



Smithsonian Institution

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Set of Underwood & Underwood stereographs of Japan

Extracted on Apr-20-2024 08:43:24

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You are in the northeastern part of the city and are facing nearly northeast. This is the most important and popular of several approaches to the great Buddhist temple of Kwannon the Goddess of Mercy. The pagoda-roofed gate which you see ahead at the end of the street marks the entrance to the temple grounds.

The buildings alongside this street are shops for the sale of all sorts of toys and trinkets, charms and amulets—every sort of trifle that could tempt crowds of holiday-makers to spend small change. The first shop on the left is for candies; the uppermost sign advertises parched beans—the Japanese equivalent of "popped corn."

The temple is the most popular one in all Tokyo; people are coming and going more or less everyday in the week and the temple premises are the favorite playground of children all day long. (For exceedingly interesting explanations of the religious ideas and rites of these people, read Davidson's "Present Day Japan," Hearn's "Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan," or Scherer's "Japan Today"—the latter quotes some Buddhist sermons.)

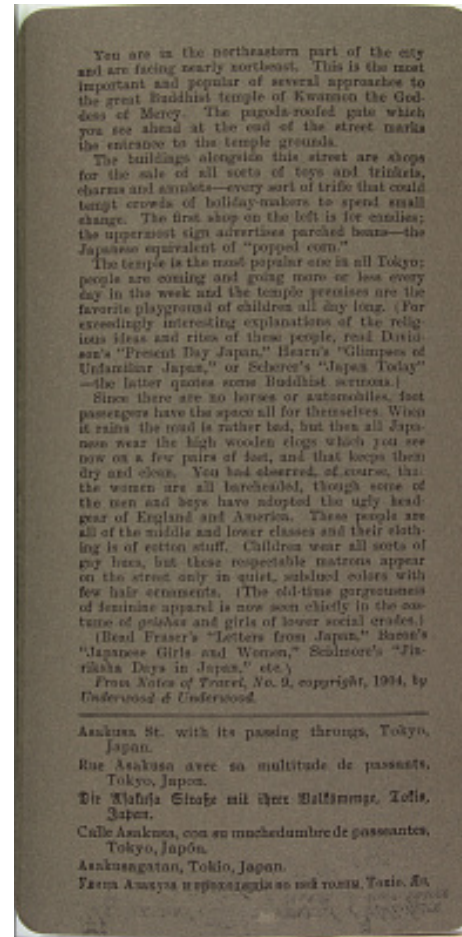
Since there are no horses or automobiles, foot passengers have the space all for themselves. When it rains the mud is rather bad, but then all Japanese wear the high wooden clogs which you see now on a few pairs of feet, and that keeps them dry and clean. You had observed, of course, that the women are all bareheaded, though some of the men and boys have adopted the ugly headgear of England and America. These people are all of the middle and lower classes and their clothing is of cotton stuff. Children wear all sorts of gay hues, but these respectable matrons appear on the street only in quiet, subdued colors with few hair ornaments. (The old-time gorgeousness of feminine apparel is now seen chiefly in the costume of geishas and girls of lower social grades.)

(Read Fraser's "Letters from Japan," Bacon's "Japanese Girls and Women," Scidmore's "Jinriksha Days in Japan," etc.)

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[[Double-line]]

Asakusa St. with its passing throngs, Tokyo, Japan.
Rue Asakusa avec sa multitude de passants, Tokyo, Japon.
Die Asakusa Straße mit ihrer Volksmenge, Tokio, Japan.
Calle Asakusa, con su muchedumbre de paseantes, Tokyo, Japón.



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