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LOW VOICE

ART SONGS OF JAPAN

(Yamata Shirabe)

Traditional Japanese Themes and Poems

By

GERTRUDE ROSS

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大 和 調 へ

My interest in the music of the Japanese was awakened when a little Japanese woman played for me on the samisen. The weirdness of this music founded on scales so entirely different from ours, impressed me with its unusual intervals and rhythms. The unresolved melodies, without our cadence, gives a sense of something so foreign to our occidental ears, that it is indeed an awakening.

I wrote down these quaint airs, which, with some fragments culled from their ancient folk-lore, and music written for the Koto, form the foundation of the following sketches.

The Koto is the instrument of the upper classes, while the samisen belongs to the people. The figure on the title page is playing the Koto.

The poems are translations from the poets of the period 300 to 700 A. D. In this period the height of Japanese poetry was reached. The verses were short, mostly in "Tanka" form, consisting of five lines with thirty-one syllables.

So impressionistic and vivid are these lovely little odes, they reveal the secret of all Japanese art—merely suggesting, and not weighing down with detail and elaboration.

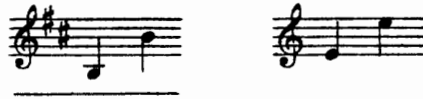
The translations of the Japanese poems, "Old Samurai Prayer," "Butterfly," "Love-Lay of Mikado Temmu" "Slumber Song of Izumo" and "Fuji" are from "Meistersingers of Japan" by Clara E. Walsh, and are used with the kind permission of the publishers, E. P. Dutton & Co.

GERTRUDE ROSS
Los Angeles
July, 1917

Old Samurai Prayer^{*}

KOMACHI 700 A.D.

GERTRUDE ROSS



Andante

Voice *mf*

Piano

May the Springs pure - ly flow

And sick - ness cease. May Vic - to - ry crown our House, — And treas - ure

stores in - crease. — E - vil no long - er grow — And

all the World know Peace! —

mp *p*

*The Samurai is the Military Class of Japan

Butterfly



This song is sung in nearly all parts of Japan, although it comes from the Province of Izumo. The name "Na" is given to several different kinds of plants, but here probably refers to the Japanese wild mustard.

The pronunciation of Japanese words is not difficult as each vowel forms a syllable, and is always pronounced ä, e, i, ö, u.

The Japanese words are very singable, and I would recommend singing this little song through first in English and then in Japanese.

For the benefit of those interested I will give a literal translation of the words in this little poem. I wish to acknowledge the kind assistance of Kenzo Kubota in these notes and translations.

Chocho! Chocho!
Na no ha ni tomaré!
Na no ha ga iyénara,
Té ni tomaré!

Chocho, butterfly.

Na, wild mustard.

no, on.

ha, leaf.

tomaré, light or perch.

iyénara, tired or dislike.

Té, hand.

Using these words we have the literal translation--

Butterfly, Butterfly, light upon the leaf of the wild mustard. If you are tired of the leaf of wild mustard light on my hand.

Butterfly

CHŌ-CHŌ

Child's Song
Province of Izumo

GERTRUDE ROSS

Leggierézza, non molto allegro

Voice

Piano

mf

But - ter - fly,
Chō - chō

8

Red. * *Red.* *

But - ter - fly ——— Light up - on a Na - leaf, pray!
Chō - chō ——— Na no ha ni to - ma-ré!

Or if Na - leaf tempt you not, On my hand a - light and
Na no ha ga i - yé na - ra Té ni to - ma - ré!

meno mosso

sway
Té ni to - ma - ré!

meno mosso *rit.*

Hand and Na - leaf both are nigh - Light up - on one
Na no ha ga i - yé na - ra, Té ni to - ma-ré

But - - - ter - fly!
Chō - - - chō!

10 *molto accel.* 8

Red. * *Red.* *

Fireflies

Fireflies are connected with weird legends and folk-lore. Insects, birds, animals and fish have a peculiar significance to such nature lovers as the Japanese. The Fireflies are compared to stars that have left the heavens to wander upon the earth. Every summer thousands of people visit Uji to see the Hotaru-Kassen, or Firefly Battle.

Fireflies

HOTARU

Text adapted from translations by
LAFADIO HEARN
from the Japanese

GERTRUDE ROSS

Allegro grazioso; leggiero assai ♩ = 144

Voice

Piano

Fire - - flies, Fire - flies, Al - read - y spark - ling,

sempre stacc.

and it is not yet dark! Ah - the Fire - - flies!

they hide them-selves in the moon - light! _____

rit. *a tempo*

rit. *a tempo* *accel.*

8.....

When the wa - ter grass - es

a tempo

8.....

Ap-pear to grow dark, the Fire-flies be-gin to fly! _____

molto accel. *e*

leggiero *vivo*

8.....

Love-Lay Indited by the Mikado Temmu

A.D. 673-86

From the Manyôshiu

The musical setting is founded on the following fragments of original Japanese themes.

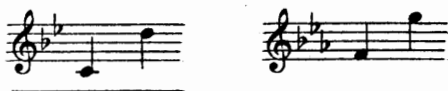


Nature plays so intimate a part in the Japanese life, it is little wonder their greatest emotions are compared to some phase of nature.

Just as we find constant reference to the falling cherry blossom, meaning shortness and illusion of mortal existence, so the perpetual snow and rain is symbolic of unending love.

Love-Lay Indited by the Mikado Temmu

A.D. 673-86



From the Manyōshū

GERTRUDE ROSS

Moderato assai *mf*

Voice *Lo! on Mi - ka - ne's heights In*

Piano

fair Yo - shi - no's Land, Tire - less the

snow a - lights on wind - ing moun - tain ways;

più mosso *cresc.*

There the fierce - driv - en rain Ev - er its rage dis -

f più mosso *cresc.* *sf*

mp tranquillo

plays. So, just as cease - less - ly,

col voce

meno mosso

Snow and rain fall, Dwell all my thoughts on

p *meno mosso*

molto espressivo
with exaltation *ten.*

thee — Lov - ed a - bove all! —

p

Slumber Song of Izumo



This Slumber Song is a very ancient one and is found in various forms in the different provinces. I have used the Izumo version.

The Loquat leaves are exactly the shape of a rabbit's ears. The queer rhythm and quaint naïveté of the Japanese words are charmingly illustrated in this poem.

In using the Japanese words, several notes will be found on one vowel sound, where in the English these notes have a syllable. I prefer leaving the notes for the English without inserting ties and small notes for the Japanese words as these can easily be ascertained.

Nenneko
O-yama no
Usagi no ko,
Naze mata
O-mimi ga
Nagai e yara?
Okkasan no
O-naka ni
Oru toku ni,
Biwa no ha,
Tabeta sona,
Sore de
O-mimi ga
Nagai e sona.

Nennero is a derivative of the verb neru - to sleep.

ko, child.

nenne-ko, sleep baby - child.

Usagi, hare.

no, of.

Naze mata, why.

O-mimi, ears.

Nagai e yara, long and slender.

Okkasan, mother.

Oru toku ni, where stay.

Biwa, loquat.

ha, leaf.

Sasa, bamboo.

sore de, that is why.

Slumber Song of Izumo

Text 700 A.D.

GERTRUDE ROSS



Andantino *p*

Voice

Sleep, ba-by sleep! On
Nen - ne - ko O -

Piano

misterioso pochetto accel.

moun - tains steep The chil-dren of the hare are stray - ing.
ya - - ma no U - sa - gi no ko Na - ze Ma - ta

Why are their soft brownears so long and slen - der Peep-ing a - bove the rocks
O - mi - mi ga Na - gai e ya - ra? O - mi - mi ga

Quasi narrante

Where they are play - ing? Be-cause their moth-er, ere they yet were born, Ate the ,
Na - gai e ya - ra? Ok - ka - san no y O - na - ka ni O - ru

Lo - quat leaves in the dew - y morn, And the bam - boo grass long and
 to - ki ni, Bi - wa no ha, Sa - sa no ha, Ta - be - ta

L. II.

naturalmente

slen - der - That's why the ears of ba-by hares are long!
 so - na; So - re de O - mi - mi ga Na - gai e so - na.

Tempo I

Sleep, ba - by sleep! to the lilt — of my song!
 Nen - ne - ko Nen - ne - ko.

perdendosi

pp

Fuji

Ode to the Mountain Fujiyama

Japanese theme



It seems fitting to close this little group of Uta with the "Ode to Fujiyama" for this typifies the depth of reverence and worship of the Japanese for the beautiful in nature.

The majesty and beauty of this noble mountain have been constant themes for poets and painters, and a Japanese writer declares, "from time immemorable Fujiyama has exercised a silent influence on the formation of Japanese character."

Mt. Fuji stands isolated in the midst of a great plain, and on its southern side slopes gracefully down to the sea. In winter it is covered from base to summit with snow. It may be seen from thirteen provinces of Nippon. The solemn grandeur and impressive beauty of Fujiyama make it one of the noblest mountains in the world.

Fuji

Ode to the Mountain Fujiyama



ARIKOTO 700 A. D.

GERTRUDE ROSS

Lento molto Nobile *Andante maestoso*

Voice

Piano

A thous-and times I gaze up-on thy

The first system of the musical score. It features a voice part and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is D major (two sharps). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. The tempo/mood markings are 'Lento molto Nobile' and 'Andante maestoso'. The lyrics are 'A thous-and times I gaze up-on thy'.

form, — A thous-and times and each more won-der - full!

ten.

The second system of the musical score. It continues the voice and piano parts. The lyrics are 'form, — A thous-and times and each more won-der - full!'. There is a 'ten.' (tension) marking above the piano part.

Più vivo *cresc. molto* *marcato*

Swift with the drift - ing clouds tu-mul - tuous storm The driv - ing

R.H.

The third system of the musical score. It continues the voice and piano parts. The tempo/mood markings are 'Più vivo', 'cresc. molto', and 'marcato'. The lyrics are 'Swift with the drift - ing clouds tu-mul - tuous storm The driv - ing'. There is an 'R.H.' (Right Hand) marking above the piano part.

meno mosso

winds So dost thou smile or frown -

volante con fuoco

espressivo *with great fervor and reverence*

Yet al-ways beau-teous wheth-er storm or shine, O ma-gic moun-tain!

mf *dim.*

Fu - ji the Di - vine!

Tempo I

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NIGHT IN THE DESERT



FAITH BOERNCKE

GERTRUDE ROSS

Tempo rubato

VOICE

Andantino-che elude End-less reaches of grey

PIANO

mp

sand, Waves of sea

poco moto

Save that those waves are

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LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE



FRITZ HART

WILLIAM REDDICK

Andante espressivo

PIANO

pp sempre legato

cresc.

mf

Love, place your hand in mine, And I will gent-ly lead you,

pp a tempo

sempre legato

f

lead you on the way That leads thro' dusk and night In-to the

mf

cresc.

subito p

day Love, place your hand in mine.

mf

pp colla voce

rall.

f.a.

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A JUNE PASTORAL



CARYL B. STORRS

META SCHUMANN

Allegro (M.M. 104)

PIANO

ff brillante

dim. e rit.

a tempo

The grass is long, the branch-es low, And the

a tempo

poco rall.

wild grape bloom is sweet; The ants are build-ing their

rit.

a tempo

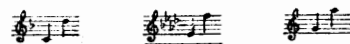
vil-lage nests Where the fern fronds bend and meet, The

rit.

a tempo

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God Smiled Upon the Desert



ELIZABETH GORDON

CHARLES WAKEFIELD CADMAN, Op. 64- No. 3

Maestoso

VOICE

mf

God smiled

PIANO

ff

mp

Andante semplicissimo

God smiled up-on the des-ert, and there

mp

con Ped.

grew a won-drous flow-er, a won-drous flower of gor-geous sheen and hue,

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