JAPANESE POETRY

Japanese poetry largely concerns itself with flowers and forest and wild life and the changeable weather through the seasons (KUW). Poetry, if it is the kind that everyone knows and treasures (NAGI), reveals (YAMU) the heart of a people better even than their philosophy (SHU). From the following examples it is evident that the Japanese love of nature (NAK) is deep indeed.

"The morning glory twined binds
My well-rose rope.
And I must borrow water.
The thought is of a housewife
Going early one morning to draw water from her well (Yu) and finding that the morning glory (SHI) has wound itself round ihe rope during the night. Rather than break it she goes out to fetch new water for her washing.

The same poet describes a small willow tree (SUKE) (the Japanese symbol of grief) as follows:

Two arms may not span the willow,
But its few leaves once the lea.
Implying (SUKU) that for all its strength it has lost none of its gentleness.

The Japanese Ruben Burra, a poet called Issa, having had a very sad youth, won the championship (KAKU) of the weak and downtrodden.

Little orphaned sparrow, come to me and play.
I am not only for the rich.

Less frog.
You mustn't lose,
I see here.

"I've written— though it seems silly, "Stuck it, skinny."

"A Visit to a Circus"

The late Robert E. Sherwood could write with great speed and once completed a Pulitzer prize play in three weeks.

A young playwright, complaining of an inability to get started on a script, asked: "Is it in your greatest difficulty when you sit down to write?"

"My greatest difficulty," replied the six-foot-seven Sherwood, "is sitting my knees under the desk."

"THINK & GIVE"

CHAN: Yesterday I was looking at a girl standing in the corridor, and I thought, "I wish I could give her a flower." WONG: Oh, very lucky! CHAN: Dear! she threw it in the flower-pot.

"A Free Ride for Lion Cub"

"Nurse's Song"

When the voices of children are heard on the ground,
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast,
And everything else is still.

Then come home, my children, the sun be gone down,
And when the sky of night arise,
Come come, leave off play, and let us away,
Till the morning appears in the skies.

CHAN: Please Jack, please Jack.
WONG: O, think, Jack! O, think, Jack! The teacher is coming.

CHAN: I beg you, or rather, I implore you, to let me sit down.
TRACHER: All right, you can sit down. P. Y. Kwok (Queen's College)

"In Memory of the Late Mr. H. S. Kwan"

H. S. Kwan (Private Student)

"Poetry Page" - The photo of the Upside Down World is a photograph of a world upside down, where the text is mirrored and reversed, creating a visual and textual play on words.

"A Free Ride for Lion Cub" - An advertisement for a free ride for lion cubs, possibly an event or promotion at a zoo or wildlife park.

"In Memory of the Late Mr. H. S. Kwan" - A tribute to a private student who passed away.