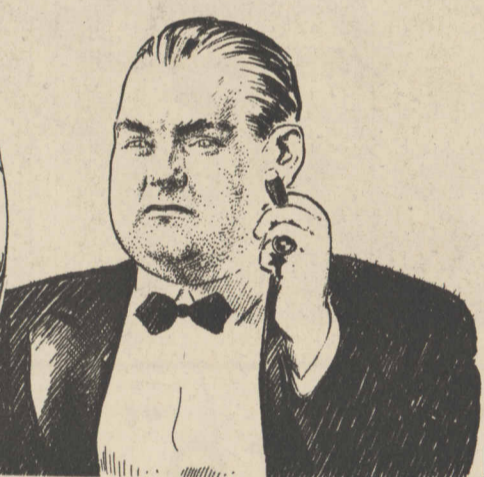
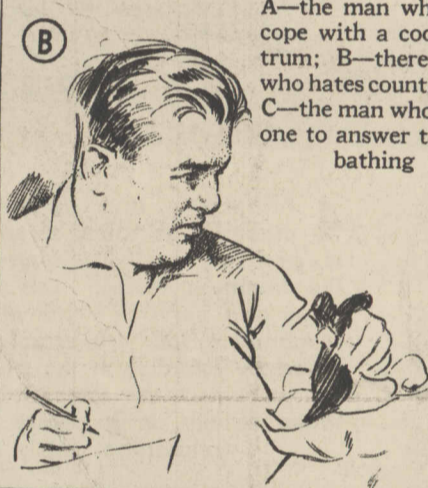


WHY BACHELORS WEAKEN

By W. E. Hill

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Strange Japanese Logic

Provides Atonement for Very Practical 'Sins'



The Mikimoto kuyo in honor of oysters killed to enrich the pearl king. Priests are conducting the ceremony. (Photos from Sheba.)

(Continued from page one.)
The creative, practical west and the passive spiritualism of the east clash in Japan as they do nowhere else. You hear the humming of streamlined trains and hydroelectric power stations a few blocks from the tolling of ancient temple bells.

The west maintains that it is beneficial to eat meat. Japan agrees. Buddha teaches that it is sinful to kill. Japan likewise agrees. So Japan goes on slaughtering cattle and erects altars in the slaughterhouses where prayers are said as animals are dispatched.

The question may be asked: Why do the Japanese, having decided to follow the west, still stick to the teachings of the east, which are incompatible with the practices of the west? The answer is that a time comes when all people must think of death. Buddhism promises nirvana to all who become its followers. This is a comforting thought to Japanese who grow old and commence to think of the world beyond. Buddhism offers a wonderful attraction to dying people. Most Japanese are married according to the rites of Shinto, the religion of ancestor worship. The majority of families having children celebrate Christmas. Everybody eats meat. But 90

Another strange kuyo was that held for animals victimized for medical purposes at the Institute for Research in Infectious Diseases. Some three million patients had benefited from serum obtained from these victims. A monolith with an appropriate inscription commemorates the holding of the mass within the inclosure of the institute.

Likewise a stone monolith is found in the grounds of the Zokusenji temple in Shimoda, where the first American envoy to Japan, Cyrus Townsend Harris, made his headquarters. It was erected on the spot where the first cow was killed in Japan to supply meat for the American diplomat. It is in honor of all cows sacrificed for food. A kuyo is held at the temple annually.

Another popular kuyo is that for cats. From time immemorial the skins of cats have been used to make the samisen, the three-stringed banjolike instrument used by geisha girls. A stone tablet has been erected in the Tamagawa recreation ground in Tokyo, and a kuyo is performed from time to time, attended by many geisha girls and other public entertainers.



Monolith erected to the first cow killed in Japan, to provide meat for an American diplomat.

per cent of the Japanese people die Buddhists, or at least have Buddhist services performed at their funerals.

There are two kinds of kuyo. In the first, according to the high priest of Zojoji, only Buddhist priests participate. These services are conducted once or twice each week. The second form of kuyo is conducted less frequently, usually at the request of persons desiring to appease the souls of objects, animate and inanimate, which have been sacrificed to benefit mankind.

Two hundred fifty cooks in the restaurants of Yamaguchi prefecture in southern Japan recently inaugurated a kuyo for the fish and fowl they handle in preparing dishes. The mass consisted of the reading of Buddhist sutras (rules) by a score of priests and the burning of incense.

One of the strangest kuyos is that for the housefly, carrier of diseases and the enemy of man. Some years ago a chemist named Imatsu invented a particularly effective insecticide. His product was cheap and soon became a household necessity. Through its use housewives killed millions upon millions of flies each year, and Imatsu soon amassed a large fortune.

He is a Buddhist. Buddha teaches that it is a sin to kill any living creature. In olden times Imatsu undoubtedly would have had to stop killing flies or stop being a Buddhist. Today, thanks to the kuyo, he is able to sell more and better insecticide to the housewives of the country and still feel assured of passing on to nirvana when he dies.

Such is Japanese logic and perhaps explains the sometimes strange conduct of Japan in international affairs.

Another ceremony along the same lines as the mass for houseflies is that staged by Kokichi Mikimoto, the culture pearl king. Mikimoto invented a process to cultivate pearls in oysters. In obtaining the pearls, however, the lives of the oysters had to be sacrificed.

Millions of bivalves have been killed to enrich the pearl king,

who is now 80 years old. Mikimoto a few years ago started to think about what he had done to the poor oysters. So he summoned the priests of one of the largest temples in the country to perform a kuyo. It was a gigantic affair. The whole town of Toba, where Mikimoto keeps his pearl farm, took part in the services. Prayers were said to solace the souls of the bivalves, and the priests assured Mikimoto that the oysters understood.

This heartened the pearl king, for it meant that he could pass on to his nirvana without any hitch. He was so tickled, in fact, that he went so far as to buy a coffin and rehearse his funeral.

Another strange kuyo is that performed for mosquitoes one slaps to death. Usually it is the custom for the sponsors to deliver an address praising the object for which the ceremony is held. Even in the case of the mass for houseflies it was possible to say a few good words. They brought fortune to Imatsu.

But mosquitoes! No one could think of anything good to say for these pests. Not even mosquito net makers, who were among those who attended the



Mr. Mikimoto delivering a tribute to oysters.

kuyo. These people claimed their product did not take the lives of mosquitoes, but rather saved them, so it was not so much the net makers who should be thankful as the mosquitoes.

A public kuyo is held by the reading of sutras in which from one to a hundred priests take part simultaneously, and the burning of incense by those attending the ceremony. Each person walks up to the altar, bows humbly, picks up three pinches of incense, and scatters this over the incense bowl. After bowing again he steps back one or two steps before turning about to walk to his seat. Laymen are unable to under-

stand the sutras, which are read in Hindu or Chinese, but, according to the high priest of Zojoji, it is not necessary for those attending a ceremony to understand what the priests are saying. The people who go to a kuyo know why they are there. The reading of sutras is a mere formality, he explained.

Kuyos for fish and cattle are attended not so much by people who eat them as by fishermen and stockyard owners and hands. Such persons usually go to a temple in a group and ask that a mass be held. They pray for the appeasement of the souls of the creatures they have killed.

According to the high priest of Zojoji, Buddha teaches that there is life in everything, animate and inanimate. Supposing a cooked fish is brought before one at a meal. It may be dead according to the interpretation of the western mind, but according to Buddha it has life, the priest explained.

"Supposing," I asked, "I were to eat that fish. What becomes of its life then?"

"In that case," the high priest calmly answered, "the fish is inside you. It becomes a part of you by being transformed into your blood, flesh, and bones. The fish still lives, although in a different form."

"Would you then say," I asked, "that a person who eats a fish becomes the nirvana of that fish?"

"Nirvana," the high priest replied, "is the loss of all personal consciousness by absorption into the divine."

That was all the satisfaction I could get from him.

As already has been noted, kuyos are held for inanimate as well as animate objects. Some years ago Sugiyama, a well known ethnologist, thought it would be a splendid thing for girls to hold a mass in honor of dolls they had discarded. This idea was favorably received by the citizens of Tokio, and it has been the custom during the last few years to hold a doll kuyo each year.

Likewise masses of appeasement are held for hundreds of other inanimate objects. Some of these are cited by the writer Wada Eisaku. Users of brushes for calligraphy and drawing, he notes, hold a kuyo for their discarded implements as an expression of their sense of indebtedness. There are, he says, ceremonies for chopsticks, morning glories, needles, and umbrellas.

More popular nowadays than masses for calligraphy brushes are those held for wornout type by newspaper printers. At a recent kuyo one of those present rose and paid the following tribute:

"We acknowledge publicly the useful service type has rendered in the progress of culture, and we wish to cultivate the proper sense of respect for this instrument, which is invaluable for the dissemination of knowledge."

It can hardly be said that a kuyo is primarily held to seek atonement. Rather it is a ceremony of thanksgiving and is so regarded by most Japanese. Their feeling toward things which have been of service to them is much the same as that of Babe Ruth for his favorite bat or of Carey Orr for his drawing desk.

at Painters—Seurat and Sully

to say that he applied color to his canvas tediously in countless rounded, detached dots. "La Grande Jatte" was his first major venture in the new technique.

For months the artist worked with infinite painstaking, yet furiously. When at last the picture was finished it was hung in an impressionist exhibition—and academic Paris laughed at it.

Still unrecognized, Seurat died in 1891 at the age of 31. But from the hereafter he was to have the last laugh. As years went by his work gradually won

recognition, not because he was a pointillist but because he was a great painter; and today he is reckoned one of the masters of his century.

In 1920 Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Clay Bartlett of Chicago chanced upon "La Grande Jatte," then hanging in a Paris shop, and determined to have it. The woman in charge, the owner, refused repeated offers, but, because she needed money for an invalid son, sold it to the Bartletts for \$20,000.

In 1925 Mr. Bartlett presented the painting to the Art Institute of Chicago. Five years later a

French syndicate offered \$400,000 for it, but the institute refused to sell. The canvas is now considered one of the ten greatest paintings in the Art Institute's collections.

Such in brief is the story of the larger of the two paintings reproduced on the front page of the picture section today.

"The Tarn Hat," reproduced beneath "La Grande Jatte," was painted in the first half of the last century by Thomas Sully, one of the greatest American artists of that period. Sully's own son was the model. There is an appealing quality in the painting which makes it a timeless portrait of a typical American boy, wherefore it is a perennial favorite at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.



Georges Seurat



Thomas Sully