FEAST OF THE BONKU

HOW JAPAN'S GREAT SUMMER HOLF DAY IS CELEBRATED.

It is at Once an Occasion For Feasting the Spirits of the Departed and an Opportunity For a Marvelous Display of Lanterns.

There are no Sundays in Japan, but the people enjoy many legal and religious holidays. The most notable of all is that elaborate summer festival which lasts for four days in the entiddle of July and has so many sides to it that it is known by several names. Formerly it was styled Urabon; today it is usually called the Feast of Bon, or Bommatsuri, or the Bonku. It is at once a time for feasting the spirits of the departed and an occasion for a marvelous display of lanterns. Many fires. They are intended to guide the Europeans call it the Feast of Lauterns. Speaking strictly, it may be denominated the Japanese Festival of All Souls.

In Dai Nippon religion and pleasure go band in hand, and this extraordinary season of homage to friends who have passed away is an occasion of over each entrance. For the poor most singular and exceedingly picturesque national festivities on a universal scale. The popular doctrine is that during these four days of the year the spirits of ancestors take a holiday from hades and visit the familiar scenes of past terrestrial life, cial function of the third night, especially the temples and shrines! where they used to worship, and that nial, is the final scene, and a pathetic they expect to be cordially and devoutly welcomed and generously fed. These shadowy visitors also look for must all return whence they came to amusement, and it is abundantly sup earth for their brief visitation, and

Tokyo is a gay sight indeed on the morning of July 13. The first cere poetical messages of love and good mony is the Kawa Biruki, or open will have been written with assiduous ing of the river. Processions of pleas, care and real reverence. These love ure boats start down the river Su letters have been placed in beautiful with flags, ribbons, colored paper and gether with delicate morsels of various flowers in profusion, the illy being kinds of food for the journey; also most in evidence, as this blossom is in miniature lanterns are deposited in the Japan the emblem of purity. The tiny craft, for the departing friends people wish their ancestral invisible will need light on the mystic way. guests to believe that they are living The boats are about twelve inches in immaculate lives, whatever may hapgen to be the truth of the matter. At night all the river craft will again sail in procession, and the gayety will be at the climax.

During the daytime the religious ritual is sedulously observed. For many days numerous hands have been bustly weaving new mats of the finest rice straw, and now these are brought to the Buddhist shrines and spread upon the altars and inside the temples. In every home also a similar preparation for the featival worship is observed, the spotless mat being devoutly laid in the domestic "butsudan," as the little home shrine is termed where morning and evening prayers are offered before the ancestral tablets or inscriptions.

Of course the feeding of the ghostly guests is the most essential item in the programme of preparation. The dietetic commodities which these visitors from the unseen world are supposed to prefer are somewhat numerous; therefore the viands are offered not go too far, and no one shall keep in many tiny portions. Fresh lotus leaves are procured, if possible, and on these the food is placed. The morsels are all delicious, and the banquet is indeed a tempting one, supposing that the hadean epicures have really any appetite for these mundane delicacies. They are supposed to be specially fond of bits of the choice Japanese fruits called "saikwa" and "uri." They are offered plums and peaches. Little slices of muskmelon and watermelon are in evidence. The eggplant fruit is never missing.

Somewhat more substantial are the contributions in the shape of "gozen" (carefully boiled rice), "somen" (a kind of macaroni) and "dango" (a minute flour dumpling). Various delicate specimens are added, but no kind of animal food is ever offered, nor is a drop of wine included. Such commodities would shock the refined spiritual tastes of the guests. Clean water is constantly sprinkled on the shrine with a branch of the sacred mishohag! bush, and all day once an hour tea is freshly prepared for the ghosts. Chopsticks are laid by the offerings, the unseen visitors being treated just as liv-

ing beings. The proceedings indoors of course occupy much attention, and some member of the family must constantly be in the

home, but the doings out of doors are full of interest and charm. All kinds of fascinating features characterize the public celebrations on land, on the river and by the sea. In all rural Ja-pan the lively Bon Odori, or dance of souls, is kept up during the three days. It consists of a performance by the villagers in a great circle. The dancers go round, posturing in a great variety of attitudes, a few in the center being the musicians. In the cities the Bon Odori is now a professional exhibition of skill by pretty and popular geisha giris. As always in Japan, the dancers tell a story by their move-

Wonderful everywhere in the land is the scene at nightfall. The "mukaebi," or welcome fires, are kindled on the first evening of Bommatsuri slong the rivers and the shores wherever any town or village stands. The Japanese do nothing promiscuously, so they light in every place exactly 108 of these spirits if any need illumination to find their way to the homes and shrines they are seeking. And, with a like aim, every householder at sunset fixes before his portal several torches. Besides these flaring and fragrant signals, beautiful lanterns are suspended ghosts who come to earth for the Bommateuri, but have no friends, and so would be bungry and disconsolate.

very special provision is made by the priests in the temples. This is a spe-

The "sayonara," or farewell ceremeperformance it is. On the last night, the evening of the 16th, the spirits nothing has been neglected in preparation for their departure. Sweet length. Another tiny lantern is attached to the prow. This is lighted, and incense is set afame in the stern. Then the little craft is launched on creek, canal, river or sea. And far into the night, as these phantom feets glide along, the waters gleam with the sparkling of the strange little craft, the "shoryobune," or boats of the blessed ghosts.-St. James' Gazette.

Disinherited.

They tell a story in Paris of Pierre Wolff, the dramatist, nephew of Albert Wolff, the critic and sworn enemy of the manager Antoine. When Pierre took his first piece to Autoine it was accepted on condition that he should put into it "as much as possible of everything that is abominable to your uncle, good will that he scandalized his uncle, the public, the stage firemen, the dressers, the prompter and M. Antoine himself, who went about at rehearsal rubbing his hands and saying, "One canme from putting in the advertisements, 'Play by Pierre Wolff, nephew of Al-bert Wolff.' "When the dramatist called on his uncle, Albert shouted, "Miserable! If I had a fortune I'd disinberit you?" "Disinherit me all the same," suggested the nephew. "It will advertise me." "Very well, then. I have nothing to leave, so I won't leave it to you!"

Scenery In Bering Sea.

"Sailing southeasterly along the shore of that haunt of the walrus and polar bear, St. Matthew's Island, in the Bering sea," said a navigator of those waters, "one is impressed by the mingling of the grotesque and the terrible in the character of the scenery. The northwest point of the island is split up into a collection of large rocks of most fantastic shapes. Houses, spires, cathedrais and figures of men and beasts are some of the forms assumed by these volcanic fragments, which, rising black above the white, seething foam of the sea that breaks against their base, give a weird aspect to the grim and desolute region. One rock resembling a large saddle suggested to me the thought that some antediluvian giant might in his time have straddled it and perhaps fished for reptilla over the beetling cliffs which it surmounts."

TIDE TABLE, NOVEMBER

| NOVEMBER, 1905. | | | | | | NOVEMBER, 1905. | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------|------|-----------------|-------|--------|-------|----|
| Low | Water. | A. M. | | P. M. | | High Water. | A. M. | | P. M. | |
| D | ate. | h.m. | ft. | h.m. | ft. | Date. | h.m. | ft. | h.m. | ft |
| Wednesday 1 | | 9:25 | 2.8 | 10:35 | -0.5 | Wednesday 1 | 4:00 | 7.4 | 3:32 | 8. |
| | | 10:55 | 3.2 | 11:32 | 0.0 | Thursday 2 | 4:57 | 7.0 | 4:29 | 8 |
| Carlot March 1975 | | | | 12:05 | 3.3 | Friday 3 | 6:01 | 6.9 | 5:35 | 7 |
| | 4 | 0:34 | 0.5 | 1:20 | 3.3 | Saturday 4 | 7:09 | 6.9 | 6:52 | 6 |
| UNDAY | | 1:37 | 1.0 | 2:31 | 2.9 | SUNDAY 5 | 8:14 | 7.1 | 8:11 | 6 |
| | 6 | 2000 | 1.3 | 3:34 | 2.3 | Monday 6 | | 7.4 | 9:19 | 6 |
| | ******* 7 | | 1.5 | | 1.8 | Tuesday 7 | | 7.7 | | 6 |
| | му 8 | 1000 | 1.7 | | 1.3 | Wednesday 8 | 10:34 | 7.9 | 11:05 | 6 |
| | 9 | 5:09 | 1.9 | 5:53 | 0.8 | Thursday 9 | | 8.1 | 11:48 | 7 |
| | 10 | | 2.1 | 6:30 | 0.4 | Friday10 | 11:45 | 3.1 | | |
| | | | 2.4 | 7:01 | 0.1 | Saturday11 | 0:28 | 7.2 | 12:17 | 8 |
| UNDAY | | | 2.7 | 7:31 | -0.1 | SUNDAY12 | 1:06 | 7.1 | 12:45 | 8 |
| fonday | 1 | | 2.1 | 8.02 | -0.2 | Monday | 1:42 | 7.0 | 1:12 | 8 |
| uesday | | 7:55 | 3.1 | 8:31 | -0.2 | Tuesday14 | 2:20 | 7.0 | 1:41 | 8 |
| | ay15 | | 8.3 | 9:05 | -0.1 | Wednesday15 | 2:53 | 6.9 | 2:14 | 8 |
| | 16 | | 3.4 | 9:44 | 0.0 | Thursday16 | 3:32 | 6.8 | 2:52 | 8 |
| | | | 3.6 | 10:80 | 0.3 | Friday | 4:18 | 6.7 | 3:38 | 7 |
| | 18 | | 3.6 | 11:20 | 0.7 | Saturday18 | 5:10 | 6.7 | 4:32 | 7 |
| UNDAY | | | | 12:02 | 8.5 | SUNDAY19 | 6:09 | 6.9 | 5:42 | 6 |
| | 20 | 0:20 | 1.1 | 1:14 | 3.1 | Monday20 | 7:10 | 7.1 | 7:05 | 6 |
| needay | | 1:24 | | 2:29 | 2.5 | Tuesday21 | 8:08 | 7.5 | 8:30 | 6 |
| Tadnesdi | ay22 | | 1.7 | 3:35 | 1.7 | Wednesday22 | 9:00 | 7.9 | 9:41 | 6 |
| | 23 | | 1.9 | 4:32 | 0.8 | Thursday23 | 9:50 | 8.4 | 10:42 | 7 |
| | 24 | | 2.0 | 5:25 | -0.1 | Friday24 | 10:40 | 8.9 | 11:38 | 7 |
| sturday | 25 | ■ 207.30.2 | 2.1 | 6:15 | -0.8 | Saturday25 | 11:25 | 9.3 | | |
| UNDAY | | | 2.2 | 7:02 | -1.3 | SUNDAY26 | | 10,140 | 12:10 | - |
| | 27 | 7:00 | 2.4 | 7:50 | -1.5 | Monday27 | | 7.6 | 12:52 | .9 |
| uesday | 28 | 7:52 | 2.6 | 8:35 | -1.4 | Tuesday28 | | 7.6 | 1:35 | 8 |
| | LY29 | 8:43 | 2.8 | 9:21 | -1.1 | Wednesday29 | 2:55 | 7.5 | 2:22 | 9 |
| | | 200.00 | a company | 10:11 | -0.6 | Thursday30 | 3:45 | 7.4 | 3:13 | 8 |

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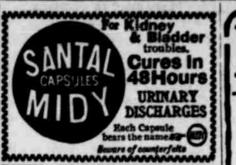
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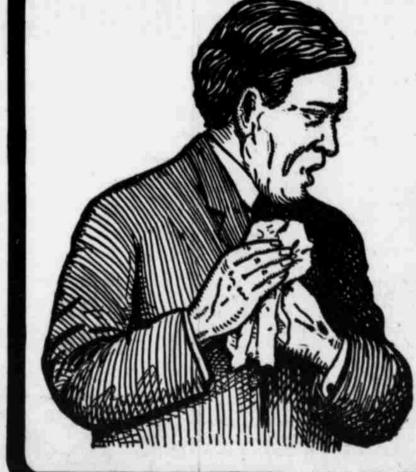
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