

# **JAPANESE LYRICS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649429301

Japanese Lyrics by Lafcadio Hearn

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Cover @ 2017

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**LAFCADIO HEARN**

**JAPANESE  
LYRICS**



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TRANSLATED BY  
LAFCADIO HEARN



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

*The Riverside Press Cambridge*

1915

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*Published April 1915*

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Seki wa yoi toko,  
Asahi wo ukete;  
O-Yama arashiga  
Soyo-soyoto!

SONG OF MIONOSEKI.

[*Seki is a goodly place, facing the morning sun. There, from the holy mountains, the winds blow softly, softly, — soyo-soyoto.*]



#### PUBLISHERS' NOTE

*SCATTERED* through the pages of Lafcadio Hearn's writings are many Japanese lyrics. So graceful are these little poems, so characteristic, in their swift, sure impressionism, of Oriental art, that it has seemed worth while to bring them together within the compass of a single volume.

It is perhaps unnecessary to analyze here the distinctive features of Japanese poetry. The reader will understand that as the poets relied for their effect largely upon the opportunities for subtle and intricate double meanings afforded by the peculiar structure of the Japanese language, it is scarcely possible to do them justice in an alien tongue. But these translations, though faithful to the original, have the innate feeling for beauty, the instinctive sense of the right word, the perfect phrase, common to everything that came from Hearn's pen.

To preserve the volume from the appearance of undue weightiness the interpretive notes with which the poems are accompanied have been reduced to the smallest possible compass. Indeed, in many cases the elaborate plays upon words are too involved to be susceptible of explanation.

In their limitation of a poem to the presentation of a