

members of the Emperor's family. When he has composed one of his prayers for the Emperor or the introduction to some poem, he becomes the object of universal praise.

(399) A learned priest is also splendid. It is impressive enough when he reads his breviary by himself, but how much more so when he is among several Lectors officiating in the Sacred Readings at one of the fixed periods! It is getting dark. 'Why haven't they brought the oil?' says one of the Lectors. 'How late they are in lighting the lamps!' All the Lectors stop reading, but the learned priest continues quietly reciting the scriptures from memory.

An Imperial Procession by the Empress in daytime.

(400) The Empress's birth chamber.

(401) The ceremony of installing a new Empress. On this occasion tables are arranged in front of her dais together with the lion and the Korean dog. Then the people from the Table Office bring in the Imperial Cauldron. As one watches all this, it is difficult to believe that this same Empress was recently an ordinary person known simply as 'Princess'.

(402) The procession of the First Man. His pilgrimage to Kasuga Shrine.

Grape-coloured material.

Anything purple is splendid, be it flowers, thread, or paper. Among purple flowers, however, I do not like the iris despite its gorgeous colour. What makes the costume of Sixth Rank Chamberlains so attractive when they are on night duty is the purple trousers.

A large garden all covered with snow.

(403) The eldest son of our present Emperor is still a child, but how splendid he looks when he is in the arms of Their Excellencies, his handsome young uncles, when he is being served by senior courtiers, or when his horse is led out for inspection! Seeing the young Prince at such times, one would say that nothing unpleasant could ever happen to him.

85. *Graceful Things*

A slim, handsome young nobleman in a Court cloak.

A pretty girl casually dressed in a trouser-skirt, over which she wears only a loosely sewn coat. Some herbal balls are attached to her sleeve by a long cord, and she is seated by the balustrade, her face hidden behind a fan.

An attractive young woman raises the lower part of a white curtain of state and attaches it to the cross-bar on top. Over her unlined robe of white damask she wears a coat of violet gauze. (404) She is engaged in writing practice, and the fine, smooth sheets of her notebook are elegantly bound by threads of uneven shading.

A letter written on fine green paper is attached to a budding willow branch.

A bearded basket, beautifully dyed, is attached to a five- (405) needled pine branch.

A fan with three ribs. Five-ribbed fans are too thick and they look ugly in the middle.

An attractively designed cypress box. (406)

Thin white braid.

A cypress-thatched roof, neither too new nor too old, is (407) beautifully covered with iris.

Below a green bamboo blind one catches sight of a curtain of state whose bright, glossy material is decorated with a pattern of decaying wood. It is pretty too when the ornamental curtain- (408) cord is allowed to flutter in the breeze.

One day by the balustrade before a set of thin head-blinds I (409) saw a pretty cat with a red collar and a white name-tag. He looked very elegant as he walked along, pulling his anchor cord and biting it.

The Lady Chamberlains who distribute iris during the Festival of the Fifth Month. They have garlands of iris on their heads, and their costumes are enhanced by shoulder sashes and (410) waist-bands which, except for the colour, remind me of the ribbons worn by the Young Noblemen of the Lesser Abstinence. (411) They make a most elegant sight as they distribute their herbal balls. The princes of the blood, Court Nobles, and other gentlemen who have been standing in a row waiting to receive the balls

While McCullough's anthology has many sections of the Pillow Book, I would also like you to read these.

from Ivan Morris, trans. *The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon*. Vol. 1 (Columbia UP, 1967).

reasons for writing } }
(442) delightful scent, which it was impossible to identify. The air was very damp. Even though nothing noteworthy took place, there was something peculiarly elegant about the entire scene, which makes me feel bound to mention it. The Captain's scent permeated the screen and lingered there till the following day. Small wonder that the younger ladies-in-waiting should have felt this was something unique!

90. *One of Her Majesty's Wet-Nurses*

One of Her Majesty's wet-nurses who held the Fifth Rank left today for the province of Hyūga. Among the fans given her by the Empress as a parting gift was one with a painting of a travelers' lodging, not unlike the Captain of Ide's residence. On the other side was a picture of the capital in a heavy rainstorm with someone gazing at the scene. In her own hand the Empress had written the following sentence as if it were an ordinary piece of prose: 'When you have gone away and face the sun that shines so crimson in the East, be mindful of the friends you left behind, who in this city gaze upon the endless rains.' It was a very moving message, and I realized that I myself could not possibly leave such a mistress and go away to some distant place.

91. *Annoying Things*

One has sent someone a poem (or a reply to a poem) and, after the messenger has left, thinks of a couple of words that ought to be changed.

One has sewn something in a hurry. The task seems finished, but on pulling out the needle one discovers that one forgot to knot the end of the thread. It is also very annoying to find that one has sewn something back to front.

(445) One day when the Empress was staying in the Southern Palace, she went to visit His Excellency, her father, in the western wing. I and the other ladies-in-waiting were gathered in the main building with nothing particular to do. We wandered along the corridors, trying to distract ourselves in one way or another. Then a messenger came from Her Majesty. 'A robe is wanted in a hurry,' we were told. 'All of you are to get together

and make sure that it is delivered to the Empress, fully sewn, before the next watch.' We were then given some plain silk material. (446)

My companions and I assembled at the front of the main hall, each of us taking a piece of silk and each determined to be the first to finish her work. We sat side by side, not facing each other, and started sewing at great speed. Nurse Myōbu, who did the wide sleeves, finished her work before anyone else. In her haste, however, she did not notice that she had sewn one piece of material inside out. Without even tying the final knot, she laid down the sleeves and stood up.

When it came to putting the different parts of the dress together at the back, we soon realized that there had been a mistake. The ladies laughed and scolded the nurse, saying, 'You'd better do it over again properly.' 'And who do you suppose would admit she had made a mistake in sewing?' said the nurse. 'With patterned silk, of course, one would have to start again if one had mistaken the front for the back, but with plain material like this what does it matter? If anyone has to do her work again, I don't see why it should be me. Ask the girls who still haven't finished their sewing.'

Since she could not be persuaded, the rest of us had to start our work over again. It was really amusing to watch the expressions of Gen Shōnagon, Shin Chūnagon, and the others as they sat there plying their needles and muttering, 'How does she think she can get away with it?' All this because Her Majesty intended to visit the Emperor that evening and had said, 'I shall know that the one who gets her work done first really loves me.' (447)

It is annoying when a messenger delivers a letter to a person not meant to see it. If he simply admitted his mistake, it would not be so bad. But when he begins insisting that he merely carried out orders, it is really infuriating. If I were not afraid that someone might see me I should rush up and strike him. } }

One has planted some nice clover or *susuki* grass and goes to have a look at it. What a painful and annoying experience to find someone with a long box and a spade who has carefully dug up the plants and is now carrying them away! If a gentleman were present, the fellow would not dare act like this. On being reproached, he answers, 'I've only taken a little,' and hurries off. (448)

handwriting, which was traced on heavy, nut-brown paper, was very weak, as though done by some old priest:

Here we keep our sombre, oak-dyed clothes
In memory of him who died.
But in the capital no doubt
The clothes are changed to brighter hues.

(653)

Tōzammī was extremely shocked and wondered who could have sent it. The Archbishop of Niwa occurred to her as a possibility, yet surely he could not have written such a letter. So who was responsible? It must be the Fujiwara Major Counsellor, since he was Director of the late Emperor's household. She would have liked to let Their Majesties know about it at once; but the Masters of Divination had told her that she must be extremely prudent during the period of abstinence and she restrained her impatience until the two days had passed. On the following morning she wrote her answer to the poem and sent it to the residence of the Fujiwara Major Counsellor, whence a further poem came in reply.

Tōzammī now hurried off to the Empress, taking along the two letters she had received. On arrival she explained what had happened, and the Emperor, who was in the room at the time, heard everything. Her Majesty glanced indifferently at the letters. 'This doesn't look like the writing of the Fujiwara Major Counsellor,' she said. 'It must be from some priest.' 'But who?' said Tōzammī. 'Who among the high nobility or clergy would do such a thing? Can it be Lord So-and-so? Or perhaps it's Bishop So-and-so.'

Seeing Tōzammī so perplexed and curious, the Emperor smiled and said, 'Your letter reminds me of something I've seen here.' Opening a small cupboard, he took out still another letter.

'Oh dear. Do tell me what this is all about,' said Tōzammī insistently. 'My head is aching. I really must know.' She gave a bitter laugh.

Finally the Emperor spoke. 'The demon-child who brought you the letter happens to work as an assistant for one of the servants in our kitchen. But I think it may have been Lady Kohyōe who plotted the whole thing.'

Now Her Majesty burst out laughing. 'Oh!' exclaimed Tōzammī, tugging at the sleeve of the Empress's robe and shaking it.

'How could Your Majesty have played such a trick on me? I never suspected anything like that. Before even opening the letter, I specially washed my hands and knelt down.' Tōzammī laughed and I was delighted by the proud, angry look on her face. There was also loud laughter in the kitchen when the servants heard what had happened.

Returning to her own apartments, Tōzammī sent for the child from the Imperial kitchen and showed him to her maid who had originally taken the letter. 'Yes, that's the boy,' said the maid. 'Who wrote the letter, child, and who handed it to you?' The boy gave a foolish laugh and ran away without a word.

Later the Fujiwara Major Counsellor was told the story and chuckled with delight.

132. *Boring Things*

To leave home because of an abstinence. (659)

To be unable to move a piece forward in a game of backgammon. (660) }

The house of a man who has not received a post during the period of official appointments. (661)

The most boring time of all is when it rains heavily.

133. *Distractions at Boring Times*

Prose romances. The games of *go* and backgammon. }

A baby of two or three who talks in a charming way; or a very small baby who simply smiles and babbles.

Fruit. }

Even during a period of abstinence, if I receive a visit from a man who is witty and good at conversation, I let him come in. }

134. *Things without Merit*

An ugly person with a bad character.

Rice starch that has become mixed with water. . . . I know that this is a very vulgar item and everyone will dislike my mentioning it. But that should not stop me. In fact I must feel free to include anything, even tongs used for the parting-fires. After all, these (662) }

- writing
history
- (663) objects do exist in our world and people all know about them. I admit they do not belong to a list that others will see. But I never thought that these notes would be read by anyone else, and so I included everything that came into my head, however strange
(664) or unpleasant.

135. *Outstandingly Splendid Things*

- What can possibly equal the ceremonies performed in His Majesty's presence on the occasion of the Special Festivals? The rehearsal is also delightful. . . . A bright sun shone in the peaceful spring sky, and in the garden in front of Seiryō Palace
(665) mats had been spread out by men of the Housekeeping Office. The Imperial messengers sat facing north, while the dancers faced the Emperor. (But perhaps my memory is mistaken on this
(666) point.) Assistant Officials of the Emperor's Private Office placed little tables in front of each of the noblemen in attendance. One after another the guests took the bowl and, after holding it for a while, poured some of the wine into a thing called a Yaku shell and drank.
(667) This was followed by the 'gathering of remains'. I find it bad enough to see men doing this; but now to my surprise a lot of
(668) women emerged from the fire-huts, which I had thought were empty, and began helping themselves to the left-overs in a most unsightly way. The women who roughly pushed themselves forward, determined to take as much as possible, actually got less than the ones who darted out nimbly and snatched the first things they could find. I was much amused to see how cleverly they used the little huts as store-rooms for their spoils.
As soon as the men from the Housekeeping Office had removed the mats, some workers arrived from the Office of Grounds, each carrying a broom, and levelled off the sand in the garden.
(669) On the day of the rehearsal even the musicians are allowed to come and go freely in His Majesty's presence. As they reached the front of Shōkyō Palace, one could hear the sound of their flutes and of the wooden clappers beating time. I impatiently waited for them to arrive at Seiryō Palace. Presently they emerged by the side of the fence that surrounds the bamboo garden; they
(670) were singing Udo Beach to the strumming of their zithers, and,

seeing them, I could hardly control my joy. Now two of the dancers ran forward to start the first dance. They stood facing the Emperor, with the sleeves of their robes joined in exactly the right way. The other dancers came out one by one, tapping their feet in time with the music. Having adjusted their costumes—the cords of their short-sleeved jackets, the collar of their over-ropes, their head-dress, and the rest—they began dancing to the accompaniment of The Little Pines and other such songs. (671)
It was really splendid, and I could gladly have watched them all day as they danced, moving their wide sleeves like great wheels. I felt very sorry when they had finished but consoled myself with the thought that there was another dance to come. I was disappointed, however; for now the musicians walked off, carrying their zithers on their shoulders, and the performers immediately danced behind the bamboos. They made a most elegant picture as they glided gracefully away, their cloaks removed from one shoulder to let the sleeve hang down and the long trains of their glossy silk under-ropes stretching out in all directions and becoming entwined with each other. . . . But I am afraid it all seems rather commonplace when put into words.

Now they had gone, and I was left with the sad thought that there would be no more dancing that day. The High Court Nobles and others who had been watching also left, making me feel very forlorn and regretful.

Things are different when the Special Festival is held at Kamo; for then one can look forward to the Sacred Dance of the Return. I remember one such evening. As the smoke rose in
(672) slender wisps from the bonfires in the garden, I listened to the clear, delicate, charmingly tremulous sound of the flute that accompanied the sacred dances. The singing also moved me greatly. Delighted by the scene, I hardly noticed that the air was piercingly cold, that my robes of beaten silk were icy, and that the hand in which I held my fan was almost frozen. Afterwards the director summoned the dancers, and I enjoyed seeing how
(673) pleased he looked when they came running towards him.

When I am staying at home, I am not satisfied with simply watching the procession as it passes on its way back from the Shrine in the evening. Often I will go all the way to Kamo to see the dances. On arrival I tell my men to place the carriage under

slightest idea." And, instead of answering the riddle, he began making jokes.

(691) "I've won!" cried the man who had posed the riddle. "A point for our side!" A token was duly given to the team of the left.

"Disgraceful!" said the members of the other team. "Everyone knows the answer to that riddle. They certainly shouldn't get a point."

"But he said he did not know," replied the man. "How can you claim he hasn't lost?" In this and in each of the subsequent contests he argued so effectively that his side won.

(692) "Later the player who had failed to answer the first riddle was being taken to task by his team-mates. "We admit", they said, "that people can forget the answers to the most obvious questions and have to concede defeat. But what possible reason could you have to say you didn't know?" And they made him pay a forfeit.'

When the Empress had finished her story, all the ladies burst out laughing. 'The people on the team of the right had good reason to be annoyed with their man,' said one of them. 'I can see why they were disappointed. And how furious the other team must have been to hear their candidate lead off with such a silly riddle!'

(693) 'Indeed,' I thought, 'how could anyone possibly forget something so simple and commonplace?'

137. *On the Tenth Day of the First Month*

On the tenth day of the First Month there were thick clouds in the sky but the sun shone through brightly. In a rough, uncultivated field behind a poor dwelling-house grew a young peach tree. Little branches sprouted thickly all over it; I noticed that the leaves were green on one side while on the other they were dark and glossy as if coloured with a deep red dye.

A slender youth, with beautiful hair and wearing a torn hunting costume, had climbed the tree. At the foot stood a little boy; he had on short clogs, and over a plum-red under-robe he wore a white hunting costume tucked up so that it bulged at the waist. 'Come on!' he called to the youth in the tree. 'Cut me a nice branch.'

Just then a small group of girls arrived. They too had pretty hair and their jackets were torn; though their skirts were faded, the colours still looked quite attractive. 'Please cut us some branches,' they shouted to the lad. 'Choose some that we can make into nice hare-sticks. Master sent us for them.'

When the youth in the tree started to throw down branches, the children ran for them helter-skelter, each taking her share and crying, 'Lots for me! Lots for me!' It was a delightful scene.

Then a man in a dirty trouser-skirt came running along and said that he too wanted some branches. The boy asked him to wait for a moment, whereupon the man began shaking the tree. The boy was terrified and clung on like a monkey, which I found most amusing. One is likely to come across similar scenes when the plum trees start bearing fruit.

138. *Two Handsome Men*

Two handsome men are absorbed in a game of backgammon. Though they have been playing all day, they still do not seem tired and order a servant to light the lamp on a short stand. One of the players holds the dice in his hand and, before finally placing them in the box, prays earnestly for a good throw. The other player puts his dice-box on the board. As he sits there waiting, he tucks in the collar of his hunting costume, which has begun to creep up over his face, and shakes his sagging lacquered cap. 'How could anyone possibly lose after reciting all those charms?' he seems to be saying as he stares impatiently at his opponent. What a proud look he has! (694)

A high-ranking gentleman is about to start a game of *go*. He loosens the sash of his cloak and with a negligent air picks up the stones from his box and starts placing them on the board. Meanwhile his opponent, who is of lower rank, sits respectfully at some distance from the board, bending forward, and each time that he reaches out to place a stone he has to push aside his sleeve with the other hand. It is a delightful scene.

139. *Frightening Things*

- (695) The bark of an oak tree.
A place where there has been a fire.
The prickly water-lily, the water-chestnut, and the chestnut-bur.
- (696) A man with lots of thick hair who washes and dries it.

140. *Things That Give a Clean Feeling*

- An earthen cup. A new metal bowl.
A rush mat.
The play of the light on water as one pours it into a vessel.
A new wooden chest.

141. *Things That Give an Unclean Feeling*

- A rat's nest.
Someone who is late in washing his hands in the morning.
White snivel, and children who sniffle as they walk.
The containers used for oil.
- (697) Little sparrows.
- (698) A person who does not bathe for a long time even though the weather is hot.
All faded clothes give me an unclean feeling, especially those that have glossy colours.

(699) 142. *Things That Seem Better at Night Than in the Daytime*

- The lustre of dark red, glossed silk.
A woman who has a drawn forehead but beautiful hair.
The sound of a seven-string zither.
An ugly person with an agreeable nature.
The *hototogisu*.
The sound of a waterfall.

143. *Things That Should Not Be Seen by Firelight*

- Violet robes, wistaria blossoms—indeed, anything of this colour.
Scarlet things look ugly in the moonlight.

144. *Things That Are Unpleasant to Hear*

Someone who has an ugly voice yet speaks and laughs without restraint.

- A drowsy voice reciting incantations. (700)
Someone who speaks while her teeth are being blackened. {
A commonplace person who talks while eating. {
The sound of someone practising the flageolet. (701)

145. *Things That Look Pretty but That Are Bad Inside*

- A screen covered with a painting in the Chinese style. {
A well covered with lime cast.
Offerings presented at religious ceremonies.
The top of a cypress bark roof.
Kōshiri excursions. (702)

146. *Things That Give a Vulgar Impression*

- A Secretary in the Ministry of Ceremonial who has been raised to the Fifth Rank. (703)
Coarse black hair.
A new cloth screen. (When it is old and dirty, it is not worth including among vulgar things; such a screen escapes criticism since people do not even notice its existence.) If one immediately decorates a new cloth screen with elaborate designs of cherry-blossoms, richly colouring it with chalk, cinnabar, and the like, it becomes still more vulgar. All provincial things are vulgar, whether they be screens, sliding-doors, or cupboards. {
The hood of a straw-mat carriage. (704)
The trouser-skirts worn by members of the Imperial Police. (705)

An Iyo blind made of thick reeds.

A little priest who is still only a child but is already becoming fat.

(706) An Izumo straw mat that actually comes from Izumo.

147. *Things That Make One Nervous*

(707) A visit to a horse-race.

(708) Twisting a paper cord for one's hair.

To find that a member of one's family has fallen ill and is looking very unwell. If there is an epidemic at the time, it is still more worrying; in fact one can think of nothing else.

A child who is still too young to speak begins to whimper, then refuses his milk and bursts into a prolonged fit of crying that does not stop even when his nurse picks him up.

One has gone to a quite ordinary place when suddenly one hears a vaguely familiar voice. This alone is enough to make one nervous; but it is still more disquieting if someone else now

(709) comes along and begins speaking about that other person.

When a man or woman whom one loathes comes to call, one becomes extremely nervous.

When a man who has spent the night with a woman is late with his next-morning letter, it worries not only the woman herself but

(710) even people who hear about the matter.

When a woman produces a letter that she has received from a man one loves oneself, it makes one very nervous indeed.

148. *Adorable Things*

(711) The face of a child drawn on a melon.

A baby sparrow that comes hopping up when one imitates the squeak of a mouse; or again, when one has tied it with a thread round its leg and its parents bring insects or worms and pop them in its mouth—delightful!

(713) A baby of two or so is crawling rapidly along the ground. With his sharp eyes he catches sight of a tiny object and, picking it up with his pretty little fingers, takes it to show to a grown-up person.

A child, whose hair has been cut like a nun's, is examining something; the hair falls over his eyes, but instead of brushing it away he holds his head to the side. The pretty white cords of his trouser-skirt are tied round his shoulders, and this too is most adorable. (714)

A young Palace page, who is still quite small, walks by in ceremonial costume.

One picks up a pretty baby and holds him for a while in one's arms; while one is fondling him, he clings to one's neck and then falls asleep.

The objects used during the Display of Dolls. (715)

One picks up a tiny lotus leaf that is floating on a pond and examines it. Not only lotus leaves, but little hollyhock flowers, and indeed all small things, are most adorable.

An extremely plump baby, who is about a year old and has a lovely white skin, comes crawling towards one, dressed in a long gauze robe of violet with the sleeves tucked up.

A little boy of about eight who reads aloud from a book in his childish voice.

Pretty, white chicks who are still not fully fledged and look as if their clothes are too short for them; cheeping loudly, they follow one on their long legs, or walk close to the mother hen. (716)

Duck eggs. (717)

An urn containing the relics of some holy person.

Wild pinks.

149. *Presumptuous Things*

(718)

A child who has nothing particular to recommend him yet is used to being spoilt by people.

Coughing.

One is about to say something to a person who is obviously embarrassed, but then he speaks first—very strange.

A child of about four, whose parents live near by, comes to one's house and behaves mischievously. He picks up one's things, scatters them about the place, and damages them. As a rule he is held in check and cannot do as he wishes, but, when his mother is with him, he feels that he can assert himself. 'Let me see that,

Mama,' he says, tugging at her skirts and pointing to some coveted object. The mother tells him that she is talking to grown-up people and pays no more attention to him, whereupon the child manages to take hold of the object by himself, picks it up, and examines it—oh, how hateful! Instead of snatching the thing from him and hiding it, the mother simply says, 'You naughty child!' Then she adds with a smile, 'You mustn't do that. You'll damage it, you know.' The mother is hateful too. Since it would be unseemly to say anything, one has to sit there in silence, anxiously watching the child.

150. *Things with Frightening Names*

- (719) A pool of green water.
A cavern in a valley.
A board fence.
Iron.
A clod of earth.
Thunder: not only is the name frightening but the thing itself.
A hurricane.
A cloud of ill omen.
The halberd star.
A wolf.
A white-eyed cow.
Prison. A prison warder.
An anchor. Here again one is frightened not only by the name but by the sight of the object.
A rope mat.
A robber is frightening in every possible way.
An 'elbow shower'.
Snake strawberries.
A living ghost.
Devil's yam and devil's fern.
Bramble and the prickly citron.
Dried charcoal.
A peony.
The cow-headed devil.

151. *Words That Look Commonplace but That Become Impressive When Written in Chinese Characters*

can read

- Strawberries. (720)
A dew-plant.
A prickly water-lily.
A walnut.
A Doctor of Literature.
A Provisional Senior Steward in the Office of the Empress's Household.
Red myrtle.
Knotweed is a particularly striking example, since it is written with the characters for 'tiger's stick'. From the look on a tiger's face one would imagine that he could do without a stick.

152. *Words Written in Chinese Characters for Which There Must Be a Reason Though One Cannot Really Understand It*

- Baked salt. (721)
Short under-jackets.
Curtains.
Lacquered clogs.
Starch.
A bucket boat.

153. *Squalid Things*

- The back of a piece of embroidery.
The inside of a cat's ear.
A swarm of mice, who still have no fur, when they come wriggling out of their nest.
The seams of a fur robe that has not yet been lined.
Darkness in a place that does not give the impression of being very clean.

A rather unattractive woman who looks after a large brood of children.

A woman who falls ill and remains unwell for a long time. In the mind of her lover, who is not particularly devoted to her, she must appear rather squalid.

(722) **154. *Trivial Things That Become Important on Special Occasions***

(723) Radishes in the First Month.

(724) Ladies of the Escort when they accompany the Emperor on his processions.

(725) Lady Chamberlains during the breaking of the knots on the last days of the Sixth and Twelfth Months.

(726) Masters of Observances during the seasonal Sacred Readings. What skill they display as they kneel in their red surplices, reading out the roster of the priests!

Assistant Officials of the Emperor's Private Office when they decorate the hall for the Sacred Readings, the Naming of the Buddhas, and other ceremonies.

(727) Imperial Attendants at the Kasuga Festival.

(728) The procession that takes place during the Banquet.

(729) The girls who taste the Imperial wine in the First Month.

(730) The priests who present the Emperor with hare-wands.

(731) The women who dress the hair of the girls during the rehearsals for the Gosechi dances.

(732) Palace Girls who serve at the Imperial Table during the Palace Festivals.

(733) Lower officials of the Great Council on the occasion of a Ministers' Banquet.

(734) *Sumō* wrestlers in the Seventh Month.

(735) Women's lacquered hats on a rainy day.

The helmsman during a boat journey.

155. *People Who Seem to Suffer*

The nurse looking after a baby who cries at night.

A man with two mistresses who is obliged to see them being bitter and jealous towards each other.

An exorcist who has to deal with an obstinate spirit. He hopes that his incantations will take effect quickly; but often he is disappointed and has to persevere, praying that after all his efforts he will not end up as a laughing-stock.

A woman passionately loved by a man who is absurdly jealous.

The powerful men who serve in the First Place never seem to be at ease though one would imagine that they had a pleasant enough life.

Nervous people.

156. *Enviably People*

One has been learning a sacred text by heart; but, though one has gone over the same passage again and again, one still recites it haltingly and keeps on forgetting words. Meanwhile one hears other people, not only clerics (for whom it is natural) but ordinary men and women, reciting such passages without the slightest effort, and one wonders when one will ever be able to come up to their standard.

When one is ill in bed and hears people walking about, laughing loudly and chatting away as if they did not have a care in the world, how enviable they seem!



Once on the day of the Horse in the Second Month I decided to visit Inari. By the time I had reached the Middle Shrine I was already worn out; yet I kept going and was on my way to the Upper Shrine when a group of people passed me. Though they had evidently started after I did, they strode briskly up the hill without the slightest look of discomfort—very enviable. (736)

I had made haste to leave at dawn, but by the Hour of the Snake I was still only half way to the top. To make matters worse, it was gradually becoming hot, and I felt really wretched. When I stopped to rest, I began crying from exhaustion and wondered why I had come on this pilgrimage when there were so many people who had never even thought of making the effort. Just then I saw a woman in her thirties walking down the hill. She was not wearing a travelling costume, but had simply tucked up the (737)

}} first
tear

wind, she was a truly splendid sight. As she gazed at the scene of desolation in the garden, a girl of about seventeen—not a small girl, but still not big enough to be called a grown-up—joined her on the veranda. She wore a night-dress of light violet and over that a faded blue robe of stiff silk, which was badly coming apart at the seams and wet from the rain. Her hair, which was cut evenly at the ends like miscanthus in a field, reached all the way down to her feet, falling on to the veranda beyond the bottom of her robe. Looking at her from the side, I could make out the scarlet of her trouser-skirt, the only bright touch in her costume.

In the garden a group of maids and young girls were collecting the flowers and plants that the wind had torn up by the roots and were propping up some that were less damaged. Several women were gathered in front of me by the blind, and I enjoyed seeing how envious they looked as they watched the young people outside and wished that they might join them.

181. *Charming Things*

(824) Through a partition one hears a lady's hushed voice, followed by the youthful voice of someone answering her and the rustling of clothes as she approaches. It must be time for the lady's meal; for then comes the sound of chop-sticks and spoons, and then the clatter made by the handle of a jug as it falls on its side.

(825) Over a bright robe of beaten silk a lady's hair hangs neatly over her shoulders.

It is evening in a splendidly decorated room. The lamp has not yet been brought in, but a fire is burning brightly in the long brazier, and by its light one can see the glitter of the cords on the curtain of state and the lustre of the hooks that hold up the head-blind.

The skilful painting that decorates the inside of a well-made brazier can be clearly seen by the light of the fire that burns among the neatly raked ashes. It is also very elegant when two fire-irons have been placed across each other and are brightly lit up by the flames.

Late at night, when almost everyone has gone to sleep, one hears some senior courtiers talking to each other outside the

house, while from one of the back rooms comes the repeated sound of *go* stones being dropped into their boxes. (826)

A light shining on an open veranda.

One is awakened in the middle of the night by the voice of a gentleman who has come to pay a secret visit to a lady in the house. One cannot make out what they are saying to each other; but one hears the man laughing softly, which is delightful and excites one's curiosity.

182. *Islands* (827)

The Isles of Uki. The Yaso Islands. Taware Island. The Isle of Mizu. The Matsugaura Islands. Magaki Island. The Isles of Toyora and Tado.

183. *Beaches*

The Beaches of Soto, Fukiage, Naga, Uchide, Moroyose, and Chisato.¹ I imagine that the last one must be enormous. (828)

184. *Bays*

Ou Bay. The Bays of Shiogama and Shiga. Nataka Bay. Korizuma Bay. The Bay of Waka.

185. *Plains* (829)

Inabi, Kata, Koma, Awazu, Tobuhi, and Shimeji Plains, and of course the Plain of Saga.

One is bound to enjoy the name of Sōkei Plain, but I wonder how it came to be called that.

The Plains of Abe, Miyagi, Kasuga, and Murasaki.

186. *Temples*

Tsubosaka, Kasagi, Hōri, Kōya (how moving to think that the Great Teacher, Kōbō, lived there!), Ishiyama, Kokawa, and Shiga. (830)

¹ Lit. 'Beach of a Thousand Hamlets'.

everyone makes a great fuss over them. If they are attractive children, it is only natural that their parents should dote on them. How could it be otherwise? But, if the children have nothing particular to recommend them, one can only assume that such devotion comes merely from the fact of being parents. (928)

I imagine that there can be nothing so delightful as to be loved by everyone—one's parents, one's master, and all the people with whom one is on close terms.

250. *Men Really Have Strange Emotions*

Men really have strange emotions and behave in the most bizarre ways. Sometimes a man will leave a very pretty woman to marry an ugly one. Surely a gentleman who frequents the Palace should choose as his love the prettiest girl of good family he can find. Though she may be of such high standing that he cannot hope to make her his wife, he should, if he is really impressed by the girl, languish for her unto death.

Sometimes, too, a man will become so fascinated by a girl of whom he has heard favourable reports that he will do everything in his power to marry her even though they have never even met.

I do not understand how a man can possibly love a girl whom (929) other people, even those of her own sex, find ugly.

I remember a certain woman who was both attractive and good-natured and who furthermore had excellent hand-writing. Yet when she sent a beautifully written poem to the man of her choice, he replied with some pretentious jottings and did not even bother to visit her. She wept endearingly, but he was indifferent and went to see another woman instead. Everyone, even people who were not directly concerned, felt indignant about this callous behaviour, and the woman's family was much grieved. The man himself, however, showed not the slightest pity.

251. *Sympathy Is the Most Splendid of All Qualities*

Sympathy is the most splendid of all qualities. This is especially true when it is found in men, but it also applies to women. Compassionate remarks, of the type 'How sad for you!' to someone

who has suffered a misfortune or 'I can imagine what he must be feeling' about a man who has had some sorrow, are bound to give pleasure, however casual and perfunctory they may be. If one's remark is addressed to someone else and repeated to the sufferer, it is even more effective than if one makes it directly. The unhappy person will never forget one's kindness and will be anxious to let one know how it has moved him.

If it is someone who is close to one and who expects sympathetic inquiries, he will not be especially pleased, since he is merely (930) receiving his due; but a friendly remark passed on to less intimate people is certain to give pleasure. This all sounds simple enough, yet hardly anyone seems to bother. Altogether it seems as if men and women with good heads rarely have good hearts. Yet I suppose there must be some who are both clever and kind.

252. *It Is Absurd of People To Get Angry*

It is absurd of people to get angry because one has gossiped about them. How can anyone be so simple as to believe that he is free to find fault with others while his own foibles are passed over in silence? Yet when someone hears that he has been discussed unfavourably he is always outraged, and this I find most unattractive. (931)

If I am really close to someone, I realize that it would be hurting to speak badly about him and when the opportunity for gossip arises I hold my peace. In all other cases, however, I freely speak my mind and make everyone laugh.

253. *Features That I Particularly Like*

Features that I particularly like in someone's face continue to give a thrill of delight however often I see the person. With pictures it is different. If I look at them too often, they cease to attract me; indeed, I never so much as glance at the beautiful paintings on the screen that stands near my usual seat.

There is something really fascinating about beautiful faces. Though an object such as a vase or a fan may be ugly in general, there is always one particular part that one can gaze at with pleasure. One would expect this to apply to faces also; but, alas, there is nothing to recommend an ugly face. (932)

254. *Pleasing Things*

Finding a large number of tales that one has not read before. Or acquiring the second volume of a tale whose first volume one has
(933) enjoyed. But often it is a disappointment.

Someone has torn up a letter and thrown it away. Picking up
(934) the pieces, one finds that many of them can be fitted together.

One has had an upsetting dream and wonders what it can
(935) mean. In great anxiety one consults a dream-interpreter, who informs one that it has no special significance.

A person of quality is holding forth about something in the past or about a recent event that is being widely discussed. Several people are gathered round him, but it is oneself that he keeps looking at as he talks.

A person who is very dear to one has fallen ill. One is miserably worried about him even if he lives in the capital and far more so if he is in some remote part of the country. What a pleasure to be told that he has recovered!

I am most pleased when I hear someone I love being praised or being mentioned approvingly by an important person.

A poem that someone has composed for a special occasion or written to another person in reply is widely praised and copied by people in their notebooks. Though this is something that has never yet happened to me, I can imagine how pleasing it must be.

A person with whom one is not especially intimate refers to an old poem or story that is unfamiliar. Then one hears it being mentioned by someone else and one has the pleasure of recognizing it. Still later, when one comes across it in a book, one thinks, 'Ah, this is it!' and feels delighted with the person who first brought it up.

I feel very pleased when I have acquired some Michinoku paper, or some white, decorated paper, or even plain paper if it is nice and white.

A person in whose company one feels awkward asks one to supply the opening or closing line of a poem. If one happens to recall it, one is very pleased. Yet often on such occasions one completely forgets something that one would normally know.

I look for an object that I need at once, and I find it. Or again,

there is a book that I must see immediately; I turn everything upside down, and there it is. What a joy!

When one is competing in an object match (it does not matter
(936) what kind), how can one help being pleased at winning?

I greatly enjoy taking in someone who is pleased with himself and who has a self-confident look, especially if he is a man. It is amusing to observe him as he alertly waits for my next repartee; but it is also interesting if he tries to put me off my guard by adopting an air of calm indifference as if there were not a thought
(937) in his head.

I realize that it is very sinful of me, but I cannot help being pleased when someone I dislike has a bad experience.

It is a great pleasure when the ornamental comb that one has ordered turns out to be pretty.

I am more pleased when something nice happens to a person I love than when it happens to myself.

Entering the Empress's room and finding that ladies-in-waiting are crowded round her in a tight group, I go next to a pillar which is some distance from where she is sitting. What a delight it is when Her Majesty summons me to her side so that all the others have to make way!

255. *One Day, When Her Majesty Was Surrounded by Several Ladies*

One day, when Her Majesty was surrounded by several ladies,
(938) I remarked in connexion with something that she had said, 'There are times when the world so exasperates me that I feel I cannot go on living in it for another moment and I want to disappear for good. But then, if I happen to obtain some nice white paper, Michinoku paper, or white decorated paper, I decide that I can put up with things as they are a little longer. Or, if I can spread out a finely woven, green straw mat and examine the white bordering with its vivid black patterns, I somehow feel that I cannot turn my back on this world, and life actually seems precious to me.'

'It really doesn't take much to console you,' said the Empress,