossom,  
returning to the branch—  
lo! it was a butterfly"







## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

way through the crowd gathered to view them, young and old. How charming is the background where, through the pink snow of the cherry blossoms, we catch the angles of roofs, seeming to smile too, in unison with the coquettish little beauties below."

Notes Upon  
Hiroshige's  
Masterpieces

Entrancing is the night scene on the Sumida River at this season. The river is crowded with craft of all kinds, notably house-boats decorated with gay, fluttering lanterns. Gliding down the stream they come, the gay laughter of the geisha mingling with the tinkling samisen, its strange syncopated rhythm vibrating to the pulse of oriental night. Fireworks flare into the upper darkness and fall in flowery clusters, and always the strange singsong of the boatmen warily steering their course through the jam.

The illustration is named "Sumidagawa Sui Shin no Mori" (Woods of Sui Shin), near the bank of the Sumida. No festival day and, perhaps, all the dearer for wandering "lonely as a cloud," we may gaze upon the peaceful river and the overhanging cherry boughs, which later shall "flash upon that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude." This print is seal-dated "Dragon, 8," 1856.

Another illustration, entitled "Ohashi no Yudachi," shows us a sudden thunderstorm at the Ohashi, or big bridge. We see the torrential rain that Hiroshige loved and which he compelled with his strange but effective convention of black criss-cross lines. It is the most beautiful rain scene of the set, with its sage-green river deepening into amethyst beneath the gray-black columns of the bridge; the blurred trees lining the river's brink barely outlined against the steely sky. The thunderstorm has burst upon the coolies and the women, huddling beneath the umbrella half-furled against the stormy gusts, are flying for shelter, whilst the man on the raft must have all he can do steering single-handed against the swift current.



## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

Notes Upon  
Hiroshige's  
Masterpieces

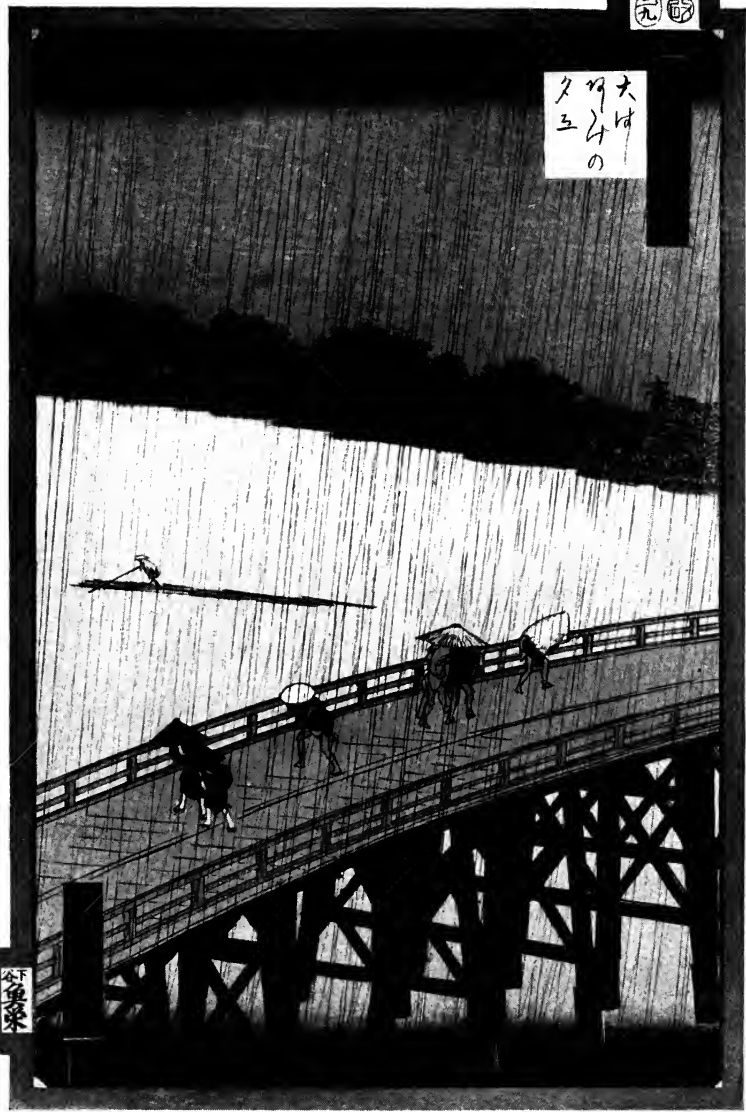
The last work of the master was the "Fuji San ju Rok'-kei" (Thirty-six Views of Fuji). The plates are seal-dated "Horse, 4," 1858. The title page is seal-dated "Ram, 6," 1859; publisher, Tsutaya. After the list of contents is "Sho-dai Ryusai Hiroshige O-i;" that is, "First Hiroshige—old man left, or relic of." The preface states that the plates were carefully published as an "offering of sincere respect to my deceased friend." The writer adds that "Hiroshige wished to stop using his brush and, alas, his wish came true, for he died last year." The desire of Hiroshige, expressed in his farewell sonnet, that he might view the beauties of the Buddhist Heaven, "perchance limn them too," recalls a passage by Lafcadio Hearn, in which he portrays the land of Horai.

To those who watch and wait for the sun's coming, a cloud convention of the Japanese may often be noticed—parallel streaks of flame athwart the horizon or long pennons of yellow light heralding the sun's triumphant progress. A significance is attached to these cloud effects—they symbolize a dreamland of beauty, a mist of colours which Faith has crystallized into an ethereal world; where Love is synonymous with Life; and where all evil, shame and calumny are banished forever. This is Horai which Lafcadio painted for us in letters of light.

"Because in Horai there is no knowledge of evil, the hearts of the people never grow old; and, by reason of being always young in heart, the people of Horai smile from birth until death, except when the Gods send sorrow among them. All folk in Horai love and trust each other—and the speech of the women is like bird song, because the hearts of them are as light as the souls of birds; \* \* and the swaying of the sleeves of the maidens at play seems a flutter of wide, soft wings. In Horai nothing is hidden but grief, because there is no reason for shame. \* \* Evil winds from the West are blowing over Horai, and the magical atmosphere

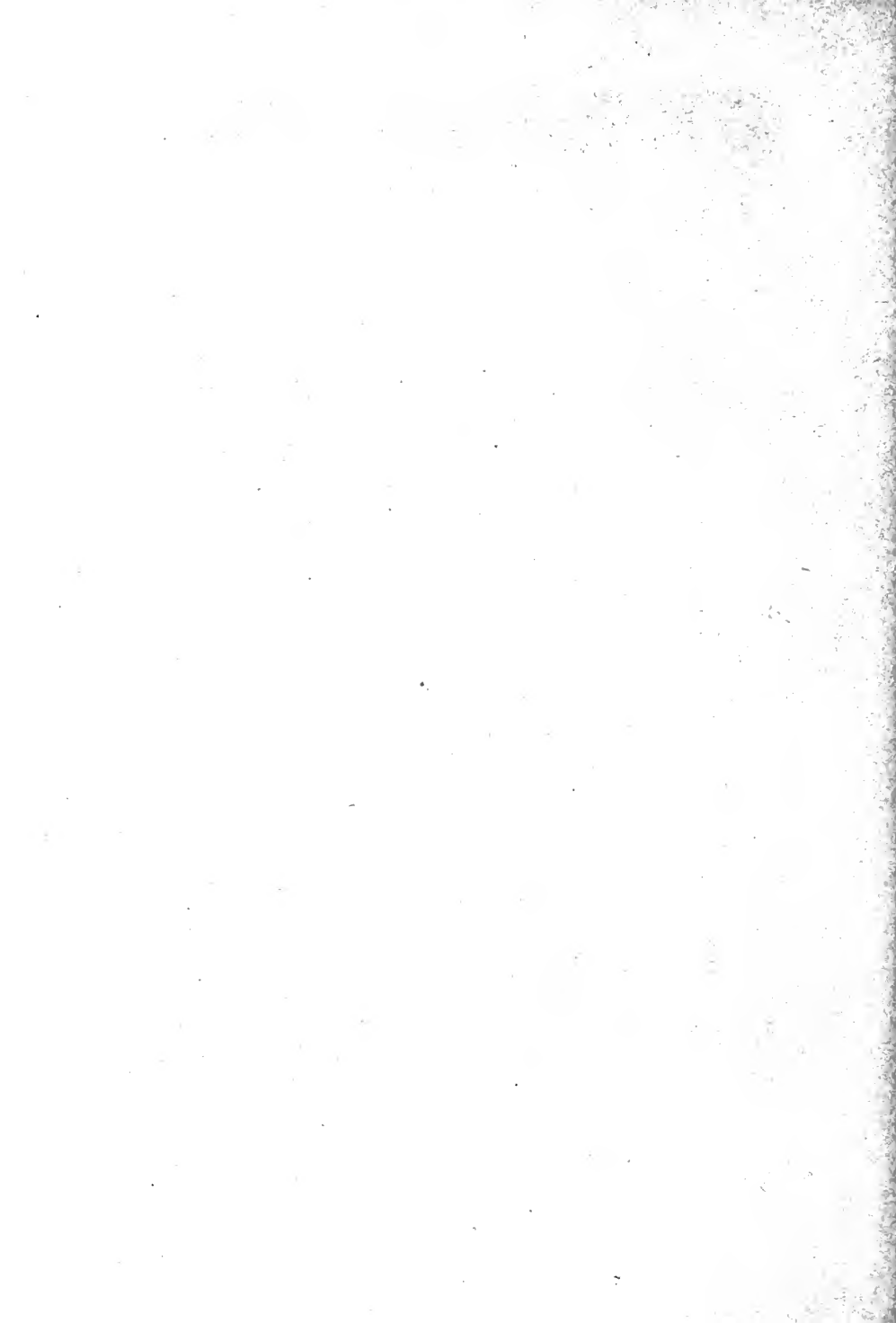


大橋の  
夕雨の



下  
鏡  
家

Ohashi no Yudachi  
A Thunderstorm  
at Yudachi near the  
Great Bridge.  
Seal-dated Snake, Sei  
(1857)



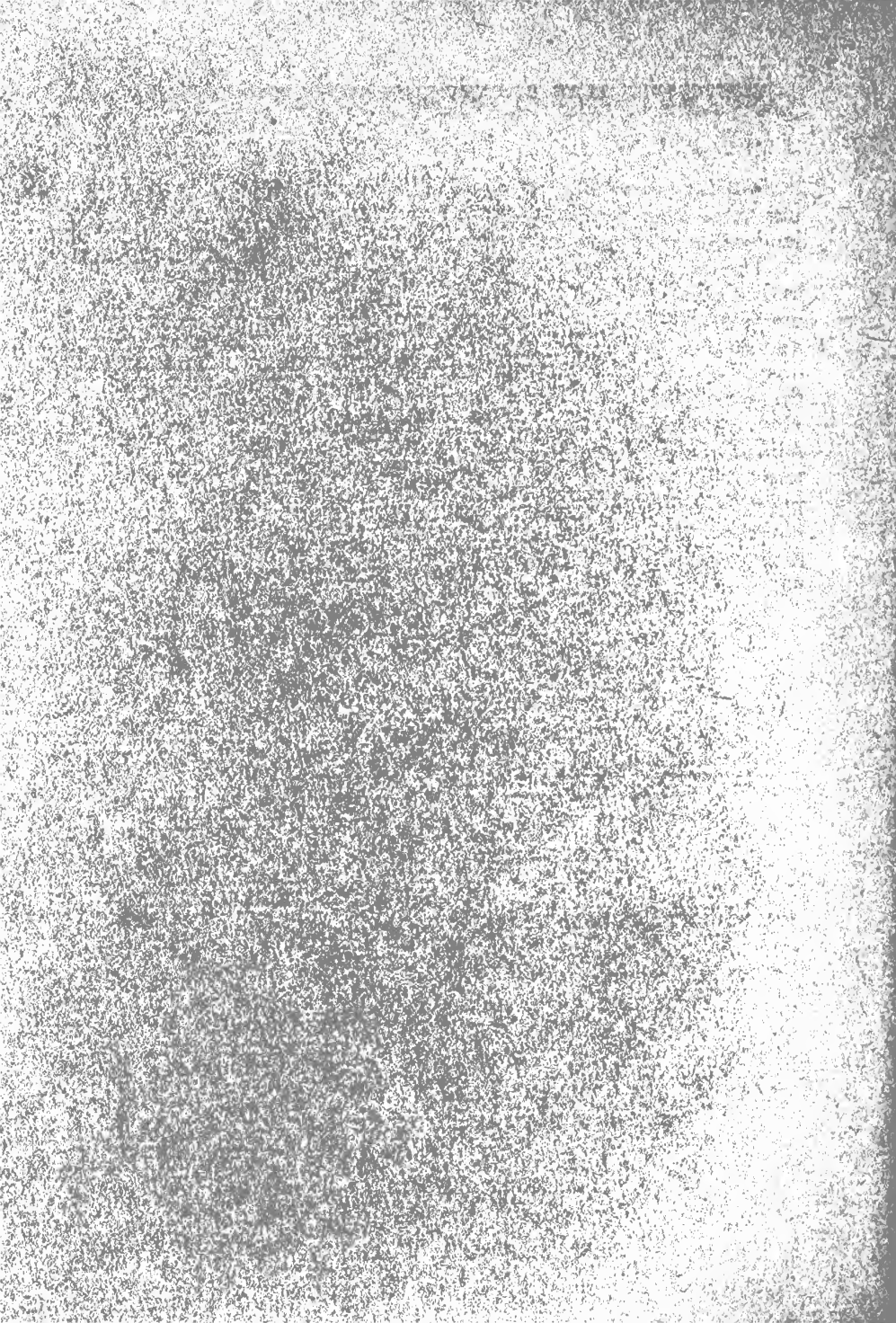


## THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

is shrinking away before them. It lingers now only in patches like those long, bright bands of cloud that trail across the landscapes of Japanese painters."

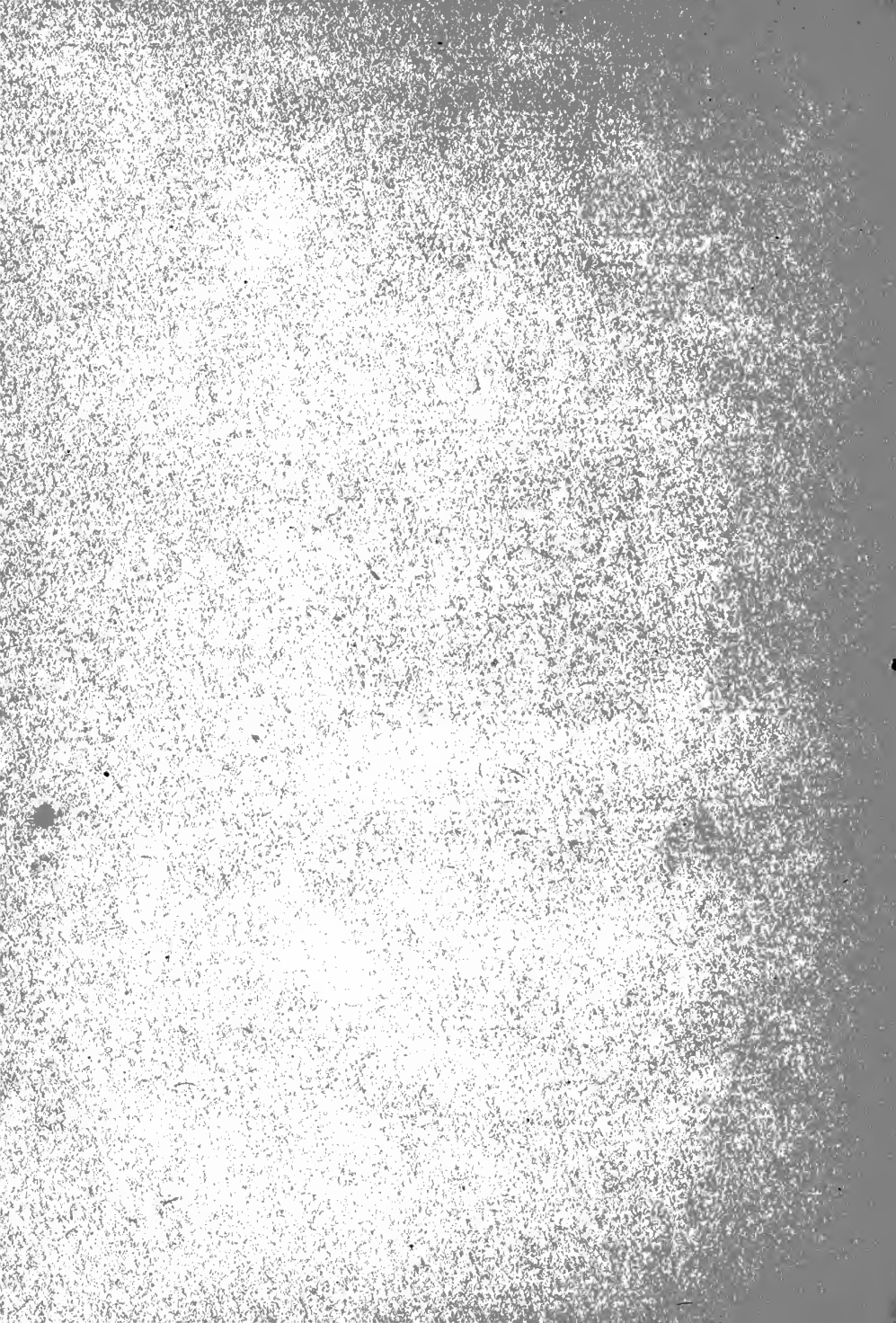
Notes Upon  
Hiroshige's  
Masterpieces

The longing of Hokusai, praying Heaven upon his death-bed to grant him five more years of life in which to follow art, was "that his soul, turned will-o'-the-wisp, might come and go over the summer fields;" and those who oppose the gospel of stagnation may conceive the immortal genius of the artist ever searching the universe for fresh secrets of vital art. So too, in fancy, we may imagine the spirit of the Apostle of Impressionism winging its way from the monastery to the glad land of Horai and, in company with the old painter-monks who went before him, glorying in surpassing sunsets—seeking in those elysian fields the springs of beauty in the chalice of flowers of Art; Art that is one with Nature and Nature's God, the Omnipotent Creator of the Universe.



## APPENDIX

1





THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

1  
 一  
 廣重

2  
 二  
 重  
 宜  
 改

3  
 重  
 宜  
 重

4  
 廣  
 重  
 重

5  
 保  
 永  
 堂  
 重  
 林  
 内  
 梓

6  
 廣  
 重  
 筆



7



8

Signatures

Of Hiroshige and Shigenobu—Publishers' Seals:

- 1—(a) Ichi, (b) yu, (c) sai, (d) Hiro, (e) shige, (f) gwa. 2—(a) Shige, (b) nobu, (c) aratamete, (d, e) ni sei, (f) Hiro, (g) shige, (h) gwa. 3—(a) Shige, (b) nobu, (c) gwa. 4—Hiroshige's early signature: (a) Hiro, (b) shige, (c) gwa. 5—Seal of Hoyoedo Takeuchi, on the cover of Tokaido set. 6—(a) Hiro, (b) shige, (c) fude. 7—Monogram seal, Takeuchi, (Take in a circle). 8—Seal of the Publisher, Tsutaya.

THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

子 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup> 丑 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup>

寅 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup> 卯 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup>

辰 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup> 巳 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup>

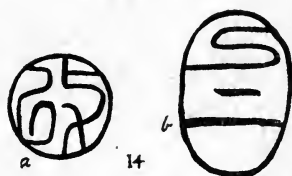
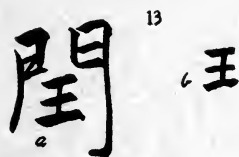
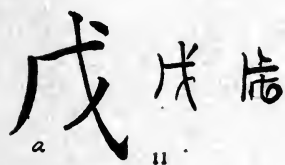
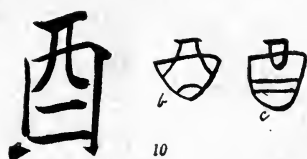
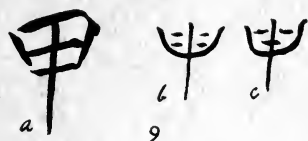
午 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup> 未 <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> <sup>c</sup>

The Twelve Zodiacal Characters

Which appear in the Cycle Ciphers

Ordinary Form	Seal Form	Ordinary Form	Seal Form
1—(a) Nezumi (Rat)	(b, c).	2—(a) Ushi (Cow)	(b, c).
3—(a) Tora (Tiger)	(b, c).	4—(a) Usagi (Hare)	(b, c).
5—(a) Tatsu (Dragon)	(b, c).	6—(a) Mi (Snake)	(b, c).
7—(a) Uma (Horse)	(b, c).	8—(a) Hitsuji (Ram)	(b, c).

THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE



- Ordinary Form*      *Seal Form*  
 9-(a) Saru (Monkey)      (b, c).  
 11-(a) Inu (Dog)      (b, c).  
 13-(a) Uru (Intercalary).  
 13-(b) Abbreviated Form.  
 14-(c) Sei (Ansei) Seal, Dog, 3.  
 15-Hiroshige's Diamond Seal.

- Ordinary Form*      *Seal Form*  
 10-(a) Tori (Cock)      (b, c).  
 12-(a) I (Boar)      (b, c).  
 14-(a) Sei (Ansei) Seal.  
 14-(b) Date-Seal, Snake, 2;  
 (1857, second month).  
 16-Hiroshige's Seal, Ichi Ryu Sai.

THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

菱河吉真衛師宣

1

奥村政信

2

鈴木春信画

3

湖龍齋画

4

寿亭画

5

以舟以笔了年

6

北斎画

7

画狂老人也

8

十侯画

9

清長画

10

Facsimiles

Of the Signatures of the most famous Artists of Ukiyo-ye:

- 1—Hishikawa Moronobu, 1643-1711-13. 2—Okumura Masanobu, 1690-1720.  
3—Suzuki Harunobu, 1747-1818. 4—Koriusai, 1760. 5—Shunsho, died  
1792. 6—Iitsu (Hokusai), 1760-1849. 7—Hokusai, 1760-1849. 8—Gakio  
Rojin Manji (Hokusai), 1760-1849. 9—Hok'kei, 1780-1856-9. 10—Ki-  
yonaga, died 1814.

THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

哥  
磨  
筆

11

豊  
國  
画

12

菊  
川  
英  
山  
筆

13

國  
貞  
画

14

平  
画

15

溪  
英  
泉  
画

16

國  
貞  
画

17

廣  
重  
画

18

廣  
重  
画

19

11—Utamaro, 1754-1806. 12—Toyokuni, 1768-1825. 13—Kikugawa Yeizan, flourished 1810-30. 14—Kunisada, 1785-1864. 15—Yeishi, flourished 1754-1805. 16—Keisai Yeisen, 1790-1848. 17—Kuniyoshi, 1800-1861. 18—Hiroshige, 1797-1858. 19—Hiroshige, 1797-1858.

[79]



# THE HERITAGE OF HIROSHIGE

## AKITSU

FROM time immemorial the Japanese have loved to observe the habits of insects and, of all ephemera in Japan, the dragon-fly is most ubiquitous. Noting the configuration of the province of Yamato, the Emperor Jimmu compared it to a dragon-fly, hence Akitsu-shima is one of the names given to the Empire. Whistler took for his *cartouche* the butterfly and we choose for Hiroshige (the artist from whom he imbibed the Oriental impulse shown in his symphonies and nocturnes) the symbol of the dragon-fly. The imagery of Lafcadio Hearn in his portrayal of the insect suggests a comparison with the master's impressionistic sketches of his country—"flashes of colour continually intercrossing like a weaving of interminable enchantment over the face of the land."

The old brocade designers of Kyoto caught in their looms the sheen of the humming-bird's breast or the butterfly's wing, and the Ukiyo-ye print was named "brocade picture." The poems upon the *tombo*—the modern term for dragon-fly—expressed in a few ideographs, Lafcadio declared could be delightfully imaged with a few strokes of the brush into tiny colour-prints. An additional significance in the comparison of the dragon-fly with our artist is noted, for the Japanese observed that it loved to alight upon common objects—a water-bucket or a stone. "Oh, the dragon-fly; heedless of the flowers, it perches upon a stone," says one of the *hokku* (poems). The print artists (painters of the floating world, loving the drama of everyday life) after artistic flights did not they, too, light upon a water-bucket?

Mr. Happer, commenting upon Hiroshige's early brush name, *Ichiyu sai* (one or lone; obscure room or studio), remarks: "Does the early name contain a hint of obscurity? Then, when he felt worthy to take the prenom of his teacher to 'stand' alone, he took the character *ryu*, to stand upright (*Ichiryu sai*); another interpretation of *ryu* being dragon." The final brush name, *Hiroshige*, means "widespread-importance." The dragon-fly has spread his wings!

*"Kurenai no  
Kagero hashiru  
Tombo kana!*

"Like a fleeting of crimson gossamer threads, the flashing of the dragon-flies."



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