The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE


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The Open Court
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Science is slowly but surely transforming the world. Science is knowledge verified; it is Truth proved; and Truth will always conquer in the end. The power of Science is irresistible. Science is the still small voice; it is not profane, it is sacred; it is not human, it is superhuman; Science is a divine revelation.

Convinced of the religious significance of Science, The Open Court believes that there is a holiness in scientific truth which is not as yet recognized in its full significance either by scientists or religious leaders. The scientific spirit, if it but be a genuine devotion to Truth, contains a remedy for many ills; it leads the way of conservative progress and comes not to destroy but to fulfill.

The Open Court on the one hand is devoted to the Science of Religion; it investigates the religious problems in the domain of philosophy, psychology, and history; and on the other hand advocates the Religion of Science. It believes that Science can work out a reform within the Churches that will preserve of religion all that is true, and good, and wholesome.

THE MONIST

The Monist is a Quarterly Magazine, devoted to the Philosophy of Science. Each copy contains 100 pages; original articles, correspondence from foreign countries, discussions, and book reviews.

The Monist Advocates the Philosophy of Science which is an application of the scientific method to philosophy.

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Monism Means a Unitary World-Conception

There may be different aspects and even contrasts, diverse views and opposite standpoints, but there can never be contradiction in truth. Monism is not a one-substance theory, be it materialistic or spiritualistic or agnostic; it means simply and solely consistency.

All truths form one consistent system, and any dualism of irreconcilable statements indicates that there is a problem to be solved; there must be fault somewhere either in our reasoning or in our knowledge of facts. Science always implies Monism, i.e., a unitary world conception.

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The Open Court Publishing Co.
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THE WOOING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

A FAIRY TALE OF OLD JAPAN.

BY CHARLES JOHNSTON.

I.

ONCE upon a time, in the forest not far from Kyoto, there lived an old, old man, with his old, old wife. He was surly and gentle hearted, and she was crabbed and kind. They were kind and gentle, because they greatly loved little children. They were crabbed and surly, because, though they had prayed much and hoped much, they had no children of their own.

This old, old man was a busy worker. Day by day, he cut bamboos in the forest, and, bringing them home, fashioned them into all sorts of useful and pretty things: baskets and pitchers and flower-vases, arm-stools and mirror-stands and screens. And as he worked, he grumbled, and muttered to himself petulantly, and sang sad snatches of song. And his old, old wife busied herself about their dwelling, weaving, and cooking, and cleaning her chambers, and she too grumbled to herself at her toil, not because it was irksome, but because her house was lonely and silent.

One day, as the old man was splitting bamboos in a forest-glade, he came upon a stem very large and glossy and thick. He split it cautiously with his iron chopper, and then his eyes opened wide, and the snatch of song died on his lips. For there, within the hollow of the bamboo, was a little maiden, very lovely and shining with a shimmering radiance like full moon light. And the little maiden smiled at him, and stretched out her little hands to him to take her.

The old, old man shook, and his lips quivered, and his hands trembled, but he took the little maiden to his heart and said:

“I have worked hard enough, here in the wild forest, chopping
these tough bamboos, and taking whatever comes. Surely, then, I may take this little maiden, and bring her home to my old, old wife, to keep her for our own!"

There were tears on his rough cheeks when he brought the little maiden home to his wife, and tears were on her withered face, as she took the child and fondled it, and fed it, and hushed it in her arms. But there was gladness in their eyes, as they sat silent to-

gether, hand in hand, watching the moon-maiden sleeping, in a basket of woven bamboo, and smiling as she slept.

The blessing came not singly, but brought others with it. For on the next day, when the old man had caressed the little moon-maiden, and bade his old wife farewell, and had set himself once more to chop bamboos in the forest, a strange thing happened. Cutting a tough bamboo, and smiling at its toughness, he came upon a hollow joint, all filled with grains of yellow gold, that would have
poured out upon the moss, if he had not stopped it with the hollow of his hand. Every day this happened, as though the Great Ones who had sent the little maiden, sent also the daily measure of fine gold, that she might be well tended, and lack nothing. The old man and his old wife took the gold, and spent some of it for the little maiden, and stored some of it away for the little maiden. And though they were well content to have the gold, yet they grumbled over it a little, for they would have been better pleased to do all things for the little maid with their own earnings, thus feeling that she was more their own.

The moon-maiden grew not by years and months, but by days, so that presently she reached the full stature of girlhood, and bound up her hair, and wore the robes of a grown girl, instead of the garments of childhood. But her smile and her sweetness remained unchanged and she filled the old couple's house with radiance, charming away their aches and pains and sorrows. With affection they tended her, as their child, yet looking on her with wonder, as something celestial. The gold did not fail to pour itself daily from the bamboo joint in the forest, so that the old wood-cutter grew to be a man of great consequence and worth, well considered of all who dwelt there, and famed even as far as the great city of Kyoto.

The time came for them to present their wonderful child to the people of their acquaintance and their friends, and the old man took gold from his hoard, and bought things rich and dainty and beautiful, and he and his old wife prepared a great festival, to which they summoned all, men and women alike, to partake of their feast and behold the moon-maiden.

II.

From the day of the festival, the fame of the moon-maiden went abroad, so that nothing else was talked of in the neighborhood, and even as far as Kyoto, and the distant provinces. The hearts of the young men became as water, when they thought of her radiance and her smile full of moonlight, and they forgot even to conceal their love-lorn estate, as good manners enjoin. The whisper of her went through the forests, and soon all through the wood the lovers began to come together, till the fence about the garden was full of eyes, as the suitors crept close, hoping to see the moon-maiden. But neither early nor later did she appear to them, neither by day nor in the twilight, when the monkeys came forth from the deep forest, did she show herself to them, nor satisfy their aching hearts with a sight of her radiance.
The sound of their sighing was like wind among the pine-trees, or the rustling of leaves in the bamboo grove, and their faces were pale as the waves with waiting and longing. Yet never a sign did they see of the moon-maiden, and never a word did they hear of her, though they lay in wait to get speech with the old, old man and his old, old wife.

As the long days and long nights of waiting passed without

SUITORS SEEKING A GLIMPSE OF THE MOON MAIDEN.
She converses below with the old old couple.

solace, the eyes of those that watched at the fence grew fewer, the less ardent hearts grew cool, and only the fervent still lingered, determined to behold the moon-maiden, eager to win her to wife. Faint hearts grow fainter in adversity, but stout hearts grow stronger. Therefore, while the lesser men slunk away discouraged from the quest of the moon-maiden, the nobler more determinedly remained. At last four only lingered, the best of all the suitors. And these
THE WOONING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

were the four: a prince, and a courtier, and a councillor, and a minister of the Emperor's court. These four resolutely remained, the love of the moon-maiden growing ever greater in their hearts, and day and night their sighs echoed around her dwelling.

How great is the love of youths, even for the daughters of men, such as possess rare loveliness of face and form, and exceeding grace and gentleness of spirit! How great, then, was the longing of the suitors for the peerless moon-maiden, so that her shining image was before them whichever way they turned, and the longing desire to behold her possessed their souls. Moody and lean, they paced up and down, outside the fence of the garden, seeing nothing but the image of the moon-maiden, feeling nothing but the pain of their longing for her.

As they were no common men, but lords well trained in wisdom and wit and words, they indited tender epistles to the maiden, fragrant with soft eloquence of passion, but the maiden never sent a word in answer, and they knew not even whether her heart rejoiced or grieved at their fair speech. Verses, too, they inscribed to her, very sweet and musical, likening her to blossoms and sunlight and spices, her cheek to the peony, her eyes to stars, her tresses to the long leaves of weeping willows. But never a word came back to them from the maiden, to show whether her heart was flattered by all their musical pain. When winter came, with icicles and snow-furries, they still were there, blowing on their fingers and thinking of the moon-maiden. When summer returned, sultry and thunderous, when even the Great Ones hid from the heat in the cool night-sky, the suitors still lingered, dry-lipped and parched by the heat, but still thinking of the moon-maiden.

A day came at last when the suitors waylaid the old wood-cutter in the forest: not proudly, though they were great lords and courtiers, but humbly, though he was but a poor wood-cutter, and they bowed down to him, with palms joined in supplication.

"Give us your daughter! Give us to wed the moon-maiden!" they besought him; "that one of us may possess her love, and the rest may be cured of hope, and so of longing!"

"Not in the way of birth is she my daughter," said the old man, doubting; "nor was she cradled in my poor dwelling. Therefore I cannot bid her to wed this man or that, but her own will must she follow. If she will wed, let her wed. If not, then she must remain single. What can a poor old wood-cutter do with a moon-maiden?"

So even these four, the prince, and the courtier, and the councillor, and the minister of the Emperor's court, went sorrowing away
to their own homes. Yet even there, they did not cease from their longing and their desire to possess her. Never a month passed that they did not indite rare epistles and inscribe musical verses to her, sending them to the old wood-cutter, that he might lay them before the moon-maiden, hoping thus perchance to touch her heart.

But the old man was grieved at their departure, for he had loved to watch them, while feigning not to look at them, for it is no common thing for a prince and a courtier, a councillor and a minister to linger outside a wood-cutter's garden, not proudly, but humbly, and lowly of heart. Therefore the old man grieved over their going, and would have had them back again. He bethought him, too, of the shortness of life, and of the mutability of things, and that his old wife and he must soon be going, and then their moon-maiden would be alone, with none to succor her. So one day he decided in his heart that he would speak to the maiden.

III.

Thus did the old man speak to her:

"Darling mine, fair daughter! Down through the cycles of change that ring through the years you came to us; day by day have we cherished you, baby and maid. Listen, then, to an old man who loves you!"

The moon-maiden thus answered:

"What has my father to say to his daughter? Humbly she listens, obedient. Whether I came through the cycles of change I know not, but that you are my father, well-loved, I know!"

The old man said again:

"Joyful and glad is my heart at my daughter's answer. But let my daughter bethink her! I am an old, old man; three score and ten are the years upon me. To-day or to-morrow my time comes, or it may be after to-morrow, and so my daughter will be left alone. Think too of this my daughter: since the world was young, it has befallen that the heart of the youth and maiden are drawn together, so that the heart of the youth is to the maiden, and the heart of the maiden to the youth, and there is no help for it, but so it is ordained, that the world may increase...."

But the moon-maiden wrung her hands:

"What are these strange words of my father? What do they portend? Must it be so, and is there indeed no help?"

"There is no help!" said the old man; "but so must it verily be. Though you came through the cycles of change to us strangely, yet you are a maiden, as maidens be. So there is no help. And
consider, too, the heavy white years upon me! Soon must your father be going, leaving you all alone, without a protector. Think too of these great lords, how noble and fine they are, how full of constancy! Let your heart pity their longing. Through months and through years they have sought you, longing to wed you, therefore have pity! Let them speak with you, that each may plead his cause, telling you how he loves you,—each in his turn!"

But the moon-maiden answered pitifully:

"Your daughter is far from fair; not such as she can be sure to hold a man's heart, yet were she indeed most miserable, if the heart of her lover turned from her! The suitors are noble and courtly, truly. Yet is it not wise to wed even a noble, whose constancy is untried, whose inmost heart is unknown!"

The old man began to hope:

"My very thoughts, my daughter! But if these noble courtiers please you not, who then among men may hope to please you? Are they not very fair and fine?"

The moon-maiden answered:

"It is as my father says. But I desire only to try and prove the constancy of these nobles. The hearts of men are subtle, nor is it easy for a maiden to tell the better from the worse, for all make a show to her. Go, therefore, my father, and tell to these courtly lords that your daughter will follow in wedlock him among them who proves himself most worthy."

The old man answered: "So be it, child!" and smiled to himself with satisfaction, for he was right glad to think that the suitors were coming back, and swiftly he sent messengers to them, to summon them to assemble.

The shadows of twilight descended out of the sky, and with the darkness came a sound of low music in the woods, as the suitors drew nearer. The shrill, sad voices of flutes resounded among the trees, and soft, low love-songs, with a plaintive burden. Reed-pipes lisped their sweetness, and there was a low throbbing of fans, moved in cadence to the music, so that the moon-maiden might know that all her lovers had come.

The moon-maiden herself came not forth, but sent the old man, her father. He, indeed, bowing reverently to the nobles and courtiers, spoke to them thus:

"Long have my masters lingered by this poor dwelling, filling the lowly hearts of its inmates with gratitude. Many are the years of your servant, the white years that lay their burden upon men. Therefore your servant took counsel with himself, and spoke thus
to the moon-maiden my daughter: 'Soon must I go hence, my
daughter, leaving you lonely and unprotected! Choose, therefore,
from among these great lords and courtiers one who may be your
guard and guide when I am gone!' The moon-maiden my daughter
answered that the hearts of men are subtle, and hard to discern.
She would wed only him who proved himself most worthy, and for
this purpose she would summon my masters hither. May this seem
good to my masters, as it has seemed good to your poor servant!'

The lords and courtiers said: "So be it!" and bowed to him,
assenting.

So the old man, bending low to them in reverence, returned
to the dwelling, bringing to his daughter the assent of the lords
and courtiers.

The moon-maiden pondered deeply, with downcast eyes, so that
even her fan ceased moving. Then she spoke thus, in a low voice:
"In far-away Iind was born our lord, the Compassionate. In
the days of his trial he begged food by the wayside, seeking alms.
He gathered rice from kind folks, in a poor bowl of stone. Here is
the first quest: let the Prince, my suitor, set forth in search of the
bowl!"

Then she pondered again, and once more her fan grew still.
"In the wild, wide ocean of the sunrise," she said again at length,
"is a lofty mountain peak. It is Horai, the magical mountain, and
on its crest is a tree most wonderful. The roots of the tree are
silver, and its stem is pure gold. The leaves are emeralds, and the
fruit is milk-white jade. Let the Courtier, my suitor, bring me a
branch of that tree!"

She bethought herself once more, and presently spoke:
"In the gruesome land of sulphur, beyond the sea, are rats that
no flame will burn. Of their skins men make fur-robies, that fire
consumes not. Let the Councillor, my third suitor, go thither and
bring me a fur-robe! This is the third quest."

After deep meditation, she spoke once again:
"Lastly, the Minister of the Emperor's court; here is his quest.
There is a fearsome dragon, who breathes forth smoke and fire.
Yet for all his venom, hid in his head is a precious jewel, colored
like the rainbow, sparkling like the dew. Let him slay the dragon,
and bring the bright gem to me!"

As he listened to the moon-maiden, his daughter, the old man's
chin sank on his breast, and his heart grew heavy:
"Dire tasks are these, my daughter, impossible to be fulfilled.
The things you demand may not be found within the rim of the
THE WOOING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

Four Seas. I cannot carry a message like this to the lords and courtiers, bidding them set forth on such quests as these!

But the moon-maiden answered:

"If they have hearts in their breasts, the tasks are not too hard for them!"

So the old man saw, as many an old man does, that he must obey his daughter, for there was no help. He went out, therefore, and bowing lowly and reverently to the lords and courtiers, told them of the tasks that were laid upon them:

"Only by these stern quests can your valor be known, and the maiden be won!" And he bowed once more, in reverence and sorrow.

IV.

The lords and courtiers bowed to him, and withdrew. But when they were gone some little way, they began to murmur together, raising their eyebrows, and pursing their lips.

"The lady disdains us!" they said; "and in scorn she has laid these tasks on us! Let us go!" So they went.

The Prince, the first of the suitors, returned to his mansion, wrathful and angry at heart, thinking that the maiden had scorned and flouted him. But his wrath faded, and his anger grew cold, and the image of the moon-maiden remained, so that his heart was sick with longing, and he found no rest nor joy in his house.

Then he bethought him whether indeed it were better to set forth to the land of Ind, to seek the holy bowl of the Compassionate One, so that thus he might win the moon-maiden.

But he likewise bethought himself of the perils of the way, of the weary leagues of ocean, of the danger of storms and fearful beasts and evil men, and presently, deeply pondering, he saw in his mind a more desirable way. And seeing it he smiled.

He sent word straightway to the old man and the moon-maiden his daughter, that he would set out for Ind, in quest of the holy bowl. But in truth he did not set out thither, but went only as far as the sea-coast, and then turned back secretly by night, and hid himself, and so remained concealed for many a moon, until three years were passed.

Then he hied him to the hills, where was a monastery of the saint Pindola. Behind the altar in the shrine he sought, and found a bowl of stone, very old, very dust-begrimed and black, that looked as if it might indeed have been the bowl of the Compassionate One, for very age.
This he took with him, and wrapping it in a rich roll of brocaded silk, and binding to it a spray of cherry-blossoms, very artfully fashioned, he sent them to the old man and to the moon-maiden his daughter, and with them he sent verses very skilfully indited, himself following after.

Full of wonder and fear was the moon-maiden, when she saw the bowl and the silk brocade, and the cherry-blossoms, for she thought that the hour was come when she must leave the house of her father, to follow the Prince in wedlock, and her heart was sore. Within the wondrous bowl, she found the verses that the prince had written, and this is what she read:

Oh! the rock-pierced mountains,
Oh! the foam-driven billows
In my long quest I have traversed!
THE WOOING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

Oh! the tears of the search for the bowl!
A bowl-full of tears shed to win it!

The moon-maiden drew her brows together and considered: "If it be indeed the bowl of the Compassionate, then will it shimmer radiant in the darkness!" So they set down the bowl in the midst, very reverently, and darkened the chamber. But never a gleam from the bowl, not even the glimmer of a fading fire-fly!

When they lit the paper lanterns, the prince was gone. So the moon-maiden, very glad at heart, wrapped the bowl once more in the brocade, and, adding verses, sent them after the Prince, her suitor. These are the verses that she sent:

Even a glint of light
Such as a dew-drop might harbor,
Lurks not within the rim!
How could you hope for light
In the altar's recesses dark?

The Prince took the bowl, and read the verses. When he had read them, he first tried to break the bowl, and then, failing to break it, sent it rumbling and rolling away. But as he was a learned man and courtly, he sent these verses to the moon-maiden:

Only through the radiance of your beauty
Was the light of the bowl dimmed,
Radiance paling before greater radiance.
But elsewhere than in your presence,
The bowl's light will prove me true!

But though he waited long, the maiden sent him no answer. So weary and sick at heart and very desolate, he gave up his quest, and hied him home to his lonely mansion, bitterly complaining of her heartlessness.

v.

The Courtier, considering the quest of the golden branch, decided thus within himself: to his friends, he declared that he was going to the mountains of hot springs; but to the moon-maiden he sent word that he was set forth in very deed on the quest of the golden bough. So setting forth from Kyoto, he came to Naniwa by the seashore, where is the port for ships, taking certain of his warriors with him, but choosing few only. Then boarding a ship, he bade these too farewell, saying he was setting out on a long journey, and that they might never behold him again. They returned sorrowful, but when they were gone, in the dead hour of
night, he turned his prow upstream, returning once more toward Kyoto, and landing in a certain secret place already prepared. For he was of subtle mind and many resources.

He had built a house in a lonely place in the forest, and set a triple hedge about it, which no man could pass; and thither he had assembled six silver-smiths, well skilled and crafty beyond all silver-workers of their time. He set aside the rent of sixteen households

on his estate, to provide food for the six craftsmen, and to furnish them with silver and jewels and gold. He had built furnaces for metal-work, and had bade the craftsmen fashion such a branch as the moon-maiden had demanded, saying it grew on Mount Horai, in the wild, wide sea of the dawn.

To this secret place the Courtier now betook him at dead of night, sending back his boat, and there he long remained, watching
the master craftsmen as they fashioned the wondrous branch. When they had made and moulded it, and had adorned it with leaves of emerald and fruit of milk-white jade, the Courtier took the branch, and once more set forth in the darkness. Coming to the port of Naniwa by the seashore, he once more took boat, and going out a little way into the ocean, returned in the gray of the morning to the land. Thence he sent word to his warriors that he was returned from his quest, and coming quickly to meet him, they found him worn and travel-stained and with faded garments, as of one whose ship has come over wild and distant seas.

His warriors received him with joy and gladness, gazing in wonder on the shining branch. And presently it was rumored abroad that the Courtier had brought a bough of the Tree of Paradise, and all men pressed together to see it. So the Courtier wrapped the precious bough in rich brocade, and laid it in a costly case of scented wood, and so came toward the old man’s dwelling.

When the moon-maiden heard of it, her heart became as water, and she grieved bitterly, thinking that her hour was come when she must bestow herself in wedlock. So she hid herself in an inner chamber, and wept.

Then came a knocking at the door of the house, for the Courtier was come with his warriors, bearing the golden branch. He was travel-stained and worn and his raiment was faded, and he begged that the moon-maiden would receive him, as one who had risked his very life to serve her.

So the old man, glad of heart, took the branch and certain verses that the Courtier had written, and brought them in, coming hastily to the moon-maiden. These are the verses that the Courtier wrote:

Oh! the terrible dangers,
Threatening my very life!
Yet without the golden bough,
Never would I have dared to return,
Nor to behold again my native land!

The moon-maiden wept when she read them, not for his peril, but for hers. But the old man was impatient, saying:

“Is not this the very branch my daughter asked for? Has not the Courtier fulfilled his quest? Has he not merited his reward? He has come hither from the seashore, his raiment unchanged, before returning even to his own mansion! How can my daughter longer refuse him?”

The moon-maiden, with chin resting on her palm, made no
answer, unless the tears that streamed down her cheeks and plashed upon the mat were an answer.

But the Courtier was waiting on the threshold, so the old man urged her again:

"Is not this the branch from Mount Horai? Has he not earned his reward? Is he not handsome, my daughter, and a lord?"

But the moon-maiden, weeping, replied:

"Hard seemed the quest, even impossible! Yet easily has he accomplished it! Very keen is your daughter's grief!"

The old man, very impatient, busied himself with setting the chamber in order; then shortly went out, and spoke to the Courtier again:

"I am an old man, and humble. Yet would I know where the wonderful branch came from, and on what manner of mountain it grew?"

The Courtier, sighing deeply, answered:

"Many moons, many moons have waned, since, in the month of cherry-blossoms, we set sail from Naniwa by the seashore, turning our prow out into the wild, wide ocean of the sunrise. Pathless and wild was the ocean, but I cared not, knowing that without the moon-maiden life was none to me.

"So the land sank behind us, and the great deep raged about us, now sinking in the hollow of the waves, now torn by the storm-ghosts. We knew not where we were, with the waters seething all around us, with hunger haunting us, and huge, vast things seeking to rend us.

"The very skies changed, and there was none to help us. Strange sicknesses fell upon us, as we tossed on the plain of the sea, till at length a vast mountain loomed out of the dusk of the ocean.

"We knew it was Mount Horai, and our heart stood still with fear. Yet we were glad, for our quest was fulfilled. Coasting along the shore of the mountain, we one day saw a woman, bright like a spirit, who came from the hills with a silver pitcher.

"We asked her the name of the mountain. 'It is Horai,' she said, 'and I am the jewel-maiden!' Then she departed suddenly into the hills.

"We wandered along the cliffs, amid trees with magical blossoms. A stream flowed with rainbow water, silver and golden and sapphire. The bridges were of gems, and the trees were lit with jewels. So I broke off this branch, to bring it to my lady.'"

The heart of the old man melted within him at so many terrors, and these verses came into his mind:
THE WOOLING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

Dwelling among the bamboos
On the lonely hillside,
And daily cutting them asunder,
Yet have I never seen
Nor heard such a tale of sorrow!

The heart of the Courtier was touched by the sadness of the verses, and he wrote these lines in reply:

The sleeve of my garment,
Long wet with tears and sea-spray,
Has dried to-day!
The countless miseries I have passed
Are all forgotten in my joy!

While he was reciting them, six men came to the fence of the garden, and entered one by one. The leader carried a bamboo wand, with a writing in a cleft of it. He came forward, humbly bowing and spoke thus:

"The chief of the silver-smiths humbly represents: That he and his fellows have toiled a thousand days, breaking their hearts to make the golden bough. They have not received their wages. He humbly begs that they be paid, so that they may buy food for their starving wives and children!"

The old man wondered, setting his head on one side, as he watched the master craftsman holding the bamboo wand. But the Courtier felt his liver melt within him.

The moon-maiden heard of it, and bade them bring the writing. It was written thus:

"His excellency shut himself in a hut with us, humble workmen, and bade us make a golden bough. Hearing that the bough was to be given to the lady of the moon, a gift for her wedding, we thought the lady might aid us to recover our wages!"

The tears on the face of the moon-maiden dried up as she read, and joy shone in her eyes and covered her face with smiles. She bade the old man give back the bough, adding these verses:

Is this the magic branch of Horai?—
I asked when I saw your gift,
Its leaves are but leaves of a tale,
Its gems are cunning inventions,
On your blossom-laden bough!

So the old man gave it to the Courtier, very sad and wroth. But he, not knowing if he should go or stay, at last slunk off in the darkness.

The moon-maiden bade that the craftsmen be paid, and added
gifts of gold, for she was well pleased. The craftsmen were also pleased, and went away boasting, and saying: "We knew it would end thus!"

But in the thick of the forest, the Courtier's warriors set on them, and beat them, and scattered their gold, so that they fled away howling.

The Courtier was ashamed, and sorrowful, and full of despite. So he fled away among the mountains, and sought out a cave, and became a hermit, and there he dwelt to the end of his days, thinking hard things of the moon-maiden.

VI.

The Councillor, the third of the suitors, was a chieftain of men, a lord of great wealth. He therefore bethought him whether with wealth he might win the moon-maiden, and through the crafts of statesmen and councillors.

In those days, it befell that there came to Naniwa by the seashore a certain merchant, wise, shrewd and rich, and the Councillor heard of his coming. Forthwith he wrote a letter, and sent it to him by the hand of a warrior, faithful and trusty. In this letter he bade the merchant seek for and bring the wonderful fur robe that no flame would burn, from the land of sulphur, and with the letter he sent much yellow gold.

The merchant also was wise and rich and full of guilefulness. Therefore he thus replied to the warrior:

"Not in my own land is the wonderful fur robe that no flame will consume. Yet have I heard of it, though I have not seen it. To find a robe like that is hard, very hard for a merchant. Mayhap in distant Ind is there such a robe, and merchants there may have seen it. If I find it, well; if not, then shall the gold be sent back to my lord the Councillor!"

The ship set forth. Days passed, and months, and the ship returned to Naniwa by the seashore. When the news came to Kyoto, the Councillor, hearing of it, rejoiced, and sent warriors on swift steeds to meet the merchant. They returned in seven days with a robe and a letter, thus:

"I have found the wonderful robe and brought it! It was hard to find. From an aged priest of Ind I received it, in a temple far away in the western mountains. I gave gifts to the priest, great gifts, very great, and to all the men of the temple: very great gifts, of much gold. My lord's money did not suffice for the wonderful robe, therefore I added gold, much gold, of my own. I doubt not my lord
will repay me, before my ship sails, or return me the costly robe!"

The Councillor's heart was glad, and he joyfully sent much gold, and the merchant sailed away to the seas of the sunset. In a rich case was the robe, inlaid with lapis lazuli and gold; the fur was very beautiful, of dark gold, the long hairs tipped with bright gold, a robe indeed very precious.

So the Councillor came, bringing the case and the robe, with a gift branch of plum bloom, fashioned artfully, and with these verses, to the house where dwelled the moon-maiden:

THE FUR ROBE IS CONSUMED BY FIRE.

Fierce fires of love
Burn my heart!
But this wonderful robe
No fire will burn!
Joy! I shall see Her to-day!

Thus rejoicing, the Councillor came, and the old man her father met him, and took the casket and robe and the branch and the verses,
and brought them all in, to the moon-maiden. Stemming her tears, the moon-maiden looked at the robe in wonder, and pondered:

"Fair is the robe!" she said, "and good to behold! Yet how shall a maiden know if the gift be what it seems?"

The old man, her father, answered:

"Tut, tut, my daughter is very distrustful! The world does not behold the like of the robe. Therefore bid the Councillor welcome! Why should good men die of love?"

So they bade the Councillor enter, and the moon-maiden stemmed her tears, knowing well that the old man, her father, would fain see her wedded, yet would not constrain her will.

But to the old man she said:

"This is the wonderful robe of fur that no flame will burn! Not in the world is its like! then let fire be brought, that we may all behold the wonder!"

The old man acquiesced, and so did the Councillor, saying:

"Did not the robe come from afar?—even from distant Ind? Was it not long sought for? What is related of it must then be true! Bring fire!"

They brought fire. They cast the robe into it. The robe withered up and was consumed.

The Councillor's face, beholding, grew green like grass in the springtime, and his eyes were wide with wonder. But the moon-maiden was glad at heart, and gave him the case of the robe, adding verses thus:

Fair was the robe of fur,
Such as maidens love!
Alas! it is consumed! The pity!
Had I known its virtue in time,
I had kept it far from fire!

So the Councillor was downcast, and returned secretly to his house. But those who had heard that he had won the maiden, for so he had published it abroad, sent congratulation. But he declared that he had not won the maiden, and was wroth. But the moon-maiden rejoiced, and was glad. And the fame of the fire-proof robe that was burned remains.

VII.

Finally came the quest of the fourth suitor, the Minister. Assembling his warriors, and those of his house, he spoke thus:

"There is a certain dragon, in whose head is hid a jewel, all
rainbow-colored. He among you who shall win me that jewel,—
to him shall be given whatever he desires!"

The warriors and servants answered trembling:

"Great is our master, and august are his requests! But how
may any of the children of men find such a jewel, or draw it forth
from the head of a dragon?"

But the Minister was wroth and said:

"Are you not my warriors, my servants? At your life's peril
you must do my bidding! Neither in this our land, nor the empire
of the west nor in Ind is the jewel of rainbow color. The dragon
dwells in the deep, and climbing up the cliffs rushes down again
headlong to the ocean. Why do you not start at once upon the
quest?"

This the Minister said smiling, to hearten them; and he be-
stowed on them silver and costly silks and cloths for their journey,
and sent them forth. But they went but a little way, and then took
counsel together. Murmuring against their lord, for that a pretty
face had thus bereft him of his wits, they divided among them the
silver and silks and went their several ways secretly.

Meanwhile the Minister bethought him that such a dwelling as
his, fine though it was, were no fit home for a moon-maiden. Therefore
he had it adorned within and without, beautifying the wood-
work with lacquer of gold and silver; silken embroideries and costly
brocades were hung in every chamber; and subtly limned pictures
were disposed upon the panels of the walls.

In this splendor he abode in solitude, awaiting the coming of
the moon-maiden. But the men lingered, and came not; so he took
two warriors more, and himself went forth on the quest.

Journeying down thus slenderly attended for so great a min-
ister, he came to Naniwa by the seashore. There he asked con-
cerning his men, whether they had taken ship in quest of the jewel.
But the people of Naniwa laughed at him. But he scorned them and
said:

"How should such stupid folk understand? I will go after
the dragon and win the jewel!" So he took ship and sailed forth.

Suddenly, without warning, a great storm arose against them.
Waves towered overhead, and the thunder god made a great din
amid the clouds, so that his drums seemed very close to them.

The Minister felt his heart sink within him, and took counsel
of the sailors, as to what they might do for help. But the chief of
the sailors bewailed and said:

"We shall surely be drowned; or if not, the lightning will slay
us; or we shall drift away to the southern ocean!” and he wept for very fear.

"Why do you speak so sadly?" said the Minister. As he spoke, a strange sickness came upon him, for the dragon of the sea was wroth at his quest.

The Minister was in great fear and dread. Then he bethought him to pacify the dragon, and made a vow to renounce his quest, if only the sickness might pass away, and the storm cease. So he uttered his vow many times, and the waves abated, and the clouds parted, and they saw the sun and were glad.

Four days passed, and the wind drove them presently to land, the place being indeed Akashi, not far from their own abode. But the Minister was so wasted by the strange sickness that had come upon him, that he did not know the place, but feared that they were come to some savage land. So he cast himself on the sand, hiding
THE WOOGING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

his face, and trembled greatly. The governor of the place came, and ordered clean mats to be spread for them, under the pine-trees by the seashore, and he smiled in his sleeve when he saw the plight of the Minister, wasted and lean, his paunch swollen, and his eyes dull as wild plum fruit. Calling palanquins, he had the Minister and his warriors sent safe to their homes.

When those of his warriors and servants heard it, who had gone forth first on the quest, they came to the Minister, with feigned humility and sadness:

"Pardon us!" they said, lowly bending; "august lord, pardon your unworthy servants! We have failed, and are of no worth! But our august lord knows the hardiness of our task!"

The Minister went forth to welcome them, saying:

"Happy are you, to return from the quest of the jewel, with your bare lives, and empty-handed! For the dragon and the thunder-god are kin, and who can take the jewel from the dragon? Have not I endured storms and strange sickness at their hands?

"But as for the moon-maiden,—she who steals men's souls, and ruins their bodies, never again shall I turn my footsteps toward her dwelling! I counsel you also to shun her!"

The Minister then took gifts from what remained to him of his substance, and bestowed it upon them. But the women of his household, when they heard it, and remembered how the silk and silver were already gone the same way, hid themselves in an inner chamber that they might laugh at their ease, and they laughed till languor overtook them, and their tender sides ached. And the silken cloths that the Minister had spread over his dwelling, to beautify it for the moon-maiden, the crows presently carried away, a thread at a time, to line their nests.

Wherefore, when men asked of the quest of the Minister, whether he had found the jewel, his people made answer:

"No jewel has he found, if we count not his eyes, which are now two jewels, very like the wild plum fruit for dulness and bitterness!" Which things are a warning.

viii.

How could it well be otherwise?—The moon-maiden's loveliness came at last to the ears of the Mikado, august doorway of Heaven's blessings. He, a lover of beauty, longed to behold her. So he sent a court lady, saying:

"Many a man has found grief through the moon-maiden's loveliness; go therefore and bring me word of her charms!"
So the lady went, and came to the house of the old, old man, where dwelt the moon-maiden, and his wife met her, and courteously bade her enter.

"His Majesty," said the lady, "has sent me hither, to view the moon-maiden, whose beauty has charmed his ear!"

So the old wife told it to the moon-maiden, and bade her receive the lady. But the moon-maiden was obdurate:

"I am no beauty!" she said, "nor will I receive her!"

Shamefaced and sad, the old wife carried the words of her daughter to the great court lady, and the lady was wroth and insistent. But the moon-maiden withstood her wish, declaring:

"There is no help! If I must die, let me die! But I will not receive this lady!"

Sadly betaking her back to the palace, the lady told it to the august Mikado. And the Mikado, hearing it, said:
"Truly, she angles for souls!" and bethought him how he might see her. Therefore he sent this order to the old wood-cutter:

"Bring hither your daughter the moon-maiden! Shall we be disdained?"

But the old man answered:

"What can I do? My daughter will not obey, and my heart is sore!"

But the Mikado answered:

"Bring the girl hither! A noble's hat may reward her father!"

The old man's heart was glad when he heard it. But the moon-maiden would not listen.

"Never," she said, "will your daughter go to Court! She will pine away and die, if you seek to compel her!"

The old man heard her, and said:

"Alas, for my noble's hat, if it be so! For what were a noble's hat, if I lost my moon-maiden? But why need you pine and die?"

So the old man went to Kyoto, the capital, and spoke thus to the Mikado, very humble and lowly and sad:

"It may not be, my lord! The moon-maiden will not hear! Nor may I compel her, since she is not my daughter born. Nor is her heart of this world! Let the noble's hat be given to another!"

But the Mikado bethought him thus:

"Does she not dwell hard by, in the forest? Let a royal hunting party be prepared! We may, perhaps, gain sight of this moon-maiden!"

The old man rejoiced when he heard it:

"Through the device of the hunting-party," he said, "may His Majesty see my daughter, perhaps, ere she hear of his coming!"

On the day of the hunting-party, the Mikado separated himself from the rest, and came to the wood-cutter's dwelling. And, coming, he wondered in awe; for the house was full of light, and he beheld there the moon-maiden, very radiant and glorious.

The Mikado caught at her sleeve, to hold her, and watched the light in her face. Entranced, he bade them bring a litter, to take her away. But the moon-maiden, still withstanding, answered:

"My lord may constrain his servants and his own people. But I am not of my lord's subjects, and may not be so constrained!"

And when the Mikado would have carried her away, she vanished, melting into air.

Wonder came upon the Mikado, and he knew that her words were true.
“So be it!” he said; “I forbear! But let the lady appear again, once more would I gaze on her beauty!”

So she re-appeared, as she had melted into the air, and the Mikado gazed in delight on her beauty; his heart was made glad by her radiance. The old man too was made glad, for His Majesty gave him a title, high-sounding and full of dignity, and his heart was well content.

Yet the Mikado lingered, and presently addressed these verses to the lovely moon-maiden:

Sadly returns the hunting-party
That set forth so full of hope;
My heart also is full of sorrow,
For I go back without the moon-maiden,
And she resists my entreaties!

The moon-maiden wrote these verses in answer:
Humble the house where the maiden dwells;  
Trailing hop-vines grow over the roof.  
Not less humble the heart of the maiden.  
How could she dare to gaze  
On the jade-decked imperial palace?

Reading these words, the Mikado knew not what to do, whether to stay or to return. So he lingered until the dawn came, and then gave orders to depart for the palace.

The moon-maiden's face dwelt in his heart, and the thought of her charms lingered in his memory, so that he no longer found solace in the company of the court ladies, though they were fair and of many accomplishments. He therefore sent verses and letters forth to the moon-maiden, and she indeed replied, very gently and courteously, sending letters in return.

IX.

Then a great change came over the moon-maiden, though at first the old, old man and his old, old wife neither marked it nor understood it. But the maidens who waited on her noted that, night by night, she went forth to gaze at the moon, and as she gazed she wept. As the moon grew, from slender crescent to full shield, so grew her grief, but when the moon was waning, and the dark nights came, something of gladness returned to her.

As the months grew, from the chill morns of cherry-blossoms, to the long daylight of wisteria and scented iris, so grew the gloom of the moon-maiden, waxing as the moon grew, then waning for a space, when the time of the moonless nights came.

The maidens spoke of it to the old, old man, praying him to question her. So the old man said to her:

"Why does my daughter grieve, and why are her cheeks pale and wet with tears? Does my daughter seek anything, to make her happiness complete?"

"Gazing on the moon as it waxes and wanes, and thinking on the mutability of things, I grieve for the sadness of human life!"

Again and again the old man questioned her, going softly to her room and saying:

"Why grieves my daughter, well-beloved? And what is the hidden fountain of her grief?"

"Nay I grieve not," answered the moon-maiden, "unless it be for the sadness of this world, which breaks my heart!"

"Then gaze no more on the moon!" said the old man, "for from moon-gazing comes mournfulness!"
Then came the eighth month, the time of the first red leaves on the maple, and of the first chrysanthemums, and the moon-maiden was heart-broken, weeping unceasingly. At last, yielding to the entreaties of the old man and his old wife, she spoke thus to them:

"I would have told you long ago,—yet I feared to wring your dear hearts with anguish! but I may no longer delay, for the time has come for me to go! No maid of the earth am I, but in the city of

THE MAIDEN WEEPS AS THE TIME FOR HER DEPARTURE DRAWS NEAR.

the moon was I born, among the celestials. Long years ago, in the moonland was it ordained that I should come to this earth, here to abide for a while; but my time has come, to go. As this eighth moon waxes, so do my days here wane. With the coming of the full moon will come my time also, and my people will come for me from moonland, and therefore I greatly grieve!"

But the old man was full of anger and despite when he heard her:
"Are you not my daughter?" he said; "Did I not find you, a very tiny thing, in a bamboo's hollow stem? Did not my old, old wife fondle you? Did we not rear you? None shall dare to take you from us!"

Sorrowing for his sorrow, the moon-maiden answered him:

"There is no help! My father and mother are of the celestials, and dwell in the moon city. I was sent to the earth for a season only, and now I must away. My heart is torn that I must leave you, yet there is no help!"

So they all wept together, the moon-maiden and the old man, and his old wife, and the maidens that waited on her.

These things were told to the Mikado, in whose heart still dwelt the image of the moon-maiden, and he was grieved and sent for the old wood-cutter, and questioned him. The old man answered thus:

"With the full moon will come a host from the moon city, to carry off my beloved daughter! But were His Majesty to deign to order a company of soldiers to guard her, then would she be saved to me." The heart of the Mikado was touched, and he ordered one of his generals to take men of the guard, two thousand in number, to the wood-cutter's house, against the full moon. The general posted them about the house and upon the roof, and every warrior of them held his bow bent, with the notch of the arrow on the string.

The moon-maiden they hid in the innermost chamber, and the old man himself fastened the door upon her.

But the moon-maiden told them there was no help; when the celestials came from the moon city, their guard would avail nothing, and that she must indeed go.

The old man was grieved and wroth at her words:

"I will tear their faces with my nails!" he cried. "I will pull out the hair of these celestials! I will shame them all before the faces of his majesty's warriors!"

But the moon-maiden admonished him, saying:

"Take heed lest the warriors hear these words, which were a shame and a confusion! But my heart is very sore, for I must go. Nor shall it be given me to come back, for the doors of this world will be closed to me, so that I cannot come to tell you of my love for you! Very earnestly I entreated that I might linger yet a year with you, loving you, but it might not be! My heart is sore to think that old age will come upon you, and I shall be very far away, nor will there be any child of yours to tend you!"
So the moon-maiden wept, and the old man consoled her.

X.

Twilight came, and then darkness. Then the moon rose, the full moon of the eighth month, and sailed upward to the roof-tree of the heavens.

As the full moon shone down on the house of the wood-cutter, a great brightness descended from the sky and hung over the house; a light as of ten moons at once, so that the fine pores of the skin could be clearly discerned. In the sheen of that great light a glistening cloud appeared, bright like silver, and on the cloud were celestial spirits ranged, rank upon rank, with one who commanded them.

The cloud descended, gleaming like silver, until it rested hovering in the still air, immediately over the wood-cutter's dwelling.

When the warriors of the Mikado, each with his finger on the arrow, beheld the ranks of celestial warriors glistening there on the silver cloud, the heart for fighting went out of them, and their arms fell powerless at their sides. Even the most valiant among them, though they strove hard and indeed discharged their arrows against the celestials, shot far wide of the mark, so that their shafts fell harmless back to the earth. Thus was their guard of no avail against the celestials.

The chief of the celestial warriors, in a silvery white garment very resplendent, then came forward, and stood upon the margin of the cloud, with his shining warriors behind him. Standing there, he summoned the wood-cutter to come forth from the dwelling.

He indeed came forth, his knees quaking, and his lips all tremulous, and he cast himself on the ground, when he beheld the celestials. Thus did the chief of the celestials address him:

"Old man of little wit! Yet did you show some virtue and worth; and for this cause was the moon-maiden sent to your abode, and much gold was bestowed upon you, as the reward of your love and tenderness toward her. For a fault committed among the celestials was she sent hither, but a little while; and now that her fault is expiated, she must return. Bring her, therefore, and take your leave of her!"

"Many long years," the old man answered, "have I tended the moon-maiden, with gentle care and affection. How does my lord call this 'but a little while'? But I know not where she dwells whom my lord seeks. The maiden who dwells here is very sick, and cannot come forth."
THE WOING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

The chief of the celestials, very luminous, answered him not, but called on the moon-maiden to come forth:

"Child of the moon!" he cried, "will you abide longer in this mean dwelling of the earth?"

As the chief of the celestial warriors spoke these words, the outer door of the wood-cutter’s house opened of itself, and the door of the inner chamber slid back in its grooves. The moon-maiden came forth to the door, and stood there in the silvery light. Her maidens around her wept, knowing that she must indeed depart, and that there was no help.

XI.

The moon-maiden came slowly forth from the house. Stepping reluctantly, she went forward to where the old man lay, reputed her father, very abject and abased for fear of the celestials.

"Father!" she said, "my fate is calling me, and I must away! Will not my father raise his eyes, to follow me, as I am borne up through the air?"

But the old man lay on his face, very wretched and miserable.

"Why should I follow you with my eyes?" he answered. "Let be what must be, and let me be left desolate and alone, a poor old man, and helpless. Let the celestials bear you away, since they have come for you!"

So the old, old man grieved, and would not be comforted. Then seeing that the old man was too cast down even to lift his eyes to her face, or to bid her farewell, the moon-maiden bethought her, and wrote a letter for him, which he might read when she was gone, and as she wrote it, she wept bitterly. This is what the moon-maiden wrote to her father:

"My father! Had I been born your child in the ways of the earth, never would I have left you to desolate old age. But I am of other destiny, and I must go. I leave behind me, for a memory, my scarf of silk. When the moon, my abode, rises full above the earth, let my father gaze at it, knowing that I am there! Would that I could come back to him again, gliding down like a falling star!"

The time grew short. From among the celestials, some came close to the moon-maiden, bearing a robe of heavenly plumage, and in a cup, the water of life.

"Drink of the water of life!" they said to the moon-maiden; "that the grossness of this earth may be purged away from you!"

The moon-maiden sipped at the cup, and would have hidden
some of the water of life, to leave for her old father, but the celestials forbade her, and over her shoulders they spread the robe of heavenly plumage. But she held it back for a little saying:

"Patience, a little patience! Yet one message must I send before I wear this robe; for whoever wears it, the memory of the earth falls away from him, and of all the things of the earth!"

One of the celestials would have hurried her, but she wrote on, sadly and gently withstanding him. This is what she now wrote.

"Obeisance to His Majesty the Mikado! Your Majesty graciously deigned to send two thousand men of your guard to protect me, and for this I am grateful, even though it be ordained otherwise and I must go!

"Your Majesty graciously honored his servant, seeking to bring me to the palace, and she is very sensible of the honor. But it was not so ordained, nor was it permitted to me to go. Therefore
THE WOOGING OF THE MOON-MAIDEN.

Your Majesty will pardon me, knowing that it was not rudeness on my part that kept me away, but the rule of the celestials.

"The time has come for your servant to don the heavenly plumage, and bid farewell, sadly and with tears departing!"

This writing she gave to the commander of the Mikado's guard, that had been sent to protect her, two thousand men. With it she sent the cup of the water of life to the Mikado, and then drew the robe of heavenly plumage on her.

As she covered herself with the shining robe, suddenly all memories of the earth fell from her, nor did she remember the pain of him who had been her father, for those who wear this robe make an end of sorrow forever.

The moon-maiden mounted the cloud of silvery light, and with all the celestials around her ascended upward into the sky of night, a great radiance falling earthward from her.

The old, old man and his old, old wife, and the maidens that had waited on her, shed bitter tears, but it availed nothing, for the moon-maiden was gone. The old man lamented grievously, saying:

"Woe is me, a poor old man, very wretched! Desolate old age is come upon me, with no child to tend my failing years! What is life worth, where there is none to give and receive love?" So he would not touch the cup of the water of life, but thrust it from him.

xii.

When the great radiance had faded, and the moon alone stood in the crown of the night-sky, the commander of the Mikado's guard, seeing there was no more reason to remain, ordered his men to form rank, and return to Kyoto, the capital.

Returning, he told how he had sought in vain to withstand the celestials, whom none among mortals may oppose. He told how the moon-maiden had departed on high, and delivered to the august sovereign the letter and the cup of the water of life that she had left behind her.

The august sovereign took the letter, very gently, for the moon-maiden's image still reigned in his royal heart, and he was touched to the heart when he read it, and withdrew from his court for a season.

Then His Majesty summoned the Grand Council of the empire, and asked them thus:

"Which is loftiest among the mountains of my dominions?"

The council answered:

"Not very remote from the great capital, Kyoto, is there a
mountain, very lofty, towering above all the mountains in His Majesty's empire!"

Learning this, the Mikado wrote these verses:

Never again shall I see her!
Bitter tears overcome me.
But as for me, left desolate,
What have I to do with the cup
Of the water of life she has left?

So the moon-maiden's letter, and the cup of the water of life were sent, very reverently, by a trusty messenger. Going with faithful and valiant warriors, he straightway betook him to the lofty mountain, toiling painfully up to the summit.

When he came at last to the crest of the mountain, looking down on the sea-plain and the earth-plain, and with nought but the vast sky overhead, he bowed reverently, and making a fire, set in the midst of it the moon-maiden's letter and the water of life, that the flames might consume them.

The immortal draught burned in the flames, yet it could not be consumed. So the flame burns on the mountain-top to this day, and therefore men call the mountain Fuji-yama, which indeed has many meanings, but one of them is "the mountain of immortality."