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Fukuzawa Yukichi as a Father: Translations of Letters Written to His Two Eldest Sons While They Were in the United States, 1883–1888.¹⁾

Translated by Helen Ballhatchet

Introduction to the translations

As well as his various publications, including the articles that he regularly wrote for *Jiji shinpo*, the newspaper that he set up in 1882, Fukuzawa was a prolific letter writer. One of his children remembers that on family trips to hot springs, once they had arrived at the hotel Fukuzawa would soon sit down, and taking up brush and inkstone, write letter after letter.²⁾ Obviously many of the letters were thrown away or destroyed in either natural or man-made disasters. Even so, 2584 letters survived to be published in the nine hardback volumes of *Fukuzawa Yukichi shokanshu* (The Collected Letters of Fukuzawa Yukichi, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2001–2003). More have been discovered since then, and it has been suggested that the survival of so many testifies to the value that the recipients and their families placed in either the fact that they were written by the great man himself, or to the message that they contained.³⁾

Obviously, the letters include simple business letters, but many of them, particularly those to family members, reveal aspects of Fukuzawa that are not visible in the many texts that he wrote for a public audience, even in the

sometimes confessional autobiography.⁴⁾ Below are translations of 28 of the 113 letters that Fukuzawa is known to have written to his two eldest sons, Ichitaro and Sutejiro, during the five years (mid 1883–mid 1888) while they were studying in the United States. One letter from Fukuzawa’s wife, Kin, (Letter No. 24) is also included.

Fukuzawa sent all four of his sons, and two future sons-in-law, abroad to study. In the case of Ichitaro and Sutejiro, Fukuzawa intended to do this from the day they were born, although he worried about how this would be funded since this was before his many publications had guaranteed his financial stability.⁵⁾ It should be clear from the letters that he regarded this period as essential to make them truly independent beings, both in the sense of becoming psychologically self-reliant, and in the sense of being able to earn a living by themselves.

Independence was a central theme in Fukuzawa’s life and writings.⁶⁾ After all, at Keio, Fukuzawa is remembered chiefly for his motto “*Dokuritsu jison*” (Independence and Self-Respect). However, taken as a whole, the letters to Ichitaro and Sutejiro in the United States show a constant struggle between this ideal that Fukuzawa stressed so unceasingly in public, and his privately expressed paternal feelings. Thus, although he frequently tells his sons that they should make their own decisions, he cannot refrain from giving them advice, about the subjects they should study, the need to care for their health and take regular exercise, and even the importance of being discreet in what they say about events at home to Japanese acquaintances.

30 of the 113 letters in the *Shokanshu* are addressed to both sons, and 19 to Sutejiro. But the majority, 64, went to Ichitaro, the eldest son,⁷⁾ who is clearly Fukuzawa’s main target of concern. In the very first letter below, which is a list of instructions to both sons rather than a letter in the strictest sense of the word, Fukuzawa strongly advises Ichitaro to give up alcohol

while abroad, because he cannot hold his drink. (It becomes clear in the course of the letters that Ichitaro does not follow this advice.) We do not have Ichitaro's letters, but Fukuzawa's replies suggest that Ichitaro lacks confidence, and is easily discouraged. His handling of Ichitaro clearly illustrates the struggle mentioned above between what he regards as the rational duty of a father to cultivate independence in his sons, and his emotional inability to give Ichitaro the freedom to learn by his mistakes. Thus on the one hand, Fukuzawa urges Ichitaro to act as an adult and to use his time in the United States to prepare to pursue an independent livelihood on his return to Japan since it is not the job of his parents to look after him indefinitely; on the other, he does not hesitate to state what he thinks Ichitaro should do, and to assure him that as a result of his father's achievements, the family's financial position is secure so that Ichitaro need not have any worries about money.

At first Ichitaro is destined to study agriculture, mainly, it would seem, because it does not involve mathematics. Even so, he has difficulty in reaching the standard of mathematics required for entrance to Cornell, his chosen university. Fukuzawa encourages him, and is delighted when he succeeds. However, Ichitaro decides to leave Cornell before completing his degree in order to enter a school of commerce. Fukuzawa has his doubts about Ichitaro's idea, although he accepts that business studies may be of use in the future. But again, Ichitaro is unable to carry his plans out to the end. He gives up the business course and decides to specialize in literary studies. Fukuzawa expresses pleasure that Ichitaro has at last found what he wants to do and begins to plan for Ichitaro either to join the staff of *Jiji shinpo*, or to teach at Keio. There is some talk of Ichitaro's entering the Literature Department at Cornell, but this never materializes; instead he studies under at least one private tutor, with whom he quarrels. In the end,

while Sutejiro was able to graduate with a degree in civil engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Ichitaro returned with no tangible results from his five-year stay.

It cannot have been easy to be the eldest son of such a successful and strong-minded father. From a young age, Ichitaro had probably felt himself to be under extreme pressure to live up to his father's name. This can only have been increased by the fact that Sutejiro began to study at Keio at the same time as Ichitaro and graduated half a year earlier, despite being two years his junior. On the other hand, Fukuzawa is admirably sympathetic and patient in the face of Ichitaro's inability to stick to one path and his frequent need for encouragement. There is only one letter (at least of those that survive) in which Fukuzawa appears to lose his patience. Ichitaro seems to have sent an emotional letter in which he accuses his father of asking his private tutor to send reports about Ichitaro and to issue instructions about his behavior. His mother is so concerned at the effect of this letter on her husband that she writes to rebuke Ichitaro for causing his father anxiety, and reminds him of a promise to write about his worries to her rather than directly to his father (Letter No. 24). On his part, Fukuzawa appears to have more or less ignored this letter until the lack of any follow up moves him to write in strong terms (Letter No. 25). He even threatens to travel to America in order to bring Ichitaro back, after which he will wash his hands of him.

Another issue that clearly caused Fukuzawa concern was the short-lived possibility that Ichitaro might marry an American woman. Ichitaro appears to have mentioned this in strictest confidence after a chance reference by Fukuzawa to the practical differences that were likely to follow such a marriage. Fukuzawa strongly explained his negative view but followed this, inevitably, by telling Ichitaro that he was an adult, and that the decision was therefore up to him. (See Letters Nos 17–20.)

In addition to his love and expectations for his sons, the letters also reveal Fukuzawa's awareness that their behavior and achievements will affect his reputation. When the conscription law is changed so that Keio students will also be eligible, he is glad that the change occurred after their departure for the United States, since otherwise it might have looked as if he had sent them to study abroad in order to escape conscription (Letter No. 9). When he asked both of his sons to be careful of what they said about events at home to Japanese acquaintances (Letter No. 7), this was at least partly because he feared that any criticisms they attracted for indiscreet talk would affect how people viewed him as well. Similar concerns appeared when he was (fruitlessly) urging Ichitaro to obtain some sort of certificate to prove that he had spent his time abroad studying (Letter No. 27). He did not wish Ichitaro to be compared to sons of the new Meiji peerage who had wasted their time abroad in idle pursuits.

On a lighter side, the letters also reveal happy scenes of the family left behind in Japan, and the close relationship between Fukuzawa and his wife. The "elderly couple" (*rosei fufu*), as Fukuzawa calls them, share their sadness at the absence of their eldest sons, their joy at news of their accomplishments, and their embarrassment as they realize that whenever they see girls of a marriageable age they are wondering if any might be suitable brides for Ichitaro once he returns.

* * *

The letters:

Translator's Notes:

1. The letters are numbered in chronological order. The information in brackets gives the letter number, volume and pagination of the originals as printed in the *Shokanshu*. The only exceptions are Letters Nos 1 and

24. In this case, the reference is to *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshu*, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1958–1971.

2. Information in square brackets has been inserted by the translator to aid understanding.
3. Most of this information, and the information in the footnotes, has been obtained from the annotations in the *Shokanshu*.
4. Bold has been used to indicate foreign words that Fukuzawa wrote using *katakana*.
5. In 1883, Fukuzawa was aged 48, Kin, his wife, was 38, Ichitaro was 20, and Sutejiro 18. The two eldest sons were followed by five daughters Sato (aged 15), Fusa (aged 13), Shun (aged 10), Taki (aged 7), and Mitsu (aged 4). Finally came two boys, Sanpachi (aged 2) and Daishiro, who was born in 1883, after Ichitaro and Sutejiro's departure.

* * *

No. 1 (No. 558, vol. 17, pp. 552–553)

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro

10 June 1883

Instructions for your studies

1. While you are studying abroad, you should not return to Japan under any circumstances until told to do so by your parents. Even if you hear that one of us is ill, you should not return home in a panic.
2. Since Ichitaro has chosen to study agriculture, this is what his studies should focus on. He should concentrate on practical matters rather than agricultural theories, so that he can apply what he has learnt as soon as he returns to Japan.
- 3 Sutejiro has selected physics as his subject. I would like to suggest

something like electrical engineering, but I will leave the final decision up to him.

4. You should both take care not to damage your health, and give only second priority to your academic progress. Therefore, you should not worry if you need to extend the length of your studies - even, for example, if what should take three years requires five. There are natural differences in the stamina of people from the East and West. You must take great care.
5. Ichitaro is not a heavy drinker, but he easily becomes drunk. He lacks the willpower to control his alcoholic intake by himself, but luckily he has not yet developed an ingrained habit of drinking. Since it should be easy to give up alcohol at this stage, he should definitely do so. Once he has reached around the age of thirty, his temperament will have settled down and he may do as he pleases. But if he gets drunk during his studies, other people will despise him, and it will cause him unhappiness. Moreover, it will break the hearts of his parents. Both of you should behave with discretion. This item is not a demand of your parents, but rather an entreaty. You must definitely show your consent.

I have recorded these items before our parting.

Yukichi

* * *

No. 2 (no. 748, Vol. 3, pp. 298–301)

19 June 1883

Dear Ichitaro and Sutejiro,

After parting from you at the boat in Yokohama at 9:00 on the 12th of this month, we went to the second floor of the Mitsubishi office to have a

short rest. After 10:00, we watched the ship as it set off into the distance, and went back to Tokyo on the 11:00 train.

The weather has been good here since you left, with no rain at all, even though it is the rainy season. How has the weather been at sea? I am trying to convince myself that you are having good weather as well.

After you had left I was pleased to hear that a large group of Japanese entertainers were on board with you. You will find that the company of other Japanese people, no matter who, will cheer you up during the long and boring sea voyage.

We are all well, but the sudden disappearance of the two of you has left a gap. Hide [Imaizumi Hidetaro, Fukuzawa's nephew] is loath to eat alone without you at the table, so he is spending most of his time in his mother's quarters,⁸⁾ while O-Sato, O-Fusa and O-Shun have all come back here and are sharing meals with us.

We have cleared away both the desks and all your books, burnt boxes and other things which seem no longer necessary, tidied up everything else and put it where it will not be disturbed, so put your minds at rest.

Gentaro [Sakamoto Gentaro, Fukuzawa's gatekeeper] is looking after the doves, so they are safe. We have also been making a sparrow hut so that we can keep some sparrows for Sanpachi and O-Mitsu to enjoy. The hut was ready this morning, but it is difficult to get the sparrows to come near.

I am busy working on the newspaper [*Jiji shinpo*] as usual. I naturally neglected it around the time of your departure, but have been writing again from around two or three days ago. I expect that my labors will continue until you return. Life cannot always be full of amusement.

As I have already made clear, once you have arrived in America you should ask Messrs Terashima [Munenori, 1832–1893, then Minister to the United States] and Sameshima [Takenosuke, 1855–1931, then Secretary to

the Japanese Legation in Washington]⁹⁾ for advice concerning education. I have asked the Morimura Company¹⁰⁾ to take care of financial matters so you should have no difficulties in that regard, but since mistakes involving money matters often occur you should keep me informed of the date when you obtain any money, the exact amount, accurate to the smallest unit, the name of the Morimura employee who handed you the money, and what the money is for. In addition, as I have already made clear, no matter what the circumstances might be, you should not borrow money from any source apart from the Morimura Company; neither should you lend any. This prohibition does not apply only to the lending of money itself. You must not allow anyone to use the name of Ichitaro or Sutejiro. To lend your name, stand surety, or even arrive at some private understanding because of a particular situation, is no different from actually handing money over to someone. Please take the utmost care in this regard.

There is absolutely no need for haste in learning. To make swift progress at the expense of your health would be pointless. Do not forget how it was health concerns that led to Sutejiro's leaving Monbuko [a school?] last year. In Ichitaro's case as well, my intention is not to turn you into an expert in the theory of agriculture. Gain a basic theoretical knowledge and then focus on **practice**. Above all, take care to behave well. Make every endeavor to avoid being criticized for **shyness** by forming a wide circle of close and active friendships. I have no serious demands of you beyond this.

It will gradually grow hotter. If you have difficulty in adapting to American customs, for example as regards taking baths, your first year will cause you some problems. However, just as [the great Chinese general] Kongming [Zhuge Liang (181–234)] crossed the land of Yunnan in June [at the height of summer], men should not allow matters such as the heat or the cold to prevent them from accomplishing their goals. If they use their brains,

they will be able to find ways of enduring hardships. The thought that even now people from Europe and America are making a living by travelling vast distances should act as a spur in your efforts.

In haste, just wishing to assure you that all has been well since you left.

Yukichi

In addition: I have arranged for you each to receive a copy of *Jiji shinpo*. Of course, until your lodgings are decided I will address them to the Morimura Company, but once I know your address, I will immediately get it changed.

You will probably have to rely particularly on the kindness of Mr Murai [Yasukata, a Morimura employee]. I will write to thank him, but please give him my regards. The same goes for Mr Morimura Yutaka.

* * *

No. 3 (No. 777, Vol. 3, pp. 333–336)

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro (Extract)

27 August 1883

...As I have frequently remarked, Ichitaro should aim to study agriculture, but I think that skill in the **practical** is much more important than **high science**. Even if your level of scholarship is low, it does not matter. What Japan needs now is people who are fluent in English, and can read and write it. Note this, and work hard. In addition, Ichitaro is not good at mixing with people, and has a tendency to hold himself aloof. He should make an effort to copy the temperament of American people. If he consciously learns from them how to behave in an **amiable** manner on all occasions, it will become second nature. This is the first secret to deepening the roots of **happiness** in one's life. ...

We all gazed at the photograph [that you sent]. It is such a good likeness that when we showed it to Sanpachi, he pointed to you happily, saying “Itchan”, “Teichan”. We were all amazed that he still remembered your appearance so well.

* * *

No. 4 (No. 798, Vol. 4, p. 32)

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro (Extract)

4 November 1883

...The essay on the **analytic synthetic** [distinction] sent by Ichitaro is so well done that there is hardly anything that needs correcting. But I would like you to write more neatly, and make sure that there are no mistakes in your use of characters.

Sutejiro's passage in English is also splendid. I read both pieces full of the hope that your progress will continue in this way. I also explained everything to your mother, while weeping tears of joy. To tell the truth, since being parted from you both, she has been so anxious that at times she goes off by herself to think about you and becomes very gloomy. She has kept silent about this in the face of my positive attitude, but when your pieces arrived and I told her of your progress, she felt vitalized enough to accept your long absence. While I join her in welcoming your progress, my single worry is still your physical health. Please take every precaution.

Yesterday was the Emperor's birthday and a party was held at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. I was among the 100 Japanese and overseas guests. As I observed the proceedings, the feeble and diminutive appearance of the Japanese men and women there made me feel deeply ashamed. I also considered how much I hope that you will pay special attention to building up your physical stamina while you are away.

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No. 5 (No. 818, Vol. 4, pp. 65–66)

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro (Extracts)

22 December 1883

We have received your letters of 13 and 14 November, and are relieved to hear that your studies are proceeding well. It must be very cold by now, and I expect that your first winter in the United States is difficult to bear. In fact, that is the only thing that concerns me at present. I want you to be extremely careful. Take every measure to preserve your health, however much money this may require. Sutejiro reports that he is taking exercise at a fixed time every day, but what about Ichitaro? I pray that he will not be neglectful in this respect.

All is well here. The children are all full of life. On the 18th we pounded rice to make [the seasonal] rice cakes and invited 108 Keio students (including the elementary school children and their headmaster Mr Wada [Yoshiro (1840–1892)]) to the house to eat rice cakes with sweet bean paste. It was a very festive occasion.

...With regard to the direction of your studies, as I said at the time of your departure, my suggestion is that Ichitaro should specialize in agriculture and Sutejiro in a scientific subject, possibly **electricity**. But these are just my **speculations**. My intention was not to limit your options; I merely assumed that it would be sensible for you to pursue your strengths. I have no problem with you making your own choices. I only suggested agriculture for Ichitaro because I know that mathematics is his weakness. It was not my intention to order him to limit himself to agriculture. If there is some aspect of **literature** that interests him, he should just go ahead and make his own decision.

Recently in Japan there has been real public interest in favor of the railway question, with no hint of any opposition. Since it is highly likely that the future will see a great increase in railway construction, it may be of great help to Sutejiro's future prospects if he learns about steam railways.

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No. 6 (No. 823, Vol. 4, pp. 75–78)

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro (Extract)

4 January 1884

Your letter(s) of 20 November arrived a few days ago. On opening the envelope I was above all relieved to find that you were both well. Things here are unchanged. It is the fourth day of January 1884 and the New Year is proving very busy, with everyone bustling around. For both of you this is the first spring in a strange land. You must be feeling lonely. And yet, looked at from another point of view, how enjoyable it must be to spend the New Year in each other's company, as brothers, travelers in a distant land, with no other Japanese in sight! You must feel as if you are truly independent young men. This thought is the only source of comfort to both your mother and myself.

At the New Year we had our customary gathering of youngsters, who had a lively time playing new year games, but you were not here and with O-Sato being married and therefore also away, everything seemed somehow out of balance, strangely quiet and a little sad.

* * *

No. 7 (No. 838, Vol. 4, pp. 100–103

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro (Extract)

22 February 1884

...I gather from your letter(s) of 14 January that after arriving at Poughkeepsie you consulted Dr [Duane B.] Simmons¹¹⁾ [1835?–1889], that you have more or less chosen where you intend to study next, and are now making **preparations**: Ichitaro for Cornell [University], and Sutejiro for Troy [Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute] or Massachusetts [MIT]. The rest is up to you. But as I said in my last letter, there is no need for you to limit your choice of subjects to agriculture or electrical engineering. It is probably a good idea for Ichitaro to study agriculture. Alongside that, he can study literature and language. If he becomes able to speak English fluently and also write it well, he will have developed a skill that could very well prove to be the basis of his **life** in the future. He must be prepared not simply to rely on property that he has inherited from his parents, but to support a family through his own abilities. In the case of Sutejiro as well, I chanced on the idea of electrical engineering, but this was not in order to restrict your range of choices. The job of a **civil engineer** is very important too. This is particularly because civil engineering works are bound to increase in Japan. In any case, people who are studying something that they are not good at make slow progress. Think about what is in your best interests and do not worry about my preferences.

Sutejiro says that he is thinking of going to Britain after finishing his studies in the United States. This is very sensible. Any scholar worth his salt must visit Britain once. Moreover, once you have a sufficient knowledge of English, you should also learn French and German. This will keep you busy! But in making all these remarks about your studies, I am not forgetting the issue of your health. Your physical state is much more important than your

scholarship. Above all, please make sure to take care of yourselves. I was very happy to hear that when Dr Simmons examined you the other day he pronounced that you were both in good health.

You report that you have started skating as a form of exercise and spent 20 dollars on boots and skating blades. I hope you will wear them out through constant practice and outshine those **Yankee boys** with your skating prowess.

I absolutely agree with you that Western-style clothing is best for an active life. With this in mind, my view is that you no longer need the Japanese-style clothes that you left behind with us, and I do not intend to store them. I assume that on your return to Japan you will change completely to Western dress and am planning to prepare a Western-style house for you both on the assumption that you will want Western-style rooms. I am already enjoying myself by wondering whether to buy an old house in the Ginza area, or build a new one in Sankozaka [in the present day Shirokane area of Tokyo].

You expected the winter weather to be cold, but how is it in reality? We are worried that it might be difficult for you to bear.

There is a warning that I wish to repeat to you both. If you can sense the situation in Japan from abroad, you will realize how impossible it is. There are many ridiculous affairs going on in both politics, education, and commerce. However, there is no need to discuss what is happening. Moreover, since no good will come of such discussions, you should not go on and on about what is happening in our country, even at the end of letters you write to friends in Japan. Not everyone in our society is a stubborn fool. There are many **liberal** thinkers both in the government and outside it. Even among government officials, there are people who are not narrow-minded. Young students should devote themselves single-mindedly to their studies.

In addition, since you are now in New England, you are bound to have associations with many other Japanese who are living abroad. On such occasions, do not make all sorts of comments about Japan when there is no need to do so. You must realize that if you assume that you are free to say what you please since you are in a foreign country, and make many inappropriate remarks, people will criticize you and say that Fukuzawa's sons do not know how to behave properly. In other words, my reputation will be damaged as well. Please be discreet. ... Of course, I believe that you are unlikely to behave so carelessly, but when people are abroad, they develop a tendency to be outspoken, and it is sometimes difficult to avoid mistakes. I remember behaving like this when I myself was young.¹²⁾

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No. 8 (No. 853, Vol. 4, pp. 122–123)

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro (Extracts)

8 April 1884

...I have asked Morimura to send 1 box of *yokan* [bar of sweet jellied bean paste], 2 boxes large and small of *chamame* [soy beans], and the same of *nikkeimame* [cinnamon-flavor beans]. Ichitaro likes *yokan*, doesn't he, and I know that Sutejiro is very fond of *chamame* and *nikkeimame*. ...

Sanpachi is rather timid, and was afraid of going in a rickshaw. Since he weighs over 15 kilos, he is too heavy for a long piggyback, but if we let him walk, he dawdles along at a snail's pace, so it has been impossible to take him on any long journeys. At the beginning of this month, he and I had several negotiations, and finally arrived at the unanimous conclusion that he would finally get into a rickshaw. On the morning of the 6th, we all set out for Asakusa, whereupon he discovered that there was actually no reason to be frightened of a rickshaw. He chattered away confidently as we crossed the

bridges of Ryogoku and Azuma, ate lunch at Asakusa, and returned home in the evening. Since then he has not ceased to talk happily about his first trip to Asakusa, particularly his surprise at the length of the bridges, the size of the sea (by which he means river), and the great number of pigeons, and how a parrot talked to O-Take [a maidservant?] using human speech.

* * *

No. 9 (No. 862, Vol. 4, pp. 131–133)

To Ichitaro (Extracts)

24 April 1884

I have read your letter of 18 March. First of all, I am relieved that you are well. There are no changes here. Everyone is in good health.¹³⁾ You write that Dr Simmons is of the opinion that you should enter the regular course at Cornell, but that the preparations are giving you a lot of work, and that you are having some difficulties with the mathematics. I am not unaware of this. Therefore, I have frequently written to both Messrs Terashima and Sameshima, and similarly to Dr Simmons, saying that it is not necessary for you to enter the regular course. My desire has always been for you to acquire some knowledge of American agricultural methods and also to gain fluency in spoken and written English. However, it is only natural human behavior for someone who is entrusted with responsibility for someone else's offspring to want him to do as well as possible. I have just recently received a letter [from Dr Simmons?] to the effect that Ichitaro is no mathematician, but that on the other hand, his ability is definitely not below average; if he does some preparatory work now and over the summer, it should be easy for him to enter the regular course. Therefore, I cannot tell you how you should proceed. If you were to say that a degree is just a piece of paper, that would be that; however, from the point of view of gaining a

position in society after your return to Japan, a degree would certainly be worth more than a piece of paper, so Dr Simmons' view is very reasonable. On the other hand, if the work you must do in preparation, particularly in mathematics, is so hard that it causes you mental stress and there is a possibility that you will fall ill, I would certainly think that to continue would be out of the question. Only you can decide which is the better course. In any case, for the time being, whatever you decide about the preparations for entering Cornell, you should continue with your English-language classes, since in academic terms this will certainly be to your advantage. When the autumn comes, either you will enter the regular course at Cornell, or you will just stay where you are now. If you can enter Cornell, you should do so; if you are unsuccessful, all you can do is stay put. However, it is not my intention to order you to do anything that is against your will.

...recently there has been a tremendous rise in the number of students going to the United States from Japan. ...there seems to be no end to the number of Keio students bound for that country. One reason for this is that the Japanese have realized how important it is to understand the circumstances of foreign countries, and even older people have become more willing to spend money on this. Another is the reform of the conscription law, which has encouraged the idea that study abroad is preferable to being called up.¹⁴⁾ Whatever the case, it seems likely that as far as the near future is concerned, there will be a great number of young men bound for the United States. I am sure that very soon you will both cease to make any comments about feelings of loneliness. Since you are exactly twenty this year, you would be eligible for conscription were you in Japan. Therefore, even though you have suffered some inconveniences, it is extremely fortunate that you left Japan last year. In particular, if you had left

this year, we would have had no defense against the charge that the Fukuzawa boys had set off in order to avoid conscription. But we have no need to worry: since the decision to leave had already been taken last June, there is obviously no link with the change in the conscription rules.

Because of the situation I explained above, even if you enter Cornell and are therefore separated from Sutejiro, since there is a stream of Japanese, especially Keio students, going to the States, you are likely to feel very much at home although you are in reality so far away. Remember that it is important to interact with others. Talk lightheartedly or have discussions with every type of person, in a pleasant manner. It is essential to spend some time relaxing even when you are studying hard.

* * *

No. 10 (No. 883, Vol. 4, pp. 164–166)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

20 July 1884

...Regardless of whether you enter the standard course at Ithaca [Cornell] or not, I want you to achieve excellence in some field or other, so that you can live an independent life once you return to Japan. Whether you work for the government or join the private sector does not matter. What is important is for you to become a person of value who can support his own family. ... Parents do not act as parents forever. Once you are fully grown, you should no longer need to rely on us. ...

* * *

No. 11 (No. 884, Vol. 4, pp. 167–168)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

29 July 1884

Your letter of 23 June has arrived. I gather that you left Poughkeepsie on the 12th, spent one night with Ichitaro in New York, and then left for Ithaca, where you visited Dr Roberts and met Mr Tsumaki [Yorinaka, a former Keio student and future architect]. I also understand that you have had a difficult time.

You tell me that since Mr Tsumaki has since graduated and moved elsewhere, and the person called Arakawa has already left Ithaca, you are the only Japanese person there for the moment. This is a lonely situation to be in but seeing that life is full of great hardships, we should always be prepared for relatively small problems like this. Moreover, it will surely be good for your English **practice** to have no Japanese people nearby. On the other hand, recently more and more people are going to the United States from Japan, and some of them are bound to come to Ithaca.

Speaking of Ithaca, you say that the customs are not very refined. I can understand why this troubles you, but ultimately it is the individual's power of will that determines his level of behavior. Even if other people are drinking heavily, all you need to do is retain your self-control. Since you have never been able to hold your drink, you must take particular care when it comes to alcohol. Stay sober until you come back to Japan and you can drink in your father's company again.

You also wrote that the university entrance examinations began on July 15, and that you did well in the first and final parts but failed the rest. You should put that in the past, and study during the summer so that you can do the retake. I have also had a letter about this from Dr Simmons. His very sensible advice is that you should prepare with the help of a **private tutor**.

Let us do as the good doctor says; if you fail again in September, you can enter the **special course**. I do not think badly of you in any way. I shall be satisfied as long as you return to Japan healthy, and with some skill that will enable you to support yourself and a household. Life is not easy. It is becoming more difficult to make a living every day. This is only to be expected as Japan develops. You should not forget to bear this in mind. ...

* * *

No. 12 (No. 907, Vol. 4, pp. 199–203)

To Ichitaro (Extracts)

4 November 1884

...You write that you successfully passed the entrance examination on 17 September. Congratulations! You also write that the successful result surprised you. My long experience has taught me that this often happens. People differ in the level of their **self-estimation**, and those who have a poor opinion of themselves are often surprised when they achieve something. As a young man, I led a sheltered life and had such difficulty even making the stock greetings to those I did not know, that I convinced myself that I could not interact with ordinary people. This feeling remained both when I went to study at Nagasaki and when I was at Ogata [Koan]'s academy in Osaka, but on my way to Edo at the age of 25, I stayed at inns on the Tokaido and found that I could make teasing remarks to the men who were employed as casual labor along the way. Once I arrived and gradually got used to getting along with other people, I discovered that I was not as unsociable as I had feared, but was in fact quite good at making conversation. In fact now, I find it hard to believe how awkward I used to feel. My only weak point is that I am still not good at using my chopsticks to pick up bits of food to serve to drinking companions. This is probably a still-remaining trace of my sheltered

upbringing. Your success in the entrance examination is a similar case. A young man who greatly **underestimated** his ability at mathematics surprised himself when he actually passed. ...We should avoid arrogance and self-satisfaction, but it is a great help to be self-reliant and full of self-confidence...

To change the subject, I thought deeply about your question regarding your future direction, and also consulted your mother. On reflection, even if there may not actually be any great difference between the regular and special courses, recently in Japan, as a result of the increase in the number of people with academic qualifications, it has become harder to evaluate individual graduates when deciding whether to employ them, both in government and private positions. People are now assuming that someone who has studied abroad and obtained a **diploma** should be able to fill a post of responsibility. Inevitably this has led to a tendency to employ people just because they have **diplomas**. It is not clear whether this trend will continue. In order to obtain work, either in a government office or in a private post, it is important to be known and valued. Therefore, if you can, I would like you to complete the four-year regular course and come back to Japan bearing a graduation certificate. If this way of thinking is correct, your idea of attending a school of commerce should be postponed until your graduation in four years' time. ...

Your mother and I are counting out the time until you return in 1888, having persevered until your graduation. But, as I have said before, you do not have to find a job and set up your own home immediately; since I have been managing the household finances during your absence so that we should have money to spare, ...there will be no need for you to rush around in order to earn your living as soon as you return, like a miserable dog

belonging to a once-splendid family that has met its ruin.

Another concern is the fact that since there are no other Japanese in Ithaca, you are virtually alone. ...I will talk to former Keio students who are planning to go to the United States and try to find people who might enter Cornell, so please send a **catalogue** about the university by the next post.

...eventually, my intention is to hand everything over to [both of] you, with a fixed sum going to your mother and I so that we can settle down in retirement. She and I are really looking forward to this and often talk together about how enjoyable it will be. But even though the Fukuzawa household finances are not in a bad state at the moment, there are lots of you children. Looking after the younger ones will be a hard task for the two older brothers, but I am relying on you. I have already made an agreement with a life insurance company for Sanpachi and Daishiro to receive 3,000 yen each when they reach the age of 18. This is being paid in yearly installments...

* * *

No. 13 (No. 985, Vol. 4, pp. 306–308)

To Ichitaro

2 October, 1885

Dear Ichitaro,

Sutejiro's letter of 4 August arrived yesterday, but we have no tidings from you. Even so, it is clear from what Sute says that you are doing well.

I was very impressed by the article that you sent to Mr Takahashi called "Thoughts about 'On Japanese Women'",¹⁵⁾ and intend to use it as an editorial.¹⁶⁾ The published version of "On Japanese Women" [Part Two] has had a great impact in Japan. It seems to be encouraging the adoption of

Western-type hairstyles and clothing, and even influencing wedding ceremonies. However, it is not unusual for a trend that attracts great popularity at the beginning to have no ultimate effect. I have **expected** this from the beginning and will not be particularly disappointed if it turns out to be the case.

I gather that you recently met Sutejiro and consulted with him about the direction of your studies. It might be possible to grow tobacco [in Japan], but even if it is, cultivating something is not the same as turning it into a product, although the two are very closely linked. Having the answer to one is not good enough if you lack the answer to the other. In my opinion, you should consider the matter carefully. In any case, in all matters related to your future work, even if you have an idea unrelated to tobacco, you need to have thorough consultations with Dr Simmons and with Sutejiro. Since Japan is increasingly part of the world of English and English prose, at the very least, you must make every effort not to neglect your studies in that direction.

Until now, young men have single-mindedly aimed to enter government service, as if this was the only way to gain status, but already there is no **room** left, and now they have no choice but to turn in the direction of commerce or manufacturing. In any case, the trend to equate money with power in all things is very strong. Even among my acquaintances, there has been a great change [?], leading to a rising clamor of voices talking about money. Of course, this is the influence of the American way, but even though it will lead to various abuses, there is nothing that we can do. Be sure to bear this in mind, and to give thought to how you will make a living in the future. This was the reason why I once advised you to enter a school of commerce. If they have courses that last six months, you should register and get a qualification.

Recently, people with a specialist training do not have a good reputation in Japan. The reason is, for example, that if you make someone a judge on the grounds that he has graduated with a specialty in law, he is of no use at all. In the worst cases, someone may be completely unsuited to the work, hardly able to write down a guilty verdict since his sentences are ungrammatical and his writing is as twisted as a badly hammered nail. The only skill such people have is in arguing: they chatter away, but to no effect at all. People give them trial employment for a year, on the grounds that actual experience is needed, and put up with them for three years, but they show no sign of improvement. This being the case, many complaints are directed at specialists who have degrees, to the effect that scholars are useless and that up till now society has been tricked into overvaluing learning. In other words, scholars know a lot about scholarly matters but little about the real world, and they have fallen into the sin of self-satisfaction. I hope that you will take this situation into account as well and consider it carefully. Learning is not the only factor in our society; everyday friendships and skills can be of greater importance in achieving success.

I have to spend so much time with visitors every day that I have been at my wits' end. I have therefore made some alterations to the Kojunsha¹⁷⁾ building so that I can set aside a day and meet people there. I have been thinking of getting a Western-style house at some point, but in any case, when you both return from the United States, if you decide to spend time at home in the Western manner and built houses for that purpose, I could occasionally ask you to lend me the use of a room. Therefore, I will not take any action towards building a house of my own while you are away. Since it will just be your mother and I from now on, we will have no difficulties living in a small place. Since you members of the second generation will each build your own separate houses according to your means, your aged

parents will sometimes come to stay as your guests. This will be one of the enjoyments of our declining years.

That being said, the household finances at present are in an extremely good state. The losses from Maruya have been made up from another source.¹⁸⁾ Since we are far from poor, you will not find yourself pressed for money immediately after you return to Japan, so there will be no need for either of you to take up an occupation that you regard as less than ideal and worry about the picture you present to the world on that account. I want you to set your minds at rest on this point, since this is something that makes your parents feel somewhat self-satisfied. (Big smile.)

In any case, everything is going well.

Yukichi

Since I gather that you are living in different places at the moment, I will write separately to Sutejiro.

* * *

No. 14 (No. 995, Vol. 4, pp. 323–327)

To Ichitaro (Extracts)

Evening, 22 October; 10 November 1885

According to the letter I received from Dr Simmons in the last mail, you intend to enter a school of commerce in Poughkeepsie and expect to graduate in six months. You are therefore thinking of spending about one more year from now (September 1885) in the United States and then perhaps returning to Japan. However, my view is somewhat different, since even if you return home having graduated from a school of commerce, this will not be enough to enable you to start your own enterprise. For example, this may be the school that Morimura Yutaka and Iwata Shigeho¹⁹⁾ graduated from,

but that is not the only reason why they have a valued position in Japanese society. Of course, it is important to graduate, but this is only one accomplishment; people's achievements must also give them something that enables them to become self-reliant.

As far as this applies to you at the moment, if you were to return to Japan now, it would be extremely difficult for you to find work in the immediate future, whether in farming or in business, and equally hard to make a living as a writer. In fact, if your natural talent is for writing, there are many things that you still have to master. I will only mention one or two here:

You need to work hard at improving your handwriting skills, both in English and Japanese. Some people say that it is only necessary not to make any errors in one's handwriting, but this is a great **mistake**. It is similar to the difference between speaking eloquently and being inarticulate. Among humans too, some have beautiful faces while others are ugly. Those who claim that calligraphy is not important any more might as well be saying that neither speaking skills nor facial appearance are important either. These ideas would not receive mass agreement. Therefore, you should listen carefully to your father's advice, and work hard on your handwriting. I have been making this point frequently since last year, and I am very disappointed that you have not been practicing; at any rate, there is no sign of any improvement in the letters or other samples of writing that you send.

Your style is your strong point. Yet while it is distinctive and not without signs of excellence, it is not yet sufficiently developed. Supposing you were a complete stranger employed by *Jiji shinpo*, we would not be able to let you work unsupervised in the editorial office. It would probably not be possible to pay a salary to someone who could

not work without supervision. In other words, you are not yet in a position to earn your own living.

In view of the two points explained above, once you have graduated from the school of commerce, you should apply yourself single-mindedly until your calligraphy and style reach a level that will not cause you embarrassment in front of other people. At the same time, it is also vital for you to improve your level of general knowledge. I know that you read history books, and that you have a good memory, so it should not be difficult for you to study historical records of people's words and actions. This is what I meant in my last letter about entering a college literature department or employing a private tutor after you graduate from your school of commerce.

If you study for one or two more years in this way, people will say that Fukuzawa's eldest son, Ichitaro, is a literary gentleman who is a) skilled at both Japanese and English calligraphy; b) a fluent writer whose prose is polished, whose style is both distinctive and sincere, but who can completely adapt himself to other people's needs; and moreover, c) has such a wide general knowledge that he is the one whom everyone turns to when historical research is needed. If, in addition to these three points, you become used to interacting with other people while you are in the United States and therefore gain a wide reputation for refined behavior, for being able to chat pleasantly with people without showing either flattery or disrespect, for being helpful and polite and always looking cheerful, you will easily find a position. In other words, graduating from the school of commerce will serve a practical purpose. If you use this to add to your reputation, you will gain a source of happiness for life and therefore be secure. The hopes of your mother and father will be fulfilled. In any case,

make sure that you read this letter carefully and take my words to heart. My intention is to create an opening for you here [at Keio] during your absence, if this is what you would like. Please, therefore, study conscientiously.

10 November 1884

[in red ink]

I wrote the above on October 22, but before I could send it, on 6 November your letter dated 9 October arrived. The passage with the title “My future goals” gave me a good idea of your intentions. Since they coincide with mine, I am very pleased. It is a good idea to go back to Cornell and enter the **literature** section after graduating from Eastman [Business College]. I will not give you any detailed guidance, but leave most of the planning to you. ...

...In fact, it is the chance resemblance between your plans regarding literature and my own views that pleases me most. It is much more agreeable if the child says what he thinks first and his ideas coincide with his father’s wishes rather than for the father to write first and the child to form his opinion in accordance with the father’s intentions. This is why I am sending you what I wrote on the evening of the 22nd without changing any of it, regardless of your present plans. Parts of it may sound rather harsh, but that evening I wrote exactly what I was thinking.

* * *

No. 15 (No. 998, Vol. 4, pp. 329–330)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

Evening, 1 December 1885

...Literary studies should begin with calligraphy. You write English neatly, but the same cannot be said for your Japanese. For example, when mail from

America arrives and visitors call hoping for news, there are occasions when, if at all possible, I would like to show them a letter you have sent me. However, I often find myself hiding them instead, for fear that they will be shocked by handwriting that is terrible for a man of over twenty years of age. You should feel ashamed. Your letter of 18 October was particularly bad in this respect, and I was far too embarrassed to let anyone see it. I have therefore returned it to you so that you can look at it with your own eyes and realize how shocking it is. Of course, there is no lack of people with bad handwriting. Your father should be included in their number. But if you take a little care, you should improve enough to avoid being laughed at. Moreover, you are still young. There should be nothing that you cannot accomplish if you try. It all depends on how much attention you pay to this in the normal course of things. ...

* * *

No. 16 (No. 1036, Vol. 5, pp. 37–39)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

9 April 1886

...On my return [from a trip to Hakone], there were two letters from you waiting for me. The contents suggest that you are full of worries, which has made me very worried as well. First, you mention the expenses caused by your foreign studies, but as I have mentioned to you before now, this is something for which I have been preparing since you were born, so there is absolutely no need for concern. You also seem to be upset by your slow rate of academic progress, but you must realize that everyone has different preferences, and learn to view your interests as strengths. Your strength lies in writing, and your weakness in numbers. At the moment, you are pursuing something that involves numbers, your weakness, so you should not be

discouraged even if it is not enjoyable. I have also received a letter from Dr Simmons in which he develops various ideas about your future study program, and suggests the employment of a **private teacher**. I leave this up to you. In his letter, Dr Simmons also has high praise for your mental capabilities, news that overjoyed your loving father. I have enclosed it so that you can read it in confidence. In any case, I hope that when you return you will be a master of English prose, particularly since nothing can stem the growing influence of English and English literature in Japan today. This accomplishment will allow you to make a good living for yourself, a thought that makes me feel at ease again.

This reminds me that I was the strongest member of the party that went on the trip from which I have just returned. I crossed the Hakone mountains on foot, leaving my companions far behind. I look forward to making similar trips with you on your return, so whatever else, please do not feel discouraged! Please also reflect on the fact that although scholars are generally poor, this is not the case with Fukuzawa. There will never be any need for me to kneel in front of anyone to obtain money. As my son, you should realize that you are unlikely to ever need to do this either. Therefore, do not have any worries about your studies. ...

I am overjoyed to see that the English passages that you include in your letters are showing such steady improvement. Although we do not say anything publicly, your mother and I share our satisfaction in private. We also marvel together about our courage in letting you go away to the United States.

* * *

No. 17 (No. 1116, Vol. 5, pp. 137–138)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

6 January 1887

I received a letter from Kimura Jutaro [a former Keio student, by 1887 owner of a Yokohama trading company] in San Francisco. In it he mentions news concerning Takashima Kokinji [a former Keio student (1861–1922), by 1887 working as a businessman] and his landlady. Whether true or false, it is highly interesting. I do not find it ridiculous at all for a Japanese to marry a foreign lady; in fact, I highly approve. But the standards of living in Japan and the United States are so different that grave difficulties are bound to occur as soon as the wedding is over and they begin a life of poverty on a diet of *miso* soup and pickles. If this problem does not exist, everything should go well, but what does this Takashima intend to do? I have written a letter to Kai [Orie (1850–1922), an ex-samurai from Nakatsu, the same *han* as Fukuzawa, by 1887 a successful San Francisco businessman] in San Francisco, asking him privately, and in a roundabout way, to see if he knows anything. I would be grateful if you too could find out if Takashima himself has any capital, or if the lady herself is wealthy.²⁰⁾...

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No. 18 (No. 1126, Vol. 5, pp. 150–151)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

1 February 1887

... With regard to the matter that you have raised in confidence, neither you mother nor I wish to do anything to prevent this. We are just extremely worried that it will lead you into financial difficulties. There is no lack of examples of men who have made rash promises that they could not actually sustain financially in everyday life. Their promises ended in disaster, leaving

them with nothing but hardship and ridicule. Since you are no longer a child, you should understand what I mean. I urge you to think over this matter extremely carefully, and to refrain from action until you are sure that you have found a way of assuring your future prospects. In any case, please keep me privately informed of your thoughts on this matter.

* * *

No. 19 (No. 1130, Vol. 5, pp. 155–156)

To Ichitaro (Extracts)

9 February 1887

Life back in Japan continues as normal, but O-Fusa, O-Shun and O-Taki have started at a school in Yokohama,²¹⁾ and O-Sato is now living with [her husband] Sadakichi since he has returned from abroad. That leaves only O-Mitsu, Sanpachi and Eishiro. It is much quieter, which is all very well, but we feel lonely in the evenings.

How are things with you? I have not heard much from you since your confidential news. I do not wish to force you to do anything against your will, and I realize that it is hard to make such important decisions. Perhaps you should make a visit to Japan before you finally decide. I would like us to be able to consult properly. I am just waiting for your next letter.

* * *

No. 20 (No. 1141, Vol. 5, pp. 170–173)

Extract from Letter to Ichitaro

16 March 1887

I have read your letter of 4 February. ...

You have asked me once more for my true opinion regarding the

confidential matter that you raised previously. As I wrote before, my only concern is your future ability to earn a living. In my view, it will definitely not be easy. I realize that children grow and become independent, and that parents should not interfere in every aspect of their behavior. However, it is highly disagreeable to watch as a child's way of living unravels. This American lady may appear to be intelligent, but she does not know anything about the real nature of Japan. I am deeply concerned that if she comes to Japan and actually has responsibility for running a Japanese-style household, she will inevitably be unhappy and there will be a high likelihood that the match will not last long. For example, let us consider the situation of those who graduated from Keio after you and stayed in Japan. Whether they have found employment in government or in the private sector, they are earning 100 yen per month at the most, in most cases around 40 to 50, and in some, even less. Even if you are lucky enough to earn 70 or 80 yen per month, this will not ensure you a high standard of living. What will you do if this American lady cannot bear such conditions? You will be in an impossible situation. If you want my frank opinion, your plan is all very well, but since it will probably not work out in practice but end in failure, the only really safe course is to give it up. However, you are no longer a child, so you should consider the matter very carefully yourself. Please tell me your decision as soon as you make it.

Alternatively, are you ready to earn a living independently in the United States? This would also be one possibility. But while it may be easy to earn money there, it is also easy to spend it, so it would be even harder for you financially than in Japan. In fact, I find it hard to believe that you would be able to earn an independent living there. I am extremely worried that whether you set up here or in the United States, you will find yourself in financial straits. In your letter you said that you had some ideas about what

to do. If this is so, please tell me the details. ...

* * *

No. 21 (No. 1148, Vol. 5, pp. 180–182)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

13 April 1887

...I very much agree with the plans that you outlined for after your return to Japan in your last letter. After you come back and begin to teach at Keio, I intend to make great efforts to collect the funds to develop it into a university. For you to become a teacher at the university, or even the **director**, would give me great satisfaction. To tell the truth, the ideas you expressed in that letter, and the words of your passage in English made me very happy. Anyway, redouble your efforts at studying until you come home. I pray that you will find that the trials you have experienced in the United States have not been in vain. Please believe this yourself as well. ...

* * *

No. 22 (No. 1159, Vol. 5, pp. 192–195)

To Sutejiro (Extracts)

21 May 1887

In your last letter you wrote that you were looking into the best field to take up in order to put your studies to practical use when you return to Japan after graduating next year. This is a very important issue, and I have also been making inquiries. At the moment, railways are being established in various parts of Japan, and it looks as if this will be a good means of employment now. But the real present need is for bridges and tunnels, and Japan lacks specialists in both these areas. Therefore I would like you to study the construction of railways in general, with a particular focus on

bridges and tunnels.

While Japan does not have enough people who have studied railway construction, they are not entirely absent. However, when it comes to the **management** of the railway business overall, there is no one, probably because it was not formerly seen to be necessary. For this reason, anyone who has knowledge of administering railways as well as building them will be unbeatable. ...

Therefore, for the present as well as your major at university, you should read books, newspapers and so on in order to learn about building bridges and boring tunnels. If you have time after investigating these thoroughly, there is railway **management**:

Issuing shares

Buying and selling them

The level of wages

The selling of tickets

The regions where railways run at a profit and where they run at a loss

The salaries of company officials

There are a host of other important issues, but I would like you to do your investigations with the above points in mind.

* * *

No. 23 (No. 1176, Vol. 5, pp. 212–215)

To Ichitaro (Extracts)

29 June 1887

I have read your letter of 20 May extremely carefully.²²⁾ Most of it makes very good sense, but you are mistaken in thinking that Dr Yunghans [Ichitaro's private tutor, an American doctor who had worked in Japan for a

time] has written to me about you. After Dr Simmons left, I earnestly asked you both to take careful charge of your own health and educational affairs, and I definitely did not ask Dr Yunghans to take a quasi-paternal role in guiding your progress. Therefore, do not worry about what he might say. You should tread your own path. ...

...as I write, I am imagining the happy future of the Fukuzawa family. Such matters are not anything that other people should interfere with since they are for your mother and father alone to discuss with you. Overall, the Fukuzawa family has nothing to be ashamed of: parents and children are close to each other, and our standards of behavior are pure. Fortunately, nothing up till now has led to any betrayal of these principles. ...

When you were born, you did not get enough milk and this slowed down your development a little; for example, you did not begin to speak until you were five.²³⁾ As a result, your mother and I were extremely worried about how you would develop. But fortunately you have made steady progress and grown into a healthy young man of intellectual ability, able to develop your natural talents without any help from us by studying literature in the United States. Therefore, we are incredibly proud at the thought that you will come back as an independent young man without anything to be ashamed of, ready to be a teacher at Keio or take up some other field, with no need to take a post which just involves obeying someone's orders. Once you have completed your studies, our one wish will be for you to have a family.

This is just between ourselves, but what shall we do about finding you a bride? Although parents should not order a child to marry, they have a duty to advise their children and either give or withhold permission. This is probably completely illogical behavior, but because we want to secure the best bride for you in Japan, recently whenever your foolish parents go out,

they find themselves looking intently at all the young ladies of marriageable age. We laugh together at this strange tendency. ...

* * *

No. 24 (No. 910, Vol. 18, pp. 129–30)

From Kin to Ichitaro²⁴⁾

9 July 1887

I am sorry not to write more frequently. First of all, I am glad to hear that you are keeping well. Please be assured that we are all well, too.

In your last letter [of 20 May 1887?], it seemed that you were in a state of high anxiety. I was extremely anxious as well, and we even wondered whether it might turn out to be a good idea for you to come back early, without waiting for your brother's return. This is still a possibility. In the following, my intention is to give you my private opinion regarding your father in confidence:

Your father is extremely busy in many ways. He seems very well, but he is no longer a young man, and it seems to me that any worries have a bad effect on his health. Our many children are not yet able to make a living independently, so that he is not in a position to relax in any way. Therefore I devote my efforts to seeing that even though he is still unable to reduce his actual workload, he will at least experience the minimum of mental stress. I do not ask you to perform any specific act of filial piety, but to try not to cause him any anxiety. Your previous letter was really a great cause of anxiety for your parents. We were shocked for a time, and waited for further news. I have aged a lot recently myself. I make lots of writing mistakes, so I made many attempts at this letter and frequently lost track of what I wanted to say. As a result, I twice lost the chance to send it and felt at my wit's end since what I really wanted was to actually have a face-to-face talk with you.

Recently I have been busy every day, either with invitations to go out that cannot be turned down, or with guests to look after, so I had given up the idea of writing to you, and thought that I would just ask your father to send regards to you on my behalf. I have added this part without telling him. As I have mentioned before, you have promised to write to me about anything that is worrying you. Therefore, from now on please put such matters in a separate letter addressed to me, so that I can tell the details to your father myself.

In haste.

* * *

No. 25 (No. 1187, Vol. 5, pp. 231–233)

To Ichitaro

18 July 1887

Dear Ichitaro,

Since the arrival of your letter dated 20 May, there have been three mails from the United States and letters from Sutejiro and Momosuke,²⁵⁾ but nothing from you. What is your news? I would like you to send something assuring us of your wellbeing every mail, even if it is not a long letter.

I have just read your letter of the 20th again. Despite its length, the only point that you make is your dislike of the restraints that Dr Yunghans places on your actions. I have certainly not asked him to behave in this way.²⁶⁾ All I have done is make the simple request that in addition to tutoring you, he should also pay attention to your health. I fail to understand both why you are so angry, and why you state that you do not care if you die.

After all, the reason for your trip to the United States is to follow your studies. Your only duty is to devote yourself to this and return with a

reputation that will enable you to set up an independent household. All I want to know is whether you have achieved this. Whatever your relationship might be with the doctor, this is only a temporary misunderstanding that will be solved in due course. Your idea of turning it into a noisy argument does not strike me as calm behavior.

As I have frequently told you, although I have taken great pains over the education of you both, I do not expect that you will look after me in my old age in return. Therefore, there is also no reason for you to expect much from your parents once your education is finished. All I ask for in the way of filial conduct is that you refrain from causing your parents unnecessary worry. While it is hard for me to understand the intention behind your letter of 20 May, it did not make for pleasant reading, and far from giving us joy, made us extremely worried. Please make sure that this does not happen again.

You have already spent a full four years in the United States, and seem to have made great progress in your literary studies. If you spend one more year there and come back with Sutejiro, you should have a variety of different opportunities for work, and I am already considering what you might take up. Since you have been receiving assistance from your parents during your studies, you have been able to spend time as you wish. However, the duties of parents are not meant to continue indefinitely. I am not getting any younger, and I cannot continue to support a young man in the prime of life at the expense of my own health. In other words, each day that you spend in study now lays down the capital to support another day of your life in the future. It is not time that you can afford to waste. What should you have to focus on apart from studying? Please consider my words.

It might be that you are thinking of coming back to Japan now instead of staying longer in the United States. However, since you left with Sutejiro,

I think you should return with him as well, and therefore encourage you to spend one more year. If the situation already surpasses your endurance and I am not satisfied I am perfectly ready to go to the United States to bring you back with me, since the trip would not be hard, despite my age. However, since you are already more than an adult, I doubt that you want to cause your father such trouble. I assume that your situation is not that extreme.

In short, you should therefore spend one more year abroad focusing on your studies, and return with Sutejiro. During this time, you should keep your mind on your duties and work hard like any other student. Students have no need for alcohol: heavy drinking is forbidden. I gather that you tend to exercise a little, and then grow lazy. Regardless of how I have obtained this information, this is unacceptable behavior. Why do you neglect your health in this way? From now on, make sure that you pay attention to this matter. If there are any other difficulties or problems unrelated to the wishes that I have stated above, I am resolved to come to the United States and bring you home with me, and thus complete my paternal duties towards you. The Fukuzawa family is as clear as water; as perfect as a sphere. Whatever the circumstances, I will not allow any blemishes to ruin this perfection. I still have enough strength to protect our honor.

If you have anything to say, please feel free to do so. I will answer you conscientiously. You must know that my love for you will not change as long as I live. When you have a strong affection for someone, it sometimes leads one to say more than is necessary. This seems to have happened in the case of this letter. It should be read carefully with this in mind. I will write more in my next letter.

In haste,
Yukichi

* * *

No. 26 (No. 1213, Vol. 5, pp. 267–269)

To Ichitaro (Extract)

1 September 1887

Your letter of 3 August has arrived. I was very relieved to read that you planned to leave Poughkeepsie in the company of Iwasaki Seikichi [a former Keio student, later a businessman], and that by now you will be living with Sutejiro in Salem. As I have said many times, everything is fine here; our only prayer is for you to pursue your studies without experiencing any problems. I hope that you will settle down and focus on your literary training. The tone of your letter suggests that you have been much more relaxed since leaving Poughkeepsie. I am overjoyed. As I wrote in my last letter, you should study harder than ever for one more year. After that, you can either return with Sutejiro for a short time to rest on your laurels before visiting Europe for a while, or you can travel back via Europe and the Indian Ocean, working in some sightseeing on your way. I wish to write more about these possibilities later...

* * *

No. 27 (No. 1262, Vol. 5, pp. 333–334)

To Ichitaro

16 January 1888

Dear Ichitaro,

In the last mail there were two boxes of books sent by the Morimura Company that seem to belong to you. I expect that a letter explaining the situation will arrive soon.

With regard to your return to Japan this year, [it concerns me that] you

will have no graduation certificate. Of course, this is a childish matter, and it is of no matter to me if you do not have one, but I fear that this is not the way in which the world at large thinks. I have discussed the matter with Dr Simmons and asked him to consider whether you can obtain a certificate from your **private teacher** or get one just for literary studies from a college, or whether there is some other method. Please think about this too, and endeavor to find a way of procuring one if at all possible. You should be prepared to do this even if means enduring some unpleasantness.

Dr Simmons may contact Dr Yunghans about this. Since you previously had a disagreement with Dr Yunghans, you will probably not wish to ask a favor of him now, but this is the sort of occasion in life when one must endure. I hope you will be prepared to behave politely to him for the sake of a certificate. There are scions of the aristocracy²⁷⁾ who have spent five or even seven years abroad, and come back with no skills apart from the ability to play billiards or go fishing. It would be completely unfair if your achievements were regarded in the same light. We can safely say that you have achieved a high standard in your literary studies. I should be most unhappy if you were seen in the same light as those scions of the aristocracy just because you do not have a certificate. Please give this matter careful thought and obtain a certificate, even if it means swallowing your pride. If Dr Simmons' negotiations by mail [with Dr Yunghans] are ineffective, please consult with Sutejiro about what efforts can be made.

I have no time to write more.

In haste,

Yukichi

I will write something about your plans to come back via Europe in a

separate letter addressed to both of you.

* * *

No. 28 (No. 1364, Vol. 5, pp. 337–339)

To Ichitaro and Sutejiro

16 June [? Probably January] 1888

Dear Ichitaro and Sutejiro,

When Sutejiro graduates this June, you plan to travel home together via Europe and the Indian Ocean. Please read my thoughts about this.

1. Finish your preparations for departure before June and cross over to Britain as soon as Sutejiro graduates. You should visit each country in Europe; in particular, be sure not to miss Russia out. You should definitely pass through St Petersburg on your way to Moscow. (This is the first time you will need a visa.)
2. You should tour cities such as Paris and Berlin, but it does not matter if you only gain a general idea of them. It would be a good idea to go as far as Turkey, via Italy.
3. You may find the cultural products of Europe to be similar to those of the United States, but there are differences between the Old World and the New. Focus on getting a general grasp of the region, since this will be of help on any further visits.
4. Once you have crossed the Mediterranean, you should have a quick look at Alexandria. Then enter the Indian Ocean, stop at Ceylon and be sure to visit Bombay and Calcutta. In China, Kwantung is more important than Hong Kong.
5. If you leave the United States in June and follow the above course, it should take you five months to get to Japan. Your parents and also your brothers and sisters are waiting impatiently for your return, but the

chance to observe the customs and human nature of the various countries of the world, however superficially, is something that will serve you well in the future and also enhance your reputation in Japan.

6. You should obtain the money to pay for your expenses from the United States to London from Morimura. In London, I will arrange for you to obtain money from the local branch of the [Yokohama] Species Bank. This should be enough for your needs.
7. Since we want you to return home as soon as possible, please arrange to set out the day after Sutejiro obtains his graduation certificate. You should not need to do any further sightseeing in the United States.
8. It is essential for you to visit India and China. If you begin to read about them now, it will really help you when you actually get there.
9. It may seem foolish to spend only five months in this way, just staying at hotels and travelling by train, but this is not so. Actually seeing all these places will be more useful than it may seem.
10. You should collect even trivial things as souvenirs wherever you go. They will become precious **memories** for life.
11. There is no reason for you to post any letters while you are touring Europe, India and China. It should be possible to send messages assuring us of your safety wherever there is a Japanese consular office. Please be sure to do this whenever you can. For example, there are consular offices in Hong Kong, Tenshin and Shanghai. The present consul at Tenshin is Hatano Shogoro [1858–1929, a Keio graduate].
12. I would like you to write about your travels so that I can publish your articles in the newspaper, so please send occasional reports, either in Japanese or English.
13. Dr Simmons thinks that your travels will last until next March. But since both boat and rail transport are so convenient nowadays, I think

that they should be over by November or December, or even earlier.

14. These are my thoughts. Of course, I understand that you may have your own ideas about the itinerary. I have just focused on pointing out places that are so far unfamiliar to Japanese people.

In haste,
Yukichi

* * *

No. 29 (No. 1386, Vol. 5, p. 367)

Extract from Letter to Sutejiro

23 March 1888

Do not worry about Ichitaro's lack of a graduation certificate. In fact, we need someone who is fluent at reading and writing English at *Jiji shinpo*. Ichitaro has just the right qualifications, and if we were to employ an outsider, it would cost 60 to 70 yen. Even if it is proving difficult to obtain a certificate, there is therefore no need to worry. He and I will do a magnificent job at earning a living through independent cooperation. ...

Notes

- 1) These translations are part of the work that I have been doing as editor of the women and family volume of *The Thought of Fukuzawa*, Tokyo: Keio University Press, forthcoming.
- 2) Interview of Kiyo'oka Shun by Kiyo'oka Ei'ichi in Nishikawa Shunsaku and Nishizawa Naoko, ed. *Fudangi no Fukuzawa Yukichi*, Tokyo: Keio Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 1998, p. 11.
- 3) Tsuchihashi Shun'ichi, who visited many people who possessed letters by Fukuzawa in order to copy them, states that in most cases the letters were valued for their content. See "*Kaidai*", *Fukuzawa Yukichi senshu*, vol. 13, Tokyo: Iwanami

- shoten, 1981, p. 240.
- 4) Tsuchihashi compares the autobiography and the letters as sources. “*Kaidai*”, pp. 240–243. For an analysis of how Fukuzawa consciously structured the autobiography, see Matsuzawa Hiroaki, “*Kaisetsu: Jiden no ‘shizo’: dokuritsu to iu monogatari*”, in *Fukuzawa Yukichi-shu, Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei, Meiji-hen*, vol. 10, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2011, pp. 501–506.
 - 5) See Koizumi Shinzo, “*Kaidai*”, in Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Aiji e no tegami*, Iwanami shoten: 1953, pp. 221–22.
 - 6) Matsuzawa demonstrates how the centralizing theme of Fukuzawa’s autobiography is his attaining, and retention of, independence. See “*Kaisetsu*”, pp. 501–506.
 - 7) See the table on p. 395 of Terasaki Osamu and Nishikawa Shunsaku, “*Kaidai*”, *Fukuzawa Yukichi shokanshu*, Vol. 5, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2001.
 - 8) Imaizumi To, elder sister of Fukuzawa’s wife. She and her son were living in Fukuzawa’s house.
 - 9) Terashima had been a friend since he and Fukuzawa were both students at Ogata Koan’s academy of Dutch Learning in Osaka in the mid 1850s. Sameshima was a former Keio student.
 - 10) This was a trading company set up in 1876 by Morimura Ichitaro, an acquaintance of Fukuzawa, and his younger brother, Yutaka, who had studied at Keio. Yutaka went to New York and established Morimura Bros. in 1879.
 - 11) Simmons worked as a doctor, initially as a medical missionary, in Japan and had become friends with Fukuzawa after treating him for a severe case of typhoid in 1870. At this time, he was living in Poughkeepsie. Until returning to Japan in 1886 he acted as physician and general adviser to Ichitaro and Sutejiro, at Fukuzawa’s request.
 - 12) Fukuzawa is probably remembering that during his second voyage to the United States in 1867 he became drunk on board ship and criticized the Bakufu in a loud voice. On his return he received an official reprimand for “offensive acts” while abroad. He concluded that his remarks had been overheard and reported. See *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa*, revised translation by Kiyo’oka Ei’ichi, New York: Columbia University Press, 2007, pp. 172–174. For the original Japanese, see *Fukuzawa Yukichi chosakushu*, Vol. 12, Tokyo: Keio Gijuku Daigaku

shuppankai, 2003, pp. 208–211.

- 13) Remarks of this nature were a stock beginning of most of the letters Fukuzawa sent to his sons while they were away.
- 14) In 1877, Keio had been the only private school to be exempted from conscription. Revisions of December 1883 prohibited exemptions for any school or college. Deferment was possible, but only for students at government-funded institutions.
- 15) Fukuzawa is here referring to his first major writings about the need to improve the position of women in Japan. “*Nihon Fujinron*” (On Japanese Women) and “*Nihon Fujinron kohen*” (On Japanese Women, Part Two) were both serialized in *Jiji shinpo* in 1885. The latter was also published in book form in the same year.
- 16) It appeared in *Jiji shinpo* on 6 October, 1885.
- 17) The social club for businessmen in Ginza that Fukuzawa had been instrumental in founding in 1880.
- 18) Fukuzawa had been a major shareholder in the Maruya Bank, which had failed in 1884.
- 19) Both former Keio students who were successful in setting up their own businesses after studying in the United States. For Morimura Yutaka, see Footnote 10.
- 20) Takashima appears to have married into the family of Okura Hachiro, a wealthy businessman, so whether this story is true or not, presumably no wedding actually took place.
- 21) The school was Yokohama Kyoritsu Jogakko (The Doremus School), a school for girls established by female missionaries of the Women’s Union Missionary Society of the United States in 1871. It was a boarding school. However, it seems that Fukuzawa and/or his wife were so lonely without these three daughters that he withdrew them after only two months.
- 22) This is probably the letter that Kin refers to in Letter no. 24.
- 23) If Fukuzawa is following the traditional Japanese way of counting ages, according to which a baby is counted as one year old when born, this would mean that Ichitaro did not start to speak until the age of four by Western reckoning.
- 24) This was in an envelope with a letter of the same date from Fukuzawa. I have not translated Fukuzawa’s letter but, like Letter No. 23 of 29 June, it makes no reference to any worries about Ichitaro. For what seems to be, finally, a direct

response to the letter of 20 May that Kin is probably talking about, see Fukuzawa's letter of 18 July (No. 25).

- 25) Fukuzawa Momosuke (1868–1938). He was adopted by the Fukuzawa family as a future husband for their second eldest daughter, Fusa, while a student at Keio in 1886. In 1887 Fukuzawa sent him to the United States, where he studied and then gained experience in railway management by working on the Pennsylvania Railway. He married Fusa on his return in 1889. Momosuke was a successful entrepreneur, but unfortunately did not turn out to be a faithful husband to Fusa.
- 26) It appears that Dr Yunghans was a believer in cold baths in winter and other Spartan-like practices. Terasaki Osamu and Nishikawa Shunsaku, “*Kaidai*”, p. 400.
- 27) These would probably have included the children of contemporaries of Fukuzawa who, unlike Fukuzawa himself, had chosen to take government posts and subsequently been raised to the peerage as a reward.