

大阪毎日新聞副社務部

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Osaka, Japan  
Jan. 18, 1940

Dear Tomoye:

First of all, all good wishes for the New Year that has dawned.

After sending off that postcard to you once upon a time, I was going to write to you more fully about Henri Takahashi's coming, but now, it is about time for his returning. Still, I think that this letter will be able to beat him back to the U.S.A.

I suppose he has written to you by now about the books that you wanted. He tells me that he is taking quite a lot of baggage back, and so all in all, I believe that he has handled the situation satisfactorily.

We had a Chinese dinner in Kobe and then I introduced him to a bookstore run by an Englishman that specializes on books, old and new, regarding Japan. Henri seemed to be rather impressed by the Old Curiosity Shoppe look about the place and especially the proprietor, who looks like a Dickens' character.

Your gifts via Henri were much appreciated. Anything from the U.S.A. is, especially in these wartime days. If Henri comes around again, I'll try to persuade him to take something back to you from me -- oh, nothing much -- something colorful and useless, I suppose.

Henri seems to be quite a photography bug. I being interested, myself, in this field, we had a lot to talk about. He said he was going to try to take an enlarger back to the United States.

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At any rate, he certainly has been fortunate, winning a trip back to Japan, etc. Besides, he's had a pass on the government railways, so he's been going back and forth, and travelling here and there, quite a bit more nonchalantly than the others, like us, who would have to pay out quite a sum for a similar experience.

With three wars going on, the work at the office manages to keep me busy, and besides, I manage to keep busy with other things as well. I often regret that there are only 24 hours in each day.

You seem to have had quite an interesting experience yourself, that is, working for the Japanese Pavilion at the Fair. Now that the Fair has closed, would it be difficult to return to routine again, that of everyday living?

I really want to write more in 1940, not routine stuff, but something creative. But it is a queer thing, that being on a newspaper gives you less time to write. A paradox, isn't it?

Have been keeping up with my reading, although books and magazines in English are more or less difficult to get. What we do is to have a circulating system and whenever one of us in it gets a book, it makes the rounds. Have read "Grapes of Wrath," "Slogum House," "Barbary Coast" and am starting on "The Rains Came,"! although it looks like a terribly long work. Why are American books particularly sexy these days -- or have they always been? Maybe the ones I have been reading are especially slanted that way.

If you are interested in books re Japan, I'll keep on the lookout and send you any advertisements, catalogues, etc. in English when

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appear, shall I? And if you ever need any, that is, after Henri goes back, I'll always be glad to secure them for you.

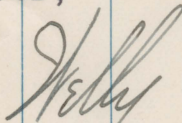
There is a bookstore in New York, I believe, called Orientalia, that specializes in books on the Far East and would be a good source to secure old books, etc. I can't get hold of their address at the present time, but I suppose they advertise in such magazines as Harper's, Atlantic Monthly, Saturday Review of Literature or others that feature publishers' ads. They do not publish books, however.

While I was in the States, I always had a hankering to start up a lending library specializing in books on the Orient, especially Japan. I suppose Los Angeles or San Francisco would be a good place to start one up -- and some Nisei interested in such an enterprise ought to open one, perhaps as a side business to some other shop at first and then gradually expand it. The name that I had picked out was the Far East Bookery, but of course, nothing ever came of it. I had quite a collection but they became all scattered over Seattle, San Francisco, etc. I think Oski Taniwaki might still have some, etc., etc.

I have quite a new collection at the house now, but books are bulky and quite a bit of nuisance when one moves around.

Well, so much for this time.

As ever,



By the way, come to think of it, if you ever hear of anyone interested in the above lending library idea, I'd always be glad to cooperate -- perhaps not able to financially, but as the agent over here, you know.

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Miss Tomoye Nozawa

786 Stanyan Street

San Francisco, California

United States of America