



Smithsonian Institution

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Set of Underwood & Underwood stereographs of Japan

Extracted on Apr-23-2024 09:45:15

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The village here about six hours journey N. W. from Tokyo. It is a favorite summer resort of foreigners, especially those engaged in missionary work. The visits of missionaries account for the presence of glass windows in that little schoolhouse—a most uncommon detail in this land where paper is in nearly universal use. The heavy straw-thatched roof is thoroughly Japanese.

These little people live close by and go to school here many weeks in the year. Look at their gay cotton kimonos and aprons and those curious styles of foot-gear. The wooden clogs with two bridges underneath to hold them up out of the dirt are held to the foot by a cord passing over the toes; the flat sandals of plaited straw are held in place the same way. One girl at least wears white stockings—each stocking has the place for the great toe separated from the rest like the thumb of a mitten, to allow the sandal-strap to pass between the toes. Any American or European would feel absurdly awkward with such things on his feet, but these boys and girls play the liveliest running games without ever dropping clog or sandal.

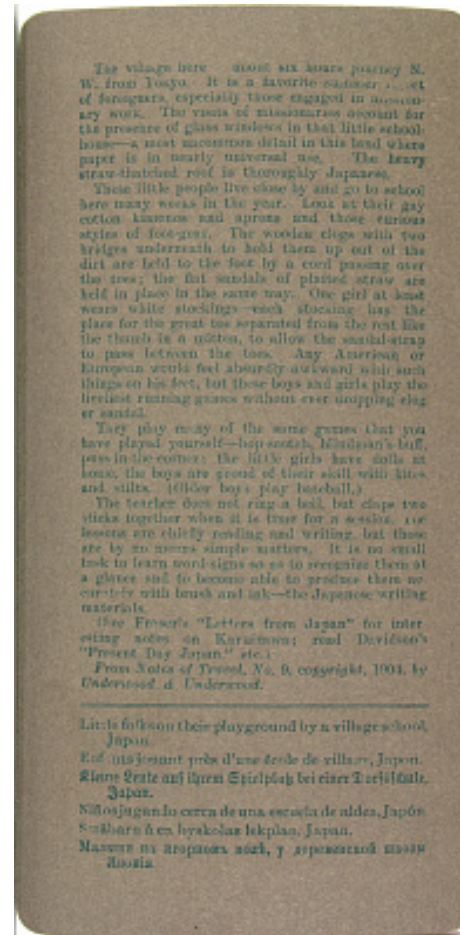
They play many of the same games that you have played yourself—hop-scotch, blindman's-buff, puss-in-the-corner; the little girls have dolls at home, the boys are proud of their skill with kites and stilts. (Older boys play baseball.)

The teacher does not ring a bell, but claps two sticks together when it is time for a session. The lessons are chiefly reading and writing, but those are by no means simple matters. It is no small task to learn word-signs so as to recognize them at a glance and become able to produce them accurately with brush and ink—the Japanese writing materials.

(See Fraser's "Letters from Japan" for interesting notes on Karuizawa; read Davidson's "Present Day Japan," etc.)

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Little folks on their playground by a village school, Japan.
 Enfants jouant près d'une école de village, Japon.
 Kleine Leute auf ihrem Spielplatz bei einer Dorfschule, Japan.
 Niños jugando cerca de una escuela de aldea, Japón.
 Sapbarn á en byskolas lekplan, Japan.



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