

ANNALS OF FUJI-SAN : AN APPENDIX.

I. **T**HE earliest known references to Fuji San in Japanese literature are to be found in a very ancient and famous anthology known as the *Manyōshū*—‘The Collection of a Myriad Leaves’—published about the end of the eighth century A.D. :—

‘When of yore the Gods did part
 Heaven above from Earth below,
 Lonely in his majesty,
 Fuji, loftily sublime,
 O’er Suruga’s land uprose.
 Oh, the towering peak of Fuji!
 When, with upturned glance, men scan it,
 All the vasty plain of Heaven
 And of Sun on daily path
 All the lustrous light is hidden;
 And of nightly radiant moon
 Not a shimmer may be seen.
 Still round thee shall white clouds hover,
 Scarcely daring stay or go;
 Still the snow shall fall upon thee,
 Ever falling ceaselessly—
 Still shall men the story tell,
 Lofty peak of Fuji-San.
 Of Yamato, the Land of Sunrise,
 It is the Peace-giver, it is the God,
 It is the Treasure.’

On the other hand, one of the latest utterances is the somewhat prejudiced verdict of a recent fat and infuriated traveller whom I found in bed some time ago, on his return from the ascent, on a scorching summer day, and who declared with rather undue warmth: ‘Fuji-yama is a fraud—it is nothing more than a disgusting heap of *humbug and ashes*!’

The fame of Fuji-San was known even in Chinese literature also in very early times. An ancient miscellany, *Gisho Rokujō*, tells of the wondrous peak to the N.E. of the then capital of Japan, “called Fuji, or Hōrai. It is very steep; three sides rise sheer from the sea, and flames and smoke are belched forth from its lofty summit. Many beautiful springs flow down its sides, and these at night ascend again, when sounds

of music may be heard upon it. Here of old once came Jōfuku."

This Jōfuku (in Chinese, *Su Fuh*) was a famous magician of Shantung, who was sent by the Chinese Emperor Shōkō to cross the seas to search for the 'elixir of perpetual youth.' In those days the popular expression of man's natural craving for some assurance of immortality had, in China, mainly degenerated into a fevered and fruitless search for plants and potions whose magic powers could confer it. There are differing legends as to the success of Jōfuku's quest; one is that it may possibly have been attained in the 'Land of Perennial Youth' on the mountain Hōrai, known to us as Fuji-San. Possibly this may explain the fact that the name 'Fuji' is sometimes written with two Chinese characters which signify 'deathless.'

Were Jōfuku, however, to reappear amongst some of the members of the Alpine Club of to-day, I am inclined to believe his search might meet with more certain results. At any rate, I cannot but feel that there are, in the ranks of its senior members, a number whose sustained and perennial activities should go far to convince him that they themselves appear to have succeeded in the quest on which he failed.

Whole volumes have been devoted to descriptions of the manifold perfections of the mountain. In one work entitled '*Fuji-hyaku-shu*' ('A hundred chapters on Fuji'), Keichui has pictured its rugged loftiness, while in '*Fuji-hyaku-ku*' ('A hundred stanzas on Fuji') Tōko has called us to admire it 'hidden amidst gorgeous-hued clouds.' Various proverbs bear witness to its hold on the popular imagination, *e.g.* :

'Even Fuji is without beauty to one who is hungry and cold.'

'Whether the sky be cloudy or clear, the form of Fuji never changes.'

The breezes that blow down from the mountain-top are the breath of its guardian Goddess; the rain that falls on it is her tears.

To dream of a snow-clad Fuji, and above all if with it appear an egg-plant (*nasubi*) and a flight of three cranes, is the height of good fortune.

In modern Japanese literature the descriptions of the charms of Fuji-San are perhaps less poetic, though an exception must be made in the case of a remarkable little volume, published some years ago for the use of visitors to the Hakone district, near the eastern foot of the peak. It is entitled 'A Guide-

Book on Hakone' and was translated by a Japanese writer into what he states to be the 'English that is generally spoken by most of foreigners.'

He warns us that these hill-country views of the great mountain involve a toilsome ascent, but that 'the result of toleration is pleasure.' The first prospect afforded the traveller is when 'the lake of Ashi (Hakone) spreads a face of glowing glass reflected upside-down the shadow of Fuji, which is the highest, noblest, and most glorious mountain in Japan.'

'Whenever we visit the place, the first pleasure to be longed is the view of Fuji mountain, and its summit is covered with permanent undissolving snow. Its regular configuration, hanging down the sky like an opened white fan, may be looked long at equal shape from several regions surrounding it. Everyone who saw it ever has nothing but applause.'

The final inducement offered is that: 'Forty-five houses among whole village are the hotels for *cessation of travellers!*' for whom 'transparent and delicate liquid is constantly overflowing from the vat, and its purity free from defilement so fully values on the applause of visitors as it is with the air.' The liquid here is nothing more harmless than the spring water in which these delightful valleys and hillsides abound.

II. The place of Fuji in the Art of Japan is as unique as it is universal. Each successive season of the year invests it with its own peculiar charm. One great artist devoted nearly fifty separate drawings to the illustration of the beauties of the snow that forms its winter drapery. There is scarcely a single one, of all the applied fine arts of this Land of Art, whose greatest masters have not found some of their highest inspirations in the fascination of its form, its colour, or its numberless and varied charms viewed from land or sea.

It is not difficult to understand why Fuji makes such a universal appeal to the affection and reverence of an artistic and nature-loving people like the Japanese. In spite of the terrors its volcanic activities have inspired in bygone times, there is something wholly friendly and sociable in the way it looks down on the daily labours and the pleasures of the millions of toilers in crowded cities, and on the unceasing, ant-like activities of the country-side of the Thirteen Provinces from which it is seen, revered, and loved.

It was this friendliness of Fuji that appealed to the imagination of Hokusai, the artisan artist of the early part of the nineteenth century, and furnished his nimble fancy with that endless variety of subjects which his brush has portrayed

with such extraordinary skill. The two chief works of his later days are his 'Hundred Views of Fuji,' printed in light tints of black and red, and the 'Thirty-six Views' of the same mountain, mainly in green, blue, yellow, and brown. They afford a striking proof of the originality and capability of the one artist of his time who had the courage to break away from the traditions of the colour-print school of the past and establish himself the leader of a movement entirely novel and revolutionary.

The actual meaning of the title 'Fuji' is most ambiguous. Old Japanese books tell us that for ages after its creation the mountain had no name at all, and to-day the neighbouring country-folk often refer to it with a reverent familiarity simply as *O Yama*—'The honourable mountain.' While it is sometimes written with the two Chinese characters which stand for 'no two,' 'none such,' 'peerless,' it is also occasionally represented by two which signify 'not dying,' 'immortal.'

The word 'Fuji' is probably derived from the Ainu '*push*'—'to burst forth,' and takes one back to the days when the hairy aborigines dwelt in that part of the land, before they were driven northwards by the invaders from the West. Another reminder of them is at hand also at the eastern foot of the peak, for the name 'Subashiri' (one of the most popular starting-points for the ascent) is of Ainu origin. Its meaning is 'steaming earth' and points back to some now vanished *solfatara* such as is found near the base of all the great volcanoes of Japan. Another explanation is that the word is derived from 'Huchi,' the name of the Ainu 'Goddess of Fire.'

III. The actual birth of Fuji-San itself is no less a subject of romantic fancies than its name. In any case it is, from the point of view of geological time, a mere infant of a mountain, an upstart among volcanoes. Japanese tradition tells us it first rose to view in the fifth year of the reign of the Emperor Kōrei (B.C. 285). One night, in the province of Ōmi, the earth opened in a gigantic chasm, forming the Lake of Ōmi (Biwa), while the soil thrown forth was transported some 150 miles to the N.E. and deposited in the province of Suruga, to form in Fuji a cone of perfect symmetry. The comparatively modern excrescence of Hoyei-zan which mars the eastern slope did not appear until centuries afterwards. A curious survival of this tradition is suggested by the fact that, whilst it was once the rule for ordinary pilgrim climbers to fast and mortify the flesh for one hundred days before ascending to worship on the summit, there was a special dispensation in

favour of the men from the province of Ōmi. Since the mountain was formed from the soil of their birth-place, a natural autochthonous affinity with it redeemed them from the need of more than seven days of special preparation.

A shrine on the summit is said to have been dedicated by the 'Emperor' Heijō in A.D. 806 to the presiding divinity, the goddess *Ko-no-hana-saku-ya-hime*, 'The Princess who makes the blossoms of the trees to flower.' The most popular shrine, perhaps, in her honour is that of Fuji Sengen (another of her titles) at Yoshida, the northern 'entrance' to the mountain, which was originally built about 900 A.D. But probably the most ancient of such foundations is really that at Ōmiya, at the southern foot, the starting-point of the Murayama ascent. It is known to the Japanese as *Omote guchi*, or 'Front Entrance.' This was naturally the most convenient way of approach in early times from the ancient capitals of Nara and Kyoto, and would naturally be the first to be honoured with the 'Great Shrine' which its name implies. This is the only direction from which Fuji is viewed as a pointed peak and not as a truncated cone. Between the eighth and eighteenth centuries there are twelve distinct eruptions recorded, and smoke is said to have been seen proceeding freely from the crater as late as the fourteenth century. The latest took place in the winter of 1707-1708, when the crater and mound known as Hōyei-zan were formed.

At the present time steam still continues to issue from various cracks on the east side of the outer rim of the great crater on the top of the mountain, and on my last ascent, in 1914, it was possible to boil an egg in some of them.

On the other hand, within a few hundred yards or so of these, on the level space inside the north of the crater wall, there gushes forth an icy spring of crystal clearness, well called *Kim-mei sui*—'Golden famous water.' Some of the lava streams ejected by the earlier eruptions have flowed for a distance of fifteen miles, as far as to the banks of the Fuji-kawa river beyond Ōmiya. Others have been dammed up against the flanks of the granite hills that encircle the foot of Fuji on the north and west, and in the hollows thus formed there lies the chain of the five lovely lakes that lend the prospect of the mountain on the Kosbu side so much of its charm. Of all the approaches to Fuji, that from Kōfu by the Nagakura-tōge is justly described by Mr. Freshfield as the most charming of the many ways of reaching it, reminding one as it does of a bit of Tyrolese landscape warmed with the colour of

Japanese life and atmosphere. From the summit of the pass one looks over the bright water of these turquoise lakes to the lower slopes of the great pyramid that soars to a height of 10,000 feet above their shores. In early times these were probably but one united sheet of water stretching from north-east to west for a distance of over twenty miles. The surface level of all of them is identical (about 3120 feet), and as it fluctuates simultaneously, some regular subterranean communication probably exists between them. Near Lake Shōji, one of the loveliest of the chain, rises a low, dark hill called Maruyama, at the foot of which several natural ice-caves have been formed by the freezing of the moisture which percolates through the porous lava into beautiful stalactites and stalagmites of ice.

To the south of these caves are several waterfalls of great beauty. The *Shira-ito-no-taki* ('White Thread Cascade'), with the snow-clad form of Fuji as a background, is one of the loveliest in Japan. The stream rushes over the edge or through the face of a semicircular cliff in the lava, in a series of some fifty cascades, into a basin nearly 100 feet in depth. The two larger of these are known as the 'Father' and 'Mother' falls respectively, and the smaller ones form their numerous progeny.

The height of Fuji above the Pacific shore, from which on the S.E. it sweeps upwards in one mighty unbroken curve, is about 12,400 feet.

Experiments carried out on the summit in 1884 by the late Professor Milne suggested that the stability of the upper part of the peak was affected by a strong wind. The movements of the tromometer used there were very much greater than those of another simultaneously observed at Tokyo.

The steepest inclination of the upper slopes is about 35° on the western side. This fact is worthy of note in view of the exaggerated statement of admiring writers whose language is apt to be more picturesque than accurate. Lafcadio Hearn, for instance, speaks of the 'amazing angle' and the 'stupendous pitch' of the slopes on the S.E., and he adds: 'Evidently I am not fitted to climb high mountains. . . . And yet there are people still alive who have climbed Fuji three or four times for pleasure!' Another describes it as a 'stupendous incline which shoots up at a dizzy angle into space.'

Probably, however, the most delightfully comprehensive claim on its behalf is that of a *fuda*, a sort of charm sold to pilgrim climbers who have achieved the ascent: 'Fuji-no-

yama is the origin of all other mountains, and its grandeur equals that of both sun and moon.'

IV. A modern Japanese proverb states that 'there are in Japan two kinds of fools—those who have never once climbed Fuji, and those who have climbed Fuji more than once.'

The distinction, however, of the first ascent by a human being (and of many subsequent ones) is usually claimed on behalf of an ancient and highly-venerated worthy known as En-no-Shōkaku, alleged to have been born in the land of Yamato, the ancient cradle of the Japanese people, in A.D. 688. From childhood he loved to dwell in mountain solitudes, and ultimately founded the sect of *Gyōja* (pilgrim mountaineers) called *Yamabushi*. Their modern descendants one may still meet to-day on some of the remoter sacred peaks. In addition to the usual white garments of the ordinary pilgrim, they wear a kind of tufted stole (*kesa*). The stricter members, under a special vow, march in wooden clogs (*geta*) supported on a single piece, no more than half an inch wide, to avoid the slaughter of straying insects. One, whom I met some years ago, assured me he had thus walked over two hundred miles without killing a single beetle.

As the upward way grows toilsome, the tired climbers chant a curious antiphonal invocation. "*Rokkon shōjō*," gasps one half of the breathless band—"May our six senses be pure." "*O yama kaisei*," comes the fervent response—"And may the weather on the honourable mountain be fine!"

Some years ago, on Ontake San, next to Fuji the most sacred of all the Japanese peaks, I met a pilgrim party whose leader I asked for the reason of the white garments of his order. His explanation was worth recording. 'We wear them to show the mountain gods we have come to worship, that we want to be sincere in heart and upright of life, for without this we know they will not hear our prayers.'

It reminded one of the familiar words of a kindred spirit—"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall rise up in His Holy Place?—Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

The first Englishman to set eyes on Fuji was probably the sturdy and sagacious Kentish pilot, Will Adams, who spent the last twenty years of his life, from 1600 to 1620, mainly in the service of the great Shōgun, Ieyasu.

Will Adams must often have looked out on the glorious view of it over the island-studded waters that wash the feet

of the green hills above Hemi, his Japanese home, where modern Yokosuka now stands.

Kaempfer's 'History of Japan,' published in 1727 (in an English translation by Scheuchzer), contains glowing references to Fuji as *the* 'mons excelsus et singularis' of this land of mountains. "It is incredibly high," he says, "and not unlike the peak of Teneriffe. Poets cannot find words, nor painters skill and colours, sufficient to represent this mountain as they think it deserves."

V. The first recorded ascent of Fuji by any European was that made, by the Murayama route, in September 1860, by Sir Rutherford Alcock, the British Minister in Japan from 1859 to 1862. The expedition of which it formed a part was undertaken mainly for political reasons. He was anxious to ascertain for himself "whether the clause of the treaty giving unrestricted right of travelling to Foreign Representatives residing in the capital was, like so many other official Japanese stipulations, to be regarded as a dead letter to all practical purposes . . . and whether there was any foundation for the never-failing assertion of the (Japanese) Ministers that the country was in an unsettled state, owing to the increased dearness of everything, caused by the sudden demands of foreign trade."

Owing to the severe restrictions on foreign travel outside the limits of the 'Treaty Ports,' it was seldom possible for Europeans to repeat the ascent. But in 1867 a step onwards and upwards was made by Lady Parkes (wife of the famous British Minister to Japan from 1865 to 1883), who achieved the distinction of being the first *woman* to actually climb to the top of Fuji. It is noteworthy that the divinity at whose shrine on the summit some 15,000 now yearly pay their devotions is a feminine one! Yet until quite recently no woman was ever permitted to ascend the peak, and the upward limit allowed them reached, on the Murayama route, no higher than 5000 feet. An imaginary cordon was drawn round the flanks of Fuji, and called *Nio-nin-dō*—'Woman's way,' and beyond it no female might venture. It was, however, a varying thing on different sacred peaks. On Ontake San it reached 8500 feet, while on Tateyama an upright stone at 7000 feet marks it and the place where the wife of the alleged first pioneer of that mountain, disobediently seeking to emulate his feat, was petrified on the spot for her pains.

The ascent of Fuji under ordinary conditions offers no difficulty whatever. The climbing season, which lasts from

the middle of July to the middle of September, is ushered in by a formal ceremony called *Yama-biraki*, or 'mountain-opening,' conducted by the head *Kannushi*, or 'God-guardian,' in charge of the principal shrine. Outside that official period the Goddess of the Mountain is not supposed to be 'at home' to pilgrims, and only disaster is to be expected by the importunate and unwelcome. By a curious coincidence, I have had that experience on nearly every ascent I have made before the *Yama-biraki* had been proclaimed.

Early one July, my wife and I, ascending by the Subashiri route, were not only imprisoned, at a height of 10,000 feet, by a storm which raged on the mountain for three days, but our coolies refused to go to the actual summit, and we had to finish the climb alone in the 'tail end of a typhoon.'

Some years earlier my experience was still more singular. Up to that time practically nothing was known, from the climbing point of view, of the snows of Fuji and the possibilities of ascending them. One lovely morning, early in May, I started with my friends Noel Buxton and H. W. L. O'Rorke from the 'front entrance' at Ōmiya, only after earnest dissuasion and well-meant warnings from the village fathers, policemen, and priests of the Sengen Shrine. No sooner had we and our unwilling *goriki* (mountain porters) reached the lower limit of the forest, and made our bivouac in a broken-down shed, than the promised typhoon broke with appalling violence. We had been warned to 'look out for squalls,' but for the next three days we looked out very little at all. The squalls saw to that. Finally the weather cleared up, and we cleared out. An excellent snow climb of nearly 6000 feet rewarded us, but the coolies, thoroughly unnerved, deserted at intervals on the way to the top, though one hardened sceptic persevered.

The sequel to this ascent, however, was, in more senses than one, something of a 'come-down.'

Our friendly counsellors at the Ōmiya Shrine, from which we had set out, saw us no more, for we traversed the mountain to Gotemba, and did not return. Their kindly solicitude, however, soon rendered us the objects of public concern, and the 'foreign' newspapers forthwith honoured us with the following obituary notice, translated from a well-known Japanese journal, the *Hochi Shimbun* :—

'The two (?) foreigners who started to ascend Fuji with four coolies have not since been heard of. The mountain is still covered with snow as far down as the 5th Station, and, as the summit was hidden in clouds, the visitors were urged

to postpone the attempt. But these foreigners were determined to go. A few hours afterwards the storm burst, dislodging huge boulders and house-roofs. As nothing has since been heard of them, it is feared they have succumbed to the fury of the gale. Even had they taken shelter, cold and starvation must long since have rendered them helpless. Their nationality is unknown, but we surmise that they are British, for the reason that *the people of that nation like to do that which is distasteful to them, and glory in their vigour!*

For those in search of novelty on Fuji, a fine scramble can be had in the great gully known as Ō Sawa, which seams the last 6000 feet of the northern side. The rocks are rough but not difficult, and the views to the N. and W. are grand and extensive. Another pleasant variation, though rarely made by Europeans, is the *Ō Chiū-dō*, 'The Great Way Round.' The track encircles the mountain, roughly speaking, about half-way up, and the walk of eight hours is full of variety and interest.

The most interesting ascent of Fuji in the ordinary summer climbing season is by the northern or Yoshida route. This can be approached from Tokyo either by the railway to Kofu or by the main Tokaido line. In either case, the starting-point at Yoshida is finally reached by a quaint little one-horse tram-car, whose aberrations from the prescribed track are frequent and entertaining. Impending disaster was always to be foreseen, and could usually be escaped by a timely leap. All was taken as a joke, and a willing shoulder to the wheel soon set the car in the way it should go.

It was a little disconcerting, however, at one time, on boarding this kind of vehicle, to be confronted with the official warning, in ostensible English, '*All Parsons who are intoxicated, infected, or lunatics are not allowed in here!*' Still this notice was no more ambiguous or uncomplimentary than another one, near the old Shinbashi railway station in Tokyo. After we had conjointly resisted the call of a local 'Carter Paterson' to 'Leave your luggage with us, and we will send it in every direction,' my wife was confronted with the startling legend over a millinery establishment:—'Clothing of woman tailor: ladies furnished in the upper story.'

On our first ascent by the Yoshida route we made friends on the summit with the guardian priest of the Fuji Sengen Shrine, who begged to be allowed to make the descent of the crater with us. The *ō ana*—'Great Hole,' as the Japanese call it—is about 550 feet in vertical depth, and can be descended either by a glissade of the snow-slope below Ken-

ga-mine, the highest point, or by an adjoining scree. On the flat bottom we found great masses of newly-fallen rock, and in a crevice of one of these a curious white substance embedded. Our friend described this as a great marvel, nothing less, indeed, than 'petrified snow'! Possibly it was really some sort of gypsum, or even chloride of ammonia, which is sometimes found in the cooler part of volcanic fissures and *fumaroles*.

The excitement of getting down into the crater, combined with the exertion of getting up out of it and back to his shrine, quite overcame the worthy *Kannushi*. Before reaching the top he collapsed and I had at first to haul, and finally to carry him the rest of the way on my back. He subsequently presented my wife with the gold medal of honorary membership of some Pilgrim Club of which he was an official, as he said she was the first European lady to descend into the crater and explore its secrets!

From a share of those 'blessings' of Western civilisation which have been acquired by Japan in recent years, her most venerated mountain has, unhappily, not escaped. While the lower slopes of Fuji-San are becoming the haunt of winter ski-ing parties, usually led by Austrian or German devotees, nearly every New Year's holiday now sees some band of Japanese adventurers bent on the achievement of a winter ascent. Few succeed, and of the many failures a large proportion are signalled either by serious accidents or by actual fatalities. The risks are not wholly unrealised beforehand, and a favourite motto for such a company is '*Kesshitai kyōkwaï*'—'The do or die Society.'

But it is in the summer climbing season that some of the less attractive changes most challenge attention, or excite disapproval. On starting our last ascent, again by the Yoshida route, in 1914, we spent the night beforehand at Yoshida itself. The whole village was in a turmoil of excitement, for it was the great *matsuri*, or festival of Sengen Sama. Near the great *torii*, or 'sacred gateway,' in the main street, an enormous silhouette of the mountain was outlined in electric lights, bearing in the middle of it a huge cherry blossom, the symbol of Japanese manly valour. Revelling and drunkenness lasted far into the night—a singular contrast to the rigorous orthodox asceticism which usually preceded the ascent. On our way up the mountain the next day, it was almost possible literally to *smell* one's way from hut to hut along the route. We spent that night at the 8th Station, at 11,000 feet.

Here we found no need to sleep on a bare board floor, surrounded by chattering and snoring pilgrims, and wrapped in an uneasy slumber and flea-infested *futon* (cotton quilts). The new and solidly-built hut boasted a number of separate bunks, like those of the fo'c'sle of a merchant steamer; but the crowning feature of the cabin consisted in a resident policeman and a 'house surgeon.' The duty of the former was to take up the unruly, and of the latter to take down the unfit. The ascent, simple enough in good weather, is altogether another affair in the frequent storms that usher in and close the summer climbing season. On this, my last expedition, I was for the fourth time the victim of the sport, or anger, of the great dragon that is popularly supposed to rule, if not to reign, over the winds and storms on Fuji. The first three typhoons were by way of welcome, the last was Fuji's final farewell to one of her most devoted admirers. All had been smiles and sunshine on the way up. Overnight we had gazed out on the wonderful *Kage-Fuji*—the shadow of the peak cast by the setting sun on the clouds that eastwards veiled the Pacific from view. Later on, when these had dissolved and departed, we caught the lights of Yokohama and Tokyo glimmering like motionless myriads of glow-worms settled on the ocean margin, fifty or sixty miles way. The early morning greeted us with the glorious summit prospect that never fails to fascinate, however familiar. But after mid-day angry murmurs arose as we traversed the peak from north to south. On the top we passed by the spot where, years ago, a party of half a hundred pilgrims found themselves storm-bound and unable to descend. Their frozen bodies were discovered later on just as they had lain down, huddled together for warmth, and waiting for the help that never came.

Close by is the *Sai-no-Kawara*, 'the river of souls,' where many little pillars of stone mark votive offerings to Jizō-Sama, the patron divinity of travellers and little children.

Late in the afternoon we descended to the rest-house at the 2nd Station on the Ōmiya route, a picture postcard of which describes it as the 'Second limited resting-place than Mt. Fuji's front street.' The gale increased in fury during the night, and in the morning we realised that, unless we got a move on at once, we might never move at all. It was with difficulty we succeeded in struggling across the storm-swept moorland to Ōmiya, over tracks now transformed into torrents, against a wind that seemed to blow from all quarters at once and through rain that seemed to rain up as well as down. It

took two days to cover the distance of thirty miles to Hakone, with bridges broken down, railway tracks torn up, and large tracts of countryside flooded deep. In Shidzuoka, forty miles west of Fuji, nearly three hundred lives were lost in the inundations that partly wrecked the town. The toll taken by the typhoon of August 29, 1914, will not soon be forgotten. It was not until long afterwards that I learned of our own unconscious share of responsibility for the disaster.

Ancient tradition, as the Japanese pilgrim guide-books tell us, has always warned travellers against tampering with the rocks on Ken-ga-mine, the highest point of Fuji. From time immemorial violent storms have always been promised as the portion of those who take away the little round volcanic fragments that lie there.

Now, on each occasion my wife has climbed Fuji with me, such storms have been our lot, and, at length, I have the confession that she has never failed to commit that unforgivable crime. She tells me it must be the outcome of some feminine inquisitiveness (I suggested acquisitiveness). In any case it offers a singular comment on—I will not add a justification of—the ancient prohibition of the other sex from ascending the 'Peerless Peak' beyond *Nio-nin-dō*, the limit assigned to them on the upward way.

May I, as I close, once more emphasise one outstanding and significant feature of the Fuji-San of to-day? It offers—beyond any other mountain known—so many startling and suggestive contrasts between ancient and modern ways. Nowhere else does one meet the old and the new jostling one another so violently, without apparent objection or incongruity in native eyes. There, the unromantic materialism of the twentieth century stretches out its hand across a thousand years, and draws the tenth century to its side with all its old-world dreams and communings. Almost at the very door of the most sacred shrine on this holy peak, the post-office banner flutters in the breeze to beckon the tired but triumphant pilgrim to despatch to the four corners of the Empire the picture postcard that shall announce his successful toil. And as at early dawn you turn from a surprised contemplation of the most up-to-date installation of modern meteorology on the crater's edge, your astonished eyes are arrested and held with reverent interest by the shivering limbs and the adoring gaze of some aged pilgrim, whose white-clothed form enshrines the glowing devotion of a primeval worship paid in all sincerity to the splendours of the Rising Sun.