



HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

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THIRTY-FOUR YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

Long time ago, while I lived in Fukuoka, Kyūshū, I received a postcard from Dr. Uchida. He asked me if I knew a fish, locally called "Stereoskyo" or "Telesco" in Nagasaki. He wanted to see if the fish suits his laboratory experiments.

I at once wrote to Mr. Kaneko in Nagasaki, a physician known for his rich collection of fish. His reply was that such a fish he had never heard of. I informed to Dr. Uchida soon, telling the result with regret.

A few days later, on hearing of this, one of my boys cried out laughing: "Ah, it is a non-existent, fabulous being. It is a fish in a favorite topic of comic story often told by storytellers, as we hear over the radio."

Even now, I recollect this indignantly, and am very doubtful whether Mr. Kaneko then did know the joke, or he was really innocent in replying me.

Another story. I was participating in the annual meeting of our Zoological Society held in Tōkyō. While I was listening some one on the platform, an usher came up and politely presented to me a namecard, saying that a man outside wanted to have an interview with me. The card was of a man with the title: Special Secret Service Police. Very much embarrassed, though without a slightest idea whatever of any business concerned with such a person, I at once rose up, and left the auditorium stealthily. But, in the corridor outside I could find nobody wanting to see me. During the whole act, Dr. Uchida must have been looking at me from somewhere way off, with mischievous and triumphant mien, satisfied with his success.

One day, in the preceding year, Dr. Uchida was in the train, after having attended the zoologists' annual gathering which took place in Fukuoka. A policeman of the Special Secret Service took seat opposite to him, and began to ask him where he was coming from, what he did there, what his profession was, etc. etc. Very probably he must have been judged by the policeman as quite a suspicious person, — "red" perhaps, or something else.

Dr. Uchida replied gently that he had given lectures on jellyfish at the zoologists' gathering at Kyūshū Imperial University, and was on his way home for Hokkaidō.

So the suspicion on the part of the policeman was cleared away, and they traveled farther chatting like good friends. The namecard of the policeman was kept by Dr. Uchida carefully for use on some later lucky opportunity. Pity for the victim, however!

The day when I made acquaintance with young Mr. Uchida was May 31,

1923, namely 34 years ago, when he had just graduated from university and came to Fukuoka to visit our laboratory. For some years he engaged in research work as post graduate student, and at the same time he taught in the Senior High School of Musashi, Tôkyô. After having obtained the doctor's degree, he moved to Sapporo, where he has held the professor's post until now.

As we lived far apart from each other, — he in Hokkaidô up in the north, and I in Kyûshû down in the west,—the chance of seeing each other was rather slender; say, only once a year, when the annual meeting of zoologists took place somewhere in turn, for instance, Kyôto, Sendai, Hiroshima, etc.

The only exceptionally good occasion for us two to travel together was given in 1932. After the zoologists' annual meeting in Taihoku, Taiwan (Formosa), we both joined in an excursion party to trip along the western half of the island down to the south end, Cape Garambi.

Then, we made a collecting tour together in the northeastern coast of the island, and further, took a ship to visit the Yaéyama Group of Okinawa (Loo Choo). Thus, from the day when we had left the port of Moji, the 20th of October, till I saw him off at Ishigaki-Harbour on the 14th of November, namely for more than three weeks, we were together, enjoying the marvellous surroundings of subtropical nature, and making the tie between us ever faster.

I look back on this happy occasion with great pleasure, which no doubt Dr. Uchida would share with me.

Son of the eminent scholar of Chinese classics, Dr. Uchida is gifted with an unusual talent of good-style writing and special senses in observing nature. This we can find clearly in the several books of popular essays which he has published of late one after another.

The friend more than ten years younger than I, yet Dr. Uchida is highly esteemed by me for his ever unceasing research work. I cannot but help wishing heartily for his excellent health, and he contribute further to his beloved line of zoological field.

Salve!

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