

sons stated before. We obtained permission one day to witness a performance and entering found ourselves in a long open room the floor being as usual spread with mats upon which the audience were seated which consisted for the most part of women each with her charcoal furnace in front of her. A small stage was erected at the farther end upon which the play was progressing but whether comedy or tragedy we were not informed but judging from the contortions of the actors it must have been tragedy for them at least. They were not what would be called "stars" at home but seemed to perfectly satisfy their audience. There were about fifty sailors collected here and after witnessing the performance for a while the stage was taken possession of by them and there being fiddlers bawls players amongst them a negro concert was improvised and the stage resounded to the steps of the fuba dance with music which gave immense satisfaction to all in the theatre but the actors who appeared to be highly indignant at being interrupted in their performance and driven from the stage. After performing as long as we pleased we adjourned to the street upon which the doors of the theatre were immediately closed and were not opened again during our stay.

This being the last day that we expected to be allowed on shore towards night the most of those on shore began taking anything they had a fancy for and getting hold of some "sake" were soon ready for anything and going up and down the streets began to take whatever they came across until the merchants getting alarmed when they saw them coming would take what they had exposed outside and take it into the house for safety. This was kept up until time to go on board when we marched down to the boat with our baggage. For my own part I was sorry to see this go on as it tended to create an increased distrust of us and would detract from the good opinion they had begun to form towards us.

Chapter VII.

My First second season in the Ochotk.

We staid in Hakodadi three weeks and then getting water on board we set sail for the Ochotk on our second season which we entered about the first of May 1858 and soon reached the ice where the same programme was carried out as the seasons before with but little variety with this exception. We had been in among drift ice and at nightfall the wind continued to increase until by eight o'clock we had everything furled but a close reefed main topsail spencers and fore topmast staysail. My watch having the first four hours from eight to twelve on deck we had managed by wearing ee. to keep clear of the ice and at twelve went below tired enough. We had just turned in and I was taking a smoke before going to sleep when all at once thump, crash she went against a floe and the Captain running on deck rang out "call all hands. So we had no alternative but to turn out which was done amid a great deal of swearing and growling and going on deck we found the ship surrounded by ice. We would stand on a few ships lengths and meeting the ice would wear ship and stand on the other tack till we met it again when the operation would be repeated. The night was intensely cold with a fine sleety rain which with the spray dashing on the rigging would freeze in a minute or two and cover it with a solid coat of ice and I think that if we had not been kept pulling and hauling nearly all the time some of us would have frozen for we were all wet to the skin. But the longest night will end and on morning dawned at last and the other watch were sent below for breakfast and on their finishing and coming on deck we went below and ate ours and then no time was lost in turning in. During the day we managed to work clear of the ice which however had not damaged us any except stripping off a little copper.