Not all kakocho give this depth of detail, but unlike the various census records known to demographers, they note the deaths of all of a temple’s parishioners, including stillborns and infants who died before they could be registered elsewhere. As Jannetta points out, the kakocho can only be used to calculate changes in mortality over time, not death rates, because the size of the temple’s population remains unknown. The use of the kakocho in conjunction with other records nevertheless promises to bring a new perspective to the demographic history of Japan.

Jannetta has made an important contribution to our understanding of why people died in premodern Japan, but her interpretation of what this implied for demographic change is not entirely convincing. On the one hand, she supports the assumption made by what she calls the “early modern economic development” school of Japanese history that “strong preventive checks” (infanticide) are the only possible explanation for the failure of the Japanese population to grow in the last half of the Tokugawa period. (See pages 105, 204-207). On the other hand, she emphasizes that infants under the age of five were the most susceptible to epidemics, yet most children listed in her registers died of other causes, and most died before they would ever appear in the standard censuses used by demographers. Even the shōgun’s own family saw half of its offspring die in infancy. By her own admission, the effect of smallpox on male infertility needs to be taken into effect in studying birth rates. The jury is still out on the question of to what extent Japanese parents killed their newborn babies.

Like any important book, this one raises a number of questions for future research. Jannetta has shown how the incidence of epidemics varied with the isolation of communities by focusing her analysis on villages off the beaten track. Yet other regions of Japan and the major cities must have experienced these epidemics differently just as they experienced famines differently. Western Japan, which figured so largely in the spread of measles whenever it was introduced from outside, would appear to be of particular interest. The historian is left wondering about other diseases that appear in Tokugawa period diaries and chronicles. What was the incidence, for example, of pulmonary tuberculosis, a disease that afflicted young adults?

No book can do everything, and this one is a monument of solid scholarship. Jannetta is to be commended for her readiness to acknowledge intellectual debts, both to the Japanese scholars without whose careful spadework none of us would be able to do Japanese history, and to authorities in the diseases she studies. The book is beautifully illustrated with woodblock prints suggesting how the Japanese conceptualized disease, and the clear exposition of medical history and medical terms is of incalculable help to the layperson.

University of Utah
Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A.

ANNE WALTHALL


When men of mediocre talents appear to take the lead role in great historical events, as they occasionally do, it is probably accurate to say that often a combination of luck, timing, and other fortuitous circumstances had thrust them into the limelight. Whether or not these ordinary individuals can sustain their initial triumph to legendary status is another matter. In this intriguing biography of one of the lesser well-known U.S. oyatoi (foreign employee), F. G. Notehelfer makes significant contribu-
tions to our understanding of early Meiji Japan and to the limited, but important role played by Westerners at a crucial period in modern Japanese history. Notehelfer’s study of Captain Leroy Lansing Janes (1837-1909) evokes a dynamic, reforming, revivalistic era characterized in Japan as “Restoration” and as “Reconstruction” in the United States. The respective post civil war periods were difficult, transitional times for both countries. Notehelfer’s ability to tell a good story helps to flesh out some of the human dimensions of a particularly rich chapter in U.S.-Japanese cultural relations. It was a time when Japanese society was transformed to an extent and at a pace which historians have deemed extraordinary.

Given such an impressive setting, Notehelfer’s complex, controversial subject is not altogether convincing in the role of “heroic figure whose uncompromising commitment to an ideal refuses to bend even at the cost of personal destruction, (a definition which) constituted the ultimate Japanese heroic type” (p. 262). In 1871 hired as headmaster by the reformist faction of the southwestern domain of Kumamoto to expose bright young Japanese to western learning, West Point graduate and Civil War veteran Captain Janes became an “American samurai” and a second father to a group of young Japanese later known as the Kumamoto Band. Few foreigners then were allowed to travel beyond the treaty ports to the interior of Japan. For five years Janes resided in the interior with his wife and two small children, and speaking no Japanese managed to instruct and to inspire men such as Ebina Danjō, Kozaki Hiromichi, Ukita Kazutami, and Tokutomi Sohō, leaders in the intellectual development of modern Japan. With his reckless courage and emotional intensity Janes convinced even his enemies of his sincerity and deep affection for his students. More important, he managed to imbue these students with a sense of intellectual integrity, freedom to think for themselves, and a sense of social justice for all humankind, certainly progressive achievements.

However, Janes overextended himself physically, mentally and emotionally in Kumamoto. A nervous, erratic, and opinionated man, his generalist skills and the readiness and ability of the Japanese made for dramatic success in the first scene of the drama, but for various reasons Janes could not live up to his reputed accomplishments. The issue which precipitated the beginning of his downfall was the 1876 conversion to Christianity of several of Janes’ brightest students. Although Janes labored primarily as a “secular reformer”, emphasizing the rational, scientific legacy of western learning, his “excessive nervous fatigue” made him subject to “strange joys” which marked periods of intense religious experience. Given the long tradition of deepseated hostility to Christianity which persisted in Japan, the students’ public declaration of faith created a minor revolution. At the termination of his contract in Kumamoto, Janes accepted a teaching post in Osaka before he returned to the U.S. in 1877.

For Notehelfer, one of the pivotal issues in the transformation of Japan was the “set of brilliant minds that made Christianity a central theme in the intellectual development of modern Japan” (p. 3). And for Notehelfer, Captain Janes is the central figure in the drama of Christian influence on modern Japanese thought and education. Yet, Janes for most of his life had an ambivalent attitude toward religion in general, and towards American Protestant Christianity in particular.

In the years between 1877 and his return to Japan in 1893, several unfortunate events occurred which embittered Janes. The defamation of his character by his father-in-law Henry Martyn Scudder, a renowned Presbyterian minister, and the scandal of his divorce eliminated any possibility of employment in Japan with the