

THE ROAD TO YESTERDAY

Edited by
G. C. DONOVAN, '17
Alumni General Secretary

FROM CHERRY BLOSSOM LAND

By J. Clyde Auman, '18

Dear Elonites:

The General Secretary of the Alumni Association has asked that I write an article for the college paper. If this request had come immediately after my first four weeks in Japan I feel that my task would have been easier, and the work of my pen more interesting. The things which attracted my eye first have become more or less commonplace. However, I suppose it is the commonplace things possibly that would be of most interest to my readers, if I could but present them in an interesting form.

A year ago the 29th of this last December Mrs. Auman and I arrived in Japan. The things which caught our eyes first was the mud, for it was raining when we arrived, the little two wheel buggies pulled by men; and our ears, the clatter of the wooden shoes on the hard pavement, for we soon found there were some places free from mud where we could walk. The first thing our noses caught were the many smells which greeted us on every hand. Many of them altogether new to us. It is said that if all of Yokohama scents made dollars, no other city on the globe would be able to equal it in wealth. However, I do not know that this is any more true of Yokohama than any other city in Japan. But it is rather wonderful how the conditions are as good as they are when the people are so crowded into a big city, without any modern sewerage system. The above conditions in the larger cities will not last much longer because the sewerage system is being put in.

Having lived in Japan for one year we are becoming more acquainted with the Japanese mode of life. We have learned to like Japanese food, but to sit on our feet like the Japanese do, without feeling our rheumatism is not in our line. If we are asked to eat with chop-sticks instead of with a knife and fork we are quite willing. Really, we do not enjoy our Japanese food unless we have chop-sticks. I do not know what Dr. Wicker would say about this, anyway we think it is true. At first we did not think our conscience would permit us to ride in a two-wheel buggy pulled by a man, but there are times when we are caught in a rain which soon produces mud, and we gladly turn to this method of travel. Really, it is a more comfortable way of traveling than in an automobile, unless you are in a great hurry.

One of the most popular things in Japan is the street car. And if one comes by that is not crowded to overflowing you will know there is a fire down town. Where I lived last year a little house not much bigger than a rich man's dog house caught on fire. I suppose two or three thousand people crowded the streets to see that fire. Many of them went away without seeing the fire.

I do not know whether it is fortunate or unfortunate that I came to Japan. For my height furnishes a side-show for the people who are so low in stature. I hear on every hand, *takai hito* (high person) or *moshiko hito* (interesting person). In this sense I have become more attractive than my wife since coming here. Recently I had an occasion to be in a smaller town where foreigners had never lived. Stopping at stores, the people would congregate about me to look me over and to hear what I would say to the shop-keeper. However, it is interesting for me also, especially when the kiddies crowd around me. I begin to count them one by one in Japanese. They do not know what I mean so they run away.

This time of the year which is the New Year season, universally observed by the Japanese nation, and I suppose

more interest is taken in it than in any other time of the year. This being the time they must get ready to live another year. By New Year's morn all debts must be paid and bills collected if the New Year is to be full of success and luck. Each member of the family must have a new kimono and shoes if the money lasts. All during the New Year season gifts are passed between each other. Especially must the employees give gifts to their employers.

The spirit of Christmas is growing in the hearts of the Japanese. The Christian Church throughout Japan commemorate Christmas seemingly with as much enthusiasm as do the churches in the home land. In this way the churches are influencing the communities where they are located. Many of the shops had Santa Claus in their windows. Some think that Santa Claus and Jesus Christ are the same personalities. This year a lady of my acquaintance was asked by one of the members of the Imperial household to teach the true meaning of Christmas to her children. This is the first time such a thing has taken place inside of the Palace grounds. These children are the nephews and neices of the present Emperor. This is only an example of what is happening all over Japan. The people are inquiring into the "why" of things. I have been asked harder questions since coming here about things I believed than I had ever been asked at home. Although many of them simple yet hard to answer especially to a people who do not have a Christian history behind them.

If you will pardon me I will add this personal element, as to where we would be found and what we would be doing if some of you should suddenly decide to come to Japan. At present Mrs. Auman (who is also an Elonite) and I are studying the language in a school especially organized for this purpose. In this school will be found students from the following countries: Russia, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Ireland, England and the United States. The methods used are those used in the study of most any language. Only we study it more from the stand point of being able to speak it. We find we have a task which will last us a life time.

With the best of wishes for the students of Elon. I trust you are keeping the spirit which made Elon go when the class of '18 held the fort.

J. Clyde Auman, '18.
2 Aoyama Gakuin, Tokyo, Japan.
January 5, 1922.

SOLDIERING IN A FRENCH UNIVERSITY

By R. S. Rainey, '22

Well, folks, here goes. I was once a mule-skinner in the American Expeditionary Forces in France. And, by the way, that is the lowest rank I ever held in any concern, unless you count the incidental jobs I once held such as "Grease Monk" in a railroad shop, printer's devil in a publishing house, or a prep here at Elon. The highest position I ever held was janitor in Elon's old Administration Building recently cremated. But, I started out to say something about France. And, kind reader and fellow alumni, in case you are bored with the story herein related, please place responsibility where it belongs—on the Alumni General Secretary who gave me a subject.

When the great World War made us all happy by coming to a successful, or otherwise, conclusion, there were, as you all know, some several of Uncle Sam's nephews put out of employment and left a long way from home in France. The gods and a few Y. M. C. A. secretaries put the happy notion in the head of a certain superior at general headquarters that it might be well to send some of these fellows to school in a foreign uni-

versity. Accordingly, about ten thousand of us who could produce evidence that we had had as much as two years of college work were distributed about in fourteen different French universities.

On the fourth of March, 1919, I de-trained at Montpellier, France, with the permission of the United States to become a student at l'Universite de Montpellier. When I stepped into the courtyard of the famous old university located in this beautiful French city, which was once the center of religious wars in France, and the present stronghold of Protestantism in that great Roman Catholic country, a very familiar sound came to my ears and a familiar sight greeted my eyes. The sound was the voice of our own Dr. H. Shelton Smith, and the sight was the long stringy neck of that same lanky divine. He was then a chaplain in the United States Army. A boy from home! A son of Elon to greet me in a foreign land! I had that well known feeling that our friend Briggs so aptly describes in his cartoons.

Our life at the university soon became not unlike the average student's in an American college. Chaplain Smith, as our spiritual leader, soon had the outfit well organized along religious lines. There was a Bible study class and other things similar in many respects to what we have here at Elon. He was also made chief entertainment officer for our detachment. A band, an orchestra, and a glee club were organized. These including some of the best musical talent that followed our flag across the sea.

One day Smith called a bunch of us in and we discussed the desirability of putting on a real honest-to-goodness play. The result was that in a few days we were staging a drama entitled "Je M'en Fichs". Chaplain Smith, Private J. B. Lackey and myself were the authors. The thing was mostly action, but the conversation was half in English and half in French. With the excellent musical talent from which we had to draw, the thing could not help being a success, since its authors wisely—if I do say it myself—introduced only those scenes in which this talent could be utilized.

(To be continued.)

WERE YOU HERE WHEN—

—R. A. Campbell, '11, taught second year latin? He called the roll by saying, "name?" "name?" while the students down the rows gave their names and he checked them off. One morning when it came one young man's turn his voice cracked and he shrilly whispered, "W. E. Beale." Then to better it he said, "W. E. Beale," in a deep bass voice. Prof. Campbell, busy with the roll book, exclaimed, "One at a time please."

WHO AND WHERE

Mrs. R. O. McDonald (nee Mattie Artelia Dawson) '18, has moved from Baltimore, Md. to Tampa, Florida. Her new address is 317 W. Francis Ave.

R. C. Cox, '03, is superintendent of Mt. Gilead Graded School, Mt. Gilead, N. C. The high school has grown under his leadership. Since taking this position the high school has had forty graduates, thirty-six of whom have entered college. Prof. Cox holds his position the year round, teaching during the summer in the county summer schools.

Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Auman's address will shortly change to 43 Chokyuji, Machi, Nagoya, Japan.

Rev. R. E. Brown, '16, has left Columbus, Ga., to take up work at Pleasant Hill, Ohio.

Hester Stuart, (commercial certificate, '17), is making a splendid record as office secretary to D. W. Sims, General Secretary North Carolina Sunday School Association, Raleigh, N. C.

L. M. Cannon, '21, has established an athletic poster service. Orders are coming in from many eastern schools.

C. B. Riddle, '16, is confined to his home in Burlington with la grippe.

Messrs. Guy and Dave Miller, and W. C. King were here for a short time Wednesday.

Miss Madge Moffitt spent the week end at her home in Ramseur.

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