

●恒藤恭「旧友芥川龍之介」の「芥川龍之介のことなど」の一括 PDF 版内の「十三 英文書簡一通」の章のための芥川龍之介英文書簡 (PDF による補完分)

July, 20, 1912.

My dear friend

I thank you for a letter so warm and kind.

At 7 o'clock, this evening, I imagine I see you with your mother sister and brothers, talking and laughing. Certainly, you talk most delightfully, floating hearty smile on your brown cheeks, sunburned like a olive-nut, while at times your little brothers throw a jest at which nobody (even your mother and sister) can help laughing.

The laughter ring like a silver-bell, in the yellowish lamplight, the sweet smell of flowers and the chirping of crickets, -- at this time I was writing this letter in my sultry library, sweating and being bitter by mosquitoes. Have pity on me!

The summer in Tokyo is awfully detestable. The red sun, shining like a white-heated iron, pours its light and heat over the thirsty earth, which stares the cloudless sky with the bloodshot eyes. Chimney, walls, houses, rails and pavements, everything on the ground grins and groans from its hellish anguish. (Perhaps you can hardly understand how disgustful the summer in Tokyo is, and you feel rather ridiculous my extreme hatred of summer). To think of poetry or life or eternity in this horrid heat and tumult, is quite impossible.

I feel like a flying-fish, fallen unluckily on the deck of a ship and dying there. Besides, I am greatly annoyed by dust, smell of staled fishes, hums of insects, hateful feature of *Yamori* and *Tokage*, and the most dreadful *Ka*. In short, The Queen of Summer who is favourable to you, treats me very cruelly.

I read *Yussenkutu*, dreaming of a fairyland of sunshine and peach-blossoms, where reality turns into a delicious dream and suffering into a life of luxurious pleasure. I wish to forget everything, vulgar and common, in this charming magic land and to live a life, not of men and women, but of gods and goddesses, under the sapphirine sky of this fairy land, enveloped with the perfume of snow-white pear blossoms, with the poet of this fantasia, *Chobunsei*.

Don't laugh at my childish fantasy! This is my little kingdom where the mysterious moon shines above the mysterious land. I dream a dream day and night, a dream of primrose-colour, and in this dream, (this is my ivory tower)I find my happy sadness, lonely but sweet, forlorn but agreeable. The "blue lotus of mystery" said one of the Old-Indian poets, "blossoms only in the milky evening mist of fantasy." There are only sciences and arts ; and there is no science without the sciences of "Müssen". You may as well call history, logic, ethic, philosophy and etc. "arts" as call music and painting "arts". Fauns and

nymphs, dancing in the bright moonlight of the glen in which red roses and yellow narcissuses blossom, sing cheerful songs and blow silver flutes, while historians and philosophers, with grey heads and wrinkled faces, engage in their so called scientific research. The fauns' song and the historians' study are quite same, without the only slightest difference between them: that the former is charming but the latter awfully tedious.

A pale green moth came and sat on my shoulder. Outside the window the oaktrees are rustling very quietly in the evening twilight of July. The smell of hay the dull moo of the cows — the yellow new moon— Night is coming on with it's thoughts and dreams.

Now I must light the lamp and sup with my old father and mother.

Yours truly

R. Akutagawa

P. S. Beardsley's Salome is extraordinarily dear. I found it yesterday in the shop of a second-hand book-seller; it was 7 yen.

[やぶちゃん注：このためにブログ・カテゴリ「芥川龍之介書簡抄」の[「芥川龍之介書簡抄150 追加 明治四五（一九一二）年七月二十日 井川恭宛（全文英文）・オリジナル邦訳付き」](#)で岩波旧全集版の当該書簡を先に電子化注し、私の芥川龍之介書簡に似せて作った歴史的仮名遣・正字表現版の擬似的訳文を載せておいた。一言言っておくと、“The blue lotus of mystery” said one of the Old-Indian poets, “blossoms only in the milky evening mist of fantasy.” sciences and arts ; and there is no science without the sciences of “Müssen”.”の“sciences and arts”の箇所は文を成していない。ここは岩波版旧全集の通り、“There are only sciences and arts”でないと、おかしい。それでも実は“blossoms only in the milky evening mist of fantasy.” sciences and arts”の部分は、表記的におかしいままなのだが。なお、恒藤が前振り指摘している[“without”と書いているが、正しくは“with”と書くべきでなかつたかと思ふ]というのはその通りである。私は意識では、説明していないが、それに従って、訳に手を加えておいた。]