

Tokyo Jan. 4th 88

My Dear Hashimoto:

I have the pleasure of telling you that I have entered upon the age of two-and-twenty with the 1st of Jan. '88, quite well & happy. I hope you have also welcomed the happy New Year, there. I now sit to write you a letter in my room with Kestry pines on one side and stretched plum trees on the other, while pretty little birds sing their merry tunes among the bushes in front. The day is calm and clear, the sun shines brightly and the windows of my room are thrown open so as to let in the fresh air that is stirring, while I with my back toward the sun-light fully enjoying the warmth of it, go on to write this letter to my bosom friend. You can easily imagine the happy state of my mind.

But when I reflect upon the past course of my action or cast a glance around me, every reflection and every glance suddenly makes me sorrowful & melancholy. We parted only three years ago. Yet how mighty is the change that has passed over every object I meet with! Whenever I take a walk in the suburbs of the city, I cannot fail to see new houses built or in construction where only a few days ago green grass was only thing to be found. What strikes me more, those who were quite children a few years ago, have become blooming youths and followed their own occupations sustaining themselves independently. Indeed every thing has undergone a change either wholly or partly, during that short time. But ah me! My mind is I am still headstrong, passionate, shy and reserved before strangers, joking and punning before intimate friends, fond of gaiety, eager in attempt never con-

turning to the end, absorbed in idle speculation, proud & careless. I shoud I have as many faults as you used to find in me. On the contrary, my good parts, if there were any, seem to decrease day by day. My memory of which I was supposed to have had a little firmness is fast declining now. My attention has greatly diminished in acuteness and my brain has lost the greater part of its thinking power. What a pitiful creature!

But, ^{as} what cannot be repaired cannot be regretted, so I am determined to supply the deficiencies of the past days by the diligence of the future. My eyes are now opened to the errors of my former conduct & I must endeavour to become a quite altered being. — to become sober-minded, attentive, diligent. Man's life is but fifty years, as they wisely remark, of which ^{twenty} ~~twenty~~ one years have already passed. If I know ^{any} imaginary perfection can never be attained, why should I hope to realize ^{any} ideal desire?

"All earth born cares are wrong,
Man wants but little here below,
No wants that little long."

So let us throw away those poultry cares & become studious & diligent. There will be a time when we shall spring upon our prey — our intended ~~and~~ object.

Some days ago you wrote to Mr Kojio who told me, you had felt much anxiety about me, excess of study being the chief cause of illness. I am, however, far from being so studious & I am very glad to say I am quite well except my having ophthalmia from some days past which somewhat impaired my sight. But I hope you will not ~~impute~~ impute it to my hard study. I remain

To Hashimoto keep

My dear
Yours very sincerely
K Shiohara