



The Narrative of a Japanese, Vol. 1: What He Has Seen and the People He Has Met in the Course of the Last Forty Years (Classic Reprint)

Joseph Heco

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Excerpt from The Narrative of a Japanese, Vol. 1: What He Has Seen and the People He Has Met in the Course of the Last Forty Years

Some time in the spring of 1892, I was handed eight thin but closely-written note-books, with a request that I should extract from them all that was of more than purely personal interest, and if I deemed the excerpts so made worthy of being made public, to see to the publication of the same. The first two of these volumes contained all that the writer could recall of his childhood in old Japan, of his being cast-away and picked up and taken to America, and of what befell him there. The remaining six formed a portion of the regular diary which Mr. Heco has kept ever since the time he began to write English. Dealing as they do with such stirring themes as the opening of the Treaty Ports, and life in them at a time when all the pomp and splendour of the old feudal Japan which has now so utterly passed away were daily before men's eyes, at a time when it was not good for folks to walk abroad at night without an armed guard, at a time when the social and political fabric of centuries was surely tottering to its fall, the pages of these note-books are of more than mere passing interest.

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