

Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan, Feb. 26, 1877.

Dear Sister:

I arrived at this my destination yesterday at eleven oclock A. M.; and was I can assure you very glad to get here, for I had become heartily sick of travel. I will begin now and give you a short account of my doings since I landed in Japan, for of the voyage from San Francisco to Yokohama I can only say what I have already written to Martha. I enjoyed myself very much while I was in Tokio and Yokohama. Everything was new and interesting. The Japanese houses are nearly all of them very small and low. Most of them, in these two cities are covered with a very curiously shaped style of tile which gives the roofs a very pretty, picturesque appearance. These houses usually contain only one or two rooms which are quite small. If there is more than one room, one is separated from the other by paper partitions, and all the doors and windows are of paper. The frame of the house is always very light, and is frequently fastened together by strings. The whole front of the house can be taken down and always is down in the day time, so that a passer by may see the entire house keeping arrangements at a glance. These are very simple; the entire furniture is comprised in these few articles, a few mats to sit and sleep on, a few wooden boxes to eat from, a kettle to use for brooking purposes, a box lined with metal in which a few charcoals are kept for warmth and cooking purposes and chopsticks. Besides these every man, woman and child has a pipe, for all are incessant smokers. A part of every floor, in all the better houses, is covered with straw matting which is kept very clean and nice. On this no one ever steps with shoes on with which they walk out of doors; but some wear inside a sort of slipper. This description is of a regular Japanese house; but now a very few have foreign houses; the number however is very very small. The people all seem to be happy and contented; though they live in circumstances in which we should be very miserable. Flying kites seems to be the national amusement, and all, both old and young engage in it. In passing through a village you may count scores of them in the air, all in view at the same time. I have seen a youngster, apparently about six years of age, with a large baby on his back, who in spite of this load was engaged in the national sport, while the baby watched the kite with apparently as keen an interest as he. The clothing of the natives is very various both as to color, quality, style and quantity. Most frequently, even up here, they are bareheaded, and barefooted often. They seem to have no idea of what we should call comfort, and in this part of the empire build their houses without chimneys, their only fire being one of charcoal in a small open box. But I have not time to write more of the Japanese, if I write anything of myself, and so will say nothing more at this time. I was just on the point of going to

a dinner party given in my honor by the Kaitakushi when I wrote Martha. Well I went and had a much better time than I anticipated. There were twelve Japanese dignitaries present only two of which could speak a work of English. The dinner itself was very elaborately gotten up, and the table was tastefully decorated with Japanese artificial flowers. I enclose the bill of fare, which as you will see is printed in French and Japanese. Wines were plenty and all except myself drank. The next day Thursday the 15th inst. I spent in looking round, and in buying a few articles which I needed, and that evening went on board the Hakodate Maru, which sailed the next morning for Hakodate. All the passengers and crew on this steamer were Japanese, and I had amusing times in trying to make them understand what I wanted, as some of them knew a little English; and I tried to make them understand in that language. For instance I wished some crackers, and the waiter brought me almost everything else in the line of food and much that was not food without getting the right article. Then I would get out my dictionary while they looked on in open mouthed astonishment and then give them the Japanese name which for crackers is katai pan. We had a very pleasant passage of about three and a half days to Hakodate, with the exception of the last night which was very rough. Most of the way we were in sight of the land and the shores were very picturesque. We reached H. on Monday at about noon. I immediately went on shore, and after seeing the Kaitakushi officials was taken to a Russian Hotel and lodged. Here I stayed till Wednesday morning, spending my time in seeing the place. Then we sailed for Otarumai; but after getting some way up the strait, it was so rough that the steamer was turned round, and we returned to Hakodate having spent the entire day on a very rough sea. I again went to the Hotel, & the next day went about ten miles into the country to a place called Nanaye with Mr. Yuchi, who was formerly in Amherst, and who had come to Hakodate to take me out there. Here the Kaitakushi have a very fine farm of which he has the management. I passed a very pleasant day, and returning to H. I remained there till about ten oclock in the evening, when I again went on board the Hakodate Maru. We sailed once more the next morning at three oclock, when the weather was quite fine; but the wind continued to increase all day, and in the evening it blew a perfect gale. The waves rolled mountains high and the steamer pitched about fearfully, great waves constantly sweeping over her and thundering against her sides. I could not sleep a particle all night. One sailor fell overboard and was lost, and the boat sustained some injury; but we weathered it and the next day, Saturday the 24th inst., we reached Otarumai a port about twenty five miles distant from this place. Here I was met by an official from here, who at once took me in charge and saved me all further trouble in regard to baggage or any thing else. He took me ashore in a nice boat and we went to a Japanese Hotel. Here I, from choice for I had my knife and fork with me, made my first attempt to eat with chop sticks. My guide Mr. Sato at once telegraphed my arrival to Sapporo, and for a cook to come to that place about ten miles distant where we intended to spend the night. After a short rest we set out

on horse back, and rose to Jenibaka where we put up for the night. Here I slept in Japanese style on quilts and covered by quilts. It was very comfortable, except that I very much missed pillows, which they never have. The next morning at eight oclock we started again on our way and were met when about five miles from here by Pres. Clarke, Profs. Penhallon and Wheeler and Mr. Saito. We made a merry party the rest of the way, and at eleven oclock we dismounted before the doors of the Professors residence in Sapporo. I found two nice large rooms all furnished and warmed which were designed for my use. Here I soon settled down, and at last felt at home once more. I live in the family with the three gentlemen who were here before me, and am very pleasantly situated. I have met and been introduced to all the boys in the college, and like their appearance very much. But no more at this time, for it is late. Give lots of love to all the home folks, and tell them all to write often and long letters. Remember me to all enquiring friends.

Yours with much love

Wm. P. Brooks.

I never have patience to read this over
so if there are any mistakes please excuse.

I find said bill of fare printed on such
stiff card that I cannot send in a letter
without destroying it, so I leave it out.

W.P.B.