

A HISTORY OF HAIKU

Volume One

R. H. BLYTH



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君の春や

まんざいらく

あら目出たや

物に心得たる


俳諧師には

あらねども

萬歳樂

西行

This is by Saikaku, a picture of Fukurokuju, one of the Shichi Fukujin, 七福神, The Seven Gods of Luck. Fukurokuju, 福祿寿, is the god of popularity, and always has a very high bald head. He is flourishing a priest's hair flapper, *hossu*, as he dances. The inscription says: あら目出たや, 物に心得たる俳諧師にはあらねども, 君が春や, まんざいらく, 萬歳樂. How congratulatory! I am not, it is true, a haiku teacher, who sees a meaning in everything. But it is the Spring of the Emperor, and the music of the strolling comic-dancers, their music!



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A HISTORY OF HAIKU

Volume One

THE HISTORY OF HAIKU
BY WALTER D. M. BELL
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THE AUTHOR
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1954

By R. H. Blyth

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R. H. BLYTH:
A HISTORY
OF
HAIKU

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME ONE

From the Beginnings up to Issa

THE HOKUSEIDO PRESS

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PREFACE

This volume, the first of two, traces the history of haiku from its beginnings in renga to the uncertainties of present-day haiku. Haiku are not very amenable to a chronological treatment. Haiku are moments of vision, and the history of moments is hardly possible. If we were to choose verses which are typical of each poet, it would not be so difficult to make out some sort of development, but if it is the best verses which we select, there must be a sameness throughout, a more or less constant level of excellence in which it is difficult to distinguish one writer from another.

A compromise has been effected by choosing the best of as many writers as possible, thus illustrating the ups and downs of haiku history. The religious naturalism and profound simplicity of Bashō, the versatility of Buson, the artfully artless art of Issa, the objective dryness yet pregnancy of Shiki, and the decadence of all later writers is thus not obscured. A fair number of not first-class verses being inevitably included, the reader, making a virtue of necessity, may actually learn more about the nature of haiku by considering the failures and near-hits rather than the successes.

The translations, as before, are as literal as the English language will bear; there is nothing here even distantly resembling the wonderful "translations" of the Peter Piper book, which again only distantly resemble the originals.

The six volumes include almost all the best haiku up

to, say, 1920, and a number of the best beyond this point. Someone should go to the immense trouble of harvesting the forty odd years between then and now, but speaking personally, and therefore somewhat violently, I feel that very little would be lost if all the haiku of modern times were tacitly forgotten. The world, of which Japan is a part and a microcosm, has set for itself goals totally different from those of Bashō. His Way of Haiku can hardly be said to exist now, for almost nobody walks on it. As a Way, it was in many respects better than that of Taoism, Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism, and so on. Its desuetude is a monument to the stupidity, vulgarity, sentimentality, and unpoeticity of human beings. It makes us view their possible total destruction with equanimity.

R. H. Blyth

Oiso

25 June 1963

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The sketches on the dust-cover are taken from Buson's 俳譜三十六歌僊, made in imitation of the *Sanjuroku Kasen* (仙), the Thirty Six Poetical Geniuses, of waka. There are two lists of these, those living before the 11th century, and those living after. The first consists of Hitomaro to Nakatsukasa, the second of Shikibu to Sei Shōnagon. The *Haikai Sanjuroku Kasen* was published after Buson's death by Rōka in 1799. The thirty six are Kikaku, Ransetsu, Kyoroku, Sampu, Ryōto, Sora, Ranran, Shōhaku, Senna, Riyu, Izen, Yasui, Keikō, 荊口, Chigetsu, Tōrin, 桃鄰, Rōka, Bonchō, Tōkabō (Shikō). Kyorai, Jōsō, Yaha, Rosen, Toho, Hokushi, Masahide, Kyokusui, Shadō, Ensui, 猿雖, Tokoku, Bokusetsu, Otokuni, Etsujin, Taiso, 苔蘇, Jokō, 如行, Seira, Sodō. The usual list begins with Sōkan, Moritake, Teitoku etc., and includes also Gonsui and Onitsura. In his preface, Rōka says that both Bashō and Buson thought of poetry and painting

as being two forms of the same activity, and so Buson made sketches of thirty six haiku poets, writing beside each a representative haiku of each. Hekigodō, by the way, considered this work to be a forgery.

The front cover shows Yasui; the verse is translated in *Haiku*, Vol. 4, p. 63. The "portrait" on the back is of Rosen, with the verse:

本年は本年はとて暮れにけり
Honnen wa honnen wa tote kure ni keru

This Year,
Yes, even this Year
、 Has drawn to its close.

INTRODUCTION

I

HAIKU AND ZEN

Haiku is an ascetic art, an artistic asceticism. Of the two elements, the ascetic is more rare, more difficult, of more value than the artistic. For this reason, Wordsworth remains the least understood of English poets, and has no disciples, or even imitators. Art is something that every woman is born with; every man begins to be a kind of artist when he falls in love. Asceticism is found, it is true, whenever a man gives up pleasure for pain, happiness for blessedness, when for example an athlete makes himself mentally and physically fit for a contest, but the asceticism spoken of here is not a means to an end. It is an end in itself, and therefore cannot be questioned; it cannot be explained or justified. It may seem odd that this sobriety of asceticism should be vitally connected with the piquancy of art. It should be noted however that art tends from life to artificiality, from the simple to the complex, the penny plain to the tuppence coloured, but the art of haiku is as near to life and nature as possible, as far from literature and fine writing as may be, so that the asceticism is art and the art is asceticism. This kind of thing we see in Chuangtse and Hanshan, Thoreau, Wordsworth, and Clare; and also in Bach, Giotto, Eckhart, Spinoza, Socrates, Cervantes, Conrad, and Stevenson; in Bashō and Issa. We cannot divide a certain kind of life from a certain

kind of art, the truth from the beauty. Campion has a somewhat similar experience expressed in,

Great is Beauty's grace,
Truth is yet as fair as she.

This asceticism is the antithesis of vulgarity, and yet there is nothing precious or affected or snobbish or high-brow about it.

The question of quantity and quality is a difficult one. The half is no doubt greater than the whole, but there is a limit to the less the better. Some senryu, or rather, pre-senryu, were of 14 syllables only, 7, 7, for example, from *Mutamagawa*:

惚た方から横にさす傘

The one who loves more
Slants the umbrella over the other.

Haiku is not a truncated or de-tailed waka. It was the first stanza, so to speak, of a very long poem, of perhaps 100 lines, and its potential independence was due to its being the first, and having a season word in it for subsequent stanzas. When however it was composed independently it still had the nature of "a shock of mild surprise," a stab of enlightenment; the haiku poet

Felt throughout this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

What Vaughan says here, in *The Retreat*, is worth considering a little in detail. "Shoots" implies the shortness and strength of the experience, and this shortness corresponds to that of the form of haiku. "Everlastingness" is poetry, and "fleshly dress" points to the essentially

physical, sensuous nature of the experience. Everlastingness is to some extent mental, but the experience is all in the body, and in all the body. What distinguishes haiku from (other forms of) poetry is this physical, material, sensational character, and it might be termed what Buchanan called the pre-Raphaelites, "the fleshly school of poetry," but with no sexual implications. Actually, this absence of sex is a defect in haiku, overcompensated in senryu; it is the sexual element that gives to D. H. Lawrence's nature poetry its especially real and living character. The everlastingness and the fleshliness, unseparated and inseparable, unsymbolic and unsuggestive,—this is the characteristic of haiku. We find this kind of thing most of all in Thoreau, perhaps only in him.

Sometimes in haiku the material and the immaterial, the near and the far, the personal and the impersonal are brought together in too obvious a way:

白露や芋の畑の天の川 子規

White dew;
Over the potato field,
The Milky Way. Shiki

野分止んで鼠のわたる流かな 蕪村

The autumn storm
Stopped blowing:
A rat swam over the stream. Buson

竹縁を團栗はしる嵐かな 子規

The storm
Runs the chestnuts
Over the bamboo verandah. Shiki

In Volume I of this series it was asserted that haiku is an aspect of Zen; that haiku is Zen, Zen directed to certain selected natural phenomena. The choice of subjects is significant, reflecting as it does the character of the haiku poets, their nationality, social position, and world-view. Those things omitted, war, sex, poisonous plants and ferocious animals, floods, pestilences, earthquakes and so on, are all dangerous and menacing to human life. We wish to forget them, and must do so if we are to live our short life in any sort of mental ease.

An old battlefield, wild boars, things shaking in an earthquake, typhoons as merely strong winds,—such things are occasionally treated, but there is nothing of Hemingway about the haiku poets. Zen includes, haiku excludes; here is a great difference between the two. Zen is yea-saying, haiku also, but there is also the nay-saying of an art that avoids ugliness and hate and untruth, that abhors the sentimentality and romance and vulgarity which Zen will view with equanimity.

What is Zen? The following, by Bernard Phillips, is one of the best explanations I have come across so far. It concerns “Zen practice,” but this term is a sort of tautology, for Zen is practice; without practice there is no Zen.

Zen literature abounds in admonitions against seeking Buddhahood by any sort of contrivance. What, then, can it mean to “practice Zen?” Are not *zazen*, *koan* study, *sutra* chanting, etc., all “contrivances?” On the other hand, if all such are to be eliminated, how will the Zen student ever progress from his initially unenlightened condition to a state of enlightenment?

Zen practice is at bottom the act of giving oneself, of entering wholly into one’s actions. As this giving

becomes more and more complete, one's practice and one's life both attain to an ever-deeper degree of integrity and reality. It is not sufficient simply to practice a formal routine. One must enter into the practice and become one with it, so that it is no longer an action performed by a doer who is external to the action. What is decisive is just this *entering in* and not the formal niceties of the practice in and of themselves. To the degree that the doer is divorced from the deed, to that extent is the deed a mere formality, an act of the ego and lacking in the ring of truth. To give up the ego is just to abandon the position of exteriority to one's actions and to be "all there" in them.

Zen practice is thus not a set of operations designed to achieve an external goal. In Zen, the effort and the result are not two different things, the means and the goal are not to be separated, the finding occurs in the very seeking itself. For ultimately, what is sought is the wholeness of the seeker, and this emerges only in the wholeheartedness of the seeking. Whatever specific form the practice may take, it is not the form *per se* which is efficacious, for that is only a mold into which the seeker endeavors to pour himself.

Zen itself is beyond the dichotomy of form and no-form, of contrivance and no-contrivance, of "square" and "beat." A no-contrivance which opposes itself to contrivance is only another kind of contrivance. That is truly uncontrived which stems from the Buddha Heart, that is, from the ego-less union with life. The real task is to achieve this union with life, for only in this way is life transformed from a formality to a reality. This union with life is not accomplished by a revolt against forms, but by an entry into one's actions.

How is this entry into life to be achieved? The only

word of advice is: Do not seek to find out what to do. Every *what to do* is only a general recipe, that is, an abstraction. You will never come into the truth of your own being riding on the back of an abstraction. If you know *what to do*, be sure it is the wrong thing.

If, as a corollary of this, we take Zen to be the essence of all art, literature, music, and worth-activity, we must be able to see at the back of, for example, English poetry and haiku, some form or other of this "entering into the activity." For all the irreconcilable and fundamental differences between the two, they must have the equally fundamental quality of being (the result of) unification, the re-unification of two separate modes of being. In Zen, the doer and the deed are undivided and undividable (though at the same time they are divided and divisible). What corresponds to this unity in English verse, and in haiku?

The essence of English literature, that is, poetry in verse or prose, is that the sound-rhythm-intonation meaning and the intellectual meaning of the (spoken) words are one. From this arises the fact that a poem is not capable of an explanation, which is at best an analysis of the symbolic meaning of the sounds etc., a paraphrase of the thought, and a fusion of the two (really four). English poetry is thus a kind of onomatopoeia, not of the cheap, calculated, Tennysonian variety, where the sound of the word is the sound of the thing, but in which the word is the thing and the thing is the word, spontaneously, naturally, "accidentally."

The theory of the matter is that a thing is not really a thing until it has a word, a spoken word, as its own expression; and a word is not really a word, that is, is



自注

鐘子行

not a poetic word, unless it is part of a thing, the extension of it, the thing heard, the thing speaking. Things without words, and words in a dictionary, have no existence. They are either dead or not yet born. A (real) word does not express a thing. No thing can express another. A (real) thing is a thought-thing, a thing thinking, a thing wording. "I see men as trees walking." Trees are men that can't walk. Thoreau says, "The words of some men are thrown forcibly against you." These words are the men themselves. Thus the 100% entering of the doer into his deed, in Zen, corresponds to the interpenetrability of word and thing in English poetry. "The flesh is made word, and dwells among us."

Haiku have no rhyme, little rhythm, assonance, alliteration, or intonation. It is hardly necessary to read them aloud. It may be in olden times *chōka* and even *waka* were always recited, perhaps to the accompaniment of musical instruments, strings and percussion, but this is mere conjecture. Nowadays, most Japanese can with difficulty understand a spoken haiku. Written in Chinese and Japanese characters it is grasped by the eye rather than by the ear or mouth. There is therefore, as said before, not much onomatopoeia, even of the ordinary kind, though we may find some striking examples in Buson.

In haiku, the two entirely different things that are joined in sameness are poetry and sensation, spirit and matter, the Creator and the Created. The coldness of a cold day, the heat of a hot day, the smoothness of a stone, the whiteness of a seagull, the distance of the far-off mountains, the smallness of a small flower, the dampness of the rainy season, the quivering of the hairs of a cater-

pillar in the breeze—these things, without any thought or emotion or beauty or desire are haiku.

Zen and (European) poetry and haiku and senryu have all a sameness, in that two opposite things, or things of different categories are united in one. They all have a difference, in that it is different things that are united. The schema is this:

Zen	:	Doer is deed
Poetry	:	Word is thing
Haiku	:	Meaning is sensation
Senryu	:	Enlightenment is illusion

In the beginning was the Actor, not the Act, as Goethe mistakenly says; the Word. To avoid materialism, we may say that the action is an extension of the actor, the thing is an extension of the word, *mayoi* of *satori*, sensation of meaning. But they are all hens and eggs really. One does not come before the other in time, or in essence, or in value. But yet the actor and the act, the thing and the word, enlightenment and illusion, meaning and sensation, are all two things, not one. The hen is not an egg; the egg is not a hen.

II

ANIMISM

The essence of all nature poetry is animism (more exactly, animatism), the experience that each thing is "alive," not merely animate or inanimate. Indeed God is The Great Animist, or Animiser, "for unto Him all live."

Animism is thus the essence of divinity and therefore of humanity. Further, we are most human when we realise that not only stones and trees and gods are alive, but even human beings are. The highest point a man can reach is to know that he himself is not merely alive, but 'alive.' What is meant by 'alive'? It means having a direction, a purpose, a will. Things want. Things love, as Shelley tells us, following and transcending Plato and Dante. There is also the animism of place of D. H. Lawrence, the "spots of time" of Wordsworth, and the inveterate tendency of the human mind to personify the very abstractions they have separated from human beings possessing these qualities.

Animism is of course at its best when silent. When explicit,

And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes,

it is a rational expression of something poetical. It is not poetry, it is not the thing living, and talking, but only one thing chattering about another. By primitive man and a child ("thou best philosopher") animism is taken for granted. It cannot be despised in them as a superstition, for it is not something taught or learnt. On the contrary, as Wordsworth tells us in the *Immortality Ode*, this 'aliveness' of all things becomes overlaid by and confused with the aliveness and unaliveness taught and learned later. The function of the intellect is to distinguish between unalive and alive, but it has an additional and more important work, to mark the difference between 'alive' and alive. 'Alive' is absolute; it has no contrary, —other than the non-perception of this 'aliveness,' which

simply means that it is only the living who can know what 'living' is, for "the dead know not anything." What is lost by education (and how much this is Thoreau tried to teach us) must somehow be regained. The intellect perceives the loss, and points to the cause and prescribes the remedy. Christ and Plotinus and Eckhart; Traherne, Vaughan, Blake, Wordsworth, Clare, and D. H. Lawrence; and more indirectly Homer and Cervantes, Bach and Mozart, help us to return to Nature, that is, to our own nature, which is, as the most living thing in a living universe, to live in its life.

The animism of haiku is hardly ever explicit. There is little personification. But the Shintō belief that the sea is "a mighty Being," that the mountain is a god, is not far from Vaughan's stones that are "deep in contemplation." Unlike the stones of Jerusalem, however, they would never go so far as to "cry out." So with Bashō's animism, as when Homer says the sun rises or the moon sets, "we can hardly detect the enthusiasm of the bard."

Japanese literature as a whole, and haiku in particular, has no mysticism in it. In Japan, the Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation confirmed the intuitions of the early Japanese. Animals and plants and senseless things were not merely "senseful" but our poor relations, even, it may be, our own father or mother. Taoism was animistic to a superstitious (shamanistic) degree. Confucianism, a yet stronger influence in Japan, as providing something lacking in the Japanese character, loved ritual rather than living creatures, and affected only the already unsavably unpoetical people.

The Japanese, not in any case a nation of philosophers,

never thought over the question of "the pathetic fallacy." Even nowadays, the dilemma is too intellectual, that is, too remote from ordinary, animal existence, to arouse interest. Is the foam cruel and crawling, as Kingsley said, or pretended that it was, and as Ruskin said it was not? Or, a different problem, was it Kingsley's mind that was cruel and crawling, and the foam just air bubbles? The answer is that the sea is alive; it loves and hates; it moans, it has many voices. But these words are not dictionary words, and the sea is not kind sometimes and cruel sometimes. It is never kind, and never cruel. But it is always 'kind,' always 'cruel,' always 'kind-cruel.' Wordsworth speaks of the "unutterable love" of ocean and earth. "Unutterable" does not mean "which cannot be uttered." It signifies that this love is the real thing that even we feel sometimes, in the midst of our loving and hating, attraction and repulsion.

When Japanese, that is to say, poetical Japanese (decreasing in number and also in Japaneseness) read a haiku, their standard of judgement, by a combination of heredity and environment, is as follows. Positively, the haiku must express a new or newly perceived sensation, a sudden awareness of the meaning of some common human experience of nature or man. Negatively, and more importantly, the haiku must, above all things, not be explanatory, or contain a cause and its effect. Even in the case of the all-too-famous *Furu-ike ya*, the sound of the water is not a consequence of the presence of a pond, and the jumping in of a frog; these are not even antecedent circumstances. The old pond is there; it exists in its own right, and has intrinsic value, as we see by the particle *ya*. The jumping in of the frog is grammatically

adjectival, so that the sound of the water is not consequent, either in reason or in time, upon the jumping in of the frog. Both are coexistent, that is, coeternal. The old pond continues in time; the jumping in and the sound of the water are timeless. Or we may say, conversely, that the silence of the old pond continues timelessly, whereas the sound of the water is as a bubble upon that river of silence. This mystical and also mystifying atmosphere is due to the absence of thought, the transcendence of cause and effect, but a Japanese reader of haiku is far from aware of all this. He simply rejects intellectual components as "not haiku" instinctively. Moral elements are also rejected as being generalities. Thus haiku has nothing to do with the Good, the True, or the Beautiful. There is nothing good, true, or beautiful about the sound of the water of the pond which this frog jumps into.

An English reader (poetical, and decreasing also in numbers and quality) of English nature poetry appreciates the richness of the verse, its overtones, the meaning-sound of the words, the physico-spiritual dancing, the heightening of his sensitivity to the significance of the whole and its parts, and of their interrelation. The more beauty the better. Morality, if subsumed into the topic and unseparated from it, as it is not in

He prayeth best who loveth best
The things both great and small,

is an enrichment of the verse. Intellectuality, in the same way, something for the mind to meditate on, is an additional attraction. Haiku is in danger of excessive purity. Devoid of beauty, intellectuality, and emotion, it may easily fall into triviality. English poetry may wallow, in a

Wagnerian manner, in a mass of emotion and words, with Keats and Hopkins, or involve itself in abstraction and ethics, as in Shelley and Browning. To say that the best parts of English nature poetry are those most like haiku would be too cruel, too provoking, perhaps even untrue, but the reverse is not a fact. Haiku is at its best when it is simply Wordsworthian, that is, Wordsworth at his most simple, "a sort of thought in sense." It is at this point that haiku and English nature poetry coincide.

Last of all, it is necessary to state with some vehemence that haiku is not symbolic, that is, not a portrayal of natural phenomena with some meaning behind them. In *Haiku and Haikai*, published by the Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai in 1958, and in which the present author is said to be one of the (minor) collaborators, it asserts that "most contemporary haiku poets believe that haiku is symbolistic, that is, it seeks to represent ideas and emotions by indirect suggestion, and to attach a symbolic meaning to particular objects." It is then stated that Bashō held this theory, and the following quotations are given as evidence, from the *Sanzōshi*, *Zoku Goron*, and *Yamanaka Mondō* respectively:

When our master told us to learn about the pine-tree from the pine-tree and about the bamboo from the bamboo, he meant that we should transcend self and learn. . . . To learn means to submerge oneself into the object until its intrinsic nature becomes apparent, stimulating poetic impulse.

Every form of insentient existence—plants, stones, or utensils—has its individual feelings similar to those of men.

Make the universe your companion, always bearing

in mind the true nature of all creation—mountains and rivers, trees and grasses, and humanity—and enjoy the falling blossoms and scattering leaves.

Bashō is declaring his belief in animism, the origin and basis of all religion and poetry. He is saying that each thing is, not has, infinite value. There is no separation between the thing and its meaning, no finding “the universal in particular natural objects or human beings,” not “an awareness of something infinite and eternal of which they are the symbols.” One thing is not used to imply another thing. A single paulownia leaf falling is not a symbol of autumn, any more than the gleaner and the winnower, the reaper and the wine-presser are symbols in the *Ode to Autumn*. These people are autumn. No autumn, no falling leaf; no falling leaf, no autumn. And to the poet they are not parts of the season; each thing is the whole season.

III

NATURE IN JAPANESE LITERATURE

A view of nature which is not utilitarian or scientific, in other words which is not nothing at all, is a poetical view of some kind. Literature itself, which is poetry in verse or prose, is a view of nature, the nature which is in man no less, and no more, than it is in the outer world. In *A Week on the Concord* Thoreau says that literature must be as natural as nature itself:

As naturally as the oak bears an acorn, and the vine

a gourd, a man bears a poem, either spoken or done.

Thus the above title should be: *Nature is Japanese Literature.*

Omitting the climate, topography, and all the other physical environmental factors, very important no doubt, but somehow not very interesting, and therefore not very important, we may say that the Japanese view and the English view of nature were the result of the innate character of the two races, and the influence of other cultures upon it. In the case of Japan, the influences are two, Indian, and Chinese; Korea influenced Japan greatly in sculpture and pottery. It should be noted in passing that the Indian, Korean, and Chinese cultures were already to a great extent blended when they reached Japan.

The aboriginal Chinese view of nature was no doubt like that of the Japanese and the English and the Indian,—an instinctive animism, but in China this feeling that all things are equally alive developed not only into shamanism, as elsewhere, but into the Taoism of Laotse and Chuangtse, in which all nature palpitates with life, and yet has philosophical implications for the thoughtful mind. With them, Taoism became a lofty yet homely mysticism, the object of life being a re-union of microcosmic man with the macrocosmos. How? Laotse answers, with Wordsworth, "Let nature be your teacher!"

Confucianism, on the whole anti-poetical, appealed to anti-poetical Japanese. Confucius loved music, and poetry perhaps, and believed no doubt that his principles of conduct for man were "natural," but he seems to have had little interest in Nature for its own sake. In the *Analects* it is written,

子在川上日，逝者如期夫，不舍晝夜。

Standing by a stream, Confucius said, "Never ceasing, it flows on and on like this!"

but this kind of poetry was appreciated by the Zen poets of Japan.

The Buddhism which went to China was late Buddhism mingled with a Hinduism that was both pre-Buddhistic and post-Buddhistic. Primitive Buddhism was apparently a pedantic, moral, repetitious, unpoetical, non-religious affair, and could have had no effect upon the Chinese or Japanese people worth affecting. Hinduism was a different matter. Its all-soul-ism, contrasted with the no-soul-ism of early Buddhism, fitted in perfectly with the vague pantheism and explicit animism of primitive Shintō. Actually, as we see in the *Upanishads*, the Indian hermits of a millenium before Christ went beyond the animism of primitive man, by which man is a body-spirit among other, and all other, body-spirits, to a realisation that each man is himself The Body Spirit. "You are It." What Laotse and Chuangtse had found out by thinking, the ancient Indians discovered by practice. It was two thousand years before the Chinese Zen monks did the same thing again, in their own way.

Late Buddhism, with its doctrine of the Void, which has a remarkable correspondence in existentialism, made man not Everything, as in Hinduism, but Nothing, not the negative nothing of primitive Buddhism, but something positive, from which all things exfoliate. In this Nothing, all things are equal, because infinite. In this Silence, all things speak. We are not superior to nature, nor yet inferior to "it," but of one substance with it.

The most direct influence upon Japanese and the Japanese view of nature was of course Chinese poetry, though Chinese painting must also have had a great effect. The prevailing tone of Chinese poetry is that of a melancholy subjectivism; there is no Wordsworthian joy. The Chinese poet sees himself in nature, or sees nature separated from himself, but himself is always there. Coleridge says in *Dejection*, "Lady, we receive but what we give," and this is true of all but the deepest poetry. In the *Manyōshū*, allusions to nature are very frequent in the *chōka*, longer poems, but it is not easy to find a whole *tanka* (*waka*) devoted to nature only. The following is an example, by Ōtomo Yakamochi, composed about 750.

夏山の木末の繁にほととぎす
鳴き響むなる聲の遙けさ

The cuckoo calls
Among the leafy tree-tops
Of the summer mountain,
Far, far-off
His echoing voice.

In a *chōka* by the same poet, written in 747 we see the animism (animatism) of the Japanese of Manyō times. Speaking of Mount Futagami, in Toyama Prefecture, the poet says:

神故やそこば貴き、山故や見が欲しからむ

Is it because it is a god it is so sublime?
Is it because it is a mountain it is so delightful
to see?

Bashō read such verses in the *Manyōshū*; he read the

Chinese poets, the greatest of them all perhaps, Tōenmei, who ends one of the most famous of his poems with the lines:

此中有眞意, 欲辨已忘言.

In these things (of Nature) there is a deep meaning,
But when we try to express it, we forget the words.

Could Bashō remember the words which Tōenmei forgot? Could he write something which should be beyond words, or, better still, *before* words? The answer is the following:

ひやひやと壁を踏まへて晝寝かな

A noon-day nap;
Pressing the feet on the wall,
How cool!

This may seem an anti-climax; indeed, it is. It is coming back to earth (the wall is made of earth) with a thud, but it is also doing what Wordsworth did, looking at the rocks, the valleys, the mountains, only looking,

nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.

Bashō's verse has no interest unborrowed from the soles of his feet. It is the poetry of "pure" sensation. More than a hundred years after Bashō, Crabbe has *his* anti-climax to the beauties of *L'Allegro* and *It Penseroso*:

Here on its wiry stem, in rigid bloom,
Grows the salt lavender that lacks perfume.
Here the dwarf sallows creep, the sept-foil harsh,
And the soft slimy mallow of the marsh.

Wiry, rigid, salt, lacks, dwarf, creep, harsh, soft, slimy,—

with these words Crabbe teaches us something never taught before. Just as Bashō has no emotion, and Wordsworth no thought, Crabbe has no beauty; all three have only poetry, only nature.

IV

THE ENGLISH VIEW OF NATURE

The "original" English view of nature has been affected by Christianity, and by Greek, Latin, French, and Italian cultures. The Anglo-Saxons, as far as the monkish transcribers inform us, seem to have been quite different from the Manyō Japanese. The poetry, the nature they wanted and willed and chose was that of danger, winter, solitude, of a bareness and bleakness that comes out again, after a thousand years of Mediterranean allurements to flowers and sunny skies, in the early Wordsworth, and Hardy always:

the dark waves,
The sea-birds bathing, spreading their wings,
Rime and snow falling, mingled with hail.

Buddhism deepened and saddened the life-loving Japanese of the 6th century. Christianity had a sentimentalising and deadening effect upon the English view of nature. According to orthodox Christianity, the enemies of God and man are "the world, the flesh, and the devil." Nature belongs to the first two, and perhaps also to the third. God is infinitely above us; animals are infinitely below us. The Japanese view is still that of the author of *Beowulf*.

Grendel is part demon, part man, part bear, or rather, not part, but one thing with three aspects; three things with one name. By the time we get to Milton, animals have no connection even with one another:

Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl,
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape.

These lines are quoted with disapproval by White of Selborne. Having no souls, animals have no value or meaning or poetry. Often useful, sometimes ornamental, always dangerous, nature is something to escape from. The Mediterranean cultures were all man-loving, nature-hating. To come across lines in Greek and Roman literature which show a poetical understanding of nature is a rare thing, and all the more a happy one. In *A Week on the Concord* Thoreau quotes the following from Virgil:

Now the buds swell on the joyful stem . . .

The apples lie scattered everywhere, each under its tree.

The first of these, in its animism, is reminiscent of Keats' "Oh, happy, happy boughs!" and the second of a haiku by Buson:

白露や茨の刺にひとつづつ

White dew on the bramble,
One drop
On each thorn.

Though the effect of the view of nature (if such it may be called) of the Mediterranean nations on that of the English was pernicious, with the notable exception of Hebrew (religious) literature, it may be said that by reaction it helped to produce the mysticism of Herbert,

Vaughan, Traherne, Blake, Wordsworth, and Shelley. The *Auguries of Innocence* says:

He who the Ox to wrath has moved
Shall never be by Woman loved.
The wanton Boy that kills the Fly
Shall feel the Spider's enmity.

The first two lines state that women (really) love only men that (really) love living creatures. This is true in my experience. The second two lines are less moral and psychological, and more mystical. The cruel man suffers the fate of the spider; the sin *is* the punishment.

The truly religious attitude to nature, which is the religious attitude *of* nature is seen in the following line of Vaughan:

For stones are deep in admiration.

Very different, and yet the same is Bashō's verse written in spring at Nikkō:

あらたふと青葉若葉の日の光

Ah, how glorious
The young leaves, the green leaves,
Glittering in the sunshine!

The leaves share in Bashō's admiration.

Thoreau's attitude is always religious; on the death of his dearly beloved brother John:

Soon the ice will melt, and the blackbirds sing along the river which he frequented, as pleasantly as ever. The same everlasting serenity will appear in this face of God, and we will not be sorrowful, if he is not.

This has the same meaning, the same tone as the con-

clusion of *The Matthew Passion*, which is Bach's view of Nature.

The moral attitude to nature is especially English; we cannot find anything in Japanese literature like Tennyson's "nature red in tooth and claw," or Arnold's *Morality*. Or we may say that the morality of nature is taken so much for granted by the Japanese that it is completely implicit, "for Nature cannot err." The intellectual, which means the scientific or philosophical aspect of nature, is also absent from Japanese literature. There is no Gilbert White, Darwin, Bates, or Hudson in Japan.

The aesthetic attitude, the idea that Beauty is truth, truth Beauty, was largely that of the Japanese poets up to the second half of the 17th century. In English literature, however, in Anglo-Saxon poetry, *Piers Plowman*, Chaucer, Skelton, the metaphysical poets, Swift, Burns and so on, ugliness was seen as more meaningful than beauty, but it has never been really firmly grasped and explicitly stated that ugliness is closer to poetry than beauty, just as the sinner is more religious than the good people Christ did not die to save. This paradoxical fact the Japanese people discovered-created in *senryu*, where the weakness and folly and hypocrisy of mankind are seen as more interesting, that is, more poetical, that is, more human than its greatest virtues. However, *haiku* are often as devoid of beauty as the lines quoted before of Crabbe. An example is the following by Shiki:

海士が家に干魚の匂ふ暑さかな

In the fisherman's hut
The smell of dried fish,—
Ah, the heat!

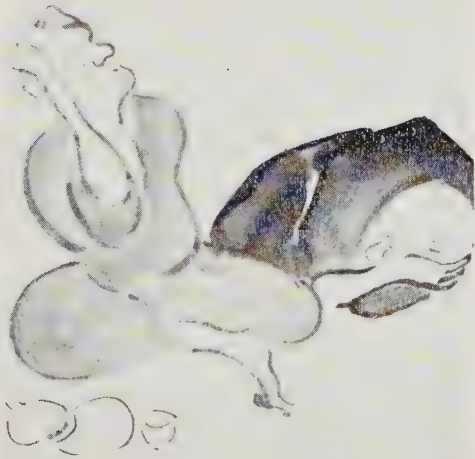
一、月夜に
くさくさ

うた

うたは
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The unique contribution of Japan to world culture was their poetry of sensation; we find it everywhere in English poetry, but not in isolation. An example from Wordsworth:

Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and bill
Wetting, that drip upon the water still.

The beauty of the swan, or the lake, is not the point here.

The emotional attitude to nature is found in waka, but not, strictly speaking, in haiku. Emotion is certainly a value (love, by the way, is not an emotion; it is another name for the religious value.) Coldness of heart is as inhuman as lack of brains. As Kierkegaard said, "It is impossible to exist without passion," but haiku seems to omit it, or rather, digests it completely into the sensation.

Humour is latent in every good haiku; its lack in Milton is perhaps only apparent. Underneath all the majesty there is some sort of pretence. We know it is really all a play, a comedy. It is not our world, whole and complete, but only a part of it. Man is the spectator and the actor in this drama, but, as Emerson says, Nature bites her lips as she watches the antics of her puppets. Sometimes, but this is rare, the doll glances back at the Puppeteer, and they wink at each other.

The animistic value is the most important of all. It is for lack of this that the world is dying, almost dead. An interesting, well-known example of animism from *In Memoriam*:

Thy voice is on the rolling air;
I hear thee where the waters run;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

A dead man is alive, as alive as the lifeless sun. We may compare this to a remarkable verse by Bashō, also on the death of someone he knew:

塚も動け我が泣く聲は秋の風

Shake, O tomb!

My weeping voice

Is the wind of autumn.

English nature poetry comes to exist when nature speaks with the voice of the poet; when the meaning of the words is the sound of the words, and the sound is the meaning. This is a sublime onomatopoeia, and it is to be heard also in haiku. However, English (nature) poetry is strongly physical; one may call it sexual. Examples from Keats, with true onomatopoeia:

Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves . . .

And full grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn . . .

Waka also are such beautiful things in beautiful words which are the things speaking, but haiku are ordinary things in ordinary words. Further, haiku is both more physical and more spiritual than the lines of Keats quoted above. More physical in that it goes back to the sensation; more spiritual in eschewing beauty and morality and thought. Or shall we say that they are so latent as to be hidden from the intellectual eye. To be compared and contrasted with Keats' lines, a verse by Buson:

地車のとろと響く牡丹かな

The heavy wagon

Rumbles by;

The peony quivers.

In haiku the words are less important than the sensation—of size, of heaviness, of strength, and of weakness—that gave birth to them, that hardly existed however as a cause until the effect arose. From the expression we go back to the impression, and, as Tōenmei said, forget (the words of) the expression.

John Clare is the greatest English *nature* poet, just as Wordsworth is the greatest English *nature poet*, but he struggles in vain against the words of the grammar book, of the publisher, of English literature, which smother him as completely as Desdemona was smothered by Othello's passion. But perhaps it is after all a good thing. At the end of a poem, *Insects*, Clare says that they

Are fairy folk, in splendid masquerade
Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid,
Keeping their merry pranks a mystery still,
Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

V

HAIKU IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Haiku being the poetry of sensation, ideally speaking what happens is this. We receive, or create, a sensation, a mere sensation, almost entirely physical and mechanical. It then becomes humanised, and at this stage is called in Zen, *dai-ichi nen*, 第一念. To this are added emotions, and then thoughts, and more emotions and more thoughts, so that we get *dai-ni nen*, 第二念. Haiku is *dai-ichi nen*, but is not mere description, just photography. One of

the worst things in the world is mere sensation smeared all over with emotion and thought, as in *The Family of Man*. An example of this in English poetry is Tennyson's famous line:

The moan of doves in immemorial elms.

The same sort of thing in an equally famous haiku:

夏草やつはものどもの夢のあと

The summer grasses,
All that remains
Of the warriors' dreams.

On the other hand, Japanese haiku is sometimes weak because, though it does not add human emotion to poetical sensation, it does not add the human will to the will of nature.

The poet may speak of himself, if it is in the same "sensational" way. Wordsworth does so in the following:

I wandered, lonely as a cloud,
That floats on high o'er vales and hills.

This is haiku because the poet sees himself as a cloud, a kind of *unsui*, 雲水; sees that he is a cloud, until all at once he sees something else,

A crowd, a host of daffodils,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Then the third haiku comes much later, after he has returned home, after he has done no work, and when he is lying idly on his couch:

My heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

The sensation of floating in the sky, the sensation of the "jocund" dancing of the daffodils, and the sensation of his own dancing with "pleasure" together with the daffodils,—these are all tending to emotion, but somehow avoid it. Poetic joy is not an emotion, any more than real love is, and this we see in other lines of Wordsworth:

The one blasted tree,
And the bleak music from that old stone wall.

Haiku avoids the two most interesting parts of human life, war and sex. For this reason, Burns' best lines are not haiku (he is full of *senryu*):

My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Burns here expresses his genuine feeling, his thoughts as he watches woman in the arms of nature. Mary is at her most beautiful, Burns at his most moral; it is a kind of religion of sex. But what the haiku poets discovered, though it was never put into words explicitly, was that poetry is not thought, is not emotion, is not beauty, is not morality, is not religion, but something else. And if thought and emotion and beauty and so on are considered by someone as desirable, then we may say to such a person, "Seek ye first the kingdom of poetry, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Haiku has so far been taken to be equivalent to poetry, but what is the difference between haiku-like English poetry and un-haiku-like poetry? What is the common element, if any, in the poetry of Homer and Kalisada and Bashō? Is there such a thing as POETRY, something which

fills, and bounds, connects, and equals all?

As suggested above, haiku is the poetry of meaningful touch, taste, sound, sight, and smell; it is humanised nature, naturalised humanity, and as such may be called poetry in its essence. Sappho's famous verse,

Evening Star, that bringest back all that lightsome
Dawn hath scattered afar, thou bringest the sheep,
thou bringest the goat, thou bringest the child home
to the mother . . .

is not haiku, because of the personification of the star; the pathos of the child, who does not know what takes him home; the grandeur of the conception. In haiku the child is seen as a child, the star as a star. There is no attempt to bring them together, at least in a serious way. Man has no dignity, nature no majesty. A small, nameless hill is better than Mount Fuji, best of all when "half-hidden from the eye." Haiku is the counterpart in literature of "He who would be master of all, let him be a servant."

It may be asked, how can we distinguish between mere objectivity and poetry, if thought and emotion are in both cases omitted? The answer is that we feel it in the choice of words. An example from Crabbe:

Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silken leaf.

The harvest of corn is thin, and half-withered, but the weeds, like the soft hairy mallow, grow triumphantly in this sandy soil. The alliteration and the onomatopoeia (on l and m, in the second line) are also remarkable. We see the same in the following, also by Crabbe:

Beneath an ancient bridge, the straiten'd flood
Rolls through its sloping banks of slimy mud.

It might also be asked, how about waka in English

literature? The difference between waka and haiku is not merely that of length, at least of physical length. Waka is spiritually more expansive, and aims at beauty rather than poetry. So Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* are close to waka, or rather renga, though sometimes to haiku as well:

Oft on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar.

In the history of English literature we find the haiku spirit everywhere but often mixed with other elements more or less consciously omitted by the Japanese haiku poets. In *Beowulf* we have lines such as:

Thence the welter of waters washes up
Wan to welkin when winds bestir
Evil storms, and air grows dusk,
And the heavens weep.

This is the drearier aspect of nature beloved of the haiku poets, but there is a lack of sobriety, a dramatic element caused by and the cause of the alliterative form, that makes it, from the haiku point of view, a little false. It lacks "the modesty of nature" that should be seen even in a typhoon. Much closer to haiku is the following from the 8th century *Seafarer*:

Storms there the stone-cliffs beat.
There them the starling answered, icy of wings,
Full oft the eagle screamed, dewy of wings.

Coming to the Middle English Period, the famous *Cuckoo Song* is almost pure haiku:

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!

“Sumer” here means rather spring. The important thing to notice is the imperative. Poetry is never merely indicative. The will of the poet is the will of nature, and every poetical sentence must have to some extent an imperative meaning. The word cuckoo itself is poetry, for the word is the thing. The cuckoo is its voice. When a cuckoo cuckoos we always have poetry. But how seldom does a human being human-be!

Chaucer sees nature only as a background for human life, and this goes for all the poets up to Sydney and beyond, but in the same century we have mystical writings that could have been the basis of haiku poetry, for example from *The Book of Privy Counselling*, apparently by the same author as *The Cloud of Unknowing*:

Let Him be only that He is as He is, and make Him
no otherwise. Seek no farther in Him by subtlety of wit.

This mystical attitude to God is the haiku poets' attitude to nature.

In the same 14th century again we find two lines in *Winner and Waster* which may be paralleled in haiku:

So sounded the rough streams,
And reached so high,
That it was nighing night
Ere I nap might,
For din of the deep waters
And clamouring of birds.

A poet of the next century, who recently has become famous again, John Skelton, has many lines that are akin to haiku and senryu, for his verse, as he says himself,

“hath in it some pith.” Of his mistress’s sparrow he writes like Issa:

Sometimes he would gasp
When he saw a wasp;
A fly or gnat,
He would fly at that;
And prettily he would pant
When he saw an ant;
Lord, how he would pry
After the butterfly!

A hundred years later Alexander Montgomery has a poem about the nightingale, which, when read with the Scotch pronunciation, has the onomatopoeia which every good haiku should also have, especially with regard to (singing) birds:

Thy chivring chirls whilk changingly thou chants,
Makes all the rockes round thee ring.

Passing by Shakespeare and all the Elizabethan poets, we come to two Englishmen who if born in Japan would have been haiku poets, Herbert and Vaughan. In *Affliction*, Herbert writes:

I read and sigh, and wish I were a tree,
For sure then I should grow
To fruit or shade.

Again in *Employment*:

O that I were an orange-tree,
That busy plant!

Vaughan has the same feeling of the secondary importance of human beings:

A feather or a shell,

A stick, or rod, which some chance brings,
The best of us excel.¹

Especially in *Etenim res creatae exerto capite observantes expectant revelationem Filiorum Dei* (Romans VIII, 19) he not only repeats Herbert,

I would I were a stone, or tree,

but asserts that animals and plants and stones also have a sense of God, and await the coming of Heaven on earth.

Cowper, in the 18th century, realised how poetic the trivia of life may be; he has a great deal of what is called in haiku *jinji*, human affairs. Some of Cowper's lines are haiku because of the pure sensation conveyed:

The poplars are fell'd; farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade.

Here sound and coolness and light and straightness are expressed concretely, in two lines. However, Cowper's most charming lines, for instance

The squirrel, flippant, pert, and full of play,

and so on, are not haiku because they are, for all their aptness and humour, mere pictures, like those of Milton with his larger brush.

It is with Thomson's *Seasons* (Winter was first, in 1726) that spring, summer, autumn, winter really enter English poetry as subjects. Thomson is too general for haiku, though we have such lines as:

And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps awkward.

We should not forget that Pope also, in spite of his poetic

¹ *Early Death.*

diction and dislike of wild nature, taught his countrymen some things they needed to know, for example:

Is it for thee, the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings!

And Gilbert White, the naturalist, writes of the swallows:

I could not help being touched with a secret delight . . . to observe with how much ardour and punctuality those poor birds obeyed the strong impulse towards hiding.

Burns says, in one of his letters:

I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the mild cadence of a troop of grey plovers in an autumn morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry.

He states, without knowing he does so, that the love of nature is religion, and that religion is poetry; these three things are one thing. This is the unspoken creed of the haiku poets. However, when it becomes explicit, as in Blake and the later Wordsworth, and often in Shelley, like every creed and every dogma it has a stultifying, fossilising effect. In fact, one may say that the better the belief the more harmful, since it is the more difficult to disprove, and reprove.

Crabbe is the first English nature poet to realise that Nature is not, or should not be, pretty, that the positive ugliness of a hippopotamus is far more meaningful, that is, poetical, than the negative beauty of a butterfly. One more example to add to those given before; Peter Grimes' haunt:

Where the small eels that left the deeper way
 For the warm shore, within the shallows play;
 Where gaping mussels, left upon the mud,
 Slope their slow passage to the fallen flood.

Haiku poetesses are only fifth class, but Dorothy Wordsworth is superior to her brother in some ways, in modesty, minuteness, and warmth. From the *Journal*, May 6th:

The birch tree is all over green in small leaf, more light and elegant than when it is full out. It bent to the breezes, as if for the love of its own delightful motions.

Of Wordsworth it is not really necessary to say anything. *To the Cuckoo*, *The Glow-worm*, *The Green Linnet*, *A Poet's Epitaph*, *To My Sister*, and a dozen others are full of the spirit of haiku and nothing else. Even to the loose pebble along the highway he "gave a moral life," but he does not usually fall into moralising about nature. In the poetry of Wordsworth and that of haiku there is this seemingly unimportant but deeply significant common element; that the most ordinary people, those to whom Buddha preached and for whom Christ died, are able, if they will, to understand it.

Shelley's poetry has in it, in spite of his philosophising, an aspect of the Zen that is at the bottom of all haiku. Shelley's Zen and his point of contact with oriental ways of thinking come out clearly when we compare a phrase of Palgrave's, "Shelley's wayward intensity," with the "direction" of Chinese expression which Spengler says we see "in free hither and thither wandering that nevertheless goes to the goal." But the best and the last of the English nature poets is John Clare. The following,

the final verse of *Autumn*, is three haiku:

The feather from the raven's breast
Falls on the stubble lea;
The acorns near the old crow's nest
Drop pattering down the tree;
The grunting pigs, that wait for all,
Scramble and hurry where they fall.

It would be wrong not to mention Thoreau here. His poetry is wooden, but *Walden* and *A Week on the Concord* are haibun if not haiku, in many places. He has always and everywhere, in every sentence, something that is essential to haiku, that is, humour. For example, from Sunday, in the *Week*:

The meadows were a-drinking at their leisure; the frogs sat meditating, all Sabbath thoughts, summing up their week, with one eye out on the golden sun, and one toe upon a reed, eyeing the wondrous universe in which they act their part; the fishes swam more staid and soberly, as maidens go to church.

There were elements in the character of Keats which prevented him from writing much haiku poetry. For him, the object of life was a combination of love, fame, and poetry, though sometimes

on the shore
Of the wide world alone I stand and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

Even poetry, if pursued too vehemently, will shrivel, or worse still, putrify, for this "poetry" is too much a matter of words, of trying to find the best word, instead of being satisfied with the right one. This we always feel, even in lines that are haiku-like:

a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all
And hides the green hill in an April shroud.

Clouds do not "weep." "Fosters" does not harmonise with "droop," and the word "shroud," with its most unsuitable associations of death, is used for the rhyme. In the Buddhist *Ode to Melancholy* we have the transitoriness of life ("Beauty that must die") and the identity of opposites ("in the very temple of delight, Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine"), but it is in *Meg Merrilies*, his least typical poem, that we see the spirit of haiku, above all the spirit of Bashō:

Her brothers were the craggy hills,
Her sister larchen trees;
Alone with her great family
She lived as she did please.

No breakfast had she many a morn,
No dinner many a noon,
And, stead of supper, she would stare
Full hard against the moon.

Where are love, fame, and poetry? In an unambitious sonnet, *On the Grasshopper and the Cricket*, we are reminded of the many good haiku on this subject in several lines:

He has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The last three lines of the *Ode to Autumn* are perhaps the best, the purest of all:

and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Tennyson is no good. Arnold is too interested in himself, Browning in others. Whitman froths too much, Ruskin is too self-conscious, Meredith too high-faluting. Richard Jefferies gushes, Coventry Patmore and Francis Thompson also. In the last hundred years, the nearest to haiku are Hardy and D. H. Lawrence. Hardy's novels contain passages of haibun, objective and lovingly exact, but without meaningless minutiae. They have humour, homeliness, warmth, and precision:

The little birds in the hedges were rustling their feathers and tucking themselves in comfortably for the night, retaining their places if Oak kept moving, but flying away if he stopped to look at them.

Lawrence is too subjective for haiku; he hates so much in nature and will not resign himself to it, but the depth and intensity of his seeing into the life of things makes us wish to claim him as at least a heretic in the faith.

Through the open door, stealthily, came the scent of madonna lilies, almost as if it were prowling abroad. The moon was melting down upon the crest of the hill. It was gone; all was dark. The corncrake called still.

Just for good measure here are a few more examples of haiku in English literature put into the three-line form:

Hills of sheep,
And homes
Of the silent vanished races.

O lovely lily clean,
O lily springing green,
O lily bursting white!

Where the quick sandpipers flit
 In and out the marl and grit
 That seems to breed them, brown as they.

Heavily hangs
 The holly-hock,
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

The long day wanes:
 The slow moon climbs:
 The deep moans round with many voices.

While in a quiet mood
 Hedge-sparrows try
 An inward stir of shadowed melody.

The fair breeze blew,
 The white foam flew,
 The furrow followed free.

Enough examples have been given to show that even where English haiku lack a season word, when they are too long, or have too many adjectives, or tend to morality or emotionality or philosophy, they have something in common with Japanese haiku. This common element is sense in thought, thought in sense; the thought is not mere thought, but the thought subsumed in sensation; the sensation is not simply sensation, but the sensation involved in real thinking, that is, poetical thinking. When they are divided or divisible, when the word and the object, the man and the thing are in any way separated or separable, no poetry, and especially that of haiku in any language, is possible.

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Chapter I

RENGA

It is not easy to know where to begin the history of haiku, the poetry of the seasons. Perhaps it should be with the creation of the world, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted with joy. At least it must begin with the coming to Japan of the primitive Japanese. Whether it was the people from the south or those from the north, no one will ever know who brought the poetical faculty with them, and found in the well-defined seasons a four-fold pleasure in nature itself, a pleasure that was childlike, useless, artistic, religious, objective, unsentimental, unromantic, unphilosophical, like that of the early Wordsworth,

An appetite, a feeling and a love
That had no need of a remoter charm
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.

The impression we get from the *Kojiki*, the *Manyōshū*, haniwa and other archeological remains is that of a happy-go-lucky, sensuous, nature-loving people, easily excited, lacking both passion and intellectuality. Life is always a form of renunciation, renunciation of one good for another, and the primitive Japanese had to learn to be complicated before they could be truly simple, melancholy before they could really laugh; we must worship many false gods before we can know the true one. It was no doubt Buddhism that brought about this oblique result. Buddhism

was originally severely and strictly moral, and the Japanese were not, and are not so. Buddhism had a wonderful philosophy and psychology. Japanese people still dislike both. Buddhism was other-worldly, the Japanese are the reverse. However, it should be noted that the Hinduism which had mingled with the (late) Buddhism that was brought to Japan was most acceptable to the potentially pantheistic and already animistic Japanese of the 6th century A. D. (The same thing happened in the case of orthodox Christianity, which was a "carrier" of Near-eastern mysticism to the potentially spiritual and already poetical Germanic nations.)

The *Manyōshū* contains three kinds of verse, *chōka*, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, . . . 7 syllables; *tanka*, 5, 7, 5; 7, 7 syllables; and *sedōka*, 5, 7, 7; 5, 7, 7 syllables. The alternation of five and seven syllables had its appeal to the ancient Japanese partly perhaps because the repetition of 5 and the repetition of 7 expressed the regularity of nature, and the alternation of 5 and 7 its irregularity. It should be compared for its world view with the rhyme, tone, and regular number of characters in Chinese, the head-rhyme of alliteration, the rhyme, rhythm and fixed number of stresses in modern English verse, the long and short vowels of Greek and Latin verse.

In the Heian Period, 794-1185, *tanka* (or *waka*) was the favourite form of the aristocrats, the only practitioners of verse, but from the end of it *renga* became popular. *Renga* is important because it is the origin of *haiku*, and because it continued to be composed for the next eight hundred years, side by side with the later *haiku*. *Bashō*, *Buson*, and *Issa* were teachers of *renga*; it was their art and their livelihood. *Renga*, linked verse, was a continuous chain of

alternating 21 and 14 syllable verses, each independently composed, but connected in various ways with the foregoing (and following verse). The origin of renga itself is said to be the composition of a single tanka by two persons a nun, and Yakamochi. The verse is given in the *Manyōshū*:

さほ川の水せき入てうゑし田を
 かる早飯はひとりなむべし

The rice-field is sown
 By damming and leading
 The Saho River;
 The early harvest
 Should be eaten by him¹ alone.

The nun wrote the first three lines, Yakamochi the last two. Renga are found in the *Gosenshū*, (1), and in the *Zukushikashū* (17). At this time they were called tsugi-uta, "joined-songs"; they became known as renga from the time of the *Kinyōshū*, 1127. During the reign of the Former Emperor Gotoba, 1186, two poets Sadaie and Sadatake made renga of 50 and 100 verses, and decided the rules of it. It was a kind of game, with the words moon, cherry-blossoms, maple leaves, snow, and so on, as the materials.

Already in the 12th century there appeared in renga the two schools which characterise other spheres of Japanese culture, the serious and the playful. Some of the renga teachers favoured humour, wit, and puns; their works were called kyōrenga, literally, "mad" renga, but

¹ The man who dammed the river, and led the water into the rice fields.

meaning “light” renga; and their school was called Kurinomoto-no-shū. The ordinary renga-makers belonged to the Kakinomoto-no-shū. The words *mushin*, 無心, and *ūshin*, 有心, were used in the same way. *Mushin* refers to wit and humour, and was considered to show insincerity as contrasted with *ūshin* poems, those with deep emotion and beauty as their object. Interestingly enough, haiku developed from the *mushin* school, or to put it in another way, the *ūshin* Bashō was warm-hearted enough, that is, “clever” enough, to retain the humour that the Pharisees of poetry rejected.

Neither the *ūshin* nor the *mushin* people were either as serious or as comic as they should have been, but there is an interesting anecdote concerning their rivalry during the reign of the Emperor Gotoba. At the Minase Palace, the poetic section, there was the Ūshin-Mansion, and the Mushin-Mansion, with a garden between them, a large pine-tree in it. One fine day, when a breeze was blowing, Jichin Oshō of the Ūshin-za composed and sent the following verse to the Mushin-za.

心あると心なきとが中にまた
いかにきけとや庭の松風

Between “With-Mind”
And “Without-Mind,”
The pine tree breeze!
How do you want us
To listen to you in the garden?

Muneyuki-kyō replied;

心なしと人のたまへと耳もあれば
きゝさふらふぞ庭の松風

People say
 We are "Mindless,"
 But we have ears all right,
 So we listen to the breeze
 In the pine tree of the garden.

This is the spirit of haiku. Whether we have a "heart" that is, an aesthetic faculty, or not, we may and must listen to things with our ears, and look, as Wordsworth says, steadily at the object with our eyes.

In the 1st volume of this series, pages 126-144, there is an account given of renga, or renku, which need not be repeated here, and a translation of *Hatsushigure*, The First Winter Rain, composed by Bashō, Kyorai, Bonchō, and Shihō (or Fumikuni). There is a tradition probably, I should think, fabricated, that the first hokku to become independent of renga is the following, by the Emperor Horikawa, 1087-1107, in the *Tsukubashū*:

黒男黒戸のかたに音すなり
Kuro-otoko kurodo no kata ni oto su nari

The flautist "Kuro-otoko"
 Played the flute
 Near the Kurodō.

The Kurodo was part of the Palace, to the North, perhaps called "Black Door" because near the kitchen. Kuro-otoko means "black man," and the only point, if any, of the verse is this feeble pun. Dainagon Tsunenobu and Toshiyori visited the Emperor, but made no waki-ku, second verse, so the hokku remained isolated and in fact became a haiku, since it was not the first of a series. It is not known when haiku first began to be written but

possibly at the time of the Emperor Gotoba. The following are example of very early haiku (continuing to be called hokku, wrongly, up to the time of Shiki).

散る花を追ひかけて行く嵐かな
Chiru hana wo oikakete yuku arashi kana

The storm
 Goes pursuing
 The scattering blossoms.

This is by Fujiwara Sadaie, 定家, 1162-1241, a poet and the son of a poet, Toshinari. His verses are found in the *Hyakuninisshu* and the *Shinkokinshū*. The haiku is rather animistic, and represents the blossoms as fleeing from the wind in the manner of Shelley.

遠山は雪ふる雲の絶え間かな
Tōyama wa yuki furu kumo no taema kana

A rift in the clouds,
 Whence snow falls
 On the distant mountains.

This was written by Senjun, 専順. It is hardly distinguishable from an average verse of the post-Bashō period.

Returning to the history of renga, we now come to the change from renga to haikai (-renga), or playful linked verses. The reasons for the change were as usual various and blended, social, cultural, and personal. By the end of the 16th century a middle class had been formed between the warrior class and the artizans and farmers, one described a hundred years later by Saikaku. After people have got money, they like to decorate and disguise it with art or music or poetry, and haikai renga suited these wealthy

people. Renga was dying of repetition and inanition. The only thing to put some spirit into it was humour; puns, proverbs, satire, parody, paradox, far-fetched allusions, vulgarity, eroticism,—poetry has always needed them in some form or other to prevent stagnation into aestheticism and artificiality. Two poets, Sōkan, 1465-1553, and Moritake, 1473-1549, were the originators of the haikai renga that was the immediate origin of haiku. (The period corresponds, in English literature, to that of Surrey and Wyatt, but the flowering of this poetry was much slower in Japan than in England).

Haikai means sportive and playful, not solemn and serious. The word is used in the classification of verses in the *Kokinshū*, A. D. 905. It corresponds somewhat to Wordsworth's "Poems founded on the Affections."

Chapter II

SŌGI

Sōgi, 宗祇, 1421-1502, was the renga poet who formulated, in the *Hakuhatsushū*, published in 1564, the necessity for a definite season in renga, and in this sense might be called the (inadvertent) father of haiku. At this time, the middle of the Kamakura Period, the Ūshin school was in the ascendancy, but later, under Sōkan and Moritake, the Mushin School with its colloquialisms and free-and-easy attitude became popular. Sōgi is thus not quite in the direct line of haiku, for his renga are high-toned and elegant. He was a monk of the Risshū Sect, a calligraphist, a tea-man, and a painter, and in fact was almost too poetical and artistic to be human. Hence perhaps the dearth of information about him. Among other pen-names he assumed the name of Shizensai, 自然齋, and travelled around Japan in a way that foretold the life of Bashō. In the *Azuma Mondō*, 吾妻問答, he stresses the importance of *kokoro no tsukeai*, 心の付合, that is, for renga poets to enter into each other's feelings as they write their linked verses, and to make word-play secondary to this. In *Oi no Susami*, 老のすさみ, he says that if the matter and form are like two wings of a bird, that is, equal in value, this is best, but if we choose between them, the matter is more important.

For the history of haiku, Sōgi is important as powerfully assisting the tendency towards the independence of the hokku. He wrote many hokku, that is to say haiku,

besides renga, while on journeys, which did not lend themselves always to the writing of renga. We are more alone on a journey, even with others, than at home. He is the forerunner of Bashō in his love of loneliness, and his feeling that poetry is the expression of "moments of vision." He lacks, however, the "human warmth" which Bashō had. There is the same difference between for example Jonson and Shakespeare, or Dryden and Johnson.

Sōgi died at 82. At the beginning of *Oi no Susami*, "The Comfort of Old Age," he had written:

Already I am sixty years old. The waves of death beat on my shore, but unlike Confucius my ears do not yet obey me. Wantonly I have spent my life with the flowers of spring and the moon of autumn, awaiting the dew of the morning and the winds of night. The dew-drop of my life trembles on the tip of the leaf,—how much longer? Not thinking of the life to come, not doing my duty (as a monk), I grieve that I have been attached to the things of this world.

The following are selected from *Shizensai Hokku*, published a few years after Sōgi's death. It contains about 1600 verses. They are all elegant and refined, the product of a mind like that of Emerson's humble bee,

Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet.

雲に雁谷にをしなく山ぢ哉
Kumo ni kari tani ni oshi naku yamaji kana

A mountain path;
Wild geese in the clouds,
The voice of mandarin ducks in the ravine.

This is like a Sung painting. Do the geese also cry?

とくちるもまたれし花の心哉
Toku chiru mo matareshi hana no kokoro kana

Making us wait so long,
 Yet falling so soon,—
 The soul of the cherry blossoms!

Have the cherry blossoms a soul? We dare not deny it, otherwise we shall be landed in mechanism and automation.

道芝の朝露はらう柳哉
Michi-shiba no asa-tsuyu harau yanagi kana

The willow-tree
 Brushes the morning dewdrops
 From the grasses along the path.

This is almost too beautiful for haiku.

夏きぬと嵐な告げそ山櫻
Natsu kinu to arashi na tsuge so yamazakura

Stormy blasts!
 Do not tell the wild cherry
 That summer has come.

In the mountains the wild cherries have at last bloomed. He does not want the strong winds of late spring to blow them away.

みる人の旅をし思へかきつばた
Miru hito no tabi wo shi omoe kakitsubata

O irises!
 Think of the journeys
 Of the those who see you!

These flowers by the stream, under the bridge, are they indeed indifferent to the admiration of the people who pass by?

五月雨ははれてもいくか水の聲
Samidare wa harete mo iku ka mizu no koe

The sound of the water;
 Are the summer rains
 At an end?

Up to this time the only sound was that of the rain. Now the sound of running water is heard; the rain is over, perhaps.

月おつる朝しほはやし夏の海
Tsuki otsuru asashio hayashi natsu no umi

The moon is setting;
 The morning tide flows fast;
 The summer sea.

There is nothing to add to this, the perfection of nature in the early morning.

くれずとも雨こそ夕窓の秋
Kurezu to mo ame koso yūbe mado no aki

Not yet evening,
 But with the rain,
 It is a window of autumn.

Autumn and evening are closely and deeply related. Here rain takes the place of darkness.

うすくこくそめよ梢の秋の露
Usuku koku some yo kozue no aki no tsuyu

Dye the sprays
Dark and light,
Dews of autum!

This belongs to what Wordsworth calls "Poems of the Fancy."

萩もまだしらじ深山の秋のこゑ
Hagi mo mada shiraji miyama no aki no koe

The lespedeza,
In the recesses of the mountains,
The voice of autumn as yet unheard.

This animism belongs also to waka. The voice of spring we know well, but autumn also speaks to us. "Thou hast thy music too."

こほる夜は梢ををしのうきね哉
Kōru yo wa kozue wo oshi no ukine kana

A freezing night;
On the boughs
The mandarin ducks sleep fitfully.

Another hokku on the same subject:

夕霜にひまなきをしの羽をと哉
Yū-shimo ni hima naki oshi no haoto kana

Frost at night;
The ceaseless sound of the wings
Of the mandarin ducks.

Both verses are equally good, and remind us a little of John Clare.

夜の雨を今朝ふりかくす木葉哉
Yo no ame wo kesa furikakusu konoha kana

The leaves of the tree
 That fall this morning
 Hide the rain of last night.

This is a simple observation, but well worth making.

松やしる待し心の雪の庭
Matsu ya shiru machishi kokoro no yuki no niwa

The pine tree knows
 The mind of him who pines
 For the snow in the garden.

This is too thin for haiku, but not for hokku. A verse which shows Sōgi's deep relation with Bashō:

世にふるもさらに時雨のやどりかな
Yo ni furu mo sara ni shigure no yadori kana

Passing through this world,
 We shelter as we may
 From the winter rain.

This verse is based on a poor waka by Nijōin Sanuki, 二條院讃岐, in the *Shinkokinshū*:

世にふるは苦しきものを眞木の屋に
 やすくも過ぐる初時雨かな

Passing through this world,
 Painful things are like
 The first winter shower
 Easily passing
 Over a flimsy house.

Sōgi's verse has not the light-heartedness of the waka. It was written in the so-called age of chivalry, which means brutal ambition and suffering all round, but it nevertheless belongs to the beauty half of haiku, just as those of Sōkan, and Moritake, and later Kikaku, and later still Karai Senryu belong to the realism half. On the one hand we must keep ourselves from the world, and guard carefully our "fragile air of life"; this is what Sōgi does. On the other hand, we need the mud and blood of life, the unresolvable contradictions, the comic, the free-and-easy. This latter was to be supplied by the haikai renga poets.

Both before and during the time of Sōgi hokku were being produced in increasing numbers. For example, in the *Tsukubashū*:

見し花の面影うづむ青葉かな
Mishi hana no omokage uzumu aoba kana

The flowers I gazed at
 Have been swallowed up
 In the green leaves.

This is by a monk, Zenna, 善阿法師. The following is by another monk, Gusai, Zenna's pupil, 救濟法師:

鳴けばこそ名は残りけれ郭公
Nakeba koso na wa nokorikere hototogisu

It sings!
 And the name "hototogisu"
 Remains among us.

By the same author:

冴ゆる夜は風と月とに更けにけり
Sayuru yo wa kaze to tsuki to ni fuke ni keri

A clear, cold night,
 With wind and moon;
 Later and later it gets.

These hokku are haiku in their independent content.
 Other hokku by Sōgi's contemporaries:

水たまり梅ちる庭の眺かな 宗 砌
Mizu-tamari ume chiru niwa no nagame kana

Petals of the plum
 Fallen in the puddles:
 A garden scene. Munemigiri

名も知らぬ小草花咲く川邊かな 智 蘊
Na mo shiranu ogusa hana saku kawabe kana

Its name all unknown,
 A weed flowers
 By the side of a stream. Chiun

Chapter III

SŌKAN, MORITAKE

Sōkan, 宗鑑, 1458-1546, was born of a samurai family. From an early early age he attended on the Shōgun, Ashikaga Yoshihisa, 1465-1489 a man of character and proficient in both military and cultural arts. His father was Yoshimasa, who after the end of the civil war of Ōnin, built Ginkakuji, and patronised religion, literature, and so on. Yoshihisa died of illness during an expedition against Sasaki Takayori, at the age of 25. Sōkan, who had been his favourite, and was of the same age, realised the transiency of human life and renounced the world, after the manner of Saigyō. Bashō was later to imitate him in devoting himself religiously to poetry, though he did not, like Sōkan, become a monk.

The matter is not clear, but Sōkan seems to have been the inventor of haikai renga, a "popular" form of the renga whose rules were too complicated for ordinary people. Sōkan himself lived a most simple life in a hermitage called Taigetsuan. At the end of one year, looking round his bare and cheerless room, he wrote:

年くれて人物くれぬ今宵かな
Toshi kurete hito mono kurenu koyoi kana

The year draws to its close;
Nobody gives me anything,
This evening.

Sōkan puns here on *kurete*, "come to an end," and "give."

Besides, there is here a frankness and self-understanding that was to run all through haiku and emerge in senryu as a penetrating and formidable realism. Sōkan is also a precursor of senryu rather than (the Bashō type of) haiku in the following:

寒くとも火になあたりそ雪佛
Samuku tomo hi ni na atariso yuki-botoke

Cold you may be,
 But don't warm yourself by the fire,
 Buddha of snow!

When we read such a verse as this, we remember that Sōkan did *sanzen* with Ikkyū, who influenced him very much in his making haikai witty and humorous. An example of the opposite kind of thing, filial piety:

竹の子のふときも親のめくみかな
Takenoko no futoki mo oya no megumi kana

When bamboo sprouts
 Are big, that too
 Is the grace of our parents.

A more poetic verse:

風寒し破れ障子の神無月
Kaze samushi yabure-shōji no kannazuki

The wind is cold;
 Through the torn paper-screen
 The moon of October.

One day, when Sōkan was about to leave Kyōto for Banshū, that is, Harima Province, Sōgi wrote the following hokku:

忘るなよ連歌の點と播磨鍋
Wasuru na yo renga no ten to harima nabe

Do not forget
 The points for renga
 And Harima saucepans!

“The points for renga,” were the Indian ink marks made by the brush to show that the verse was approved. Sōkan replied to this hokku, adding the *wakiku*, “side-verse,” or second verse:

いづれか墨のつかであるべき
Izure ka sumi no tsukade arubeki

On both of them
 Must be the black.

There is a kind of pun on *sumi*, which means both Indian ink and soot, but they are the same in essence anyway. Sōkan sees and brings out the connection between the “points for renga” and “the Harima saucepans.” This perception of the sameness in difference and the difference in sameness is of the essence of poetry, of humour, of science even, and Zen goes so far as to declare that sameness *is* difference, and difference *is* sameness.

Another example of this seeing the hidden relations of things is the following. Sōkan wrote:

六十三はうしろにぞなる
Rokujū-san wa ushiro ni zo naru

Sixty-three is behind me.

This means that he is more than sixty-three years old; the verse following is:

高野には紫竹を笈の脚にして
Kōya ni wa shichiku wo oi no ashi ni shite

For Mount Kōya,
 A portable altar,
 Whose legs are made of *shichiku*.

Shi-chiku is a kind of bamboo, but *shichi-ku* means seven, nine, which makes sixty three. Also "legs" refers to the legs of an old man of sixty-three on a pilgrimage to Mount Kōya, the home of the Shingon Sect.

うづき来てねぶとに鳴くや時鳥
Uzuki kite nebuto ni naku ya hototogisu

{Coming in the *Fourth* Month,
 {Coming *forth* to throb,
 {Crying with a *swelling* voice,—
 {Crying at the *swelling*,—
 The cuckoo!

Uzuki, 卯月, means April, and painful throbbing. *Nebuto*, 音太, is a big voice, and also a boil, 根太.

We may say that haiku (hokku) had to fall (from the elegance of waka) into this kind of (poetical) vulgarity, before it could become the poetry of things as they are, things which are as naturally humorous as the above verse is so artificially.

にがにがしいつまで嵐ふきのたう
Niganigashi itsumade arashi fuki no tou

How I rue the bitter barb
 Of the storm that stalks
 Over the stalks of the rhubarb!

The original is: “Bitter, bitter; until when the storm
 {blows } stalk.” “Bitter” applies to both the rhubarb
 {rhubarb’s} and the poet’s aversion to bad weather. *Fuki* is both
 “blows,” and “rhubarb.”

I do not have such a low opinion of this kind of thing as most critics. Puns adumbrate the identity of (apparently and really) different things. What is the universe but a playing with things by the Word of God? Poetical puns do not lack the philosophical doctrine of correspondencies which we find in Cowley, Donne, and the other “meta-physical” poets. Both Buddhism and Taoism asserted that all things are one. Sōkan’s death-verse is well-known:

宗鑑は何處へと人の訪うならば
 ちと用ありてあの世へと言へ

If someone asks,
 “What’s happened to Sōkan?”
 Say,
 “He’s gone to the next world
 On some business.”

This verse, which should perhaps be called a *kyōka*,¹ reminds us of Milton’s sonnet on Hobson, the Oxford carrier; Death had

Shewed him his room where he might lodge that night,
 Pulled off his boots, and took away the light:
 If any ask for him, it shall be said,
 “Hobson has supp’d, and ’s newly gone to bed.”

Sōkan had the boldness to put verses like this in the *Inutsukubashū*:

¹ There is also a pun on *yō*, business, and *yō*, world.

霞の衣裾は濡れけり
佐保姫の春立ちながら尿をして

The skirts of the clothes
Are wet with mist;
Princess Saho,
When spring begins,
Makes water.

Princess Saho, the goddess of spring, wets her skirts when she makes water, as the spring rain. Besides this there are verses humanising, not to say debunking Buddhas and gods; for example:

ほとけも喧嘩するところ聞け
釋迦はやり彌陀は利劍をぬきもちて

The Buddha also will quarrel,—
This you should know!
Shakamuni can't control himself;
Amida draws
And holds out his sword.

There is an artistic Fall of Man as well as a moral (religious) one. A mediaeval verse says, of Adam and the apple:

Ne hadde the appil take ben,
The appil take ben,
Ne hadde never our lady
A ben hevене quen.

In the same way if haiku (in its potential form of haikai renga and hokku) had not fallen into vulgarity, mere word-play, parody, unreal poeticality, excessive simplicity, sententiousness, and epigrammaticness, and even some-

times pantheism and religiosity, Bashō could never have resurrected it into something different from all these, yet not entirely excluding them. The work of Sōkan and Moritake was thus to bring down renga and hokku from the height to which Sōgi had raised it, *too far*, to a level above which Bashō had to raise it, until it should become

not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food.

Moritake, 守武, 1472–1549, who was eight years younger than Sōkan, was a Shintō priest in the service of Ise Shrine throughout his life. A man of learning, he was also a skilful renga poet, but he tried, as did Sōkan, to infuse a different life into this old form. It should be noted that many poets of this time wrote in both ways, the elegant and the free. Once Moritake was at a renga meeting held by Sōgi, in which all the participants were monks, and he composed the following:

御座敷を見ればいづれも神無月
Ozashiki wo mireba izure mo kannazuki

Looking at the room,
All of those present
Are October.

The English translation means nothing at all. In the Japanese there is a pun on *kami*, 神, which comes in 神無月, God-absent month, and *kami*, 髪, hair. In October all the gods meet at Izumo, and thus they are absent at their respective shrines. The humour of this is to be compared with Hood's poem, entitled *No!* The next verse is:

ひとり時雨のふる鳥帽子着て
Hitori shigure no furu-eboshi kite

One only wearing an old priest's cap,
 Winter rain falling.

Here *furu* is both "fall (of rain)" 降, and "old, 古." The month is when the first winter rain falls. The following are other characteristic verses of Moritake.

青柳の眉かく岸の額かな
Aoyagi no mayu kaku kishi no hitai kana

The green willows
 Paint eyebrows
 On the brow of the hill.

Moritake to Bashō is literature to poetry, is Thomson to Wordsworth. The comparison of the willow tree with the female form is a "literary" one. It is, and always was from the beginning, an attempt to stimulate jaded minds. We find it in Hakurakuten, quoted in the *Wakan Rōeishū*; and in *Makura no Sōshi*.

飛梅やかろがろしくも神の春
Tobi ume ya karogaroshikumo kami no haru

The flying plum-tree,
 Lightly, lightly,—
 Spring of the Gods!

This verse is based on the story of Sugawara Michizane who loved the plum tree of his garden so much he composed this waka:

東風吹かば匂おこせよ梅の花
 あるじなしとて春な忘れそ

When the warm east wind blows,
 Smell sweetly,
 O flowers of the plum!
 Though your master be not there,
 Forget not the spring!

The tree is said to have followed him to Anrakuji Temple in Fukuoka. *Kami*, 神, god, is punned with *kami*, 紙, paper, which flies lightly. Moritake, himself a (Shintō) priest, put this verse as the first one, hokku, of his collection *Moritake Senku*, "A thousand verses of Moritake," because he wished to sing of and praise the gods.

散る花を南無阿彌陀佛とゆふべかな
Chiru hana wo namuamidabutsu to yūbe kana

The cherry blossoms
 Falling, scattering:
 An evening of Namuamidabutsu.

Poetry is religion, but verse is not theology. We experience in this haiku the fact that (aloof) nature and (pious) man are closer than we supposed.

花よりも鼻にありける匂ひかな
Hana yori mo hana ni arikeru nioi kana

The sweet smell
 Is not so much in the flower
 As in the nose.

Hana, meaning both nose and flower, has been used as a pun from ancient times. Moritake, like all the pre-Bashō poets, more or less, went from this extreme of word-play to the following extreme of sweetness:

あかつきの秋時雨かなあはれかな
Akatsuki no akishigure kana aware kana

In the early dawn
Oh, the autumn raindrops!
How poetical!

There are several poems said to be his death verse. One of them is:

朝顔に今日は見ゆらむ我が世かな
Asagao ni kyō wa miyuran waga yo kana

My lifetime;
Today it may appear
Like the morning-glory, alas!

Chapter IV

TEITOKU AND THE TEIMON SCHOOL

Teitoku, 貞徳, 1570-1653, said to have been an infant prodigy, was born of a samurai family, but received from an early age a literary education. He learned waka and renga from many famous teachers, especially from Hosokawa Yūsai, who one day said to him, "If poetry were more popular in this country, you would be famous." To this Teitoku replied, "I am glad it is not; if it were, I would enter society." This anecdote is told to show his modest character. He lived a comfortable and happy life until the age of 29, when his eyes began to trouble him:

闇き夜の枕の海の明けゆけば
人を見る目も老いぬものかは

This dark night
Of the sea by my pillow
Will dawn, I hope,
And eyes
To see people.

Yo means "world" and "night"; *umi*, "sea" and "pus."

Teitoku was the author of many works; he improved the art of haiku which Sōkan and Moritake had originated. His death verse was:

露の命消ゆるころもの玉手箱
ふたたびかけぬみのりなるらん

My dew-drop life,—
It is disappearing;
The garments in the jewelled chest
Can never again be put on:
This is the Law.

Another death verse ascribed to him, a famous one:

明日は斯くと昨日おもひし事も今日
おほくは替る世のならひかな

“Tomorrow will be like this!”
We think the day before,
But today we realise
That all is change:
So is the way of the world.

The following are some of his best hokku.

ねぶらせて養ひたてよ花の雨
Neburasete yashinai-tate yo hana no ame

Let him lick it,
And look after him well,—
Rain on the flowers.

The verse has a prescript, `子をまうけたる人に, “To someone who had a child.” There is a pun here, on the word *ame*, 飴, a sweet, which the child is to lick; and *ame*, 雨, rain, which nourishes the cherry blossoms. This is based on several ancient literary works, for example the *Wakan Rōeishū*. There is a (Chinese) poem by Ki no Haseo, 紀長谷雄, “Spring Rain on a Hermitage,” 仙家春雨, in which comes the line:

養得自爲花父母,

Nourishing oneself, and treating one's parents like flowers.

Also in the Nō play *Yuya* there occur the lines:

草木は雨露の恵み、養ひ得ては花の父母たり。

Trees and grasses receive the grace of rain and dew, which cherish them like parents.

This kind of haiku, based upon classic literature, wants the immediacy and penetration of the present-moment kind of poetry, but it has a suavity, a feeling of time and growth lacking to the eternal moment.

冬籠り蟲けらまでも穴かしこ
Fuyu-gomori mushikera made mo ana-kashiko

Winter seclusion:
Even the insects
{ Wholly respectful.
{ Holey.

The chief point in this verse is the pun on *ana kashiko*, which means both "respectfully yours," and "respectfully in a hole."

雪月花一度に見する卯月かな
Setsu-getsu-ka ichido ni misuru uzuki kana

Snow, the moon, the cherry blossoms,—
All seen at one and the same time
In the *u* month!

From olden times the white flowers of the utsugi or u-tree, blooming in July, were compared to the snow and to the moon, so Teitoku says here that we can enjoy in

these summer flowers the beauties of winter, spring, and autumn also.

花よりも團子やありて歸る雁
Hana yori mo dango ya arite kaeru kari

Better than cherry blossoms
Are dumplings instead,—
Returning wild geese.

There is a Japanese saying “Dumplings are better than flowers.” These early haiku have something of the quality of Pope’s verse. The interest and value lies in the form rather than the matter; it would be more exact to say the matter is indifferent. Teitoku is telling us that nature is practical, not “poetic,” not romantic or sentimental, as waka would have us believe; also, he wants us to enjoy the words, the play on words, because words are the revelation of the nature of things.

Teitoku is the most remarkable (hokku) poet before Bashō. The title of his most important work, *Okarakasa*, 御傘, The Honorable Umbrella, is said to mean that the work is that of one man, just as a Prince only can be under his umbrella. Teitoku’s function in the history of haiku was his settling the rules of haikai, reviving it, and helping the tendency towards writing hokku only. He increased the poetical content, using however colloquial and Chinese expressions. In addition, and what perhaps makes him seem a greater man than he was, he had many good disciples, of whom seven were especially well-known, 七俳仙.

I. **Ryūho**, 立圃, who died in 1744, a doll-maker of Kyōto, was therefore nicknamed Hinaya¹ Ryūho. He

learned poetry from Teitoku and excelled in haikai. He was also a skilful painter, and originated haiga, a haiku style of painting usually accompanying a haiku. He is said to have been a self-willed man (a fervent supporter of the Nichiren Sect), refusing to correct the work of those he disliked, and making many enemies. He carved his death-verse on his own tombstone and died not long after at the age of 71.

月花の三句めをいま知る世かな
Tsuki hana no sanku-me wo ima shiru yo kana

The moon, and the cherry-blossoms,—
 Now I know, in this world,
 What the third verse is!

This means perhaps that after we have gazed at the moon, and at the cherry-blossoms, the remaining thing is to die. Another verse of his:

源氏ならで上下に祝ふ若菜哉
Genji narade jōge ni iwau wakana kana

Unlike in the *Genji Monogatari*,
 The wakana is eaten felicitously
 Without "first and last."

The chapter *Waka-na*, Young Rape-flower, of *The Tale of Genji*, is divided into two parts, but the auspiciousness of the New Year is a democratic thing; there is no distinction between high and low, rich and poor.

綻や尻も結ばめ絲櫻
Hokorobu ya shiri mo musubame ito-zakura

¹ Hinaya = doll-shop, doll-maker.

Bursting,
The ends cannot be tied,—
Thread-like cherry trees in bloom.

This verse is on the drooping, weeping-willow-like cherry trees, which are called “thread cherry trees” in Japanese. *Hokorobu* means both “splitting at the seams,” and “first blooming.” This is all only word-play, but it may be said in support of the verse that the punning does not in any way detract from the beauty of the tree. Does it not perhaps enhance it?

II. *Ishū*, 維舟, also known as Shigeyori, 重頼, who died in 1680 aged 74, seems to have been of a quarrelsome disposition, and had his own style of writing. From his school appeared such writers as Onitsura and Gonsui. An interesting verse:

阿蘭陀の文字が横とぶ天津雁
Oranda no moji ga yoko tobu amatsukari

Like Dutch letters,
Geese flying
Across the sky.

The following is a very good haiku indeed, such that Bashō or Issa would be glad to have written:

順禮の棒ばかりゆく夏野かな
Junrei no bō bakari yuku natsu-no kana

Pilgrims' staves only
Passing across
The summer moor.

The next also is pure haiku:

秋やけさ一足に知る拭ひ縁
Aki ya kesa hitoashi ni shiru nugui-en

Autumn's first morning!
 The foot knows it
 On the newly-washed verandah.

This is an example of physical and spiritual unity; and of a much in little that was the aim of the Teimon School as it was of Pope and his school.

彼岸とて慈悲に折らする花もがな
Higan tote jihi ni orasuru hana mo gana

It is the spring equinox;
 The compassion of Buddha
 Allows us to break the flowering branches.

In the ordinary way, it is a sin to destroy even plant life, but when the cherry blossoms bloom and the birthday of Buddha is celebrated at that very time, Buddha is merciful enough to let us break the Buddhist law together with the branches, for the sake of beauty.

III. **Teishitsu**, 貞室, died 1673, aged 64, studied poetry under Teitoku for more than thirty years, and edited a number of books, of which he is said to have burned most in his last years. A paper merchant of Kyōto, he had a talent for literature, and was skilful in various arts, especially in playing the koto, or Japanese harp. He is universally known for his ever-new verse:

これはこれとはばかり花の吉野山
Kore wa kore wa to bakari hana no yoshino-yama

"Well, well!"
 Was all I could say
 At the cherry blossoms of Yoshino.

The following is a verse he made in Edo:

いざのぼれ嵯峨の鮎くいに都鳥
Iza nobore saga no ayu kui ni miyakodori

Let's go up to Saga,
You seagulls,
And eat trout!

He died at the age of 64, leaving the following death-verse:

今迄は目みえせねども主人公
八八といひし年もあきけり

I have never seen,
Up to the present time,
The Master of my fate;
What is called eight times eight,—
This ominous year now begins.

IV. **Bōitsu**, 望一, 1548-1630, devoted himself to poetry. Although blind, he was extremely learned. The following hokku are taken from his first book, *Bōitsu Senku*.

花にきぬ人笑ふらし春の山
Hana ni kinu hito waraurashi haru no yama

Here I am among the flowers!
I hear people laughing
In the spring mountains.

風待ちの昨日かぎりの落葉かな
Kazamachi no kinō kagiri no ochiba kana

So long wind-awaiting,
Up to today,
Fallen leaves!

V. **Tokugen**, 徳元, who died at the age of eighty nine in 1647, was formerly a samurai who escaped from the battlefield of Sekigahara to Edo and studied poetry. He published one of the first books of haikai printed in Edo. His last verse:

今まではなまたわごとを月夜かな
Ima made wa nama-tawagoto wo tsukiyo kana

Up to now
 I spoke balderdash,—
 A moon-lit night.

Another verse:

何と見ても雪ほど黒きものはなし
Nan to mite mo yuki hodo kuroki mono wa nashi

However we look at it.
 There's nothing so black
 As snow.

This is an example of how intellectual Zen, and the philosophy of Laotse and Chuangtse, can never become poetry.

VI. **Kigin**, 季吟, is now remembered chiefly as being Bashō's teacher of haiku. He studied poetry in Kyōto and lived as a Shintō priest. He was more interested in waka than haikai, and his style is somewhat ethereal, as can be seen from the following:

秋風の姿なりけりむらすゝき
Akikaze no sugata nari keru mura-susuki

The pampas grasses
 Take the form
 Of the autumn wind.

くず水や花の下ゆく吉野川
Kuzumizu ya hana no shita yuku yoshino-gawa

Turbid water flowing
Beneath the cherry blossoms
Along the River Yoshino.

VII. **Saimu**, 西武, a cotton dealer of Kyōto, studied poetry under Teitoku in his youth, and became his favourite pupil. The master made the following:

つみ綿かぬり桶なりの庭の雪
Tsumiwata ka nurioke nari no niwa no yuki

The snow in the garden
Piles up like cotton-wool
In a laquered tub.

Saimu's profession is here referred to; Saimu added:

火鉢めされよ雪のころも手
Hibachi mesare yo yuki no koromo de

Warm your "snow" garments
By the brazier.

From this we can feel the "warm" relation between the two. Throughout his life Saimu loved the classics and the old ways of living, and the "modern" poets of his time spoke ill of his works. He edited many kinds of books, at his teacher's suggestion, and died at the age of 73. His death verse:

夜の明けて花にひびくや浄土門
Yo no akete hana ni hibiku ya jōdo mon

The day breaking,
The bell resounds in the flowers
Round the gate of the Jōdo temple.

His verses are not very interesting on the whole; one that presages Bashō's on the same subject:

からからに身はなり果てゝ何と蟬
Kara-kara ni mi wa narihatete nan to semi

Its body has ended
 In empty vacuity,—
 What a thing a cicada is!

Nan to semi, "What a semi!" also means *Nan to sen*, "What is to be done about it?"

Baisei, 梅盛, who died in 1699, aged 89, one of Teitoku's disciples, lived in Kyōto. His works were criticised as "neither good nor bad; Buddha's excrement mixed with flowers." He died at the age of 89, five years after Bashō. The best of his poor verses seems to be this one:

飛ぶ蝶はまいまい虫か花の波
Tobu chō wa mai-mai mushi ka hana no nami

Are they whirligigs,
 The butterflies,
 Flying among the waves of cherry blossoms?

This is based on a verse in the *Kokinshū* by Tsurayuki, in which he says the scattering petals are like waves in the sky.

朝霧に風ほしぞおもふ月の舟
Asagiri ni kaze hoshi zo omou tsuki no fune

The boat under the moon
 Needs a fair wind
 In the morning mist.

The moon and the mist seem to have got "mixed."

Dōsetsu, 道節, who died in 1654, was also a disciple of Teitoku. He became famous with the following:

もしあらば雪女もや白うるり
Moshi araba yukionna mo ya shiro-ururi

If there were such a thing,
 The snow-ghost-woman also
 Would be like a white melon.

In the *Tsurezuregusa*, it says that Jōshin, an abbot, looking at a certain monk's face, said, "It's like a white melon." Someone asked, "What's a white melon?" and received the answer, "I myself don't know, but it must be like that monk's face." The above verse says that a snow-ghost-woman would be like a white melon, if only there were such a thing. A yuki-onna is a female ghost that appears sometimes when it is snowing.

Tadatomo, 忠知, who died at the age of fifty two in 1676, was the pupil of Harukiyo, 春清, an Edo physician who learned haiku from Teitoku's pupil Ryūho in Kyōto, and died in 1657. He became famous in Edo as "Tadatomo of the White Charcoal" as a result of composing the following:

白炭ややかぬ昔の雪の枝
Shirazumi ya yakanu mukashi no yuki no eda

White charcoal;
 In former times
 It was a snowy branch.

White charcoal is often used in the tea ceremony. Tadatomo is here writing what Wordsworth would call "a poem of the fancy," but for all that, or rather, precisely

because of that, such a verse as this can be read with a lightness of mind and a pleasure untainted by any critical poeticality. Further, the relation of mere whiteness (in the charcoal and the snow) is perhaps after all not “mere,” since every thing is deeply and unbreakably related to every other thing in the universe.

Gensatsu, 玄札, a doctor of Kyōto, died in 1689, aged eighty three. He was extremely clever at word-play, being ranked as one of the Five Wise Men of Edo. The following is an example:

矢の下に花のちをのむ鹿の子かな
Ya no shita ni hana no chi wo nomu ka-no-ko kana

A fawn
 Sucking its mother's breast
 Under the arrows.

“Fawn” is a baby in a fawn-like dress; “arrows” is an arrow-patterned kimono.

Mitoku, 未得, who died in 1669 at the age of eighty two, was born in Edo, and associated with Tokugen and Gensatsu. He afterwards became a monk. The following is an example of his not very poetical wit:

雪花のへんぼうなれや花の雪
Yuki-bana no hembō nare ya hana no yuki

These snowy flowers
 Must be a response
 To the snow-flowers.

Ryōtoku, 令徳, one of Teitoku's oldest disciples, was the editor of the *Konzanshū*, 昆山集, the chief collection of Teimon verses. Two of his own:

住之江の浪のつゞみや松ばやし
Sumi-no-e no nami no tsuzumi ya matsu-bayashi

On the shore of Sumi-no-e
Drums of the waves
To the music of the pine-trees.

This verse has too much beauty for haiku, and so has the following.

花に蝶の舞うや神樂ぞ伊勢櫻
Hana ni chō no mau ya kagura zo ise-zakura

Butterflies dancing
Among the cherry blossoms;
Kagura under the Ise-zakura.

Ise-zakura are a kind of willow-cherry, and bloom at the end, *owari*, of the season. *Owari*, 尾張, is a town near Ise, and so they are called Ise-zakura. From Ise we get the association of the *kagura*, the sacred dance held there, and this is compared to the dancing of the butterflies among the blossoms. This verse is one of the most painfully laboured of the Teimon school, which one is somewhat glad to take leave of.

Chapter V

SŌIN AND THE DANRIN SCHOOL

Sōin, 宗因, 1604-1682, established a new group of writers of haikai called the Danrin School, as opposed to the Teimon School of Teitoku. There are several explanations of "Danrin"; the best seems to be that as Sōin entered the priesthood, the school was called so in imitation of the *dānrin*, 檀林, which means temple. Sōin was a samurai who loved literature, and later, at the age of 29, became a monk and lived near Kyōto. While studying renga, he made the acquaintance of Jūrai, a disciple of Teitoku. He was not satisfied, however, with Teitoku's style of haikai (renga) which was then popular, and returned to that of Sōkan and Moritake. People were tired of Teitoku's mannerisms and Sōin's new style appealed to them, for it was designed to make haikai more free, and more interesting. For this purpose, any kinds of words, any materials were allowed, almost at random. Vulgarisms and even obscenity were not avoided. This shows the Danrin tendency towards the humanisation of art. Saikaku's verses are an example. This freedom was opposed by the Teimon School, and quarrels between the Teimon and the Danrin School were fast and furious, and numbers of books were published of and concerning these arguments. The following linked verse was made by Sōin and Sessai, the leaders of the Danrin School. It shows their ambitious, reformative spirit:

さればこゝに談林の樹あり梅の花
世俗眠をさますうぐひす

Well, in this place
There is a Danrin tree,—
A plum tree,
And nightingales, singing
To awaken this slumbering world!

Here are some of Sōin's haiku:

ながむとて花にもいたし首の骨
Nagamu tote hana ni mo itashi kubi no hone

Gazing at the cherry blossoms,
The bone of my neck
Gets painful.

These early 17th century haiku, a reaction to waka, are very much like the 18th century senryu, a reaction to haiku. Sōin here is aiming at the whole truth, putting back what the waka poets had left out, the “unpoetic,” unpalatable, ugly facts of life. But actually the pain in the neck is the best possible evidence of poetic interest, or to put it more profoundly and transcendently, pain is love and love is pain. This haiku is based on Saigyō's waka in the *Shinkokinshū*:

眺むとて花にもいたくなりぬれば
ちる別れこそ悲しかりけれ

Gazing and gazing
At the cherry blossoms,—
What are my feelings!
But when they fall and depart,
How sad I am!

Saigyō's *itaku*, very . . . , becomes Soin's *itashi*, painful.

有明の油ぞ残るほととぎす
Ariake no abura zo nokoru hototogisu

Some oil still remains
 In the twilight-lamp,—
 A cuckoo sings!

There is a pun here on *ariake*, which means both “dawn” and “dawn-lamp,” but the point of the haiku is its bringing down to earth the heavenly poetry of the waka it parodies, a poem by Fujiwara no Sanesada found in the *Senzaishū*, 千載集:

ほととぎす鳴きつる方をながむれば
 たゞ有り明けの月ぞ残れる

When I gaze
 In the direction
 Of the cry of the cuckoo,—
 Only the crescent moon
 Remaining in the sky of dawn!

蚊柱や削らるるなら一かんな
Ka-bashira ya kezuraruru nara hito-kanna

Mosquito “posts”;
 I'd like to be able
 To plane them down!

The “posts” are the columns of gnats that waver and rise and fall “as the light wind lives or dies.” This verse is remarkable in its gaining some poetic meaning as a result of the energy of wit.

里人のわたり候か橋の霜
Satobito no watari sōro ka hashi no shimo

Have some villagers
Crossed over it?
The hoar-frost on the bridge.

This comes from the Nō play *Kagekiyo*, 景清:

いかに此のあたりに里人のわたり候か
Are there any villagers around here?

and also from a Chinese poem by Wentingyun, 温庭筠:

鶴聲茅店月, 人跡板橋霜

The voices of the cranes flying under the moon over
the thatched hut;
People's footprints on the frost of the plank bridge.

Basing haiku on Nō was one of the characteristics of the Danrin School.

秋やくるのうのうそれなる一葉舟
Aki ya kuru nō nō sorenaru hitoha-bune

Autumn is coming
Come! Don't leave without me!
The leaves fall one by one on the boat.

Autumn "coming" and the boat "coming"; the boat which "leaves" and the "leaves" that are falling—this imitates the original.

大空を仰げば梅の匂ひかな
Ōzora wo aogeba ume no nioi kana

Gazing up
At the great sky,—
The scent of plum-blossoms.

Sōin has few verses like this, of such a purity and simplicity that we might expect from one of the Fathers of Haiku.

秋はこの法師姿の夕べかな
Aki wa kono hōshi-sugata no yūbe kana

This picture of Saigyō,—
 Autumn's very form and imprint,
 This evening.

This verse was written on the picture. Of the other poets of the Danrin School the most interesting perhaps is **Ichū**, 惟中, 1639-1711. He was a man of learning, literature, and medicine, and in the squabbles with the Teimon School was the only writer who could stand against the enemy rationally and persuasively. Three of his hokku:

柳からねむりさそふや春の雨
Yanagi kara nemuri sasou ya haru no ame

In the spring rain,
 It is the willows first
 That induce us to drowsiness.

This looks more like an excuse than a reason.

とゝろくや鼠神鳴夏寢覺
Todoroku ya nezumi kaminari natsu nezame

Was that thunder?
 Waking this summer morning,
 A rat rumbles overhead.

Japanese ceilings are of thin wood and very resonant. I have never thought of thunder, but rats often sound like

badgers or some other big animal when they scurry across.

とく散りて見る人かへせ山櫻
Toku chirite miru hito kaese yamazakura

Fall and scatter quickly,
Cherry blossoms, and send back
These people come to see you!

There are few more disagreeable things that drunken parties of people under the cherry blossoms, and the haiku, which of course may be only the result of the desire to write something different from the ordinary, expresses the feeling of sensitive and really poetical people.

Saigin, 西吟, who died in 1709, studied poetry under Sōin and Saikaku, and acted as the latter's amenuensis. His verses are such that poetry had to fight against:

新月のおのに散るらむ花の今日
Shingetsu no ono ni chiruran hana no kyō

The cherry flowers
Will scatter tonight,
Under the axe of the new moon.

Chapter VI

PRE-BASHŌ HAIKU POETS

Between the weakening Danrin School and the about-to-be-born Bashō School appeared a large number of poets. Some, like Onitsura, were very good, but all are interesting in that we feel they are groping for something which they vaguely feel to be of value. For example **Takamasa**, 高政, dates unknown, who called himself the general head-temple in Kyōto of the Danrin School, composed the following:

關伽棚の菊かざしゆく鼠かな
Akadana no kiku kazashi yuku nezumi kana

A rat goes onto the Buddhist altar,
His head ornamented
With chrysanthemum flowers.

This was criticised by his opponents as "a verse of a rat," not a verse about chrysanthemums. Another verse which shows his effort to bring out the interest of natural phenomena:

目にあやしむぎわら一わとぶほたる
Me ni ayashi mugiwara ichi-wa tobu hotaru

Charming to the eye,
The fireflies flying about
Like a bundle of straw scattering.

Shōi, 松意, was invited from Edo to Ōsaka by Sōin in 1675 and then went back and introduced the Danrin School

into Edo. He endeavoured to give haiku a popular appeal, as we see in the following verses:

雪折れや昔にかえる笠の骨
Yukiore ya mukashi ni kaeru kasa no hone

Broken with snow,
The frame of a bamboo umbrella
Reveals its original form.

The spokes of the umbrella appear as they did before the frame was papered.

吹き寄せてつきとなりけり芋の露
Fukiyosete tsuki to nari keri imo no tsuyu

Blown together,
It becomes the moon,—
The dew on the taro leaves.

The moonlight reflected in the round dew-drops in the centre of the leaves, when gathered up together by the wind, will become the moon from which it came.

Tsunenori, 常矩, who died in 1682, became famous for the following verse:

蛇之助が恨みの鐘や花のくれ
Hebinosuke ga urami no kane ya hana no kure

The temple bell is tolling
The snake's bitterness,
This flowery evening.

This refers to the story of Dōjōji.¹ Another really witty verse:

¹ See *Japanese Humour*, page 123.

蚊柱を煙のけずる夕かな
Kabashira wo kemuri no kezuru yūbe kana

In the summer evening
 The smoke planes
 The mosquito columns.

Saikaku, 西鶴, 1643-1693, had a position of importance in the haikai world of his time, but as a novelist he eclipsed himself. Once, when studying under Sōin, he made one thousand six hundred verses in a day. Hearing of this, another poet made two thousand eight hundred. Not to be outdone Saikaku made four thousand verses during the day-time only. In the same year as Sōin died, 1682, Saikaku's *Kōshoku Ichidai Otoko* was published, and had such a success that he gave up haikai. His style of haiku-writing was criticised not only by the Teimon School but also by the School of Bashō as being wretched and dissolute. He wrote very few good hokku:

笙吹く人るすとはかおる蓮かな
Shō fuku hito rusu to wa kaoru hachisu kana

He who plays the pan's-pipes
 Is not here,—only
 The lotus-flowers smell sweet.

枯野哉つばなの時の女櫛
Kareno kana tsubana no toki no onna-gushi

On the withered moor,
 From the time of the ears of the reed,
 A girl's comb!

It is interesting to see how the poet-novelist Saikaku makes his haiku out of a woman's comb found among the

reeds. In spring young people eat the soft long flower
inside the sheath.

世に住まば聞けと師走の礎哉
Yo ni sumaba kike to shiwasu no kinuta kana

You live in this world?
Then listen to the fulling-block
At the year's end.

Saikaku knew well the pains and griefs of human life,
which in Japan seem to come to their climax at the end
of the year. Poor people, especially women, are working
late into the night trying to make ends meet, endeavouring
to keep up with their friends and neighbours. In this
verse, poetry and social feeling are blended.

鯛は花は見ぬ里もあり今日の月
Tai wa hana wa minu sato mo ari kyō no tsuki

Villages that know not
Sea-bream or cherry blossoms,—
Today's moon.

This is a well-known verse of Saikaku, but it is after
all a pious generality. Also, the fish seems too far from
the moon, if not from the flowers. Issa could easily have
blended them.

五月雨や淀の小橋の水行燈
Samidare ya yodo no kobashi no mizu-andon

In the summer rain,
A lantern hanging under a small bridge
Over the Yodogawa River.

This is a Dickens sketch, of Edo, not London; the

Yodogawa instead of the Thames. The lantern shows the course for the boats. It is dimly seen through the lines of rain, and is reflected in the muddy water below.

浮世の月見過しにけり末三年
Ukiyo no tsuki misugoshi ni keri sue ninen

I have seen the moon
 Of this fleeting world
 Two years in excess.

Saikaku died in Genroku the 6th year, the 8th month, the 10th day, aged 52, and this is his death-verse. To Japanese people, the years of a man's life were *two score years and ten*.

Fūko, 風虎, 1619–1684, was a feudal lord of Ōshū; he learned poetry from Sōin. An unfortunately typical verse:

月は入りわれらは出でる鵜舟かな
Tsuki wa iri warera wa ideru u-bune kana

The moon has gone in,
 We have come out,
 In the cormorant fishing-boat.

His son, **Roten**, 露沾, 1654–1732, also studied under Sōin, and made the acquaintance of Bashō and Kikaku.

水仙に人のにごりの隈もなし
Suisen ni hito no nigori no kuma mo nashi

In the narcissus flower
 There is not a shadow
 Of the ignobleness of men.

Another pupil of Sōin, who was a teacher of Raizan, and afterwards became a priest, was **Yūhei**, 由平, died

1710. The following verse looks forward to Issa:

石原やたがくつ守る女郎花
Ishihara ya ta ga kutsu mamoru ominaeshi

Maiden-flower,
Whose shoes are you keeping,
On this stony ground?

Raizan, 來山, 1654–1716, was almost always drunk. At his mother's death he drank himself blind, and composed the following:

今日の月ただ暗がりが見られけり
Kyō no tsuki tada kuragari ga mirare keru

Today's moon
Is but a darkness
For my eyes.

When his only son died in the spring, he wrote:

春の夢氣のちがわぬが恨らめしい
Haru no yume ki no chigawanu ga urameshi

But a spring dream!
How vexing
That I could not go mad!

Other, less violent verses of his:

行水も日まぜになりぬ虫の聲
Gyōzui mo himaze ni narinu mushi no koe

Baths in the open air
Become less frequent:
The voices of insects.

In the summer the poet has a bath every evening, but as time passes he has it every other day, then once in three days, less and less often. The voices of insects sound louder and more numerous. Summer is passing into autumn. What is to be noted in this verse is the way in which the Japanese poet joins, or rather, does not divide his own (physical) life from that of nature, and still more, *does not say so*. We may compare this verse with an early verse by Bashō, before 1682. There is the same unconscious and instinctive mingling of the life of man as an animal and the flowers as beauty:

夕顔の白く夜の後架に紙燭とりて
Yūgao no shiroku yo no kōka ni shishoku torite

The evening glories
 Seen whitely from to the privy at night
 With a paper candle.¹

A famous verse, but senryu rather than haiku:

両方に髭があるなり猫の戀
Ryōhō ni hige ga aru nari neko no koi

Both of them
 With whiskers,—
 Cats in love.

This verse appeared in *Imamiya-gusa*, 今宮草, 1734, as 猫の妻, the cat's wife, but in 1775 as above. This is admitted as haiku, it should be noted, because the humour is not in the words, but in the things themselves.

¹ A paper twist, about a foot and a half long, saturated in oil and used as a torch.

若楓一降り降って日が照って
Waka-kaede hitofuri futte hi ga tette

The new maple leaves,
 Again in the sunshine
 After the passing shower.

The new maple leaves shine at all times, but after the shower they have an almost intolerable brightness.

青し青し若菜は青し雪の原
Aoshi aoshi wakana wa aoshi yuki no hara

Green the young herbs
 In the fields of snow,
 Green, O, how green!

As we learn from the Old Testament, from the rhymes and rhythms of verse, and from the regularity of music, repetition is the soul of emotion. (Or is emotion the soul of repetition?) But pure poetry has no repetition, because poetic experience is once and for ever.

今宮は虫所なり聾なり
Imamiya wa mushi-dokoro nari tsunbo nari

Imamiya is the place
 Where insects sing lustily,—
 Alas for my deafness!

When Raizan was forty, he built a hermitage, Jumandō, in Imamiya village in Settsu. To the east was Cha-usu Mountain and to the west Nako Sea; it was far from the world at that time. Imamiya was famous for its singing insects. “Alas” is not in the original, which is (rightly) bare and bleak.

これほどの三味線暑し膝の上
Kore hodo no samisen atsushi hiza no ue

To that extent,—
 The samisen on the lap,
 How hot it was!

This is too explanatory to be a really good haiku, but the verse shows the extreme sensitiveness of the poet to the heat-heaviness of such a light instrument as a samisen.

お奉行の名さへ覺えず年暮れぬ
O-bugyō no na sae oboezu toshi kurenu

Not knowing
 Even the prefect's name yet!
 The end of the year.

Raizan lived in the middle of Ōsaka. He was punished for this verse by the bugyō himself. Raizan's death-verse, a very good one:

我はたゞ生まれた科で死ぬるなり
 それで恨みも何もかもなし

I die just because
 I committed the sin
 Of being born,
 So I have nothing to grumble at,
 Absolutely nothing at all.

Saimaro, 才磨, 1656–1737, learned poetry at first from Saimu, then from Sōin and Saikaku, and when the Bashō School arose, he inclined to that. His verse often shows the weakness and sentimentality to which the Bashō School was prone.

猫の子に嗅れてゐるや蝸牛
Neko no ko ni kagarete iru ya katatsumuri

The kitten
Is sniffing
At the snail.

This is a haiku for children, but not poetical children.

水につれて流るゝやうな燕かな
Mizu ni tsurete nagaruru yō na tsubame kana

Following the stream,
The swallow flies
As if flowing.

This is not very remarkable as poetry, but we recall Dorothy Wordsworth:

The shapes of the mist, slowly moving along, exquisitely beautiful; passing over the sheep, they almost seemed to have more of life than those quiet creatures.

白雲を吹き流したる新樹哉
Shirakumo wo fuki-nagashitaru shinju kana

Blowing away
All the white clouds,—
The new-leaved trees.

In its inversion, this verse reminds us, not over-pleasantly, of Lyly's lark:

Now at heaven's gate she claps her wings,
The morn not breaking till she sings.

夕暮の物うき雲やいかのぼり
Yūgure no monouki kumo ya ikanobori

A spring evening;
The clouds are sad;
A banner floats there.

The banner is motionless; the clouds hang above it; darkness falls imperceptibly; the mind broods with unfulfilled desires. This verse shows one of the far-off origins of haiku, Chinese poetry.

Dansui, 團水, who died in 1711, was a man of Kyōto; he learned first from Saimaro.

ほたほたと椿の落つる朧月
Hota-hota to tsubaki no otsuru oborozuki

Camellias fall
One after another, plop, plop,
Under the hazy moon.

Famous for his *ukiyo-zōshi*, 浮世草子, rather than his haiku, Dansui admired Saikaku very much and is said to have kept his hermitage when he died. The above verse gives us the feeling of a warm spring evening.

Gonsui, 言水, 1650-1722, became famous with the following verse:

凧のはてはありけり海の音
Kogarashi no hate wa ari keru umi no oto

The winter wind
Has its final end
In the roaring of the sea.

He studied haikai under Shigeyori, later learned the Danrin style, and at last inclined closely to the Bashō School. The two following, however, are of the Danrin type:

初月の弓に糸なし雁のこえ
Hatsuzuki no yumi ni ito nashi kari no koe

The bow of the new moon
Is string-less,
Wild geese calling.

朝霧やさても富士のむ長次郎
Asa-giri ya satemo fuji nomu chōjirō

The morning mist,—
Why it's a Chōjirō!
It has swallowed Mount Fuji!

Chōjirō was a famous conjurer of Consui's time. He was said to be able to swallow cows and horses. Every poet is a Chōjirō. Keats said he was a chameleon.

火の影や人にて凄き網代守
Hi no kage ya hito nite sugoki ajiromori

The fish-trap watchers
Look fearsome
In the flames of the bonfire.

Fishermen, hunters, policemen, soldiers—the list could be extended—are and look horrible always, but especially at night, and by the light of a fire.

Chapter VII

ONITSURA

Onitsura, 鬼貫, was born in 1660, the same year as Kikaku, and Jōsō a year after. Bashō was now sixteen.¹ Onitsura communicated with Baiō, Saikaku, Saimaro, Raizan, and Dansui, and with Bashō's disciples Izen, Shikō, Ransetsu, and Ryōto. He is said to have composed the following at the age of seven:

こいこいと言へど螢が飛んでゆく
Koi koi to iedo hotaru ga tonde yuku

“Here! Over here!” we say to it,
But off goes
The firefly!

When he was eighteen, he entered the school of Sōin. In his twenty fifth year he suddenly realised that haikai is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The following verse was composed on the death of his son:

土に埋めて子の咲く花もあることか
Tsuchi ni umete ko no saku hana mo aru koto ka

I bury him in this ground,—
But is it possible
That a child will bloom from it?

¹ It should be remembered that Bashō wrote *Furu-ike ya*, the foundation of the Bashō School, in 1686, when Onitsura was twenty six. In *Hitorigoto*, ひとりごと, Onitsura says that the best way to learn haiku is to imitate one's teacher's haiku faithfully, and then write one's own verses. This is still done in Japan.

Onitsura though that *makoto*, sincerity, is the most important thing in the world; it is the real humanity of a human being. In his later years he lived as a masseur, and at last entered the priesthood. The following are some of his best verses:

ひゅうひゅうと風は空ゆく寒牡丹
Hyū-hyū to kaze wa sora yuku kan-botan

The wind whistles
 In the sky:
 Winter peonies.

There is a contrast between the keen, colourless wind and the great red flowers, and a comparison of power between the peonies and the wintry blast.

涼風や虚空にみちて松の聲
Suzu-kaze ya kokū ni michite matsu no koe

A cool breeze;
 The vault of heaven is filled
 With the voices of pine trees.

Onitsura is not so deep as Bashō or Vaughan, but he has the breadth of Thomson and Collins, and this is difficult to attain in a short verse. Speaking of Vaughan:

谷水や石も歌詠む山櫻
Tanimizu ya ishi mo uta yomu yamazakura

The stream in the valley;
 Stones too sing songs
 Under the flowering mountain cherry trees.

Vaughan says apparently the opposite:

And though poor stones have neither speech nor tongue,
While active winds and streams both run and speak,
Yet stones are deep in admiration.

によっぼりと秋の空なる富士の山
Nyoppori to aki no sora naru fuji no yama

Sticking up
Into the sky of autumn,—
Mount Fuji.

Onitsura's attitude towards haiku may be summed up as novelty without distortion. He antedated Issa by a hundred years in his use of colloquial expressions. He is like Bashō in his love of "minute particulars," and in his compassionate heart.

ささ栗の柴に刈らるる小春かな
Sasaguri no shiba ni kararuru koharu kana

Cutting *sasakuri*
Together with the brushwood:
Indian Summer.

Sasaguri is a small kind of chestnut tree. The countryman is cutting brushwood on this mild autumn day, and the *sasakuri*, being inconspicuous, is cut along with other inferior brushwood.

梅を知る心も己れ花も己れ
Ume wo shiru kokoro mo onore hana mo onore
To know the plum blossoms,
One's heart,
One's nose!

We have a mind, we have a body. What for? To

know the plum blossoms. How about God, and the object of life, and the meaning of suffering, and the immortality of the soul? These are all included in the plum blossoms; not they in God, but God in them.

したがうや音なき花も耳の奥
Shitagau ya oto naki hana mo mimi no oku

We are obedient,
 And silent flowers too
 Speak to the inner ear.

This refers to the ear of Confucius which was obedient at the age of sixty. Obedient to what? Obedient to Heaven, Blake's heaven of a wild flower. What is obedience to a flower? It means hearing what it says. What does a flower say? "Silent is the life of flowers."

目は横に鼻はたてに春の花
Me wa yoko ni hana wa tate ni haru no hana

Eyes are length-wise,
 Nose is up-and-down,—
 Flowers are in spring!

The position is space of eyes and nose, their horizontality and verticality are fixed by nature. They *are* nature. In the same way the flowers come in spring, the spring comes in flowers. This is hardly haiku, but is a very original verse in perceiving the suchness of things so quizzically and facially.

鶯や梅にとまるは昔から
Uguisu ya ume ni tomaru wa mukashi kara

The uguisu;
It perched on the plum tree
From olden times.

Like many of Onitsura's verses, this has several possible layers of meaning. Perhaps the most poetical one is that this particular bird is heard as singing from a thousand years ago. Thoreau says:

The rush-sparrow, Nature's minstrel of serene hours,
sings of an immense leisure and duration.

飛鮎の底に雲ゆく流哉
Tobu ayu no soko ni kumo yuku nagare kana

A trout jumps up;
At the bottom of the water
Clouds coming and going.

This scene alone makes us want to live for ever, and see it when we feel like it.

この秋は膝に子のない月見かな
Kono aki wa hiza ni ko no nai tsukimi kana

It is autumn;
I gaze at the moon
With no child on my knee.

In his lap no child is sitting, this year. Is the moon the same as last year or different? The answer is, yes.

我はまだ浮世をぬがで衣更
Ware wa mada ukiyo wo nugade koromogae

The time of the change of clothes;
I have not yet taken off
The garments of worldliness.

“Putting on the whole armour of God,” “the garments of holiness,”—literature often uses the symbol of clothes. The tailor must be re-tailored. The clothes are the man. Tell me what you wear, and I will tell you who and what you are.

此塚は柳なくてもあはれなり
Kono tsuka wa yanagi nakutemo aware nari

This grave
 Has no willow over it,
 And yet it is melancholy.

This verse is too explanatory to be called haiku.

何迷ふ彼岸のいり日人たかり
Nani mayou higan no irihi hito-dakari

The evening of Paramita;
 What are they deluding themselves with,
 This crowd of people?

Higan is passing from this shore of illusion to “that shore” of enlightenment and Nirvana. But these crowds of people are satisfied with this shore.

佗ぬれど毛虫は落ちぬいほり哉
Wabinuredo kemushi wa ochinu iori kana

It is a lonely life,
 But hairy caterpillars fall
 Round my hermitage.

From a child I loved hairy and hairless caterpillars, no doubt for Freudian reasons, but not entirely.

さはさはと蓮うごかす池の龜
Sawa-sawa to hachisu ugokasu ike no kame

The tortoise in the pond
Sways and rustles
The leaves of the lotus.

This is probably a temple pond, or that of a wealthy house.

さみだれや 鮓のおもしのなめくじり
Samidare ya sushi no omoshi no namekujiri

The summer rains;
On the stone for pressing *sushi*,
A slug.

This long summer rain has the power and the function to unite all kinds of different things, and take away both our love and our loathing. The large stone is used for pressing and preserving fish-meat and vinegar, *sushi*. The slug is not very appropriate to food, but “the rain is raining all around,” and the slug on the stone is in its own world, which happens to coincide with ours.

秋風の吹きわたりけり人の顔
Akikaze no fuki-watari keru hito no kao

The autumn wind
Blows across the fields:
People's faces.

The verse has the prescript, “Walking along the path over the moor.” People's faces, especially in the country, change according to the seasons.

枯葦や難波入江のささら浪
Kare-ashi ya naniwa irie no sasaranami

Against the withered reeds
Of the creek of Naniwa,
Water-ripples.

Rushes are the most poetical of all plants, and when withered still more meaningful. Ripples are the most poetical aspect of water.

破壺に擇鴻細く咲きにけり
Yaretsubo ni omodaka hosoku saki ni keri

In the broken crock,
A water-plantain
Blooms slenderly.

The leaves are slender, the flowers are white. There is something timid about the flower blooming in this broken pot.

うちはれて障子も白し初日影
Uchi-harete shōji mo shiroshi hatsuhi kage

It turned out fine,
The paper-screens a brilliant white,—
The sunlight of New Year's Day!

On New Year's Day the white paper-screens are especially white, partly because people often re-paper them some days before, but entirely because on New Year's Day white things are particularly white, just as red things are especially red.

Onitsura composed the first real haiku. They show his genius; they show pure nature; the best express his unintellectualised experience; they are "a sort of thought in sense." His verses are simple and easy, melodious and

poetical. Contemporary with Bashō, he was independent of him, and the chief difference between the two men was in their power of making disciples. Onitsura made only a few, such as Kisei, 其勢, and Shisen, 只川. The poetry of Onitsura has something in common with that of Robert Frost.

Chapter VIII

BASHŌ

Bashō, 芭蕉, wrote *Furu-ike ya*, the model verse of the Bashō School, in 1686. The school came to an end with the death of Hajin, 巴人, the teacher of Buson, 1742. The Genroku Period was from 1688 to 1703, but Bashō died in 1694, and thus his great poetic work was all done at the beginning of Genroku. Until 1686, when Bashō was 41, he had written only mediocre verses, and for only eight or nine years, the last years of his life, did he write real poetry. In this respect he is the opposite of Wordsworth, whose best work was done at the beginning of his life, in the ten years between 1798 and 1808, with versifying up to 1850.

When the Genroku Period began, the Tokugawa government had been in power eighty years. Saikaku in prose, Chikamatsu in drama, Kumazawa Banzan in Confucianism made the period famous. In Buddhism also the various sects produced great monks, and in art Kōrin and Itchō are names that will never be forgotten.

Bashō was born in 1644, and in his youth was in attendance upon Yoshitada, the eldest son of his feudal lord, who loved literature, and studied haikai under Sengin. At his death, Bashō, being then 23 years old, left the samurai service, and later, at the age of 29, went to Edo. At first he used the pen-name Tōsei, 桃青, but changed it to Bashō after he went to live at Bashō-an, "The Banana Hermitage," at Fukagawa.

芭蕉野分して盥に雨を聞く夜かな
Bashō nowaki shite tarai ni ame wo kiku yo kana

A night listening
 To the rain leaking into the tub,
 The banana-plant blown by the gust.

This is signed 芭蕉庵桃青, Tōsei of Bashō-an. The banana plant comes again in a haiku by Chiri, 千里, with whom Bashō went to his native place and Yoshino and Kyōto between August 1684 and April 1685:

深川や芭蕉を富士にあづけ行く
Fukagawa ya bashō wo fuji ni azuke yuku

Fukagawa!
 We depart, leaving the bashō
 To Mount Fuji.

Bashō spent much of his life in travelling, and most of his works are diaries; even the haiku are a kind of poetical diary. Bashō's first verses are of the Danrin type:

あらなんともなやきのふは過ぎて河豚と汁
Ara nan to mo na ya kinō wa sugite fugu to shiru

Well, nothing seems to have happened,
 Though I ate swell-fish soup
 Yesterday.

This is early Bashō, with its popular, anti-waka tone, though the language of the first part is borrowed from Nō. After living in hermitage after hermitage throughout the country he came back to Edo and stayed there for about two years. A verse of this period:

梅が香にのつと日の出る山路かな
Ume ga ka ni notte hi no deru yamaji kana

Suddenly the sun rose,
 To the scent of the plum-blossoms
 Along the mountain path.

He left Edo again, for the last time, and returned to his native place. One of the verses composed on this journey:

大井川波にちりなし夏の月
Ōigawa nami ni chiri nashi natsu no tsuki

The River Ōi;
 In the ripples, not a particle of dirt—
 Under the summer moon.

He went on to Nara, and Ōsaka, where he died. His death-verse is worthy of such a great poet:

旅に病んで夢は枯野をかけめぐる
Tabi ni yande yume wa karenō wo kakemeguru

Ill on a journey;
 My dreams wander
 Over a withered moor.

This verse has mystery without solemnity, finality without despair, truth without ornament. It should be compared to the following by Izen, composed the night before Bashō's death:

ひっぱりて蒲團に寒き笑ひ哉
Hipparite futon ni samuki warai kana

Pulling the bed-clothes
 Back and forth, back and forth,
 Wry smiles.

This verse was occasioned by Izen and Masahide, 正秀, sleeping under the same quilt. Bashō himself smiled when he read it. Master and disciples had the relation of parent and children. Bashō reminds us a little of Goldsmith.

Bashō's verses are comparatively few in number, about two thousand in all, of which about a hundred are really good, but one thing that strikes us about them is their variety. We can see in his verses the tendencies which later poets developed.

Epic

吹き飛ばす石は浅間の野分かな
Fukitobasu ishi wa asama no nowaki kana

The autumn blast
 Blows along the stones
 On Mount Asama.

Chinoiserie

夜着は重し呉天に雪を見るあらん
Yogi wa omoshi goten ni yuki wo miru aran

The bed-clothes are so heavy,
 The snow of the sky of the Kingdom of Wu
 Will soon be seen.

Still Life

塩鯛の齒茎も寒し魚の棚
Shio-dai no haguki mo samushi uo no tana

In the fish-shop
 The gums of the salted sea-bream
 Are cold.

Unconventionality

野を横に馬引きむけよ郭公
No wo yoko ni uma hikimuke yo hototogisu

Lead my horse
 Across the moor
 To where the hototogisu is singing!

Humour

麥飯にやつるる戀か猫の妻
Mugi-meshi ni yatsururu koi ka neko no tsuma

The lady-cat,
 With love and barley-rice
 So thin!

Picturesqueness

しぐるるや田のあら株の黒むほど
Shigururu ya ta no arakabu no kuromu hodo

First winter rain,—
 Enough to turn
 The stubble black.

Delicacy

粽結ぶ片手にはさむ額髪
Chimaki musubu katate ni hasamu hitai-gami

Wrapping rice-dumplings in bamboo leaves,
 With one hand she fingers
 The hair over her forehead.

When we call Bashō the greatest of the (haiku) poets of Japan, it is not only for his creation of a new form of

human experience, and the variety of his powers, illustrated above. He has an all-round delicacy of sympathy which makes us near to him, and him to us. As with Dr Johnson, there is something in him beyond literature, above art, akin to what Thoreau calls homeliness. In itself, mere goodness is not very thrilling, but when it is added to sensitivity, a love of beauty, and poetry, it is the irresistible force which can move immovable things.

What was it that made Bashō suddenly realise that poetry is not beauty, as in waka, or morality, as in dōka, or intellectuality and verbal wit as in haikai? Some say it was the result of his study of Zen, but this seems to me very unlikely. Bashō does not seem to have urged his disciples to do zazen, and seldom speaks about Zen and its relation to haiku. The fact is that haiku would have come into being even if Bashō had never been born. We cannot say, however, that somebody would have written Shakespeare's plays even if Shakespeare (or Bacon or Marlowe or the Earl of Oxford or Queen Elizabeth) had not. What Thoreau said, that "Man, not Shakespeare or Homer, is the great poet," is truer of Japan than of any other country, where custom and tradition are stronger, and where the poetry was not a romantic or classical solo, but a democratic trio or quartet. Again, as was noted before, Onitsura, Gonsui, and many lesser men were composing good haiku at the same time as Bashō. However, they did not have the modesty, the generosity, the ambitionlessness of Bashō. Onitsura loved sincerity and truth and made them his object, but Bashō just loved.

The following are some verses left untranslated in the four previous volumes.

鶯を魂に眠るか嬌柳
Uguisu wo tama ni nemuru ka tao-yanagi

Making the uguisu its spirit,
 The lovely willow-tree
 Sleeps there.

This early verse of Bashō (written before 1683) seems to be based on the famous story of Sōshi's dreaming he was a butterfly.¹ The willow has dreamed itself into an uguisu while it stands there asleep in the warm spring day.

こもを着て誰人います花の春
Komo wo kite tarebito imasu hana no haru

Who is he,
 A straw-mat over him,
 This flowery spring?

People go to see the cherry blossoms in their best apparel, but here is someone lying under them covered with a straw-mat, a beggar or a madman, or a wandering master-less samurai. His spring, his flower-viewing must be different, more Thoreau-like than that of ordinary people; Bashō does not "pass by on the other side."

この秋は何で年よる雲に鳥
Kono aki wa nan de toshiyoru kumo ni tori

This autumn,—
 Old age I feel,
 In the birds, the clouds.

It is evening. Bashō is on a journey, his last; half a

¹ See Vol. I, page 37.

month later he will be dead. The birds of the air have their nests and the foxes their holes, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head. The onomatopoeia of this verse is striking; Bashō sounds as if sobbing or choking.

朝顔や晝は錠おろす門の垣
Asagao ya hiru wa jō orosu kado no kaki

Morning-glories blooming;
 Locking up
 The gate in the fence.

What Bashō means is that if he leaves the gate open, someone will come and he will have to entertain him. He wants to enjoy the morning-glories while they bloom. Morality gives way to aestheticism.

樗の木の花にかまはぬ姿かな
Kashi no ki no hana ni kamawanu sugata kana

The oak tree
 Looks careless
 Of the cherry blossoms.

The oak tree seems quite boorish and rustic compared to the delicate and civilised cherry flowers, but Bashō liked the former better; Wordsworth also.

起きあがる菊ほのかなり水のあと
Okiagaru kiku honoka nari mizu no ato

Faintly the chrysanthemums,
 After the water subsides,
 Rising again.

Heavy rain in the day-time has caused the garden to

be a stretch of puddles. As evening comes on, the water drops, the flowers begin to raise their heads again, but now it is half-dark and the flowers have something ethereal and even ghostly about them. It reminds us of Lawrence's writing of flowers, lilies, pinks, and irises in *Sons and Lovers*.

四方より花吹き入れて鳩の海
Shihō yori hana fuki-irete nio no umi

From all directions
 Come cherry petals,
 Blowing into the lake of Nio.

Nio-no-umi, or Lake Biwa, is very large, and this verse gives us a feeling of the expanse of cherry flowers surrounding it, and blown by spring breezes onto the surface of the water.

顔に似ぬ發句も出でよ初櫻
Kao ni ninu hokku mo ideyo hatsu-zakura

The first cherry blossoms;
 May the hokku
 Be unlike our faces!

Oriental aestheticism is different from Wilde's, and even from Pater's green tie. The haiku poets were on the whole an awful-looking crowd, and never tried to look anything else.

杜若語るも旅のひとつ哉
Kakitsubata kataru mo tabi no hitotsu kana

Talking before the iris flowers:
 This also is one of the pleasures
 Of travelling.

This was written at a man's house in Ōsaka, when on the journey described in *Oi no Kobumi*.

須磨のあまの矢先に鳴か郭公
Suma no ama no yasaki ni naku ka hototogisu

Is the hototogisu crying
 At arrows shot
 By fishermen of Suma?

This is the kind of verse which can hardly stand by itself, but requires the poetic narrative in which it is embedded. Bashō tells us some twenty lines before, that there were fish called *kisugo* spread out on the shore to dry, and crows stole them. The villagers, disliking this, shot at the crows with bows and arrows, which Bashō comments was hardly becoming to fishermen, 海上のわざと見えぬ, and says that this cruelty may be perhaps ascribed to the fact that many battles were fought here in olden times. In the haiku Bashō expresses the feeling that the hototogisu by this shore may be crying in sympathy with the crows, or in fear of its own life.

灌佛の日に生れあふ鹿の子哉
Kambutsu no hi ni umarau kanoko kana

On the very day of Buddha's birth,
 A young deer is born:
 How thrilling!

On Buddha's birthday, a small statuette of the Buddha is continually laved with sweet green tea. From this comes the name Buddha-laving Day. The word "thrilling" is a very strong word to use for *kana*, which is hardly more than an exclamation mark.

此山のかなしさ告よ野老堀
Kono yama no kanashisa tsuge yo tokoro-bori

Make known
 The sad stories of this mountain temple,
 Yam-digger!

This verse, which comes in *Oi no Kobumi*, was written at Bodai Hill Temple at Yamada in the province of Ise; it was in ruins at this time. Bashō, with a kind of earthy humour, relates the Buddhism to the yams the man is digging up.

神垣やおもひもかけずねはんぞう
Kami-gaki ya omoi mo kakezu nehan-zō

The Fence around the Shrine:
 Unlooked-for, unforeseen,—
 The picture of Buddha entering Nirvana.

This was composed at the Ise Shrines, on the 15th day of the Second Month, and Bashō is expressing his surprise (and pleasure) at something which, however much sanctioned by ancient custom, is still astonishing, namely, the fusion of Shintō and Buddhism. This amalgamation took place at the beginning of the 9th century A.D., when the Shingon Sect developed the doctrine of *Ryōbu-Shintō*,¹ or *Shimbutsu-Kongō*² by which the gods of Shintō were recognised as manifestations or incarnations of the Buddhist divinities.

¹ 兩部神道; *ryōbu* means "two parts," what arises from the *Kongōkai*, 金剛界, the Diamond Wisdom; and what arises from the *Taizōkai*, 胎藏界, the Universe-Treasure.

² By analogy with these two, we get *Shimbutsu-Kongō*, 神佛混合, Shintō and Buddhism blended.

よし野にて櫻見せふぞ檜の木笠
Yoshino nite sakura mishō zo hinoki-gasa

Cedar-strip kasa!
 At Mount Yoshino I will show you
 The cherry blossoms.

This verse is interesting in its playful simplicity. Bashō was going to Yoshino, with Tokoku, 杜國, to accompany him. Besides the above verse, they also wrote in their kasa, umbrella-like hats,

乾坤無住同行二人,

Two fellow-travellers, dwelling-less in the Universe.

This expression, so deeply tragic, is to be put together with the verse above, just as they were in the kasa.

猶みたし花に明行神の顔
Nao mitashi hana ni akeyuku kami no kao

Still, I would fain see
 The god's face
 In the dawning cherry blossoms.

The verse was made at the foot of Mount Katsuragi. There was a story¹ that En no Otsuno, 役の小角, a necromancer, born 634 A.D., when intending to make a bridge between Katsuragi and Yoshino, asked a god, Hitokoto-nushi, 一言主, to help him. His face was so hideous that he only appeared and worked at night. Bashō feels that the place is so beautiful that he cannot believe the face was ugly, and wishes to see it. This is an

¹ Recorded in *Okugishō*, 奥儀抄, a collection of waka, with notes, by Fujiwara Kiyosuke, 1104-1177.

indirect, but all more impressive tribute to the beauty of the place and the person.

We often feel Thoreau misanthropic, though perhaps he only disliked shallow and self-important people. We find Wordsworth a little cold to humanity, though he loved his sister and his friends passionately. But Bashō has such a warm heart, warmer even than Hakurakuten. In the *Oi no Kobumi* we find the following haiku:

若葉して御めの雫ぬぐはばや
Wakaba shite onme no shizuku nuguwabaya

Young leaves coming out,—
 Ah, that I could wipe away
 The drops from your eyes!

This was composed at Shōdaiji Temple in Nara. The temple, the main temple of the Risshu Sect, was founded by Kanjin, a Chinese monk of the Tang dynasty, who came to Japan in 745 A.D. Bashō says that he endured “more than seventy distresses at sea,” his eyes being injured by the salt air, and becoming totally blind. The haiku was made when worshipping before his image that stood in the temple.

名月や門にさし来る潮がしら
Meigetsu ya kado ni sashi-kuru shio-gashira

The autumn full moon;
 The foaming tide
 Rolls up to the gate.

The tide flows up to the gate and the moon shines on the waves. The moon is reflected in the water, and falls and breaks with it. There is the silence of the moon and

the thunder of the waves. It is the moon of autumn, and there is an inexplicable feeling of grief and sadness.

京まではまだ半空や雪の雲
Kyō made wa mada hanzora ya yuki no kumo

On a journey to the Capital,
 Only half the sky traversed,
 With clouds foretelling snow.

Bashō wrote this at Narumi. When Masaaki Asukai, a noted poet, died 1679, passed a night in this town, he composed the following waka and gave it to his host:

うちひさす都も遠くなるみがた
 はるけき海を中にへだてて

The Capital
 Far, far away
 From this Bay of Narumi,
 With the vast, remote seas
 Rolling between.

This reminds us of:

From the lone shieling on the misty island
 Mountains divide us and the waste of seas.

白髪ぬく枕のしたやきりぎりす
Shiraga nuku makura no shita ya kirigirisu

Beneath the pillow
 Where the grey hairs are pulled out,
 Chirps a cricket.

Somebody is pulling out his white hairs for him as he lies in bed. Beneath the floor under his pillow, a cricket

is chirping. There is something in the voice of the cricket, its melancholy resignation, which accords with Bashō's feeling of old age and the inevitable passing of time.

ねはん會や皺手合る珠數の音
Nehané ya shiwate awaseru juzu no oto

The anniversary of the Death of Buddha;
 From wrinkled praying hands,
 The sound of the rosaries.

It seems that this is the original version; later the first line was emended to 灌佛や, *Kambutsu ya*, The Ceremony of pouring Water over an Image of Buddha on his Birthday. It is difficult to imagine why Bashō changed this, except perhaps on the general principle that a discord is better than a harmony,—a very doubtful idea anyway.

香を探る梅に蔵見る軒端哉
Ka wo saguru ume ni kura miru nokiba kana

Smelling the plum-blossoms,
 I gazed up at the eaves,
 And saw a godown.

This verse was the first verse, the *hokku*, of a set of linked verses made at a poetical party held at a house near Atsuta Shrine in Owari. There are three beautiful things here, the scent of the plum, the curving eaves, and the white-walled, castle-like warehouse.

ためつけて雪見にまかるかみこ哉
Tametsukete yuki-mi ni makaru kamiko kana

Smoothing its creases,
 I go out snow-viewing
 In my kamiko.

The poetry of this is faint but real. The *kamiko*, a kind of rain-coat made of paper, is all crumpled when he puts it on, and for this poetical viewing of the snow-landscape, he makes the best of this poor garment, straightening it here and smoothing it there. He wishes to look his best when the snow looks its best. This is expressed also by the literary terms *tametsukete*, *makaru*, instead of *nosu*, *yuku*.

磨なをす鏡も清し雪の花
Togi-naosu kagami mo kiyoshi yuki no hana

The sacred mirror
 Is re-polished and clear,
 In the snow-flowers.

This verse comes from the *Oi no kobumi*, and was written concerning "The Completed Rebuilding of Atsuta Shrine," 熱田御修覆, near Cape Irako in Mikawa Province. The point of the verse is the purity of the newly-polished mirror, and that of the snow. This verse has more (Shintō) piety than poetry.

旅寝してみしやうき世の煤はらひ
Tabine shite mishi ya ukiyo no susu-harai

Seen on a journey,—
 The year-end house-cleaning
 Of this transitory world.

Bashō felt himself to be homeless, though actually he was at this time, the 10th of December 1687, on his way to his native place.

枯芝やややかげろふの二三寸
Kareshiba ya yaya kagerō no ni-san-zun

Over the withered grass,
At last an inch or so
Of heat-waves.

The grass is still withered, with no eye of green in it, but already there is an inch or two of heat-waves above it. This verse follows another one:

春立ちてまだ九日の野山かな
Haru tachite mada kokonoka no noyama kana

Spring has come,—
But moor and mountain
Are those of the ninth day.

These haiku are not very poetical perhaps, judged as literature, but they show how deeply interested Bashō was in the procession of the seasons. The same is true of the beginning of the *Tintern Abbey Ode*:

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters!

星崎の闇を見よとや啼千鳥
Hoshizaki no yami wo miyo to ya naku chidori

The crying plovers,—
Do they bid me gaze upon
The darkness round Hoshizaki Cape?

The plovers are whistling from the darkness in the direction of this headland. The verse was composed at Narumi where he stayed when on a journey to his native place, 1687. We feel in it the sadness of a traveller who knew his journey to be without end. The question-form of this verse is deeply significant. Poetry is never

in the answers, but in the questions,—or rather it lies in the region between question and answer, between known and unknown. Compare Shōha's verse:

何を釣る沖の小舟ぞ笠の雪
Nani wo tsuru oki no kobune zo kasa no yuki

What are they catching,
 The small boats out in the offing,
 As snow falls on my *kasa*?

One of the most representative of Bashō verses:

旅人と我名よばれん初しぐれ
Tabi-bito to waga na yobaren hatsu-shigure

The first winter shower;
 My name shall be
 "Traveller."

This was the first haiku Bashō wrote when setting out in November on a journey to his native place. Up to this time, he has been "Bashō," or "Tōsei," or "Teacher," but now he has joined that vast multitude that journey without rest from one place to another, like torn-off leaves carried no one knows whither by the wind. This is the democracy of Bashō, the democracy of Nature.

冬の日や馬上に氷る影法師
Fuyu no hi ya bajō ni kōru kagebōshi

A winter day;
 On my horse's back
 A shadow sits freezing.

This verse was composed when Bashō was passing

along the Amatsu Nawate, "a narrow path through the ricefields, where a strong cold wind was blowing from the sea," あまつ縄手, 田の中に細道ありて, 海より吹上ぐる風いと寒き所なり.¹ Bashō feels himself to be a mere shadow, frozen stiff. There are several other forms of this verse, for example:

さむき田や馬上にすくむ影法師
Samuki ta ya bajō ni sukumu kagebōshi

The cold rice-fields;
 On horse-back,
 My shadow creeps below.

Here the shadow is imprinted on the field as he passes.

曙や白魚白きこと一寸
Akebono ya shirauo shiroki koto issun

In the morning twilight
 The lancelets,
 Inch-long white things.

On the way to Nagoya, near Kuwana, 桑名, Bashō went down to the sea-shore in the early morning, before it was still properly light. Fisherman were at work there, and he saw something white gleaming on the sand. Going closer, this mass of translucent whiteness, reflecting the eastern skies, resolved itself into small fishes, each of about an inch in length.

死にもせぬ旅路の果よ秋の暮
Shininosenu tabiji no hate yo aki no kure

¹ 笈の小文。

Still alive
 At the end of the journey!
 An evening of late autumn.

On the second of his journeys (eight in all) and the first of which he made a record (*The Nozarashi Kikō*) Bashō reached his native place in the autumn of 1684, when he was forty one years old. It was about this time that Bashō realized that “our being’s home is with,” not “eternity,” but nature, and he had resolved to give up life itself in order to live there. He registers in this verse some surprise at finding himself not dead yet, in spite of a weak body upon an arduous journey of altogether eight months.

旅鳥古巢は梅になりけり
Tabi-garasu furu-su wa ume ni nari ni keru

The old nest
 Of the journeying crow,—
 It has become a plum-tree.

This could hardly be called a great poem, or even a particularly good haiku, and yet when we know it is by Bashō, it expresses the whole of his character and way of life, that is, way of poetical living. It was probably composed in 1685, when he went back to his native place. He had been a young samurai; now he was dressed in black, monkish robes. Then it was his home; now it was the home of the plum tree in the garden. Bashō sees nature,

With its calm oblivious tendencies,
 And silent overgrowings.

馬に寝て残夢月遠し茶の烟
Uma ni nete zanmu tsuki tōshi cha no kemuri

On horseback half-asleep,
 Half-dreaming, the moon far off,
 Smoke for the morning tea.

Bashō left the inn in the early morning. He had not slept well, and he sat on the horse still half-asleep. In the western sky the moon was fading as it sank, and from here and there rose in the air the smoke of the fires being lit for the morning cup of tea. The horse, Bashō himself, the dreams of the night, the faintness of the moon in the distance, and the unwilling smoke are all in harmony with the morning stillness and half-awakeness.

芋種や花の盛りを賣り歩く
Imo-tane ya hana no sakari wo uri-aruku

The cherry blossoms at their best,
 They walk about selling
 Seeds of the yam.

Potato seeds are sown just at this time, and Bashō, though brought up as a samurai, and living chiefly in Edo, took a deep interest in the seasons as such.

日の道や葵かたむく五月雨
Hi no michi ya aoi katamuku satsuki-ame

In the rains of June
 Does the hollyhock turn
 To the path of the sun?

It is raining, and the hollyhock turns perhaps in the direction of the unseen sun. We feel the secret life and

faithfulness of things, the bond that unites them.

うぐひすや竹の子藪に老を鳴く
Uguisu ya take no ko-yabu ni oi wo naku

The uguisu,
 In the grove of bamboo shoots,
 Sings of its old age.

It is early summer, and bamboo shoots are already appearing in the groves. The voice of the uguisu is past its prime, and as the sound of the bird declines in power and sweetness, the young sprouts are coming out of the ground with all their vitality and energetic growth.

晝顔に米つき涼むあわれなり
Hirugao ni kometsuki suzumu aware nari

The rice-pounder,
 Cooling himself by the convolvulus flowers,—
 A sight of pathos.

The rice-pounder is exhausted, and sits in the shade mopping his brow. Along the fence the convolvulus flowers are blooming because of and in spite of the heat. The half-obliviousness of the flowers on the part of the man, and the complete obliviousness on the part of the flowers, gives Bashō a feeling which, like God, is nameless.

春雨や蜂の巣つとう屋根のもり
Harusame ya hachi no su tsutou yane no mori

Spring rain falling
 The roof leaks,
 Trickling down the wasps' nest.

This is a minute observation of the inconsequence, the

haphazardness of nature, one of Wordsworth's "random truths."

三日月に地は朧ろなり蕎麥の花
Mikazuki ni chi wa oboro nari soba no hana

The earth is whitish
 With buckwheat flowers
 Under the crescent moon.

Sometimes this hard, solid, matter-of-fact world looks ghostly and unreal; which indeed is the true one?

ながき日を囀りたらぬ雲雀かな
Nagaki hi wo saezuri taranu hibari kana

Singing, singing,
 All the long day,
 But not long enough for the skylark.

There is something insatiable about nature, as there is also in man, and though in general there seems a fitness and balance in things, we find also the ravenous, the excessive, infinite desire. The skylark is a simple and innocent example of this. It sings without sense or reason, from morning to night, a creature which the longest day can never satisfy or weary.

朝露によごれて涼し瓜の泥
Asa-tsuyu ni yogorete suzushi uri no doro

In the morning dew,
 Dirty, but fresh,
 The muddy melon.

Bashō perceived in 1694, the year of his death, what

Crabbe grasped a hundred years later, that mud is the most poetical thing in the world.

草まくらまことの花見しても來よ
Kusamakura makoto no hanami shite mo ko yo

Come, come
 To the real flower-viewing
 Of this life of poverty.

We may find a hint of Bashō's attitude towards the cherry blossoms in a waka from the *Kokinshū*, Volume xv, by Komachi:

色見えでうつろふものは世の中の
 人の心の花にぞありける

The invisible colour
 That fades,
 In this world,
 Of the flowers
 Of the heart of man.

Occasionally we can see what an emotional person Bashō was, though usually he represses his feelings:

手にとらば消えん涙ぞあつき秋の霜
Te ni toraba kien namida zo atsuki aki no shimo

Should I take it in my hand,
 It would melt in my hot tears,
 Like autumn frost.

He is referring to the white hair of his dead mother which he saw when he returned to his native place in 1684.

秋近き心のよるや四疊半
Aki chikaki kokoro no yoru ya yojōhan

Autumn is near;
The heart inclines
To the four-and-a-half mat room.

When summer is ending, and autumn approaches, poetical people feel drawn to the small room where the tea ceremony is held. Tea, like nature itself, belongs to no particular season, yet as the energy of summer declines, the meditative mood, a more passive state of mind arises, and we wish to express the harmony and beauty of life in a meeting of friends, an association with simple and beautiful things only, and for this mood the tea ceremony was made, since out of this it proceeded. Bashō's verse is undeniably subjective, but it is not purely individual, for tea is a social thing, and further, through the expression of his own desire, he has given us something of the objective nature of the autumnal season as it takes the place of late summer.

What makes Bashō one of the greatest of the poets of the world is the fact that he lived the poetry he wrote, and wrote the poetry he lived.

Chapter IX

THE TEN DISCIPLES OF BASHŌ I

Of the very many disciples of Bashō, Kikaku and Ransetsu and Kyorai were the chief, and to these, seven more make up the ten, Jōsō, Kyoroku, Shikō, Sampū, Yaha, Etsujin, and Hokushi. Like most disciples, they were a motley crew, and no doubt often made their master sigh. Oddly enough, Bashō seems to have been fondest of **Kikaku**, 其角, the most different in character from Bashō, and who might even be taken as the unwitting father of senryu. Born in 1661, he lived only forty six years, but was very active in Bashō's school, which he entered at the age of fifteen. While Bashō was alive he submitted to his goodness and seriousness, but after his death in 1694, and until his own in 1707, he went his own way of truthful frivolity and witty sincerity. He learned Confucianism from Kansai, 寛齋, medicine from Kusagari, 草刈, Chinese poetry from Ōshō, 大巖, painting from Itchō. As with everybody, Kikaku's strong point was also his great weakness. His talent led him into artificiality, and his originality into a desire to astonish. Bashō once criticised a famous verse of his:

聲かれて猿の齒白し峰の月
Koe karete saru no ha shiroshi mine no tsuki

Its voice hoarsening,
The monkey's teeth are white
Under the moon over the peak.

Bashō said: "You have the weakness of trying to say something unusual. You seek a splendid verse in far-off things, but it is in things around you." Kikaku has what one may call Edo-taste. His lightness of touch Bashō could not emulate, though it is to be noted that it is this very *karumi* which Bashō attained to in his last years. Kikaku is one of the children of this world, but shallowness and vulgarity are also part of the universe. We see this in the following:

初雪にこの小便は何やつぞ
Hatsu-yuki ni kono shōben wa nani yatsu zo

What creature on earth was it
That made water
On this first snow?

It is interesting to compare and contrast this with Issa's verse on the same subject:

眞直な小便穴や門の雪
Massugu na shōben-ana ya kado no yuki

The straight hole
Made by pissing
In the snow outside the gate.

Kikaku is, or pretends to be, indignant at the unaestheticness of the person who has made water and spoiled the beautiful white expanse of snow. Issa is actually far less moral than the immoral Kikaku. He sees how straight the yellow hole in the snow is. However, Kikaku has an energy like that of Byron and Burns, that overflows on to all things.

Kikaku lived at the time of "The Forty-Seven Rōnin."

When they committed harakiri in the 16th year of Genroku, he offered some verses, including:

かへらずにかのなきたまの夕べかな
Kaerazu ni kano naki tama no yūbe kana

Those precious souls of yours
 Are passed away, never more to return,—
 Ah, this night!

The following is said to be his own death verse:

鶯のあかつきさむしきりぎりす
Uguisu no akatsuki samushi kirigirisu

The uguisu's morning
 Is chill;
 It is now a mere grasshopper.

Other verses:

蚊を焼くや褒奴が閨の私語
Ka wo yaku ya hōji ga neya no sasamegoto

Sweet nothings heard
 In Hōji's bedroom,
 Burning mosquitoes.

Paosu was the mistress of the Emperor Yu of Chou. She never smiled, and he did all kinds of cruel things to interest her. Kikaku says that the Emperor must have burned mosquitoes alive with a candle to please her, billing and cooing the while. Even Buson could not surpass the brilliance of this verse, which however is really senryu, not haiku.

灌佛や捨子則ち寺の兒
Kanbutsu ya sutego sunawachi tera no chigo

Buddha's birthday;
The deserted child,—
Now a boy of the temple.

Kikaku always reminds us of Shakespeare, in this case vaguely of *Measure for Measure*. This verse represents what the people who have come to the temple on this holy day whisper to each other about the young priestling.

香薷散犬がねぶつて雲の峰
Kōjusan inu ga nebutte kumo no mine

The dog is licking
The kōjusan medicine;
Billowing clouds.

The peaks of summer clouds are present and visible symbols of the heat for which kōjusan is a specific. This haiku means that the weather is very hot, and also refers to the Chinese story given on page 84 of *Oriental Humour*. The animals and birds rose up to the “billowing clouds.”

あさぎりに一の鳥居や波の音
Asa-giri ni ichi no torii ya nami no oto

In the morning mist
A single torii:
The sound of the waves,

This was composed at Yuigahama. Here we have religion,—but rather, the coldness of the mist and the murmuring of the sea are present to the mind.

すむ月や髭をたてたる蚕
Sumu tsuki ya hi ge wo tatetaru kirigirisu

The moon becomes clear;
 A grasshopper
 Is erecting its whiskers.

The moon is shining, and outside many insects are singing. One of them is by the table, or on the kettle-hanger over the fire-place, moving its long whiskers in a charming way.

鳩部屋の夕日しづけし年の暮
Hato-beya no yūhi shizukeshi toshi no kure

On the pigeon house
 The setting sun shines quietly
 At the end of the year.

There is an interesting contrast between the busyness and worry of human life (created by people themselves) especially felt during the last few days of the year, and the soft winter sunshine on the pigeon house with its gentle cooing sounds of peaceful joy. This is an unusual verse for the practical-minded Kikaku.

夜神樂や鼻息しろき面のうら
Yokagura ya hanaiki shiroki men no ura

Sacred dances at night;
 Their breath is white
 Behind the masks.

Kikaku's verses always have something fresh, frank, unsentimental, agreeable in them. They are parts of life. Here, where other people are only aware of the brocade

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文治三年甲寅二月十五日普子百回忌追福

久松白雲



shining in the light of the torches, the musicians chanting, and the instruments throbbing, Kikaku sees the breath of winter arising from behind the masks of the dancers.

雁の腹見送る空や舟の上
Kari no hara miokuru sora ya fune no ue

Seeing off the bellies
Of the wild geese in the sky
Above the boat.

The significance of this sight is increased by the water, the reeds nearby (the home of the geese), and the swaying of the boat itself. Kikaku saw the bellies of the geese as something significant, the most meaningful part of their bodies at the moment. Usually it is their long necks or their paddles moving. Compare what Thoreau says in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* of the ducks,

flying against the stiff gale with reefed wings, or else circling round first, with all their paddles briskly moving, just over the surf, to reconnoitre you before they leave these parts.

夜着をきてあるいて見たり土用干
Yogi wo kite aruite mitari doyō-boshi

Summer airing:
Trying on a quilt,
And walking about in it.

These small things are, as Homer in his greatness knew, as important and unforgettable as the major calamities of human life, which as Dr. Johnson said, are borne with great equanimity when they are other people's.

わが僕落花に晝寝ゆるしけり
Waga yakko rakka ni hirune yurushi keru

The gardener;
 I let him have a longer sleep,
 The cherry-blossoms falling.

The petals covered the ground under the trees, and Kikaku was glad that the man-of-all-work had not yet swept them up.

芋の葉に命をつゝむ清水かな
Imo no ha ni inochi wo tsutsumu shimizu kana

The leaf of the yam
 Envelops the life
 Of the drop of water.

It can make it or break it.

秋の空尾上の杉のはなれたり
Aki no sora onoe no sugi no hanaretari

The autumn sky,
 Separated
 From the cedar on the hill.

The sky in autumn is seen to be far above the hill with the cedar on the summit, and it is then realised that the rest of the year the sky is close to, and almost touching the hill-top cedars.

車にて花見を見ばや東山
Kuruma nite hanami wo mibaya higashiyama

I would like to see,
 From a carriage, the people flower-viewing
 On Mount Higashi.

It is true; the people who love the flowers are lovelier than they. Solomon is more glorious than the lilies of the field.

花を得ん使者の夜道に月を哉
Hana wo en shisha no yomichi ni tsuki wo kana

Oh for a moon
Over the road of the messenger
Who is bringing the flowers!

A man used to send Kikaku flowers every year. Kikaku wishes it to be a moonlight night, not so that the messenger may come easily and quickly, but so that he, Kikaku, can imagine a more beautiful scene.

うき舟の涼しき中へかにの甲
Uki-fune no suzushiki nakae kani no kō

In the coolness
Of an empty boat,
The shell of a crab.

When we read this haiku, as with many others of Kikaku, we feel a strong admiration of him as a poet, but when we go deeper into the matter, it ends in an anticlimax. The prescript of this verse is: 蟹をもてなす人に, "For a man who treated me to crabs." The crab-shells are those remaining after the Walrus and the Carpenter "had eaten every one." Another explanation is that a young man and a young woman were sitting in a boat, and a passing boat threw empty crab-shells into it from jealousy. This is based on the story in the *Genji Monogatari* of a woman who met Niō Miya in a boat, and was thereafter known as Ukibune, Miss Empty-boat. In other

words, Kikaku is, like Chaucer, never really serious. Bashō is always serious, in his writings also, and this is a defect, as it is in real life.

水影や颯わたる藤の棚
Mizu-kage ya musasabi wataru fuji no tana

The flying squirrel
 Is reflected in the water
 Passing under the wistaria.

This subject is suitable perhaps for waka, but not for haiku, which is a poor man's poetry, just as (primitive) Christianity was a poor man's religion.

汁鍋に笠のしづくや早苗取
Shiru-nabe ni kasa no shizuku ya sanae tori

Women transplanting rice-seedlings;
 Rain-drops from their kasa
 Fall into the soup of the saucepan.

They have made a fire on the bank and are cooking some soup over it. There is some slight malice in this verse which stamps it as Kikaku's.

せみ啼や木のぼりしたる團扇賣
Semi naku ya kinobori shitaru uchiwa-uri

A cicada cries,
 And the fan-peddler
 Climbs up the tree.

This verse was published in the 5th year of Genroku, 1692. At this time, fans were sold by boys.

水うてや蟬も雀もぬるゝほど
Mizu ute ya semi mo suzume mo nururu hodo

Sprinkle water around,—
Enough to wet
The sparrows and cicadas too!

This is not, as one commentator says, “an expression of Buddhist piety,” but of the exasperating heat, by a hyperbole arising from it.

千人が手を欄干や橋すゞみ
Sen-nin ga te wo rankan ya hashi-suzumi

A thousand hands
On the balustrade,
Cooling in the evening on the bridge.

The metonymy here, or synecdoche, whichever it is, is the life of this verse.

此木戸や錠のさゝれて冬の月
Kono kido ya jō no sasarete fuyu no tsuki

This wicket-gate
Is bolted and barred:
The winter moon.

In such a verse as this Kikaku shows his genius as a haiku-writer. The moment is experienced, grasped, expressed. Man's extremity is Nature's opportunity.

Ransetsu, 嵐雪, 1654-1707, who was born in a farmer's house, and served various feudal lords as a samurai, at last learned haikai from Bashō, and became his most representative disciple. He learned Zen from Saiun Hōjō, 濟雲方丈, and painting from Itchō. Ransetsu is too nega-

tive; he follows his master too closely, and lacks Kikaku's Chaucerian vivacity. Bashō said of him, "I cannot equal Ransetsu in poetical austerity," からびたる事嵐雪に及ばず, but this does not seem to be Ransetsu's characteristic. Rather, he is soft and gentle, for example:

顔につく飯粒 蠅にあたへけり
Kao ni tsuku meshitsubu hae ni atae keru

The grain of rice
 Stuck on my face
 I gave to a fly.

Kyoroku wrote of Ransetsu:

He is a man of small calibre, soft and weak by nature; he seems to have flowers, but has no fruit.

There is some truth in this, though it is perhaps inspired by envy. Even his death verse, beautiful and justly famous as it is, has something nerveless about it:

ひと葉散りとつひと葉散る風のうえ
Hitoha chiri totsu hito-ha chiru kaze no ue

A leaf falls,
 Totsu! Another leaf falls,
 Carried by the wind.

The following are some of his best verses not given in previous volumes:

風の吹きやるうしろ姿かな
Kogarashi no fukiyaru ushiro sugata kana

Sent off
 By the winter blast,—
 His retreating figure.

This was composed in commemoration of Bashō's death.

門の雪白と盥のすがたかな
Kado no yuki usu to tarai no sugata kana

Under the snowy gate
The form of the tub and the mortar
Are clearly seen.

The dirty rice-mortar and the old tub attract no attention on ordinary days, but after a fall of snow they become somehow poetical, at once more familiar and yet a little unfamiliar.

文もなく口上もなし粽五把
Fumi mo naku kōjō mo nashi chimaki gowa

No letter,
No message,—
Five rice dumplings in bamboo leaves.

Chimaki are eaten at the Boy's Festival, May 5th. In this case someone sent this present, but without the (unnecessary and insincerely formal) words that usually accompany such a gift.

若竹は片肌ぬぎのきほひかな
Waka-take wa kata-hada`nugi no kioi kana

The young bamboo
Bares one shoulder
Gallantly.

To understand this excellent verse we must know two things: the way in which the bamboo grows out of the ground, the sheath on one side; and the way in which a Japanese of the old dashing type would pull out his sword

and bare the shoulder of that arm to ensure freedom of action.

なめくしり這つて光るや古具足
Namekujiri hatte hikaru ya furu-gusoku

A slug
 Crawls shining
 Over the old greaves.

The old Japanese armour also shines and glistens in the sunshine. Perhaps this verse was composed during the summer airing, when all the things are brought out of the house to dry them.

鴨ありて水まで歩む氷かな
Kamo arite mizu made ayumu kōri kana

The wild ducks there
 Walk across the ice
 Up to the water.

This verse is too explanatory and matter-of-fact.

簀ほして朝々ふるふ螢かな
Mino hoshite asa-asa furuu hotaru kana

Every morning,
 Shaking out the fireflies
 When drying the straw rain-coat.

The haiku poets lived very close to nature, to mist and rain, to insects creeping and flying.

草の葉を遊びありけよ露の玉
Kusa no ha wo asobi arikeyo tsuyu no tama

Beads of dew!
Walk about on the blades of grass,
And enjoy yourselves!

Clare writes of dewdrops in the same way.

身一つをもてあつかへる西瓜かな
Mi hitotsu wo moteatsukaeru suika kana

Able to look after
Its own self,—
The melon.

There is some Zen in this verse. Each thing can and does manage itself,—except the so-called higher animals.

蛇いちご半弓提げて夫婦づれ
Hebiichigo hankyū sagete meotozure

Snake-strawberries;
Carrying small bows,
Husband and wife together.

In 1705 Ransetsu went, with several of his disciples, on a journey from Ise to Southern Kishū. The above verse is found in his diary of the journey, *Those Hamayū*,¹ 其濱ゆふ. He writes:

I have so far seen those inhabitants of far-off islands, Luson and Kabocha (Cambodia), only in pictures. One of the pleasures of travelling is to see such southern barbarians, be they devils or be they human beings, hiding in caves or rushing about the rocks.

Ransetsu puts in the “devil strawberries” to bring out the exotic nature of the scene.

¹ The hamayū is a plant with white flowers.

何も音なし稲うちくうて蟲かな
Nanimo oto nashi ine uchikūte kemushi kana

Soundlessly
 Eating the rice-plant,—
 The caterpillar.

Bashō and his disciples were fond of insects' voices, for example the song of the (actually voiceless) bagworm, and of the sound of bowl-beating, all sounds of nature and religion. Here it is the lack of sound which is appreciated.

The relation of **Kyorai**, 去來, 1651-1704, with Bashō was peculiarly close, partly, as in the case of Kikaku, because of his difference of character. Kyorai, the son of a Confucianist, was fond of the martial arts, especially of archery, but at the same time had something of the tenderness of mind of Clare. He had thus a double character, and when he died, someone said of him, "He had a soft part and a hard part at the same time."

青あらし定まる時や苗の色
Ao-arashi sadamaru toki ya nae no iro

After the "green storm"
 Has blown over,—
 The colour of the rice-seedling field.

The sky is seen in its real nature, not directly, but in the bosom of the now steady water of the field where the rice-seedlings have been sown.

動くとも見えで畑うつ男かな
Ugoku tomo miede hata utsu otoko kana

The man
Hoeing in the field,
Seems motionless.

See *Haiku*, Vol. II, page 166, for a criticism.

一畔はしばし啼きやむ蛙かな
Hito aze wa shibashi naki yamu kawazu kana

One field of frogs
Croaks for a time,
And then is silent.

Actually it is "one footpath between the fields" of frogs. Frogs often croak together, and then suddenly, for no apparent reason, stop.

使者ひとり書院へ通る寒さかな
Shisha hitori shoin e tōru samusa kana

A single messenger
Is led into the guest-chamber,—
The cold!

The room is spacious and in the best possible taste, but it is filled with the coldness of the human heart.

故郷もいまは假寝や涙鳥
Furusato mo ima wa karine ya watari-āori

Even in my native town,
O birds of passage,
It is but the sleep of a traveller!

Kyorai was born in Nagasaki, but had lived long in Kyōto. When he went back home on a visit, he felt that home is sweet, but home is not home.

冬枯の木間のぞかん賣屋敷
Fuyugare no konoma nozokan uri-yashiki

Winter desolation;
 Let's peep through the trees
 At the mansion for sale.

Empty buildings have a strange attraction. Perhaps they are to us prophetic of the world as it one day will be, empty of human beings.

鉢たゝきこぬよとなれば朧なり
Hachi tataki konu yo to nareba oboro nari

A night
 When the bowl-beaters ceased to come,—
 A hazy moon.

This verse has a strange subject for its poetry,—the interim between the cessation of the nightly visit of the religious enthusiasts, and the advent of spring with its misty moon. The fact of the bowl-beaters having ceased to come is perceived in the seeing of the vernal moon.

有明や片帆にうけて一時雨
Ariake ya kata-ho ni ukete hito-shigure

The remaining moon of dawn;
 One side only of the sail
 Receives the gust of rain.

Nature has its oddities, inconsistencies, incongruities, just as men have. The rain does not always fall equally on the just and on the unjust. Another good verse on sails:

いそがしや沖の時雨の眞帆片帆
Isogashi ya oki no shigure no ma-ho kata-ho

How busy they are
Out at sea in the rain,
Full sails, close-hauled sails!

“Busy” is a word of Zen.

有明にふりむきがたき寒さ哉
Ariake ni furimuki-gataki samusa kana

The cold!
Too difficult to look round
At the crescent moon.

This verse is an expression of the bitter winter cold, and at the same time of the beauty of the moon, warped and bent, in the sky, by means of the unwillingness of the poet to turn his head round and open his neck to the cold air.

あら磯やはしり馴れたる友衛
Araiso ya hashiri naretaru tomo-chidori

Flying back and forth,
The groups of seagulls are accustomed
To the wild shore.

This haiku has some intellectual element (in the word “accustomed”) but the scene is a beautiful one, the skilful birds unconcerned at “the wild uproar.”

手の上に悲しく消ゆる螢かな
Te no ue ni kanashiku kiyuru hotaru kana

Alas!
The light of the firefly goes out
In the hand.

This was written when his younger sister Chiné died. She was accomplished in haikai. She married a man from Nagasaki, and the next year she died, her death poem being:

もえやすく又消えやすき螢かな
Moe yasuku mata kie yasuki hotaru kana

How easily it glows,
How easily its light goes out,—
The firefly!

Kyorai's verse is based on this.

箒こそ真似ても見せむ鉢叩
Hōki kose mane temo misen hachitataki

Hand me a broom,
And I'll show you an imitation
Of bowl-beating!

This is a very interesting verse. The human value is great, though perhaps not the poetical. Kyorai asked Bashō to come to his house for the bowl-beating, which celebrates the death of Kūya Shōnin from the 13th of November for forty eight nights by beating a kind of drum or gourd, intoning the nembutsu, and walking through Kyōto and its outskirts. The sound of the beating and the hoarse voices in the cold winter night is infinitely touching. In his writing, *Hachitataki no Ji*, 鉢叩辭, Kyorai tells us that the night Bashō came was stormy, and the

bowl-beating people did not turn up according to schedule however long they waited, so Kyorai, in order not to disappoint Bashō, used a bamboo mouth-bellows, and imitated the sound of the bowl-beating. He quotes (part of) Kikaku's verse:

悉く寢覺めはやらじ鉢叩
Kotogotoku nezame wa yaraji hachitataki

Not everybody
Is wakened
By the bowl-beating.

Kyorai also quotes the verse of Bashō:

長嘯の墓もめぐるか鉢叩
Chōshō no haka mo meguru ka hachitataki

Have they not walked round
The grave of Chōshō,
Bowl-beating?

Chōshō was a waka poet of the beginning of the Edo Period whose grave is in Shojiji Temple. A far better, and justly famous verse by Bashō on the same subject:

乾鮭も空也の瘦も寒の内
Hoshi-zake mo kūya no yase mo kan no uchi

Dried salted salmon,
Kuya's emaciation also,
During the coldest season.

花守や白きかしらを突き合はせ
Hanamori ya shiroki kashira wo tsukiawase

The guardians of the cherry trees
 Put together
 Their white heads.

Kyorai says of this verse that it has *sabi*, a certain colour, or odour, or taste, which is not that of mere quietness or loneliness, but of age, an age which is not that of time, but of experience, of depth.

かゝる夜の月も見にけり野邊送
Kakaru yo no tsuki mo mi ni keri nobe-okuri

Coming back from a funeral,—
 On such a night
 I gazed at the moon.

Poetry is not emotion. Looking at the moon has nothing to do with the death of a relative or friend. But how these things are contrasted and blended in our world!

Chapter X

THE TEN DISCIPLES OF BASHŌ II

Jōsō, 丈草, 1662-1704, resigned from his service as a samurai at the age of twenty six, and soon after became a pupil of Bashō. He studied Zen under Gyokudō, 玉堂, of Kōseiji Temple, 光聖寺. Bashō and Jōsō were extremely fond of each other. After Bashō death he made a hermitage at Awazu near Yoshinaka Temple, 義仲寺, and died there at the age of forty-two. His verses often have "the taste of Zen," sometimes too much; for example:

とりつかぬ力で浮ぶ蛙かな
Toritsukanu chikara de ukabu kawazu kana

The frog floats on the water
By its power of clinging
To nothing at all.

This is not haiku; neither is it Zen, but only the clinging to it.

うづくまる葉の下の寒さかな
Uzukumaru kusuri no shita no samusa kana

Squatting
Round the medicine,—
The cold!

This was written in Ōsaka, on the second of October, 1694, when Jōsō, Kyorai, Seishu, Mokushetsu, 木節, Otokuni, Shikō, and Kikaku were gathered round the bedside of the

dying Bashō. It is a true haiku, in that the spiritual loneliness, the inevitable parting, the death-feeling is felt in the physical cold.

陽炎や墓よりそとに住むばかり
Kagerō ya haka yori soto ni sumu bakari

Quivering spring vapour!
 I myself barely live,
 Just outside the grave.

This was written of Bashō's grave when Jōsō himself was very ill.

狼の聲揃ふなり雪の暮
Ōkami no koe sorou nari yuki no kure

Wolves howling,
 All in chorus:
 An evening of snow.

The Russians could write some good winter haiku.

きりぎりす啼くや出立の膳の下
Kirigirisu naku ya detachi no zen no shita

A cricket chirps
 Beneath the table
 Of the one about to set out.

The sound of the insect increases the feeling of slight uneasiness the traveller feels as he is about to leave the inn. Another verse about the cricket by Jōsō:

悔み言ふ人のとぎれやきりぎりす
Kuyami iu hito no togire ya kirigirisu

In the intervals
Of his condolences,
The cricket.

This verse has some Zen in it, and (perhaps for that reason) leans towards senryu.

火を打てば軒に啼きあふ雨蛙
Hi wo uteba noki ni naki-au amagaeru

Striking a light,
The green-frogs under the eaves
Strike up in concert.

The frogs must have been singing off and on all day, but when Jōsō struck the flint (the pun is not in the original) the noise and the light make him suddenly listen to what he had heard from before. Jōsō was living alone in Butsugen Hermitage, 佛幻庵, in the last years of his life.

釣し柿や障子に狂ふ夕日影
Tsurushi-gaki ya shōji ni kuruu yūhi kage

Persimmons hung up to dry;
On the paper screens,
The shadows in the evening sunlight are crazy.

Persimmons are peeled, spitted on sticks, or tied on strings and hung from the eaves to dry and sweeten in the sunshine. "Crazy" means all shapes and sizes.

時鳥啼くや湖水のさゝ濁り
Hototogisu naku ya kosui no sasari-gori

A hototogisu cries!
The waters of the lake
Are a little cloudy.

This verse is written as though there were some (causal) relation between the crying of the *hototogisu* and the slight turbidity of the water of Lake Biwa. To say there is a relation is nonsense. To say there is no relation is to be at best scientific. The (poetic) truth lies between the two.

黒みけり沖の時雨の行ところ
Kuromi kerī oki no shigure no yuku tokoro

Where the winter rain
 Blows over the offing,
 The sea darkens.

What should we do in Heaven without such things?

我がこととどぜうの逃げし根芹哉
Waga koto to dojō no nigeshi nezeri kana

The parsley-gatherer;
 Thinking he is after him,
 The loach slips away.

Even nature makes mistakes, imputes false intentions. Monkeys fall from the tree sometimes, so the Japanese say. Perhaps after all, we are wrong to be so ashamed of our faults.

光り合ふ三つの山の茂り哉
Hikari-au futatsu no yama no shigeri kana

Two leafy hills
 Greenly reflecting
 Each other.

This haiku is somewhat in the style of Richard Jefferies. The greenness of one hill reflects not only the greenness

of the other, but the leafiness; the will to live greenly is also reflected.

行く秋や梢にかゝるかな屑
Yuku aki ya kozue ni kakaru kannakuzu

Autumn is passing;
On the twigs there hang
Plane shavings.

There is something inexplicably desolate in this meaningless disharmony of the twigs of the trees, and the curled shavings of the carpenter, but this disharmony is in harmony with the season.

しら粥の茶碗くまなし初日影
Shiragayu no chawan kuma nashi hatsuhi kage

White gruel
In an immaculate bowl,—
The sunlight of New Year's Day!

This is the verse of a man who sought for purity and early found it in the life of a monk.

まつさきに見し枝ならんちる櫻
Massaki ni mishi eda naran chiru sakura

These branches
Must have been seen first of all,
Falling blossoms!

This is not a logical deduction, but an imaginative recreation of something now past.

一月は我に米かせ鉢扣き
Hitotsuki wa ware ni kome kase hachitadaki

Bowl-beating;
Lend me
A month's rice!

The bowl-beating in memory of Saint Kūya was done for thirty days in winter, walking round the city and its suburbs. Jōsō is not advertising his poverty, but humorously transcending the religious practice. It is a sort of prayer: "Give us this month our monthly rice!"

Sampū, 杉風, 1647-1732, was a fish merchant, and not very clever or literary, but all the more followed Bashō faithfully during the master's lifetime, and after his death. He has his place in haiku history for his providing the Bashō-hermitage. Sampū's haiku are not great as literature, yet for this reason have something that literature can never give us.

名は知らず草ごとに花あはれなり
Na wa shirazu kusa goto ni hana aware nari

Their names I know not,
But every weed has
Its tender flower.

菊畑おくあるきりのくもりかな
Kiku-batake oku aru kiri no kumori kana

A chrysanthemum-garden;
The depths are clouded
In mist.

川添の畑をありく月夜かな
Kawa-zoi no hatake wo ariku tsukiyo kana

Walking through
Fields by the river,
A moonlit night.

Thoreau often did this by the meadows of the Concord.

木枯に何やら一羽寒げなり
Kogarashi ni naniyara ichi-wa samuge nari

A nameless bird
Looks cold
In the wintry blast.

God is nameless—how much more so a single solitary bird. To be nameless is to be naked. Namelessness and coldness are thus connected.

Kyoroku, 許六, 1656–1715, was a samurai of Ōmi Province who learned haikai from Bashō in the last few years of the master's life, from 1692. It is said that he taught Bashō painting. He disputed with Kyorai concerning the meaning of *sabi* and so on; his good haiku are not many. His death verse:

下手ばかり死ぬることぞと思ひしに
上手も死ぬべく、そ上手なり

I thought
That only the unskilful
Die,
But if a clever man dies,
How cleverly he will do it!

涼風や青田のうへの雲の影
Suzukaze ya aota no ue no kumo no kage

Cool breezes blow;
Over the green fields
Cloud-shadows pass.

新藁の屋根の雫や初時雨
Shin-wara no yane no shizuku ya hatsu-shigure

Rain-drops
From the new thatch:
The first winter shower.

照りつける晒の上の雲の峰
Teritsukeru sarashi no ue no kumo no mine

Over white cotton cloth
Spread out in the sun,
Billowing clouds.

灸の点ひぬ間もさむし春の風
Kyū no ten hinuma mo samushi haru no kaze

The marks for moxa;
While they dry,
The cold wind of spring.

The second day of the Second Month (Lunar Calendar) was the day when moxa was customarily placed on the body. The person stripped to the waist, and marks were made with indian ink where the moxa was to be put. He or she sat there a moment while the ink dried. At this time the spring wind was perceived to be blowing.

卯の花に蘆毛の馬の夜明哉
U no hana ni ashige no uma no yoake kana

Along by the flowers of the *u*,
The white horse
In the early dawn.

The white *u* flowers, the horse, the pale dawn, this is a Symphony in White, without the other colours of Whistler's picture. This kind of harmony was the forte of Kyoroku.

産月の腹を抱えて田植かな
Umizuki no hara wo kakaete taue kana

Pregnant,
And will give birth this month,
But she plants the rice seedlings.

The Japanese says, "Holding a belly of this month's bearing, field-planting." Hekigodō says this is a comical verse, thus exhibiting the (old) Japanese man's view of women in general and child-birth in particular. The subject of the verse is somehow more suitable for senryu than haiku, but it is possible to see something perhaps quite unintended, the pregnant woman working in the pregnant field.

十團子も小粒になりぬ秋の風
Tōdago mo kotsubu ni narinu aki no kaze

These dumplings too
Have got smaller:
The autumn wind.

Tōdago were specialties of Utsunoya Pass in the Province of Tsuruga, so named because ten were cooked at one time in a saucepan, and later, sold in batches of ten.

Kyoroku says that they seem to have got smaller than before, and this is a delicate if somewhat gastronomical observation. However, when we read Bashō's eponyms of this verse—he says it has *shiori*—we realise that there is more in this verse than meets the eye, or the mouth, for the decrease in size of the *tōdago* is part of that general tendency of things to decline in quality and quantity. Wordsworth says, in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, that “ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual light.”

一竿は死装束や土用干

Hito-sao wa shinishōzoku ya doyō-boshi

Summer airing:

On one of the poles,

Death-clothes.

In old Japan also, the shroud was usually white, and when hung out to air in the hot sunshine after the rainy season, it is easily distinguishable from the other gaily-coloured garments. This verse is to be taken not as “a solemn contrast,” but as an example of the democracy of things, the universality, the impartiality of Nature. “He maketh his sun to shine upon the living and upon the dead.”

道端に繭干すかざの暑さかな

Michi-bata ni mayu hosu kaza no atsusa kana

On the roadside,

They are drying cocoons:

The smell! the heat!

This was composed in a village in Yamanashi Prefec-

ture where sericulture was practised.

あさがほの裏を見せけり風の秋
Asagao no ura wo misekeri kaze no aki

The autumn of wind;
It shows the back
Of the morning glories.

The flowers of the morning glory belong more to summer than autumn in their colours, blue, red, purple, and indigo, but when the autumn wind blows, the whitish backs of the flowers are in accord with autumn and its loneliness and poverty.

看經の間を朝顔の盛かな
Kankin no ma wo asagao no sakari kana

While intoning the sutra,
The morning glories
Are at their best.

Reciting the sutras in a loud voice, we feel, though not understanding the meaning of the words, the evanescence of life, Joy with his hand ever at his lips, bidding adieu. The flowers of the morning bloom once for ever, soft, deep, and perfect.

Shikō, 支考, 1665-1731, was first a Zen monk of Daichiji Temple, but afterwards became a doctor. He learned haikai from Ryōto, and met Bashō in 1690, four years before the master's death. He set up his own school in Mino, which lasted a long time. He wrote an enormous number of books. His haiku show his strong and stubborn character; they are practically senryu.

船頭の耳の遠さよ桃の花
Sendō no mimi no tōsa yo momo no hana

The boatman,—
 He's hard of hearing!
 The flowers of the peach tree.

He was present at Bashō's bedside before he died,¹ and when scolded by Kyorai for talking about publishing Bashō's works after his death, he composed the following:

叱られて次の間へ出る寒さかな
Shikararete tsugi no ma e deru samusa kana

Reprimanded,
 I go to the next room,—
 How cold it is!

He was said to be shamelessly ambitious; perhaps this was the cause of the following verse:

娑婆にひとり淋しさ思へ置炬燵
Shaba ni hitori sabishisa omoe okigotatsu

Consider how lonely I am,
 All alone in this worldly world!
 With a foot-warmer.

A verse which is not exactly haiku, and yet is a sensation-experience common to everyone:

寒ければ寝られず寝ねば猶寒し
Samukereba nerarezu neneba nao samushi

Cold, it is difficult to sleep;
 If you can't sleep,
 It's still colder.

¹See page 107.

In the following there is even more realism:

蓮の葉に小便すればお舍利かな
Hasu no ha ni shōben sureba o-shari kana

Making water
On the leaves of the lotus,
Sarari-sarari!

Shari is the bones of the Buddha (supposed to be found) in the cremated ashes of any Buddhist saint. *Sha-sha* is the sound of the urine falling on the leaves of the lotus, and thus *shari* is used punningly. The meaning of the verse seems to be that to piss on the lotus, to give up all desire for Paradise, is the hall-mark of the Bodhisattva.

牛になる合點ぢゃ朝寝夕涼
Ushi ni naru gaten ja asane yū-suzumi

I don't mind becoming a cow!
I can sleep in the morning,
And be cool in the evening.

Some one must have told Shikō that he would become an animal in the next world if he persisted in wine, women, and song. Shikō says it may be a more comfortable life than that of human beings.

風に何やら一羽寒げなり
Kogarashi ni naniyara ichiwa samuge nari

In the wintry blast
A single bird
Looks cold.

This reminds us of Shelley's "widow bird upon a wintry bough" in the freezing wind, and of Hardy's lark, with

“wind-beruffled plume.”

馬の耳すぼめて寒し梨の花
Uma no mimi subomete samushi nashi no hana

The horse puts back his ears:
 Cold flowers
 Of the pear-tree.

It is spring to the tree, but not to the horse.

野は枯れてのばすものなし鶴の首
No wa karete nobasu mono nashi tsuru no kabi

The fields all withered,
 Nothing stretches out,
 Only the necks of the cranes.

There is some humour here, but the intention is rather that of a picture; the only rising, aspiring, living thing is the long necks of the cranes in the stubble of the rice-fields.

食堂に雀鳴くなり夕時雨
Jikidō ni suzume naku nari yū-shigure

Sparrows twittering
 In the refectory,
 Evening rain falling.

This is probably a Zen temple. The monks are busy preparing the evening meal; the wooden fish-bell is being struck with the mallet. Rain falls uninterruptedly through the darkening air. The sparrows chirp eagerly as they hop here and there. The Buddhist atmosphere is necessary to bring out one of the meanings of sparrows.

鶏の音の隣も遠し夜の雪
Tori no ne no tonari mo tōshi yoru no yuki

The clarion of the cock
Next door sounds far away,
This evening of snow.

When snow falls, all sounds change, not only in volume and tone, but even in (apparent) position.

門前の小家も遊ぶ冬至かな
Monzen no koie mo asobu tōji kana

The small shop before the temple gate
Also has a holiday,
At the winter solstice.

The point of the verse is in も, "also." The small shop too, besides the great temple, has a holiday on this day. There are few people; there is a coldly-warm sunlight over everything, and all is unusually silent.

五月雨や雲雀なくほど晴れて又
Samidare ya hibari naku hodo harete mata

Summer rain:
Clearing up enough for the larks to sing,
Then again

This verse is an interesting one, partly because of the poetic brevity of *mata*, which means that it began to rain again and the larks stopped their trilling again. In the original, the *mata* is a two-syllabled tail that wags surprisingly at the end of the verse.

Yaha, 野坡, 1662-1740, was born of a merchant in Fukui, and went to Edo to learn business. After the death of

Bashō he led a purely literary life and had many pupils. His verses are rather trivial, the best perhaps being:

人聲の夜半を過ぐる寒さ哉
Hito-goe no yahan wo suguru samusa kana

People's voices
 Passing by at midnight,—
 The cold!

There is something ghostly about voices only, which intensifies the feeling of cold. One verse I am very fond of:

郭公顔の出されぬ格子かな
Hototogisu kao no dasarenu kōshi kana

A hototogisu cries:
 The lattice stops me
 Putting my face out.

This is close to senryu, for the emphasis is more on the human exasperation than on the bird and its arousing the desire to see it.

此の頃の垣の結目や初時雨
Konogoro no kaki no yuime ya hatsushigure

The fence recently,
 With its knotted strings,
 In the first winter rain.

When a bamboo fence is made, it is fixed together with black string, artistically knotted, with which the transparent drops of rain contrast.

永き日や油しめ木のよわる音
Nagaki hi ya abura shimegi no yowaru oto

The long day;
The sound of the oil-pressing machine
Weakens.

This is something that presses out oil from seeds. It is remarkable, the number of ways in which the haiku poets could express the length of the (spring) day.

長松が親の名で来る御慶かな
Chōmatsu ga oya no na de kuru gyokei kana

Chōmatsu comes,
Using his father's name,
With the New Year's greetings.

Bashō said of this verse, 軽きこと野坡に如かず, "For lightness of touch, there is no one like Yaha." The point of the haiku is the self-importance of the boy, that brings out the almost un-natural significance of the first day of spring.

Etsujin, 越人, 1656?-1739, is another haiku poet whose good verses are very few. One of his best-known, also like senryu:

羨やまし思ひきるとき猫の戀
Urayamashi omoikiru toki neko no koi

When I have decided not to love,
How I envy
Cats in love!

This may be taken as praise of free love, in cats. His only good verse, perhaps:

行燈の煤けて寒き雪のくれ
Andon no susukete samuki yuki no kure

The night-light is sooty;
A cold evening
Of snow.

A feeble light, griminess, coldness, snow, and evening,
—these all have a strong and natural relation.

初雪を見てから顔を洗ひけり
Hatsuyuki wo mite kara kao wo arai keri

The first snow;
After I had gazed at it,
I washed my face.

This is one of those things which should be left unsaid,
like Chiyo and her borrowed water.

稗の穂の馬逃したるけしき哉
Hie no ho no uma nigashitaru keshiki kana

The ears of the barnyard-grass
Seem to have made the horse
Shy and run off.

This is like part of a picture by Brūgel. A sudden
gust of wind blows the grass and frightens the peasant's
horse.

山吹のあぶなき岨の崩れかな
Yamabuki no abunaki soba no kuzure kana

The yellow roses
On the crumbling edge
Of the cliff.

Danger adds or intensifies meaning, moral, aesthetic,
or poetical.

Hokushi, 北枝, 1665-1718, was a sword-sharpener by trade. He met Bashō when he went to the Hokuriku district (Kanazawa). Some of his few good verses:

池の星またはらはらと時雨哉
Ike no hoshi mata harahara to shigure kana

The stars in the lake;
Yet again patters down
The cold winter rain.

The stars reflected in the lake, and the rain-ruffled surface, with the stars invisible,—both are good.

帆柱の並ぶや霧の向ひ島
Hobashira no narabu ya kiri no mukai-jima

Masts in a line,
The island
Hidden in mist.

This is a picture in one of Sesshū's styles.

橋桁や陽はさしながら夕霞
Hashigeta ya hi wa sashi nagara yūgasumi

The sunshine gleams
On the bridge girder
Through the evening haze.

This is as near objectivity as poetry can go. The nearness is impressive.

くる秋は風ばかりでもなかりけり
Kuru aki wa kaze bakari de mo nakari keru

Autumn coming
Is felt not only
In the autumn breeze.

This kind of haiku shows its origin in waka. The lack of intensity, concentration, concreteness is the other half of poetry which haiku endeavours to include in itself. To be objective, yet subjective, specific yet vast, sensational yet spiritual,—this is the aim of haiku. In Hokushi's verse, however, it is a vague, "poetical" idea, ideational, hardly grasped through the body. It is probably based on a verse from the *Kokinshū*:

秋來ぬとめにはさやかに見えねども
風のおとにぞおどろかれぬる

Clearly before my eyes
Autumn
Is not seen to come,
But with the sound of the breeze
My heart is moved.

草の葉に置くや残暑の上ぼこり
Kusa no ha ni oku ya zansho no uwabokori

On the leaves of the grasses
There lies the dust
Of the "remaining heat."

Dust lies on the grasses by the road-side. In autumn in Japan the summer heat remains, or seems to return, in a disagreeable way.

薺は咲きならべてぞ凋みける
Asagao wa saki narabete zo shibomi keru

The morning glories
Bloom side by side,
And wither.

The point of this verse, and the only point is the “side by side.” These flowers are born together and die together, unlike human beings, who must die alone and at different times and in different places.

居りかわる羽音涼しや枝の蟬
Orikawaru haoto suzushi ya eda no semi

When it changes its place,
The sound of the wings of the cicada
Is cool and restful.

This association of one sensation (sound) with another (coolness) is not different in essence from the Buddha's power of seeing with his ears, hearing with his nose, and so on.

焼けにけりされども花は散りすまし
Yake ni kerī saredomo hana wa chirisumashi

Burnt to ashes,
But the cherry blossoms
Had all fallen.

In the 3rd year of Genroku, 1690, Hokushi's house in Kanazawa was burnt down, and he sent this haiku to Bashō. Haiku, like Caesar's wife, must not only be devoid of pose, but be above the suspicion of it. We must avoid even the appearance of evil, and avoid the appearance of avoiding it. Above all, art and life must have no “but.”

破鐘のひびきも暑し夏の月
Ware-gane no hibiki mo atsushi natsu no tsuki

The hot sound
Of the cracked temple bell,—
The summer moon.

This is a rather psychological verse, depending upon the association of crackedness and heat. Haiku is indeed the poetry of the senses, here the tactual feeling of warmth and the corresponding disagreeableness of the sound of the cracked bell, but the question is, what is the relation of this to the moon? To put it simply, the moon is not hot, and it is not cracked.

書いてみたりけしたり果はけしの花
Kaite mitari keshitari hate wa keshi no hana

Writing something,
 Then rubbing it out,—
 The flower of the poppy!

Life consists of trying to do something, then trying again and again, until, like the flower of the poppy which cannot “stay until the evensong,” it is all finished, an end without an end. This is Hokushi’s death verse.

Chapter XI

OTHERS OF THE BASHŌ SCHOOL I

Bonchō, 凡兆, who died in 1714, was a doctor. Together with Kyorai, he edited the *Sarumino*, Monkey's Straw-rain-coat. In 1693 he was imprisoned in connection with secret traffic with Dutch traders. Bonchō is remarkable among the Genroku haiku poets for the large number of excellent objective verses. His reputation was not so great, among his contemporaries, as it should have been, the reason partly being that his haiku looked away from Bashō's style to Buson's, which was not yet in fashion. His verses are all original:

うつくしく牛のやせたる夏野かな
Utsukushiku ushi no yasetaru natsuno kana

The cow has become
Lean and beautiful
On the summer moor.

It has returned to something like the animal God intended it to be, not a butcher's dream.

鶯や下駄の齒につく小田の土
Uguisu ya geta no ha ni tsuku oda no tsuchi

The nightingale is singing!
The blades of my clogs
Stick in the earth of the field.

There is here a connection of contrast felt between the

sense of suction and the free-flowing voice of the earth-scorning bird.

身ひとつを里に来なくかみそさざい
Mi hitotsu wo sato ni ki naku ka misosazai

This wren,—
 Has it come to the hamlet
 To chirp to me in my loneliness?

Bonchō and the wren have an equality of solitariness and desire for companionship, so that each expresses the nature and feeling of the other.

しぐるゝや黒木積む屋の窓明り
Shigururu ya kuroki tsumuya no mado-akari

The faint light from the window
 With logs piled up round it:
 Cold winter rain.

The firewood still has the bark on it. The shed is cold and dark and damp. High up there is an opening through which a dim light enters. Or, this may be firewood piled up outside the window, with the light inside.

渡りかけて藻の花のぞく流哉
Watari-kakete mo no hana nozoku nagare kana

On the way over,
 Looking at the duckweed flowers,—
 The flowing stream!

This is simple, but it has also some depth, for the poet, while *looking* at the flowers with his conscious mind, *sees* the water moving with his unconscious self; plants bloom in the stream of his life.

下京や雪つむ上の夜の雨
Shimokyō ya yuki tsumu ue no yoru no ame

The suburbs of the Capital;
 On the deepening snow,
 The evening rain.

The rain is noiseless. The lights of small houses and shops are reflected on the snow.

ある僧の嫌ひし花の都かな
Aru sō no kiraishi hana no miyako kana

A certain monk
 Who hates
 The flowery capital.

This is the spirit of haiku, though not of Zen, but at times at least we may allow ourselves the feeling of pleasure at the revulsion to cheapness and vulgarity. Shiki has imitated this verse, perhaps:

ある僧の月も待たずに歸りけり
Aru sō no tsuki mo matazu ni kaeri keri

A certain monk
 Went back home
 Without waiting for the moon.

There was a moon-viewing meeting at Ueno in 1898. Everyone, about twenty people, scholars and poets, sat waiting for the moon, which delayed making its appearance, upon which a certain monk (almost certainly a Zen monk) went off without saying goodbye. Shiki admired him for his energy and unwillingness to stagnate.

灰捨てて白梅うるむ垣根かな
Hai sutete shira-ume urumu kakine kana

Throwing away the ashes,
The white plum blossoms of the hedge
Are clouded over.

Urumu seems to mean, "become turbid, blurred." When the ash is thrown away, some of it falls lightly on the petals of the plum-blossoms. In a way they are dirtied, in a way they are only slightly changed, dimmed with the whitish grey powder. In Bonchō's mind there is also some faint confusion, overlapping of the natural and artificial, beautiful and ugly, nature and man.

呼びかへす鮒賣見えぬあられ哉
Yobikaesu funa-uri mienu arare kana

Calling back the crucian-seller,—
But he was lost
In the hail.

There seems to be some connection between the fish and the hail, but the point of the haiku is in the emptiness of the street, and of the mind of the caller, man's extremity being poetry's opportunity.

市中は物の臭ひや夏の月
Ichi naka wa mono no nioi ya natsu no tsuki

Through the town
Various scents and fumes,
Under the summer moon.

In summer we have the moon, but it is the summer moon, with the summer smells, even stinks. The summer moon is also perceived with the nose.

Ukō, 羽紅, was Bonchō's wife.

縫物や著もせでよごす五月雨
Nuimono ya ki mo sede yogosu satsuki-ame

The needlework,—
Soiled without wearing it,
In the rains of June.

This is haiku, in that the wetting of the garment brings out the meaning of the rain, but the clothes were perhaps more important to her than the rain.

入相のひびきの中のほととぎす
Iriai no hibiki no naka no hototogisu

Through the tolling
Of the evening bell
The cry of the hototogisu.

Izen, 惟然, 1646–1711, was the son of a rich brewer, but left home and lived a Hanshan-like life of nonchalance and sincerity. We feel this in the following:

別るゝや柿食いながら坂の上
Wakaruru ya kaki kui nagara saka no ue

Parting,
And walking up the slope,
Eating a persimmon.

This verse was composed in the 7th year of Genroku, when saying good-bye to Bashō.

近づきになりて別るゝ案山子かな
Chikazuki ni narite wakaruru kakashi kana

I have got acquainted
With you, scarecrow,
But now we must part.

Having a rest in the same field as the scarecrow, eating one's lunch in its shadow, it is difficult to say good-bye.

更け行くや水田の上の天の川
Fukeyuku ya mizuta no ue no ama-no-gawa

Night deepens:
 Over the paddy-fields
 The Milky Way.

The stars of the Galaxy seem to grow brighter with the passing of time, reminding us of Shelley:

And solemn midnight's tingling silentness.

磯際の波に鳴き入るいとどかな
Iso-giwa no nami ni naki iru itodo kana

The sloping water's edge;
 The grasshoppers chirrup
 Into the waves.

This is a remarkably good haiku, less recherché than Bashō's famous verse about the voice of the cicada penetrating the rocks.

短夜や木賃もなさでこそ走り
Mijika-yo ya kichin mo nasade koso bashiri

The short night;
 Running off without paying
 The doss-house fee.

This is an excellent way of expressing the shortness of the summer night, when there is no danger of oversleeping and having to pay even the small fee for a night's lodging.

水さっと鳥よふはふはふうはふは
Mizu satto tori yo fuwa-fuwa fūwa-fuwa

With a sweep the birds rise
 From the water,
 Lightly, buoyantly.

The onomatopoeia of the original is far better than the imitation of the translation. Sometimes the verses are a little "mad":

風呂敷へ落ちよ包まむ舞雲雀
Furoshiki e ochi yo tsutsuman mai hibari

Fall into my big handkerchief,
 Dancing skylark,
 And I'll wrap you up in it!

Izen's verses are closest to those of Issa in their spontaneity:

水鳥や向ふの岸へつういつうい
Mizutori ya mukō no kishi e tsūi-tsūi

The water-fowl
 Swiftly fleeing
 To the further shore.

Here again, the sound of the Japanese words is the sound of the wings of the water-birds, is the wings themselves. We are reminded of Shelley's poetry with its mobility, a movement which is that of Nature.

若葉吹くさらさらさらと雨ながら
Wakaba fuku sara-sara-sara to ame nagara

The young leaves
 Rustle and murmur
 In the windy rain.

This kind of thing is indeed “the harvest of a quiet ear.” The onomatopoeia is unusually noteworthy; *wa, ka, ba, sa, ra, sa, ra, a, na, ga, ra*. Did Izen know, as Tennyson did too well, what he was doing?

Ryōto, 涼菟, 1661-1717, was a Shintō priest of Ise. He wrote a great number of books, and was skilful in painting. His style has something light in it, shown in the following:

それも應 これも應 なり老の春
Sore mo ō kore mo ō nari oi no haru

That's all right!

This is all right!

The spring of my old age.

We see the same thing in his death-verse:

合點やその暁のほとゝぎす
Gatten ya sono akatsuki no hototogisu

Certainly I'm ready!

Ah, the hototogisu

In that dawn!

傾城の畑見たがる菫かな
Keisei no hatake mitagaru sumire kana

Violets are blooming;

The courtezans

Must want to see the fields.

Most of the courtezans came from the country, and the poet supposes, and we may half-hope, that in the spring they felt some longing for their native place, and the fields when they used once to pluck the first violets

鍬さげて叱りに出るや桃の花
Kuwa sagete shikari ni deru ya momo no hana

Hoe in hand,
 He comes out to scold,—
 Peach blossoms.

The hoe shows the rustic and uncultured man, his possessiveness, but the feeling is of grief at the destruction of beauty.

人中へぞろりと長き袷かな
Hito naka e zorori to nagaki awase kana

A long lined-garment
 In the height of fashion,—
 To where there are a lot of people!

This is not senryu only because the object of the writer is to give us the feeling of (people in) early summer.

Shōhaku, 尚白, 1650-1722, was a doctor of Ōmi. He learned haikai at first under Teishitsu, then from Bashō. He lived a calm and refined life. The following are two of his later verses:

夕顔の盛りふす部屋老の秋
Yūgao no sakari fusu heya oi no aki

The evening-glories are blooming;
 I lie in my room;
 The autumn of my years.

藁積んで廣く淋しき枯野かな
Wara tsunde hiroku sabishiki karenō kana

Straw-stacks here and there;
 The withered moor
 Is vast, is lonely.

The adjectives here are weak and unnecessary, but the verse reminds us of the Countess of Winchelsea's nature poetry.

Kakei, 荷兮, 1648-1716, edited three of the Seven Anthologies of the Bashō School. In *Arano*, Wilderness, we find his best-known verse, not a particularly good one, except in its onomatopoeia:

木枯に二日の月の吹きちるか
Kogarashi ni futsuka no tsuki no fukichiru ka

The two-day-old moon
 May be blown away
 By the cold winter blast!

The following two verses seem to me similarly disagreeable.

しんしんと梅散りかゝる庭火かな
Shin-shin to ume chirikakaru niwa-bi kana

In silence
 Fall petals of the plum
 Into the garden bonfire.

草の葉や足のおれたるきりぎりす
Kusa no ha ya ashi no oretaru kirigirisu

Blades of grass,
 And a grasshopper,
 Its legs broken.

A far better verse:

あさがほの白きは露も見えぬなり
Asagao no shiroki wa tsuyu mo mienu nari

The morning glory
Is pure white,
The dew unseen.

Both morning glory and dew are fleeting, not symbols of evanescence, but evanescence itself. But the pure whiteness makes the dew invisible, and only beauty is seen, timeless, and apparently dew-less.

Tohō, 土芳, 1657-1730, was born in Iga, Bashō's native province. He compiled the *Sanzōshi*, Three Notebooks, Bashō's talks on haikai. A passage from it:

The Master said, "Learn from pine-tress, learn from bamboos." "Learning" means joining with things and feeling the innermost nature of those things. This is haikai.

Besides the *Sanzōshi*, Tohō left five volumes of verse very useful for the history of haikai. His best verses:

陽炎やほろほろ落ちる岸の砂
Kagerō ya horo-horo ochiru kishi no suna

Summer colts;
The sand of the cliff
Falls grain by grain.

We feel here the inevitability of the impermanence of things.

桐の葉に光り廣げる螢かな
Kiri no ha ni hikari hirogeru hotaru kana

On the paulownia leaf
The radiance spreads out,—
A firefly!

A firefly suddenly settles on a large dewy leaf, which becomes as it were an extension of its body and its greenish light.

Shintoku, 信徳, 1633-1689, a man of Kyōto, learned first from the Teitoku School, then the Danrin in Edo, and associated also with poets of the Bashō School. He published many books.

すさまじや女の眼鏡としのくれ
Susamaji ya onna no megane toshi no kure

How fearful!
 A woman with spectacles
 At the end of the year!

This looks like a senryu, making ungentlemanly fun of a short-sighted woman, but this is not senryu. Certainly it is not a particularly kind-hearted haiku, but the point of it is the ferocity of the *season*, when women forget what femininity they may have in the paying or not paying of bills.

雨の日や門提げて行くかきつばた
Ame no hi ya kado sagete yuku kakitsubata

A day of rain;
 Someone passing my gate
 Carrying irises.

It is the picture of a man in *kasa* and *mino* walking in the May rain carrying the flowers, or perhaps a woman with an umbrella going to use them for flower-arrangement. In any case, it shows haiku not quite sure of itself. The vagueness is accidental, not purposeful.

Rotsū, 路通, 1651?-1739?, was a beggar, who met Bashō

in Edo in 1688. His independent character would not allow him to get on with Bashō, much less with other people.

いねいねと人にいはれつ年のくれ
Ine-ine to hito ni iwaretsu toshi no kure

“Nothing for you!”

They all say,—

The end of the year.

This is the life of a beggar towards the end of the year, when everybody is too busy to be kind to others. This is Rotsū's own experience, but seen truly, and with yet a faint pathos and humour that belong to all things when seen neither objectively nor subjectively.

鳥共も寝入て居るか余吾の海
Tori domo mo neitte iru ka yogo no umi

On Lake Yogo,
 Even the water-birds
 Are fast asleep?

There is no sight or sound of birds on the water. The withered sedge rustles sometimes in the cold wind. Not a soul is abroad. Only Rotsū the beggar stands there by the winter lake and sees what he was born to see, and feels the solitude he was born to feel.

芭蕉葉は何になれとや秋の風
Bashō ha wa nani ni nare to ya aki no kaze

To the leafy *bashō*,
 What will it do,
 This autumn wind?

Shikō says of this verse in *Kuzu no Matsubara*, 葛の

松原, "We can say that the poetry of life is all contained in this verse," 一生の風雅をこの中にぞとゞめ申されけむ。

ぼのくぼに雁落ちかゝる霜夜かな
Bo no kubo ni kari ochikakaru shimoyo kana

The wild geese fell down
 At the nape of my neck,
 This night of frost!

This was written in a boat at night in Fushimi. It suggests that the poet involuntarily ducked his head, they came down so close, and implies the degree of the cold that intensified his feelings at the voices of the geese.

Chapter XII

OTHERS OF THE BASHŌ SCHOOL II

Shadō, 酒堂, who died in 1737, was a doctor who lived in a house called Sharakudō, later shortened to Shadō. One of his other names is Chinseki, 珍磧.

高土手に鶉の鳴く日や雲ちぎれ
Taka-dote ni hiyo no naku hi ya kumo-chigire

On the high embankment,
Bulbuls are crying:
Today with its fleecy clouds.

This is a perfect haiku, a perfect poem in any place, in any age. Autumn is in the voices of the bulbuls perching in trees; in the long embankment beyond the rice-fields; in the shapes of the clouds high in the sky.

Rosen, 露川, 1662-1743, learned haikai from Kigin, and then from Bashō. After Bashō's death he quarrelled with Shikō. Kyorai criticised his haikai as "vague, like walking on a wild plain at night." On his tomb-stone is inscribed his death-verse:

丸家こそよけれ四角な冬籠
Maruya koso yokere shikaku na fuyu-gomori

A round dwelling place
Is better than a square one:
Winter seclusion.

This seems to refer to the tub used to bury people in

a squatting position. Another of his verses:

蒲の穂に聲吹戻すわかれ哉
Gama no ho ni koe fukimodosu wakare kana

At the parting,
 My voice was blown back
 By the bulrushes.

Sodō, 素堂, 1643-1716, made the acquaintance of Bashō while he was learning haikai under Kigin. He was respected by Bashō as having a profound knowledge of the Chinese Classics, which he learned under Hayashi Shunsai, 1624-1705. His verses have their flavour:

花芙蓉美女湯上りて立てりけり
Hana-fuyō bijo yu agarite tateri keru

A rose mallow,—
 Standing there like a beauty
 After a bath.

He is famous for a verse (which I dislike for its greediness) of eye, ear, and tongue:

目には青葉山時鳥初松魚
Me ni wa aoba yama-hototogisu hatsu-gatsuo

Green leaves for the eye;
 The mountain cuckoo,
 The first bonito.

An objective verse:

夕立にやけ石涼し淺間山
Yūdachi ni yake-ishi suzushi asamayama

A sudden shower;
The lava of Mount Asama
Is cool.

Mount Asama, the largest active volcano in Japan, rises up into the summer sky. The stones are hot, the vegetation rank. There is a sudden shower of rain, and the rocks darken in colour, and the trees drip down their overflow.

浮葉卷葉この蓮風情過ぎたらん
Ukiha makiha kono ren fuzei sugitaran

Floating leaves, curled leaves,—
The manner of this lotus
Is too multifarious.

It is said that Bashō insisted that 蓮 should be pronounced *ren* here, not *hasu*, to give the verse dignity, perhaps. This dignity belongs to Chinese poetry and waka rather than haiku, but this is precisely what Sodō is saying, that the lotus is a little too high-class for haiku, for real poetry.

垣根やぶる其若竹を垣根かな
Kakine yaburu sono wakatake wo kakine kana

Breaking down the hedge,
And making the young bamboos
Into the hedge.

This is not poetry, not haiku, but it is the frame of mind, the attitude which will produce, at least should produce nature poetry. Life is always better than the greatest art. Why this is so, why a mindless, purposeless

Nature should outdo the greatest poets and artists, this is a mystery, but not a displeasing one.

春もはや山吹白く露苦し
Haru mo haya yamabuki shiroku fuki nigashi

Spring is nearly gone;
 The yellow rose is pale,
 The rhubarb is bitter.

This is an excellent haiku, because the passing of spring is seen with the eye, and tasted with the tongue.

Riyū, 季由, 1661-1705, the chief priest of Kōmyō Henshōji Temple, was fond of poetry and the Tea-ceremony, and inclined to hero-worship, as we see in the fact that when Bashō died, he buried a *kasa* (a cypress-wood umbrella-like hat) of Bashō's, together with the verses of his friends, and set up a tomb called Kasazuka. He was especially intimate with Kyoroku, and edited a number of books with him.

なま壁に寄りつきがたき寒さかな
Namakabe ni yoritsuki-gataki samusa kana

It is difficult to sit anywhere near
 The bare wall,—
 The cold!

To use the word near again, this verse is a near-hit.

雲の峯石臼を挽く隣かな
Kumo no mine ishiusu wo hiku tonari kana

Billowing clouds;
 Next-door is grinding
 A stone mortar.

This reminds us of the German story of how the sea became salt. A ship with a salt-making machine on it sank, and the machine has never stopped. The cumulus clouds seem like the foam from the mortar. The relation between the mortar and the clouds is partly in the feeling of heat, and partly the vague idea that the grinding of the mortar is producing the clouds.

Senna, 千那, 1651-1723, like Riyū, was the head priest of a temple, Honfukuji. He was skilful in painting,¹ and it is said that Bashō sometimes visited his temple to learn painting from him. Kyoroku criticised him as having "too gay flowers, but poor fruit." Perhaps an example is:

名月におくれて晝の千鳥かな
Meigetsu ni okurete hiru no chidori kana

Too late for the autumn moon,
 The plovers flying
 In the day-time.

The following verse, however, has some weight:

唇に墨つく兒のすゞみかな
Kuchibiru ni sumi tsuku chigo no suzumi kana

A smear of indian ink
 On his lips, a young boy
 Cooling in the evening.

The children are sitting on the edge of the verandah of the temple where they have been learning their letters. One of them has some indian ink on his lips, from biting the brush to make a better point. All the childishness of childhood is seen in that smear. It makes the adult world

¹ See Vol. 1, page 317.

look heavy and dull.

Gochū, 五仲, dates unknown, was a man of Kyōto who dealt in Buddhist pictures. He was a pupil of Riyū.

竹伐って日のさす寺や初紅葉
Take kitte hi no sasu tera ya hatsu-momiji

Cutting down the bamboos,
 The sun shines on the temple;
 The first tinted leaves.

The fault of this verse is that it says too much. When the bamboos at the back of the temple are cut, it becomes light. This is enough, but in addition we are told that the red and yellow autumnal tints can be seen for the first time. Compare the following verse by Bonchō:

肌寒し竹伐る山の薄紅葉
Hada samushi take kiru yama no usu-momiji

It is chilly;
 The mountains where the bamboos are cut
 Have turned colour.

This verse also says more, but the more is not more of the ulterior effects of cutting the bamboos, but the fact that the cold sensation of the skin corresponds to the colours of the leaves. Yet another verse, this time by Rankō:

紅葉散って竹の中なる清閑寺
Momiji chitte take no naka naru seikan-ji

The tinted leaves having fallen,
 Seikanji Temple
 Is seen among the bamboos.

Tokoku, 杜國, who died in 1690, was one of the favourite pupils of Bashō. The circumstances of his life seem to be unknown, except that he was a merchant of Nagoya, learned haikai from Bashō, and later went into exile on account of a certain crime. The following verse was composed thinking of his native place:

春ながら名古屋にも似ぬ空の色
Haru nagara nagoya ni mo ninu sora no iro

It is spring,
 But the colour of the sky
 Is not that of Nagoya.

A better verse:

足駄はく僧も見えたり花の雨
Ashida haku sō mo mietari hana no ame

Rain on the cherry blossoms;
 A priest of the temple
 Wearing high clogs.

This verse was written at Hase Temple when on a journey to Yoshino with Bashō. It is given in *Oi no Kobumi*. It is especially good because of the deep yet distant connection between the rain, the flowers, the priest, and the high *geta*.

霜の朝せんだんの實のこぼれけり
Shimo no asa sendan no mi no kobore keru

A frosty morning;
 The bead-tree
 Sheds its berries.

The yellow berries lie on the white snow. Why is the

snow white? In order to show up the colour of the berries. Why are the berries yellow? To reveal the whiteness of the snow.

Otokuni, 乙州, dates unknown, studied haikai under Bashō together with his mother, Chigetsu, and his wife. He was one of those who looked after Bashō during his last illness.

海山のとり鳴きたつる吹雪かな
Umi-yama no tori nakitatsuru fubuki kana

On land and water,
 The birds set up their cries
 At the snow-storm.

Why birds sing is one of the lesser unsolved mysteries, but in this case it is from apprehension. Snow is no doubt beautiful, but for living creatures it is something fearsome, deathly. This verse is also ascribed to Chigetsu, Otokuni's mother.

Yasui, 野水, who died at the age of 86 in 1743, was a merchant of Nagoya. His best-known verses:

麥くいし雁と思へど別れかな
Mugi kuishi kari to omoedo wakare kana

Wild geese,
 Yes, you ate my barley,
 But now we must part.

春風にちからくらぶる雲雀哉
Haru-kaze ni chikara kuraburu hibari kana

The skylark!
 It vies in strength
 With the spring wind.

The following was made on his wife, who died young:

初雪や今年うえたる桐の木に
Hatsu-yuki ya kotoshi uetaru kiri no ki ni

The first snow;
 It falls on the paulownia tree
 Which she planted this year.

Later his interest changed from haikai to waka and the Tea-ceremony.

Bokudō, 牧童, dates uncertain, elder brother of Hokushi, was a sword-sharpener, like his brother. He was interested at first in the Danrin School, and then changed to that of Bashō. His favourite subject was drowsiness; the following is the best-known verse:

若葉かげねむたくなるべき朝かな
Wakaba-kage nemutaku naru beki ashita kana

Under the young green leaves,
 This spring morning,
 It's natural I'm sleepy.

This kind of unaffected verse is not easy to make.

Rōka, 浪化, 1672-1703, was the son of the chief priest of the Higashi Honganji Branch of the Shin Sect. After Bashō's death he set up a tomb and hermitage in his memory. He had an objective style of haiku, like Bonchō's:

頭たて鵜のむれのぼる早瀬かな
Kōbe tate u no mure noboru hayase kana

A flock of cormorants,
 Head erect, swim up
 The swift stream.

水鳥の群にわけゆく櫻かな
Mizutori no mure ni wakeyuku sakura kana

The waterfowl
 Cleaves with its breast
 The cherry petals.

夜の雪はれてやぶきの光かな
Yoru no yuki harete yabuki no hikari kana

Last night's snow
 Clears up;
 How the grove glitters!

The following is said to be his death-verse:

たてよこと屏風にくれて時雨かな
Tate yoko to byōbu ni kurete shigure kana

Vertically and horizontally,—
 It grows dark by the folding screen;—
 Cold winter rain.

“Vertically and horizontally” seems to refer to the way in which the sick man lies in bed and sees the rain.

麻殻を踏み折る背戸の月見かな
Asagara wo fumi oru sedo no tsukimi kana

Gazing at the moon,
 Walking on the crackling hemp-plant refuse
 Outside the back door.

The threads of the hemp are taken from the inner part of the stalks, which crack when they are trodden on. This sound has a connection with the clarity and preciseness of the moon.

痲瘡する兒も見えけり麥の秋
Hōsō suru chigo mo mie keri mugi no aki

A child with small-pox
Is seen too,
This barley autumn.

“Barley autumn” is summer, when the barley, sown the winter before, is reaped. Everyone is extremely busy, and a sick child cannot be attended to, and yet must be. The verse brings out the fever of both child and parents.

釣り初めて蚊帳の匂ひや三三日
Tsurisomete kaya no nioi ya ni-san-nichi

Hung up for the first time,
How the mosquito-net smells,—
For two or three days!

Even an old net smells, when it has been put away in a cupboard for half a year. The point of the haiku, however, is not merely the smell of the mosquito-net, but the smell of the season.

Sora, 會良, 1649–1710, was at first in attendance upon a feudal lord, but gave up his position to study poetry. Like Bashō he was fond of travelling, though perhaps for different reasons. He had little genius for haikai, but all the more his affection for Bashō was of the purest.

夜もすがら秋風聞くや裏の山
Yomosugara akikaze kikuya ura no yama

All night long
Listening to the autumn wind
Of the mountain at the back.

This was composed by Sora the night after he parted from Bashō. They were on a journey together, but owing to illness Sora was forced to go back. He stayed at Yamana in Kaga. A pain in the stomach enables us to listen to the autumn wind. We perceive some of its qualities, its loneliness, dreariness, stomach-acheness.

行きて行きて倒れ伏すとも萩の花
Yukite yukite taore-fusu tomo hagi no hana

Walking on and on,
 Though I may fall exhausted,
 I shall lie in these fields of lespedeza flowers.

This was also written when Sora separated from Bashō on account of illness during the journey of *Oku no Hosomichi*.

子や待たん余り雲雀の高上り
Ko ya matan amari hibari no taka-agari

Her young will be tired of waiting,
 The skylark
 Is soaring so high.

This verse is more like English poetry, like Burns, for example, than haiku.

風は何やら一羽寒げなり
Kogarashi ni naniyara ichiwa samuge nari

What bird is it,
 Lonesome and cold,
 In the autumn tempest?

This reminds us a little of Shelley's "widow bird," and also of the lines in *The Green Knight*:



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With many briddes unblithe upon bare twiges
That pitously ther piped for pyne of the colde.

Tōrin, 桃隣, 1639-1719, is said to have been in attendance on the same feudal lord as Bashō. Later, he lived in Edo and was intimate with Bashō. On his tomb is found the following verse:

白桃や雫もおとす水のいろ
Shiramomo ya shizuku mo otosu mizu no iro

A white peach;
A drop of water drips down,
Pure in colour.

Haritsu, 破笠, 1663-1747, is said to have been disowned for prodigality and to have lived on Kikaku. He had great talents in painting and lacquer-work; his style became famous, and later he was employed by a feudal lord. The following verse seems to refer to himself:

咲くまでは待つ人もたぬ躑躅かな
Saku made wa matsu hito motanu tsutsuji kana

Until they bloom,
No one gives heed to them,—
Azalea flowers.

Ranran, 嵐蘭, 1648-1693, like many other haiku poets, was in attendance upon a feudal lord, gave it up, and devoted himself to poetry. He had been acquainted with Bashō for nineteen years when he died, a year before his master, and was thus one of the oldest members of the Bashō School, together with Kikaku and Ransetsu. The following verse is either easy or not:

笑ふにも泣くにもにざる木権かな
Warau ni mo naku ni mo nizaru mukuge kana

The Rose of Sharon;
 It neither laughs,
 Nor weeps.

いつ暮れて水田の上の春の月
Itsu kurete mizu-ta no ue no haru no tsuki

In the paddy-field,
 The moon of spring:
 The shades of night have fallen.

In the ordinary way we feel that the daylight has gone, and that therefore we may see the moon reflected in the water of the rice-field. In the above, the order is reversed, but it is not a rational deduction.

Masahide, 正秀, 1657-1723, is said to have been a samurai, and then became a disciple of Bashō. He seems to have had an unhappy life in his later years.

鎧持のなほ振りたつるしぐれ哉
Yari-mochi no nao furitatsuru shigure kana

The halberdiers
 Continue to flourish their spears
 In the winter rain.

This is the picture of a daimyō procession. Masahide is famous for a very pretentious verse approved by Bashō:

蔵焼てさはるものなき月見哉
Kura yakete sawaru mono naki tsukimi kana

My storehouse burnt down,
 There is nothing to obstruct
 The moon-view.

This should be compared with Hokushi's verse at the end of the last chapter. Masahide's death-verse:

ゆく鳥は月にならいて水の友
Yuku tori wa tsuki ni naraite mizu no tomo

When I depart,
Let me be friends with the water,
Like the moon.

Kyokusui, 曲翠, was a samurai who killed one of his fellows, and had to commit suicide in 1717. His son was also forced to kill himself, his wife, a poetess, became a nun, and his family was extinguished. His verses are usually of strong sounds:

明星や尾上にきゆる鹿の聲
Mōjō ya onoe ni kiyuru shika no koe

The evening star vanishes
Behind the mountain top,—
The voice of the deer.

寒き夜や海に落込む瀧の音
Samuki yo ya umi ni ochikomu taki no oto

A cold night!
The sound of a waterfall
Falling into the sea.

馬叱る聲も枯野のあらしかな
Uma shikaru koe mo karenō no arashi kana

The voice shouting at the horse
Is the storm
Of the withered moor.

Mokusetsu, 木節, dates uncertain, was the doctor who attended Bashō in his last illness. He wanted to call another doctor, but Bashō said, characteristically, "If it is my fate, no one can cure my illness. I trust you, Mokusetsu, till I die." Some verses of his:

咲く花をむつかしげなる老木かな
Saku hana wo mutsukashige naru oiki kana

The old tree
 Looks its displeasure
 At the blooming flowers.

すずしさを竹にのこしてはれにけり
Suzushisa wo take ni nokoshite hare ni keji

It cleared up,
 Leaving the coolness
 In the bamboos.

One hot summer day, a shower of rain fell, and it was cool for a while, but the sun came out and it had become hotter than ever. Only the bamboos looked cool as before.

ひね麥の味なき空や五月雨
Hine-mugi no aji naki sora ya satsuki ame

Stale barley,
 Flavourless as the sky,—
 The long summer rains.

Some readers of this verse may feel as Wordsworth says of *his* readers:

They will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title.

Hajin, 巴人, 1677-1742, the teacher of Buson, was born in Edo, and learned haikai from Kikaku and Ransetsu. He was dissatisfied with the tendency of haikai after the death of Bashō. His own verses have simplicity, but no depth:

ひぐらしのふいと一聲月夜かな
Higurashi no fui to hitokoe tsukiyo kana

The *higurashi*
 Suddenly cries, once:
 A moonlit night.

The *higurashi* is a kind of cicada, with a strident but musical voice. It sings only in the early morning and evening. The following is Hajin's death-verse.

こしらへてありとも知らず西の奥
Koshiraete ari to mo shirazu nishi no oku

I knew not
 That the Realm of the West
 Was ready to receive me.

Tantan, 淡々, 1674-1761, the son of a merchant of Ōsaka, went to Edo to study haikai under Kikaku, whose chief disciple he called himself, and then went back to Kyōto and became very popular. He lived a luxurious life, and it is said he would do anything for money. However, the following has some interest and value:

Chinese poetry is a long sword; waka is a sword;
 renga is a short sword; haikai is a dagger.

His haiku are poor, but Tantan deserves to be remembered as one who tried to turn anything and everything into poetry:

穂にもでず雲にも遠き木賊かな
Ho ni mo dezu kumo ni mo tōki tokusa kana

It has no ear,
 It is far from the clouds too,—
 The scouring-rush.

This plant has no leaves, no flower, no ear, like the bulrush, but it is not tall, only about two feet high.

初雪や波のとどかぬ岩の上
Hatsuyuki ya nami no todokanu iwa no ue

First snow,
 On the rock
 The waves can't reach.

The sky and the sea are grey; the rock washed by the waves is blackish, the thin snow on the top whitish. That is all, but how much of the universe is given to us here! Tantan's death-verse:

朝霜や杖で畫きし富士の山
Asa-shimo ya tsue de egakishi fuji no yama

Morning frost,
 And in it a picture of Mount Fuji,
 Drawn with a stick.

Shihō, 史邦, whose dates are unknown, was a doctor of Nagoya. In later years he went to Edo, and entered the Bashō School.

馬方の謂次第なりさつき雨
Umakata no iishidai nari satsuki-ame

In the summer rain
It's just a matter of doing
What the horse-man says.

When on a journey, and sitting on a led horse, we are at the mercy of the man leading the horse. All our education and money and influence are of no avail.

いなづまやなぐり盡して薄原
Inazuma ya naguri tsukushite susuki hara

Thunder and lightning
Buffets the length and breadth
Of the pampas grass moor.

The Japanese says "pounds limitlessly." This is a clever description of a storm over the autumn fields of tall grasses, in the Thomsonian style.

Banko, 萬乎, who died in 1724, was a man of Iga, Bashō's home town, and a disciple of Bashō.

田の畝の豆つたいゆく螢かな
Ta no aze no mame tsutaiyuku hotaru kana

The fireflies
Thread the beans of the path
Through the rice-field.

Fireflies are poetical in themselves, and in their surroundings, as we see also in the following, by Ippatsu, 一髪:

刈草の馬屋に光るほたるかな
Kari-kusa no umaya ni hikaru hotaru kana

A firefly
Shining in the cut grass
Of the stable.

Yamei, 野明, dates unknown, was a man of Kyōto:

春の野をただ一のみや雉子の聲
Haru no no wo tada hito-nomi ya kiji no koe

The spring plain,—
The pheasant's voice
Has gulped it down!

This hyperbole reminds us of Matsu's answer to Pang-yun when he asked, "What kind of man is he who does not keep company with anything?" "I will tell you when you have swallowed up in one draught all the waters of the West River!" 待汝一口吸盡西江水.

駒買に出迎ふ野べの薄かな
Koma kai ni demukō nobe no susuki kana

Going to buy a pony,
The pampas grass
Greets me.

We often have such illusions, more precious than the so-called facts of nature.

Chapter XIII

WOMEN HAIKU WRITERS

Haiku for women, like Zen for women,—this subject makes us think once more what haiku are, and what a woman is. Men have a tendency towards intellectuality, women to sentimentality, both foes of poetry. But intellectuality is easier to cure, for it is farther from poetry. Emotion is as difficult to detach from poetry as superstition is from religion. A woman who is able somehow to avoid her womanly “feelings,” like Jane Austen, or who can think, like Emily Dickinson, or who expresses her emotions without asking for our sympathy, like Christina Rossetti, has something that a man can hardly attain to. But haiku by women must be of none of these types. Women are said to be intuitive, and as they cannot think, we may hope this is so, but intuition, like patriotism, is not enough. It must be really deep and penetrating, even pointed and piercing, and we must also be conscious of the depth, and not confuse the profound with the shallow.

Chigetsu, 智月, dates unknown, was the mother of Otokuni. She learned haikai from Bashō and was skilful also in painting. Kyorai criticised her haiku as being “far better than her son’s, but she has colour of only one kind. This is indeed the poetry of a woman.” Shiki said of her that “she was as pure as a lotus flower.”

わが年の寄るとは知らず花盛り

Waga toshi no yoru to wa shirazu hana-zakari

The flowers are at their best,
And know not
I am getting old.

This is more like waka than haiku.

山櫻散るや小川の水車
Yama-zakura chiru ya ogawa no mizuguruma

Mountain cherry petals
Fall and scatter
Over the water-wheel of the brook.

This is too pretty for poetry.

朝顔の咲くや親にも叱られず
Asagao no saku ya oya ni mo shikararezu

The morning-glories blooming,—
And my parents
Did not scold me.

The poetess always got up late and was grumbled at by her parents, but this morning she got up early to see the morning-glories blooming.

我影のそれかと覗く落葉かな
Waga kage no sore ka to nozoku ochiba kana

Is that my shadow?
And looking,
There lay fallen leaves.

海山の鳥鳴きたつる吹雪かな
Umi-yama no tori nakitatsuru fubuki kana

A blizzard,—
Birds singing loudly
O'er sea and mountain.

きりぎりす鳴くや案山子の袖のうち
Kirigirisu naku ya kagashi no sode no uchi

A grasshopper is chirping
 In the sleeves
 Of the scarecrow.

When her son was setting out for Edo, she wrote the following verse, encouraging him:

わざとさへ見に行く旅を富士の雪
Waza to sae mi ni yuku tabi wo fuji no yuki

People go on purpose
 To see the snow
 On Mount Fuji!

They lived in Ōtsu, Ōmi Prefecture, and Mount Fuji is between there and Edo.

我形も哀れに見ゆる枯野かな
Waga nari mo aware ni miyuru karenô kana

My figure too
 Looks wretched,
 On this withered moor.

We are reminded a little of Meg Merrilles, but Meg "was brave as Amazon queen."

待春や氷にまじるちりあくた
Matsu haru ya kōri ni majiru chiri-akuta

Waiting for spring,—
 Ice mingled with
 Dust and rubbish.

This dirt, like nature, is both human and non-human.

溜池に蛙生まるゝぬくみかな
Tame-ike ni kaeru umaruru nukumi kana

Some warmth,
 Frogs born
 In the puddles.

How eager Nature is to live, and how careless about
 dying!

かゝしにもあはれさまけじ尼仲間
Kakashi ni mo awaresa makeji ama-nakama

Several nuns,
 Not less pitiful
 Than those scarecrows.

This was written on the occasion of the 7th Anniversary of her husband's death. A man with dignity, or a woman without it, are both pitiful creatures.

Sute-jo, 捨女, 1633-1698, was the wife of a magistrate. She learned haikai from Kigin. Upon her husband's death she became a nun. In her youth she belonged to the Jōdo Sect, but in later life she learned Zen from Bankei, 盤珪.

思ふことなき顔しても秋のくれ
Omou koto naki kao shite mo aki no kure

Looking as if
 I have nothing on my mind,
 An autumn evening.

Autumn evenings, by their nature, make us pensive, however much we may pretend to ourselves and others that we are calmly satisfied.

雲路にもちか道あるや夏の月
Kumo-ji ni mo chikamichi aru ya natsu no tsuki

Among the cloudy ways
 Are there also short-cuts?
 The summer moon.

This is an ingenious but hardly feminine verse describing the shortness of a summer night.

日くらしや捨てゝおいても暮るゝ日を
Higurashi ya sutete oite mo kururu hi wo

Day-darkener!
 Should you take no notice of it,
 All the same, the day draws to its close.

The cicada that cries in the evening is called the *higurashi*, "he who darkens the day."

雪の朝二の字二の字の下駄の跡
Yuki no asa ni-no-ji ni-no-ji no geta no ato

A morning of snow;
 The letter two, the letter two,—
 Clog-prints.

This is said to have been composed when the poetess was only six years old. Two in Japanese is written 二, and this is the mark that the "teeth" of the clogs leave in the newly-fallen snow.

肌かくす女の肌のあつさ哉
Hada kakusu onna no hada no atsusa kana

How hot
 The skin,—the skin
 A woman hides!

This is the haiku of a woman, and is perhaps what such a verse should be, for it gives the feeling of one particular woman, which is also the experience, at least potentially, of half the population of the world.

Sono-jo, 園女, 1649-1723, became a pupil of Bashō in 1689. After his death, she learnt from Kikaku a year. She became an eye-doctor, and later a nun. It was of her that Bashō wrote his well-known verse, about a fortnight before his death:

白菊の目にたてゝ見る塵もなし
Shiragiku no me ni tatete miru chiri mo nashi

The white chrysanthemum;
 Not a speak of dust
 To meet the eye.

Her own verses:

鼻紙の間にしをるゝすみれかな
Hana-gami no aida ni shioruru sumire kana

Violets,
 Withered up
 In the paper handkerchief.

These shrivelled flowers, reminders of a life once lived, have the same effect upon us as that of a mummy, and "tease us out of thought."

衣更みづから織らぬ罪ふかし
Koromo-gae mizu kara oranu tsumi fukashi

The change of clothes:
 I did not weave any of the cloth;
 My sin is deep.

This is a verse a man like Gandhi might have written. It has the prescript, 當麻のまんだらを拝みて, "Worshipping the mandala at Taima Temple." This is an ancient temple in Nara prefecture, and is famous for its mandala.

葉の音に犬吼かゝる嵐哉
Ha no oto ni inu hoe-kakaru arashi kana

The dog is barking
 At the sound of the leaves,
 A gale blowing.

This is a perfect haiku.

涼しさや襟に届かぬ髪のとと
Suzushisa ya eri ni todokanu kami no tsuto

The coolness!
 The knot of hair
 Does not reach the collar of my dress.

This is the sort of haiku women can and should write.

忙しや堇を摘めばつくづくし
Isogashi ya sumire wo tsumeba tsukuzuku shi

Oh, how busy I was,
 Plucking the violets,
 Absorbed in them!

This brings out the unthinking, unthought nature of spring, through the thought-less nature of a woman. We feel the vastness of the plain, and the small, sweet joys of humanity.

負うた子に髪なぶらるゝ暑さかな
Outa ko ni kami naburaruru atsusa kana

When the child I am carrying
Plays with my hair,—
The heat!

This is one of the best of women's haiku. It is a woman's experience, and it is haiku because it is a sensation poetically perceived.

置く霜やけふ立つ尼のふる葛籠
Oku shimo ya kyō tatsu ama no furu-tsuzura

Frost has fallen;
The old wicker-basket
Of the nun starting on a journey.

All three things, frost, nun, and basket, have something old and weary and sad and lonely in them.

涼しさや額をあてて青畳
Suzushisa ya hitai wo atete ao-datami

Pressing my forehead
On the green tatami,
The coolness!

The sight and smell and feel of new tatami are all cool and bracing. There is a freshness to the eye, to the touch, to the spirit.

Shūshiki, 秋色, 1668-1725, was the wife of Kangyoku, 寒玉, a haiku poet. From an early age she became a pupil of Kikaku and was famous for her verses, but most are ridiculously sentimental like the following:

雉の尾のやさしくさはる葦かな
Kiji no o no yasashiku sawaru sumire kana

The pheasant's tail
Touches the violets
Softly.

The next is all right:

しみじみと子は肌につく霰かな
Shimi-jimi to ko wa hada ni tsuku mizore kana

Pressing the child
Closely to my body,
Sleet falling.

The Japanese is much better than the translation.
Shimi-jimi means 'intensely'.

見し夢のさめても色のかきつばた
mishi yume no samete mo iro no kakitsubata

Waking from my dream,
What a colour
Were the iris flowers!

Perhaps *iro* here also means the pleasures of the senses,
the colours of our dream of a life.

親も子も同じふとんや別れ霜
Oya mo ko mo onaji futon ya wakare-jimo

Parent and child
Under the same quilt;
The frost of parting.

This was written upon the death of Kikaku's younger daughter, a year before his own death. Kikaku himself had written:

霜の鶴土に蒲團もかけられず
Shimo no tsuru tsuchi ni futon mo kakerarezu

A crane in the frost;
 Even on the earth
 I cannot lay a quilt.

Kana-jo, 可南女, dates uncertain, was Kyorai's "wife." In the following we have an example of personification which is rare in Japanese poetry, especially in haiku:

行春のうしろ姿や藤の花
Yuku haru no ushiro-sugata ya fuji no hana

Are they not the retreating figure
 Of departing spring,
 The wistaria flowers?

This is not only fanciful.

塩かきの夜は聲ちかしほととぎす
Shio-kaki no yo wa koe chikashi hototogisu

The salt-raker hears at night
 The voice of the hototogisu
 Close at hand.

This is nearer to waka than to haiku.

ぎぼうしの傍に経よむいとどかな
Gibōshi no soba ni kyō yomu itodo kana

Beside the plantain lily
 The grasshopper
 Sings his sutra.

The plantain lily has large green leaves, used in flower-arrangement, of a somewhat religious appearance.

麥の穂に追はれる蝶のみだれかな
Mugi no ho ni owareru chō no midare kana

The ears of barley
 Follow after
 The wavering butterflies.

The summer wind is blowing both barley and butterflies,
 and they seem to be moving together.

Chine-jo, 千子女, dates uncertain, has already been dealt
 with in a previous chapter. A few more verses may be
 added here, taken from *Ise Kikō*, the diary of a journey
 she made with her brother Kyorai to Ise.

小鳥さへわたらぬほどの深山かな
Kotori sae wataranu hodo no miyama kana

No small birds
 Pass through
 These deep woods.

萩すゝき山路を出る笠おもし
Hagi susuki yamaji wo izuru kasa omoshi

Bush-clover and pampas grass;
 As I emerge from the mountain road,
 How heavy my kasa!

伊勢までのよき道づれよ今朝の雁
Ise made no yoki michi-zure yo kesa no kari

Welcome fellow travellers
 As far as Ise,
 Wild geese this morning.

長き夜も旅草臥に寝られけり
Nagaki yo mo tabi kutabire ni nerare keru

However long the night,
 Weary with the journey
 I sleep through it all.

This has no double meaning, as in Christina Rossetti's *Up-Hill*. Bashō wrote the following on Chine-jo's death:

なき人の小袖も今や土用干
Naki hito no kosode mo ima ya doyō-boshi

Summer airing;
 Now the garments
 Of the dead also.

Chiyo-jo, 千代女, 1701-1775, was the wife of the servant of a samurai. Her husband died eight years after, and she became a nun and gave herself up to haikai. She was at first the pupil of Shikō, then of Rogembō. Around her name have collected innumerable anecdotes, now unverifiable. Her verses are nearly all tainted with subjectivity. Perhaps the most objective of her haiku are the following:

野に山に動くものなし雪の朝
No ni yama ni ugoku mono nashi yuki no asa

On field or mountain
 Nothing stirs,
 This morn of snow.

にぎやかな乞食の床や蟲の聲
Nigiyaka na kojiki no toko ya mushi no koe

How lively and interesting
 The beggar's resting place,
 Insects singing all around!

釣竿の絲にさはるや夏の月
Tsuri-zao no ito ni sawaru ya natsu no tsuki

The summer moon,—
 It touches
 The fishing-line!

The famous verse which made the author famous:

朝顔に釣瓶とられて貰ひ水
Asagao ni tsurube torarete morai-mizu

The well-bucket
 Having been taken by the morning-glory,
 I borrow water.

What is wrong with this verse is not that she is, or appears to be, boasting of her aesthetic tenderness of mind, but that the sudden perception of the frail sweetness of the tendrils of the morning-glory has no (poetical) connection with the going next door and asking for a pail of water.

Oddly enough, women poets have a tendency to be moralistic and even philosophical; Mrs. Browning is a dreadful example of this. Chiyo also has her Buddhist verses:

百生や蔓一すぢの心より
Hyakushō ya tsuru hitosuji no kokoro yori

A hundred gourds;
 They have come
 From the mind of one vine.

The Buddhist saying is, "The Three Realms are but One Mind," 三界唯一心. These three are the world of desire, 欲界; the world of form, 色界; and the world of

no-form, 無色界. These three worlds, says the *Kegon Sutra*, are only one mind, and outside this mind nothing exists. So every leaf comes from the Leaf Mind, every gourd from the Gourd Mind. The following also is moralistic but less successful; it was written in reference to the saying "Return good for evil":

手折らるゝ人に薫るや梅の花
Taararuru hito ni kaoru ya ume no hana

The flower of the plum
 Gives its scent
 To him who breaks off the branch.

The moral of this seems to be "Break off flowering branches!" The next have four verses all have something paradoxical in them:

鍋墨の行方はづかしかきつばた
Nabe-zumi no yukue hazukashi kakitsubata

The soot on the saucepan
 Is ashamed, as it goes
 Among the flags.

The soot on the bottom of the saucepan is scraped off, and thrown into the stream. It finds itself flowing among the beautiful irises.

来てみれば森には森の暑さかな
Kite mireba mori ni wa mori no atsusa kana

When we go and see,
 The forest
 Has the forest's own heat.

It looks cool, from a distance.

二日三日身に添いかぬる袷かな
Futsuka mika mi ni soi kanuru awase kana

For two or three days
 The lined garment
 Won't lie well.

When the padded kimono is first put on, it doesn't agree to the body, nor the body to it.

鶯やまた言ひなほし言ひなほし
Uguisu ya mata ii-naoshi ii-naoshi

The uguisu, —
 Again he tries,
 Again he tries!

This is not Browning's "wise thrush," who thinks you think he couldn't repeat himself, but a bird who is trying again and again to say, "Hō! Hokekyō!" the name of a sutra.

澁かるか知らねど柿の初ちぎり
Shibukaro ka shiranedo kaki no hatsu-chigiri

I know not
 Whether it will be astringent,
 This first-plucked persimmon.

There is a pun here on *chigiru*, to peel, and *chigiru* to pledge. This is said to have been written when she married; but she apparently died unmarried. The same applies to the following, said to have been composed upon the death of her husband:

起きて見つ寝て見つ蚊屋の廣さ哉
Okite mitsu nete mitsu kaya no hirosa kana

Getting up,
 And lying down,—
 How large the mosquito net.

時鳥々々として明けにけり
Hototogisu hototogisu tote ake ni keru

“Hototogisu!”
 “Hototogisu!” I waited and repeated,—
 And day dawned.

This is said to have been composed in the early morning after having vainly attempted all night long to write a haiku on this subject, set by her teacher, Rogembō. It seems to me a very fine verse. She has at last identified herself with the *hototogisu*, and begins to sing like one. A similar verse, in which the bird can be heard, is the famous 13th century *Cuckoo Song*:

Summer is icumen in
 Lhude sing cucu!

But the verse attributed to Chiyo-jo seems to derive from one by Chōwa, 調和, who died in 1715 aged 78:

時鳥々々として寝入りけり
Hototogisu hototogisu tote neiri keru

I waited for you
 Hototogisu, hototogisu,
 But fell asleep.

This is also popular in its appeal. The following two verses are usually given as hers, both as referring to her own child who had died:

蜻蛉釣り今日はどこまで行ったやら
Tombo-tsuri kyō wa doko made itta yara

The little dragon-fly hunter,—
 How far, I wonder,
 Has he gone today?

This is not haiku, but the Japanese *Little Boy Blue*.

破る子のなくて障子の寒さ哉
Yaburu ko no nakute shōji no samusa kana

The dead child,
 Who tore the paper-screens,—
 How cold it is!

Chiyo's authorship of this verse is doubtful, but so is whether women can write haiku. The meaning of course is that the wind which comes through the holes in the paper-screens torn by the child who soon after died is colder than the ordinary wind. Whether this is superstition, or subjectivity, or a philosophical reality is not easy to decide.

蝶々や女子の道の後先や
Chōchō ya onago no michi no ato-saki ya

Butterflies,
 As the girl walks along,
 Before and behind her.

This is a good example of the haiku of women.

聲なくば鷺失なわむ今朝の雪
Koe nakuba sagi ushinawamu kesa no yuki

Were they voiceless,
 The herons would be almost non-existent,
 This morning of snow.

The Bible teaches us the importance of the word, the voice of the god. What is silent, is non-existent.

月の夜や石に出て鳴くきりぎりす
Tsuki no yo ya ishi ni dete naku kirigirisu

A moonlit night;
 Coming out on a stone,
 A cricket chirping.

This has the simplicity of nature itself.

簾下げて誰が妻ならん涼舟
Misu sagete taga tsuma naran suzumi-bune

Lowering the rattan blinds,
 Whose wife can it be
 In the boat floating there?

This is rather in the Chinese style. Four more verses:

若草や駒の寝起きのうつくしき
Waka-kusa ya koma no neoki no utsukushiki

The new young grass,
 The colts also, lying down, or standing,—
 All beautiful!

春雨や美しくしうなるものばかり
Harusame ya utsukushū naru mono bakari

In the spring rain
 Every blessed thing
 Becomes more beautiful.

足跡は男なりけり初櫻
Ashi-ato wa otoko nari keri hatsu-zakura

The footprints
 Are those of a man:
 The first cherry blossoms.

When she went to see the blossoming trees, she found that someone had been there before her, and from the size and shape of the marks on the ground, this female Sherlock Holmes judged it was a man.

踞ばうて雲をうかゝふ蛙かな
Tsukubaute kumo wo ukagau kawazu kana

Squatting down,
 And spying out the clouds,—
 A frog!

Shōfū-ni, 梢風尼, 1688-1758, was the wife of Ryōhin, 良品, a disciple of Bashō, who died in 1730.

名月やもたれてまはる様ばしら
Meigetsu ya motarete mawaru en-bashira

The autumn moon!
 Leaning against the verandah post,
 And moving round it.

Chapter XIV

HAIKU BETWEEN BASHŌ AND BUSON

Due to Bashō's labours, his life-long teaching and travelling, there were disciples of his all over the country. In Edo, Kikaku, Ransetsu, Sampū; in Naniwa (Ōsaka), Fūchiku, Shara; in Kyōto, Yamei, Kyorai, Fukoku, Shikō; in Ōmi, Masahide, Otokuni, Chigetsu-ni, Senna, Shadō, Kyokusui, Rotsū, Kyoroku, Shōhaku, Jōsō; in Mino, Shikō, Izen; in Owari, Tokoku, Rosen, Yasui, Etsujin, Kakei; in Iga, Tohō, Bairin; in Ise, Kyofu; in Mikawa, Hakusetsu; in Kaga, Hokushi, Bonchō; in Echizen, Yaha; in Etchū, Rōka; in Shinano, Sora; in Nagasaki, Ushichi.

But the question is, how many of these disciples, and all the other converts to his Way of Haiku, really understood what Bashō was getting at? And was not Bashō himself, like Wordsworth, only partly conscious of what he was doing, what he wanted to do? In Ryōta's *Kotō Mondai*, 湖東問題, we are told that Bashō praised the following disciples for certain qualities they exhibited; Kikaku for his brilliant and spectacular style:

名月や畳の上に松の影
Meigetsu ya tatami no ue ni matsu no kage

The full moon of autumn;
On the tatami,
The shadow of the pine-tree.

Ransetsu for his "dryness":

梅一りん一りんほどの暖さ
Ume ichirin ichirin hodo no atatakasa

A blossom of the plum,
A blossom's worth
Of warmth.

Jōsō for his quietness:

蝸を出てまた障子あり夏の月
Kaya wo dete mata shōji ari natsu no tsuki

Coming out of the mosquito-net
There is also the paper-screen:
The summer moon.

Yaha for his lightness:

長松が親の名で来る御慶哉
Chōmatsu ga oya no na de kuru gyokei kana

Chōmatsu
Says the compliments of the season,
In the name of his father.

Kyorai for his truth to nature:

應々といへど叩くや雪の門
Ōō to iedo tataku ya yuki no kado

“All right!” I said, “All right!”
But someone still knocked
On the snow-clad gate.

The authenticity of all this is dubious, but what we cannot doubt is that very few since Bashō have grasped what the essence of Bashō's teaching was,—that our life

must be lived in the arms of nature; and still fewer have tried to put it into practice as Bashō himself did. Thus, soon after Bashō died, haiku began to decline, and for this we may add other reasons. The influence of Kikaku was very strong in Edo, and he was, to put the matter briefly, an odious character whom Bashō was wrong to have liked so much. His art is artificiality, his warmth a pose, his wit cold-hearted. His only redeeming feature was his respect for Bashō. His verses are mostly ambiguous or obscure, but sometimes, it is true, he hits the mark. Kikaku's influence came from the increase of senryu tendencies arising from social conditions. The tradesmen were beginning to get more and more power, that is, more and more money, and only an artist like Buson or a satirist like Issa, living in poverty, could resist commercialism and materialism. Senryu is to a large extent ugly realism, the backside of the glamour and sentimentalism and self-deception that always go with wealth. Since Bashō, with the exception of Buson and Issa, and perhaps Shiki, haiku poets have been repeating, with variations, the apparent trivialities of Bashō, without any depth of experience; experiences devoid of nobility of character; humour that is not the humour of nature; sketches that are only photographs; backgrounds that are simply abstract philosophy.

The lesser poets of the Bashō School, as well as those of other schools, wrote verses that were mostly easy and uninteresting, or difficult riddles hardly worth solving. Kikaku set the fashion for the latter:

日本の風呂吹といへ比叡山
Nippon no furofuki to ie hieizan

Speaking of Japanese
Furofuki,
Hieizan.

Furofuki is *daikon*, Japanese radish, boiled and eaten with *miso* sauce. Hieizan, one of the most famous temples of the Tendai Sect, was said to have three thousand monks, *bō*. *Tendai-kompon*, the fundamentals of Tendai, is abbreviated to *daikon*, which is a radish, so three thousand monks is three thousand roots, *bon*, so the *furofuki* reminds us of Hieizan, q.e.d. But most of the light verse that paraded as haiku was not quite so abstruse as this. The following are some of the less feeble and less uninteresting verses of the period between the death of Bashō and the rise of Buson.

Bunson, 汶村, who died in 1713, was a samurai who became a pupil of Bashō, then of Kyoroku.

名月や暗き處は虫の聲
Meigetsu ya kuraki tokoro wa mushi no koe

The bright autumn moon;
From the dark places,
The voices of insects.

Mokudō, 木導, dates unknown, was yet another samurai who became Bashō's pupil.

春風や麥の中ゆく水の音
Harukaze ya mugi no naka yuku mizu no oto

The spring breeze is blowing!
Through the barley fields
The sounds of water.

Bakusui, 麥水, 1720–1783, was a merchant, and learned

from Kiin, 希因, then Shikō, and became the pupil of Otsuyu. His verses are mostly subjective, or rather, egoistic:

寝た下へ月流れこむすゞみかな
Neta shita e tsuki nagarekomu suzumi kana

Cooling myself,
 The moon flowed under
 Where I was sleeping.

He was lying on a kind of large bench over the river bed.

よわよわと日の行き届く枯野かな
Yowayowa to hi no yukitodoku kareno kana

The weak sunlight;
 It reaches the farthest bounds
 Of the withered moor.

The point of this haiku is the indirectness with which the vast extent of leafless, shadowless land is portrayed.

路かへて庵へもどるや菫草
Michi kaete io e modoru ya sumire-sō

Going back home
 By a different path,—
 These violets!

The poet feels in this change of path what Wordsworth speaks of in *Resolution and Independence*:

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befell that, in that lonely place

Rito, 吏登, 1680-1754, lived in Edo, and was the pupil

of Ransetsu. He was the author of many works. One of his best verses:

梅咲いてあたりに春はなかりけり
Ume saite atari ni haru wa nakari kerī

Plum blossoms blooming;
All around,
No other trace of spring.

Mōgan, 毛納, dates unknown, was a samurai who learned first from Bashō, then from Kyorai. The following verse is more like waka in its spirit:

大名の駕に散りこむ櫻かな
Daimyō no kago ni chirikomu sakura kana

Cherry blossoms
Fall into the palanquin
Of a daimyō.

This is too beautiful, too high-class for haiku, which must be rather low-ku.

Suiō, 水鷗, dates unknown, a pupil of Bashō.

秋の夜や夢と鼾ときりぎりす
Aki no yo ya yume to ibiki to kirigirisu

An autumn night:
Dreams, snores,
Grasshoppers chirping.

Shidō, 之道, dates unknown, was a merchant of Ōsaka, and a pupil of Bashō. He is also known as Fūchiku, 諷竹.

老僧も袈裟かつぎたる花見哉
Rō-sō mo kesa katsugitaru hanami kana

The old monk also,
His surplice over his shoulder,
Gazing at the cherry blossoms.

Yayū, 也有, 1701-1783, was a samurai of high rank, and had no master as a haiku poet; he is famous rather for his haibun, haiku-like prose. The following is interesting as showing three characteristics of the Japanese.

元日や雪を踏む人憎からず
Ganjitsu ya yuki wo fumu hito nikukarazu

The First Day of the Year;
People who tread the snow
Are not hateful.

First, the Japanese are (unconsciously) animistic. The newly-fallen snow is something, is "somebody" which should not be wantonly spoiled by walking on it. Those who do so, as Cowper said of a man who treads on a worm, are sub-human. Second, there is a spirit of time, as Wordsworth felt, which makes one moment different from another, one day different from another. And we are ourselves are different beings on different days. On New Year's Day we are Confucius' "Superior Man." Third, after all, human beings are more important than nature, and when we are at our best, our most benevolent, we do not hate the rather obtuse and unpoetical people who come to see us on that day, defacing the snow with an un-sublime indifference.

三つ三つ星みいだすや啼く蛙
Futatsu mitsu hoshi miidasu ya naku kawazu

I can see
Two or three stars;
Frogs are croaking.

Two or three stars seen, two or three frogs heard,—what a harmony of eye and ear, of far and near, of infinite and finite, on this spring evening!

The life-time of Yayū coincides with the rise of senryu. The first *Haifū Yanagidaru* was published in 1765, seventeen years before the death of Yayū, and though the poet is noted especially for his haibun, or poetical sketches, many of his verses are very close indeed to senryu, for example:

蜂の巢や討手に向ふ頬かぶり
Hachi no su ya uchite ni mukau hō-kaburi

A wasps' nest:
He defies them
With a towel round his face.

小便はよその田へして早苗とり
Shōben wa yoso no ta e shite sanae-tori

Pulling out young rice-plants:
He makes water
In the next field.

The man feels that his own rice field is pure and holy, not to be polluted.

暗がりに座頭忘れて涼かな
Kuragari ni zatō wasurete suzumi kana

Cooling in the evening,
The blind man forgetting himself
In the darkness.

物まうの聲に物着る暑さかな
Mono mō no koe ni mono-kiru atsusa kana

Putting something on
 At the voice of a caller,—
 How hot it is! ,

仲國が耳に邪魔なる砧かな
Nakakuni ga mimi ni jama naru kinuta kana

For the ears of Nakakuni
 The sound of the fulling-blocks
 Got in the way.

In the *Heike Monogatari* we are told that when Nakakuni wanted to find Kogō, 小督, in Saga, he went listening for her *koto*, or harp; the sound of the *kinuta* all around must have been a nuisance. This is 100% *senryū*.

庭ばかりはやるいしゃありけふの菊
Niwa bakari hayaru isha ari kyō no kiku

Today's chrysanthemums:
 A doctor with a large practice,—
 In the garden only!

The (quack) doctor has few patients, so he becomes an expert of chrysanthemum growing. This verse also is pure *senryū*.

蠅が来て蝶にはさせぬ晝寝かな
Hae ga kite chō niwa sasenu hirune kana

A mid-day nap:
 He won't let me become a butterfly,—
 This fly!

This refers to Sōshi's celebrated dream (see Vol. I

pages 40-43) and simply means that the fly will not let him go to sleep. A senryu of the time says:

蠅が来て晝寝の顔を皺にする
Hae ga kite hirune no kao wo shiwa ni suru

A fly comes,
 And makes wrinkles
 On the sleeping face at noonday.

二三枚繪馬見て晴るる時雨哉
Ni-san-mai ema mite haruru shigure kana

A winter shower:
 Two or three *ema*,
 And it cleared up.

This is a sudden shower, and the poet takes shelter in the Emadō, a shrine where *ema*, pictures of horses (symbols of virility) are hung. After looking at only a few of them, the rain has stopped and he is glad to get out of the musty, neglected hall with its strange, half-human horses and mysterious inscriptions. There is a senryu very similar to this.

山は時雨大根引くべく野はなりぬ
Yama wa shigure daikon hikubeku no wa narinu

On the mountains, winter rain,
 In the fields, daikon-pulling
 Is the order of the day.

This has the simplicity of John Clare.

闇の香を手折れば白し梅の花
Yami no ka wo taoreba shiroshi ume no hana

Breaking off the dusky scent,
I found it was white,—
The flower of the plum!

Keats is almost as bold as Yayū here with his lines in the *Ode to a Nightingale*:

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet . . .

It is very dark, and the flowering branches are hardly visible. He breaks off, not a *seen* branch but one which he *smells*. He sees with his nose. What he has broken off is a smell, and he carries it away with him.

梅の散るあたりや炭のあき俵
Ume no chiru atari ya sumi no aki-dawara

Where the plum-blossoms
Are falling and scattering,
An empty charcoal sack.

It is early spring, winter not yet forgotten. The petals of the plum are falling on and near the empty straw sacks that contained charcoal. The earth is black with the charcoal dust, and the petals are pinkish white, in strong contrast with them.

くさめして見失うたる雲雀かな
Kusame shite miushinōtaru hibari kana

Sneezing,
I lost sight
Of the skylark.

A sneeze is a remarkable thing, if rightly considered.

It has something of Zen in its union of mind and body, 100 percentness, cause-and-effect-lessness, individuality, universality, unemotionality, sinlessness, unintellectuality, desirelessness, transcendence, humour, impersonality, sneeze-for-sneeze-sake-ness. Here we have a Lear-like intimate, alliterative association of a sneeze and a skylark.

追剝のながめて通す紙衣かな
Oihagi no nagamete tōsu kamiko kana

The paper-coat
 Looking at the foot-pad
 Casually.

The *kamiko*, à kind of garment made of paper, stained with persimmon juice, was a poor sort of apparel used by hermits, religious tramps, and such-like. Thus anyone wearing a *kamiko* was not afraid of highwaymen, who were correspondingly uninterested in them. This senryu-like verse has its counterpart in Juvenal, who was imitated by Chaucer.

Senkaku, 仙鶴, 1676-1750, was a pupil of Sentoku. He was born in Edo, but went to Kyōto and became popular there, and taught the tea-ceremony. The following is one more of the rare examples of personification in haiku:

踏つ蹴つ跡も見ずして年ぞ行く
Fumitsu ketsu ato mo mizu shite toshi zo yuku

Off went the old year,
 Kicking and trampling,
 Without giving a backward glance.

Hajin, 巴人, 1677-1742, was a pupil of Kikaku and Ransetsu when young, and the teacher of Buson when old.

He worked together with Hyakuri, 百里, a fish purveyor, died 1727, and Gikū, 祇空, of Ōsaka, who shaved his head before Sōgi's grave. The three tried to purify haiku from its tendency towards senryu-like verse. Hajin's own verses are not very good; perhaps the following is the best:

酒屋まで兵一人夜の雪
Sakaya made tsuwamono hitori yoru no yuki

A warrior
 Going to a wine-shop
 Through the snow at night.

Sentoku, or **Tentoku**, 沾徳, who died in 1726 at the age of sixty three, was a man of Edo. Together with Fukaku, he was the most responsible for the degeneration of haiku after Bashō's death. He learned haikai first from Rogen, 露言, then associated with Rosen, 露沾, 1654-1733, Lord of the Taira Clan in Iwaki Province, from whom he got his pen-name. One of his witty verses:

遠乗や鞭は柳のありしだい
Tōnori ya muchi wa yanagi no arishidai

A long ride;
 Until the willows last
 For whips.

Fukaku, 不角, died in 1753 at the age of ninety two, started a new style of haiku called *Kechōtai*, 化鳥躰, Ghost Bird. In the Genroku Period this became very popular, and Fukaku is said to have had a thousand pupils, from which he was called Senō, 千翁, Old Man Thousand. This Ghost Bird style is not easy to define. The name anyway

seems to have been given later, and refers to what one might call smartness and eccentricity; an example, by Fukaku:

三度目の雪なん只の雪のくれ
San-do-me no yuki nan tada no yuki no kure

“It’s snowing for the third time!”
“Pooh, it’s only
Another snowy evening!”

Sogan, 素丸, who died at the age of eighty three in 1791, wrote many pleasant verses:

土べたに子を這はせおく菜摘哉
Tsuchi-beta ni ko wo hawase oku natsumi kana

Gathering young greens,
Letting the child
Crawl on the ground.

釣鐘に横日の残る暑さかな
Tsuri-gane ni yoko-bi no nokoru atsusa kana

The slanting rays of the sun
On the temple bell:
The remaining heat!

Sogan was a member of the group formed in 1731 called *Goshikizumi*, 五色墨, “Five coloured Indian-ink,” to which belonged also Fūha, 風姜, (afterwards Sōsui, 宗瑞) Renshi, 蓮之, (afterwards Keirin, 珪林) Shiseki, 咫尺, (afterwards Ryōwa, 寥和) and Chōsui, 鳥醉, (afterwards Ryūkyo, 柳居). They used the different colours to judge each other’s verses, and published a book with a (posthumous) preface by Kikaku, who quotes Rikyū’s admonitions. Kikaku had been dead twenty five years, and there was

great confusion in the haikai world.

Renshi, 蓮之, who died in 1742 at the age of sixty three, was a man of Edo, a pupil of Sampū. He also wrote some interesting verses:

菜の花や引残したる窓の前
Na no hana ya hikinokoshitaru mado no mae

Young greens!
 Leaving them unpulled
 Before the window.

Perhaps because beautiful.

踊りかな京は女の多いこと
Odori kana kyō wa onna no ōi koto

The dancing!
 In Kyōto,
 What numbers of women!

しぐれるや傾城町も神無月
Shigureru ya keisei machi mo kannazuki

Cold winter rain;
 A street of harlots;
 The god-less month.

Sōsui, (the First), 宗瑞, died aged sixty in 1744. His haiku are simple and objective:

米つきにこぼれかゝるや花卯木
Kome-tsuki ni kobore kakaru ya hana-utsugi

The flowers of the u tree
 Fall upon
 The rice-huller.

ぬけ道や落葉かくれの溜り雨
Nuke-michi ya ochiba-gakure no tamari-ame

A short cut;
The fallen leaves hide
The rain-water.

The water that has collected on the path.

Shiseki, 咫尺, otherwise **Ryōwa**, 寥和, died at eighty three in 1759. He learned first from Bashō, then Ransetsu. His verses are similar to those of his teachers.

參宮の笠を着て居る案山子哉
Sangū no kasa wo kite iru kagashi kana

The scarecrow,
Wearing a hat
For a pilgrimage to Ise shrine.

埋火に年よる膝のちひさゝよ
Umore-bi ni toshi yoru hiza no chiisasa yo

Oh, the thinness
Of the old thighs
By the banked fire!

Ryūkyo, 柳居, who died at 63 in 1748, was a samurai who learned first from Tentoku, then joined the Goshikizumi, but becoming dissatisfied with it learned from Bakurin, 麥林. His best verse is:

菜の花や赫奕として寺一つ
Na no hana ya kakueki to shite tera hitotsu

Rape-blossoms,
Resplendent and shining,—
And a single temple!

Kiin, 希因, who died at the age of 51 in 1748, was a man of Kanazawa, a cotton-wool merchant and druggist. He learned first from Hokushi, then from Otsuyu. His verses are pretty poor; a particularly bad one:

盗人のあとで棒ふる柳かな
Nusubito no ato de bō furu yanagi kana

The willow
 Flourishes its branches
 After the thief has gone.

A better one:

桐の實のふかれてふかれて初時雨
Kiri no mi no fukarete fukarete hatsu-shigure

The seeds of the paulownia
 Are blown about
 In the first winter rain.

The seeds are pointed, about an inch long.

Chōsui, the First, 鳥醉, who died in 1769, went up to Edo and learned from Ryokyō. A verse which has more space than most haiku:

天の際にちらばる人や汐干狩
Ten no kiwa ni chirabaru hito ya shiohigari

Human beings scattered
 Over the line of the sky
 At the low-tide shell-gathering.

Chapter XV

BUSON I

In Bashō, the religious, aesthetic, moral, and poetical elements of his character were justly balanced. He has no cruelty, no callousness, little sentimentality, no triviality, no ambition, no irreverence, (that is, irony,) no obtuseness. Buson no doubt felt himself inferior to Bashō in depth and humanity, but he was superior to Bashō in one point, the fineness and wakefulness of his sensibility. Bashō is more passive. Buson has an eagerness of perception that reminds us of Pater and Oscar Wilde. Like them, his moral judgements are often weak or absent. Bashō could never have written such a verse as the following:

雉子打って歸る家路の日は高し
Kiji utte kaeru ie-ji no hi wa takashi

Coming back home
After killing a pheasant,
The sun still high in the sky.

To kill such a splendid bird as a pheasant is a great joy, expressed indirectly by the hunter's going back so early. This verse should be compared to Taigi's, on page 295. Bashō was far from being a member of the S.P.C.A., but his vague feeling may be seen in:

面白うてやがて悲しき鶉舟かな
Omoshirōte yagate kanashiki ubune kana

How exciting for a while,
The cormorant fishing-boat!
Then depressing.

Buson's love of nature was as strong as Bashō's, but it has a different quality, aesthetic chiefly, with moral flavour. However, the following shows how the artist may after all feel the pathos of animal life:

木枯しやひたとつまづく戻り馬
Kogarashi ya hita-to tsumazuku modori-uma

In the storm,
The horse returning
Suddenly stumbles.

This reminds us of what Pater says of snakes in *Marius the Epicurean*, that he could not kill them, for they are pitiful, in being what they are.

春の水すみれつばなをぬらしゆく
Haru no mizu sumire tsubana wo nurashi yuku

The water of spring;
It flows along, laving
The violets, and the ears of the reeds.

The melody of this verse is sweet, like the sound of the water itself, like Buson's feeling for nature. Another verse in which Buson's watery love for water, airy love for air, and earthy love for earth is expressed:

かげろふや簀に土をめづる人
Kagerō ya ajika ni tsuchi wo mezuru hito

The air quivering with heat,
A man with a warm feeling to the earth
Carried in a straw-basket.

Perhaps the best explanation of this would be that the man is Buson himself, who must have loved the earth for its own sake, but what he was carrying the earth for is a question, perhaps to his garden; But the greatness and wonderfulness of Buson is in his extreme minuteness, not merely objective, but subjective also, so that a relation between things and between people and things is discovered-created that is a perpetual astonishment to the reader:

山もとに米踏む音や藤の花
Yama-moto ni kome fumu oto ya fuji no hana

The sound of treading rice
 At the foot of the mountain:
 Wistaria blossoms.

There is a secret connection between the dull thud of the primitive machine, and the purple flowers. Both belong to the sleepiness of spring. We may compare the following:

をちこちに瀧の音聞く若葉かな
Ochi kochi ni taki no oto kiku wakaba kana

Listening to waterfalls
 From here and there:
 The young leaves!

Here it is the glittering element that joins sound and sight.

Besides an understanding of the relation of things, Buson also has a deep feeling of time, the shortness or length of time. In the following it is a certain limited time which is felt:

温泉の底に我足見ゆるけさの秋
Yu no soko ni waga ashi miyuru kesa no aki

At the bottom of the hot water
 My legs I see,
 This morning of autumn.

His own funny-looking legs seen in the bath, and the commencement of autumn when the energy of life begins to decrease, are in curious harmony. Buson has the artist's eye for harmony and contrast. Sometimes the contrast is too strong, and the poetry suffers:

骨拾ふ人にしたしき堇かな
Kotsu hirou hito ni shitashiki sumire kana

How intimate
 The violets,
 To the one who collects the bones!

The morning after cremation, the relative must pick out the bones, with chopsticks for the purpose. The violets blooming among the green grass are consoling to his feelings. A better, because less emotional verse:

櫻より桃にしたしき小家哉
Sakura yori momo ni shitashiki koie kana

More than cherry blossoms,
 Plum blossoms
 Are intimate with the small house.

Other verses of harmony:

初午や物種うりに日のあたる
Hatsuuma ya mono-tane uri ni hi no ataru

The First Day of the Horse;
 Seeds being sold
 Where the sunshine falls.

On this day, people go to worship at the Fox Shrine. Near-by there are booths, in sunny places, which sell seeds in paper bags. There is some human warmth felt here. This verse is nothing much in the translation, but the sound of it, *ha, ma, ya, a, ta; tsu, u, u, ru; mo, no; ri, ni, hi*, gives us a feeling of the harmonious warmth of spring.

大和路の宮もわら屋もつばめ哉
Yamato-ji no miya mo waraya mo tsubame kana

The mansions and thatched houses
 Of the roads of Yamato,—
 Swallows.

In Nara, swallows nest and breed equally in the eaves of shrines and temples, and of farmers' houses. This haiku is based on a waka by Semimaru found in the *Wakan Rōeishū*:

世の中はとともかくてもおなじこと
 宮もわら屋もはてしなければ

In this world of ours,
 So long as it may last,
 Whatever may happen,
 Shrines and thatched houses
 Are no different from one another.

This waka was used often in haiku, for example in one by Kikaku, who quotes most of it:

宮わら屋はてしなければ 矢倉賣
Miya waraya hateshi nakereba yagura-uri

As long as there are
 Mansions and farm-houses,—
 Men going round selling yagura.

A yagura is the wooden part of a kotatsu. Kikaku says that everybody is the same because everybody wants to be warm in winter. Buson says they are the same because the swallows build their nests in them all impartially.

片町にさらさ染むるや春の風
Katamachi ni sarasa somuru ya haru no kaze

A village on one side of the road,
 And dyeing calico prints;
 The wind of spring.

On the vacant ground on the opposite side of the road of a rather desolate town, the young spring grass is a brilliant green. Drying on it, cloth dyed in beautiful colours is rippled by the spring wind. *Sarasa* is a Portuguese word which ultimately comes from "Saracen." The English is "sarsenet."

Though Buson's feeling for animals is far inferior to that of Bashō and Issa, his sympathy with human beings is in a way greater, for he has not the irony of Issa, or the religious resignation of Bashō; an example:

離別れたる身を踏込んで田植哉
Sararetaru mi wo fumikonde ta-ue kana

The divorced woman
 Steps down into it,—
 The field to be planted!

A village woman has been divorced, but now is the busiest season of the year, when even a cat's paw would be borrowed. However painful or disagreeable or shameful or outrageous it must seem, she must step down into the muddy water, and "do her bit." This is or was, the fate or the nature of a country-woman. It is perhaps her "patriotism."

梅咲いて帯買う部屋の遊女かな
Ume saite obi kau heya no yūjo kana

Plum flowers blooming,
 Courtezans are buying sashes
 In their room.

"In their room" has a slightly sinister meaning, for the rooms of courtezans were almost their prison cells. The plum blossoms outside, the gorgeous apparel, and the *obi* spread out inside, all is like a picture, beautiful in two dimensions only.

雪折れも聞えて暗き夜なるかな
Yuki-ore mo kikoete kuraki yo naru kana

Snow-break also
 Can be heard,
 This dark night.

The philosophical point here is the re-joining of two apparently unrelated things, the darkness and the sound of the bamboos breaking under their weight of snow. The psychological point lies in the intensifying of the feeling of darkness by the sudden terrifying noises outside. The poetical point is the humanizing of the snow and the bamboos, the snowification and bambooification of the poet,

the unbearable weight and tension, and suspense felt by the poet between the sounds.

梅が香のたちのぼりてや月の傘
Ume ga ka no tachinoborite ya tsuki no kasa

The scent of the plum blossoms
 Rises up and up,—
 The halo round the moon.

Sight and smell are closely associated. Here one seems to change into the other.

にほいある衣も疊まず春の暮
Nioi aru kinu mo tatamazu haru no kure

The perfumed clothes
 Not yet folded away,
 The spring evening.

The clothes (of a charming young lady back from flower-viewing) that were scented in the smoke of some kind of wood, lie there as they were dropped. They express the relaxed, faintly voluptuous character of an evening of spring.

水仙や美人頭をいたむらし
Suisen ya bijin kôbe wo itamurashi

The narcissus flowers,—
 A beautiful woman
 With an aching head.

The flower of the narcissus is heavy on its stem, and of a pale, rather translucent whiteness. We may compare Shelley's unfinished posthumous lines on *The Waning Moon*:

And like a dying lady, lean and pale,
 Who totters forth, wrapped in a gauzy veil,
 Out of her chamber, led by the insane
 And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,
 The moon arose up in the murky East,
 A white and shapeless mass—

指貫を足でぬぐ夜や朧月
Sashinuki wo ashi de nugu yo ya oboro-zuki

Pulling off his *sashinuki*
 With his foot:
 The hazy moon.

Sashinuki are baggy trousers, like those used before kimono came into vogue. The laziness and looseness of the man, who pulls off the *sashinuki* by putting his foot on the bottom of one and taking his leg out, is in accord with spring, and the spring moon.

足弱の渡りて濁る春の水
Ashi-yowa no watarite nigoru haru no mizu

A soft-footed one
 Wades through the spring water,
 Clouding it.

The water of spring is more feminine than that of other seasons. When the slow and gentle and timid feet of a woman pass through it, the water is clouded. A man would move more quickly, and the water would soon clear. Besides this, there is the fact that women cloud everything.

盗人の首領歌よむけふの月
Nusubito no kashira shuryō uta yomu kyō no tsuki

The bandit chieftain
Sings a song
Under tonight's moon.

This is an example of Buson's fanciful imagination, by which he praises the moon as having its appeal to the hearts of even barbarous and ruthless people.

名月や世を逃れ住む盗人等
Meigetsu ya yo wo nogare-sumu nusubito-ra

Under the bright autumn moon,
Five or six bandits,
People who live apart from this world.

This is only an imaginary scene, but it is an indirect praise of the moon. It is also a still more indirect praise of Japan, which could produce such poetical robbers.

討ちはたす梵論つれ立ちて夏野かな
Uchihatasu boro tsuredachite natsuno kana

Together with another *boro*,
Who are going to kill each other,
They reach the summer moor.

A *boro* was a wandering, masterless samurai, a kind of komusō (a monk with a bamboo flute, his face hidden with a basket-like hat) an "ascetic" of the Fuke Sect, which was a branch of the Zen Sect, founded by Fuke (Puhua) 普化, of the Tang Dynasty, a contemporary of Rinzai (Linchi), whom he asked for a coffin, and sat in it, and died. Hōtō Kokushi, 法燈國師, went to China in 1248, (the Sung Dynasty) and studied the doctrines of the Fuke Sect, and learned the flute from a certain Chōyū, the 16th

in succession. He returned to Japan in 1254, and travelled about preaching and playing the flute. Komu, 虚無 (the grandson of Kusunoki Masashige) the sixth in musical descent from Hōtō, was particularly famous for his flute-playing, and gave his name to the komusō.

Buson seems to have got the hint for this verse from the *Tsurezuregusa*, Chapter 115, in which we are told:

Many *boro-boro* collected at a place called Shukugawara in Kanagawa Ken, and were intoning a sutra, when another called out to them, "Is there here, by any chance, a *boro* called Irōshi-bō?" "I am Irōshi; who desires to see him?" "My name is Shirabonji. My teacher, called Mr. So-and-So, was killed by a certain Irōshi in the Eastern Province. So I came here to avenge him. That's why I asked." "It's very manly of you, to come for that reason. Yes, as you say, I killed him. But if we fight here, it will defile this holy place, so let's go to the dry river-bed and fight there. I ask that no one here should interfere on either side, because this would trouble people and disturb the Buddhist service." This they decided, went to the dry river-bed, thrust and cut each other to their heart's content, and both died.

There is a remarkable harmony between the mind and appearance of the *boro*, (long unkempt hair, carrying a sword, ragged clothes) and the rankness of the summer moor.

鶯や家内揃うて飯じぶん
Uguisu ya kanai sorōte meshi jibun

An uguisu singing,
 All the family
 At table.

This is a little like Hans Anderson, or Cowper, but after all, is there anything better?

燃え立ちて顔はつかしき蚊遣哉
Moetachite kao hazukashiki kayari kana

The mosquito smudge
 Suddenly flared up:
 Her shy face.

Passionate love between man and woman remains almost unexpressed and undescribed in haiku, though we find it commonly enough in waka. This is not from any idea of its being vulgar or unpoetical as such, but comes from the ideal of the poetic attitude, which is the negation of self and detachment from what is portrayed. But, it may be said, this is Shakespeare's attitude, and thus we must admit that haiku has an element of quietism, of "wise passivity," something subdued in it which does not or should not belong to Zen. Those haiku which deal with the subject of love, are concerned with only a few aspects of it; for example, the spring of love, not its summer passion or winter of pale misfeature. Another example by a contemporary of Buson, Taigi:

初戀や燈籠によする顔と顔
Hatsukoi ya tōro ni yosuru kao to kao

First love,
 Their faces close together
 By the stone lantern.

春雨や同車の君がさゞめごと
Harusame ya dōsha no kimi ga sazamegoto

Spring rain:
 In the same carriage,
 Soft nothings.

We may take this, rightly enough, as an example of a romanticism unusual in haiku, yet after all the real subject is not the two people whispering together, but the soft spring rain that falls outside.

身にしむや亡妻の櫛を聞に踏む
Mi ni shimu ya naki tsuma no kushi wo neya ni fumu

In the bedroom, I trod
 On my dead wife's comb:
 The cold penetrated my heart.

This resembles the poetry of Poe, or Rossetti, and seems to me all that a haiku should not be. Haiku has nothing to do with bedrooms or dead wives or treading on this or that thing with its emotional associations. *Mi ni shimu* belongs to autumn. In actual fact, Buson's wife Tomo died in 1814, thirty four years after this verse was composed in 1780.

勝手まで誰が妻子ぞ冬ごもり
Katte made tare ga saishi zo fuyu-gomori

Whose wife and child
 Have come to the kitchen door?
 Winter confinement.

What Buson has tried to grasp here, and what has almost escaped him, is the feeling which perhaps a blind man understands best of all, the sense of some other existence beyond our own, something imagined rather than perceived by sense.

春雨やもの書かぬ身のあはれなる
Harusame ya mono kakanu mi no aware naru

Spring rain;
 How pitiful she is,
 Unable to write!

Meisetsu was the first to explain this as a woman in love. Unable to go out, due to the rain she sits moping in her room, and cannot even write a letter to the man she is in love with. The verse has the prescript, "Written as in a dream."

銀杏踏んでしづかに兒の下山哉
Ichō funde shizuka ni chigo no gezan kana

Treading the ginkgo tree,
 The young boy quietly
 Comes down from the temple.

The yellow leaves fallen from the enormous ginkgo tree cover the mountain road. A beautiful boy of the temple walks sedately over the leaves.

白蓮を切らんとぞ思う僧のさま
Byakuren wo kiran to zo omou sō no sama

A white lotus;
 The monk
 Is deciding to cut it.

Buson imagines, perhaps, that the monk feels, unconsciously, that the cutting of the pure beautiful flower, even to offer at the Buddhist altar, has something un-Buddhistic in it. In such a case we must suppose it is not a monk of the Zen Sect.

鍋釜もゆかしき宿やけさの露
Nabe kama mo yukashiki yado ya kesa no tsuyu

The saucepans and stoves of this house,—
 What a pleasure to see,
 This morning of dew!

Buson got up early in the morning, and, seeing the spotless kitchen, realised that there is a beauty of nature, and a beauty of art, but there is also a beauty of ordinary living, cooking and farming and carpentering.

みどり子の頭巾眉深きいとほしみ
Midorigo no zukin mabukaki itohoshimi

The little girl's kerchief
 Too low over the eyes,—
 It is charming.

This is the sweetness of Kezia in *At the Bay*.

雪の旦母屋のけぶりのめでたさよ
Yuki no asa moya no keburi no medetasa yo

A morning of snow;
 From the main building smoke arising,—
 What a happy thing!

When winter comes, especially in a snowy region, fire, or smoke which is its accompaniment and symbol, is felt to be a hopeful, blessed, glorious thing.

待人の足音遠き落葉かな
Machi-bito no ashioto tōki ochiba kana

The awaited one's footsteps
 Heard afar off;
 Falling leaves.

Buson has been waiting for someone to come, listening intently, and hears the leaves, blown by the wind, falling outside. At last, the sound of the expected footsteps is heard in the distance, treading on those same leaves.

屋根葺の落葉踏むや闔のうへ
Yane-fuki no rakuyō fumu ya neya no ue

The thatcher
 Is treading the fallen leaves
 Over the bed-room.

This verse reminds us of a passage in Thoreau's *Journals*:

Autumnal mornings, when the feet of countless sparrows are heard like raindrops on the roof by the boy who sleeps in the garret.

But by "bed-room" Buson gives a certain human warmth to his verse.

As said before, Buson has a strong feeling for the passing of time, a feeling that Spengler supposed was a peculiarity of the Faustian culture. The shortness of the night (of summer) the length of the day (of spring), lateness, or earliness,—these were "seen" by him poetically:

菜の花や晝ひとしきり海の音
Na no hana ya hiru hitoshikiri umi no oto

Rape-flowers at noon;
 For a short spell,
 The sound of the sea.

The yellow flowers billow all round in the warm silence.
 At times,

Here is heard an echo
 Of the far sea,
 Though far off it be.

Just before, and up to the full tide, the roar of the sea can be plainly heard. There is a harmony of the yellow flowers, the green of the pine-trees by the shore, and the blue of the sea. The sense of time is expressed also in the following:

みじか夜や波うち際の捨篝
Mijika yo ya namiuchigiwa no sutc-kagari

The short night;
 On the shore,
 A thrown-away fishing-torch.

The night before, fishermen had lighted a fishing-fire. Now it is (so soon) black and cold and wet. It is a kind of fire-clock that measures the briefness of the summer night.

おきおきに物思ふ春の行衛哉
Okioki ni mono omou haru no yukue kana

Waking each morning,
 Thinking about things,—
 Spring, where has spring gone?

This is said by some to be based on Saigyō's waka:

けふのみと思へば長き春の日も
 ほどなく暮るる心地こそすれ

If we think
 This day our last,
 Even the long spring day
 Draws to its close
 So soon, so soon!

The following verses also show how deeply Buson felt

the passing of spring:

洗足の盥も漏りてゆく春や
Sensoku no tarai mo morite yuku haru ya

The tub I washed my feet in
 Is beginning to leak;
 Spring, also, is passing.

きのふ暮れけふ又くれてゆく春や
Kinō kure kyō mata kurete yuku haru ya

Yesterday drew to its close;
 Today also draws to its close;
 Ah, spring is departing!

まだ長ふなる日に春の限りかな
Mada nagō naru hi ni haru no kagiri kana

Another long day,
 And, ah! spring
 Is at its end.

ゆく春や逡巡として遅ざくら
Yuku haru ya shunjun to shite oso-zakura

Departing spring,
 Hesitating, faltering,
 Late cherry blossoms.

This is a rather simple verse for Buson, but he has caught, in the term *shunjun*, the wavering, undecided, vacillating character of late spring and the late cherry-blossoms.

遅き日や雉子の下りゐる橋の上
Osoki hi ya kiji no oriiru hashi no ue

The day passes slowly;
A pheasant comes down
Onto the bridge.

Hekigodō says this is “to some extent a made-up verse.” Kusatao says it is “the product of the fancy.” Shūōshi takes it to be a picture. Shiki says “it is not a common scene, but we cannot assert it is not a verse based on an actual scene.”

遅き日のつもりて遠きむかしかな
Osoki hi no tsumorite tōki mukashi kana

Slow days passing,
Accumulating,—
How distant past things!

The onomatopoeic assonance is noteworthy here: *osoki*, *tōki*; *tsumori*, *mukashi*; *no*, *na*,—all give a dream-like feeling to the verse, for rhyme and rhythm are our expression of the desire for harmony and purpose in a world that is chaotic and fortuitous.

うたたねの醒むれば春の日暮れたり
Utatane no samureba haru no hi kuretari

Just a short nap,
And waking up,—the spring day
Had drawn to its close.

The actual division of this verse is 5, 4; 3, 5. This makes it more factual than the rhythm of 5, 7, 5. The length, not the shortness, of the spring day is a subject of haiku, but here it is a slight chilliness that is implied.

Buson's interest in things Chinese was not peculiar to him. In eighteenth-century Japan there was a revival of interest in Chinese poetry. Kobanashi became popular because of "translations" of Chinese humorous stories. Chinese poetry, that is, verse in Chinese characters only, was written by literary people. There was at the same time a tendency to bite, gently, the hand that fed them, that is to say, to parody the Chinese classics. This comes out in the following:

川狩や歸去來といふ聲す也
Kawa-gari ya kikyorai to iu koe su nari

River fishing;
 A voice is heard, saying,
 "Return, oh children of men!"

Kikyorai is taken from Tōenmei's famous prose poem on his going back to his home, giving up official service. The haiku, if such it may be called, is praised by some critics as "high-class"; it seems to me low-class; at least, in rather poor taste. It was written in 1768, three years after the first volume of *Yanagidaru* was published. Parody is the soul of senryu, and the following is an example of the same use of *kikyorai*:

歸去來とふられた奴が起し役
Kikyorai to furareta yatsu ga okoshi-yaku

"Return, oh children of men!"

The one the courtesan refused
 Must get the others up.

Other verses which have Chinese connections.

うつゝなきつまみごころの胡蝶哉
Utsutsu naki tsumami-gokoro no kochō kana

As if in a dream,
 I wished to hold it in my fingers,—
 A butterfly.

There are many explanations of this verse. Kyoshi says Buson actually held it. Hekigodō and Kusatao also think Buson had the (disagreeable) tactile sensation. Kakū says it is the butterfly which holds on to the leaf (with its “fingers”). Probably Buson is thinking vaguely of Chuangtse’s butterfly.

青梅に眉あつめたる美人かな
Ao-ume ni mayu atsumetaru bijin kana

At the green plums,
 The beauty
 Knits her brows.

Even at the mere sight of the unripe plums, the beautiful, sensitive girl will frown as though she can taste the sourness. This sort of thing comes in the *Ryōgon Sutra*, but “the beauty” refers to a Chinese woman like Seishi (Hsishih) of whom it is reported that when she frowned she looked more beautiful, so the village women all began to frown, and looked more ugly.

色も香もうしろ姿や彌生盡
Iro mo ka mo ushiro sugata ya yayoijin

The colour and scent
 Of her retreating figure,—
 Departing spring.

Buson himself says that in this verse spring is spoken of under the guise, 比喩, of a beautiful woman. It may be taken as another example of Buson's Chinese style.

桐火桶無絃の琴の撫ごころ
Kiri hioke mugen no koto no nade-gokoro

The brazier of paulownia wood:
 The feeling of touching
 The stringless harp.

This refers to Tōenmei, who is said to have used one. Buson says that his sense of touching the brazier must have been similar to that of Tōenmei's touching the harp.

耕すや鳥さへ啼かぬ山かげに
Tagayasu ya tori sae nakanu yama-kage ni

Tilling the field
 In the shadow of a hill;
 Not a bird sings.

It is spring, but still cold in this field under the hill. The man digs the earth mindlessly, yet not inhumanly. No wind blows, no bird sings, all is silent. There is a famous line from a poem by Wangchingkung, 王荊公:

一鳥不啼山更幽。

Not a bird sings; the mountain becomes yet more mysterious.

霜百里舟中に我月を領す
Shimo hyakuri shūchū ni ware tsuki wo ryō su

A hundred leagues of hoar-frost;
 In this boat
 I have the moon to myself.

The prescript says; 几董と浪華より歸るさ, Coming back with Kitō from Naniwa. The verse was composed in a boat at night on the Yodogawa River. The moon shines down on the frosty banks where all is withered and dry. It is this moon which belongs to him alone. Indeed, each man's moon is his, and his only. This haiku, though composed from an actual experience, is Chinese not only in its language but in its spiritual nationality.

Chapter XVI

BUSON II

Buson, unlike Bashō and Issa, and Confucius, was fond of odd things, enchantments, monstrosities. He had something of Coleridge in him, compared to Bashō's Wordsworth.

河童の戀する宿や夏の月
Kawatara no koi suru yado ya natsu no tsuki

The water-spirit
In his abode of love,
Under the summer moon.

Buson was always on the look-out for new subjects, or new aspects of old subjects. The moonlight on the water seems the right place for these strange creatures to perform their marital antics.

名月やうさぎのわたる諏訪の海
Meigetsu ya usagi no wataru suwa no umi

The bright autumn moon;
Rabbits crossing over
The lake of Suwa.

In the moonlight the water shines like quicksilver. Small waves pass over the surface looking like white rabbits one after another.

雲を呑むで花を吐くなる吉野山
Kumo wo nonde hana wo haku naru yoshino-yama

Swallowing the clouds,
Spitting out the petals,—
Mountains of Yoshino!

Wind and rain are violent, and, with the mountains,
hide the clouds. The slanting rain is filled with the petals
of the cherry blossoms.

草枯れて狐の飛脚通りけり
Kusa karete kitsune no hikyaku tōri kerī

Grass withering,
A fox-messenger
Passes swiftly by.

In the case of such verses, it is not necessary to consider fox-possession or transformation into or from a fox, but rather to think of the fox-world of the fancy, in which foxes live and move and have their being in a realm not so different from ours, or at least from the Arabian Nights or Sheherezade.

Buson cannot be excelled, though Shiki sometimes equals him, in pure, yet meaningful objectivity. This kind of thing is difficult, because a hundred percent objectivity is a mere photograph. Nature without man is a body without a soul. But when a particular man's feelings are inserted into nature, it is spoiled. Nature must be faintly suffused with humanity to give us complete satisfaction. An example is the following:

水深く利鎌鳴らす眞菰刈
Mizu fukaku togi-gama narasu makomo-gari

The water is deep;
A sharp sickle
Cutting reeds.

The summer river is deep. The sword-like water-oats stand several feet high near the shore. A sound is heard, the falling of reeds preceded by another, the indescribable sound of a very sharp cutting instrument.

短夜や枕に近き銀屏風

Mijika-yo ya makura ni chikaki ginbyōbu

The short night;
By my pillow
A silver screen.

This is a mysterious verse, and is perhaps intended to be so, but the connection between the short night and the screen may be that the white silver of the screen makes the dawn earlier, and the night seems even shorter.

大門の重き扉や春の暮

Ōmon no omoki tobira ya haru no kure

The heavy doors
Of the great gate:
An evening of spring.

The great gate is that of a daimyō's mansion or of a large temple. The doors are thick, and studded with iron. Someone has come to close them, and there is a groaning and creaking as the doors unwillingly close. Then there is the connection with spring, a certain feeling of loneliness and inevitability.

河骨のふたもとさくや雨の中

Kōhone no futamoto saku ya ame no naka

Two clumps
Of the candock,
Blooming in the rain.

The *kōhone*, or candock, or spatterdock, lives in the shallow water of marshes and swamps. The leaves look like the stalks; in summer a plum-like, yellow, five-petalled flower blooms. Buson combines in his haiku as in his painting this love of the minute with the appreciation of the sublime in Nature.

閑居鳥寺見ゆ 麥林寺とやいふ
Kanko-dori tera miyu bakurinji to ya iu

The *kankodori*;
A temple is seen,
Bakurinji by name.

The name “*麥林寺*,” “barley forest temple”, gives us a feeling of the country, of yellowing barley fields. The *kankodori* has a care-free voice in harmony with the name. Buson also has some pure pleasure in the sound of words:

... in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia.

三たび啼いて聞えずなりぬ 雨の鹿
Mi-tabi naite kikoezu narinu ame no shika

Three times it cried,
And then was heard no more,
The deer in the rain.

This must be the autumn rain, for autumn is the rutting

season. Though Buson is often historical, or ornate, he knows the value of simplicity in art, and also that of particularity, especially when contrasted, as here, with the vagueness of the autumn landscape in rain.

ちりてのみおもかげにたつ牡丹かな
Chirite nomi omokage ni tatsu botan kana

Only after the peony
 Had scattered and fallen
 Did it stand there in its glory.

This is a most remarkable verse, with some kinship to Keats' *Grecian Urn*:

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
 Are sweeter,

or to lines from *Ode to A Nightingale*:

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But in embalmed darkness guess

Yet Keats, for all his imagination, is not doing what Buson has done in his verse, imagining the real, physical peony, which is at the same time the spiritual, poetical flower. Buson finds that only (*nomi*) when the flower is gone does it become its eternal self. Death, Thoreau says, sometimes brings us nearer to people than ever we can be in life.

かきつばたべたりと鷲のたれてける
Kakitsubata betari to tobi no tarete keru

The droppings of the hawk,
 Soft and sticky,
 On the leaves of the iris.

This is the verse of an artist, the whitish streaks and

blotches on the green leaves with their sharp clean points. There is also an expressed contrast between the texture of the droppings and the leaves, and an unexpressed similarity between the militariness of hawk and leaf.

散る花の反故になるや竹箒
Chiru hana no hōgo ni naru ya take-bōki

The fallen flowers
 Become just bits of waste-paper?
 This bamboo-broom.

The cherry blossoms are beautiful, but beauty is not absolute. The bamboo broom is not so beautiful; it is indeed more poetical, and, in being so, less un-absolute than the flowers.

遅き日や餅きこゆる京のすみ
Osoki hi ya kodama kikoyuru kyō no sumi

Slow days passing
 In a corner of Kyōto:
 Echoings are heard.

The sounds of Kyōto, of Tōkyō, of London, of Paris,—all are different. This difference is not so much in the actual sounds, as in the reflection of them from the buildings etc. Each city is a resonator, with its own characteristic blend of sounds. Two hundred years ago in the capital of Japan, what were those echoings?

五月雨や水に錢ふむ渡し舟
Samidare ya mizu ni zeni fumu watashi-bune

Summer rain;
 Treading on a coin in the water
 In the ferry boat.

The people in the boat are bare-footed, having removed their geta, zōri, or straw sandals. Treading on a coin in the water at the bottom of the boat, Buson experiences the universality of water in the feel of a copper coin that also is in an unaccustomed, watery element.

追風に薄刈り取る翁かな
Oikaze ni susuki karitoru okina kana

An old man
 Cutting pampas grass
 The wind behind him.

We can hardly avoid giving the old man a beard as white as the pampas grass itself. Thoreau writes in *A Week on the Concord*, that hypaethral book:

We see men haying in the meadow, their heads waving like the grass they cut. In the distance the wind seemed to bend all alike.

冬ざれや小鳥のあさる菖畠
Fuyu-zare ya kotori no asaru nira-batake

Winter desolation;
 Small birds fossicking
 In the scallion garden.

When all things are withered and dry, only the bed of scallions is green and eatable, and the little birds gather in this not very warm or sunlit place and hunt for something to put in their crops.

路邊の刈藻花さく宵の雨
Michinobe no karimo hana-saku yoi no ame

It is flowering,
The cut duckweed at the roadside,
In the evening rain.

For some reason or other, perhaps to free the current, the duckweed of the stream has been cut, and thrown onto the bank. In the evening rain it comes alive again and puts forth its small white flowers, that can be seen through the dusk. Buson feels not so much pity for the plants that try to fulfil their nature even when doomed to die, as admiration for the power of nature. Compare the following verse by Bonchō:

骨柴の刈られながらも木の芽哉
Honeshiba no karare nagara mo ko no me kana

The brushwood,
Though cut for fuel,
Is beginning to bud.

苗代や鞍馬の櫻ちりにけり
Nawashiro ya kurama no sakura chiri ni keri

Rice seedling plots;
The cherry blossoms on Mount Kurama
Have fallen and scattered.

This is pianissimo haiku, and needs a delicate and attentive ear, in this case an eye. The young rice is seen to be of a tender green, the same beautiful soft green as every year. Raising our eyes, we see that the pink blossoms which covered Mount Kurama (in Kyōto) are all gone. Nature is always changing its meanings, and we must change to receive them.

よもすがら音なき雨や種俵
Yomosugara oto naki ame ya tane-dawara

All night long,
 Without a sound,
 Rain on the straw seed-bags.

These straw-bags, filled with husks, are used at the edge of rice-seedling plots. Before this, they are piled up near the house. What struck Buson when he looked at them in the morning, soaked with rain, was the silence with which nature performs almost all her operations; yet they are done perfectly. There is the same subject by Meisetsu, a water symphony:

くもる日や深く沈みし種俵
Kumoru hi ya fukaku shizumishi tane-dawara

A cloudy day;
 Straw seed-bags
 Deep under the water.

埋火や終には煮ゆる鍋のもの
Umore-bi ya tsui ni wa niyuru nabe no mono

A banked fire;
 At last things in the saucepan
 Begin to boil.

Red-hot charcoal is buried under the ashes, and the saucepan over it is forgotten, but suddenly it begins to boil. Nature is always there, and never forgets. "Yet will I remember thee."

暮まだき星の輝く枯野かな
Kure madaki hoshi no kagayaku karenno kana

Dusk has come early,
 Stars shining
 Over the withered moor.

Though Buson was fond of the flamboyant, the Chinese, the romantic, the supernatural, he knew very well the other value, that of the subdued, the ordinary, the almost tasteless, what people see, but do not notice. Once more he is like Lamb, of whom Hazlitt says, "That touches him most nearly which is withdrawn to a certain distance, which verges on the borders of oblivion."

西吹ばひがしにたまる落葉かな
Nishi fukaba higashi ni tamaru ochiba kana

When it blows in the west,
 Fallen leaves gather
 In the east.

This is the poetry of Zen, the Zen of poetry. The mere meaningless fact has a deeper meaning than any meaning which the fact may have. A similar verse is the following:

茶の花や白にも黄にもおぼつか
cha no hana ya shiro ni mo ki ni mo obotsukana

Flowers of the tea-plant,
 Are they white? Are they yellow?
 Who can tell?

Like Tennyson, Buson is a master of onomatopoeia:

遠近をちこちとうつきぬた哉
Ochi-kochi ochi-kochi to utsu kinuta kana

At that place there
 And this place here clack
 The fulling blocks.

The following is subjective onomatopoeia:

宿かさぬ火影や雪の家つづき
Yado kasanu hokage ya yuki no ie tsuzuki

They wouldn't put me up;
 The flickering lights
 Of several adjacent houses in the snow.

Buson was travelling, and, as it grew dark, snow began to fall. Coming to a small group of houses, he asked for a night's lodging, and was refused. He set out once more in no happy frame of mind, but, looking back, saw the lights of the houses and their reflection on the snowy ground. A feeling of, not grief, or irritation, or envy, and certainly not of indifference, and not even of resignation, but of peacefulness, of not wanting, or rather perhaps wanting not, filled his mind. Noteworthy is the onomatopoeia: *ya, ya, yu* for melancholy; *nu, no* of weariness; *ka, ka, ki, ki*, for the coldness of the night, and of the human heart, for these things also accompany the peace that passeth understanding.

水仙や寒き都のこゝかしこ
Suisen ya samuki miyako no koko-kashiko

Daffodils!
 Here and there
 In the cold capital.

Only these flowers have the power to move men's

hearts and purify them. This cleansing is expressed in the k's and s's:

Sui sen ya samuki miyako no koko kashiko

宿貸せと刀投げ出す吹雪かな
Yado kase to katana nagedasu fubuki kana

“A lodging for the night!”
 Coming in out of the blizzard
 He dashes down his sword.

We have here: *ya, ka, ka, ta, na, na, da, ka, na*, giving the sinister meaning of the demand.

Buson also has verses of what we may call thought, not exactly philosophical, however, because they deal with particular things:

稲妻や浪もてゆへる秋津島
Inazuma ya nami mote yueru akitsushima

A flash of lightning!
 Girdled by the waves,
 “Autumn-Islands.”

This is Japan seen as from a mountain top. All the islands are bound together by the white waves of the sea. Especially in autumn when the sky is high we feel this. The Emperor Jimmu is said to have looked out over the land of Japan from one of the mountain peaks of Yamato, and called it “Dragon-Fly Land,” 蜻蛉州, which is also written with the character for “autumn,” 秋津島.

Buson's extreme love of beauty is so ever-present as to be almost inconspicuous. But this beauty is often, if not always, in contrast to ugliness, or at least to the lack of beauty. The following verse brings this out clearly:

鴛に美を盡してや冬木立
Oshidori ni bi wo tsukushite ya fuyu-kodachi

Mandarin ducks,
 The extreme of beauty;
 The winter wood.

Nature makes everything lifeless and grey, and at the same time elaborates her patterns and colours so as to discourage Darwin himself in his endeavour to explain a peacock's feather scientifically.

伏勢の鋌にとまる胡蝶かな
Fushizei no shikoro ni tomaru kochō kana

Perched on the neck-plates
 Of the warrior in ambush,
 A butterfly.

The contrast here is very strong, and yet there is a harmony also, of colour and splendour.

Bashō and Shiki were lacking in humour. Not so Issa and Buson, who anyway lived in the most humorous age of Japanese history, the latter half of the eighteenth century. An example of Buson's humour, very close to that of senryu:

大とこの糞ひりおはす枯野かな
Daitoko no kuso hiri-owasu karenō kana

The archbishop
 Evacuates the honorable bowels
 On the withered moor.

Besides the humorous contrast of such a dignitary doing such an undignified thing, there is a loftier humour of the

contrast of vast nature with its enormous "beauty," and the insignificantly small ugliness of human beings. To be noted is the *ko*, *ku*, *ka*, *ka*, which gives both harmony and a certain chuckling. Another humorous verse:

あなたふと茶もだぶだぶと十夜かな
Ana tōto cha mo dabu-dabu to jūya kana

Ah, the blessed sound!
 The tea also says, "Da-bu, da-bu!"
 The ten nights.

From October (according to the old calendar) the 5th to the 14th, the nembutsu was intoned in the Jōdo Sect, "Namuamidabutsu! Namuamidabutsu!" In the temple office, listening to it, the tea, when poured out of the tea-pot also says "dabu-dabu." If the people had been silent the very stones would have cried out "Hozannah!"

山賊のさとして過ぐる野分かな
Sanzoku no satoshite suguru nowaki kana

A mountain brigand
 Warned, as he passed,
 Of the rising tempest.

This has a humorous, senryu quality, but the robber, in his rather questionable affability, brings out the brigand-like nature of the autumn "field-divider."

西行の夜具も出てある紅葉哉
Saigyō no yagu mo dete aru momiji kana

Saigyō's bed-clothes
 Have appeared:
 Tinted leaves of autumn.

Like Bashō, Saigyō spent most of his life travelling, and composing poetry. Often he had to sleep outside, or under some pent-roof, the falling leaves whirling round and fluttering onto him.

Buson's "modernity" is both a virtue and a defect. Bashō is somewhat old-fashioned; perhaps he appeared so even to his own disciples, for old-fashionedness is not a matter of chronology but of spirit. Homer is not old-fashioned; Thomas Hardy is. It is a virtue to be always new; it is a defect to be new only in 1963, that is to say, when Buson writes like the modern haiku poets. Sometimes Buson writes of himself, not as Milton does, embodying himself in God and Satan and Samson, nor as Wordsworth, with self-veneration, but rather, as suggested before, in the spirit of Lamb:

月見舟きせるを落す浅瀬かな
Tsukimi-bune kiseru wo otosu asase kana

The moon-viewing boat;
 I dropped my pipe
 Into the river shallows.

The poet went out to look at the moon, and added to his poetical pleasures by smoking, but what he really got, and what was memorable to him was neither, but the river shallows.

蚊遣して宿りうれしや草の月
Kayari shite yadori ureshi ya kusa no tsuki

Happiness on a journey:
 The mosquito smudge,
 And the moon over the grasses.

Buson has put up at an inn, and they have lighted a smudge to keep away the mosquitoes. Coming out on the verandah, he sees stretching out a vast expanse of grasses, and over it, the summer moon. He has a feeling which is partly gratitude, partly peace of mind, partly happiness, and wholly poetical.

淋し身に杖をわすれたりあきの暮
Sabishi mi ni tsue wo wasuretari aki no kure

In my loneliness
 I forgot my stick somewhere:
 An autumn evening.

A stick is a kind of companion, better than most, it may be, and losing his stick brought out for the poet his own solitude and that of the evening of late autumn.

枇杷の花鳥もすさめず日くれたり
Biwa no hana tori mo susamezu hi kuretari

The birds also do not solace themselves
 With the flowers of the loquat:
 Day draws to its close.

The loquat flowers are inconspicuous and white, and in their being unvisited by the birds, Buson no doubt expresses his own state of mind this winter evening.

寒梅を手折るひびきや老が肘
Kan-bai wo taoru hibiki ya oi ga hiji

Breaking a branch
 Off a plum tree in winter,—
 How it jerks my old elbow!

The actual word for “jerks” is “echoes.” In the sharp

sound and feel of the sudden cracking of the branch
 Buson feels the brittleness of his own bones.

鋸の音貧しさよ夜半の冬
Nokogiri no oto mazushisa yo yowa no fuyu

Winter midnight;
 The sound of a saw;
 Poverty.

There are many explanations of this sawing. Meisetsu says it is someone doing carpentry. Hekigodō says it is a poor carpenter fulfilling some order. Shimizu says it is the sound of cutting charcoal, and Buson is himself handling the saw, and feels sorry for the neighbours.

愚に耐へよと窓を暗くす雪の竹
Gu ni tae yo to mado wo kuraku su yuki no take

“Put up with your own foolishness!”
 Says the bamboo, heavy with snow,
 Darkening the window.

This is an unusual haiku for Buson. “Let Nature be your teacher.” What does Nature teach the nature-lover? “It is foolish to love me, because all love is irrational, useless, and absolute, but it is your fate. I am foolish and you must be so too.”

目にうれし戀君の扇眞白なり
Me ni ureshi koigimi no sen mashiro nari

Happy to the eyes,
 My beloved's fan;
 Purest white!

As said before, the haiku poets seemed to have felt that

white expressed their soul-colour, their aura. Here it is the symbol of love.

菜の花や法師が宿は訪わですぎ
Na-no-hana ya hōshi ga yado wa towade sugi

Rape-flowers;
 A priest's dwelling;
 I do not call, but pass on.

Buson felt, indistinctly, that the mere yellowness of the flowers was better than the cheerful gloom of the monk.

とんぼうや村なつかしき壁の色
Tombō ya mura natsukashiki kabe no iro

The dragonflies,
 And the colour of the walls,—
 My native place, how dear!

The dragonflies that are so swift to be off, and swift to be back again, and the rays of the setting sun on the immovable white walls of the village,—what little things to remember for a life-time!

去年よりまた淋しいぞ秋の暮
Kyonen yori mata sabishii zo aki no kure

Still lonelier
 Than last year;
 Autumn evening.

Buson feels older, more sensitive to the chill of the autumn evening. Old friends are fewer, new friends difficult to make, and anyway not wanted.

いさゝかなおひめ乞れぬ暮の秋
Isasaka na oime kowarenu kure no aki

I was dunned
 For a very small sum of money;
 The end of autumn.

Buson was far from well-off, though he did not always live in the poverty he implies here, as is seen in the fact that in his last years with only one child he could afford a servant. The point of the verse is the last line.

Buson had the greatest possible veneration for two persons, Bashō and Tōenmei. The following verses express his feelings towards Bashō:

我も死して碑に邊せん枯尾花
Ware mo shishite hi ni hotorisen kare-obana

I too, after my death,
 Wish to be near this tomb-stone,
 Withered miscanthus!

蓑笠の衣鉢つたへて時雨かな
Mino kasa no ihatsu tsutaete shigure kana

The rain garments
 And begging bowl are kept here;¹
 Cold winter rain.

冬ちかし時雨の雲もこゝよりぞ
Fuyu chikashi shigure no kumo mo koko yori zo

Winter is near;
 The rain-clouds also
 From here, from here!²

¹ At Yugyōji Temple in Osaka.

² Bashō-an, at Kimpukuji Temple in Kyōto.

芭蕉去ってそののちいまだ年暮れず
Bashō satte sono nochi imada toshi kurezu

Bashō left us,
 And since then,
 The year has not drawn close.

時雨音なくて苔にむかしをしのぶ哉
Shigure oto nakute kike ni mukashi wo shinobu kana

Cold winter rain falls
 Without a sound on the moss;
 How I remember things of the past!

This verse was composed at Gichūji temple in October 1774, eighty years after the death of Bashō. Indeed, where Buson is greater than Shiki is in the fact that he knew Bashō was greater than himself, whereas Shiki seems to have thought Buson the better poet. The haiku of Bashō which I like most is the following:

よくみれば薺花咲く垣根かな
Yoku mireba nazuna hana saku kakine kana

Looking closely,
 A shepherd's purse is blooming
 Under the hedge.

It may be compared with what I think to be Buson's best verse:

白露や茨の刺にひとつづゝ
Shira-tsuyu ya ibara no toge¹ ni hitotsu zutsu

The white dew;
 On each thorn of the bramble
 A dew-drop.

¹ *Hari* is read by most modern critics, but I prefer *toge*.

行く春のいつち去にけんかゝり舟
Yuku haru no izuchi iniken kakari-bune

Spring has departed;
 Where has it gone,
 The moored boat?

This verse is obscure in the expression, but clear in the meaning. Both spring and the boat are seen as departed.

花散るや重たき笈のうしろより
Hana chiru ya omotaki oi no ushiro yori

Cherry blossoms falling,
 From behind
 The heavy travelling altar.¹

The *oi* was a kind of box with legs in which yamabushi and travelling priests or pilgrims carried Buddhist things, clothes, food, books etc., on their backs. The picture here is that of the retreating figure of a weary priest with bent back and the cherry blossoms falling behind him, that is, between him and the viewer.

手枕に身を愛すなり朧月
Te-makura ni mi wo aisu nari oboro-zuki

Making a pillow of my arm,
 I feel in love with myself,
 Under the hazy moon.

Sometimes we feel that our own bodies are something to be cherished.

¹ In Volume II, page 362, this verse was translated, by mistake, with *oi* as, 老, old age, instead of 笈, altar.

五月雨や滄海を衝く濁水
Samidare ya sōkai wo tsuku nigorimizu

With the rains of June,
 The muddy waters
 Dash into the deep blue ocean.

Buson is especially good at the most difficult kind of haiku to write, Thomsonian landscapes.

稲刈りて小草に秋の日の當る
Ine karite ogusa ni aki no hi no ataru

Cutting the rice-plants,
 The autumn sun
 Falls on the small weeds.

It is interesting to see, in this purely objective verse, how morality nevertheless creeps in, with the word "small."

鯨賣市に刀を鼓しけり
Kujira-uri ichi ni katana wo narashi keri

A market selling whale-meat;
 The knives and carvers
 Are slashing and swishing.

Haiku does not avoid disagreeable things if the physical sensation is interesting and can be considered as devoid of morality and thought in itself.

歳旦をしたり貌なる俳諧師
Saitan wo shitari-gao naru haikai-shi

The First Day of the Year;
 A haikai master,
 With a complacent air.

This was written in 1777, when Buson was sixty two years old, and this verse no doubt refers to himself, and his pride in being a poet and a teacher of poetry.

Chapter XVII

TAIGI

Taigi, 1709-1771, can be thought of as the greatest haiku writer after the Great Four, Bashō, Buson, Issa, Shiki. In fact, if we read only his best verses, he may seem to be as good as they. There is a humanity and affability about him that remind us of Hakurakuten, Chaucer, and Montaigne. This comes from, or rather, is also shown in, his life, which was as uninhibited as theirs.

Taigi was born in Edo, and studied haikai first under Suikoku, 水國, afterwards under Keikiitsu, 慶紀逸, the famous editor of *Mutamagawa*. He travelled to various places, including Kyushu, but no travel diaries now remain. He went to Kyōto in 1751, and entered the priesthood, living in Shinjuan, well-known as a hermitage of Ikkyū Zenji. Here he seems to have studied Zen, but soon after gave it up, and made his home in the "gay" quarters of Shimabara. This was partly at the insistence of his pupil, friend, and patron Donshi, 呑獅, who kept a brothel there. Taigi taught haikai, and also tutored children. He was on very intimate terms with the actors of the time. His acquaintance with Buson brought out his own genius. He belonged to the Edo School of haikai, which derived from Kikaku, and placed more emphasis on man than on nature. Shiki, who "discovered" Taigi, thought highly of him. "After Buson, there is no one equal to Taigi," though in his time he was eclipsed by Chora and Gyōdai. The following are some of his many excellent verses:

羽根つくや世心知らぬ大またげ
Hane tsuku ya yogokoro shiranu ōmatage

She straddles and takes long steps
 As she plays battle-dore and shuttlecock,
 Oblivious of the evil-minded world.

The girl is playing with all her heart and soul, thinking only of the game, but the spectators see that sometimes her kimono opens and shows the lower part of her legs. They watch with divided mind, but her "eye is single." Taigi is looking at both. Living in the gay quarters, he knew very well what innocence is not, and therefore, what it is. We look at him.

元日の居心や世に古畳
Ganjitsu no igokoro ya yo ni furu-datami

New Year's Day;
 Different from the others, how snug I am
 With my old tatami.

King James used to call for his old shoes; they were more comfortable.

物深き夜の櫻や寺の門
Mono fukaki yoru no sakura ya tera no mon

Cherry blossoms at night
 Over the gate of a temple
 Set back from the road.

It is very difficult to convey the point of this verse even in the explanation, let alone in the translation. Taigi feels there is something deeply significant in the way in which the gate of the temple is not on a level with the

road, but farther back. This brings out the beauty of the flowers, the mystery of the hazy moon, the numinousness of the temple.

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

盗人に出逢う狐や瓜畠

Nusubito ni deau kitsune ya uri-batake

The thief
Met a fox
In the melon-field.

Birds of a feather. This is the humour of kyōgen.

子子や照る日に乾く根無水

Bōfura ya teru hi ni kawaku nenashi-mizu

Mosquito-larvae
In stagnant water
On a sunshiny day.

Up and down they go, but the standing water becomes shallower in the hot sunshine, until there is no more up, and no more down.

麥秋や埃に霞む晝の鐘

Bakushū ya hokori ni kasumu hiru no kane

The autumn of barley;
Dust beclouds
The midday bell.

The "autumn" of barley is early summer, before the rains begin. Everything is dry and dusty, even the sound of the temple bell at noon.

深山路を出抜けて赤し麥の秋
Miyamaji wo denukete akashi mugi no aki

Leaving the mountain road,
 And coming out
 Into the autumn of yellow barley.

When we walk through the mountains, all is green leaves, and appearing and disappearing mountain streams, but when we come to a cultivated plain, we see the waving ears of grain and the farmers' houses. All is human again.

蠅を打つ音や隣りも昨日から
Hae wo utsu oto ya tonari mo kinō kara

The sound of swatting flies
 Next door,
 From yesterday.

It is strange what things unite (and divide) us.

數多蚊の血にふくれ居る坐禪かな
Amata ka no chi ni fukure iru zazen kana

Myriads of mosquitoes
 Blown out with blood;
 Zazen.

Taigi himself had such an experience in his youth, but what he feels as he writes this verse is not quite clear; perhaps pity, scorn, envy, and admiration.

夕立や戸ざしに戻る草の庵
Yūdachi ya tozashi ni modoru kusa no iwo

A summer shower;
 Coming back to shut the door
 Of my hut.

To have no enemies, no robbers but the elements,—this is the ideal life of the Forest of Arden, the real life of many of the older haiku poets.

秋の夜や自問自答の氣の弱り
Aki no yo ya jimon jitō no ki no yowari

An autumn evening;
 Asking myself questions, answering them myself,
 Feeble and downcast.

This is an unusual verse for Taigi. It reminds us of Wordsworth's *Personal Talk*:

To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
 In the loved presence of my cottage fire,
 And listen to the flapping of the flame,
 Or kettle whispering its faint under-song.

初秋や夕立長びく夜の雨
Hatsu-aki ya yūdachi nagabiku yoru no ame

The beginning of autumn;
 The "summer shower" was prolonged
 Into an evening of rain.

What Taigi has done here is to show us how the seasons telescope into each other. What seemed to be just a shower of late summer did not stop, but continued into the evening, so that it became the rain of autumn.

まづ活けて返事書くなり蓮のもと
Mazu ikete henji kaku nari hasu no moto

First I arranged them,
 Then wrote the reply,
 By the side of the lotus flowers.

This verse makes us think many thoughts: the poetic-artistic nature of the Japanese (haiku poets); the (undemocratic) way in which the messenger is kept waiting; the fact that the reply would be much better if written after the flower had been put in a vase in the tokonoma; the easiness of mind; the lack of rush in the life of our ancestors.

廻國の笈にさしゆく團扇哉
Kaikoku no oi ni sashi-yuku uchiwa kana

A fan
 Thrust into the travelling-altar
 When making a pilgrimage.

This reminds us of Cromwell's "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry."

虫干や拔身をさます松の風
Mushi-boshi ya nukimi wo samasu matsu no kaze

Summer airing;
 The wind in the pine trees
 Cools the drawn sword.

Someone draws the sword out of its scabbard, and at this moment the wind seems to cool it; actually, both "cool" the person.

掃きけるが終には掃かず落葉かな
Hakikeru ga tsui ni wa hakazu ochiba kana

Sweeping them up,
 And then not sweeping them up,—
 Fallen leaves.

It is like Canute and the waves.

河豚喰ひし人の寝言の念佛哉
Fugu kuishi hito no negoto no nembutsu kana

The man who ate swellfish
 Says the nembutsu
 In his sleep.

We love ourselves dearly even in our slumbers. This
 verse is more senryu than haiku.

そこここと見れど目のなき海鼠かな
Soko koko to miredo me no naki namako kana

“Here they are! No, there they are!”
 But searching, it has no eyes,—
 The sea-slug.

The humour and the pathos of the sea-slug brings out
 its thusness, its sea-slug-ness.

春の夜や晝雉子うちし氣の弱り
Haru no yo ya hiru kiji uchishi ki no yowari

Killing a pheasant that day,
 Now feeling dispirited:
 An evening of spring.

He was excitedly pleased with himself all day at having
 killed such a fine bird, but when evening came he felt
 unaccountedly downcast. This may be explained psycho-
 logically as a reaction, or morally as the later upsurging
 of a belated (Buddhist) conscience, but from the point of
 view of haiku the whole incident is a kind of adjective to
 “spring evening.”

たのみなき若草生ふる冬田かな
Tanomi naki wakakusa ouru fuyu-ta kana

Young grasses
 Are growing in the winter rice-field,
 Forlornly.

The word "forlorn" is used here in its original meaning of "lost to all hope." The grasses will all be ploughed under the ground in a few months.

人音にこけ込むかめや春の水
Hito oto ni kokekomu kame ya haru no mizu

At the footsteps,
 The tortoise stumbled in:
 The water of spring.

When we read this we feel that the human being is not much less clumsy than the tortoise. Spring water is no less alive, but has a serenity that the later arrivals have not.

二里ほどは鳶もでて舞う潮干かな
Ni-ri hodo wa tobi mo dete mau shiohi kana

Five miles round
 Circle the kites
 At the low-tide.

The word for "circle" is in Japanese "dance"; *mau* implies horizontal rather than vertical movement.

初秋や浴みしあとの氣のゆるみ
Hatsu-aki ya ayumishi ato no ki no yurumi

The beginning of autumn;
 After the bath,
 A feeling of lassitude.

At the beginning of autumn (in Japan) the air becomes fresh, and the feeling is of energy, but the hot water of the bath washes away the pep as well as the perspiration. The question is, however, is this poetry? If so, it lies in the region of the contrast between the life of man and the life of the seasons.

短夜やけさ関守のふくれ面
Mijikayo ya kesa sekimori no fukure-zura

The dawn of the short night;
 The barrier-guard
 Looks sulky and sullen.

In summer, when nights are short, the barrier-guard looks in a bad temper, from lack of sleep. Taigi sees the shortness of the summer night in the morose face of the man on duty at the barrier between the provinces.

物がたき老の化粧や更衣
Monogataki oi no keshō ya koromogae

Faithful to custom,
 The old woman makes up
 On the day for changing clothes.

Thoreau says, in *A Week on the Concord*:

The decaying tree, while yet it lives, demands sun, wind, and rain no less than the green one The gnarled stump has as tender a bud as the sapling.

稲妻や舟幽霊の呼ぶ聲
Inazuma ya funa-yūrei no yobu koe

It lightens and thunders!
 From sunken ships,
 The voices of the ghosts.

It was said that at such a time the ghost called, "Give me a dipper!" The master of the ship would throw a dipper with no bottom to it into the sea, otherwise the ghost would ladle the water onto the ship and sink it.

鶏頭やはかなき秋をあたまがち
Keitō ya hakanaki aki wo atamagachi

Autumn passing away,
 The cockscomb stands there,
 Its head alone glorious.

The leaves of the cockscomb fall at the end of autumn,
 and only the head glows undimmed.

火を運ぶ旅の火燵や夕嵐
Hi wo hakobu tabi no kotatsu ya yū-arashi

On a journey;
 Carrying the charcoal to the brazier,
 A storm in the evening.

This is very enigmatic, but very good. The poet has put up at an inn. There is a roaring of wind all round. The maid-servant or perhaps the traveller himself carries some burning charcoal from the kitchen to his room. The wind blows the charcoal, making it redder.

たがやしやむかし右京の土の艶
Tagayashi ya mukashi ukyō no tsuchi no en

Men tilling the fields
 In this half of the ancient capital,—
 How redolent of poetry the soil is!

This is too explanatory for haiku.

淀船や炬燵の下の水の音
Yodobune ya kotatsu no shita no mizu no oto

The boat on the River Yodo:
 Beneath the brazier
 The sound of the water.

Heaven and hell, fire and water, life and death,—just a hair's breadth, a plank's breadth between. Night draws on, the passengers stop their chattering, the cold increases, and as the poet crouches over the *kotatsu*, he can hear the water gurgling beneath him. (This boat ran between Fushimi and Osaka on the Yodokawa.) Compare the following verse by Issa, concerning the active volcano Asama:

浅間根のけふる側まで畠かな
Asamane no keburu soba made hatake kana

The smoke of Mount Asama,—
 Fields and farms
 Right up to the side of it.

One more by Issa of the same contrast, the same feeling of the nearness of the forces of construction and destruction:

晝貌やぽっぽと燃る石ころへ
Hirugao ya poppo to moeru ishikoro e

Morning-glories
 Growing towards
 The scorching pebbles.

盗人に鐘つく寺や冬木立
Nusubito ni kane tsuku tera ya fuyu-kodachi

The temple bell ringing
 For a robber;
 The winter grove.

Nature is taciturn and silent, but man is all excited;
 even the priest is not so calm and benign as usual.

それぞれの星あらはるゝ寒さかな
Sore-zore no hoshi arawaruru samusa kana

All the various stars
 Appearing,
 Ah, the cold!

The intensity of the cold is expressed through the
 "various" stars, the infinity, the eternity of stars that the
 cold itself causes the poet to perceive.

縁端の濡れてわびしや秋の雨
Embana no nurete wabishi ya aki no ame

The verandah is wet,
 And desolate:
 Autumn rain.

Wabishi is a difficult word to translate. It implies
 poverty, but with a certain mildness and melancholy. The
 verandah is wet with rain, not the hopeful wetness of
 spring, the exuberant, overflowing wetness of summer, or
 the hopelessness of winter, but the wetness of autumn,
 the subdued sadness of the decline of the year.

よく答う若侍や青すだれ
Yoku kotau waka-zamurai ya ao sudare

The young samurai
 Answers up well:
 The green rattan blind.

The freshness of the greenhorn and the freshness of the green blind are well in accord. Taigi was a brilliant haijin like Kikaku, but far better.

三日月や膝にかげさす舟の中

Mikazuki ya hiza ni kage sasu fune no naka

A crescent moon;
As I sit in the boat,
The moonlight is on my lap.

This verse is the poetic insight at pianissimo. The moonlight is so weak that only after sitting for long, in perfect stillness in the small boat, does the poet perceive the faint radiance over his knees. This verse reminds one of the Chinese poets. Thoreau says:

The art of life, of a poet's life, is, not having anything to do, to do something.

ふらこゝの會釋こぼるゝや高みより

Furakoko no eshaku koboruru ya takami yori

On a swing,
At the highest point,
She nods a welcome.

The season of this is spring, and the person may well be a girl, so that this has a faint resemblance to a picture by Watteau or Bragonard. In any case, it is a strange haiku, close to senryu, and might have come from *Muta-magawa*.

夜見ゆる寺の焚火や冬木立

Yoru miyuru tera no takibi ya fuyu-kodachi

Through the winter grove;
A temple seen at night
By the light of a bonfire.

All day long the temple was hardly visible; only the roof perhaps seen among the pine-trees. Now the priest is burning dead leaves and branches, and night reveals what day hid.

來ると早や往來數ある燕かな
Kuru to haya yukiki kazu aru tsubame kana

When they come,
Already many fly about,—
Swallows.

This the nature of swallows. They don't come, and then fly about. They fly-about-come.

甘き香は何の花ぞも夏木立
Amaki ka wa nan no hana zo mo natsu-kodachi

A sweet smell,—
From what tree?
The summer grove.

The point of this haiku, like that of the waka it is based on from the *Kokinshū*, is that the question needs no answer. But in addition to this we realise that the question must remain a question; it must not have the form, that is, meaning, of a statement.

な折りそと折りてくれけり園の梅
Na oriso to orite kure keru sono no ume

“Don't break it off!”
And breaking off a branch of the plum,
He gave me it.

This change of mind for the better is more touching than any original goodness, as we see in the last line of Frost's poem:

I won't be gone long.—You come too.

It might also be compared with Wordsworth's *The Glow-worm*.

山霧や宮を守護なす法螺の音
Yama-giri ya miya wo shugo nasu hora no oto

In the mountain mist,
 Guardians of the shrine:
 The sound of the conch-shells.

There is a harmony here between what is heard, the hooting, swelling sound of the great shells blown by the guardians of the shrine, the lines of mist and the hills rising above them, and the unseen shrine itself where white-robed priests are performing some ceremony.

凧白し長閑すぎての夕ぐもり
Tako shiroshi nodokasugite no yū-gumori

The kites are white,
 In the evening haze,
 Beyond tranquillity.

"Beyond tranquillity" means that the significance of the white kites floating in the evening sky among the darkening clouds is deeper than mere quietness and calm. It is something that partakes of the nature of infinity and eternity. It is only a paper kite in the sky of a day that is done, but it has the meaning of the flutes in a Mozart symphony, the smell of flowers that we picked in our childhood.

欺いて行きぬけ寺やおぼろ月
Azamuite yukinuke dera ya oboro-zuki

Deceiving them,
 And passing through the temple;
 The hazy moon.

Going out one evening, under the misty moon, Taigi suddenly thought he would visit a friend, but the short way lay through a temple known to be strict about people making a public thoroughfare of it. Going to the gate, he told the priest in charge some cock-and-bull story, passed though, and came out of the back gate, the hazy moon still in the sky. There is a wonderful harmony between the moon and the deceiver and the deceived.

塵はみな櫻なりけり寺の暮
Chiri wa mina sakura nari keru tera no kure

The temple evening;
 The dust is all
 Cherry-blossoms.

Taigi, like Kikaku, was more interested in man than in nature, more moved by the falling than by the blooming of the flowers. The monks are sweeping up the temple grounds, and today, instead of the usual sticks and rubbish, it is nothing but petals of the cherry flowers. Even the dust seems to have become divine.

夕立のすは来る音よ森の上
Yūdachi no suwa kuru oto yo mori no ue

A summer shower!
 With a sudden, awe-inspiring sound
 Above the forest.

Suwa kuru is very difficult to translate. *Suwa* is written in Chinese characters 驚破, which mean “astounding and breaking.” Taigi shows his own quality in attempting to describe the threatening sound of the rain on the leaves above.

逢ひ見しは女の賊や朧月
Ai-mishi wa onna no suri ya oborozuki

I met a pickpocket,
 A woman,
 Under the hazy moon.

This may mean that he surmised that she was a pickpocket, or more interestingly, that he had his pocket picked by her. In any case, from the point of view of haiku, which is not necessarily that of Taigi, the woman and her profession or action are in counterpoint with the hazy moon in spring.

露を知る駕の寝覺や己が門
Tsuyu wo shiru kago no nezame ya ono ga kado

Waking up in the palanquin
 At my own gate,
 I saw the dew!

The movement of the palanquin sent him almost to sleep, and when the bearers set it down at his gate, the poet saw the dew on the grasses and leaves with the eyes of the new-born, the re-born. Taigi is more conscious than almost any other haiku poet of the “moments of vision,” the “spots of time” that make up real life, and the life of haiku.

こころほど牡丹の撓む日數かな
Kokoro hodo botan no tawamu hikazu kana

The peony
 Is bending very slightly,
 With the lapse of days.

The peony is a flower of size and power and colour and richness, and historical and literary and exotic associations. But the *truth* is that the flower is a bit too heavy for its stalk. So, after some days, the great flower that has been arranged in a vase begins to bend just the very slightest. In this slight bending we see the meaning of time, the mutability of things. "What price glory?"

行く女袷着なすや憎きまで
Iku onna awase kinasu ya nikuki made

The woman traveller
 Wears her lined kimono
 Almost too stylishly.

What Taigi has expressed in this verse is the *iki*, the coquettishness or feminine charm of this woman, which is so great as to be quite "hateful," over-attractive, beyond what is socially reasonable. This haiku is very close to *senryu*, and this is indeed one of the chief characteristics of Taigi's verses.

藤いけてしをれしまゝや旅の宿
Fuji ikete shioreshi mama ya tabi no yado

At an inn on a journey,
 Wistaria blossoms
 Left withered in the vase.

This gives us the feeling of an inn in the country, where people are not very artistic or sensitive, and their flower-arrangements are just for appearance, hardly noticed by either innkeeper or travellers.

草の戸や火燵の中も風を行く
Kusa no to ya kotatsu no naka mo kaze wo yuku

A poor cottage:
 Through the kotatsu also
 The wind comes blowing.

So in an English cottage, the front of the body is warmed by the fireplace, the rear part cold.

千鳥なく曉もどる女かな
Chidori naku akatsuki modoru onna kana

In the dawn
 A woman is coming back,
 Plovers crying.

The birds, all birds, have something in common with women.

もとの水にあらぬ仕掛やところてん
Moto no mizu ni aranu shikake ya tokoroten

Gelidum jelly, in a device
 Of water that flows,
 And never returns.

Water continuously flowing cools the *tokoroten*. Taigi here seems to be debunking the beginning of the *Hōjōki*:

行く川の流れば絶えずしてしかももとの水
 にあらず。

The moving waters flow on without ceasing, but the water is never the same.

駕籠にいてこちに向ふや懐手
Kago ni ite kochi ni mukō ya futokoro-de

In a palanquin,
 The east wind facing,
 My hands in my bosom.

Such a moment as this is a realisation of the fact that “things are in the saddle.” But we are free to observe our lack of freedom.

The greatness of Taigi is connected with his realisation that haiku is not religion, as with Bashō; it is not art, as Buson thought; it is not Issa’s consolation for the tragic irony of life; haiku is, or should be, life itself, no more, no less.

Chapter XVIII

POETS OF BUSON'S TIME I

Kitō, 几董, 1741-1789, was a son of Kikei, 几圭, a friend of Buson, and also a pupil of Hajin. Kitō's father died when he was twenty, and Kitō began to learn haikai from Taigi. He became Buson's pupil ten years later, just when Buson had settled down in Kyōto. Kitō was a great lover of Kikaku, but followed Buson in his directness. He was part author of Buson's *Shichibushū*. Kitō was all his life fond of drinking, like Taigi, though he became a monk in his later years. An example of his straightforwardness:

水のめば腹のふくるる暑さかな
Mizu nomeba hara no fukururu atsusa kana

Drinking water,
My stomach distended;
The heat!

The degree of heat is experienced in the bulging of the belly.

蠅うっていさゝか汚す團扇かな
Hae utte isasaka yogosu uchiwa kana

Swatting a fly,
The fan became
A little dirty.

Cleanliness is said to be next to godliness. Perhaps dirtiness is godliness itself.

青海苔や石の窪みの忘れ汐
Aonori ya ishi no kubomi no wasurejio

Seaweed;
 In the hollows of the rocks,
 The forgotten tide.

This is expanded in Katherine Mansfield's *At the Bay*:

In each of the small rock rooms . . . now a thread-like creature wavered by and was lost

めづらしと見るものごとに春や行く
Mezurashi to miru-mono goto ni haru ya yuku

At each thing seen,
 "It's wonderful!"
 While spring departs.

A thing can exist, that is, be wonderful, for an instant only. Even as we exclaim at the life, it is no more.

貫之が船の灯による千鳥哉
Tsurayuki ga fune no hi ni yoru chidori kana

Plovers come
 To the lights
 Of Tsurayuki's boat.

According to the *Tosa Nikki*, Ki no Tsurayuki left Tosa for Kyōto on the 21st of December, 932 A.D. In this verse we hear the cries of the plovers, attracted by the faint lamps of the boat, as they wheel round it over the dark sea, or alight on the waves nearby. It is the still sad music of humanity.

鳥羽殿へ御歌使や夜半の雪
Toba dono e o-uta-zukai ya yowa no yuki

The poetry messenger
To Toba palace
Through the snow, at midnight.

The Emperor Toba, 1108-1123, the 74th Emperor of Japan, lived in a palace in Kyōto where poem-contests were held. The haiku seems to be imagining verses being carried either to a poetic meeting, or as a poem-reply to a poem sent out before.

水仙にたまる師走の埃かな
Suisen ni tamaru shiwasu no hokori kana

The daffodils
Are covered with the dust
Of the End of the Year.

People are too busy for flower-arrangement just before the beginning of the new year. The dust on the leaves of the daffodils is the worldliness of human beings, though this is natural too, unfortunately.

麥唄や野鍛冶が槌も交へ打つ
Mugiuta ya nokaji ga tsuchi mo majie-utsu

The barley-reaping song
Mingles with the blows
Of the outdoor-smith's hammer.

This verse sounds like a recollection of Bashō's verse:

雲雀なく中の拍子や雉子の聲
Hibari naku naka no hyōshi ya kiji no koe

Through the skylark's singing
Comes the beat
Of pheasants' cries.

Dorothy Wordsworth would have enjoyed Kitō's verse:

The people were at work ploughing, harrowing, and sowing, a dog barking now and again, cocks crowing

年ひとつ老いゆく宵の化粧かな
Toshi hitotsu oiyuku yoi no keshō kana

Becoming one year older,
 The making-up
 Of that evening.

This is a verse of New Year's Eve. A woman of about thirty is making up before she goes to bed. She feels what Ikkyū said, that the morrow, New Year's Day, is both a time for rejoicing and for sorrow.

鶯の二度来る日あり来ぬ日あり
Uguisu no nido kuru hi ari konu hi ari

The uguisu
 Which often comes not at all,
 Sometimes comes twice in a day.

This verse shows how the poet, not knowing the glories of television and plush magazines, enjoys the short visits of the bird, and makes them one of the pleasures of life.

睡けさす魔を蹴て行くや時鳥
Nemukesasu ma wo kete yuku ya hototogisu

Kicking away
 The demon that causes sleep,—
 The hototogisu!

This has the prescript, 静座, Sitting Quietly. Thinking over various things, the head lowers, and sleep begins to

come, but the sharp sudden voice of the hototogisu breaks the spell.

たゝずめば猶降る雪の夜道かな
Tatazumeba nao furu yuki no yomichi kana

Standing still
On the road at night,
The snow fell faster.

Thus the contemplative man sees nature in some ways more truly than the man of action.

朱をそそぐ入日のあとは秋の暮
Shu wo sosogu irihi no ato wa aki no kure

The setting sun
Floods the world with crimson,
Then, an evening of autumn.

Colour changes to the colourless. Which is the real world? Or is it just an alternation of one thing and another? People answer according to their temperament, —but what is the real answer?

On the whole, Kitō's verses give us an impression of hardness (those of Taigi do not, for all their brilliance). An example is the following:

蹇の顔ほがらかに春日かな
Ashinae no kao hogaraka ni haruhi kana

The lame beggar
Has a care-free face
This spring day.

Perhaps the following is not less callous, though apparently sympathetic:

夕立やよみがへりたる斃馬
Yūdachi ya yomigaeri taru taore-uma

A summer shower;
 The exhausted horse
 Comes to life again.

Kitō's best verses are thus purely objective verses, in which the question of hardness or softness does not arise:

風に争ふごとし鐘の聲
Kogarashi ni arasou gotoshi kane no koe

The voice of the temple bell
 Seems to strive
 With the winter blast.

The best verse of all:

繪草子に鎮おく店や春の風
Ezōshi ni shizu oku mise ya haru no kaze

A shop
 With weights on the picture-books,—
 The spring breeze!

Shōha, 召波, who died in 1771, was a companion disciple with Kitō of Buson. His verses are on the whole uninteresting, but some are good. They were collected after his death, and Buson wrote a famous preface for them. His best and best-known verse:

元日や草の戸越しの麥畑
Ganjitsu ya kusa no to-goshi no mugi-batake

New Year's Day;
 Through the cottage door,
 A field of barley.

This has something Homeric in it.

囀りにひとり起き出づるや泊客
Saezuri ni hitori okiizuru ya tomari-kyaku

Birds twittering,
The overnight guest
Alone seems to be getting up.

When we go into the country, the faint sounds of the birds in the early morning, and even the silence itself, make it impossible for us to sleep.

いさゝかな草も枯れけり石の間
Isasaka na kusa mo kare kerishi no ai

A wisp of grass, too,
Between the stones,
Withers and dies.

This is very different from Tennyson's flower in the crannied wall. Tennyson wishes to grasp it with his mind, and therefore grasps it with his hand. Shōha watches the grass live, he watches it die.

淋しさは天井高し寺の蚊帳
Sabishisa wa tenjō takashi tera no kaya

In the mosquito net
The temple ceiling is high:
Loneliness.

A temple is a lonely place, inside and outside, and even the monks all sleep together. A visitor lies in the mosquito net, looking up at the unnaturally high ceiling, the night-light hardly piercing the darkness of the great room. He feels his aloneness, loneliness, lonesomeness, onlyness

oneness, nothingness.

憂きことを海月に語る海鼠かな
Ukikoto wo kurage ni kataru namako kana

The sea-slug.
 Saying sad things
 To the jelly-fish.

This verse belongs to summer, as sea-slugs and certain jelly-fish are eaten in that season. It should be compared with the following two verses, by Bashō and Kyorai:

生きながら一つに氷る海鼠かな
Iki nagara hitotsu ni kōru namako kana

Sea-slugs;
 Alive,—
 But frozen into one.

尾頭の心もとなき海鼠哉
O-kashira no kokoromoto-naki namako kana

Which tail, which head
 Nobody knows,—
 The sea-slug.

子の顔に秋風白し天瓜粉
Ko no kao ni akikaze shiroshi tenkafun

The wind of autumn
 Is white on the child's face:
 Talcum powder.

The wind is cool on the face of the child who has had a bath and is dusted with a white powder to prevent heat-rash. But the real point of the verse is in the fact

that whiteness has always been considered (by the Chinese poets) as the colour of autumn.

野鼠の逃るもみゆる鳴子かな
No-nezumi no niguru mo miyuru naruko kana

The wood-mice also
Are seen running away
From the bird-clapper.

We may compare this haiku with Jōsō's verse on the loach, and with Clare's poem, *Summer Evening*:

我事と鱒の逃げし根芹哉
Waga koto to dojō no nigeshi nezeri kana

Thinking I am after him,
The loach is off
Among the parsley!

The frog half-fearful jumps across the path,
And little mouse that leaves its hole at eve
Nimbles with timid dread beneath the swath;
My rustling steps their joys deceive,
Till past.

白壁に蜻蛉過ぐる日影かな
Shira-kabe ni tombō suguru hikage kana

The shadows of the dragon-flies,
As they pass to and fro,
On the white walls.

These walls are of the warehouses, or the roofed walls of mansions. The shadows are somewhat faint, because the wings are transparent. The dragon-flies are red, the walls white, the shadows grey.

白馬寺に如來うつして今朝の秋
Hakuba-ji ni nyorai utsushite kesa no aki

The Buddha Nyorai
 Was brought to White Horse Temple
 This autumn morning.

This verse illustrates the tendency in Buson's time to go back to the past for poetic effects. In this matter Shōha was Buson's chief disciple. Hakubaji Temple, the first Buddhist temple in China, was built by the Emperor Ming, 明, of the Later Han Dynasty, upon the arrival of two Buddhist monks, Kasyapa Matanga, 迦葉摩騰, and Chu Fa Lan, 竺法蘭, in Loyang in A.D. 67 with Buddhist statues and scriptures loaded upon a white horse. Shōha goes back to this remote time and puts the feeling of it, the magic of the coming of Indian culture to China, into this peaceful morning 1700 years afterwards.

とんぼうや飯の先までひたと来る
Tombō ya meshi no saki made hita to kuru

The dragon-fly;
 It comes and settles
 On the side of my rice.

We feel the mysterious closeness and yet infinite distance of other forms of life than ours.

乾きたる虫籠の草やあらぶさた
Kawakitaru mushiko no kusa ya ara busata

The grass in the insect's cage
 Is all withered!
 I'm so sorry!

This verse is wholly humorous and wholly serious.

花をおもみ萩に水ゆく野ずえかな
Hana wo omomi hagi ni mizu yuku nozue kana

Over the stream at the edge of the moor
 Hang lespedeza,
 Heavy with flowers.

In the original, *Hana wo omomi* is "Making its flowers a weight," the subject being the "water flowing."

寺ふかく竹きる音や夕時雨
Tera fukaku take kiru oto ya yūshigure

Deep in the temple grounds,
 The sound of cutting bamboos;
 An evening winter shower.

Bamboos are cut in early winter. Here, there is a relation between the rain, the temple, the bamboos, the cutting of them, and the distance. This is an excellent verse, in the combination of space, religiousness, a special kind of sound, darkness, cold, and wetness.

Chora, 標良, 1729-1780, was born in Shima province, but at the age of fourteen went to Ise province. Ryōto had set up the Ise School, followed by Otsuya and others, but gradually it become worldly. Chora brought it back to the poetry and simplicity of Bashō. He published the White Headed Crow Collection, 白頭鴉集. Later, he lived in Kyōto, and made poetical meetings with Buson, Kitō, Shōhaku, and so on. Chora has the spirit of Bashō without his genius.

こがねさびて若葉に偲ぶ昔かな
Kogane sabite wakaba ni shinobu mukashi kana

The gold is tarnished;
The young leaves take us back
To olden times.

This was composed at a temple. It is the young leaves which are sad, not the ancient buildings.

諸人や花をわけ入り花を出ず
Morobito ya hana wo wake iri hana wo izu

All the people, everybody
Entering in among the cherry blossoms,
Coming out from among them.

Here the flowers and the people are inextricably mixed, as they are in fact.

我が庵は榎ばかりの落葉かな
Waga io wa enoki bakari no ochiba kana

My dwelling;
Fallen leaves,
Only of the nettle-tree.

The garden of his Do-nothing Hermitage, Muian, 無爲庵, not a very large or elaborate one, is covered with the fallen leaves of one huge tree. This is a simple verse, but we feel in it the very soul of the poet, which indeed is revealed more in the fallen leaves of early winter than at any other season. It is not love of nature, nor is it resignation. It is something beyond pleasure, but not without an admixture of grief, faint and cosmic. It reminds us of Christ's words, "But one thing is enough."

秋立つや雲は流れて風見ゆる
Aki tatsu ya kumo wa nagarete kaze miyuru

The beginning of autumn;
The clouds float on high:
The wind can be seen.

In Japan, the wind blows in autumn, at first a cool poetical wind, and then a tempest, even a typhoon. Chora here sees the wind, (high in the autumn sky, moving in the form of clouds,) before it is felt.

秋萩のうつろひて風人を吹く
Aki hagi no utsuroi te kaze hito wo fuku

The lespedeza of autumn
Is passing and fading;
The wind blows us.

The lespedeza have bloomed; their time is over. Up to now, when the wind blew the long flowering branches, they were a pleasure to see. Now, as they wave in the breeze, they do not touch the mind as before. The wind blows on the poet, not on the plant.

Gyōdai, 暁台, 1732-1792, was born in Nagoya, and became the disciple of Hakuni, 白尼, but, dissatisfied with his teacher, endeavoured to reform what he saw was the vulgarity of the haiku world of the second half of the eighteenth century. He met Buson first in 1774, and for nearly ten years, until the death of Buson, was probably in constant communication with him. His verses are very good, a combination of the power of Taigi, the simplicity and gentleness of Chora, and an impressionism all his own. A week before he died of illness he composed the following:

梅林に夜のほこりや薄曇
Bairin ni yoru no hokori ya usu-gumori

It is overcast;
The plum trees are covered
With the dust of evening.

負ふた子に蕨をとりて持たせけり
Outa ko ni warabi wo torite motase keru

Plucking a fern,
And giving it
To the child on my back.

This is in a sense the whole history of culture; it has in it also something deeply human, and even pitiful.

蝙蝠や月のほとりを立去らず
Kōmori ya tsuki no hotori wo tachi-sarazu

The bat is flitting
Round the moon,
And does not leave it.

That the bat lingers by the moon, and does not go away from it, is an illusion on the part of the poet, who does not realise that the bat is simply flying about in that particular place, and the moon is above every place. But this does not matter, as long as the poet *wonders*. Poetry is wonder, from whatever cause, not curiosity, which comes simply from ignorance.

蠅一つわれをめぐるや冬籠
Hae hitotsu ware wo meguru ya fuyugomori

A single fly
Hangs round me;
Winter confinement.

The fly is part pathetic, part nuisance, part companion,

wholly poetic.

冬田刈る夕暮人の一人哉
Fuyuta karu yūgure hito no hitori kana

The day draws to its close;
Reaping the winter field,
A man, alone.

This haiku is not a very good one, but it is interesting from its insistence on the meaningfulness of *one* thing and the meaninglessness of two, that Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy felt so strongly and expressed so often in words like “a single”, “solitary”, “alone”, “one”.

つらつらと杉の日面行く時雨
Tsura tsura to sugi no hiomote yuku shigure

Deliberately
Sunlight passes, the shower passes
Over the face of the cedars.

Nature sometimes seems wanton and random, at other times severely law-abiding, with a grave inevitability that calms and pleases the mind.

くらきよりくらきに歸る海鼠哉
Kuraki yori kuraki ni kaeru namako kana

From darkness,
To darkness returning,
The sea-slug.

This verse has a darkness in it like that of the life of the half-alive creature.

暁や雨もりしきりに虫の聲
Akatsuki ya ama-mori shikiri ni mushi no koe

The dawn of day:
The incessant rain,
And the voices of insects.

Gyōdai is on the whole subdued and quiet in feeling, as in the above verse. Even when he is romantic, like Buson, the colours are sober.

こがれてや早瀬みて居る鹿の夫
Kogarete ya hayase mite-iru shika no tsuma

Languishing for love?
The stag stands
Gazing over the shallows.

This is romantic, in being like a scene of the Scotch Highlands. It is not really haiku at all.

梅折て僧歸るかたは雲深し
Ume otte sō kaeru kata wa kumo fukashi

Breaking off a plum-branch,
The monk goes back
Where clouds are lowering.

Here Gyōdai is following in the footsteps of Buson, putting a short Chinese poem into a still shorter form.

花暮れて月をいだけり白牡丹
Hana kurete tsuki wo idakeri haku-botan

The flowers darken,
But the white peony
Absorbs the moonlight.

Just as water becomes visible in the twilight, so the great white peony seems to enfold the moon within itself.

海の音いち日遠き小春かな
Umi no oto ichi-nichi tōki koharu kana

Indian summer;
All day long the sound of the sea
Is far-off.

There is no wind, the sun shines warm in these November days, and the sea sounds far away, though it is not.

雪どけやみやま曇を啼く鴉
Yukidoke ya miyama-gumori wo naku karasu

Snow thawing,
A crow caws
In the cloudy mountains.

The white snow and the black bird, the thawing of the snow and the reanimation of nature (the cawing of the crow), the cloudy obscurity of the mountains and the mysterious, unmentioned coming of spring,—all these are in a harmony which is discovered-created among the multitudinous phenomena of nature.

憂き人のひたひにあてる火桶かな
Ukihito no hitai ni ateru hioke kana

In her despondency,
Laying the forehead
On the edge of the brazier.

This must be a woman. A man would keep his dignity.

年迫る風大空を鳴らすかな
Toshi semaru kaze ō-zora wo narasu kana

The year draws to its close,
And the vast sky
Resounds with wind.

Haiku sometimes attains, as it were by accident, to a Homeric simplicity and Miltonic grandeur.

日暮れむとして又雪の降り初むる
Hi kuren to shite mata yuki no furisomuru

Day darke..s,
And once more it begins
To snow.

This verse requires more effort than perhaps a poet is justified in asking from his reader. The point is a certain state of mind caused by the darkness and the snow falling together. Added to this is the "once more;" it has already snowed that day. The state of mind does not seem to have any English word to describe it other than a feeling of inevitability.

Michihiko, 道彦, the disciple of Shirao, says, "Gyōdai is like a courtesan." This seems to me quite off the mark, as may be shown in one last example:

暁や鯨の吼るしものうみ
Akatsuki ya kujira no hoeru shimo no umi

The dawn of day;
Whales bellow
In the icy sea.

Shirao, 白雄, 1735-1792, like many other haiku poets, became a priest in early life, but later gave it up. His

first teacher was Umei, 烏明, the disciple of Chōsui, 鳥醉, the disciple of Ryūkyo, 柳居, the disciple of Tentoku, 沾徳, etc., etc. His character is shown by the title of *Kazari nashi*, Unornamented, 1771, on the art of haikai. He travelled all over the country and at last settled in Edo and became a leader in the world of haikai. He remained single, and loved drinking, one of his numerous books being verses on this subject. His death-verse, carved on his tomb:

立ち出でて芙蓉のしぼむ日にあえり
Tachi-idete fuyō no shibomu hi ni aeri

、 Going out today,
I saw a rose-mallow
Fading away.

When a Daffadill I see,
Hanging down his head t'wards me,
Guesse I may, what I must be:
First, I shall decline my head;
Secondly, I shall be dead;
Lastly, safely bury'd.

行秋の草にかくるる流かな
Yuku aki no kusa ni kakururu nagare kana

The streamlet hides
In the grasses
Of departing autumn.

This verse so natural that it defies explanation.

巢燕の下に火を焚く雨夜かな
Sutsubame no shita ni hi wo taku amayo kana

Making a fire,
Under the swallows nest;
An evening of rain.

The people and the swallows, oblivious of one another, are busy about many things in the falling rain and rising smoke; but one thing is necessary, to *see* all these things.

鶏の嘴に氷こぼるる菜屑かな
Tori no hashi ni kōri koboruru nakuzu kana

Stumps and leaves of greens;
Small pieces of ice
Drop from the beaks of the fowls.

As the chickens peck the frozen vegetable refuse outside the kitchen, small shining pieces of ice drop from their beaks.

猪を荷ひ行く野や花薄
Inoshishi wo ninai-yuku no ya hana-susuki

Carrying a wild boar
Over the autumn moor,
Pampas grasses blooming.

Wild boars are always poetic, like their human counterparts. This is a scene of two men carrying a dead boar, its violent career ended, through the autumn grasses.

瓜の香に狐の嚏る月夜かな
Uri no ka ni kitsune no hanahiru tsukiyo kana

At the scent of the melon flower
The fox sneezes,
This moonlit night.

This is a charming verse. Haiku is like Emerson's Humble Bee,

Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet.

時雨るゝや鹿にもの云ふ油つぎ
Shigururu ya shika ni mono iū abura-tsugi

Cold winter rain;
The man replenishing the lanterns
Speaks to the deer.

The deer (of Nara, perhaps) are hungry; the man is busy; but he spares a few words for them.

霧の香や松明捨つる山かつら
Kiri no ka ya taimatsu sutsuru yama-katsura

Throwing away the torches,
The mountain clouds reddening:
The smell of the mist.

People have left the inn very early in the morning, and carry pine-torches. It begins to flush in the east among the clouds over the mountain. The travellers throw away their torches, and then are aware for the first time of the peculiar smell of the morning mist.

冬近き日のあたりけり鳶の腹
Fuyu chikaki hi no atari keri tobi no hara

On the breast of the kite
Shines the light of days
That are near unto winter.

The kite is planing round in vast circles with the thin sunshine slanting upon his breast. We feel the coming

on of winter in the colour of the clouds and the pale light
on the bird.

木鋏の白刃に蜂の怒りかな
Ki-basami no shiraha ni hachi no ikari kana

The white blades
Of the pruning shears:
An angry wasp.

There is a harmony of vindictiveness between the long,
sharp clippers, and the ferocious insect; and there is a
contrast of colour between the two.

夕汐や柳がくれに魚分つ
Yūshio ya yanagi-gakure ni uo wakatsu

The evening tide;
Under the willow trees
They are sorting out the fish.

The picture is in four degrees of size: the swirling tide
that comes from the sea to the banks of the river; the
willow trees that have shaded the fishermen during the
long day of late spring; the human beings that are pre-
paring to go to their various homes; and the fish that are
the sacrifice to the life of humanity.

とし四十蝸の聲耳にたつ
Toshi shijū higurashi no koe mimi ni tatsu

Forty years old,
And how the voice of the *higurashi*
Strikes on the ear!

Forty is beginning of old age, and the oboe-trumpet-like
voice of the insect, so clear and strong, makes us feel

our weakness and hypocrisy and worldliness.

元日や大樹の下の人ごころ
Ganjitsu ya taiju no shita no hito-gokoro

New Year's Day;
Under a giant tree,
Our human heart!

Standing beneath the great tree the poet feels a safeness and calmness that comes from the power and renewed vigour of nature, and from the season. But this haiku has too much of the vagueness which is also necessary for poetry.

町中をはしる流よ夏の月
Machinaka wo hashiru nagare yo natsu no tsuki

Swiftly through the town
Under the summer moon
O rivulet!

This has a lyrical, Shelleyan quality not common in haiku. There is such a stream in Kanazawa.

明やすき夜を泣く児の病かな
Akeyasuki yo wo naku chigo no yamai kana

A sick child,
Crying in the night
That is about to dawn.

Shirao has a simplicity, like that of W. H. Davies, that will not go very far, and that may fall into a kind of mawkishness.

炭竈や塗りこめられし蔦かつら
Sumi-gama ya nurikomerareshi tsuta-kazura

The charcoal-kiln,
 And an ivy-vine
 Daubed up together with it.

When the charcoal-kiln was made, some long strands of ivy-vine were mixed up with the mud-plaster used to cover it.

撫子のふしぶしにさす夕日哉
Nadeshiko no fushi-bushi ni sasu yūhi kana

The evening sun
 Shines on each knot
 Of the pinks.

The stalks of the pinks are a little reddish, and on each of the nodes the evening sun shines.

園くらき夜を静かなる牡丹哉
Sono kuraki yo wo shizuka naru botan kana

At night,
 In the dark garden,
 How quiet the peony!

This gives perhaps slightly a sinister meaning to the great flower.

Chapter XIX

POETS OF BUSON'S TIME II

Ryōta, 蓼太, 1718-1787, came to Edo in his youth, and when he was about twenty began to learn haikai from Ritō, 1680-1754, a pupil of Ransetsu. He became famous as a teacher, with more than three thousand pupils, it is said. His verses are ambitious, like those of Kikaku, with whose school he competed. There is some vulgarity in his haiku, as there was luxuriousness in his life. It is said that a Chinese admired the following verse so much he translated it into his own language:

五月雨やある夜ひそかに松の月
Samidare ya aru yo hisoka ni matsu no tsuki

The summer rains;
One evening the moon appeared
Behind the pine-tree, secretly.

It is also said that the year before his death he made the following verse, referring to his tomb:

われ見ても賣れぬ石あり年のくれ
Ware mite mo urenu ishi ari toshi no kure

The end of the year:
I see a stone
That remains unsold.

The following all have something weak about them, though they are among his best.

源は柳なるべし春の水
 Minamoto wa yanagi naru beshi haru no mizu

At the source
 There should be a willow,—
 Spring waters flowing.

This is the sentimentality which haiku has always avoided, even at the cost of interest and popularity.

夕霞たきゝの鼓しらべけり
 Yū-gasumi takigi no tsuzumi shirabe keru

In the evening mist,
 Drums by the bonfires;
 A Nō play.

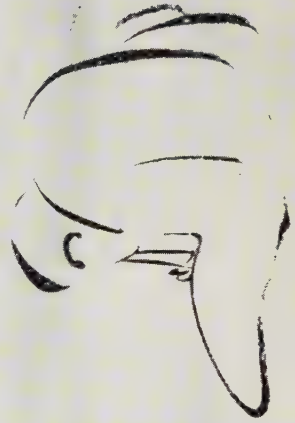
This verse was composed at Nara, where, for a week in February, Takigi Nō (Bonfire Nō) or Shiba Nō (Grass Nō) was performed in the open air. There is a feeling of satisfaction in this verse, which comes perhaps from the distant sight and sound of human culture that can turn the dark silent night into a background for its activities.

里の灯を含みて雨の若葉かな
 Sato no hi wo fukumite ame no wakaba kana

The rain on the young leaves
 Is charged with
 The lights of the village.

The wet leaves do not merely reflect the village lights, they are suffused with them, they comprehend them, make them their own.

白萩や露一升に花一升
 Shirahagi ya tsuyu issō ni hana issō



王羲之
印

王羲之
草书
王羲之

White bush-clover;
A bushel of blossoms,
A bushel of dew.

There are as many dewdrops as blossoms, is the meaning, and they are almost indistinguishable from one another, but the way of expressing this is good because it is unpoetic, unromantic, and unsentimental.

あけぼのの青き中より桐一葉
Akebono no aoki naka yori kiri hitoha

From the blue
Of early dawn,
A single paulownia leaf.

From the sky of autumn, lofty and vast, falls a large green leaf onto the great earth. Contrast this remarkable verse with one which is unfortunately far more characteristic of Ryōta:

植木屋のおいて行たる胡蝶かな
Ueki-ya no oite yukitaru kochō kana

The nurseryman went off,
But left something behind,—
This butterfly.

The gardener came with potted flowers to sell, perhaps on some kind of hand-cart, and while he was there a butterfly fluttered around the plants. After the man had left, the butterfly still remained, fluttering rather aimlessly here and there. The poet has the sentimental (and entirely unpoetical) *thought* that the gardener has not carried away the insect with the flowers.

郭公一聲夏をさだめけり
Hototogisu hito-koe natsu wo sadame keru

The *hototogisu*
 Has decided the summer
 With one song.

This verse also has too much intellect in it. Better are the following:

稲懸て里しづかなり後の月
Ine kakete sato shizuka nari nochi no tsuki

Hanging up the sheaves to dry,
 The village has become tranquil:
 The later full moon.

下闇に乾かぬ關伽のしづくかな
Shitayami ni kawakanu aka no shizuku kana

In the darkness beneath the trees,
 The dripping of the holy water,
 That never dries.

刈跡の薄にすがるいなごかな
Kari-ato no susuki ni sugaru inago kana

The locusts
 Cling to the pampas grasses
 By the harvested rice-fields.

岩端の鷲吹きはなつ野分かな
Iwahana no washi fuki-hanatsu nowaki kana

The autumn blast
 Blows the eagle
 Off the edge of the crag.

Haiku are not usually so violent as this last one. They have a point of rest in the movement, which is more important than that movement.

あら蓑の藁の青みや初時雨
Ara-mino no wara no aomi ya hatsu-shigure

It is greenish,
 The straw of the new *mino*:
 The first winter rain.

There is a deep connection between the green of the straw-coat, and the newness of the winter rain which rustles down on it.

Rankō, 蘭更, 1726-1798, was born of a merchant family in Kanazawa, but from his youth learned haikai from Kiin, the pupil of Hokushi. Later he lived in Kyōto and claimed to be restoring the Bashō style of haikai. He associated with Buson and Gyōdai. Many of his haiku are excellent, but he was spoiled by becoming master of his school, and receiving various honours. His theory of haiku was that it should be the expression of true feeling directly, no "ego" being allowed to intervene. Unfortunately his ideas were not so fresh.

五月雨や鼠の廻る古葛籠
Samidare ya nezumi no meguru furutsuzura

The summer rains;
 A mouse running round
 The old wicker basket.

Even the little mouse and the daily rain seem to have some of the age and quietness of the old basket. The

poet does not, and should not, and indeed cannot, speak of his.

薄月や水行く末の小夜砧
Usuzuki ya mizu-yuku sue no sayo-ginuta

The thin light of the moon;
 From down-stream
 The sound of the fulling-mallet.

The odd thing here is that if it is up-stream, the poetry disappears.

雨乞や火影に動く雲の峰
Amagoi ya hokage ni ugoku kumo no mine

Prayers for rain;
 The peaks of clouds quiver
 In the flames.

This has a grandeur uncommon to haiku or a bonfire.

枯蘆の日に日に折れて流れけり
Kare-ashi no hi ni hi ni orete nagare keri

The withered reeds;
 Day by day they break off
 And float away.

This verse has a remarkable simplicity. The mind delights in such inevitability, expressive as it is of some universal aspect of nature. The onomatopoeia, *hi ni hi ni* is noteworthy here, as expressing the movement of the water, the continual breaking of the reeds, and the melancholy of nature in winter. Rankō was known after this as "Rankō of the Withered Weeds."

大津繪の鬼もよごれつ櫛明り
Ōtsue no oni mo yogoretsu hoda-akari

The demon on the Ōtsu picture also
 Is getting smoky,
 In the light of the brushwood fire.

The dry twigs and branches in the fireplace are burning with much flame and smoke, and the picture of the demon pasted on the wall is getting dirty. The flame shows the smokiness, both being intimately connected with the subject of the picture.

月の夜や石に登りて啼く蛙
Tsuki no yo ya ishi ni noborite naku kawazu

A moon-lit evening;
 Climbing onto a stone,
 A frog croaks and croaks.

There is something in a frog croaking on a stone akin to a clergyman in a pulpit and a teacher or a politician on a platform. Needless to say, all are ridiculous, intrinsically, not by association or comparison. It is not often, except in the Zoo, that we see the humour of nature as clearly as we see it in frogs, especially when croaking.

ついに身を鳴きやぶるらん秋の蟬
Tsui ni mi wo naki-yabururan aki no semi

In the end, by singing
 It will destroy itself,
 The cicada of autumn!

This verse, if it has a Heine-like symbolism, is not haiku; and anyway it is not.

Tairo, 大魯, who died in 1778, was a pupil of Buson, originally a samurai, but later a haikai teacher.

旅人の錢おとしたる清水かな
Tabibito no zeni otoshitaru shimizu kana

Clear water;
 A traveller
 Has dropped some money into it.

There is an interesting contrast between the coin of the realm, and the international, unfinancial, unpatriotic, philosophical water.

Meimei, 冥々, who died in 1824 aged eighty six, was the pupil of Shirao. His verses are on the whole too simple, as the following will show:

鍋の足一つ缺けたる寒さかな
Nabe no ashi hitotsu kaketaru samusa kana

The saucepan
 Lacks a leg:
 How cold it is!

Just as the heat is increased by a mosquito, so the feeling of cold is exacerbated by something lacking, especially in a life of poverty.

犬の聲人や過ぎけん夜の雪
Inu no koe hito ya sugiken yoru no yuki

A dog is barking;
 Somebody must be passing,
 This evening of snow.

No footsteps can be heard, but as Thoreau says, the circumstantial evidence of a trout in the milk is very

strong.

Gomei, 五明, who died in 1803 aged seventy three, was a merchant of Akita, a pupil of Bairin, 梅隣. He was good at painting, but not much good at haiku, though he was called the restorer of haiku in North Japan.

ほの赤き鶴のかしらや枯薄
Hono akaki tsuru no kashira ya kare-susuki

The faintly red head
Of cranes
Among the withered pampas grass.

野の花や海すこし見ゆ山の肩
No no hana ya umi sukoshi miyu yama no kata

The shoulder of the mountain,
And the sea just seen
Over the rape flowers.

Gekkyo, 月居, 1745-1824, was born in Kyōto, and became Buson's pupil, one of his best. He was also good at waka. After Buson's death, together with Michihiko of Edo and Shiro of Owari, he became one of the Three Great Ones of the haikai world. But after some misconduct, he was expelled from the Buson school, and his style became artificial, and he was more or less "forgotten".

鶯や夕ぐれがたも朝の聲
Uguisu ya yūgure-gata mo asa no koe

The uguisu
Sings in the evening
With the same voice as in the morning.

There is something here that reminds us faintly of

Thoreau, *Journals*, 1840:

The birds I heard . . . sung as freshly as if it had
been the first morning of creation.

青柳に傘むすびけり傀儡師
Aoyagi ni kasa musubi keri kairaiishi

The puppet-player
Tied his umbrella
On a green willow tree.

The itinerant puppet-player, (often a woman) in beautiful clothes, a Chinese umbrella over him, makes a delightful picture with the green sprays of the willow behind him.

春惜しむ心年々似ざりけり
Haru oshimu kokoro nennen nizari keri

Grieving for spring,
Every year the same,
Every year differently.

In the case of this haiku, there is added the dimension of time.

Hyakuchi, 百池, 1748-1836, was a man of Kyōto, who learned from Buson. A few of his verses are interesting:

賣牛の村を離るゝ霞かな
Uri ushi no mura wo hanaruru kasumi kana

The cow I sold,
Leaving the village
Through the haze.

All painful things, all pleasant things, all things must
be seen through a haze.

大床に人の絶え間や蠅ひとつ
 Ōyuka ni hito no taema ya hae hitotsu

The great chamber;
 Nobody there,
 But a single fly.

This is the large room of a shrine or of a samurai's mansion. It is perfectly silent, nobody there; sometimes the buzzing of a fly is heard, which expresses the potentialities of the place.

Ōemaru, 大江丸, 1722-1805, was a man of Ōsaka, who carried on a courier agency, 飛脚問屋, and in pursuit of this met all kinds of haiku poets, including Tantan, Ryōtai, Buson, Bakusui, Rankō, Seira and many others. In his autobiography, he wrote, "I became first interested in haikai when I carried a letter to Tantan at the age of twelve or thirteen." He was good at painting, and was humorous in character. Most of his verses are sentimental and moralistic. To prove this would be to quote what should not be quoted, and to reanimate what never really lived. The following are innocuous.

夕涼み地藏こかして逃げにけり
 Yūsuzumi jizō kokashite nige ni keri

Cooling in the evening:
 Knocking over Jizō,
 And running away.

Some young men knocked down an image of Jizo, by accident, or mischievously. The haiku writer has the unindignant Japanese attitude.

山見えて秋ひとときの入日かな
 Yama miete aki hitotoki no irihi kana

The mountains are seen,
In the setting sun,
And autumn, for a moment.

For a short time the evening sun shines on the hills with their red and yellow tints. The glory of sky and land is seen, and, while we wonder at it, fades into the dun and dark hues of night. This brevity is that of the autumn, and the autumn day.

秋きぬと目にさや豆のふとりかな
Aki kinu to me ni sayamame no futori kana

Autumn has come;
The peas are plump
To the eye.

Not to the head, or the heart; not to the sense of beauty, or as part of an Earthly Paradise.

北濱や水うつ上の初時雨
Kitahama ya mizu utsu ue no hatsu-shigure

The first winter shower
Falls on the water sprinkled
In front of the shops of Kitahama.

Kitahama, which comes in Saikaku's novels, is a place in Ōsaka, a rice exchange. Early in the morning young men sprinkled water on the dusty road before customers came and it became busy. But nature has other plans, and sprinkles its own water on the just and on the unjust.

残月も日もいたゞける牡丹かな
Zangetsu mo hi mo itadakeru botan kana

The peony receives
The morning moon,
The morning sun.

The peony receives its beauty, its gorgeousness directly from the moon remaining in the morning sky, and the glorious sun uprising; "the golden apples of the sun, the silver apples of the moon."

Ichiku, 移竹, 1710-1760, was a man of Kyōto, who studied haikai under Kanshū, 竿秋, a pupil of Tantan, but disliked his style of haiku, and looked back at Kyorai with yearning. He knew Buson and Shōha and Kitō.

冬枯れや芥しづまる川の底
Fuyu-gare ya akuta shizumaru kawa no soko

Winter desolation;
Rubbish settles
At the bottom of the stream.

Man adds his own desolation to the desolation of nature.

Ryōtai, 涼袋, who died in 1774, was the son of samurai but became a monk in his youth. He studied the styles of Otsuyū, Shikō, and Tantan, which Buson rejected. He sat at the feet of many other masters, but in the end gave up haikai and revived an ancient form of verse, katauta, 片歌, 5, 7, 7, and also wrote novels. He was the author of numerous works. One of his hokku:

こきまぜて櫻もさびし枯柳
Kokimazete sakura mo sabishi kare-yanagi

Mixed together,
The cherry trees also are lonely,—
Withered willows.

Seira, 青蘿, 1740-1791, was dismissed from the service of his lord on account of gambling. He studied haikai in his youth and was also proficient in painting. Later, after some more gambling, he decided to become a Zen priest. On his tombstone the following death verse is inscribed:

舟ばたやくつぬぎ捨つる水の月
Funabata ya kutsu nugisutsuru mizu no tsuki

On the edge of the boat,
 Kicking off my shoes,—
 The moon in the water.

戸口より人影さしぬ秋の暮
Toguchi yori hito-kage sashinu aki no kure

In the doorway
 Falls someone's shadow:
 Autumn evening.

The short autumn day is over; evening is falling. Only the doorway is bright. Someone's shadow, the shadow of some unknown person comes in the doorway, which is darkened for a moment. There is a deep and almost painful significance in this long lonely shade that adds to the darkness within.

燈火のすわりて氷る霜夜かな
Tomoshihi no suwarite kōru shimo yo kana

The lamp
 Is motionless:
 A freezing night of frost.

We expect a flame to move, but sometimes when there is no wind, it stands like a flower in a still evening, like

a ship becalmed, and we seem to see the Unmoved Mover.

Shōzan, 嘯山, who died in 1801, aged eighty-four, was a doctor of Kyōto, originally a Chinese scholar, but learned haikai from Sōoku, 宋屋, a pupil of Hajin. He associated with Buson, Taigi, Bakusui, and Rankō. His verses are mostly too dry, honest, and matter-of-fact, like his character. On one of his memorial stones is carved:

名月や水のしたたる瓦ぶき
Meigetsu ya mizu no shitataru kawarabuki

The bright autumn moon;
The tiled roofs
Look wet.

鴛鴦なくや夕月かかる寺の門
Oshi naku ya yūzuki kakaru tera no mon

Mandarin ducks crying,
The evening moon shines down
On the temple gate.

Through the great gate of the temple can be seen the pool where the water-birds are crying.

客去って撫る火鉢やひとりごと
Kyaku satte naderu hibachi ya hitorigoto

The visitor gone,
Stroking the edge of the brazier,
And talking to myself.

This is a good example of the apparent triviality of haiku.

Denpuku, 田福, who died at the age of 73 in 1793, was a man of Kyōto. He was first a pupil of Renseki, 練石,

the pupil of Benseki, 鞭石, the pupil of Jisen, 似船, the pupil of Ansei, 安靜, the pupil of Teitoku. However, in spite of all this lineage, his wife being the aunt of Hyakuchi, Buson's pupil, Denpuku afterwards became Buson's disciple. One of his verses:

鼠追ふや椿生けたる枕上
Nezumi ou ya tsubaki iketaru makurakami

Driving away a mouse;
 Camellias arranged
 By my pillow.

Mice are not fond of camellias, but evidently Denpuku was.

Chapter XX

ISSA I

Buson was born in 1715, twenty one years after Bashō's death. When Buson died in 1783, Issa was twenty. Bashō influenced Buson strongly though Buson was a shallower character, but Issa never met Buson, it seems, and was not influenced by him. The influence of Bashō of course was strong on Issa, but Bashō had a breadth of soul (not of mind) which Issa had not. Bashō's soul was like Christ's heaven, it had many mansions; he could embrace many people, and could write many kinds of haiku. Issa had no master, no real disciples. He reminds us of Swift and Burns in his solitariness, and with them wished to love, and still more to be loved, but was like Wordsworth's Matthew, "not enough beloved."

Issa's life is said to have been a sad one, and people speak of him with a pity that Issa would have found disagreeable, if not unexpected. When Hazlitt lay dying, he surprised everybody by saying, "I have had a happy life." It would not be astonishing to know that Issa said the same thing on his death-bed. As Stevenson (should have) said:

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as Issa.

Being an orphan, not having a fixed home until he was fifty, the death of a wife, children dying like flies,—these are troubles above the average, but Issa also had happiness,

or rather blessedness, far above the average. He did not "see life steadily and see it whole" like the great men that Arnold admired. He saw it unsteadily, and in its parts, but perhaps this is all that anyone can do. What distinguishes one man from another, what differentiates the real Hell from the real Heaven is depth, and Issa felt the smallest things deeply. Breadth must always sacrifice depth. And steadiness is the attitude of the scientist and the philosopher. The chameleon poet must be as unsteady, as unpredictable as (poetical) nature, and this sameness with nature constitutes his "happiness."

It is not necessary to be poor to know that men are greedy and insolent. An ironic view of life comes from inside, not outside. When ideals are high, reality looks bad. A sense of humour lets us into secrets hidden from the wise and prudent. If we love living creatures, we pity ourselves in them, and them in ourselves. Bashō also was a sensitive and sympathetic poet. He loved nature, and the mind of man was for him also the main region of his song. But his resignation, his lack of resistance to the powers that be, deprive his haiku of irony, and leave them with only the faint humour of nature that poetry can never omit. Buson is almost always the artist, nothing like Daumier or Hogarth or Goya, however. As for Pater, the importance of life was in its moments of aesthetic insight. Shiki's mind was too hard, his life darkened by disease; he lacked the reforming spirit, except in purely literary matters.

Issa is a little like Heine in his tendency to sentimentality, and playing with motherless sparrows, his dislike of pretence (sentimentality is itself a subtle kind of pretence) his love of contrast and sarcasm. For Issa's love of living

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things, especially the least respectable ones, we must go to John Clare for a comparison. Issa often has Thoreau's dryness, and always his friendliness with nature. Issa could not say, as Thoreau did, that he regretted nothing, and though Issa also never quarrelled with God, he had to suppress a mutinous spirit to do so.

One odd thing about Issa, mentioned before, something that should be carefully studied, is the fact that in spite of his humanity—he is in many ways the least Japanese of the haiku poets—he had very few disciples, at least good ones. One was Seifu-jo, 1783–1840, wife of Shunkō, a haiku poet. I don't know any more. Bashō, Buson, and Shiki all had many disciples, Issa practically none; what does this show? Christ is said to have had twelve, but he died alone. Bashō himself is supposed to have been speaking metaphorically when he wrote:

この道や行く人なしに秋の暮
Kono michi ya yuku hito nashi ni aki no kure

An autumn eve;
 Along this road
 Goes no one.

But who is Bach's disciple? Certainly not his silly sons. Who is Nietzsche's? Who is Wordsworth's, or Thoreau's, or Lawrence's, or Blake's, or mine even? In this respect Bashō was an exception, a really good man.

Bashō is concerned with the religious meaning of things, Buson with their beauty and strangeness, Issa with their (comical) thinginess. These trivia are at the same time felt as tragic, so that Issa is one of the great ironists. The parting of Hector and Andromache, the first

kiss of Francesca di Rimini, the death of Lear,—these are more lofty, more piercing, more dreadful, but they do not come so close to our business and bosoms as do Issa's verses. John Hall, in his *A Pastorall Hymne*, says:

Yet do the lazy Snailes no lesse
The greatnesse of our Lord confesse.

Bashō often has the solemnity of Wordsworth. When setting out on a journey,

旅人と我が名呼ばれん初時雨
Tabibito to waga na yobaren hatsu-shigure

The first winter rain;
My name shall be called
“Traveller.”

Issa says:

椋鳥と人に呼ばるゝ寒さかな
Mukudori to hito ni yobaruru samusa kana

“Country bumpkin”
People call me,—
How cold it is!

Issa had actually lived long in Edo, but was poor, and indifferent to clothes, so they called him “grey starling.” Thoreau has the same lack of solemnity: from his *Journal*, 1853:

The other day, when I had been standing perfectly still some ten minutes, looking at a willow which had just blossomed, some rods in the rear of Martial Miles's house, I felt eyes on my back and, turning round suddenly, saw the heads of two who had stolen out of the house and were watching me over a rising ground

fixedly as I the willow. They were studying man, which is said to be the proper study of mankind, I nature, and yet, when detected, they felt the cheapest of the two.

The most remarkable, and to me the most delightful part of Issa's character is his love of flies and mosquitoes and so forth. Issa felt about fleas and lice what Eckhart says:

Wenn ich zu Paris predige so spreche ich und traue mir wohl zu sprechen: Alle Paris können mit allen ihren Künsten nicht bregreifen was Gott sei in der kleinsten Kreatur, ja auch in einer Mücke.

Issa can do what all Paris could not do, and what even Eckhart could not,—see a midge in God. Seeing God in a midge is not so difficult. What is really difficult is to keep one's eye fixed steadily on the insects, and not let God usurp their divinity. Issa wrote 54 haiku on the snail, 15 on the toad, nearly 200 on frogs (which belong to spring), about 230 on the firefly, more than 150 on the mosquito, 90 on flies, over 100 on fleas, nearly 90 on the cicada, and about 70 on various other insects, a grand total of about a thousand verses on such creatures. Some may say, "Little things please little minds." But Christ tells us that the hairs of our heads are all numbered, and Issa thought that the hairs on a hairy caterpillar were numbered. I think so too.

The following are haiku of Issa arranged in chronological order of publication. The first few, published when Issa was thirty years old, are in the style of Buson, and of Bashō occasionally, but when we come to the first years of Bunka, when Issa was forty, he is already mature, and

though there is some increase of depth and of tenderness later, Issa is now himself, far from perfect, but perhaps unwilling to change even for the better.

塔ばかり見て東寺は夏木立
Tō bakari miete tōji wa natsu-kodachi

Only the pagoda
 Of Tōji Temple visible
 Among the summer groves.

This is a picture, and nothing more.

楯の火や糸取窓の影ぼうし
Hoda no hi ya itotori-mado no kagebōshi

A fire of dead twigs;
 The shadow on the paper window
 Of the woman spinning.

This also is very objective, for Issa, and of the same period of his life, the early thirties.

蚊を焼くや紙燭にうつる妹が貌
Ka wo yaku ya shishoku ni utsuru imo ga kao

Her face reflected
 In the oil of the lamp,
 Burning mosquitoes.

The woman and Issa are in the mosquito-net together. Some mosquitoes have also got in, and she is getting rid of them by burning them in the flame of the lamp, a paper wick burning in oil, which reflects the face of the holder.

雨垂の内外にむるゝ藪蚊哉
Amadare no uchito ni mururu yabu-ka kana

Rain leaking
 Inside and outside:
 Striped mosquitoes.

The Japanese is "grove-mosquitoes."

猪追ふや芒を走る夜の聲
Shishi ou ya susuki wo hashiru yoru no koe

Chasing the wild boar!
 Voices at night,
 Rushing through the pampas grass!

This is a remarkable verse for Issa. One would think it was by Buson. The sound alone gives us a much stronger impression than the sight of the scene could.

衣がへ替ても旅のしらみ哉
Koromogae kaete mo tabi no shirami kana

The change of clothes;
 Changed, yes,
 But the same lice of my journeying.

The first day of the Fourth Month (Lunar Calendar) was the day to change from winter to spring clothes. The most odious thing in the world (and the commonest) is self-pity. Issa is full of it, but somehow we do not feel it disagreeable. It is not merely through his humour. He objectifies himself, and blends the solemn and the gay, the tragic with the comic, and, above all, himself with other creatures also. He has no cant.

ふるさとに高き杉ありはつしぐれ
Furusato ni takaki sugi ari hatsu-shigure

The first winter shower:
The tall cedar trees
Of my native place.

Issa has returned home after a long absence. The first winter rain is falling, mingled with sleet. Before his house there is a shrine surrounded and overhung by huge, age-old cryptomeria trees. This sombre scene is the external aspect of the internal life of Issa, gloomy and foreboding, but deeply poetical.

我れ植ゑし松も老いけり秋の暮
Ware ueshi matsu mo oi keri aki no kure

The pine tree I planted,—
It too has aged,
This evening of autumn!

To feel one's own age in that of others is only less good than to feel that of others in our own.

川狩のうしろ明りの木立かな
Kawa-kari no ushiro-akari no kodachi kana

The "river-hunting":
Behind the wood,
The sky is light.

The "river-hunters" are fishermen with torches and a huge square net. The torches glow red against the dark forest, behind which again rises the faintly pale sky.

蚊を殺す紙燭にうつる白髪哉
Ka wo korosu shishoku ni utsuru shiraga kana

In the light of the taper
That burns up the mosquito,
The white head.

There is a contrasted harmony between the death of the mosquito and the old age of the man.

梅咲けど鶯鳴けどひとりかな
Ume sakedo uguisu nakedo hitori kana

The plum blooms,
 The nightingale sings,—
 But I am alone.

We may take this sentimentally, or as “No man liveth to himself.”

春の日や水さへあれば暮残り
Harunohi ya mizu sae areba kure nokori

A spring day;
 It draws to its close
 Wherever there is water.

Every puddle and ditch and paddy-field and river reflects the twilight. We may also translate it:

A day of spring;
 Twilight lingers
 Wherever there is water.

楯の火や目出度御代の顔と顔
Hoda no hi ya medetaki mi-yo no kao to kao

The brushwood fire;
 Faces together
 In these happy times.

When the brushwood is burning in the fireplace on New Year's Day, and we are warming ourselves all over at the hot, crackling flames, we feel our humanity as we look round at the glowing faces and gleaming eyes.

We live a common and close animal life together. This is especially so if we are not in financial straits, and the things of the world are not especially bad.

秋の風乞食は我を見くらぶる
Aki no kaze kojiki wa ware wo mi-kuraburu

The autumn wind blowing;
 A beggar looks at me,
 Making comparisons.

Blessed are the poor.

やぶかげも月さへさせば我家かな
Yabukage mo tsuki sae saseba wagaya kana

O'erhung by a grove,—
 But when the moon shines,
 My house!

The house is dark and damp, under the pines and other trees that over-hang it. But when the moon shines it is the house of a poet.

通りぬけゆるす寺なり春のてふ
Tori-nuke yurusu tera nari haru no chô

The temple
 That lets me take a short-cut through:
 A spring butterfly.

What Issa feels suddenly here is the accord between the often experienced freedom of passing unforbidden through the temple grounds, and the freedom of the season and of the wanton, irresponsible insect that flutters now before, now behind him.

佛法がなくば光らじ草の露
Buppō ga nakuba hikaraji kusa no tsuyu

Were it not for the Buddha-Law,
 The dew on the leaf
 Would not shine at all.

Every thing has a Buddhist meaning, a Buddhist form, a Buddhist colour, a Buddhist sparkle. The question is, what is the meaning of "Buddhist" here? Buddhist means human; human means divine; divine means poetical; poetical means meaningful.

木つゝきや一つ所に日の暮るゝ
Kitsutsuki ya hitotsu tokoro ni hi no kururu

The woodpecker,
 Still pecking at the same place;
 The day draws to its close.

There is a feeling here of the persistence of nature.

たゞ居れば居るとて雪のふりにけり
Tada oreba oru tote yuki no furi ni keru

Just being here,
 I am here,
 And the snow falls.

There is here a simplicity profounder than that attained by the simplest English poets, even by Wordsworth or Clare or Davies. It is approached only by Dorothy Wordsworth in her *Journals*.

今はれし雨とも見えてわらび哉
Ima hareshi ame tomo miete warabi kana

It must have rained
A little while before,—
These bracken sprouts!

On each of the young stalks of bracken hang drops of water from the rain that was falling a little while ago. The form of this verse is that of a logical deduction, but the meaning is rather that of recognition: "Yes, yes; it was raining just now, and here are these heads of *warabi* still holding the raindrops, some bright, some dark."

又人にかけて抜けけり秋の暮
Mata hito ni kake-nukare keru aki no kure

Again outdistanced
By other people:
Autumn evening.

Compare this with Bashō's well-known verse.

この道や行く人なしに秋の暮
Kono michi ya yuku hito nashi ni aki no kure

No one
Walks this road:
Autumn evening.

Bashō, far above pride or cynicism, is saying that the life of the poet is a solitary one; he lives and dies alone. Issa, more human, and not less divine, says that in everything, material and spiritual, he is outstripped by others. His whole life is a melancholy autumnal twilight.

古蓴祭の風のとどく也
Furu-mugura matsuri no kaze no todoku nari

The old goose grass;
The wind from the festival
Reaches it.

The goose grass is often found growing near ruined mansions, and is used as a kind of symbol of desolation. In this verse Issa seems to be feeling the contrast between the old and the new, the silent and the noisy, nature and man.

ひぐらしやきゅうりに明き湖の方
Higurashi ya kyū ni akaruki umi no kata

The lake
Is bright over there suddenly:
A *higurashi* sings.

The *higurashi* always sings suddenly, to our violent surprise, and in the dark shade of some lofty trees. In the distance, through a clearing, water is unexpectedly seen glittering in the last rays of the sunken sun. Light and darkness, sound and silence.

鶺鴒匠や鶺鴒を遊する草の花
U-dakumi ya u wo asobasuru kusa no hana

The cormorant-master
Lets the cormorants play,
Wild flowers blooming.

Usually the cormorants are madly swallowing and (forcibly) regurgitating the river fishes, or sleeping exhausted in their baskets, but today the cormorant-keeper has let them loose to swim and dabble in the mud and sand along the bank where all kinds of wild flowers reflect their joyful freedom.

雉子立って人驚かす枯野かな
Kiji tatte hito odorokasu kareno kana

The withered moor;
 A pheasant flew up,—
 And surprised me!

Issa had a slightly disagreeable shock, but at the same moment felt a certain unwilling closeness and familiarity to the bird.

赤蜻蛉かれも夕が好ぢゃやら
Akatombo kare mo yūbe ga suki ja yara

The red dragon-fly,—
 Somehow or other,
 He likes the evening too.

De gustibus non est disputandum.

露ちるや後生大事に鳴く雀
Tsuyu chiru ya goshō daiji ni naku suzume

The dew scatters;
 Sparrows chirp
 Of the Great Thing of the Next World.

“How all occasions do inform against me.”

露ほろりほろりと鳩の念佛哉
Tsuyu horori-horori to hatsu no nebutsu kana

Softly fall the dews,
 While the doves murmur
 Their Namu-namu.

Nature has everything in it, even the piety of faith with its Namuamidabutsu.

涼風はあなた任せぞ墓の松
Suzukaze wa anata makase zo haka no matsu

The cool breeze;
 Not my will be done;
 The grave under the pine-tree.

One is good; the other is bad; what is the sum of good added to bad? We must submit to One who can do Arithmetic better than we can.

露の世の露の中にて喧嘩かな
Tsuyu no yo no tsuyu no naka nite kenka kana

A world of short-lived dew,
 And in that dew-drop,—
 What violent quarrels!

If only I could remember this the next time!

名月や今日はあなたも大急ぎ
Meigetsu ya kyō wa anata mo ō-isogi

Ah! bright autumn moon!
 Today you also
 Are in a hurry.

More than the serenity of the radiant moon Issa feels its impermanence, and ours. `

寝筵にさっと時雨の明り哉
Nemushiro ni satto shigure no akari kana

A sudden winter shower—
 I on my sleeping mat—
 It lightens up.

Issa was forty eight when he wrote this, still living a

wandering life. The rush-mat used for sleeping on in summer he is still using in winter. When the rain falls suddenly and heavily, the “candles” of the raindrops make it a little lighter.

梟や螢螢をよぶやうに
Fukurō ya hotaru hotaru wo yobu yō ni

The owls seem to be calling
 “Hotaru! Hotaru!”
 To the fireflies.

When catching fireflies Japanese call to them, half-thinking they may come and be caught.

用なしは我と葎ぞ時鳥
Yō nashi wa ware to mugura zo hototogisu

The hototogisu is singing;
 I have nothing special to do,
 Nor has the burweed.

To parody Confucius, if we not hear the hototogisu in the morning, we may die in the evening without regret.

古郷やよるもさはるも茨の花
Furusato ya yoru mo sawaru mo bara no hana

My old home;
 Getting near, or touching it,
 Flowers of the thorny briar.

This verse was written when on his way back to Edo after trying to get his patrimony from his step-brother. It applies not only to him but also to those of his household and supporting friends. The actual difficulty was not a legal one, but arising from the fact that Issa had been

so long away from his native place.

花咲くや欲のうき世の片隅に
Hana saku ya yoku no ukiyo no katasumi ni

Cherry blossoms are blooming
 In a corner of this transitory world,
 Full of greed and egoism.

Issa never forgot two things: the world is good, the world is no good.

老ぬれば只蚊をやくを手がら哉
Oi-nureba tada ka wo yaku wo tegara kana

When we get old,
 Burning mosquitoes
 Is all we can brag about.

We are born; we brag; we die.

世の中や蝶のくらしも忙がしき
Yo no naka ya chō no kurashi mo isogashiki

In this world of ours,
 Even butterflies are busy
 Making a living.

Issa deprecates his "Asiatic" character. It interesting to contrast this with what Thoreau says in his Journal, 27th of June, 1840, the same thing, but with an opposite conclusion:

The farmer is plowing in yonder field, craftsmen are busy in the shops, the trader stands behind the counter, all works go steadily forward. But I will have nothing to do; I will tell fortune that I play no game with her,

and she may reach me in my Asia of serenity and
indolence if she can,

子ありてや橋の乞食もよぶ螢
Ko arite ya hashi no kojiki mo yobu hotaru

The beggar on the bridge also
Calls to the fireflies:
He has a child.

Children are hostages to morality and poetry.

生残り生残りたる寒さ哉
Ikinokori ikinokoritaru samusa kana

Outliving them,
Outliving them all,—
Ah, the cold!

This was written when Issa's wife died, he being 61.
His fourth child had died just before, and he himself was
stricken with the palsy.

ゆさゆさと春が行ぞよのべの草
Yusa-yusa to haru ga yuku zo yo nobe no kusa

Spring is departing,
Swaying, undulating,
Over the grasses of the moor.

To regret the departure of spring, the coming of summer, the passing of time,—is not this to grieve at the *Natura Rerum*? In this opposing to nature our deeper nature we see the essence of humanity.

夕空や蚊の鳴出してうつくしき
Yūzora ya ka no naki-dashite utsukushiki

The sky of evening,—
 When the gnats begin to mourn,—
 How lovely it all is!

When barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day....

これがまあ終の栖か雪五尺
Kore ga mā tsui no sumika ka yuki goshaku

Is this, then,
 My home for life,
 Five feet of snow?

He left his native place at 14 years of age. After more than 30 years he came back in December, 50 years old. Even now he must live as a lodger in his own house, but he decides to live and die here.

世の中は地獄の上の花見哉
Yo no naka wa jigoku no ue no hanami kana

In this world of ours,
 We walk on the roof of Hell,
 Gazing at the flowers.

Happiness is impossible without forgetting.

初蟬といへば小便したりけり
Hatsu-semi to ieba shōben shitari keru

“The first cicada!”
 He said,—
 And piddled.

This verse is excellent when we know it is by Issa, but from Bashō it would be dirty, and from Buson ugly, and from Shiki pretentious. Here Issa's (philosophical)

subject is the meaningfulness of accident, and also the difference (sound and water) of the same extrusion of something.

山人は鋤を枕や鳴雲雀
Yama-bito wa kuwa wo makura ya naku hibari

The mountain villager
 Makes his mattock his pillow,
 Skylarks singing.

The mountains, the spring sky, over them, the skylarks singing from it, a small field half-dug, a man asleep with his head on his hoe,—what more is needed? The answer is, Issa.

水鶏鳴くひょうしに雲が急ぐぞよ
Kuina naku hyōshi ni kumo ga isogu zo yo

The moor-hens are chirping,
 And to their beat
 The clouds are hurrying, hurrying!

This is of course quite subjective, but “by indirections we find directions out,” “your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth,” and we see the clouds and hear the water-birds objectively, to speak more exactly, poetically, that is, objective-subjectively.

朝顔の花で葺いたる庵かな
Asagao no hana de fuitaru iori kana

My hut!
 Thatched with the flowers
 Of the morning glory.

Thoreau would have enjoyed such an experience, and

might have moralised, austere, on the capricious benevolence of nature.

其石が天窓あぶないとぶ螢
Sono ishi ga atama abunai tobu hotaru

That stone!
 Mind you don't bump your heads on it,
 Flitting fireflies!

As said just before, there is often more poetry in fancy than in (intellectual) imagination.

三日月とそりがあふやら時鳥
Mikazuki to sori ga au yara hototogisu

A crescent moon,
 And getting along with it
 A hototogisu.

Soriau means "to be in harmony with," literally "to curve in the same way." The hototogisu and the crescent moon hit it off together, because the one is in sound what the other is in shape.

雁わやわやおれが噂を致すかな
Kari waya-wayā ore ga uwasa wo itasu kana

The wild geese are vociferating,
 Each one spreading
 His own rumour.

Do birds listen to each other? Do men? Each tells his own piece of gossip on the radio, in the newspaper, to his own circle, in the book he writes, but....

霞む日の咄するやら野邊の馬
Kasumu hi no uwasa suru yara nobe no uma

A day of mist;
 The horses on the moor
 Are talking to one another, and

When a group of horses hold their heads low, they
 look as if gossiping.

永の日を喰ふや喰はずや池の亀
Naga no hi wo kū ya kuwazu ya ike no kame

The tortoises are eating,
 Or not eating,
 These long spring days.

We cannot tell if they feed or not, just we cannot know
 whether people are being poetical or not.

麥の穂も朝きげんぞよ春霞
Mugi no ho mo asa-kigen zo yo haru-gasumi

The ears of barley, too,—
 They got out of bed the right side
 This morning of spring mist!

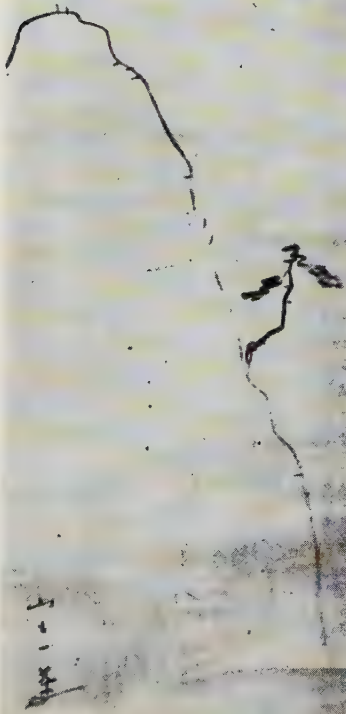
The plant world is not excluded from emotion and
 mood.

蟬が髭をかつぎて鳴にけり
Kōrogi ga hige wo katsugite naki ni keri

The grasshopper
 Shoulders his whiskers
 And sings.

Human singers seem not to have beards usually.

山門
高
山
門
高
山
門
高
山
門
高



Chapter XXI

ISSA II (50 to 60, 1812-1822)

In this period, 1812-1818, there are many verses on plants and the smaller creatures. It is interesting to think that lions and tigers, even dogs and cats, do not go into poetry so easily as snails and caterpillars. There seems to be a rule: "We needs must love the lowest when we see it." Old chaos and dark night is what we came from, and what we (want to) return to. The ugly, the formless and shapeless, the grisly and monstrous are profoundly attractive. Haiku does not go so far back. But slugs and flies, fleas and mosquitoes have also a homeliness that we need as much as the primitive. Issa himself has now reached this balanced condition.

蚤蠅にあなどられつつけふも暮ぬ
Nomi hae ni anadoraretsutsu kyo mo kurenu

Despised and treated with contumely
By fleas and flies,
Today also has drawn to its close.

It is not only human beings who are insolent.

だまれ蟬今髭どのがござるぞよ
Damare semi ima hige-dono ga gozaru zo yo

Say nothing, cicada!
Milord Whiskers
Is here present.

Is not this the best way, indeed the only way, to deal

with the terrors of life and death?

前の世のおれがいとか閑古鳥
Mae no yo no ore ga itoko ka kankodori

Was I not perhaps
 Your cousin in a former life,
 Cuckoo?

The world had to wait a little longer, until 1859 to be precise, to know that this is scientifically as well as poetically true.

大井川見えてそれから雲雀哉
Ōigawa miete sore kara hibari kana

The River Ōi appears
 And then, after that,
 Skylarks.

The Ōi River, often portrayed in ukiyoe, was a wide river, not deep at ordinary times, running through a wide valley. A vast stretch of sand and water can be seen, and besides that only skylarks high above.

かまくらや昔どなたの千代椿
Kamakura ya mukashi donata no chiyotsubaki

Kamakura; long, long ago,
 Aged camellia,
 Whose tree were you?

Issa felt strongly the folly of possession, of attachment to things and people.

雪ちるやきのふは見えぬ借家札
Yuki chiru ya kinō wa mienu shakuya fuda

Snow fluttering down;
 A "To Let" sign up,
 Not seen yesterday.

This verse expresses not only the financial urgency at the end of the year, but the impermanence of all things. One day the universe itself will be "To Let".

長いぞよ夜が長いぞよなむあみだ
Nagai zo yo yo ga nagai zo yo namuamida

Long the night!
 The night is long!
 、 Namuamidabutsu!

To wake at night, to be imprisoned in darkness, to be buried alive,—there remains only Namuamidabutsu! Thy will be done!

あこが餅あこが餅とて並べけり
Ako ga mochi ako ga mochi tote narabe keru

"This is sonny-boy's rice-cake,
 This is sonny-boy's rice-cake too."
 Piling them up.

This verse was written in 1813, when Issa was fifty, and still unmarried. We see from this how fond Issa must have been of children and home life. The mother is piling up the rice-cakes, and the child, four or five years old, is watching eagerly. To calm his over-anxious feelings she says, "This one is yours; this one is yours too," and so on.

菊さくや馬糞山も一けしき
Kiku saku ya maguso yama mo hito-keshiki

Chrysanthemums bloom,
And make, with the dung-heap,
A single picture.

As Thoreau says, "The squeaking of the pump (here, intestinal) sounds as necessary as the music of the spheres."

我宿や鼠と仲のよい螢
Waga yado ya nezumi to naka no yoi hotaru

In our house
The mice are friendly
With the fireflies.

The struggle for existence sometimes ceases for a while.

木母寺や犬が呼んでも来る螢
Mokubo-ji ya inu ga yonde mo kuru hotaru

Mokuboji Temple:
Even when the dog calls,
The fireflies come!

There are so many.

戸口までついと枯込む野原かな
Toguchi made tsui to kare-komu nohara kana

The plain extends,
Withering away,
Up to the very door.

This house has no gate, no fence, no garden, grass to the doorstep, desolation surrounding the frail works of man.

行先も只秋風ぞ小順禮
Yukusaki mo tada akikaze zo kojunrei

Where you are going,
 Little pilgrim?
 To where autumn winds blow.

Issa sees a young boy on a pilgrimage, walking along the road between the autumn fields. To what place he is going Issa knows not, but he is walking towards suffering and illness and death, towards the autumn of the world, where cold winds blow, as they are blowing today. Christina Rossetti's *Up-Hill* has the same fatal tone:

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
 Yes, to the very end.

隣からいぶし出されし藪蚊哉
Tonari kara ibushi-dasareshi yabu-ka kana

Smoked out
 From next door,
 These striped mosquitoes!

How can we love our neighbours?

子子や日にいく度のうきしづみ
Bōfura ya hi ni iku-tabi no uki-shizumi

Mosquito larva,—
 How many times do you go
 Up and down a day?

でで虫や赤い花には目もかけず
Dedemushi ya akai hana ni wa me mo kakezu

The snail;
 It does not even glance
 At the scarlet flower.

There are many human snails.

露散るや地獄の種を今日もまく
Tsuyu chiru ya jigoku no tane wo kyo mo maku

The dew is scattered,
 And today once more
 The seeds of Hell are sown.

Look at the faces of men and women; pride, greed,
 vanity, stupidity, vulgarity, cruelty; look at the news-
 papers; read history!

白歌を聞々並ぶ乙鳥かな
Usu-uta wo kiki-kiki narabu tsubakura kana

Swallows,
 Listening to the mortar-song,
 In a row.

This verse shows not only Issa's love of the weaker
 creature, but his peaceful feeling on settling down at last
 in his native place.

雀らよ小便無用古衾
Suzumera yo shoben muyō furu-fusuma

Commit no nuisance,
 You sparrows,
 On our old bedding!

Speaking *to* things rather than *of* things is the con-
 versation of poets.

我里はどう霞んでもいびつなり
Waga sato wa dō kasunde mo ibitsu nari

However hazy it is,
 My village
 Still looks warped and crooked.

When most villages are covered with mist or haze, they look more poetical and picturesque, but Issa's "home town" cannot hide its inherent meanness and perversity.

只頼め頼めと露のこぼれけり
Tada tanome tanome to tsuyu no kobore keri

"Just ask, just ask!"
 Says the dew,
 And rolls away.

We must ask things to be what they are, and what they will be. Like the dew, we too must roll away for ever and ever, amen.

一本の草も涼風やどりけり
Ippon no kusa mo suzukaze yadori keri

The cool breeze
 Takes up its abode
 Even in a single blade of grass.

This is a scene of Zen.

古郷やちいさいがおれが夏木立
Furusato ya chiisai ga ore ga natsu-kodachi

My native place;
 Small though they be,
 All the groves are mine!

秋風やひよろひよろ山の影法師
Akikaze ya hyoro-hyoro yama no kagebōshi

The autumn wind;
 The shadow of the mountain
 Trembles.

The immovable mountain, with its immovable shadow,
—but as Galileo said, “It moves!” Nothing is immovable,
nothing is infinite or eternal, nobody is omnipotent or
omniscient.

馬の草喰ふ音してとぶ螢
Uma no kusa kurau oto shite tobu hotaru

The fireflies flit
To the sound of the horse
Munching grass.

The pleasure of the eye, the pleasure of the ear.

はつ螢都の空はきたないぞ
Hatsu-hotaru miyako no sora wa kitanai zo

First firefly!
The sky of the capital
Is dirty, you know!

This is not scientific, but poetic dirt.

畠うちの眞似をして歩く鴉かな
Hata-uchi no mane wo shite aruku karasu kana

The crow
Walks along there
As though tilling the field.

Actually he is pulling things out instead of putting
them in, but in the universe there is no up and down,
and therefore no in and out.

蝸牛見よ見よ己が影法師
Katatumuri mi yo mi yo ono ga kage-bōshi

Look snail,
 Look, O look,
 At your own shadow!

Cowper reminds us how grotesque the human shadow is, but so is a snail's.

方々から叩き出されて来る蚊哉
Hōbo kara tataki-dasarete kuru ka kana

Swatted out
 From everywhere else,
 The mosquitoes come here.

But Issa did not altogether dislike mosquitoes, as we see from the following:

蚊柱や是もなければ小淋しき
Ka-bashira ya kore mo nakereba ko-sabishiki

Columns of mosquitoes;
 But without these also,—
 A little lonely.

Without all the evil in the world,—very lonely.

辻堂を蚤蚊に借りて寝たりけり
Tsujidō wo nomi ka ni karite netari keru

I borrowed the wayside shrine
 From the fleas and mosquitoes,
 And went to sleep.

There is also a variant form:

草庵は蚤蚊にかりて寝たりけり
Sō-an wa nomi ka ni karite netari keru

I borrowed my cottage
 From the fleas and mosquitoes
 And slept.

追な追な追な子どもよ子持蚤
Ou na ou na ou na kodomo yo komochi-nomi

Children! Children!
 Don't catch the flea
 With children!

What has God to say to this verse?

一ぱしの面魂やかたつむり
Ippashi no tsura-damashii ya katatsumuri

Like others,
 It has a plucky look,
 This snail!

This is perhaps an existentialist verse.

田植唄どんな恨みも盡きぬべし
Taue-uta donna urami mo tsukinu beshi

The rice-planting song;
 It tells of everything,
 Of every woe.

Ancient songs have in them the sorrows and fears of
 all generations, and we hear our own in them.

藪陰やたった一人の田植唄
Yabu kage ya tatta hitori no taue-uta

In the shadow of the copse
 A solitary woman,
 Singing the rice-planting song.

“Will no one tell me what she sings?” Wordsworth says, romantically. Issa tells us, realistically, but the solitariness of both is the same, emphasised here not by the repetition of “solitary”, “single”, “only”, “one”, but by the shadow of the autumnal trees.

らふそくでたばこ吸けり時鳥
Rōsoku de tabako sui keru hototogisu

Lighting my pipe
 At the candle-flame,—
 A hototogisu sings!

Compare Kusatao, 草田男:

燭の火を煙草火としつチエホフ忌
Shoku no hi wo tabako-bi to shitsu Chiehofu-ki

Lighting the cigarette
 At the candle-light:
 Anniversary of Chekov's death.

我菊や形にもふりにもかまはずに
Waga kiku ya nari ni mo furi ni mo kamawazu ni

My Kiku
 Doesn't care tuppence
 How she looks!

This is Issa's wife, a poet's wife, more poetical than the poet himself, unless, like Issa, he knows it.

とびひよろひいよろ神のお發ちげな
Tobi hyoro-hiyoro kami no o-tachi ge na

The kites cry
 Hyoro-hyoro!
 The gods are leaving.

The cry of the kites sounds like the piercing, melancholy sound of the flutes blown when the god is being taken from one place to another.

鶯や雨だらけなる朝の聲
Uguisu ya ame-darake naru asa no koe

The uguisu,
 Its morning voice
 Drenched with rain.

The function of a poet is to join what God has divided, morning, bird, voice, rain.

留守にするぞ戀して遊べ庵の蠅
Rusu ni suru zo koi shite asobe iwo no hae

I'm going out now,
 So enjoy yourselves making love,
 Flies of my hut!

This is more Christian than Christ, more Buddhist than Buddha, more human than man.

来る螢おれが庵とあなどるか
Kuru hotaru ore ga iori to anadoru ka

Fireflies
 That come to my cottage,—
 You despise it?

The fact that they don't shows the superiority of fireflies over human beings.

出よ螢錠をおろすぞ出よ螢
De yo hotaru jō wo orosu zo de yo hotaru

Come out fireflies!
I'm going to lock up,—
Do come out!

Nobody but Issa can say this kind of thing without affectation.

翁忌や何やらしやべる門雀
Okina ki ya naniyara shaberu kado-suzume

Bashō's Commemoration Day:
The sparrows at the gate
Are chattering something.

This verse is obscure, unlike most of Issa's, but perhaps means that what the sparrows are saying to one another, the simple voice of nature, is what Bashō himself always tended to say.

人の世に田に作らるゝ蓮の花
Hito no yo ni ta ni tsukuraruru hasu no hana

In this world of men,
The flowers of the lotus
Are made into a field.

Give us this day our daily lotus-root.

我庵は草も夏瘦せしたりけり
Waga io wa kusa mo natsuyase shitari keru

Round my hut,
Even grasses
Suffer from summer thinness.

Nature is no different from human nature,—this is perhaps the most comforting of all thoughts for us in this vale of tears.

むだ草や汝ものびる日ものびる
Muda-gusa ya nanji mo nobiru hi mo nobiru

Useless grasses,
 You also are increasing,
 The sun too.

For Nature, the word "useful" has no meaning.

人間がなくば曲らじ菊の花
Ningen ga nakuba magaraji kiku no hana

Were it not for men,
 Chrysanthemums
 Would not be bent and twisted.

Chrysanthemum plants are artificially forced into all kinds of shapes. They are straight and upright by nature, like nature.

釣人の邪魔を折々櫻哉
Tsuri-bito no jama wo oriori sakura kana

The cherry-blossoms
 Keep on getting in the way
 Of the angler.

This is a very poetical fisherman, who can't concentrate on fishing because the flowers are so beautiful.

鶯も添て五文の茶代哉
Uguisu mo soete gommon no chadai kana

Together with the uguisu,
 The price of the tea
 Is five mon.

Beauty has its price too; it costs money to go to Heaven.

君なくてまことに多大の木立哉
Kimi nakute makoto ni tadai no kodachi kana

Without you, in truth,
Too many and too wide
Are the groves.

Adam cannot possibly live, even in Paradise, without
Eve.

Chapter XXII

ISSA III

The following verses, published between 1818 and 1822, are almost all on insects and snails and birds and so on, —not that Issa wrote only on such subjects, but because his best verses seem to me to have been written on such subjects. Without any theory on the matter, Issa became a real friend of all kinds of creeping things. He did not, like St. Francis, have the effrontery to preach to them,—rather, they preached to him. He learned from them how to live, as Shelley did from his skylark, and Hardy from the darkling thrush, and from the insects of *An Autumn Midnight*.

闇より闇に入るや猫の戀
Kuraki yori kuraki ni iru ya neko no koi

Out from the dark
Into the dark,—
Loves of the cat!

In *Bliss*:

Down below, in the garden beds, the red and yellow tulips, heavy with flowers, seemed to lean upon the dusk. A grey cat, dragging its belly, crept across the lawn, and a black one, its shadow, trailed after.

~ そこにいよ下手でもおれが鶯ぞ
Soko ni i yo heta de mo ore ga uguisu zo

Don't go away!
 Poor singer though you may be,
 You're my nightingale, mine!

Possession of things is impossible, and the desire to possess is (Buddhist) sin, because it is folly, but do we not pray "Our Father"?

ばか長い日やと口あく鳥哉
Baka-nagai hi ya to kuchi aku karasu kana

"It's silly for the day to be so long!"
 Says the crow,
 Opening its mouth.

This kind of animistic humour we find in Hardy.

旅人の悪口すなり初時雨
Tabibito no akkō su nari hatsu-shigure

The first winter shower
 Speaks ill
 Of the traveller.

The rain tells the traveller not to be a fool, to go back home, and stop there till the spring comes again.

梅咲や地獄の釜も休日と
Ume saku ya jigoku no kama mo kyūjitsu to

When the plum trees bloom,
 The cauldrons of Hell
 Have a rest that day.

This is not true; they never rest, but sometimes, even the most masochistic people, even Hamlet and Issa, forget them.

小便のたらたら下や杜若
Shōben no tara-tara shita ya kakitsubata

Just below the pissing,
 Drip, drip, drip,—
 Iris flowers!

This is one of the best haiku ever written. It has everything in it. It overflows, overflows.

さむしろや鍋にすぢかふ天の川
Samushiro ya nabe ni sujikau ama-no-gawa

A straw-mat;
 The Milky Way aslant
 In the saucepan.

The greatness of Issa consists in his putting the Galaxy into the stew-pot.

小島にも畠打也鳴雲雀
Kojima ni mo hatake utsu nari naku hibari

Even on the smallest island
 They are tilling the fields,
 Skylarks singing.

There is something comforting to our lonely minds when we see human beings everywhere, even in the most unexpected places.

あばれ蚊に珠數をふりふり回向哉
Abare-ka ni juzu wo furi-furi ekō kana

The requiem mass;
 Brandishing the rosary
 At the spirited mosquitoes.

A man's religion may be, and should be gauged by his attitude to mosquitoes. D. H. Lawrence's view of life, or rather, way of life, can be seen in his *Man and Mosquito*.

膝抱いて羅漢顔して秋の暮
Hiza daite rakan-gao shite aki no kure

Holding my knees in my arms,
 Looking like a Rakan,
 This autumn evening.

The relation of the Rakan, or Arhan, one of the (five hundred) disciples of Buddha, to autumn is interesting.

子をかぐす藪の廻りや鳴雲雀
Ko wo kakusu yabu no mawari ya naku hibari

The skylark chirps
 Round the copse
 Where her young ones are hidden.

What is striking in this verse is the onomatopoeia, the assonance of *ka, ya, ma, wa, na, ba*; the rhyme of *mawari, hibari, kaku, naku*; and the *ya . . . ya* of the second line.

初蟬のうきを見ん見んみいんかな
Hatsu-semi no uki wo min-min mi-in kana

The first cicada:
 "Mean, mean is the world!
 Mean! Mean! Mean!"

The word "mean" here is used both onomatopoeically and in the American sense of disagreeable, ill-natured. *Uki wo min* seems to signify, "I will look at the wretchedness of this world."

百舌の聲かんにん袋きれたりな
Mozu no koe kanninbukuro kiretari na

At the cry of the shrike,
 The strings of the bag of patience
 Snap.

The shrike has the sharpest, shriekiest voice of all birds. When it cries so suddenly and tensely, we feel that it is the voice of unendurability, unbearableness; even nature cannot stand itself sometimes.

魚どもや桶とも知らで門涼み
Uodomo ya oke to mo shirade kado-suzumi

The fish in the evening—
 Not knowing it's a butt they're in—
 Cooling at the gate.

It is odd that Issa should write this, and then eat them.

み佛や寝ておはしても花と錢
Mihotoke ya nete owashite mo hana to zeni

The Holy Buddha
 Lies sleeping in Nirvana,—
 But the flowers and the money!

The Buddha is supposed to have entered Nirvana on the 15th day of the Second Month according to the old calendar. There is a service at the temple, and many people attend and make offerings of cash. Outside, the cherry blossoms are at their best. The world of religion and the worldly world never coincide.

重箱の錢四五文や夕時雨
Jūbako no zeni shi-go-mon ya yū-shigure

A begging-box,
With four or five halfpennies in it:
Cold rain in the evening.

This was composed in winter at the gate of Zenkōji Temple. It is growing dark, and rain is falling. A beggar sits there at the temple gate, his box before him, a few halfpence in it, the proceeds of one day's begging.

萍の花からのらんあの雲へ
Ukigusa no hana kara noran ano kumo e

Let's ride
On the duck-weed flowers
To the clouds over there.

Over a marsh the clouds often look low as they lie on the horizon. The flowers of the water-weed seem as if leading us towards them. We see here Issa's practical, pessimistic soul yearning for infinity and eternity. He so rarely makes it explicit, it is all the more impressive.

みじか夜やあかい花さくつるのさき
Mijika-yo ya akai hana saku tsuru no saki

The short night:
A scarlet flower has bloomed
At the tip of the vine.

When Issa got up early in the summer morning and went out into the garden, this bright red flower gave him a vivid impression of the power of nature, that can produce such a wonderful thing in almost no time out of almost nothing.

なぐさみに藁を打也夏の月
Nagusami ni wara wo utsu nari natsu no tsuki

Beating straw
 As a diversion:
 The summer moon.

He had no special need to bruise the straw, but, invited by the brightness of the summer moon, he went outside and enjoyed both the moonlight and the monotony of the sound of the mallet.

初瓜を引とらまへて寝た子哉
Hatsu-uri wo hittoramaete neta ko kana

The sleeping child,
 Holding on fast
 To the first melon.

“The first melon” means the first melon of the season.

能なしは罪も又なし冬籠
Nō-nashi wa tsumi mo mata nashi fuyu-gomori

No talents,
 And so no sin:
 Winter confinement.

This does not refer to some state of innocence, but to a condition of spiritual hybernation, in which Issa has no virtue to exercise, and no chance to be bad. No radio, no newspaper, no visitors, no beggars, no letters, no work. Life lives on lifelessly.

今までは罰もあたらず晝寝蚊屋
Ima made wa bachi mo atarazu hirune kaya

Divine punishment—

Napping in the day-time in a mosquito net—
Has not fallen on me yet.

To do something wrong, have the pleasure and profit of it, and not to suffer the consequences,—can anything be better?

夕霧や馬の覚えし橋の穴
Yū-giri ya uma no oboeshi hashi no ana

A hole in the bridge;
The horse remembers it,
In the evening mist.

Issa was a good poet, and for that reason would have been good at anything else, for example, looking after a horse.

さを鹿や舐ひしてなめる今朝の霜
Saoshika ya eishite nameru kesa no shimo

The does
Are licking one another,
This morning of frost.

Deer are very unfriendly though beautiful animals, but Issa here forgets his usual irony, and sees or imagines the graceful creatures comforting each other this morning of first frost. It is the world of nature, without humanity, but not altogether without love.

椽の蠅手をする所を打れけり
En no hae te wo suru toko wo utare keri

The fly on the verandah;
Just as it was rubbing its beseeching hands,—
Killed!

Issa did not take this as a parable of human beings.

けふの日も棒ふり虫と暮にけり
Kyō no hi mo bōfuri-mushi to kure ni keru

Today also—
 Together with the mosquito larvae—
 Draws to its close.

After all, a mosquito larva makes as good a friend as anyone else. "Most friendship is feigning." Most means 99%.

憂き世とてあんな小鳥も巢を作る
Ukiyo tote anna kotori mo su wo tsukuru

In this fleeting world
 Even that little bird
 Makes himself a nest.

This verse may be taken with the next:

それがしも宿なしに候秋の暮
Soregashi mo yado nashi ni soro aki no kure

I too
 Have no dwelling place,
 This autumn evening.

Issa also is a Son of Man.

遠山が目玉にうつる蜻蛉かな
Tō-yama ga medama ni utsuru tombo kana

The distant mountains
 Are reflected in the pupils
 Of the dragonfly.

This is an exceedingly minute observation, and a beautiful one, and beside this there is the remarkable unification of insect and mountain.

長生の蠅や蚤蚊や貧乏村
Naga-iki no hae ya nomi ka ya binbo-mura

Long-living flies,
 Fleas, and mosquitoes,—
 A poor village.!

Poverty is dirt, and dirt means all kinds of parasites which flourish and multiply their species and live in comfort. One creature's meat is another creature's poison.

仰のけに落ちて鳴けり秋の蟬
Aonoke ni ochite naki keri aki no semi

Falling upside down,
 It sang its song,
 The autumn cicada.

This looks a very simple verse, and so it is, but it involves many things. There is first of all the will of life to continue literally to its last gasp. Then there is the fact that nature itself is often unnatural. As Emerson says,

A spell is laid on sòd and stone.

Further, cicadas of autumn sing more feebly and hesitantly as the season draws on. This is shown quite ludicrously in the undignified posture of the cicada. We see it with equal indirectness in the following verse by Songi, 存義:

二つ居て一つは鳴かず秋の蟬
Futatsu ite hitotsu wa nakazu aki no semi

There were two there;
 One didn't sing.
 Cicadas of autumn.

穂芒のあをり出さるる踊かな
Ho-susuki no aori-dasaruru odori kana

The pampas grass plumes,
 Fanned out
 By the dancing.

We can see how Issa strove to enter into the being of things and express their real nature.

松の木も老の仲間ぞ秋の暮
Matsu no ki mo oi no nakama zo aki no kure

This autumn evening
 The pine trees too
 Are companions of old age.

When we are young, pine trees are things to use as a wicket, or to climb; later in life, as artistic and interesting parts of the landscape; in old age we feel, as Lear did towards the heavens, that they too are old. And particularly as the year wears on apace and evenings grow darker, the never-cheerful, age-old trees are seen in their true character.

孤の我は光らぬ螢かな
Minashigo no ware wa hikaranu hotaru kana

Orphaned I,
 A fire-fly
 That shines not.

Issa's haiku are on the whole easy for ordinary people

to comprehend, but at some periods of his life he wrote verses that need a certain amount of study in order to understand. This one is connected with the *Genji Monogatari*. Prince Genji also, like Issa, lost his mother, Kiritsubo, when he was young, but unlike Issa he was Hikaru (Shining) Genji, born with a silver spoon in his mouth, the son of an emperor.

初螢なせ引返すおれだぞよ
Hatsu-botaru naze hiki-kaesu ore da zo yo

The first firefly!
 Why do you turn back?
 It is me, you silly!

This is the sort of thing we all feel, all day long, but only Issa expresses it.

我が袖を草と思ふかはふ螢
Waga sode wo kusa to omou ka hau hotaru

My sleeve,—
 Do you think it is the grass,
 Creeping firefly?

When I read this verse, I think that Issa is the greatest poet in the world. But what is “great”?

でで虫の其身其まま寝起哉
Dedemushi no sono mi sono mama neoki kana

The snail
 Goes to bed and gets up
 Just as he is.

It is indeed not clear to me why human beings wash themselves, and have baths.

ことしからまる儲ぞよ娑婆の空
Kotoshi kara marumōke zo yo shaba no sora

From this year
 It's all clear profit,—
 This worldly sky!

Issa was now fifty years old. Whatever joys his life had so far held for him, they had been earned by fifty years of hardship. From now on, the beautiful sky of the new year and the sky of every day until he died would be a joy granted as an extra by God. And yet at the same time, the sky is not that of Paradise, but of this worldly world of ours.

極樂が近くなる身の寒さかな
Gokuraku ga chikaka naru mi no samusa kana

Getting nearer
 And nearer Paradise,
 And oh the cold!

Issa knew better than anyone else that blessedness and happiness are seldom found together. As we get older, even the physical pleasures get less, and the physical pains increase in quantity if not in quality.

もろ蟬やもろ雨垂や大御堂
Moro-zemi ya moro-amadare ya ōmidō

All kinds of cicadas singing,
 All kinds of rain-drops dripping;
 The great Buddhist Hall.

Buddhism is one; the world is many. No philosopher has yet found out how one becomes many, and yet remains one.

口明て蠅を追ふ也門の犬
Kuchi aite hae wo ou nari kado no inu

The dog at the gate
 Is chasing a fly,
 Opening his mouth.

The dog looks as foolish as people do in the same circumstances.

子子の念佛おどりや墓の水
Bōfura no nembutsu-odori ya haka no mizu

The mosquito larvae
 Are dancing the Nembutsu
 In the water of the tomb.

They go up and down like the heads of the genuflecting worshippers.

茨垣犬の上手にもぐりけり
Ibara-gaki inu no jōzu ni moguri keru

A fence of briars and brambles;
 How cleverly
 The dog crawls under it!

The Japanese word *moguru* is more expressive than the English "creep under". In the sound of it we can see the flattening of the front part of the dog's body, then the wriggling of the middle, and last the odd contortions of the back legs as they are pulled through. Animals can do so many things that the lords of creation cannot.

なきながら蟲の流るゝ浮木かな
Naki-nagara mushi no nagaruru ukigi kana

Insects on a bough
 Floating down the river,
 Still singing.

This verse reminds one of Katherine Mansfield's story, *Bliss*, with its meaning of "Ignorance is bliss", or as it may be more properly formulated, "Bliss is ignorance", in the sense that the insects sing as we do, because they and we do not realise that every song is a requiem.

はつ雪や一の寶の古尿瓶
Hatsu-yuki ya ichi no takara no furu-shibin

The first snow:
 My greatest treasure,—
 This old chamber-pot.

This was written in 1822, five years before his death in 1827. When he saw the first flakes of snow falling, the palsy-stricken poet realised that the body is more important than the mind, and prayed as he was taught to by experience, "Give us this day our daily chamber-pot."

新疊蚤の飛ぶ音さはさはし
Shin-datami nomi no tobu oto sawa-sawa shi

On the new tatami,
 The hopping fleas
 Fidget and rustle.

The new straw-mats are dry and taut, so the fleas can be heard.

そよ風は蟬の聲より起る哉
Soyo-kaze wa semi no koe yori okoru kana

The gentle breeze
Arises from the crying
Of the cicada.

This is a kind of "metaphysical" verse.

寝た人を晝飯くひに來た蚊哉
Neta hito wo hiru-meshi kui ni kita ka kana

The mosquitoes!
They have come for their lunch
To the man having a nap.

To be the lunch of mosquitoes and parasites and bacteria and finally grave-worms is our fate, it seems.

なぐさみに猫がとる也窓の蠅
Nagusami ni neko ga toru nari mado no hae

As a diversion,
The cat is catching
The flies in the window.

I suppose boredom is one of the reasons why people go hunting; it is certainly the chief cause of war.

とく逃よにげよ打たれなそこの蠅
Toku nige yo nige yo utare na soko no hae

Off with you!
Off with you! Don't get killed,
You fly there!

Everyone has a tendency to support the weaker side.

人の世や山松陰も蚤がすむ
Hito no yo ya yama matsu-kage mo nomi ga sumu

This world of ours!
 Beneath mountains and pine-trees,
 There too fleas are dwelling.

However much we live apart from the world of men,
 fleas and lice are still our portion.

夜の庵や蚤の飛ぶ音騒々し
Yo no io ya nomi no tobu oto sōzōshi

At night in my cottage,
 The fleas hopping
 Are quite noisy.

Not a dull moment.

Chapter XXIII

ISSA IV

In this last section, we see Issa the old man,—hundreds of years, thousands of years old, the Old Man of Edward Lear. That is our fate too. We have to die, become nothing, in order to know the meaning of something, the meaning of old age. Conrad wrote *Youth*, when he was forty five. The following verses were published in the last five years of Issa's life, 1822-1826.

古犬や先に立つなり墓参り
Furu-inu ya saki ni tatsu nari haka-mairi

Visiting the graves;
The old dog
Leads the way.

The dog will soon be in his own grave. The dog knows the way to the graves; he has been there twelve or thirteen times; dogs and men, what is the difference?—Such thoughts pass inevitably through the mind.

もともとの一人前ぞ雑煮膳
Motomoto no ichininmae zo zōni-zen

From the first, and by nature,
A self-sustained individual,
Sitting at the New Year breakfast table.

Issa married at last at the age of fifty one. He was now sixty one, the season the New Year. During those ten years he had lost his wife, and buried, one after

another, four children. When a man really knows he is alone, he is really a man,—but what agonies to attain such a state! Is it worth it all?

籠の鳥蝶を羨む目つきかな
Kago no tori chō wo urayamu metsuki kana

The bird in the cage
 Looks enviously
 At the butterfly.

Issa has no abstract humanitarianism, or belief in the sacredness of human and animal life. He simply felt a compassion with all discomfort, a merry sympathy with all quaintness and happiness, that demanded expression from him. If the pain or joy is sufficiently intense it *must* come out in word or deed. This is worlds away from sentimentality, which is a sinking back into ourselves upon the excuse of some outside stimulus from circumstances analogous to our own inner state of mind. The one is invariably dry-eyed grief, the other finds relief in blubbering.

から紙のもやうになるや蠅の糞
Karakami no moyo ni naru ya hae no kuso

Well, on the sliding doors,
 The flies' droppings
 Will make a nice pattern.

This is making a virtue of necessity.

人あれば蠅あり佛ありにけり
Hito areba hae ari hotoke ari ni keru

Where there are flies,
 There are human beings,
 There are Buddhas.

Without flies there is no Buddhism.

むれる 蠅 皺手に何の味がある
Mureru hae shiwate ni nan no aji ga aru

These swarming flies,—
 What taste can there be
 In these wrinkled hands?

I remember Bernard Shaw, when he was over ninety, saying to an audience of children, in a squeaky voice, “Look at me now!”

散るすゝき 寒くなるのが目に見ゆる
Chiru susuki samuku naru no ga me ni miyuru

The flowers of pampas grass fall,
 And we see
 The cold of coming winter.

This “seeing the cold” is not a figure of speech, nor is it association, but the Buddha power, the poetical power to mingle and interchange the different senses.

大家を上手に越へし螢かな
Ō-ie wo jōzu ni koeshi hotaru kana

How cleverly
 It flew over the mansion,
 That firefly!

What Issa admires is not the mansion, but the firefly.

ごちゃごちゃと 瘦蚊やせのみやせ子哉
Gocha-gocha to yase-ka yase-nomi yase-go kana

Promiscuously,
 Thin mosquitoes, thin fleas,
 Thin children.

Shiki said that Bashō realised that haiku must not be made up in the head, after writing *Furu-ike ya*. Issa seems to have known this from the beginning.

猿も子を負ふて指すほたるかな
Saru mo ko wo ōte yubisasu hotaru kana

Even the monkey with its baby
 Is pointing her finger
 At the firefly.

This a very poor verse, fanciful and insincere.

行な行なみなうそよびぞはつ螢
Yuku na yuku na mina uso-yobi zo hatsu-botaru

Don't go! don't go!
 Their calling is a pack of lies,
 First firefly!

This is what we want to say to the readers of newspapers.

群蠅の逃た迹打皺手哉
Mure-bae no nigeta ato utsu shiwa-de kana

After a flock of flies
 Has escaped its blows,
 This wrinkled hand!

All Issa's verses have Zen in them, particularly this one.

堂の蠅珠數する人の手をまねる
Dō no hae juzu suru hito no te wo maneru

The flies in the temple
 Imitating the hands
 Of the people with their rosaries.

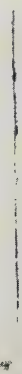
頌
和

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小



The flies are rubbing their fore-legs together in the same way as the rosary is rubbed.

ままっ子は砧になれて寝たりけり
Mamakko wa kinuta ni narete netari keri

The step-child,
 Used to the fulling-block,
 Is sleeping sound.

Issa is thinking of his childhood, not as Wordsworth thought of his, but of its hours of unconscious life, unknown and unknowing, undisturbed by all the things of the outer world. There is a democracy of sleep, as well as of death.

Issa loved his mother. She died, leaving him in never-forgotten orphanhood. He was ardently desirous of a home, but did not have one until he was fifty one years old. He wanted a married life, but could not marry until he was a toothless, white-haired old man. He was madly fond of children, especially his own. They died one after another while very young. All this has provided us with haiku of tragic meaning, not entirely un sentimental, but dolorous enough. For example, after the death of the third child, a boy named Ishitarō, three months and a half old, he wrote the following verses:

陽炎や目につきまとふ笑ひ顔
Kagerō ya me ni tsukimatō warai-gao

Heat waves;
 It haunts my eyes,—
 His laughing face.

¹ Composed in 1825, two years before his death, when he was sixty three.

なでしこのなぜ折れたぞよ折れたぞよ
Nadeshiko no naze oreta zo yo oreta zo yo

Why did it break,
 Oh why did it break,
 That flower of the pink?

石太郎此世にあらば盆踊
Ishitarō kono yo ni araba bon-odori

Ishitaro,
 If only you were here,
 At this Bon Dancing!

This last verse was written six months after the baby's death.

無常鐘 蠅虫めらもよっくきけ
Mujō kane hae mushimera mo yokku kike

Give ear,
 Ye flies and creeping things,
 To the Bell of Mutability!

The evening bell tells of the evanescence of things. All creatures must give heed to it, consciously or unconsciously.

喰逃や蚊蚤もちゑの文珠堂
Kui-nige ya ka nomi mo chie no monju-dō

Biting and running away,—
 The wisdom of mosquitoes and fleas
 In the Monju Hall.

Literally, "Eating and running off;" this implies running away without paying for what one has eaten. Monju is the Buddha of Wisdom.

焼け迹やほかりほかりと蚤さわぐ
Yakeato ya hokari-hokari to nomi sawagu

Burnt out,
 The fleas are excited,
 There's no stopping them.

When Issa was 61, his wife Kiku-jo died. Six months afterwards died Kinjiro, the child she had left behind her. At the age of 62 he married again, Yuki-jo, but they separated three or four months afterwards. The next year he married for the third time, but died while his child was still in the womb. Five months before he died, his house was burnt down, and for the last few months of his life he lived in a warehouse with an earthen floor which still remains. "The fleas have fled from the burning house, and taken refuge with me here," says Issa. Of this same fire, he wrote also:

螢火も餘せばいやはやこれははや
Hotarubi mo amaseba iya haya kore wa haya

If you leave so much
 As a firefly's glimmer,—
 Good Lord! Good Heavens!

It must be properly extinguished.

The following are uncertain as to time of composition, but Issa is the same always, exceeded in humour and originality by Sengai, his contemporary, but in humanity by nobody.

父ありてあけぼのみたし青田原
Chichi arite akebono mitashi aotabara

Were my father here,
At dawn we would gaze
Over the green fields.

This was written after his father's death; his feelings are expressed in *Chichi no Shūen Nikki*. Sometimes Issa has too much sentiment, and falls into the sentimentality of self-pity:

親と子と三人連や歸る雁
Oya to ko to sannin-zure ya kaeru kari

Wild geese flying home,
Three they are,
Parents and child.

寝た犬にふわとかぶさる一葉哉
Neta inu ni fuwa to kabusaru hito-ha kana

The sleeping dog
Is lightly crowned
By a paulownia leaf.

The crowning of Caesar, of Napoleon . . . what about it?
Oh, nothing particular.

よい世とや虫が鈴ふり鷹がまふ
Yoi yo to ya mushi ga suzu furi taka ga mau

The insects ring their bells,
The hawks dance in Heaven,—
All's right with the world!

The difference between Issa and Browning is small but all the more important. Issa disguises his seriousness with humour, or rather, transmutes it,

露はらりはらり世の中よかりけり
Tsuyu harari-harari yo no naka yokari keri

The dew-drops fall
 By ones and twos, rapidly,—
 It is a good world.

This also is Browning's:

The hill-side's dew-pearled,
 The lark's on the wing;
 The snail's on the thorn;
 God's in His heaven—
 All's right with the world!

At certain moments, we see the truth of this; at others, its untruth,—or shall we say, another truth.

勝角力虫の音除けて通りけり
Kachi-zumō mushi no ne yokete tōri keri

The wrestler who won
 Avoids the voices of insects,
 As he passes along.

When we are lucky or victorious we feel benevolent towards other people and even to the "lower" creatures. The village wrestler who has defeated all his opponents does not tread where the autumn insects are crying.

淋しさに飯をくふ也秋の風
Sabishisa ni meshi wo kū nari aki no kaze

Eating a meal
 In loneliness,
 The autumn wind blowing.

This is the whole of human life, the eating, the loneli-

ness, the season, all three inextricably mingled, perhaps even only aspects of one thing.

一尺の滝も音して夕涼
Isshaku no taki mo oto shite yūsuzumi

A one-foot waterfall too
 Makes these sounds and those,
 While cooling in the evening.

In fact, though I have never heard it, I suppose the Niagara Falls doesn't sound much like water at all. In any case, the "too" is a mistake. Water sounds; it does not sound too.

曙の空色衣かへにけり
Akebono no sora-iro koromo kae ni keri

In the dawn of day,
 The colour of the sky
 Has a "change of clothes."

Though so humorous a poet, this kind of "pun" is rare in Issa.

我と山かはるがはるにほととぎす
Ware to yama kawaru gawaru ni hototogisu

The hototogisu sings
 To me, and the mountain,
 In turn.

This reminds us of Wordsworth, who says, however, of the cuckoo:

Though babbling only to the vale,
 Of sunshine and of flowers.

鶯や泥足ぬぐう梅の花
Uguisu ya doro-ashi nuguu ume no hana

The uguisu
 Wipes his muddy feet
 On the flowering plum tree.

Issa here sees two beautiful things, the plum blossoms, and the alert, trim little bird. But he knows that there is also between them a relation which is not sentimental or beauty-loving. Like Homer, Issa tells us the whole truth.

隅の蜘蛛案じな煤は取らぬぞよ
Sumi no kumo anji na susu wa toranu zo yo

Spiders in the corners,
 Don't worry!
 I'm not going to sweep them.

This is not a verse of pity towards spiders. Issa was like Dr Johnson; he had "no passion for clean linen," or clean rooms.

鳴くな虫別るゝ戀は星にさえ
Naku na mushi wakaruru koi wa hoshi ni sae

Cry not, insects!
 Lovers, even the Stars,
 Must part.

The crying insects, Issa and his wife Kiku in 1822, and the stars. This is the most tragic of all haiku, for it has also humour and fancy.

まちすまひ雪をとかすも金がいる
Machi-sumai yuki wo tokasu mo kane ga iru

Living in the town;
To melt down the snow too,—
Money!

In the country, people wait for the warm wind or sunshine to remove the snow, but in the city there is a kind of antipathy to nature in any form, and the snow is got rid of by the universal solvent and panacea,—money. This haiku is very near senryu, but we feel Issa's love of nature in his distaste for men and their ways.

ふらここや櫻の花を持ちながら
Furakoko ya sakura no hana wo mochi-nagara

The child swaying on the swing;
In his hand he holds
A branch of cherry-blossoms.

This child is perhaps a girl, in a kimono, and this and the swaying of the swing and the flowering branch all move together. Sometimes a few petals fall.

おらが世はそこらの草も餅になる
Ora ga yo wa sokora no kusa mo mochi ni naru

This world of ours;
Those grasses over there
Give us our dumplings.

Issa means that the true poetry of life is eating poetically. The poet, like Stevenson's cow,

walks among the meadow grass
And eats the meadow flowers.

むだ人を叱りなさるや秋の風
Muda-bito wo shikari nasaru ya aki no kaze

Reproaching and reproving
The idle man, perhaps,—
The wind of autumn.

Issa is no doubt speaking here of himself. When the cool wind blows, the poet, the artist, the writer feels that he is not warming the world, except perhaps in a very doubtful, spiritual way.

ひつち田や青みにうつる薄氷
Hitsuji-da ya aomi ni utsuru usu-gōri

A field of new rice from the stubble:
The thin cat's-ice
Reflects the green.

Hitsuji, 稶, is the new rice-plant that springs up in autumn from the stubble after the rice has been reaped.

夏の夜や二軒して見る草の花
Natsu no yo ya niken shite miru kusa no hana

A summer evening;
Two houses looking
At the flowers of the grass.

This is the simple pleasure of poor people, more poetical and frequent than many imagine. Here, however, it is not cultivated, garden flowers, but the weeds of a waste piece of ground adjoining both houses that unite the two.

名月や佛の様に膝を組み
Meigetsu ya hotoke no yō ni hiza wo kumi

The bright autumn moon;
Sitting cross-legged
Like a Buddha.

The full moon requires that we should sit respectfully and sedately before it.

苔清水さあ鳩も来よ雀来よ
Koke-shimizu sā hato mo ko yo suzume ko yo

Mossy clear water!
 Come on now, pigeons!
 Come on now, sparrows!

To drink alone, eat alone, live alone,—even God could not do it.

ふしぎふしぎ生れた家で今朝の春
Fushigi fushigi umareta ie de kesa no haru

Wonderful! Wonderful!
 New Year's Morning
 In the house I was born in.

It does not matter where we are born, or where we die, but if it did, it would be good to die in the place we were born in.

我死なば墓守りになれときりぎりす
Ware shinaba hakamori ni nare to kirigirisu

When I die,
 Be the guardian of my tomb,
 Grasshopper!

This is Webster's *On the Tombs of Westminster Abbey*.

In Katō Ichirō's *Explanations and Appreciations of Waka and Haiku*, 和歌俳句の解釈と鑑賞, pages 542-3, he gives, without comment, twenty haiku of Bashō and Issa for the purpose of comparison and contrast. Here they

are translated with remarks on the differences in attitude of the two poets. These differences have been somewhat exaggerated so as to bring out the individual characteristics of Bashō and Issa, the one with his “natural piety,” the other with his “human warmth.”

花の雲鐘は上野か浅草か
Hana no kumo kane wa ueno ka asakusa ka

A cloud of cherry-blossoms;
 The temple bell,—
 Is it Ueno, is it Asakusa?

櫻へと見えてじんじん端折かな
Sakura e to miete jinjin-bashori kana

He looks as if
 He's going flower-viewing,—
 His kimono tucked up at the back.

Bashō's rhetorical question shows his tranquil mind brooding over the distant flowers. Rather than the flowers themselves, Issa sees the beauty of the mind of man, but expressed in the rather grotesque appearance, from the back, of his tucked-up *kimono* that allows him to walk a little faster.

春なれや名もなき山の朝霞
Haru nare ya na mo naki yama no asagasumi

Yes, spring has come;
 This morning a nameless hill
 Is shrouded in mist.

霞む日やさぞ天人の御退屈
Kasumu hi ya sazo tennin no go-taikutsu

A day of mist and haze:
The Dwellers of Heaven
May well feel bored and listless.

Bashō's mind is that of the haze and nameless hill. Issa, like Matthew Arnold, is a naked, eternally restless mind, and Nature shares in all his whimsicality, moodiness, and doubt.

蘭の香や蝶の翅にたきものす
Ran no ka ya chō no hane ni takimono su

The butterfly perfumes
Its wings with incense,
In the scent of the orchid.

葎からあんな胡蝶の生れけり
Mugura kara anna kochō no umare keru

From the burweed
Such a butterfly
Was born!

Bashō sees or creates harmony. Like Wordsworth, his
eyes avert their ken
From half of human fate.

Issa feels the discord of life, the unnaturalness of nature.

起きよ起きよ我が友にせむ寝る胡蝶
Oki yo oki yo waga tomo ni sen neru kochō

Wake up, wake up,
Sleeping butterfly,
And let us be companions!

我と来て遊べや親のない雀
Ware to kite asobe ya oya no nai suzume

Come and play with me,
 Fatherless, motherless
 Sparrow.

We must say that Issa means what he says; Bashō is to some extent pretending, like Shelley in *The Skylark*. Bashō's seriousness is lighter than Issa's banter.

長き日を囀りたらぬ雲雀かな
Nagaki hi wo saezuri taranu hibari kana

All the long day—
 Yet not long enough for the skylark,
 Singing and singing.

晝飯を食べに下りたる雲雀かな
Hirumeshi wo tabe ni oritaru hibari kana

The skylark
 Has dropped down
 For his midday meal.

The skylark singing, as in Wordsworth; the skylark eating, as in Clare.

行く春を近江の人と惜しみけり
Yuku haru wo ōmi no hito to oshimi keri

I lamented
 The departure of spring
 With the people of Ōmi.¹

花の蔭あかの他人はなかりけり
Hana no kage aka no tanin wa nakari keri

¹ The people of Ōmi were famous from olden times for their poetical feeling, "not inferior," Bashō says, "to the people of Kyōto."

Under the cherry-blossoms
None are
Utter strangers.

In Bashō's love of people we feel some distance. Clare objected to Wordsworth's "affected godliness." In Issa's misanthropy there is a closeness. As Lawrence says, "Hostility is not antipathy."

鶯や餅に糞する縁の先
Uguisu ya mochi ni fun suru en no saki

Ah! the *uguisu*
Pooped on the rice-cakes
On the verandah.

春日野や駄菓子にまぢる鹿の糞
Kasugano ya dagashi ni majiru shika no kuso

On the moor of Kasuga,
Among the cheap sweets,
Deer's dung.

Both poets have the Japanese realism and grasp of the significant, but Bashō preserves the poetic elegance through the nightingale, Issa through human beings.

粽結ぶ片手にはさむ額髪
Chimaki musubu katate ni hasamu hitaigami

Wrapping up the rice-dumplings,¹
With the other hand
She puts back her hair.

¹In ancient times, in the leaf of the yam; later, in bamboo leaves.

がさがさと粽をかぢる美人かな
Gasa-gasa to chimaki wo kajiru bijin kana

The beautiful girl
 Munching
 The rice-dumpling.

Bashō sees beauty in the mundane and homely, the divine in the human; Issa sees the earthly in the beautiful.

うき我を淋しがらせよ閑古鳥
Uki-ware wo sabishigarase yo kankodori

Ah! *kankodori*,
 In my sadness,
 Deepen thou my solitude!

ひいき目に見てさへ寒きそぶりかな
Hiikime ni mite sae samuki soburi kana

Even considered
 In the most favourable light,
 He looks cold.

Bashō takes loneliness as something desirable, and offers up a prayer for it. Issa takes loneliness as Hell. Cold and solitude mean anguish of mind. Bashō goes deeper, too deep perhaps for humanity to follow, without losing that most important element of all, the human warmth.

名月や池をめぐりて夜もすがら
Meigetsu ya ike wo megurite yo mo sugara

The autumn moon:
 I wandered round the pond
 All night long.

明月の御覽の通り屑家かな
Meigetsu no goran no tōri kuzuya kana

The bright full moon;
 My ramshackle hut
 Is as you see it.

The moon is so glorious Bashō cannot sleep for it. For Issa the moon is glorious too, but at the same time shows up the squalour of human life in general and his own in particular.

鞍壺に小坊主のるや大根引
Kuratsubo ni kobōzu noru ya daikohiki

Going turnip-pulling,
 The little boy perched
 On the pack-saddle.

大根引大根で道を教へけり
Daiko-hiki daikon de michi wo oshie keru

The turnip-puller
 Points the way
 With a turnip.

Bashō gives us something picturesque, a scene of rural life; Issa shows us how his

nature is subdu'd
 To what it works in, like the dyer's hand.

枯枝に烏のとまりけり秋の暮
Kare-eda ni karasu no tomari keru aki no kure

Autumn evening;
 A crow perched
 On a withered branch.

けろりくわんとして烏と柳かな
Kerori kan to shite karasu to yanagi kana

As if nothing had happened,—
 The crow,
 And the willow.

For Bashō the crow is a symbol of desolation and sadness, of hopelessness and world-weariness. Issa sees the bird as a lively and daring creature, an emblem of life rather than death. Issa is so modern in his attitude to life, Bashō somewhat Tennysonian sometimes.

この道や行く人なしに秋の暮
Kono michi ya yuku hito nashi ni aki no kure

Along this autumn road
 Goes no one,
 This autumn eve.

又人にかけぬかれけり秋の暮
Mata hito ni kakenukare keru aki no kure

Yet again have I been
 Surpassed by others;
 An autumn eve.

There is the loneliness of being quite alone, physically and spiritually. There is also the loneliness of defeat, of failure, of a realized incompetence, of being forsaken by God. It is hard to say which is the deeper and more painful.

野ざらしを心に風のしむ身かな
Nozarashi wo kokoro ni kaze no shimu mi kana

Resigned to my bones bleaching
 On this moor,
 How the wind blows through me!

五六匹馬干しておく枯野かな
Goroppiki uma hoshite oku karenno kana

Five or six horses
 Brought out for an airing,
 On the withered moor.

Bashō has the pioneer spirit, the spirit of the missionary, the martyr. The flesh is weak but the spirit is strong. Issa is weak in will and sensitive in body, but his eye sees everything. He must be classed, after all, among the extroverts.

故郷や臍の緒に泣く年の暮
Furusato ya heso no o ni naku toshi no kure

My native place;
 Weeping over the umbilical cord,
 At the end of the year.

父ありてあけぼの見たし青田原
Chichi arite akebono mitashi aotahara

With my dead father
 I would look at the dawn
 Over the green fields.

Both poets were deeply filial, and their love of nature was an extension of this piety. Poetry, like charity, begins at home.

年暮れぬ笠着て草鞋はきながら
Toshi kurenu kasa kite waraji haki nagara

The year draws to its close:
I am still wearing
My kasa and straw sandals.

それがしも宿なしに候秋の暮
Soregashi mo yado nashi ni soro aki no kure

I also
Have nowhere to lay my head,
This autumn eve.

Both Bashō and Issa accept their fate, but Issa grieves still at the sound of the word “home.”

いざゆかん雪見にころぶ所まで
Iza yukan yuki mi ni korobu tokoro made

Well, now, let's be off!
Let's go snow-viewing
Till we tumble over!

うまさうな雪がふうはりふうはりと
Umasō na yuki ga fūwari-fūwari to

This snow,
That wafts softly down,—
I could eat it!

Both poets had the power to “let themselves go,” and become as little children. There is here nothing to choose between them.

數ならぬ身とな思ひそ魂祭
Kazunaranu mi to na omoiso tama-matsuri

Do not think
That I am not numbered among human beings:
The Feast of All Souls.

形見子や母が來るとて手をたゝく
Katamigo ya haha ga kuru tote te wo tataku

The memento child;
 Told his mother will come,¹
 He claps his hands.

Bashō's verse was written on a journey, when Jutei, whom some think to have been his illegitimate son, died of illness. He seems to have been crippled in some way. Issa is speaking of his two-year-old Kinzaburo, left behind after the mother had died at the age of thirty seven. Bashō's verse is more mysterious and tragic.

もろもろの心柳にまかすべし
Moromoro no kokoro yanagi ni makasubeshi

Yield to the willow
 All the loathing,
 All the desire of your heart.

ともかくもあなたまかせの年の暮
Tomokaku mo anata makase no toshi no kure

Even so, even so,
 Submissive before Yonder,—
 The end of the year.

Bashō is a worshipper of nature. Issa looks beyond nature, not to God, but (if we *must* say what should not be said) to what Wordsworth calls

the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind.

¹ At the Feast of All Souls.

旅に病んで夢は枯野をかけめぐる
Tabi ni yande yume wa kareno wo kake-meguru

Ill on a journey;
 My dreams wander
 Over a withered moor.

盥から盥にうつるちんぷんかん
Tarai kara tarai ni utsuru chimpunkan

From one bath-tub
 To another bath-tub,—
 All stuff and nonsense.

The bath-tubs of birth and death. Both Bashō and Issa feel something of what Macbeth says:

[Life] is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.

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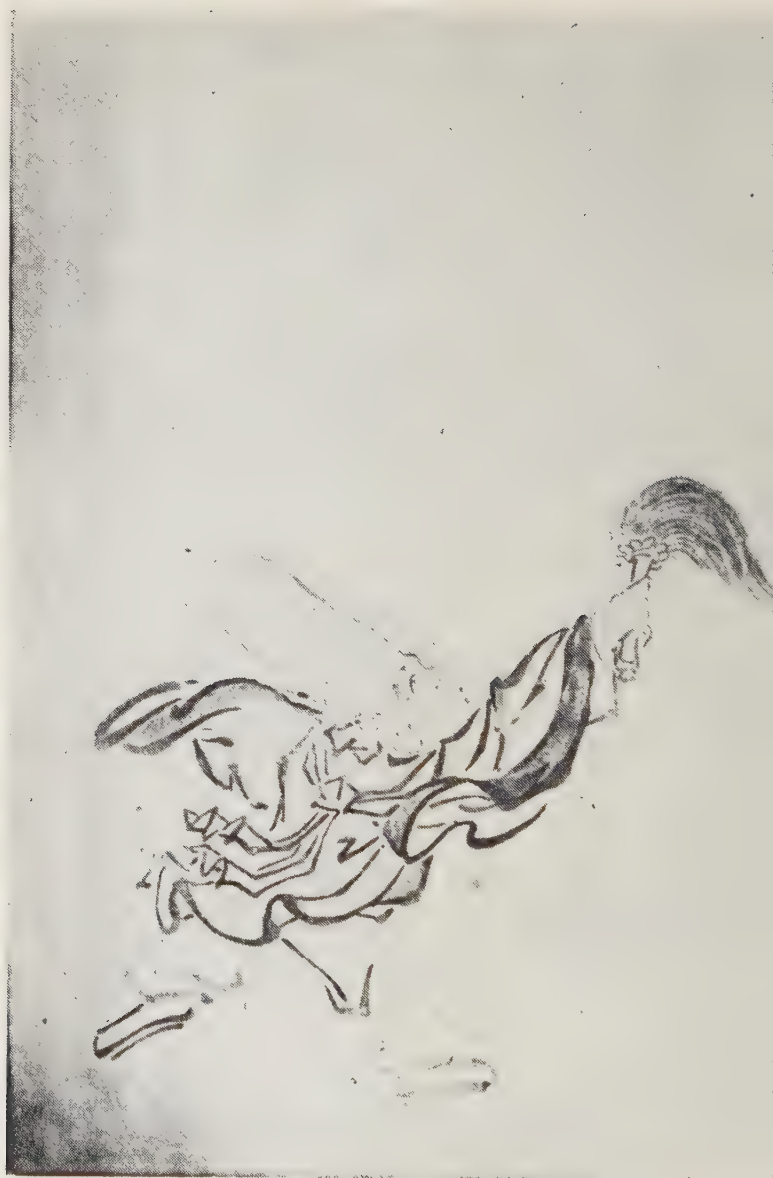
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