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Japanese Colour Print Toyokuni

Yuranosuke

A Pilgrimage to Tsuru-ga-Oka

By

C. ARTHUR COAN, LL.B.

Illustrated

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

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NOTA BENE

The intentional omission of accents and diacritical mark} in printing Japanese names is explained in Chapter X.

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NUMBER. .

To

ALL WHO FEEL THAT LOYALTY
MAY JUSTIFY HEROIC
SACRIFICE

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A PILGRIMAGE TO TSURU-GA-OKA

I

JOBUN

WHETHER or not you say, "Where is Tsuru-ga-Oka," I feel almost certain that you will ask at once, "Who or what or where is Jobun"? I am disposed, temporarily, to let Tsuru-ga-Oka attend to its own knitting, but Jobun, I fear, calls for immediate explanation.

We shall shortly see our trail leading us toward a bit of tragic history which has also taken form as staged drama. While many of us are not agreed in our likes and dislikes of races and peoples, still, for our common enrichment, whether the heroes be white, brown, black, red or yellow, the outstanding points of their history and literature are, or ought to be, common property of us all. In this case we have as source, old Japan, at a time when she was still a hermit nation and when China slumbered under the Manchus.

Even then as now, a Japanese author, writing

(with a brush, of course) a book to his own people, would have felt himself quite in step with custom in explaining his purpose by starting out with what he would call a jobun. If, while the author was wetting and pointing his brush on the ink stone, an inquisitive interpreter should peek over the busy writer's shoulder, the impertinent snoop would tell you that the author was composing his preface. Only he, too, would call it a jobun, and in proportion to the book itself, which frequently ran into tens of tiny Japanese volumes, the jobun would be short.

You could scarcely plunge right into the middle of his book (nor mine) intelligently, without first having this bird's-eye view of its purpose. Like him, I shall make my jobun very short in the hope that you will not, like the priest and the Levite, pass it by on the other side.

Today, travel is quite the thing, though you perhaps began your wanderings as long ago as I did mine. But whether you travel in cosmic fact, or by reading in front of a winter fire, you will have run into stirring epics of many strange peoples. Some of them will be the classics of ancient

Greece, India and Rome, which could scarcely be escaped if one would. Some are of the Aztecs and the Maya in the West. Some are as old as China and the East. But of them all, none exceeds in thrill and interest the great Japanese story of the Chushingura, and few are so little known in Europe and America. In addition to which, practically none except this great story escape the mysticisms of the unknown gods of pantheology, or appeal to us as the possible acts of actual people. Few, moreover, present such intriguing possibilities of being interpreted and surcharged with life through so many and varied channels. It is a tingling page of true history, wrapped up in drama and set off by two centuries of pictorial art.

That it is well known in Japan, not only as history, but as legend, as art and on the stage, is unquestionably true, but in none of these ways is it recognized at all generally except "east of Suez." And, after studying the imposing tragedy itself for years both at home and in Japan, I am always brought back to the same conclusion,—that all of the familiar writings on the subject tend to become "one facet" views. They treat it as pure

history alone, which, as we shall presently see, leaves the reader lacking much which is necessary to his understanding. Or as drama alone, which is certainly incomplete. Or as Tamenaga Shunsui repeats the legends from memory as told him by his revered grandmother. Or as a fairy story, which it is not. Or as a part of the study of Japanese art, in many-volumed or folio form too inconvenient to entice the casual reader. It seems to me that it ought to be possible so to merge the diversified interests as to bring from all sources the shafts of light which might be expected to come dazzling to a common focus from a well cut gem.

Since the origin is entirely historical, history certainly must be granted due prominence. Since we shall see frequent reference to it in dramatic form, this, with its associated arts and background of the curious customs which prevailed, also demand glances here and there. Above all, a clear understanding can scarcely be obtained except at the expense of at least one or two pilgrimages to breathe the air and memorize the scenes on the spot. Nothing short of this will give us an

adequate idea of the virile, splendid and historical plot.

If I spend the time here to explain why I am satisfied that our story is one of the most moving epics of the East or West, then this jobun will be far from the short preface which I promised you. For the moment then, let me say merely that I have myself taken the pilgrimages suggested, and would greatly like to share them with you.

II

A PILGRIMAGE TO TSURU-GA-OKA

MOST of us scarcely think of a pilgrimage without associating it immediately with the Mohammedan's desire to set foot in Mecca. That is the outstanding type. But let us have a few words on the side relative to what may be counted on in a pilgrimage. True, Mohammed was or is supposed to have been born in Mecca; but it was neither the birth of the Prophet there, at a date uncertain, nor his residence in the vicinity for a number of years that made Mecca the place of pilgrimage that it so long has been to the whole Islamic world. All of the preachments of Mohammed in his earlier days had only disastrous results. From Mecca he escaped stoning only by that historic flight to Medina in 622, to be ever after known as the Hegira.

It was not therefore chiefly because Mohammed was born in Mecca, but because Mohammed returned to Mecca with a strong right arm and a

sword, and beat Mecca into submission till it bowed to his rule and adopted his new religion that it became a holy place to his disciples. Perhaps this may prove a touchstone and an augury in our journeyings.

Now, although a Mohammedan may take other pilgrimages, he feels that his life is not entirely complete until he has made one to Mecca and is entitled to bind a green turban about his brow and be respected and greeted as El Hagg, From the day when he was a tiny, breech-clouted rascal and sat uneasy on his brown heels in front of the Imam, screaming the Koran, his progress as a pilgrim began. To know the Moslem school from experience, is to cringe at the mere recollection. The maxim,—or slogan, should I say,—seems to be, "The more noise, the more learning." Each little masculine throat must have ached at first with its shrieks and every ear within a mile surely rang, but thus is the pupil prepared to join in the rites of his religion and entitled to the dignities of manhood. If the family coffers are equal to the strain of Islamic higher education, then, from Persia, India, Egypt or the ends of the earth he

goes his leisurely way to take his place at the feet of learning in old Al Azar in Cairo. Here he will perform miracles in mathematics on an abacus, study a curious sort of flat astronomy and many of the sciences. Then he is fully prepared for any of the many pilgrimages to which his belief obligates him.

But, notwithstanding the fact that the Gautama Buddha was born under a tree in Nepal, far away, Japan is a Buddhist-Shinto country. Buddhists however, being of all colors, languages and peoples, seldom seek out as a pilgrimage far Nepal nor even Sarnath, where so long Buddha preached. Lacking any proof of the position of the tree in Nepal under which the great Buddha was born, this inattention is easily accepted, but Sarnath certainly is interesting even to a non-Buddhist like myself. But it is the custom of most Buddhists to turn their feet in pilgrimage to shrines within their native land and where the local appeal is stronger. Nor do they particularly object to having their theology and patriotic history rather generously mixed up so far as pilgrimages are concerned. Neither, for the matter of that, do we. In

any event, it is generally the incident, as in Mecca, rather than the birth-place which motivates pilgrimages.

A large proportion of us take our travels, long or short, by the Grande Tour route, mixing up peoples, religions, customs and coinages in one glorified salmagundi. We thus see things kaleidoscopically as convenience serves, and the result is pretty much "higgledy-piggledy," as Katrina Van Tassel dished up dinner to Ichabod Crane. With passports stamped "good in all countries," and visaed down to the last spare page in more tongues than we could ever hope to learn, we are ready to face whatever Pandora looses from her box. Mostly such trips are of the chile con carne variety, chock-full of what we prefer to call "pep." In few of them would one find space spared for a pilgrimage, so we shall have to plan our itinerary accordingly. For myself, I prefer to be free and "on my own," with the privilege of dodging off on even the most modest of pilgrimages where a possible objective hovers just around the corner. And do not get the wrong idea. Even on paper, Pilgrims are not necessarily dirty. Frequently

weary, sometimes hungry and thirsty, they nearly always reap signal rewards.

In order to make a proper first impression, I should perhaps promise results only after facing danger and crude hardships. From my own standpoint, where jeopardy and travail insist upon intruding themselves, well and good, but I never beckon them. It fascinates me sufficiently merely to couple an objective with the unusual or the picturesque, letting the chips fall where they may.

A camel or an elephant is a good means of transport in countries which are filled with them, but in Japan I find a rickshaw or even my two humble feet well up to the task of taking me sufficiently far from the beaten paths to avoid the roar of daily life and the dust of the madding crowd. Brigands add a zest where brigands there be, but they do not fill one's pockets and we shall probably escape them. If, on the other hand, nothing short of hair-raising excitement will suit you, then start early and from where you please. Take a pick and shovel if you like. Make your trip as arduous as suits you. Crowd it with weary marches and threaten your paths with wild beasts far from

weary. Add a few shipwrecks and catastrophes for good measure to insure a quota of tales worth writing home about. After these are finished, then join us for what, with no claim for showmanship, we shall be ready to undertake.

In natural sequence, the first of our pilgrimages may well, for reasons which will develop, be to Tsuru-ga-Oka, where we can pick up the thread of our story on a famous hill as we sit under ancient and famous trees.

Then meet me, please, at Yokohama on the great shopping street,—Benten Dori,—for our initial venture. A modern railroad train would take us part of the way from the great arches of either the Yokohama or Tokyo stations. But both of these are full of the turmoil of locomotives and the click-i-ty-clatter of hundreds of wooden *geta* clomping over the pavement, so I vote that we give a thought to our mode of conveyance before we start. Walking would be the best, but we have sixteen or seventeen miles to cover and that might be wearisome. Motor cars are no unusual sight in Japan, especially around the great cities like Tokyo, Yokohama, Kyoto and Kobe, but they steal

away too much of the perspective to go well with a pilgrimage. Omnibuses and trams also abound, but they would not carry us where we wish to go and are far too modern and noisy for our comfort. One method remains and I am sure you will agree that it is ideal.

It is of course the jinrikisha, now degenerated to the rickshaw, which originated in Japan and which you will see in different forms everywhere in the East. Perhaps it will surprise you, but, looking back to a life more or less filled with attempts to direct any driver to an unusual objective, I can honestly say that I prefer to trust a flock of rickshaw men to the most elegantly clad chauffeur slouched never so professionally behind the wheel of a glittering motor car. A rickshaw man in Japan, you know, is not nearly so harum-scarum as he frequently looks. It is a perfectly honorable calling there, and, as wages go, the runners fare not badly. And if my experience serves me,—which it is considerable enough to warrant me in the hope that it does,—I am prepared to back the Japanese rickshaw man against the world for a cheerful and intelligent helpfulness. Your Chinese

runner is indefatigable, swift and incredibly enduring, yet it is nearly always difficult to convince him that you wish to go where *you* say rather than where he fancies that you ought to wish to be taken. The results are sometimes exasperating in the extreme. On the other hand, the Japanese k*urumaya,* as he is called, is no more dull than his cousin across the Yellow Sea, and,—oh, the comfort of it,—he is seldom stubborn. Make him understand where you wish to go and he will break his back (and perhaps yours) to get you there. If you understand his native tongue, try him in that. If not, try English. He probably understands English much better than you do Japanese.

There is, of course, this objection to the Japanese form of rickshaw, that it seats only one passenger. Light and quick as they are, the double rickshaws sometimes seen in the southern countries have one advantage to offset their greater weight. They do hold two passengers each and some slight conversation can be carried on between the passengers huddled into one vehicle. With the Japanese single type on the contrary, every indi-

vidual occupies his own little private cart and one is fortunate not to lose sight of his companions completely. However, these fellows have an almost uncanny way of bringing up together even though they each pop down a different rabbit hole *en route.*

We are in the center of the city now where plenty of vehicles can be had. Thus we avoid the danger of finding three or four of us started away while the balance stand ruefully on the curb, if there is one, waiting for more rickshaws and doubtful perhaps of being able to give directions similar to the original ones.

As we shall have a long way to go, and several hills to climb, suppose that we obviate some of the difficulty by each taking an extra runner. If one fails to do this, the penalty is to get out and walk up the hills. Our journey is too long for one set of rickshaws, but we can help them out in this way and pick up others when the first lot tire. Then again, if you prefer to see the work done in front of you, hire a *sakitsuna* who will add a trace and run along beside the kurumaya. If you like to feel some one behind you on the hills, choose a sturdy

ata-o-shi, who will run behind as pushman. If you prefer to make your own decision, let me be the last to interfere.

Personally, I see very considerable advantages in the ata-o-shi. The first benefit is that the kurumaya sometimes comes to a very sudden stop and at once lets down the shafts. Unless the passenger leans back, he is not unlikely to find himself continuing right on over the tiny dash-board. This difficulty wears away with experience but, while it exists, the hand of a pushman on the seat is helpful. The other advantages are never outgrown. Going suddenly downhill, the pushman is always at hand to act as a brake and can also, on a rough or slanting road, prevent an upset. And upsets on rough roads are not unknown, with only one man.

Do not let these little warnings afright you. The rickshaw is a very sturdy, comfortable and manageable little conveyance from which one can see everything and which can be stopped and parked in a corner of the road at a moment's notice, or turned around in its own length.

Here come flocks of them, so let us stow ourselves for our trip and, in spite of its being a pil-

grimage with an objective, we may as well take in the sights as we pass along.

Yokohama is, of course, a very different looking city from what it was before the earthquake of 1923. Many of the ruined spots have been courageously taken advantage of as public parks but many unbuilt spaces still remain. That most famous of all sights in Japan, Fuji-yama, or more properly Fuji-no-yama, is still hidden from our sight by this ridge lying away from the harbor and called "The Bluff." I want very much to believe that you saw Fuji-yama in all its beauty as you came into the bay. From nowhere will you get a more impressive view, not even from Hakone. We will take one of the easy roads at the base of the bluff and shortly come to Kanagawa, now part of a Japanese garden. While our runners take a breathing space, let us absorb two or three interesting facts.

In the days not so long ago, when Tokyo was Yedo and when Yokohama was an unimportant little fishing village, there ran from Yedo all the way to Kyoto one of the two most important roads of Japan. It was known as the TO-KAI-DO, which

being put into English means the Great Coast Road. For the use and comfort of travelers it had fifty-three posting stations of which this Kanagawa was one. The first actual station was Shinegawa, of which we shall have more to say later, the second was Kawasaki, then Kanagawa and so on. It became the habit of well-known artists to paint scenes for these various posting stations in regular sets, running from Yedo to Kyoto. The exact geography was, however, somewhat confused for the reason that the artists recognized that it would never do for such a series to omit Yedo, the capital of the Tokugawa Shoguns, nor Kyoto, the home of the sacred though impotent Mikado. Such celebrated artists as Hokusai, Hiroshige and others were the source of many sets of prints entitled TO-KAI-DO. Each one begins with a view of Nihon Bashi, the great bridge in Yedo. Each ends with a print of Kyoto, neither of which was one of the fifty-three posting stations, thus making the total number of views fifty-five instead of fifty-three. The result was obvious. The first print of the series is Nihon Bashi, the second is Shinegawa (which was the first posting

station) the third view (instead of the second) was Kawasaki, and the fourth (instead of the third), was the Kanagawa where we stand on the TO-KAI-DO. I should like to tell you much more about these fascinating sets of pictures, but they are hardly akin to our subject except as we pass on our pilgrimage. So we will mount again our little vehicles and the runners will bring us just around the bend of the road to the bay that juts in from the open sea.

On the very point where now we stand, Americans were first permitted by treaty to land on Japanese soil. On Friday, March 31st, 1854,—or according to Japanese chronology, on Kayei, 7th year, 3rd month and third day,—there was here signed by Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry, commanding a fleet of warships of the United States Navy on a friendly mission and bearing a special commission from President Millard Fillmore, the famous TREATY OF KANAGAWA, to which the Japanese Commissioners likewise put their seals. By this treaty Japan was at last opened to Americans and after the preliminaries, Hon. Townsend Harris became our first diplomatic

representative. Commodore Perry's ships were the Mississippi, Plymouth, Susquehanna and Saratoga, and they were lying in Uraga Bay. The slighter indentation into which we are at present looking has been known ever since as Mississippi Bay, in honor of Perry's flagship and his successfully completed mission.

It is scarcely seemly, however, for us to pass on by rickshaw from Kanagawa without noting that here in 1870 dwelt an American missionary, who, wishing some convenient mode of transporting his invalid wife, invented what he called his jin-riki-sha, (jin, man; riki, power; sha, vehicle), the use of which has passed up and down the entire coast of the Pacific on the Asiatic side. Having now paid our respects to Rev. Mr. Gobel at the place of his invention, we will climb back into our baby carriages (for it was from a baby carriage that the first one was made) and run along the dancing waters of Mississippi Bay.

Turning shortly over the hills we shall find ourselves on the shores of Segami bay, having passed close by two or three of the posting stations of the TO-KAI-DO. Making no attempt to turn our pil-

grimage into a guide book, they will have to remain unnoticed, as they have no relation to our objective. Presently we shall come to a long roadway leading from the seashore directly north. Most of it is lined with pines and here we turn inland, coming not far from the village of Kamakura, that once stronghold of the Shoguns, and still the site of the noble Dai-Butsu of Kamakura, —one of Japan's proudest and most worthy monuments. If you know this marvelously satisfying statue, and the Hase Kwannon, you already have your reward. If not, your reward will have to await at some more convenient season, since they form no part of our story and we, as pilgrims, shall not see them.

Following our pine trees up the slope, we arrive at the hill of Tsuru-ga-Oka. Here, if it be still standing as it was not so very long ago, we shall find an enormous Icho tree said to be nearly a thousand years old. It is probably not quite so ancient as the great pine at Karasaki on Lake Biwa which, in spite of broken branches supported on stilts, was alive when I was there a few months ago. The Karasaki pine, however, is not

in our tale and is mentioned only to illustrate the almost incredible age to which sacred trees are kept alive in Japan. Not, it is true, equal to the famous redwood trees of the West, but remarkable considering the climate in which they are nursed into so great an age. The Tsuru-ga-Oka Icho tree, on the other hand, is a definite pointer along with its stately sugi or cryptomeria companions which border our way.

It is full time that we paused again, so let us dismount and assemble our ideas.

III

A CHAT UNDER THE TREES

WE shall better understand why we have come to Tsuru-ga-Oka if we indulge in a few bits of explanation, clearing up several of the characteristic peculiarities which make both the historic tragedy and the drama possible.

First, to get a fair start-off let us say that if all of the history of the Wars of the Roses were bound together, and if to those were added the historical plays of Shakespeare kindred to the period, and if the best artists in England since Elizabethan times down to the Georges and Victoria had taken turn and turn about to illustrate each important episode, and if the entire nation had from childhood learned the history, heard the plays and seen the pictures, the sum total could scarcely have woven itself into the hearts of the people more than has the memory of the Forty-seven Loyal Ronin into those of the Japanese.

Briefly then,—as history, each date, chapter and verse is authenticated. Being so striking a subject, it has been dramatized for the marionettes (in which form the lines and roles have frequently been taken by actual players), and also written directly for the k*abuki* or regular stage. Indeed, one must not omit that it has lately been performed on the silver screen in the cinema in Japan, while poetic versions and metrical forms with musical annotations for the oriental orchestra also exist. As to illustrations, few artists of the slightest pretension to merit have graced the life of Japan since the historic events occurred who have not produced whole series of prints, sometimes several different sets, showing different episodes. To the non-Japanese, these prints have long served as the opening gateway to a familiarity with the story. In whatever form it appears, we find the characters, in their almost incredible steadfastness and heroic defense of duty as they conceive it, scaling heights bordering on the sublime.

It is the custom of Western critics to look back to the Greek stage for the ultimate in tragedy. It is not unusual to select from these classics the

CEdipus Tyrannus of Sophokles to bear the crown and palm. But where shall we look for high ideas or strength of character and purpose, even under so ingenious and distracting a plot as that of CEdipus ? The plot is certainly ingenious and, only as a legend, approaching truth. Told as only Sophokles could tell it. Yes. Presented, we may believe as only the Greeks could present it. But loathsome in its very ingenuity and, in the final analysis, lacking that first essential of firm conviction. However perfectly conceived and presented, one is always irritatingly conscious that, after all, the only basis was legend. Neither Jocasta nor CEdipus ever did in fact suffer the ignominy depicted. It was, in short, not genuine courage but a dramatized figment of a splendid brain.

Do not let us argue about realism. It is no stage realism about which I speak, but we are still quite a human race and a shuddering epic or tragedy based on tangible suffering, generosity and self-immolation just naturally transcends, under generations of review, the public effect of even the subdest conception built up by ingenuity in the

Ramayana or Sakuntala, or by a Sophokles or an Æschylus.

Also, I understand that this is not the day, nor was the stage ever the place for puling over morals. We know, as a matter of fact, but little of the moral characters of most of the samurai whose lives were centered in this vendetta, and whose bodies lie at Sengakuji. Certainly they were not men of the pluperfect stamp. Indeed we see several of them stooping to debauchery and chicane to mislead the common enemy. Nor would one venture to say that Japanese literature presents no more finished poems or dramatic lines than those in the many forms of the tragedy customarily called the Chushingura. But it is certainly safe to say that the story is magnificent. In all of my long study of the history and literature of Europe and the East, I do not hesitate to state that it would be difficult, extremely difficult, to find anywhere another veritable tale of such wholesale, continued and unbending courage under foreseen, predestined and voluntarily accepted doom.

IV

CHOOSING A MEDIUM

SINCE only confusion can result from failure to understand the difference between the historic and the art sides of our tale, it behooves us to allot a page or two to a knowledge of those Japanese customs which will help us to make a wise choice in determining whether the story shall be told chiefly through the medium of strict history, or through art, or both combined.

During the life of the Japanese Empire as a hermit nation, the members of the nobility as well as the higher officials were extremely sensitive to being paraded before the masses in any form akin to publicity. The Mikado was, as we shall see, so nearly divine as to be practically exempt. But, stepping down an inch, we find that the famous artist Utamaro lost his liberty and almost his head as the result of his drawing an unwise and uncom-

plimentary cartoon of the Shogun Hideyoshi.[1] In those days lese majesty did not stop with the person of the sanctified supersovereign. Neither Shogun nor Daimyo had any hesitation about emptying the vials of his wrath upon any one who dared publicly, by cartoon or otherwise, to venture criticism, especially ridicule; and when they haled the offender up, they saw to it that he was punished. And when he was punished, it hurt.

Even without any statutes in such case made and provided, publicity regarding the High and Mighty became an exceedingly unprofitable, dangerous and unpopular pastime. Nevertheless these High and Mighty took additional precaution to decree in language thus and so, that neither the names, lineaments, acts, lives, nor weaknesses of them nor theirs should be made in any sense a football. In order to make which decree stick, censors were, during certain periods appointed, without the affixing of whose seal, no print what-

[1] While this incident is generally recited as above, some writers of late have concluded that the punishment of Utamaro was caused in part at least by his failure to have the censor's seal added to the print (see Binyon & Sexton, page 205). Whatever may have been the technicalities, however, the crime was publicity, illegal publicity.

soever, complimentary or otherwise, could be issued. Various decrees of the sort indicated were in force practically through the entire Tokugawa reign between A.D. 1600 and 1868. And having gone to the trouble so to decree, they meant it And it was a day when statutes and decrees were highly mandatory. Not to obey involved a painfully indeterminate sentence to confinement under conditions unpleasant to contemplate.

It follows from all this that at that time, the life of a prominent man was to some extent his own private property. A quiet smile behind the back of the hand could scarcely be prevented and probably was indulged in when occasion warranted. Possibly here and there a sly wag laughed secretly up one of his conspicuously voluminous sleeves. But he learned to carry his brushes and his inkstone and all of his writing and sketching paraphernalia tucked safely under cover and out of temptation when the bigwigs were about.

Out of all this grew the need for certain innocent subterfuges which were winked at when they were harmless. A prominent name was slightly changed, an incident was transplanted and dates

were hopped all about the calendar. Not even the signs of the zodiac could keep them quiet. Many times the changes were entirely transparent Many times the purpose was even honorific and complimentary. Meanwhile, the majesty of the law was maintained and life moved calmly on and most of the populace remained out of jail. There are many worse laws and many cunning schemes to dodge them, even today and much nearer home. In Japan, and at the time of which we speak, it is requisite to consider them from their serious side, realizing that they present us with a new problem in choosing our medium.

When it came to turning the tragedy of the Loyal Ronin into a drama suitable for stage presentation, or depicting the episodes in painting or print, subterfuges such as we have described had to be indulged in. Several of the heroes and certainly the chief villain were of the noble class and others, if not of the nobility, were men of prominence. Doubtless some of them (if their modesty did not forbid) would have been translated to the seventh heaven at having their honorable acts recognized. Several would promptly have turned

over in their graves—and perhaps long since have —at knowing that their baseness was publicly discovered.

This difficulty of names was solved very early in the day so far as the playwrights were concerned by the substituting of titles only slightly different in some instances from the real ones. Then there was the interpolation of many unimportant incidents which were either pure figmentation or else really happened at other times or places than those shown in connection with the story. This is all quite similar to that exercise of poetic and dramatic license familiar to every nation and literature. It has been shown that a large number of dramas have been based on the theme of the tragedy under examination. We shall make no effort to chronicize them all, nor fit them together. Whatever their several merits may have been, the general plot, the characters and episodes have so long molded themselves into a commonly accepted form, that all the work of countless artists and actors may be said to have become automatically standardized, **so far** as **current thought** is **concerned. Since our purpose is**

not to tear apart and analyze, but to bind together and familiarize, we are safe in considering that we need be concerned in only three forms,—true history, the dramatic version, and the pictorial side, which almost without exception follows the dramatic.

When I say that to the Japanese, both the historic facts and the somewhat embroidered drama are equally familiar, I am nevertheless far from saying that both forms can be written on a single pilgrim's scroll or carried in a sweating pilgrim's purse. Patience and economy demand that one be given a certain preference over the other. Or perhaps I should say rather, that one form be given a certain prudent right of way over the other. In making my choice on your behalf, I will take you fully into my confidence as to the reasons which influence my selection of our medium.

Let us see. In the historic vein, we should use the real names, the titles would be actual honors, the incidents all authentic and the dates ascertainable. Score then, so many points for reality. On the other hand, references in works on and in Japan are largely based on the dramatic versions; and,

while the names are more or less altered from true history, they are the names which we shall read and read again. The true historic names will, on the contrary, seldom be seen, so great has been the Japanese tendency to speak and draw and paint and print from the drama. Despite the addition of sundry episodes, the historic heroes are still the heroes and the villains in fact will remain the villains to the end of the chapter. With me, the deciding factor seems to be that unless the dramatic line be pursued, with cross trips into the historic, we shall be squarely blocked when it comes to pictorial art, for reasons which I have elsewhere told. The artists have with one consent, used the dramatic form as their basic platform. Names, places, episodes and continuity are all threaded along this line, swung as a series of lanterns, from above the stage to illuminate and illustrate the work.

All honor, say I, to the memory of every one of these brave men by their real names and *in propria persona.*

It is nevertheless inevitable that our progress will be faster and more continuous if we accustom

ourselves at the outset to the names constantly heard in connection with the romantic or dramatic version, in which they appear repeatedly both in literature and in art, in preference to using the actual names which are so seldom met except as a matter of recorded history.

For the same reason, along with others, it has been found impracticable to include any of the hundred and one legends on the subject. With the tendency of all tales handed down from generation to generation, they naturally add here a little and there a little, largely true and partly imaginary. Many of them are charming and some inspiring, but they do not always agree with authentic history and seldom agree with each other. A fine example of these legendary forms would be found in the I-ro-ha Bunko of Tamenaga Shunsui written about a hundred years ago and translated into English by Edward Greey and Shiuichuro Saito some fifty years later.

Because we have thus chosen a medium, it does not follow that we shall disregard the other views. Indeed, to make the connection between the forms even clearer, and to encourage a familiarity along

all lines, there will be found in a subsequent chapter, entitled Jimmeiroku, a considerable collection of the historic and dramatic names and titles, their insignia and other allied data in epitome.

V

YENYA AT TSURU-GA-OKA

IN accordance with the medium which we have established, I have at once referred to the nobleman whose quarrel originated the entire tragedy and who was the first to die because of it, as Yenya. His dramatized name was Lord Yenya Hanguwan Takasada. In real life he was the Daimyo Asano Takumi-no-Kami, Lord of the Castle of Ako in the province of Harima, and we meet him at Tsuru-ga-Oka at a date considerably earlier in drama than in actual fact. In making this change, however, the dramatists accomplished their purpose consistently. The Mikado referred to in the stage version is the Mikado who actually reigned at the period chosen for the opening. The situation, for reasons explained previously, having been transposed, the correct surroundings were interpolated so as to chronocize with it. It therefore does no serious violence to history save in moving events about. We have

previously seen *why* such dramatic changes were made in Japan. Having now seen an example of *how* they were made we need give ourselves no further concern with them.

If ever there was an occasion on which romance ought to begin with "Once upon a time," this would seem to be a most appropriate instance, since the actual dates are of so little moment in the interests which we plan to make our own.

"Once upon a time," then, a court function of considerable importance to Japan impended, which was ordained to take place here at Tsuru-ga-Oka, and great preparations were in the making. Lord Yenya Hanguwan Takasada was commanded to attend as one of the two nobles designated to receive and entertain the official representative of the Shogun.

The position of the Shoguns of Japan was for many centuries, a most unique one, and one which it is needful that we understand. During these centuries the Mikado remained as the divine head of the people, but from his shoulders gradually slipped the robe of actual authority and from his hand the scepter, inch by inch, fell. And just as

the temporal power of the Mikado waned, so did the authority of the Shogun wax, although the idea that the position of the Shoguns of Japan may be safely compared with that of the Mayors of the Palace in France must not be pressed too far, as many material points are not common to both. The authority of the Mikado, after many reigns and numerous wars to maintain his original standards of complete sovereignty, was finally lifted from the mundane to a pontificate high above it. He was raised to the clouds above most earthly worries and was honored as a deity and protected and worshiped as such even up to the date when Japan ceased to be hermit, and a revolution set in which made him again an Emperor in fact as well as by descent.

During the period known as ENGEN, **and whilst the nearly shadowed Mikado** GO-DAIGO, **reigned, though still making sporadic if bloody attempts against the Shogunal usurpations, Japan was ruled physically by a Shogun whose name was Taka-uji-ko of the Ashikaga dynasty. His bitterest enemy was the Prince Nitta Yoshisada, a member of the elder branch who, while endeavoring to**

support the Mikado, had fallen in battle against the forces of the Shogun. Nitta was a very brave and noble prince, honored by friend and foe alike and legend tells us that he had been equipped by the Mikado with a magnificent and thrice blessed sword and helmet for his use in the war. Nitta must have made gallant use of the sword, if half of the stories are true, but as our interest lies in the helmet, we shall have to omit them. The helmet Nitta wore when he fell fighting against the Shogun and it was thought to have been gathered up with other instruments of war from the battle field. With a generous spirit of chivalry, the Shogun set his heart on the attempt to have Nitta's helmet identified so that it might be formally placed, as that of an honoured enemy, in the treasury of the new Hachiman Shrine which he had just caused to be erected and which was about to be formally opened here on the spot at Tsuru-ga-Oka, where we stand.

For the dedication of the shrine, the Shogun had named his brother, the Prince Nahoyoshi [1] as his representative. As the officials who were to

[1] **Also referred to as Tadayoshi.**

carry on the ceremonies and become responsible for the entertainment, two nobles were appointed, Yenya Hanguwan Takasada,—Lord of Ako in real life—along with Momonoi Wakasa-no-suke, —Lord of Tsuwano. But as these two had spent their lives as officers more in the field than at court, it was also thought necessary, and was indeed customary owing to the extreme rigidity of Japanese etiquette in all things ceremonial, to name an adviser with whom the two lords above could consult. For this purpose Lord Moronaho, Count of Musashi was selected, nor could a worse selection have been made, as we shall see.

Wishing from the first to keep everything shaped to his own advantage, Moronaho disliked the idea of being troubled about the search for the Helmet of Nitta Yoshisada. He lost no time in throwing cold water on the plan, to the astonishment of the Prince and his noble entertainers. Lord Moronaho was a man known to be fierce, haughty and proud, grasping for money, fawning upon his superiors and oppressive to those under him; and although perhaps it was not recognized at the time, the denouement proved that he was a

coward as well. Having been named as adviser of ceremonials gave him an unfortunate authority which neither his temperament nor his social degree actually justified, but there he was, while Yenya, a high noble, and Wakasa-no-suke, of position scarcely less elevated, were without choice in accepting the situation. Difficulties threatened, but both Yenya and Wakasa, as men of position and pride, were accustomed to the exercise of self-restraint as were all of the nobles and samurai of their time.

On the day appointed all of those who had been honoured by command to be present, gathered at the Hachiman Shrine under the Icho tree at Tsuru-ga-Oka where we now stand.[1] Seating himself, as ceremony required, before the curtain or maku at the top of the dais, Prince Nahoyoshi, brother of the Shogun, motioned Umanojo Ishido, a lesser representative of the Shogun, to a place at his right and Moronaho on his left, while Yenya and Wakasa occupied places right and left but slightly less elevated. The Prince then at once in-

[1] The original Hachiman Shrine built so long ago has since been destroyed by fire, the present one taking its place.

troduced the problem of finding and identifying the sacred helmet of Nitta Yoshisada. As has been hinted, Moronaho at once and most impudently raised the double objection that, in the first place, no such honour was due to Nitta Yoshisada and second, that the thought of identifying one helmet among so many that were found, was folly. Moronaho's language, never severely restrained, became decidedly discourteous in spite of the attempts of Yenya and Wakasa-no-suke to smoothe things over,—Wakasa by studied silence and Yenya by polite artifices.

In spite of the shock which such a wrangle in the presence of the representatives of the Shogun must have caused, the Prince doubtless realized that one portion of his commission laid upon him the duty of finding the helmet of Nitta Yoshisada if possible, Moronaho willy-nilly. Therefore, as might be expected, Moronaho having temporarily run himself down, Nahoyoshi endeavored to start the wheels moving. He explains that as he understands it, the Lady Kawoyo, the beautiful wife of Yenya (who was herself of most noble lineage), has special knowledge on the subject and means

of bringing the question to a positive decision. At the direction of the Prince, she is sent for and presently appears. Being, as she is, a lady not only of beauty but position, she well knows the ceremonial forms required and she conforms accordingly. Her face is almost enameled with dazzling white rice powder, her robe sweeps the floor, her sandals have of course been left behind on entering, and she salaams deeply to the Prince at a distance dictated by his position and title.

Scarcely waiting for the Prince to explain, Moronaho begins to ogle the charming lady and in cooing terms, without waiting for Nahoyoshi to do so, invites the Lady Kawoyo to come forward. More courtier than soldier, more Lothario than either, Moronaho was not one to miss a chance with presentable members of the opposite sex, be they high or low degree, even at the risk of indecorum. With evidence of impatience, the Prince sweeps the interruption aside and himself invites Lady Kawoyo to explain whether in fact she was one of the twelve Naishi[1] and whether she has

[1]**The Naishi have been defined as Ladies who attend upon the Emperor (Bently). Dickins mentions further that being not only ladies of noble birth, but appointed by and attached to the**

any means of identifying the Helmet of Nitta Yoshisada and of distinguishing it from the large number of others.

The wife of Yenya turns softly to the Prince and respectfully replies that she knew the helmet well even before his Majesty the Mikado gave it to Nitta Yoshisada. And, further, that she was present when it was bestowed. Indeed, she continued, as I was one of the Naishi, it passed through my hands to Nitta's and I well remember the solemnity with which he declared that while man lasted but a generation, his name might endure forever: and that, before going into battle, he would first burn the ranjatai perfume[1] in the helmet so that whosoever takes the helmet may know by the sweet savor that the head in it is the head of Nitta Yoshisada.

If this were a modern function, one might expect the ubiquitous photographer at this point to whip out a bit of magnesium wire or other flash with which he blinds all of the dignitaries while

Mikado's person and that of his consort, the twelve were of rank higher than the highest of the Daimyos.

[1] Ranjatai, a kind of aromatic wood, a species of Calambac Agallochum (Hepburn).

a photograph is taken. M. Daguerre had not, however, yet been incarnated and his famous daguerreotype was still a thing of the future. Nevertheless, even in advance of photography we are not lacking artists who, through their splendid brushes, could and did preserve for us the idea of what such scenes as these were like. I cannot even enumerate, in the space which would be appropriate, any considerable list of these. As we go along, I can at least pick out here and there from my own collection, examples which are particularly adapted to setting before us the characters and the scenes which are being explained. There will also be found later on a brief summary of what any searcher might hope to discover, should he wish to delve more deeply then we can afford to do. But our efforts must be confined to the selection of only a few for illustration.

In view of this it will easily be understood that the ones selected must earn their right to the choice by presenting several merits. When a President selects his cabinet, it is always expected that each geographical portion of the country will be considered, in order that all may not come from

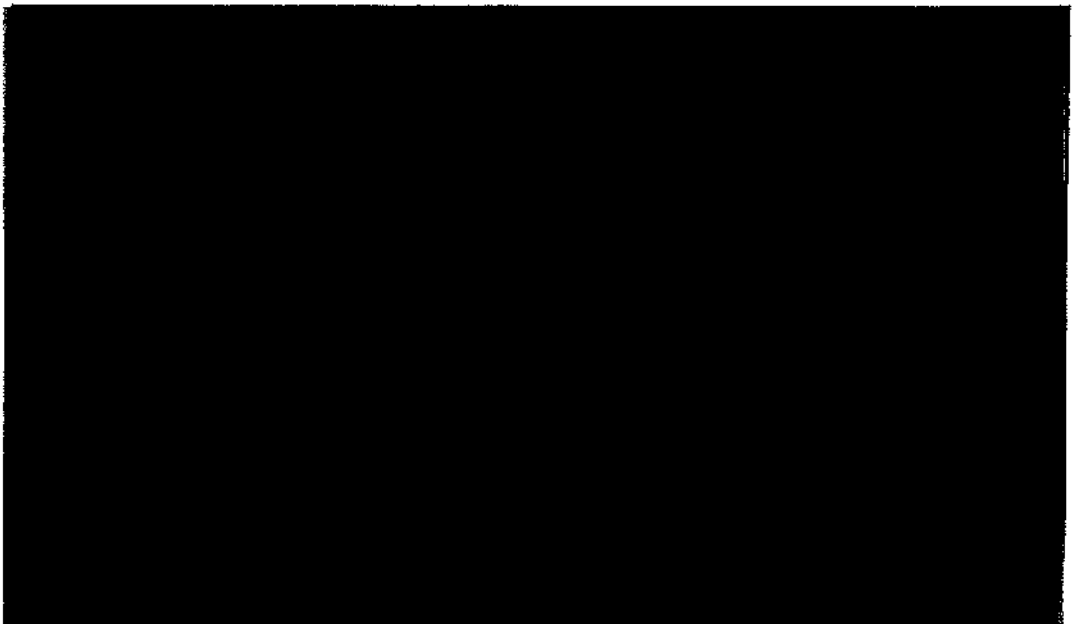
the same locality. In the same way, any fair list of the art of the Chushingura, however short be the list, cannot be representative unless as many artists as possible are included. For an exactly similar reason, we should fall far short of my hope were we to show pictures only of the episodes which afford the most conspicuous basis for impressive or beautiful decorations.

Since the most we can do will be less than completely adequate, I have chosen the Helmet Scene from the set of sixteen by Hiroshige for the illustration of this initial act, and my choice is based upon these logical grounds. First, the set in question is far and away the best known of any of the complete expositions of the Chushingura. Second, it contains as many masterpieces of Japanese art as does any other series. Third, the depiction of the episode which is in our minds, as painted by Hiroshige, includes an unusually large number of points concerning which we shall have occasion to speak, and therefore becomes sort of a *multum in parvo* to which reference will be made with an astonishing frequency as our pages turn.

Ando Hiroshige was a commoner, son of Ando

Genyemon. The son followed in his father's footsteps, becoming a hereditary fire official in the service of the Shogunate, and his early duties were in a minor capacity in that department. Doubtless the constant travel imposed by his position gave him the variety of scene of which he made so great use in his later life as an artist, but even as a child he is said to have delighted his friends by the beauty of his ephemeral *bonseki*,—pictures created by the use of pebbles, white and colored sand and shells. I need hardly say that Hiroshige is best known for his innumerable views of the TO-KAI-DO or Great Coast Road, but from no other brush can one collect more numerous, or on the whole, finer pictures of the Chushingura than his. The series to which the present illustration belongs was published by Senichi (sometimes referred to by his other designation of Idzumi-ya Ichi-bei) and is variously known as Hiroshige's Sixteen Set of the Chushingura, or the Senichi Set or the Idzumi-ya Set

And now I must beg your indulgence while I call your attention to another point over which we may trip if it is not pointed out while the light



Japanese Colour Print **Hiroshige**

Act 7. Helmet Scene

shines on it. Were we studying the illustrations of the TO-KAI-DO or any other interesting locality or subject, we should find that in Japan as elsewhere, no two illustrations bearing the same label need be expected to be taken from the same standpoint, nor to include the same objects in their composition. The foreground in one will become the background in another. In paintings and prints of the Chushingura we may expect a similar and sometimes confusing versatility. Each act or crisis embodied more than one episode, any one of which will be fair subject for brush and paper. We cannot, therefore, expect all those which deal with the initial act to select the Helmet Scene as the event to be painted. In truth, experience shows that many more artists have selected other episodes as illustrative of the opening act than have hit upon the Helmet Scene. Candor compels me to acknowledge that perhaps we should have lived comfortably without knowing these points, but the time would have been saved at the expense of a clearer comprehension. And why hurry, when we have the shadow of the noble trees over us **and** the soughing breeze from the bay.

Returning now from our excursion, let us take a good look at the Helmet Scene as we have it here reproduced. Should you turn over a pile of a hundred Japanese colour prints and be so fortunate as to hit upon any one of the sixteen comprising this Senichi series by Hiroshige, you would require no advice in recognizing the fact, owing to the beautiful Japanese habit of indulging in a constant use of symbolism, here shown in the border consisting of a Greek fret interrupted at regular intervals by the insertion of the Mon of Yuranosuke. This symbolic border occurs on all of the sixteen and nowhere else in the art world.

It is in no ignorance of the irony with which many up-to-the-minute artists view symbolism that I write. I am, however, writing about *Japan:* not about European art, France, Russia nor Oshkosh; not about modern design (so emphasized hereabouts and nowabouts); not about masses, academeticism, nor the fourth dimension in art,—but about Japan. Incidentally, I am a mathematician and harbor a very considerable respect for any scientific fourth-dimensional investigation. At the same time I have painted too much and studied

too many varieties of art in too many places scattered rather generously over the globe, to enter into a quarrel over the tenets of any group of brush-wielders from the Pre-Raphaelites down to the time when the ink is still wet on these pages. This is not a work of propaganda in any sense, but it is a work hopeful of correctly and if possible, interestingly, setting forth a phase of Japan's history and its people.

No one can take even the first step along the road either of classic Japanese literature or art without instantly and continuously running into their love of symbolism. The very names of people and things in common use are the constant subject of what might be explained as a system of dainty and ingenious cross-reference puns, illusions and subtle hints. So covert are these many times that they escape every effort of any but the most expert linguist to unearth them. In the same way, Japanese art in the times of which we speak, made persevering use of symbolism to bring out meanings not actually shown in the picture, by the indicative presentation of symbolism. In the case before us, an explanation is little short of an af-

front, since Yuranosuke's Mon can only mean Yuranosuke himself, the hero of the loyal band who followed him after their master's death.

One is under no possible obligation either to approve this method of calling into being ideas by symbol, nor to commend the result. One is, however, obliged to recognize the situation as existing, effective and customary in Japan. To my mind, to disregard the infinite amount of captivating knowledge which can thus be acquired, is wasting a part of life's all too little span. In studying Japan it is simply impossible to ignore the habits of the Japanese and this is one of the most conspicuous of them.

Once, in teaching a naive young Miss something of mythology, she made the astounding discovery that the old gods and demigods were not real, and she capped the point by asking me whether I believed all the tales of Olympus. Pulling a serious face, I said, "No, it is true that I do not believe perhaps any of the tales of Olympus, but the important thing is, that the old Greeks and the Romans following them emphatically did." Belief and even approval of method are, after all,

quite beside our point. Since we are studying another people and another age, we cannot escape, as the law would have it, "giving due faith and credit" to their habits and beliefs by that sort of comity of nations without which we should all be perpetual hermits.

Further attention is now the right of the Helmet Scene. We find the characters posed in the act of endeavoring to locate the helmet of Nitta Yoshisada. Their positions are exactly as one might expect them to be, and their identity is easily established by a glance at their Mons[1] in another example of symbolism. It is almost as if their names were embroidered on the robes. Of the Lady Kawoyo, it will be of interest to note that while she wears a headdress of flowers her hair hangs in a long, supple but nearly loose wave down her back. Because she is of the nobility, she is permitted so to wear it as a symbol of her high rank, instead of confined in a stiff coiffure imposed upon women of lesser rank. It is a common error, and sometimes the source of embarrassment, that it should be supposed as it frequently

[1] Sec chapter entitled "Jimmeiroku."

is, that the women who wear hair piled on top of their heads and stuck as full of enormous pins as a cushion, are ladies of high degree. Unfortunately these ornaments, like the tying of the obi or sash in front, are symbols recognized as the insignia of beautiful women whose paths do not permit them to be mentioned in polite society.

We have spoken of the border surrounding this series and now perhaps is as good a time as any to mention the fact that many other series of the Chushingura are also enclosed in borders, all of which differ from the one in question. Do not make the mistake of assuming that these borders are added for a symmetry of design, for the Japanese abhor unnecessary evidences of symmetry almost as much as nature abhors a vacuum. A Japanese much prefers asymmetry to an evenly balanced composition. Witness the results of the Japanese school of floral decorations which are studies in beauty achieved through asymmetry.

Following the convincing statement of the Lady Kawoyo as to why she is certain that she can identify the helmet of Nitta Yoshisada if it is among those recovered from the field, the helmets are

taken one by one from the coffer and submitted to her. After a few had been examined and rejected, the Lady Kawoyo unhesitatingly identified a superbly wrought helmet as soon as it was placed before her. The pervading aroma of the ranjatai is plainly discernible.

Had we a print of the first Act of the SHUNSEN short signature series before us, we should see one of the few other depictions of the Helmet Scene. This time the beautiful wife of Lord Yenya is shown raising the identified helmet for all to see.

The identification was accepted as authentic. The Helmet of Nitta Yoshisada was placed under suitable guard and its position in the Treasury of the Hachiman Shrine here at Tsuru-ga-Oka was assured.

VI

THE QUARREL OF WAKASA-NO-SUKE

THE Prince, Yenya and Wakasa, being all honorable gentlemen, made the mutual mistake of judging Moronaho by their own standards. Yenya and Wakasa were directed to see that the helmet was safely secured. They did so, thoughtlessly and incautiously, leaving the Lady Kawoyo alone to the tender mercy of the Lord of Musashi, Moronaho. He was no fit man so to protect a fair lady even for a passing moment. Moronaho cared not a straw as to whether ladies were chaste. He only saw whether or not they were fair to the eye. Amongst womankind, he was a man for instant action never doubting his ability to fascinate them, high or low.

She wished to be excused? He paid not the slightest attention except to come close to her and to tell her with a snigger that he was sure that the gods had brought them together. His audacity even carried him to the point of passing to her a

poem which he claimed to have written in her honour. More, he begged that she would criticize it.

Unavoidably glancing at the paper, the wife of Yenya saw that it was indeed addressed to her. Her first thought was naturally to hand it to her husband to whom she was devoted, immediately upon his return, but she realized that this would only foment trouble, so she threw the missive back to Moronaho and it fell on the ground where one frequently sees it lying in pictures of this episode. Being alone in the presence of a beautiful woman, and being a cad, the Noble Lord of Musashi improved the opportunity to do what cads have been doing all these years. He asked the gentle lady in his most overbearing manner whether she understood who and what he was and how easily he could make the consequences of her spurning him deadly to both herself and her husband. The typical cad, what?

By great good fortune, before the matter could go further, Wakasa-no-Suke appeared, to the discomfiture of Moronaho. Being no dullard and knowing his Moronaho, Wakasa drew prompt conclusions from what he saw and heard. Not

wishing to involve the wife of Yenya in a quarrel with the Instructor in Ceremonials, Wakasa cleverly pretended that he was charged with the duty of informing Lady Kawoyo that she might retire. This transparent subterfuge, however, only angered Moronaho the more. Thus infuriated, Moronaho is quoted as saying to Wakasa something about like this:[1]

"Ya. Again you dare to thrust yourself in my way. If the Lady Kawoyo withdraws it is by my permission, not yours. Kawoyo desires me, according to her husband's secret wish, to instruct him how to discharge the duties of his office with perfect propriety, without which he would be perfectly helpless: And Yenya, though a Daimyo, seeks my aid: while you, a petty fellow who got his rank through favor of nobody knows who, take care. Remember that a word from me will suffice to bring you into the clutches of the executioner."

Wakasa-no-suke, blazing with rage, was on the edge of losing his self-control. He longed to make it a death quarrel with Moronaho. In spite of the

[1]**Dickins translation, 1880.**

fact that he was within the precincts of the palace, where the mere drawing of his sword, regardless either of the provocation or the injury he might inflict, was of itself lese majesty, he was prevented from thus signing his own death warrant only by the approach of runners clearing the way for the passage of the Prince.

The night passed in an increasing excitement. The castles rang with the accounts of the quarrel. Every one from Daimyo to coolie has his own version of the misfortune. High and low, with one accord, sympathized with Wakasa-no-suke save only the immediate household of the Lord of Musashi. It was all a secret which no one knew but every one whispered, and the later the night grew the more the whisper spread.

Early in the evening, Wakasa-no-suke frankly told the situation to Kakogawa Honzo, his Chief Steward or Councilor, who racked his brains for a remedy which should save his master, but before he could hit upon anything feasible, the presence was announced of Oboshi Rikiya, the son of Oboshi Yuranosuke, who was in turn the Chief Councilor of Lord Yenya. Seeing an excuse for

temporizing, Honzo seized it. Rikiya was betrothed to Honzo's daughter, Konami. Honzo therefore instructed Tonase, his wife, to receive Rikiya with her daughter and gather what was afoot, thinking that meanwhile he could devise something propitious.

Realizing that naturally Konami and Rikiya will appreciate a few moments together, Tonase slipped quietly behind the screen, still remaining discreetly within reach and hearing. It develops that Yuranosuke, Chief Councilor to the Lord Yenya and the father of Rikiya, is away on a long and important duty. Therefore, just at this crucial time, Yenya is without the service and advice of his most experienced executive. That during this unfortunate absence, Rikiya, in spite of his youth, is being trusted as Lord Yenya's messenger and comes to Wakasa-no-suke as such, to notify him that, by the orders of the Prince, both Wakasa and Lord Yenya are to be present at the Shrine at the seventh hour (4 A.M.) the next morning. The orders of the Prince include, moreover, a subtle warning. Both Yenya and Wakasa are cautioned with silken politeness to bend to every nod of the

Lord of Musashi who stands as their instructor in etiquette.

Bad news here, thinks Honzo, with both my Lord and Rikiya's under the toe of such as Moronaho. Wakasa-no-suke also realizes the imminence of his danger, endeavors with Honzo to conceive a plan, declaring, however, that no additional insults at the hands of Moronaho can be brooked, as his honor as samurai will not permit it. Honzo is an honorable officer but years of service as Councilor have made him also fertile in expedients. It is not, to him, particularly difficult to conceive the cure which will fit the moral obliquity of Moronaho. Obviously, Moronaho wishes to be bribed. Secretly if possible. But bribed, and generously. This method would place Wakasa-no-suke beyond all danger, but is too far beneath the standing of honorable Bushi to hope for adoption. No nobleman brought up as Wakasa-no-suke was would buy his safety at such a price.

Two difficulties lay in the way of Honzo, who had by now determined that no other method would be effective. Since his master's consent could not conceivably be obtained to so low a remedy,

then his master must be hoodwinked into betaking himself to bed so that his less scrupulous Councilor might save him in spite of himself. That was the first difficulty. The second was far more staggering. To bribe a Daimyo required something more than pin-money. It could not be accomplished as one would toss *$a\ate* to a coolie to buy a drink of wine, or hand *chadai* to the landlord of a tea-house. It must be a sumptuous gift. So Honzi was confronted with the gathering together without the knowledge of his master, of a sumptuous gift between late evening, which it then was, and four o'clock the next morning, at which hour Lord Yenya and Wakasa were commanded to be present before the Prince and once more to face the jeers and jibes of Moronaho.

First, to get his upright and punctilious master out of the way. They chatted, Honzo and Wakasa, on the veranda. Honzo stepped to the ground, drew his short sword and with a single blow cut off a branch of a young pine-tree standing close by. This he presented to Wakasa while expressing the wish that in the same manner might all the enemies of Wakasa perish at his hands. Well Honzo

knew that his master feared no death so long as it was honourable, and that no true Bushi would be kept awake because danger threatened in the morning. So Wakasa-no-suke withdrew and Honzo was free to pursue the devious paths of his more difficult undertaking. The night was short. The energy terrific. The sumptuous bribe accumulated. Rolls upon rolls of magnificent silks, piles upon piles of oval pieces of gold, scores on scores of invaluable pictures. All secretly and quietly gleaned and checked.

Fearful that the dawn would break before he could get away, Honzo at last hurried his carriers off with their precious load, urging the men almost as fast as his own horse, the path being rough and stony. Brushing aside all obstructions, Honzo insisted upon seeing Moronaho at once, and finds him with his trusty rascal Sagisaka Bannai already in attendance. Suspecting the danger of a hidden knife amongst the treasures, Moronaho and Bannai proceeded carefully until convinced that the "gift" was genuine. Once this was established, Moronaho was all honey.

Opening the various presents to view, Honzo

meets guile with guile. He assures Moronaho how humbly his master will accept his help along the intricate paths of ceremony with which the Lord of Musashi is so familiar but which are a labyrinth to such a mere Bushi war officer as Wakasa-no-suke. Moronaho and Bannai gape with astonishment at the unexpected compliments which pour from Honzo's experienced lips, and this trusty executive withdraws with the hope that his Lord Wakasa-no-suke may reap the benefit of the bribe before actually learning and perhaps renouncing the act.

While we await the morning meeting of Moronaho and Wakasa which cannot be far off now, let us scan a number of the famous pictures of the portion of the drama which we have just considered. For this purpose suppose we first select the print covering the second Act of the drama in a series published by Tsuru-ya, designed by Hokusai. You doubtless know Hokusai as his work is among the most frequently met of all Japanese artists. In this print of the second Act, Honzo is depicted as using the sword of *Wakasa-no-suke* in cutting off the pine branch, instead of

using his own weapon, as is generally shown. This is interpreted by many as being a precautionary measure. By returning the sword of Wakasa-no-suke to its scabbard without first cleaning off the pine gum, Wakasa could not easily draw it in excitement, and might thus be saved from danger. This interpretation is not general, however, perhaps because it has been found illogical. In the first place, Honzo would scarcely dare to use his master's sword. Second, even should Wakasa-no-suke try to draw the weapon unsuccessfully, the mere putting of his hand on the hilt within the precincts of the Prince would constitute lese majesty, surely condemning Wakasa to *seppuku.*

Whether, however, Honzo used his own sword or that of his master, is of less consequence to us than the other factor which comes out strongly in the pictorial art of the second Act. That is the very common habit of Japanese artists of including the essence of two episodes within one picture. For example, a large number of the prints devoted to this Act, show the meeting of Tonase, Konami and Rikiya behind a screen in one corner,

while the balance of the plate is devoted to the meeting of Honzo and Wakasa at the time when Honzo cuts off the pine branch. This will be found to be the case in the Hiroshige Senichi series, in the Marusei series by the same artist, and in series by Shunsen and Kuniteru.

Before leaving the subject of pictorial art as bearing on this particular Act, I must take the liberty of mentioning one more picture on account of its rarity. Referring to my collection upon which all of my remarks are based, I find one print of an entirely different episode of the situation. It shows Honzo, at the break of day, wearing a cloak bearing the Mon of his master, Wakasa-no-suke. He is just riding into the courtyard preparatory to delivering the treasure with which he is about to bribe Moronaho. Honzo is accompanied by four lusty lads carrying a *hako* or box, partly covered by a protecting cloth which also bears the Mon of Wakasa. Underneath the covering may be seen the rolls of gold and other items of the treasure. This series is also by Hiroshige and seems to be unknown to most collectors. I will not impose on the reader technicalities fur-

ther than to say that this is not to be confused with one sometimes mentioned as being by Hiroshige the second, as neither the signature, the date nor the publisher accord. It is mentioned as showing the versatility of the artists in selecting episodes for their illustrations. I should however be doing injustice to clarity were I to omit mentioning that the actual delivery of the treasure takes place, according to one version, in the following Act. In spite of this, however, the print which I have mentioned is clearly entitled as being the second *Dan* or Act of the Chushingura.

We now see Honzo's scheme in its completion. Moronaho not only accepts the bribe but checks up the list with the assistance of his chief rogue, Sagisaka Bannai, to make certain that nothing promised has been omitted. Entirely without his knowledge, Wakasa-no-suke has been, very irregularly it is true, placed in security. But at what a cost to Yenya and to Honzo himself, as we shall eventually see.

VII

LESE MAJESTY AT TSURU-GA-OKA

SCARCELY had Honzo safely retired before Wakasa-no-suke arrived, to be led away in honor by Moronaho. Hardly was Wakasa out of sight when Lord Yenya came up in a norimono or enclosed palanquin to be duly announced by his hereditary vassal, Hayano Kampei. Yenya was uneasy at finding that he was apparently the last of the nobles to arrive, although he had assured himself that he was in ample time. Do we see the fine handicraft of the Lord of Musashi, adept at trickery, in making it appear that the only noble to slight the Prince was Lord Yenya? Lord Yenya Hanguwan Takasada, who had omitted the dishonorable but extremely necessary precaution of furnishing,—through the back door,—a suitably sumptuous bribe to the Karo Moronaho?

Yenya's uneasiness was in no way decreased to learn by the sound of singing that the festivi-

ties were in fact being begun. Not a second had been lost even for the customary preliminaries. Why was he, Lord Yenya, one of the appointed hosts, alone and without the usual courtesies being extended? Why were matters proceeding with neither Moronaho nor Wakasa-no-suke present? Why, if they had arrived, were they not in sight?

Poor Yenya. Could he have seen Moronaho conducting Wakasa to private quarters like a prince, apologizing to him for his roughness on the previous day, stuffing him with rich food and slavering over him in his eagerness to load his recent enemy down with courtesies! No more did Lord Yenya understand the root of his own accumulating misfortunes than did Wakasa-no-suke comprehend the base origin of the gross flatteries being heaped upon him. Wakasa only sensed that suddenly and for the time being, things were going smoothly. Honzo's intervention was as far from his imagination as it would have been from his approval. Having accepted the bad, he now followed Moronaho to what promised better conditions.

Instantly Lord Yenya came in view, all was

different. Moronaho lashed him with abuse for inattention, with tardiness, sarcastically complimented him on the beauty and chastity of his wife and sneered at her irreproachable character. Sardonically he referred to the Lady Kawoyo as a model of virtue, pretended that he, Moronaho had received verses from her and insinuated that these were not free from tender passages intended only for the eye of the Lord Musashi.

By this time, there was a very considerable gathering about witnessing the festivities, during which Moronaho missed no chance to give everything which Lord Yenya did or said the appearance of boorish clumsiness. Charged him with total unfitness for his duties and likened him to a fish out of water. Lord Yenya so far had kept his hand from his sword, even though his temper boiled under the continued and intentional insults.

Finally, a little later in the day, history shows that Moronaho was not above the crowning indignity. Glancing at his sock,—the foot-covering which is worn indoors in Japan even after the outdoor geta have been deposited at the entrance,—Moronaho pretended that it was untied. Mali-

ciously the Lord of Musashi turned to Lord Yenya and ordered him to stoop and tie the ribbon. This was, of course, a service to have been performed by the first menial within call, nor need a nobleman have waited for one of his own servants to have performed it. Any lackey would have flown to see it attended to. Publicly to direct a Japanese gentleman of whatever honorable standing to kneel down and tie a foot ribbon was an insult of the most degrading character. Go further, it was recognized as symbolic of an intentional degradation throughout Japan and not Lord Yenya alone but every person in sight instantly so understood it. The fact that Yenya was not merely a gentleman and a warrior, but a nobleman and a Daimyo made it so impossible to overlook it that, had Lord Yenya complied with the order, he would have totally disappeared from the companionship of all self-respecting men, high or low, both in life and in memory.

Well, it had come. Despite all he had endured, it had come. To do what he was commanded to do was to pass into outer darkness beyond the association of his kind. To resent it was to attack

his iniquitous tormentor. To assault Moronaho within the sacred limits of the court meant,—death. Not death at the soft and unmanly hands of Moronaho, for Lord Yenya was far the better man; but death at his own hands by seppuku under decree of the authorities.

Enraged beyond all bounds and bewildered by the thought that yesterday it was Wakasa-no-suke and not he who had suffered most from the bitter tongue of the Lord of Musashi, Yenya at last forgot everything but his heaped insults. Throwing precautions to the winds, drawing his short sword, he aimed a fierce blow at Moronaho. It cut the scalp on the forehead between the eyes. It was a deep and painful wound that would mark the tormentor for life, but alas, not fatal. Lord Yenya sprang instantly to deliver *coup de grace,* but was dragged away by the nobles standing around. By some it is thought to have been one of the retinue of the Prince who interfered so untimely. By some, the responsibility is laid at the door of Honzo, who rushed up thinking to save Lord Yenya. No matter, since, struggling with his many opponents, Yenya was held while Moronaho escaped.

Bundled into a netted norimono, Yenya Hanguwan Takasada was hurried away to confinement, followed by the sympathetic mourning of his friends and the growing respect of all who understood the situation. Moronaho, as was due to his social position, was carefully helped to safety, but found himself, even in his freedom, shunned by his equals and by all wherever it was possible.

Thus was the trap which threatened Wakasa-no-suke actually sprung upon Lord Yenya. Thus, in payment for resenting his insufferable insults was Yenya Hanguwan Takasada, Lord of castles, husband of a beautiful and noble lady, soldier of honour, gentleman of much wealth with many devoted followers, instantly turned into a captive, stared in the face by a certain decree requiring him to commit self-destruction, and the confiscation of all that he possessed. Fuming because he had not accomplished the death of his enemy, Yenya presented a calm front to friend and foe. *De facto* supremely justified. *De jure*, having lost all save honor.

The assault of Lord Yenya upon Moronaho is so clearly the crisis both of the tragedy and of the

drama up to this point that we may well expect nearly all artists to have chosen it as one of the conspicuous themes for their representation of the third Act of the Chushingura. It happens, however, strange as it may seem, that this supposition is not borne out by the facts. To see Yenya with his short sword or dirk flashing in his hand as he bends over Moronaho, while the nobles surge around amidst the confusion which reigns everywhere, is easily to recognize the typical scene when it appears at all. But my very careful, indeed exhaustive, research into the matter, through many authorities on the subject, through my own collection and those of others, frequently fails to disclose this scene in the various depictions by early artists. One finds it strikingly shown in two forms by Kochoro Kunisada, as well as in the little known set by Kuniteru, from my copy of which the above description is taken. In order, therefore, to be able at once to recognize the artist's intention, we must pause in our pursuit of the general thread of the matter to examine for a moment a less important episode which was coincident with, or instantly followed, the attack.

Lese Majesty at Tsuru-ga-Oka

Immediately after announcing the arrival of Lord Yenya by his faithful vassal, the samurai Hayano Kampei, the latter hurried to find O-karu, his betrothed. She was maid in waiting upon the Lady Kawoyo. When Kampei at last found her, O-karu was being annoyed by advances at the hands of Sagisaka Bannai, one of the samurai attendants of Moronaho. Considerable time was spent in convincing Bannai that he was decidedly *persona non grata.* Suddenly, while Kampei and O-karu were quietly chatting, an uproar was heard in the hall where the nobility were assembled. Word passed like a flash. Kampei realized that he must lose no time in finding his master, Lord Yenya. Attempting to reach the nobles' court, he finds his way barred at every door. Thunderously he hammers on them. No results. Overcome by the feeling that he has been negligent in his duty, he attempts to commit seppuku, being scarcely prevented by O-karu. They learn that Lord Yenya has been taken away so Kampei attempts to follow with O-karu, but finds his way blocked at the postern bridge, now guarded by Sagisaka Bannai and his crew. Kampei performs prodigies of valour in

beating them off while O-karu unfastens her scarf to entangle them from any point of vantage.

It is this scene at the bridge which we see most frequently chosen as the representation of the third Act, in which actually the assault of Yenya has taken place. If it is not too much use of invaluable time, I will mention that two series by Hokusai, three by Hiroshige, two by Toyokuni and others by Shunyei, Shunsen and lesser known artists choose this as the episode. It thus becomes much more familiar pictorially than the attack itself.

We last saw Lord Yenya being taken away in a norimono to be under the vigilant eye of a great Daimyo until it should officially be determined what the law and customs required. His greatest aggravation lay in the fact that his awful sentence, which could not be other than seppuku, with the confiscation of every possession he held, would have been neither more certain nor more terrible had he succeeded in killing Moronaho. Unfortunate Yenya! He was even deprived of foreknowledge that the scar of Moronaho's wound would

eventually be the means of preventing his cowardly escape. The significant scar which would decorate Moronaho's head after it was hacked from Moronaho's unworthy body.

VIII

THE DEATH OF YENYA HANGUWAN TAKASADA

WE think of the East as dilatory,—a place where business arrives late and justice never. What surprises are occasionally in store for us. How shall we reconcile our own tardy penalties with a sense of honour so strict that a nobleman scarcely waits to be judged before punishing himself with his own hand.

I do not see that it is particularly important to decide whether Yenya was confined in the castle of the Daimyo Tamura Ukiyo no Daibu, as history seems to record, or secluded in his own mansion of Ogiga-yatsu, as the stage setting shows. We may be perfectly sure that he had much to think about and none of it pleasant. He could expect nothing but a most painful, if ceremonially honourable death, even if he would plead for it. Even in his rage he had not for a second lost sight of that. But he was in a dark corner of woe

and his dilemma was absolute. To have let Moronaho's insults go unchallenged would have lost him his own self-respect as well as that of all his honourable associates. Even the samurai below him in rank, even the servants and the very lackeys in the servants' quarters would have despised him. "Ha. A nobleman wearing the yeboshi cap of a Daimyo and the Mon of a gentleman and the two swords of a Bushi officer who treasured his pale, pink blood rather than defend the honor of his wife and his own dignity. Shame to him," they would have said with one accord. They might even have held it against him that he had saved his money bags instead of plastering Moronaho's face with gold as Honzo had done for Wakasa-no-suke. True, neither Yenya, nor for the matter of that, Wakasa-no-suke himself, knew by what low means the latter had escaped. But what these two noblemen did not know was common kitchen talk with every one else. Moronaho was known for a man who could be bought,—who, indeed, was anxious to be bought. Having no sense of honour, he had nevertheless a very keen sense of values, in which the price which had to go into

Moronaho's pocket must be commensurate with the safety which he was prepared to insure. Being bought was therefore, from his standpoint, a very profitable business. And see how well it had all worked out. He had received a treasure worth many risks from Wakasa-no-suke, who was by reason of giving the bribe, more or less under the thumb of the Lord of Musashi. And Yenya, whom he had grown to hate, was doomed. He thought of his own healing wound as a mere scratch which would be covered by his yeboshi cap and would scarcely show. The Lord of Musashi doubtless had pleasant dreams.

Not so Yenya. Neither the price which he would have had to pay in shameful bribery (of which he knew nothing), nor the fearful penalty of seppuku which faced him (of which he knew, as did every samurai, every revolting detail) occupied the mind of Yenya Hanguwan Takasada. In his quiet seclusion he was able to drive these matters from his thought along with his flaming rage at his failure to kill Moronaho with the first blow. What burned into his mind was that after he had braced himself to go calmly through the awful agonies

of seppuku, castles, lands, treasures, titles, everything, would by the stroke of fate be swept away. Devoted wife, retainers, samurai, soldiers, servants and followers would be cast upon the world without so much as where to lay their heads.

He had not long to wait. Only a few short days. Only a few times the sun rose over the hills and set beyond the cherry blossoms. Suddenly the Commissioners appeared to announce the judgment of the official government. Jirozayemon Yakushiji and Umanojo Ishido commanded admission, carrying the decree of seppuku and confiscation. No court nor judges were summoned. Neither counsel nor jury were called. No plea nor argument was heard. Very simply and succinctly it was all set out. A good and true nobleman was to put himself to death with much almost unbearable ceremony and yield up everything he had, pauperize his wife and family and render his samurai ronin. Even was Yenya denied the useless privilege of consulting Oboshi Yuranosuke, his chief Councilor, hurrying to his side but fated to be almost too late. Too late for what. There were no instructions to give, for nothing would be left.

Companionship of his noted Chancellor was the boom denied the victim.

True the entire empire, from highest to lowest, from noble to serf, gave him silent sympathy. Deeply they regretted Yenya's misfortunes and the absence of Yuranosuke. But the Commissioners were at the door and their decree permitted no delay. Yenya was at once to perform seppuku, that awful rite by which a Japanese of the Bushi Class very quietly and ceremoniously and in the presence of duly accredited witness, transferred himself from this world to the next by raising his dirk by the point to his forehead in sign of submission and then burying it to the hilt in his abdomen. Nor was that sufficient. The dirk must be turned in the wound just below the waist, letting no drop of blood fall beyond the ceremonial white mat spread to receive it. While undergoing the torture of this, every nerve and muscle must be concentrated on the necessity of falling face forward, for on his face must he fall and expire if he would not be thought lacking in the self-control of a nobleman.

So the Commissioners appeared to carry out

their duty. Ishibo with the bowed countenance of a friendly noble, deeply saddened by the requirements of his office. Yakushiji with all the bitter sarcasm and glee of a ghoul, delighting to cause pain and wondering how he could best inflict more. If his duty could be made to turn to his advantage, so much the better.

And so all of the preparations were made. Seemingly to the surprise of the Commissioners, it was found that Lord Yenya had so far anticipated their errand as to be wearing under his outer garment the unadorned white robe or kamishimo required by ceremony. The white mat was spread, but still the prime minister, Yuranosuke, had not returned, the place of chief attendant being taken by his son Rikiya, hereditary successor to this last service. Even a moment's delay would have been considered disgraceful. Therefore, in the presence of the Commissioners and of his own boyish second, the Lord Yenya, raising his dirk in salutation, without glance to right or left, drove it full deep to its guard, turned it in the wound, and fell over on his face without a moan.

The sacrifice was accomplished. But before the

brave man lost all consciousness, Oboshi Yuranosuke, breathless from his exertions, was allowed to enter and crouch beside his master's body.

A long, sighing breath told the witnesses that Lord Yenya Hanguwan Takasada was no more. Also it told them that every vestige of his property was now confiscate. Not the Lady Kawoyo, not the faithful Councilor, Yuranosuke, not follower, servant, roof or rudest furniture was spared. With his last expiring gasp, Lord Yenya drew out the dirk which he handed to Yuranosuke, motioning that he would understand. Carefully leaving the sacred blood on the blade, Oboshi Yuranosuke accepted the offering. It constituted the entire estate of the nobleman to whom his life had been devoted. Had Moronaho contemplated the use to which this stained relic would later be put, he might have used his influence to insure the confiscation even of this slight memento. But there was no money in it for him, so Moronaho never gave it a passing thought. The omission proved to be a very stupid oversight on the part of the Lord of Musashi.

IX

WATCHFUL WAITING

THE first and imperative duty of the retainers of the Lord Yenya, now so unfortunately deceased, was to see that the body of their master be promptly interred. Rikiya, as son and representative of Yuranosuke, was assigned to this labor of love, taking the funeral train to the temple of Sengakuji, where the body was buried and where it still rests.

Knowing that his master, Lord Yenya, was said to have declared that he would rise from his grave for vengeance, Yuranosuke, or Sir Yuranosuke, as he is frequently designated, hastened to gather together all of the samurai belonging to the deceased master for the purpose of testing them out. Only two proved instantly disloyal,—Ono Kudaiu and his son Ono Sadakuro.

These two voted without hesitation in favor of looting everything upon which they could lay their

hands, while all the others were temporarily silenced by Yuranosuke, who proposed the plan of attempting to hold the castle of their late master even against the Shogun. It was a totally impractical plan, wild in its conception and absolutely impossible of success, as Yuranosuke well knew. It, however, served the purpose for which it was advanced. It clearly separated the primarily loyal from the disloyal without disclosing the real objective, which was that the loyal Ronin should band together at once and patiently seek revenge upon Moronaho.

The first difficulty arose in allowing Kudaiu and Sadakuro to maintain their places amongst the others without disclosing what was intended nor raising suspicions of these two disloyal fellows themselves. To tell them nothing was simply to put them on their guard. Much better to give them false information which, if repeated, would only start the followers of Moronaho on a wild-goose chase. The idea of holding Yenya's mansion against the warriors of the Shogun was never permitted to fruit. It only budded for the sake of such as Kudaiu and his son, who doubtless carried it

directly to Bannai, and thus to the camp of the object of their revenge.

Well knowing that success in such a vendetta required great precaution and would be frustrated before it was under way if the plan leaked out, Yuranosuke kept the matter absolutely to himself. Not even faithful Rikiya was let into the secret until the Ronin were well away from their late home. Then the daring band was again assembled and signed an agreement in the blood of Sir Yuranosuke himself. They feared their own poverty. They feared the wealth of Moronaho. They feared their lack of every calling except that of gentlemen-at-arms. But most of all they feared that Moronaho should get wind of the idea that they intended revenge and thus make matters a thousandfold more difficult. They were fighting great odds, and in the dark, and under most unfavorable circumstances. For Moronaho was a Japanese, and any Japanese would take it for granted that honourable samurai, even if masterless Ronin, would consider it their first duty to avenge their master under the conditions that existed. Moreover **Moronaho knew** exactly who they **were and how**

nearly they were without resources, Moronaho's wealth furnished ample means for paying spies, and Kudaiu, with his son Sadakuro, were already among these. Only careful planning and devious schemes could outwit such enemies as he.

Wisely the Ronin planned. Some would continue in the service of arms, joining wealthy nobles where samurai were needed. Some would be carpenters, if they could find work which their unaccustomed hands could perform. Some would join other trades. It mattered little what the trades were, since they knew nothing of any of them, and all were equally degrading to their standing as samurai. Two things mattered supremely in the choice of calling. It must give each a living, and must allow freedom of movement. If it permitted a somewhat familiar entry into the yashiki of house and grounds of a well-to-do person or noble, where hints about Moronaho might be picked up, so much the better. All was fish which came to their nets. The necessity of being able to pass unsuspected up and down the country was superlative. As we shall see, Sir Yuranosuke himself publicly disclaimed any loyal designs, kept himself

free of every entangling alliance, intent only upon gathering funds and information while he awaited that favorable opportunity which he felt sure would come.

Starting with a possible number of something over sixty, the band was finally boiled down to forty-seven, concerning which number we shall learn more shortly. Coming down through all the generations which have followed, this band has been almost reverently referred to as the Forty-seven Loyal Ronin. Forty-seven loyal hearts they were, with only one objective. Forty-seven desperate men with only a single treasure between them,—the sacred dirk with which their master, Lord Yenya, had done himself to death.

As we found in the case of the assault on Moronaho, so again we shall see in the case of the seppuku of Yenya. The artists whose pictorial work on the subject so enriches us, have seldom chosen either of these two crises as direct subject for their illustrations. In examining the choices with regard to the solemn death of Yenya, we discover that nearly all of the artists of note have elected to show Rikiya offering consolation to

Lady Kawoyo, and the arrival of the Commissioners, rather than the dramatic finale as furnished by Yenya's death. I might mention as among these, the earlier Hokusai series, one by Masayoshi, the Senichi series of Hiroshige, a series by Shunyei, two by Toyokuni, one of which is the famous pentaptych, and the triptych series by Kunisada.

Only in a few do we see any part of the critical episode. Hokusai shows it in his set signed "Kako" as does Kunisada in a full sheet series. In a little known series by Kuninao, we find an unusually interesting setting, in which the person viewing the picture stands at the near end of a vast room, out of which smaller rooms lead with *shoji* which are mostly slid back. At the far end one sees Yenya with the two Commissioners. He seems to be listening to their instructions. The actual moment for his sacrifice has not quite arrived, as he still wears, covering his ceremonial robe of white, a garment of blue. It is a most impressive picture and one very seldom seen.

Hiroshige, in both his Arita-ya series and in the Marusei as well, has set the actively solemn aside

in favor of the sad and passive. The two prints are very much alike in purport. The chief difference is that one faces left while the other faces to the right. Judging from my own copies, the Arita-ya selection is the finer. It shows the barred and shuttered exterior of yashiki or mansion of Lord Yenya immediately after the death of its master. No one is in sight in the open grounds except Yuranosuke, who has so little to look forward to but dares not look back. The very trees hang down as if they would weep, and the artist has created a sense of desolation almost unbearably sad. Sadahide has copied Hiroshige's composition, but destroyed the overwhelming desolation by inserting the persons of Rikiya and the loyal Ronin in the foreground. The lone figure of Sir Yuranosuke, standing in the deserted castle grounds, moving with hesitant and reluctant steps as he leaves his entire life behind, is far more impressive.

Yenya Hanguwan Takasada is dead. His body lies in Sengaku-ji. His house is barred, shuttered and confiscate. His people are dispersed. Revenge alone remains. While one may easily understand that, with their need for secrecy ever before **them,**

the loyal Ronin dare not adopt anything like a uniform at present. But we shall see them later wearing their chosen garb of identity, with long points of white on black, many times referred to as the "Day and Night" uniform. In the final struggle, this uniform was necessary to prevent them from destroying one another in the darkness. To each of the Forty-seven was assigned one of the Japanese *hira-kana* characters corresponding to the sound of a Japanese syllable, and these symbols may frequently be seen on their outer garments in the last Act of the Chushingura.

In the same way that we noticed the symbolic border of the Hiroshige Senichi series, so we find the diamond points of the uniform symbolized in the Marusei series by the same artist, and elsewhere by others. Again, with the same purpose we see the Mon of Yenya, with its crossed feathers appearing symbolically only less frequently than that of Yuranosuke.

Just as Yuranosuke and his loyal followers left the castle in which their Lord had dispatched himself, so we may now move away from Tsuru-ga-Oka. The Hachiman temple now standing

there is not old as things go in Japan, having been built to replace the former one destroyed by fire. But the hill with its breeze from the sea is there, looking over toward Kamakura. And the trees with which it is covered number their years by hundreds. Many of them shaded the first Hachiman Shrine about which we have been thinking when it was built and dedicated. Most of them will stand long after we have passed by and on, as have Lord Yenya and Sir Oboshi Yuranosuke.

Our first pilgrimage is completed. When we have made our return to the starting point, we shall be prepared to take up another, and again follow the labors and difficulties of the Forty-seven Loyal Ronin.

X

JIMMEIROKU

XENOPHON tells us in his classic known to students of history as the Anabasis, of the ventures of Cyrus the Persian. Like nearly all such ventures, it involved a return journey, a Katabasis, of which also Xenophon writes. Pilgrimages likewise involve the effort of a return, and before we can start on our next journey as pilgrims, we must find our way back to our original point of departure. Jinrikishas are not as easily commanded at Tsuru-ga-Oka as they were in Yokohama, though we shall find enough of them to convey us comfortably back. But we shall have to make occasional stops on the way, just as we did in coming out. We must not waste them, so I shall turn them to account. No better opportunity will offer than these rests in which to talk over in advance a number of the questions which will rise up to torment us later if they are not understood beforehand.

As we shall presently see from the painful story of the Man from Satsuma, there may be much of deep interest connected with such a tragedy as the one of which we are reading, which does not find suitable place in the direct recital. Of the many instances of this kind which come to mind in connection with our subject, one relates to the actual number of the loyal samurai who banded together and gave the customary name of "The Forty-seven Loyal Ronin" to the group.

At the moment of the death of Lord Yenya, Sir Yuranosuke seems for the time in doubt as to whether or not to attempt armed force in the defense of the Yashiki. He was at least strongly urged to do so by several of the most hot-headed of the samurai. Seeing, however, the hopelessness of attempting protection by force, Yuranosuke determined, on the contrary, to yield to the overwhelming power against him and his companions, and to muster all possible strength for a revenge upon Moronaho. For this purpose it would be necessary instantly to band together all who would be loyal to the desperate object and swear them each to secret fidelity.

It is generally accepted that there remained at that time sixty odd samurai whom Yuranosuke had it in mind to approach. Two of them, as we have seen, waited neither time nor decency to disclose their infidelity. Ono Kudaiu and his son Ono Sadakuro were the ones who seriously proposed that the samurai should loot the mansion before guards could be sent to protect the escheated estate. Both became spies. Both met merited fates.

During the time which elapsed between the seppuku of Lord Yenya and the consummation of the revenge which at last came relentlessly, many of the Ronin for one reason or another, were unable to keep in the running with the sworn loyal band. So it was that from various causes, the number was reduced from sixty-odd to forty-seven which is the number accepted by all authorities save perhaps one who strongly insists that there were only forty-six. Aisaburo Akiyama bases his reasoning on the fact that Kichiyemon Terasaka (known in the dramatic version as Tera-oka Heiyemon) was not among those samurai who surrendered themselves after

the vengeance was complete, and was not directed to commit seppuku. It would be less than fair to so loyal a member of the avengers not to mention that all other authorities unite in calling attention to the fact that Tera-oka Heiyemon was not of the rank of samurai. Consequently he was not permitted by the exacting rules of the Bushi class to honour himself by committing seppuku. It is undoubtedly true that he lived many years in seclusion, but on his death was buried with the others in the grayeyard at Sengaku-ji, consecrated by the blood of Lord Yenya and his followers.

A. B. Mitford (afterward Lord Redesdale) states positively that at Sengaku-ji he saw the documents deposited in the Treasury of the Ronin, setting out specifically that forty-seven, including the leader, Yuranosuke, took part. Tamenaga Shinsui is equally exact in his I-ro-ha Bunko. Forty-seven has always been the current number recited and forty-seven graves lie beside that of Lord Asano (Yenya) at Sengaku-ji, not counting the interment of the Man from Satsuma, **and** the memory of that unknown Ronin who,

a century and a half later, is said to have chosen to take his own life near the same spot, as being the most sacred in which to die.

To us, who look at the tragedy only as it is presented to us, no discussion at this late date as to their exact number would be seemly. For our purpose we accept the customarily accredited number of forty-seven, merely mentioning the contrary opinion in order to avoid possible confusion. By whatever name, by whatever number, we honour the courageous Lord, we honour his chief, we honour the Forty-seven Ronin.

While picking up these threads here and there, it will not be amiss to mention that as all translations of Japanese words, including names, are phonetic, the spellings adopted by various authorities differ. In the same way, their use of such diacritical marks and accents as are not infrequently seen in works of this kind. Necessarily, these diacritical marks and accents represent the impressions of the particular authority using them, and because they are more or less arbitrary, and are not found to be used in conformity one

with another, *they have been studiously and purposely omitted here.*

In connection with what has just been said, it seems necessary to add a word as to pronunciation. Nearly all authorities accept the use of Romaji translations (that is, written in the Roman alphabet) as practically equivalent to their pronunciation in Italian. For our purposes this will be sufficient, without going into exceptions. As to accents,—to wit, a stress on one syllable as against others,—it ought to be said that as a rule, the Japanese language recognizes nothing of the kind, all syllables being in general stressed alike. It may be added that, being phonetically spelled, all letters, as a rule, are pronounced. Suke, for example, is spoken in two syllables, Tonase in three. In Japanese, as in all other languages, certain syllables have, with time, become slurred or almost entirely elided, but this is not a work on the Japanese tongue. It will be sufficient that we recognize these fundamental facts.

While we are on the subject of Japanese names, it ought, for clarity, also to be said that in classic Japanese, the first name is the family name, given

names following. This habit is not so closely conformed to in present-day Japan as it was formerly. In order to establish familiarity, however, the names in this book and in the list following, are given as generally encountered, although in some instances the surname appears last and not first.

No very deep thinking is required to realize that when a reader picks up a book dealing with a large number of characters with whom he is entirely unfamiliar, it is nearly impossible to avoid mixing them up. This is particularly true when they are designated by names in a strange language. Even a theater takes this into account and furnishes us with the names of the *dramatis personce.* It has seemed wise therefore to interpolate, while we are otherwise resting, a brief list of the principal characters which have been jotted down for ready use. Having this purpose in mind will explain the Chapter title, since jimmeiroku signifies a register or list of names. A directory. A Who's-Who, in the present parlance.

Beginning at the top, we will refer first to the Shogun's representative. It has been explained that, in accord with Japanese law, it was for a

long period prohibited that either in the theater or in art should the nobility be identified. Custom required a change of name. Frequently this was extended to a change of locality and chronology. In keeping with this necessity the quarrel is recorded as between Lord Yenya and Moronaho. The Shogun at the historic time of the assault was one of the Tokugawa dynasty. Chronology having been trifled with, the name of the Shogun's representative had to be altered to meet the circumstances. The names however are all as they will be met either in history or art or on the stage.

NAHOYOSHI, brother of the Shogun, and acting as his Deputy at the dedication of the Hachiman Shrine.

ISHIDO UMANOJO, his assistant and later one of the two Commissioners appointed officially to witness the suppuku of Lord Yenya.

YAKUSHIJI JIROZAYEMON, the other commissioner.

ASANO TAKUMI-NO-KAMI, Lord of Ako in the Province of Harima. In the dramatic and art versions he is known as YENYA HANGUWAN

TAKASADA, a Koke or noble under the Shogun **ASHIKAGA TAKAUJI.**

KAMEI SAMA (otherwise referred to as KAMEI OKI-NO-KAMI or MUNEHARU DATE). He was Lord of Tsuwano in the Province of IWAMI. Friendly to Lord Yenya, but not his follower. Dramatized, his name became MOMONOI WAKASA-NO-SUKE.

KIRA KOTSUKE-NO-SUKE (sometimes referred to as Yoshinaka Kira). He was an expert on court ceremonial, whose name on the stage and in pictorial art is MORONAHO, Lord of Musashi and deadly enemy of Lord Yenya and his clan.

OISHI KURANOSUKE, Chief Councilor to the Lord Asano (Yenya). He becomes leader of the loyal Ronin and hero of their vengeance. Dramatized, his name becomes OBOSHI YURANOSUKE.

KAJIKAWA YOSOBEI, retainer of the Shogun. In the assault on Moronaho by Lord Yenya, he is sometimes charged with being the one who prevented Yenya from delivering the fatal blow. Generally this act is attributed to HONZO.

KAKOGAWA HONZO, who, in the play, is Chief Councilor to WAKASA-NO-SUKE. Later, he takes

his own life over grief for having been the means of leaving Lord Yenya defenseless.

OISHI CHIKARA (otherwise Chikara Yoshikane) son of Kuranosuke (Yuranosuke), a lad of sixteen years and the youngest of the Ronin, amongst whom, in the theatrical versions he appears as RIKIYA.

OHOTAKE GENGO, Retainer of Asano (Yenya). In the drama, under the name of OHOWASHI BUNGO, he becomes chiefly interesting as the Ronin who, in the attack on Moronaho's house, wields the enormous wooden mallet with such destructive force.

KAYANO SAMPEI, Retainer of Asano (Yenya). As a Ronin, under the dramatic designation of HAYANO KAMPEI, he is the husband of O-Karu, and commits seppuku under the misapprehension of having killed her father.

TERASAKA KICHIYEMON, a common soldier and not a Ronin. Brother of O-Karu. Retainer of Asano (Yenya) and as TERA-OKA HEIYEMON a most efficient member of the band.

ONO KUROBEI, Retainer of Asano (Yenya). As ONO KUDAIU he becomes a spy.

ONO GUNYEMON, son of Kurobei. Under the dramatized name of SADAKURO, he turns robber and murderer and is killed.

YOSHIDA CHIUZAYEMON, the faithful Ronin who was historically appointed as guardian for young RIKIYA, when the latter because of his rank as Sir Yuranosuke's son was placed in command of the attack against the postern of Moronaho's palace.

AMANOYA RIHEI, a loyal merchant who, while not a samurai and hence not a Ronin, furnished to the loyal band at considerable risk to himself and his family, the arms required by them. His name in the dramatic version was AMAKAWA GIHEI.

KOBAYASHI HEHACHI, WAKU HANDAIYU, and SHIMIDZU IKKAKU. These three men, bitter enemies of the Ronin, were followers of Moronaho, but they fought a heroic fight in his defense and were the last to fall.

HAZAMA JUJIRO, Retainer of Asano (Yenya). Dramatically he is known as YAZAMA JIUTARO. The Ronin, after breaking into Moronaho's yashiki, despaired of finding Moronaho, who

was hiding. It was JIUTARO who dragged him out, and he was strikingly honoured by Yuranosuke at Sengaku-ji.

O-ISHI, wife of Sir Yuranosuke.

HARA SAEMON, who is seemingly the character known in the theatrical versions as HARA GOYEMON, being next in rank to Yuranosuke.

LADY ASANO, spoken in the drama as LADY KAWOYO, was the wife of Asano (Lord Yenya).

TONASE, wife of HONZO, while KONAMI is his daughter, affianced to Rikiya.

TAKEMORI KITAHACHI and SENZAKI YAGORO were both valued retainers of Yenya, and amongst all the Ronin, KANAMARU is stated to have been the oldest.

SAGISAKA BANNAI, one of the leaders of the cohorts of Moronaho.

YOICHIBEI, a farmer, hence not a Ronin. Father of O-Karu who is Lady's Maid to Lady Kawoyo and betrothed to Kampei.

O-KARU, daughter of Yoichibei, above.

O-KAYA, wife of Yoichibei and mother of O-Karu.

Many more might be named, but their parts are not conspicuous enough to warrant their especial mention.

As it is the object not only to familiarize ourselves with the characters of the story, but also with the innumerable ways in which the incidents have appeared in the art most popular at the time in Japan,—that of colour prints,—it would seem helpful to throw some light on the subject of Mons. They are very frequently seen in all pictorial art in Japan, particularly that of the Chushingura.

To explain in full what the Japanese Mon means would be a rather long undertaking. Briefly, it has more nearly the meaning of a crest as heraldically understood in Europe, than anything else. This limitation must however be placed on any analogy between the two. A Mon is frequently seen in use by an actor, or other person not of the nobility, nor even of the highest or most ancient families. Where used by these higher orders of society, the Mon may be taken as a crest. Otherwise, as sort of a trade-mark. Great Daimyos three Mons, lesser Daimyos two. Ordinary gen-

tility had to struggle along with one. The Mon was worn on the back of the collar and on each breast, as well as on each flowing sleeve. Five positions in all.

In matters of art, a difficulty at once arises. When an actor wears a Mon, is it his own or that of the person whom his role represents? We need, however, concern ourselves only with pictorial art as applied to the Chushingura, and there the Mons are those of the characters and not of the actors. Particularly is this true when the theme shown is one of the episodes of the story itself. And it should further be noted that in the matter of Mons, color is immaterial, being dictated entirely by the artist's taste in relation to the background. For example, the Shogunal symbol shown at (C) in the list, will be found as blue on white (reproduced as black on white) and also as white on lavender (reproduced as white on black) in the Helmet Scene of Hiroshige previously illustrated.

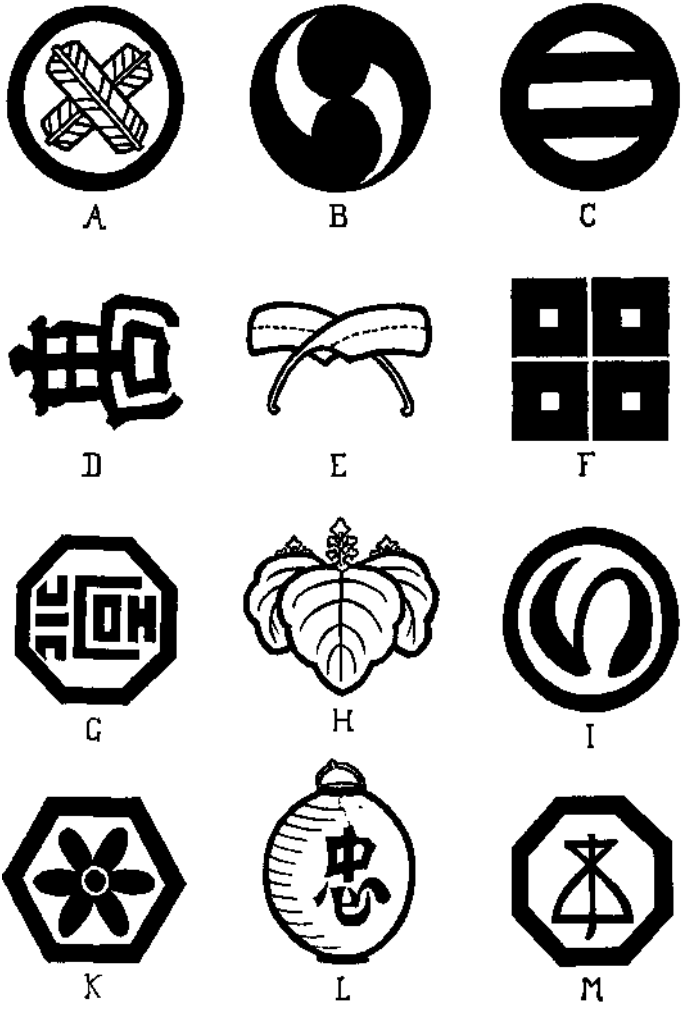
To the end that one may learn easily to recognize the chief characters whenever they are shown in any of the extremely numerous prints

covering this subject, a chart of some of the most frequently met Mons has been prepared. These are not confined to members of Lord Yenya's party alone, but include others closely connected with our story.

Explanation of the Mons illustrated.

(A) This is the Mon constantly seen on the garments of Lord Yenya, excepting only when he appears in the white robe symbolic of death which due ceremony required that he should wear at the time when he committed seppuku. Any attempt to state all of the prints upon which this Mon is seen would be futile. It may, however, be mentioned that it occurs in Hiroshige's Helmet Scene of the Senichi series as illustrated, as well as appearing in medallion form in the border of the celebrated Yeisen set, and is frequently seen on the walls and hangings where Yenya is present.

(B) This Mon is that of Sir Yuranosuke and, since Yuranosuke outlived his Lord Yenya,



Mons

Crests or Mons of Several Characters in Chushingura.

the Mon is even more broadcast than the previous one. Where two characters appear both wearing this Mon, the younger is Rikiya, Yuranosuke's son. In some Acts, Rikiya alone appears wearing the Mon, which is a family one. On lanterns, on porcelain at the tiny booths, and in every place where admiration could suitably place it, it will be seen at Sengaku-ji. In our illustrations, it will be found in the print of Yuranosuke by Toyokuni which forms the Frontispiece of this book, as well as in the Kuniteru print of the eleventh Act which is also illustrated. It will be recogized as the border medallion in the Helmet Scene, as well as in border of the title in the print of the ninth Act by Yeisen.

(C) This Mon has had a number of significations during the long years of Empire of Japan. We will not find it necessary to pursue these further than to say that in the Chushingura it symbolizes the presence of the Shogun or his authorized representative. It so appears in the Helmet Scene as il-

lustrated, where it is shown, as already mentioned, in reversed colors.

(D) Here we have the Mon customarily appearing on the five required positions of Moronaho's robe. It is so shown in the Helmet Scene with which we have become familiar, and in other prints too numerous to mention. We have seen that lesser Daimyos (of whom Moronaho was one) had the right to use two Mons, and we shall not be surprised to find that, on some occasions, Moronaho is represented as wearing another, to which reference will be made below.

(E) Kudaiu the traitor, and Sadakuro, his robber son, sometimes are shown as wearing this Mon. It has some resemblance to the crossed feathers in the Mon of Lord Yenya, to whom they were both so unfaithful.

(F) This is the frequently seen Mon of Wakasano-suke. It will be found in the illustration of Hiroshige's Helmet Scene as well as on the walls of his mansion and in other places in numerous prints.

(G) This Mon is carried by Ishido Umanojo, one of the lesser representatives of the Shogun who accompanied the Prince. So it will be found in the Helmet Scene, and many times when he appears as one of the Commissioners at the seppuku of Lord Yenya.

(H) In the description of Mon (D), reference was made to the fact that Moronaho was sometimes represented as wearing the former Mon and sometimes another. This is that other Mon. Originally it was the Family Crest of the Imperial Court. With slight changes it has had several uses, but it is unnecessary for us to go into them, since, wherever used in the Chushingura, it signifies Moronaho. It will be identified in the series of Chushingura prints from the brush of Toyokuni, in a group by Kunisada showing, among other things, the figures of Moronaho, Yenya, and Wakasa-no-suke in triptych form, and is used in the illustrations of the Chushingura in Dickins' translation.

(I) Here we stray off for a moment from the characters of the actual story to show the Mon of the actor Suketakaya Takasuke, whose stage name had previously been Sawamura Sojuro. Under his earlier name he was one of the first actors to take the part of Yuranosuke in a theatrical presentation of the tragedy.

(K) This Mon is the one we find in several instances as worn by Hara Goyemon, next in authority to Yuranosuke.

(L) This lantern, with its Mon-like insignia, is, it seems to me, most interesting. The inscription is not a Mon, but these lanterns appear in nearly every complete set of the Chushingura. In prints of the attack on the mansion of Moronaho, the followers of Yuranosuke will be found carrying lanterns such as these, similarly decorated. The inscription is significant. It signifies "LOYALTY." The character painted on the lanturns is the first of the three constituting the name "Chushingura," which, as we have seen, roughly translated, means Loyal Treas-

ure, Loyal Band, Loyal Followers, Loyal League. Lanterns bearing this symbol will be found in the illustration of the attack on the mansion of Moronaho in the series by Shunsen, later in this book and the symbol itself will be clear in the cartouche at the left of the Helmet Scene, in which the characters, read from the top downward, are translated Chushingura. It appears in the same way brilliantly in the right hand in the heavy cartouche enclosing the title of the ninth Act as designed by Yeisen, which we also illustrate.

(M) This Mon is the one seen on the few occasions when Honzo wears a Mon distinctive of himself. It so appears in Toyokuni's triptych, in the Kuniteru print of the second Dan or Act; in Sadafusa's half block of the same episode. It may, however, seldom be expected to be found in the tragic ninth Act, since in that, Honzo enters in disguise.

XI

A PILGRIMAGE TO SENGAKUJI

BY now we know a slight amount about what our second pilgrimage holds for us. We are to meet in Tokyo. At what more appropriate spot could we gather than at Nihon Bashi,—Japan Bridge. It carried the traffic of centuries before its old woodwork finally became unfit for further use and a fine stone bridge was substituted. To be exact, I believe the present Nihon Bashi is the thirteenth of the long series. It was opened on April 3, 1911, Prince Tokugawa, last of the old Shogunal dynasty, being the first to cross. He was followed by the oldest people who could be found, led by a child of one hundred and nine years, Mrs. Kojima Fusa, by name.

Not only is Nihon Bashi the center of commerce of modern Tokyo, but it has always been since before Yedo became the capital, long before its name was changed to Tokyo. And because of its commanding position and importance, all the

serial prints of the To-Kai-Do or Great Coast Road have, as I have before called to attention, begun here. Nihon Bashi and Ryogoku Bashi are as familiar in Japanese art as the Statue of Liberty is to a Staten Island commuter.

It is not too far from Nihon Bashi to Sengaku-ji to go by rickshaw. From so busy a point it will perhaps be some effort to make either a jinrikisha man or an automobile driver comprehend that we really and honestly wish to go to the Shi-ju-shichi-shi at Takanawa Sengaku-ji. This honored spot is visited almost exclusively by the Japanese themselves, but not difficult to reach. I have had the same experience before. As soon as the men understand, they are delighted. They yield laughingly to the instructions, pleased as children. They are not only glad to understand their patron, but doubly pleased and delighted that a spot so sacred to themselves is honoured by foreigners. They know instantly that we go on the same pilgrimage which is familiar to every Japanese. We go to Sengaku-ji. Ergo, we must know the history which is attached to the spot and we must wish to honour their heroes else how would we know enough to go? We

honour them and hence we must not be permitted to miss a single item. Neither crying child (if the children of Japan do cry, which is seldom the case), nor stray dog must annoy us. Cunning little misses with their inquisitive black eyes, may look at us but must not touch. Every guardian of temple gate, shrine or treasury must be on the *qui vive*. Nor is this limited to the customary and rather serious courtesy of the habitually polite Japanese people. The word runs round amongst every one in sight that while we are not of Nippon, we come to honour what they honour, and every courtesy must be ours. As we approach the hallowed ground, native visitors wish to step aside and give us first place. And they watch us never so keenly to see whether or not we understand them and what brings them here. Every snapping dark eye peeps at us with admiring approval. Adult or infant, all are careful to step out of the way. It is not in the least as if we were a group of contaminating strangers, or even objects of idle curiosity. To them we are not strangers, and our purpose is one with theirs. It is, in action, a parallel to the honorifics of their language. It is more than gracious. It is supremely touching.

Perhaps they give us credit for understanding their history better than in fact we do, but that is soon remedied. Let us rest here beneath this graceful roof and continue our outline of the tale which occupies our attention.

To Takanawa we have come because here at Sengaku-ji we have made our pilgrimage to weave the incidents together. Here three at least of the tragic episodes occurred and here the drama stages them before us. Here, of all places in Japan, can one best assimilate the various parts which constitute the whole.

Sengaku-ji, the Spring-Hill Temple, looks such a peaceful spot under its cypresses. We shall not trouble ourselves particularly with the question of whether it is Shinto or Buddhist. In Japan, religious beliefs are strangely mixed and interlarded. A man may profess either religion or both with perfect faith and respectability. They are more or less supplementary to each other. In England, Disraeli could be born a Jew, enter politics as an almost radical Liberal, be converted to Christianity and live to serve his Queen and Country as a hard-shelled conservative, thus changing both his re-

ligion and his politics. Yet he died broad-minded and respected. So Sengaku-ji welcomes all pilgrims who come, even as you and I are here. For all their long hermit life and their ironbound cults and castes, the Japanese have always shown a streak of broad-mindedness.

Let us step again into the sunshine of the courts of Sengaku-ji. Everywhere we see the Mon of the double tomoe-ye which we have come to recognize as symbolic of Yuranosuke. It is carried by penitents and pilgrims. As has been mentioned, it is glazed on the sides of cunning little cups and pottery which the hesitating and demure misses offer pilgrims as mementos. At every turn and corner we are reminded of the thought which fills their minds. I have been stolidly assured that the Japanese of the present day is too busily studying efficiency in business, along with quantity production, to spare time for romance or sentiment as his forefathers did. I am, of course, no authority, but I should say that only if and when the spirit of the shop and the highway curdles the spirit of the Japanese home and temple can that quite happen. Else how does one explain the evident senti-

ment shown by high or low when they visit Sengaku-ji. Watch them clatter over the stones up the hill to the tomb of Lord Yenya, their noble Daimyo Asano Takumi no Kami of the castle of Ako. Watch them standing with shy tears dimming their eyes as they burn incense as a tribute to the Daimyo and his Forty-seven Ronin so long since dead. Do not tell me that the Japanese no longer have sentiment. Sentimental they certainly are not. Hard-shelled in business if you like. Not always easy neighbors internationally. But I should say, keep clear of their real lives if you dislike sentiment.

In spite of all the visitors, it is very quiet here in the open court of the Spring-Hill Temple. It is not one of the large or imposing ones like Chion-in or Kiyomidzu-Dera. Nor are the tombs of a world-defying beauty like those of the first and third Tokugawa Shoguns at Nikko. All is simple and easily distinguished. Unpretentious in the extreme, as we shall find when we have finished acquainting ourselves with their completed lives so that we can go into the further recesses of the temple enclosure understandingly.

XII

OBOSHI YURANOSUKE

FOR no single instant after the body of Lord Yenya fell face forward on the ceremonial mat did the mind of Yuranosuke doubt what his own part must be. By such means as he could command and with such help as he could gather, honour required that Yenya should be avenged. That was clear, but how?

It was a dangerous project against a wealthy foe, unscrupulous and equipped with supplies, spies and arms. Secrecy was as necessary as it was difficult. The odds were overwhelming. The plan was not only imprudent but impudence itself. Nevertheless, having sifted the samurai and found forty-six besides himself available, Yuranosuke began at last to lay plans.

Owing to his well-known fidelity to Lord Yenya and to his high position, the attention of Moronaho and his many relatives and followers would immediately be centered on Oboshi Yuranosuke

and his youthful son, Rikiya. That was clear. Both father and son realized the necessity of their sinking by the promptest possible method into oblivion. Yet it was imperative that their oblivion be so contrived that, while rendering themselves unsuspected, they might be free to work. They must observe the enemy and hold the Ronin in a solid cohort.

As a good general, Yuranosuke would much have preferred to keep his little band together. He was himself a military officer of experience. Like the centurion of whom we read in Scripture, he was accustomed both to give and to obey orders. Hence he knew,—none better,—the advantages of constant association between himself and those who were to be his subordinates to the death. He knew that in quick movements, an army travels on its supplies. As Napoleon afterward expressed it, it travels on its stomach. He knew also that victory usually follows the best equipment. He knew, as Morgan so terribly demonstrated later, that the lone hope of an overpoweringly outnumbered band, lay solely in surprise. Yet he **had** neither food, equipment nor strong box to

offer and the circumstances were such that he dared not even attempt the physical solidarity of his pitiful numbers.

At all hazards, therefore, they must be dispersed. They were. Choosing any occupation that offered what they needed, they lay separately in wait. When the time came,—if the time came,—they would be ready. Hungry as they might be, they would fatten on the thought of vengeance for their Lord Yenya.

For his own part, in order to maintain his freedom of movement and destroy suspicion, Yuranosuke chose the life of an apparent renegade, a neglector of family, a wine-bibber. He sacrificed himself to become a familiar patron of pothouses, a companion of drunkards and low women. Thus, while moving unhampered everywhere he could hear all the gossip, trick the enemy into a false sense of security, and keep in touch with desperate men. Subtly planning his dangerous campaign, he sent out deceitful messages intended to be intercepted. He established a diminutive and devious line of communications such as was in later times and under very different circumstances to be known as the grapevine telegraph.

Thus we shall see him howling in simulated and drunken glee at the jests of those who would have killed him on the spot had his acting been less perfect. Assuming the complete inebriate, he would roll himself into a quiet corner or even into a convenient gutter in seeming stupefaction. There he would lie while learning all that went on.

One of the chief resorts of Yuranosuke was the famous Tea House in Gi-on Street in Kyoto. Here, funds permitting, he ate, drank, and was merry. Here he met friend and foe alike as a tipsy roisterer. That he might deceive his foes, even his friends were not permitted to see entirely through the purpose and disguise of his degradation.

Now, in judging the acts of this leader and of his dauntless men, one must never lose sight of the fact that even complete ultimate success in their venture spelled the suicide of every individual taking part with one exception. Barring Tera-oka Heiyemon only, they were all samurai. Hence all subject to the Bushi code. Success then simply *must* be achieved, since nothing but the joy of revenge was to be theirs, not even life itself. Reader

ing this situation into their methods, we shall perhaps be better able to understand them.

We have no actual portrait of Sir Oboshi Yuranosuke. Artists have, however, given us a number of pictures of actors who, at an early date, took the part of the leader of the Ronin and upon one of these we shall have to depend. For this purpose there has been selected an imposing full length picture from the brush of Toyokuni as published by Yamamotoya Heikichi and printed, so the inscription informs us, by special order. It is illustrated as the frontispiece of this book. Yuranosuke, of noble bearing, wears the uniform of the Ronin which we have described, with the diamond points of black and white, his Mon appearing in two positions. He stands in the snow under the full moon, impressive and austere.

Racked by the necessary impropriety of his pretense of a dissolute life, Yuranosuke must be left, for the moment to carry on his invisible hegemony by such means as only an opportunist could grasp, while we follow up a few of the incidents in the lives of the Ronin.

XIII

GLOOMY DAYS

WE are now called upon to see the manner in which the lowly could suffer in so just a cause with a heroism as undaunted as the samurai who were socially their superiors. Among the most loyal of the followers of Lord Yenya and Sir Yuranosuke, we have heard the name of Tera-oka Heiyemon. We know that he was not of the samurai, but a foot soldier, born to humble surroundings. Yoichibei, the farmer and O-Kaya, his wife, were the parents of this fine lad and his sister O-Karu, whom we have already seen as lady's-maid to Lady Kawoyo. Thus from their simple farm came two members of this rural family to serve the Daimyo's household. Until the death of Lord Yenya, the position of O-Karu seemed perfectly secure and she was engaged, if not already married, to Hayano Kampei, a samurai not inconspicuous in the train of Yenya.

During the excitement created by the unsuccess-

ful attempt of Lord Yenya to destroy Moronaho, O-Karu and Kampei, as we have seen, found their innocent tryst was fated to cut Kampei off from the other samurai who flocked to their master. Failing in his attempt at suicide, Kampei we know was able to beat a way through the adherents of Moronaho and Bannai by rushing the bridge. From there on, matters were even less simple. Kampei realizes that he has cut himself off from whatever plans may be in hand by the Ronin and O-Karu blames only herself for the sad position in which they find themselves. At her suggestion, they betake themselves to the farm of Yoichibei. The old man and his wife welcome Kampei and their daughter. O-Karu settles down to her accustomed household duties, being unable to serve Lady Kawayo in the present circumstances. Kampei is accepted as a son and roams the forest of the neighborhood in search of game. Hearing nothing of the secret plans of Yuranosuke, Kampei feels himself a complete outcast from all his former associates.

Meanwhile, Yoichibei and his wife had searched their minds for something to do to help right mat-

ters. Some way to raise Kampei out of his disgrace which O-Karu continually bewailed as her own doing, since it was for her that Kampei made the fatal delay. The plan upon which they at last decided was as desperate as the conditions which led to it. It was one not uncommon among the poor, and not considered dishonorable. Nevertheless the old couple faced it with loathing. In substance it consisted of selling their attractive daughter O-Karu secretly and without Kampei's knowledge, to a famous Tea House in Gi-on Street, Kyoto. The selection fell upon a resort of which we shall hear more in the future. Much as the farmer and his wife dreaded the idea, it was not one which, in common use, precluded a happy married life in perfect respectability to O-Karu at a later time.

Starting out to Kyoto in the afternoon of a rainy day to complete the arrangement, Yoichibei, stout of limb and of heart, found himself, on his return, deep in the woods when the storm was at its worst. Perhaps, after all, this was no such bad thing. He carried the first down payment for the sale of O-Karu. The sum was a large one as money

went with that neighborhood. The road was infested with thieves. Maybe the storm, which continued to grow worse, would send the robbers flying to their holes. On he trudged, rain pouring down his straw coat.

Suddenly a figure loomed before him. It was that of Ono Sadakuro, unworthy son of spy Kudaiu, an equally unworthy father. Could anything have been more unfortunate? Brave Yoichibei might be, but he was old and worn and unarmed. Coward Sadakuro might be, but he was young, of enormous build, and carried his sword at his side. Roughly Sadakuro demanded from the old man whatever he had of value, especially money. Hesitatingly, Yoichibei denied that he had anything. But he was not accustomed to lying, this honest old man, and involuntarily he felt of the cord which held his purse hung from his neck. Putting two and two together, Sadakuro snatched the string and drew his sword. Sneering, he choked the farmer with the purse string, drove his sword into Yoichibei's work-worn body, and kicked him into a ditch.

But the misfortunes of the night **were by no**

means completed for the family of Yoichibei. Kampei was out hunting on this same stormy afternoon. During the storm he had, by accident, run across Senzaki Yagoro, one of the trusted Ronin. In the rain and gathering darkness they scarcely recognized each other. Yagoro, glad to see Kampei, was nevertheless doubtful what attitude to take. How far should Kampei be trusted? In the conversation which followed, Yagoro was reticent while Kampei was outspoken in the extreme. He expressed his regrets and his despair. Boldly he denounced Moronaho, Bannai and their crew. Touchingly he pleaded to be allowed to meet Yuranosuke to beg for reinstatement. Knowing that Kampei had been one of those always highly trusted by Lord Yenya, Yagoro was inclined to be helpful. He did not, however, see his way clear to the disclosure of any of their plans. Instead of this he made up a cock-and-bull story about raising money to erect a monument over Lord Yenya's grave,—the grave which lies within a bowshot of the spot where we stand here at Sengaku-ji. Yagoro offered to consult Yuranosuke as to whether Kampei might not be permitted to join

the rest by contributing to this cause. Kampei was not slow to say that he had no funds, but would meet Yagoro and Goyemon, who was next in command to Yuranosuke, the second day thereafter. Small as his chance was, he could not but feel cheered that Senzaki Yagoro was willing to go even so far in his behalf.

The thunder roared and the storm grew into a hurricane as Kampei continued on his way to the farm of Yoichibei. As it chanced, his direction took him across the path of Sadakuro who had just slain and robbed the father of O-Karu. A wild boar rushed down the hill just ahead of Kampei. Here was something to reward his long and dreary miles in the rain. Aiming his crude musket as best he could in the darkness, Kampei fired. Something fell and he sprang forward. Horrors. It was a man. The lightning blinded him and the rain was like a curtain. The ground which was full of hills and gullies, ran sheets of water. He could not at first find any body. At last his hand came into contact with a limp human form, but in the darkness and deluge he could not in the least see who it was. Taking it for granted that it

was some wayfarer, he tried the heart. It did not beat, but he felt a purse in the bosom and put it into his own clothing. Unable to learn anything more about boar or wayfarer, he knew nothing that he could do in the fearful storm except move to shelter. The money, he decided should go at once to the Ronin for the support of their cause.

As night fell at the cottage of Yoichibei, mother and daughter joined in an anxious watch. Yoichibei was long overdue from his trip to Kyoto, and Kampei had not returned. The storm continued. The winds howled and left the roof shuddering. The meager light flamed and fluttered. Morning came but brought them no peace since the farmer still did not return.

But if Yoichibei did not come, a caller soon arrived who was far less welcome. An unpleasant man with a *kago*. He announced that he represented the Tea House in Gi-on Street, and had come with the remainder of the money to claim that O-Karu should at once, then and there, fulfill the conditions by leaving her mother and getting into the kago to spend the term of her sale in Kyoto.

By this time Kampei arrived at the scene of confusion. The discussion rose high. The strangers tried to get O-Karu into the kago by force. Kampei demanded explanations, but the Tea House man was moved by nothing. Kampei's nearly hysterical refusal to allow O-Karu to leave only elicited the statement that Yoichibei had accepted and sealed the terms and received the half of the total sales money which the farmer had put into a purse which was made of striped cloth cut from the same piece as the messenger's own garment. Offering the balance of the payment, the stranger compelled O-Karu into the vehicle while Kampei stood stunned. The purse which he still hid in his inner garments was exactly like the pattern of the messenger's clothing. Could it be that he, Kampei, had murdered his father-in-law? Had life further direful things in store for him who so greatly wished to do right by all men?

It was all so new to him. Kampei never had heard of the plan to sell O-Karu, nor, of course, would he have consented to it. But O-Karu was gone, and he himself was perhaps guilty of murder, unintentional though it had been. While

he gathered his wits together, three ungainly figures approached. They proved to be country neighbors who had found the body of Yoichibei, which they brought to his home, decently covered by a straw rain cape, leaving him there with his wife and son-in-law. Gradually O-Kaya conceived the awful suspicion that Kampei had deliberately murdered O-Karu's father in order to have money with which to regain his position with the Ronin. She showed him with pitiless tongue that the money would have been his anyway. That it was bought by the sale of their daughter for this very purpose. Finally she snatched the purse which Kampei still carried. Recognizing the pattern she flung herself in abandon on the body of her dead husband.

This was the picture which met the eyes of Goyemon and Yagoro when they approached the home of Yoichibei. This was the story which greeted their ears from O-Kaya and which Kampei could deny only so far as to insist that he intended no harm to Yoichibei. As in so many cases even today, the evidence, circumstantial though most of it was, was too strong to permit

these two faithful Ronin any disbelief. Was not Kampei already in disgrace? They too, joining with O-Kaya gave the tormented man the stinging points of their capable tongues.

Bearing this a short time and seeing no possible ray of hope, nor any means by which he could serve either wife, mother or cherished cause, Kampei at last whipped out his sword and plunged it deep into his abdomen. As the blood gushed forth he repeated his story of the killing. Suddenly, Senzaki Yagoro rose and walked over to where the corpse of Yoichibei lay. Turning the straw covering back, he carefully examined the wound. Quickly he returned to the side of the dying Kampei. Nervously he went over two or three points. Calling Goyemon to the dead man, he pointed out that the wound by which he had been killed was that of a *sword.* Together they recalled that on their way to the house of Yoichibei, they had encountered the corpse of Sadakuro, killed by gunshot. Gently they told Kampei and O-Kaya what they had found. Sadakuro had been the one who had killed the old father. Perhaps Kampei had accidentally rid the world of the

ese Colour Print — Hokusai

Act V. Sadakuro Robbing Yoichibei.

young spy, but if so, that was something over which to rejoice rather than weep.

Nothing could now save Kampei. His drooping spirits were indeed revived but nothing in this life would bring him back to his friends. His fate was sealed and only a few minutes remained on this side of the great divide. Knowing what he had to do, Goyemon knew that that little must be done in a few words. They praised Kampei briefly. Goyemon then produced a paper, on which, with dimming sight, Kampei was able to read the names of the faithful Ronin who had sworn with Yurano-suke to avenge their master's death. Writing Kampei's name at the bottom of the list, Goyemon directed him to seal the paper with his own blood then flowing so freely. Rousing himself from his final agony, Kampei put his hand, covered with his gushing life-blood on the spot and dropped back, dead.

Yoichibei, faithful old man, was dead. O-Karu, innocent of all harm, was in bondage. O-Kaya, old and desolate, was widowed. Kampei, brave and true, was passed beyond, but recognized and mourned as the first of the faithful Ronin

to die. Thinking that nothing could make her life more miserable, O-Kaya offered Goyemon and Yagoro the Fifty riyo which had been left by the man from the Gi-on Tea House. This she gave to the Ronin and in memory of Kampei, but they refused it as being uncalled for. Kampei had given his life unnecessarily, as it turned out, but bravely and as a samurai should. That was enough.

XIV

SECRET SERVICE

SO FAR, one enemy and one Ronin have passed from the picture. The death of Kampei was a very real loss to the Ronin. The passing of Sadakuro, traitor, spy, robber and murderer was his just retribution. Before we carry on with the dangerous and emphatically secret progress of the loyal band, we must pause for a moment to glance at the pictorial mementos which the artists of Japan have left us of the incidents over which we have gone.

Among the earliest of these we find the illustration which has been selected for inclusion here. It is one of the series from the brush of the famous Hokusai. This set is, somewhat to the confusion of the majority, signed *Kako*, and has been chosen both because it is by so famous an artist, and also because it divulges so many points of the story. In the foreground stands Sadakuro, dragging poor old Yoichibei by the string of his purse. With

sword raised, the robber is about to put the finishing touch to his cruelty. The storm rages. The murder is accomplished. In the background, one sees two other figures. This is in accordance with the Japanese habit which we have already noticed, whereby two episodes may be shown in one picture. The two figures are those of Kampei and Senzaki Yagoro, in their consultation. Sadakuro's own death is foreshadowed by the sight of the wild boar which rushes, like the Gadarine swine, "down a steep place into the water." This is from the second of the two sets by Hokusai, and, while undated, is usually attributed to about 1798. The fact that the flashes of lightning are shown in addition to the fierce, slanting rain, indicates that the print in question (my own) is from a very early edition as no lightning appears in later copies. I can hardly pass by one interesting fact in the marginal annotation as it points to a feature not generally understood by the western world. The title reads *Shimpan Ukiye Chushingura.* Interpreted, this means New Edition Perspective Chushingura. The familiar statement that the Japanese artists did not understand perspective as

comprehended by the Occidentals, is thus put to blush, both by the statement and the depth of perspective in the picture itself.

The series from which this print as illustrated comes, also produces a representation of the suicide of Kampei. Both of these episodes,—the murder of Yoichibei and the death of Kampei,—will be found in so many series and so readily recognized that it would scarcely be worth our time to enumerate them. Among them, however, may be included two series by Hokusai, one by Massayoshi, several by Hiroshige, and others by Toyokuni, Shunsen and later artists.

We have seen that Yuranosuke found it impossible to keep up the position of a worthy samurai of high standing, and at the same time throw off suspicion. Nor could he thus succeed in keeping in touch with his loyal followers without casting suspicion on them and their motives. Having, as a last recourse, taken up the life of a dissolute old man, Yuranosuke did his best to keep in constant view as many of the enemy as possible. He constituted himself one of the stations on the grapevine telegraph. As has been mentioned,

his chief hang-out was the Ichiriki Tea House in Gi-on Street, in Kyoto. By somewhat strange coincidence, it was to this very place of public festivity that O-Karu, the daughter of the murdered Yoichibei was being taken when last we heard of her. Not altogether strange, however. The reasons which led Yuranosuke to select this place were the same that influenced Yoichibei to sell his daughter there. Gi-on Street was full of Tea Houses of this repute. The Ichiriki was one of the best known. It was therefore the place where Yuranosuke could most easily spread news of his pretended downfall. It was the place of all others where he could be most likely to meet enemies and friends. Also, being famous, it was the very place from which Yoichibei could hope to get the highest price for the sacrifice which he planned. Hence we see that, while it was a coincidence, it was not altogether a strange one. O-Karu arrived and Yuranosuke made friends with her, as with the rest of the girls of the place. O-Karu, totally unaware of the death either of her father or of Kampei, waited in lonesome agony for some news which should straighten out the dreadful

mess which seemed to surround her. Days and weeks passed. No news came. Nothing seemed to change.

At last came a day of action. It dawned like all the other days which had gone before. Presently Ono Kudaiu entered, followed by Sagisaka Bannai. The traitor linked himself openly with the enemy. Jointly they asked for an apartment where they might eat and talk undisturbed. The whole first floor had been thrown together for a wild party. It was being given by Yuranosuke. Already the music and merriment ran high. Taken to less pretentious quarters on the second floor, Bannai disclosed to Kudaiu that Moronaho had been informed of Yuranosuke's dissipated life and he had come to verify it. Admitting that he was of the same mind, Kudaiu joined forces with the enemy of the Ronin. They looked the ground over. They asked questions. They received what seemed honest replies. They agreed that Yuranosuke was really what he seemed,—a sot. There could be no danger from such a source. So they applied themselves with diligence to the food and drink set before them.

The followers of Moronaho were not, however, the only ones interested in Gi-on Street and the Ichiriki Tea House. Strolling along came three samurai late of the service of the Lord Yenya. They were Yazama Jiutaro, Senzaki Yagoro and Takemori Kitahachi. At a respectful distance also came Tera-oka Heiyemon, who, as we know, was a foot soldier and not of samurai class. As gentlemen, they first let Heiyemon retire to the servants' quarters while they made inquiries for Yuranosuke. To think that their respected leader should be found inhabiting such surroundings! Their inquiries only elicited the response that Yuranosuke had been on a four days' carouse. He was too fuddled to talk with any one, so it was said. Unable to believe it, they waited.

Presently Yuranosuke appears, surrounded by giggling girls. His eyes are bandaged. They are having a roisterous time playing Kakurembo or Blindman's-buff. Yuranosuke was, they feared, appropriately, the blind man. Heiyemon made his unwelcome way in from the servants' quarters. He had just come from the north and bore important messages. He had been away at the time of

Yenya's misfortunes and had ever since sought opportunity to carry on a single-handed revenge. He did not even know for a long time that the Ronin had such a purpose. Now that he knew, he wished to join, although not a Ronin. No progress however could be made either by the three Ronin nor by Heiyemon. Yuranosuke knew that Kudaiu and Bannai had been there. He was taking no chances. He was adamant to the approaches of his faithful friends. He must wait a safer hour. Finally the Ronin and Heiyemon withdrew. Yuranosuke retired and was soon asleep.

So convincingly had their leader acted the part of an idle roisterer that the three Ronin were moved to slay him on the spot. Only the steady resistance of Heiyemon prevented this. So Yuranosuke slept on. It was well that he was allowed to appear to do so. Not long passed before Rikiya slipped into the apartment. Yuranosuke was instantly wide awake. Rikiya had a letter from the Lady Kawoyo giving news of progress. Also he gave a verbal message. Yuranosuke hid the letter in his robe and sent his son away flying. There was hope that he had not been seen. The letter

would have to wait for privacy more assured than the moment promised. It was a long roll, not easily hidden in a hurry.

It proved fortunate that no attempt had been made to read the communication from Lady Kawoyo. Hardly had Yuranosuke hidden it when Kudaiu appeared. Every device was tried by this spy to induce Yuranosuke to confess that a plot was in the making. Yuranosuke showed no interest in anything but his life of pleasure and abandonment. He knew nothing of any plot. He would not be interested in it if he did. He enjoyed eating, drinking, music and pretty girls. Here he found all these pleasures. Why should he entangle himself in what would surely be his undoing?

Pretending to be entirely convinced, Kudaiu offers to have a feast and drink served. With much audacity but deep purpose, he reminds Yuranosuke that it is the anniversary of Yenya's death, pausing to see what effect this will have on the Councilor of Yenya. Yuranosuke fails to see why he should be affected by the anniversary. The feast is set. They cat and drink heartily. Then

Yuranosuke excuses himself, anxious to find some quiet place where he dares to read the letter which is burning holes of fire in his breast. Scarcely is he out of sight when Bannai joins Kudaiu. Reciting what has happened, they are satisfied that nothing need be feared from Yuranosuke, but Kudaiu reports that he is sure Rikiya carried a letter. This he is determined to see before leaving.

Bannai takes a conspicuous leave, and Kudaiu makes pretense of departing also. Instead of this, Kudaiu hides himself under the floor of the *engawa* or veranda. By shoving the mats about, he can both hear and see between the boards. By this time, Yuranosuke has grown more than anxious to know what may be in the letter. He wanders about seeking some quiet place where there is sufficient light to read it. Finally he slowly unrolls the scroll, reading it as it passes through his fingers. Something attracts his attention above him. He looks up, to see O-Karu with a mirror, reading from the balcony. He calls her imperatively to come down. Reluctantly she does so. Heiyemon, her brother, comes out from the shadows to meet her as she descends. Learning

what she has done, he attempts her instant death, being prevented only by Yuranosuke. During the moment of their conversation, it comes to Yuranosuke's mind that Kudaiu must be under the engawa. What if he, too, has read the letter. With a word to Heiyemon, Yuranosuke draws his sword, plunges it between the boards, splitting Kudaiu neatly through the body. Together Yuranosuke and Heiyemon drag Kudaiu out. He is dying. It will never do to finish him there. They cover the nearly dead traitor up with a cloth and Heiyemon obeys his leader's instruction to take the body, as a drunken man, to the nearby creek to douse him well. The meaning is plain. It is carried out to the letter. Kudaiu will no longer act as Moronaho's spy, nor will he communicate anything he has learned from Lady Kawoyo's letter. O-Karu they can trust.

So disappears the second of the goats. Father and son need no more be feared.

As may be supposed, all of this has taken time. One benefit has arisen however. By combining what they have seen and what they learn from Tera-oka Heiyemon, Yazama, Senzaki and Take-

mori have convinced themselves of the entirely honorable and courageous purpose of Yuranosuke. Before leaving the Tea House they manage a chance to apologize for any doubts. They leave reunited and prepared to spread the secret to the other Ronin.

In pictorial art, the episodes we have just heard are very frequently seen represented in one of two forms. Sometimes in both. The game of Blind-man's buff is unmistakable and symbolizes the dissipation which Yuranosuke found necessary. The reading of the letter, also, cannot be mistaken. The central figure is Yuranosuke, holding the scroll in his hands. O-Karu is seen in the balcony above, holding a mirror. Kudaiu is below the platform, reading the letter as it unfolds. In some instances, instead of showing the reading of the letter, the scene shows Yuranosuke and Heiyemon dragging the dying form of Kudaiu out from under the engawa. Frequently the kago in which Kudaiu expected to escape is seen in the back-ground. These variations practically cover the field and as most of the artists which have already been mentioned are included, it seems unnecessary to enumerate them again.

XV

KAKOGAWA HONZO

IT is a longish time since we have heard anything about Kakogawa Honzo. He it was who cut off the pine branch to pacify Wakasa-no-suke, to whom he was Chief Councilor. He it was who was father of Konami, the betrothed of Rikiya. He it was who devised and carried out the bribing of Moronaho. From the day when Lord Yenya, having offered no bribe, was compelled to assault Moronaho, we have heard nothing either of Wakasa-no-suke nor of Honzo. Wakasa-no-suke never again appears. Honzo is seen once, and once only, again.

By this time Rikiya has grown, according to Japanese custom, to man's estate and marriageable age. Honzo, constantly regretting that, by bribing Moronaho, he was the indirect cause of the tragedy which fell upon Lord Yenya, perhaps would not willingly have brought the matter of the betrothal up, Tonase seeing the grief of her

beloved daughter, decided that something must be done. True, Rikiya was no longer a good match. He was a Ronin, the son of a Ronin. But he was a good man if not a good match. Her daughter, Konami, the Little Wave, loved him. That was enough. Something not only must but should be done about it. She, Tonase, decided upon the doing of that something.

Realizing that no move would effect anything until she could see O-Ishi, the mother of Rikiya, face to face, Tonase arranges to make the tedious journey with Konami from their home to Yamashima, where Yuranosuke lives. Against hope, she hopes to find Yuranosuke, O-Ishi and Rikiya there. That she may not find herself welcome daunts her not. Konami, blind with grief at losing Rikiya, dares anything.

The facts of this journey do not appear in history. In dramatic form, there is a metrical version, which is seldom referred to. In pictorial art, on the contrary, it is almost never omitted. Whenever referred to, it goes by the painfully inept name of THE WEDDING JOURNEY. Poor Little Wave who would be a bride. Poor Mother, who

would achieve a son. Suitable wedding garments may be in their chests. Coolies may be hired to shoulder the luggage. A friend or two may wish them well on the way. But no Bridegroom attends them. No assurance cheers them. No festivities nor music accompanies them. Hope only is their lodestar.

Yet this pathetic journey took such fast hold upon the hearts of Japanese artists that the long, long road is depicted constantly. On the stage, it evidently has been seized upon as a proper foil to the sadness of the majority of the scenes. Dancing and merriment are there introduced to lighten the tragic tone. But in pictorial art we usually find the two travelers and their servants alone. Sometimes they are encountered in the forest. Sometimes on the seashore. The Act, generally numbered Eight, is rather an interlude than a portion of the drama.

Of all of these, the scene is almost exclusively Tonase and Konami, either with or without porters and coolies. The variations do not prevent instant recognition of the scene. The chief one is the introduction of Honzo, following in the rear,

unknown to his wife and daughter. This occurs, as I recollect it, only in the Toyokuni upright series and in one by Sadahide. Where the landscape is laid on the seashore, Fuji-yama generally appears, as is strikingly the case in the set by Kuniteru.

At last Tonase and Konami arrived at the house of Yuranosuke at Yamashima. Whatever might have been assumed from the fact that in two of the depictions, Honzo is seen in their trail, he was not with them when they came to the door, nor did they know of his near presence. The home of Yuranosuke is described as "a wretched dwelling in the obscure village of Yamashima."

By this time it was snowing hard and Yuranosuke had but just returned from a night spent at the Tea House in Gi-on Street. On his arrival, however, he had passed into an inner room, away from the front. Through the snow came Tonase with her daughter Konami inquiring for the house of Sir Yuranosuke. They could not credit that so mean a place should be his habitation. Tonase was startled. Konami did not care. She wore the white headdress of a bride and her pros-

pective husband lived here. What else mattered?

The extreme courtesy which marks the limit of coldness met them as O-Ishi, the wife of Sir Yuranosuke, entered. The usual words of welcome were unfailingly spoken. They carried no sense of kindly reception with them. They were purely formal. The necessary greeting of a Japanese lady who finds at her door persons of standing, however unwelcome. Perhaps O-Ishi felt the slight embarrassment of knowing that her husband, while at home, was not really in presentable shape, having been out all night. The house was small and meager. It was difficult to prevent visitors from knowing that her husband was separated from them only by thin paper partitions.

Can we not spare great sympathy with this high-bred lady? Her husband has always been chief representative of a great noble. Honzo represented a younger branch of less prominence. Yuranosuke had always been in receipt of an income of three times that of Honzo. Now the great Councilor of Lord Yenya was a Ronin almost without funds. He was, for reasons best known to himself, yielding to indulgences which ill fitted him for polite

society. Instead of commanding sumptuous quarters in a splendid mansion, her husband, Rikiya, and she were compelled to eke out existence deliberately hidden in a miserable cottage on the outskirts of Kyoto. Why should these people, still well to do and suffering none of the hardships encountered by her family, hunt her out in the seclusion which had been chosen by her husband for the sake of safety? It was a hard lot.

O-Ishi realized that she and her guests had no small talk in common. Since Honzo had bribed Moronaho and prevented Lord Yenya from delivering a fatal blow, Yuranosuke had avoided Honzo sedulously. Practically, they were enemies. Honzo was not for them, consequently he was against them. Naturally, as hostess, O-Ishi could not turn the visitors out of doors. She would greatly have liked to do so. Instead, she assumed the justified air of the grande dame. Living as she did near, if not in Kyoto, she could take the position of explaining its beauties.

Not without condescension, O-Ishi suggests that while Tonase has probably been in Kyoto, Konami has yet to understand **the** interests of **the**

social capital. We must remember that Yedo was only the secular capital of the Shoguns. Do what they would, Kyoto was still the capital of the Mikado. It had always been so, for centuries. It contained the formal old temples, the palace of the Emperor, the buildings of note. O-Ishi dilated somewhat at large. Thus the strangers, accustomed to Yedo, felt somewhat belittled. In spite of their superior present position, they were intentionally put in their places. The wife of Yuranosuke enlarged on the beauty of the Chion-in. She suggested that her visitors might be interested in the gayeties of Gi-on Street. Well she knew that her visitors would scarcely express any thought of visiting this locality. Then she chattered off about the wonderful Kiyomidsu and the Kinkaku. Making it still harder, O-Ishi offered to obtain admission, assuming that Tonase could not do so.

Wandering a few miles from the confines of Kyoto, the hostess smilingly calls to the attention of Tonase and Konami the beauties of the great Buddha of Nara. True, all of these wonders were a joy to all beholders. They are no less so today.

No one wishes to miss them. Few do miss them who go to the Emperor's capital. But O-Ishi had no mind to act as guide or cicerone. She only longed to get rid of intruders.

Tonase, however, refused to be led aside from her purpose. She had come for an object. She intended to stick to it. Waiting at last for her hostess to catch her breath, she declared unequivocally that she had come to arrange the marriage between Rikiya and Konami. They were long since betrothed. Rikiya was now of suitable age, though still very young. The misfortunes and death of the Lord Yenya had caused Honzo's family to lose sight of Yuranosuke. It had been learned that he, with his wife and son were living at Yamishima, near Kyoto. Tonase and her daughter had come. The mother had found it impossible to have Honzo arrange to be present as father, but he had allowed Tonase to bring his two swords. These she was now wearing and stood *in loco parentis*. Her daughter, Konami, was betrothed to Rikiya. She, Tonase, had come this long journey to see the wedding consummated.

With a pleasant smile, O-Ishi stated that she did not at all understand. The smile was enigmatical. When the betrothal took place, Yuranosuke, as she explained, was favored by excellent appointments. To have then accepted the daughter of Honzo would not have been an upward step. Now Yuranosuke is a Ronin. To ask for Konami would be "as if to ask for the exchange of a temple bell for a paper lantern," as the translation of one version reads. Tonase, being a woman of sound sense, ridicules this idea. She calls attention to the fact that there was more difference in their wealth between Yuranosuke and Honzo when they were both well placed, than now. At that time, Yuranosuke was so much wealthier.

While this sort of argument pleased O-Ishi, it covered so small a part of her objection that she terminated the discussion while excusing herself, by saying that Yuranosuke and Honzo differ too much in disposition to make the wedding possible. Generalities seldom satisfy. They are not viewed as settling a dispute. Tonase wished immediately to know in what their two husbands so differed.

The wife of Yuranosuke saw that no answer less than a direct one would close the argument. She therefore recited the death of Lord Yenya. He refused to dishonour himself by bribery. He forfeited his life in an attempt to cut down his enemy. Honzo, on the contrary, samurai though he was, stooped to truckle to Moronaho's greed and to purchase the safety of Wakasa-no-suke by rich gifts. Not satisfied with this, when Lord Yenya, life being already forfeited, attempted to strike a fatal blow on his enemy, it was Honzo who sprang to Moronaho's rescue. He thus prevented Lord Yenya from even having the joy of success. Having recited these facts, O-Ishi rose and stated that Sir Yuranosuke could not receive the daughter of Honzo and Tonase for his son. Tonase considered herself insulted. O-Ishi pushed back the sliding partition and disappeared.

The Wedding Journey. Nothing but blackness faced them. Konami's love for Rikiya was crushed. Tonase's love for her daughter found no remedy. A long time they discussed the situation. At first the mother insisted on taking her own life. She had utterly failed. She was disconsolate.

Konami at once insisted that it was she who had nothing to live for. Therefore she was the one chosen to die by her own hand. In the midst of it all, they quickly decided that they would comfort each other by taking the dark way together. Their struggle was interrupted by some one outside. This proved to be a beggar in the hat of the *komuso*, which comes down over the eyes, leaving only a slit through which to see. The disguise is sufficiently complete. They paused.

As the two stood in their attitudes, O-Ishi returned to say that Rikiya was now back. She had seen the devotion of mother and daughter. Rikiya should now marry Konami on one condition. With her, O-Ishi brought a white-wood stand upon which to place the wedding gift. All smiles, Tonase and Konami prepared to give the swords as a wedding gift. They were of value. Almost spurning these, O-Ishi seemed to consider the offer a joke. Also a very untimely and inappropriate joke. In perplexity as to what to do, Konami guilelessly offered that anything,—anything,—would be given.

It was a tense moment. Calmly and seriously

O-Ishi told then what the condition would be. She wished the head of Honzo to be cut off and placed on the white-wood stand which she had brought. That alone would satisfy Yuranosuke and herself. On that condition only could the marriage be permitted.

There was a moment's breathless silence. Then again was heard the pipe of the komuso beggar without. In a moment, in came Honzo, with the komuso hat in his hand and his pipe silent between his fingers. His only remark was that Honzo's head was here and they could take it.

To countervail any such immediate purpose, Honzo allowed himself to rush at once into a diatribe against Yuranosuke. Recited the dissolute life which he apparently led. Charged him with being unfit to be samurai or gentleman. The speech was long and insulting, and Honzo smashed the white stand with his foot. O-Ishi's control broke under the strain. She seized a spear from the wall. The spear was a weapon in the use of which many women were trained. With this she made a wild rush at Honzo. The samurai **had** small trouble in thrusting the spear aside,

but in the tussle, he threw O-Ishi on the floor.

In this situation, Rikiya rushed into the room. Waiting for no explanation, even had one been possible, he sprang to his mother's rescue. With the spear this hardy youth was far superior to his opponent. Honzo was run through the body and fell, mortally wounded.

* It is always extremely unfortunate to be obliged to arrest the current of events by interpolating a second version of a story. It is impossible to avoid it here. We sometimes learn that Honzo, upon arriving, did, in good faith, intend a sacrifice. That he did, actually and immediately commit seppuku in the presence of his wife and daughter. That this was done as sacrifice for his former acts. That his regret had long been so poignant that he considered this act required of him as a samurai. In any event, Honzo lay bleeding out his life-blood on the mat.

Yuranosuke presently entered, greeting Honzo doubtfully. Honzo explained that his first purpose in coming was to bring something to Yuranosuke which would be of value to the Ronin. This he offers to Yuranosuke as a wedding gift

Unrolling this, Rikiya exclaims to his father that it is no wedding gift. It is a map or plan of the whole of the castle and grounds of Moronaho. It is what the Ronin have been long trying to get hold of. It is necessary in order that they may know where they go, when Moronaho at last returns unsuspecting to his palatial home.

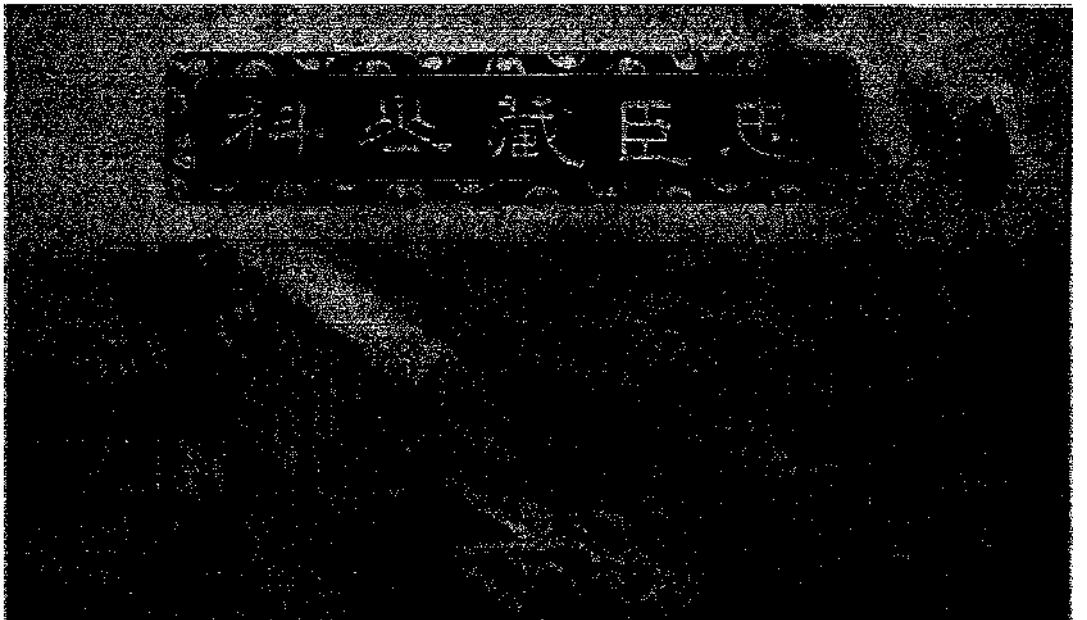
Yuranosuke heartily accepts the repentance of Honzo. They join hands in fervent friendship. They talk freely over the plans of the Ronin.

We have looked at the pathetic scenes of the Wedding Journey of Tonase and Konami, without knowing how pitiful they really were. The scenes of the ninth Act are full of tragedy. In various prints we shall find all the items and episodes represented. Not always grouped in the same way, but nearly always easily recognized. O-Ishi in her home. Tonase, bearing her husband's swords as visitor with Konami. The white-wood stand, perhaps new and whole. Perhaps smashed under Honzo's foot. Honzo we shall see in the komuso's hat playing a pipe, outside. Honzo struggling with O-Ishi. Rikiya plunging the spear through Honzo's breast. Again, Honzo

calmly committing seppuku. Honzo, giving the plan to Yuranosuke or Rikiya. Yuranosuke talking to Honzo as he lies dying. Yuranosuke departing.

The illustration which has been chosen for insertion in this book is the ninth Act from a series by Yeisen. Here we see Honzo outside just at the moment when his wife and daughter are about to do away with themselves. The significance of the heavy black title above the picture has already been explained along with its symbolic border. This picture has been chosen for the very reason that it is seldom seen and is one of a set by Yeisen, whose works we have not before illustrated. The least known, perhaps, of the Chushingura illustrations of Keisai Yeisen are the diptych book plates which he drew for the I-ro-ha Bunko of Tamenaga Shunsui, but these we have no room for.

In all the other familiar depictions of this Act, the actual episodes differ but little. In nearly all, as in Kuninao's series, Honzo is shown as being killed by Rikiya, after Tonase's husband has attacked O-Ishi. Though some differ in particulars,



Japanese Colour Print

Yeisen

Act IX. Honzo in Disguise.

I recollect only the series of Hiroshige as published by Senichi, of which a copy lies before me, as being one in which Honzo is represented as committing seppuku. Even in this one the assumption that Honzo has done himself to death by his own hand would not be entirely justified by the scene alone. Honzo, Tonase and Konami are on the veranda, Yuranosuke, followed by O-Ishi and Rikiya are in the snow in front. Honzo has his hand on his breast. He is dressed in a yellow garment and leans heavily on his hands. This, it is true, would be the ceremonial attitude of suicide, but omits all of the necessary adjuncts of ceremonial seppuku. At most it is an unpremeditated self-destruction, occurring at a moment's notice. It is immaterial from our standpoint, and is mentioned for correct understanding. The picture itself, if viewed by one not understanding Japanese, would be small proof as to whether Honzo were dying by his own dirk or by the spear-thrust of Rikiya. It is accepted by many writers as showing Honzo's self-immolation. I leave it so.

As Honzo gathers his last remaining strength, Yuranosuke, Rikiya and he go frankly over every

possible point. The primary necessity coming to all of their minds, is the acquisition of suitable arms, tools and supplies to equip the Ronin. They have an honest man in view who is willing to furnish all that is needed. Whether or not he can be trusted with their secret remains to be seen. It would be convenient for the whole band to go to Sakai. There they could get the outfit and hide it, without trusting their armorer further, but against this, Yuranosuke is adamant. He and he alone must go. He must go at once. Here lies Honzo's disguising komuso hat and his pipe. The hat at once Yuranosuke dons, taking the flute in his hands and starting oil, playing weird tunes.

In actual history, it develops that Yuranosuke, fearing that even his well-beloved wife may let some word slip and wishing to throw further dust in the eyes of Moronaho, divorces her and sends her away to her father with the two younger children, keeping only Rikiya with him.

In any event, Honzo has died where he lay. Tonase is a widow. Konami is the bride of a night. Rikiya must depart at dawn. And O-Ishi faces a sad and lonely time indeed.

XVI

THE TESTING OF GIHEI

DURING the prosperity of Lord Yenya Hanguwan Takasada, many merchant contractors had very gladly been among those who served him and his household. Remembered as being one of these was one Amakawa Gihei who lived and carried on his business at Sakai. Under circumstances with which we need not trouble ourselves, Lord Yenya had saved this man from considerable danger. Lord Yenya died without ever giving the favor a thought. Not so Amakawa Gihei. He was not a man of social standing. Not of course a samurai. A trader. One of the common people, but not forgetful.

After the Ronin were left masterless, this Gihei wished to be able to be of help in their scheme of revenge, if it existed. The trader was happily married and had a son on whom both parents doted. Unfortunately, the wife, O-Sono, was not without other relatives. She had a father, Ryochiku by

name, who was a follower of Kudaiu. Hanger-on of a traitor. Not a man to be trusted. Known to be sympathetic to all of the interests of Moronaho. Not a safe member of a family in which one branch pines to help the retainers of Lord Yenya.

But now, with the map of Moronaho's mansion and grounds ready for use, Yuranosuke could not longer wait for arms. We saw him leaving his own home at Yamashima, in the komuso disguise. None but the newly married Rikiya and the dying Honzo knew Yuranosuke's errand. None knew where he went. More than ever it was now essential that their plans should be kept a profound secret. The bands of the enemy had been thrown off the scent. If Kudaiu had learned anything from reading the letter from Lady Kawoyo, he was beyond the telling. Honzo had learned, but he had proved trustworthy. Sadakuro was always a low fellow who could scarcely have learned anything. He would not have known how to go about it. Robbery and murder were, as we have seen, his measure. And he also was in his tomb. It was now bruited about that Moronaho felt secure enough to do without the guards which life

among his friends furnished him. He might shortly return to his own home. There his own private suite of retainers would alone be around him. True, this was all too much, but the Ronin must be ready.

So, Yuranosuke wore his beggar's hat and blew tunes on his flute, at last coming to Sakai, where dwelt Amakawa Gihei. Exactly how, or precisely when, Yuranosuke was able to have a secret talk with the trader, we do not know. Enough that the arrangements were made. Enough that the arms and furniture would be ready. This much Yuranosuke had to trust to some one and he thought he could trust Gihei.

Days passed while the Ronin waited for news. Were the supplies ready? Had Gihei been able to resist temptation? Had the father of O-Sono guessed the secret and told either Moronaho or the police? Would Moronaho move into his own home of which they had now a map or plan? Thinking over all of these things, seeing spies lurking about and dwelling on the possibilities of failure wore the Ronin down. As the time approached when the arms must be ready, it was

decided that Gehei's trustworthiness must be proved before their plan was disclosed through some one of the several possible channels. Gihei's wife might comprehend and talk. His father-in-law might make trouble. His very workmen might wonder what it was all about. Yes, they must put Gihei to a proof.

Little the Ronin knew that honest Gihei had been as fearful of his father-in-law as he himself. Little they realized that the trader had equally feared the tittle-tattle of even the most devoted wife. How could they know that this faithful fellow, rather than betray the Ronin and their cause, had gone to the length of giving his cherished wife papers of divorcement in order that neither she nor her wretched father could be about ? Poor little O-Sono. So she was also to suffer. O-Sono cared for nothing in the world except her husband and her son. To be divorced from her legal spouse meant, at that time and place, that her father could compel her to marry another. So she went back and back and back to her husband and son. Finally she was outside on the wharf when we see a band of men approaching

at midnight. They wore strange costumes, but she did not recognize them. They were the secret uniforms of the Ronin.

These men came steadily and stealthily on. They carried darkened lanterns and carried each an iron mace, like the patrols of the police. Demanding entrance to the house of Gihei, they pushed their way in when the trader opened the door. Two of these strangers bore a heavy chest covered with matting. Roughly they told the merchant that he was under arrest. It was known, they said, to the police that Gihei had prepared arms and goods for Yuranosuke. With these, the Ronin intended to commit an injury to the Daimyo Moronaho. That was against the law. For that he could be thrown into quod. The chest which they carried, they informed him, was one just brought off a ship lying at his wharf. Better that he confess.

Now a great deal of this was true. Too much, far, for comfort or safety. He had sold arms to Yuranosuke for the Ronin. This chest was indeed one of the cases which had only early that evening been put aboard a boat for safety. But how did these knaves find it out, and what injury did they

intend to him? To confess might not jeopardize him permanently, but it certainly would ruin all the plans of Yuranosuke and his faithfuls. Therefore, calmly Gihei denied all that they said. He had no arms for Yuranosuke. To him the Ronin were unknown. Nor did he care to know them. Their business was nothing to him.

Seeing that nothing could be made out of the merchant by argument and threats, the strangers proceeded to indicate that they were ready to torture Gihei. Ready to run a knife through him. Even when his little son, awakened by the noise, ran in, they lifted him up and told his father to look the last upon him. It was all lost. He had nothing more to say than he had said. If they must kill him and his innocent little son, then they must.

Unexpectedly the strangers changed their occupation. Instead of threatening Gihei, they expended their efforts on getting the ropes cast off from the chest which they had carried into the house. They even smiled genially on Gihei and petted his son. At last the chest was open and the cover taken off. There inside, awaiting the event,

lay Yuranosuke. They had tested Gihei. He had been found honourable. They arranged for the immediate shipment of the goods in the utmost secrecy.

While all of this was going on, two of the Ronin saw O-Sono hanging disconsolately about outside. Knowing that her father intended to force an immediate marriage upon her, they took a bold step. Seizing her roughly, they cut off the splendid cue of her hair. They knew what it meant if the bewildered lady did not. It turned her into the simulacrum of a nun. Her hair would have to grow again before she could be forced into marrying any one without consent.

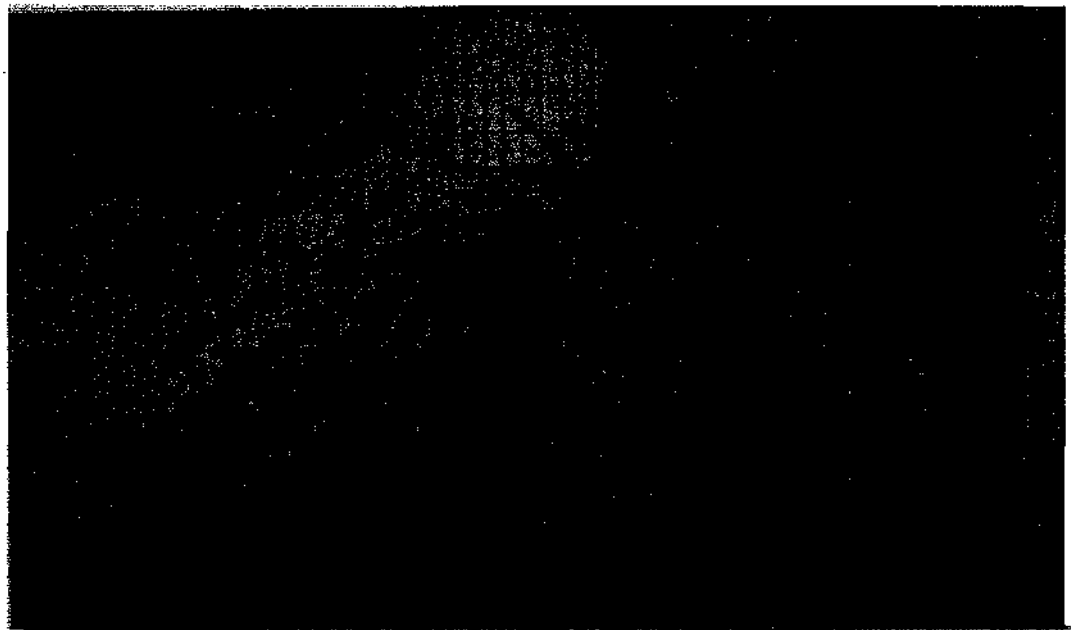
When at last Yuranosuke and his lads left, they were very hearty in their praise of Gihei. As an appreciation, they begged to make him a small gift. This he resented. He had not helped them for reward. Flinging out his hand, the package fell on the floor and broke open.

It contained the combs, hair-pins and the prized cue of hair so recently cut off by them from O-Sono to save her to her husband and son. The paper in which these were done up proved on

examination to be Gihei's letter of divorcement.

Much happier in its outcome than the fated Wedding Journey, we shall find little variety or charm in the pictorial developments of the themes of the tenth Act of the Chushingura. Only two episodes really cut much figure in the pictorial work of this Act. Looking over all of the prominent series, we find in almost every one of them either the rope-bound chest or merely the gathered ring of Ronin, threatening Gihei. Frequently O-Sono may be seen mournfully hanging about outside. In the series by Hokusai signed Kako there is a rather pretty conception which one may hit upon. Gihei is surrounded and attacked by children instead of rough men. I have heard it favorably commented on. As I look at it, it seems petty. Unsymbolic of a test of brain or courage. However, the series was prepared about 1798, so I cannot very well find why Hokusai so chose his subject. I pass it on to you as I find it.

In at least two series there is a substantial deviation from the most common design. In that of Hiroshige, published by Arita-ya we see nothing of the inside of the house. Only the wharf and the



Japanese Colour Print Toyokuni

Act X. Testing of Gihei.

commercial end. The wharf is dark. On it O-Sono walks away, followed by one of the Ronin awaiting a chance to cut off her hair. In a Yeisen series (of which one number has been used as an illustration) we find only Gihei and O-Sono in the room alone. In neither case is there any direct evidence of the attempt to test the contractor.

The print which has been chosen as an illustration is taken from an oblong series by Toyokuni. I need hardly say that Toyokuni himself (Toyokuni I) is one of the best known artists of that time. Others later sometimes used his name, conspicuously and prolifically Kunisada. This illustration, however, is from one of several series by Toyokuni I. There are two reasons for selecting it, three in fact. It shows a lively depiction of the testing of Gihei; the Ronin are, for almost the first time, shown in their secret uniform: it was painted by an artist who should be included among our dramatic scenes but has so far been shown only in a figure picture.

While Gihei could not realize his outspoken desire that he might have been born a samurai and so join the loyal band, he proved that he was

worthy of their trust, honour, and confidence. Perhaps there is no truth in the story, but Chikamatsu tells us that, before leaving Gihei, the Ronin paid him a high compliment. When they attacked the house of Moronaho, it would be necessary that they should not fail to know each other. For that purpose they had adopted the striking uniform of which they were keeping the secret. That would help. Then, too, they must have a countersign. It must be easily remembered in the heat of strife. It must be something not naturally suspected or imitated. Immediately upon satisfying themselves that Amakawa Gihei was faithful to their cause, even though it were to his own hindrance, his name was chosen. Desiring to have antiphonal terms which could be answered, one party by the other, the name Amakawa was divided into two signals: *Ama* and *Kawa.* These they chose for their countersigns. And Amakawa Gihei was honoured.

XVII

VENGEANCE

THE snows of deep winter had come. December, as we reckon months, was half gone. Moronaho was settled in his own habitation. Never without his own samurai about him, he was quite off his guard as to the Ronin of the Lord Yenya. Not for nothing had been all the care and hardships and planning on the part of Sir Yuranosuke. Not for nothing had been the deprivations, the hidden life and the scurrying hither and yon by the moon, undergone on the part of the Ronin. What, then, was to be their reward? Vengeance. To what did they look forward? Death, with honor.

Plainly, the Ronin could not assemble too near Moronaho's stronghold. Even at the nearest strategic point, the distance would be too great for the transportation of all their armed men and gear without arousing the country. Other means than a march must be sought. A seaworthy boat

was secured. A fast boat. The appointed night arrived. Nothing daunted by the imminence of the fight, Yuranosuke saw to it that the clan ate heartily, if secretly, before any start was made. Then the minute directions were given out. Each man his station. Each his companions. Yuranosuke with his party was to attack one gate. Rikiya with his men would force the other.

Ever considerate, Yuranosuke addressed them all with regard to the rights and safety of those in the neighborhood who were not concerned either with Moronaho or with themselves. We may take his crisp words from Mitford's account. Addressing his band, Yuranosuke said, "Tonight we shall attack our enemy in his palace; his retainers will certainly resist us, and we shall be obliged to kill them. But to slay old men and women and children is a pitiful thing. Therefore I pray you each one to take great heed lest you kill a single helpless person." To this the Ronin, with one voice, gave their joint promise. It is also recorded that, after the attack had sufficiently begun to raise a commotion, the thoughtful leader spared the time and men to send word to the

people surrounding that nothing need be feared. Was fierce general bent upon deadly vengeance ever more kindly?

Toward midnight, the Ronin embarked in their boat and were quickly carried to the nearest landing, where they deposited their gear. Ladders, bamboo poles with which to prize out the gates from their tracks. Each of the Ronin wore chain armor under the uniform garments which had been prepared. Ohowashi Bungo shouldered his enormous wooden mallet with which to crash down obstructions. Spears were at hand to use high up against enemies on walls and roofs. Small bows with quivers full of arrows were ready to shoot at any one whose distance forbade the use of the swords of a samurai. Above all in sacred value, Yuranosuke carried the bloodstained dirk with which Lord Yenya had let out his honoured life so long ago. With this, and with this only, was it intended to complete their revenge. Moronaho should have **a** chance to use it honourably in his own self-destruction if he proved courageous enough. If not, then his head could **be cut off like the coward he was.**

The night was still So still that the Ronin feared that the slightest noise made by their arms, armor or gear, would send Moronaho's watchmen flying to find the cause. Nothing, however, disturbed the peace of the situation. The forces were distributed in the most perfect silence. After all, forty-odd men were not enough to attract attention so long as they were quiet. After they began to scatter, it was still simpler. The ladders and the bamboo rods and the big mallet were cumbersome. Their lanterns they did not light until nearly ready.

Motionless they all stood at the two gates. When the palace watchman reached the far corner of the grounds, the lanterns were lighted, the ladders placed against the walls, and the bamboo poles bent into the rims of the gates. Tied down by bow-strings, they would fly up with tremendous force when released. It was hoped that the gates would yield. By this time the sentinel of the grounds was well on his return. Before giving the signal, two Ronin, who had sprung over the high wall, choked him and bound him. A moment only was lost in applying a gag. Then

these two were free, except for the momentary necessity of keeping up the sentinel's clapping so that no one would suspect anything amiss. This clapping of two sticks of wood is one of the customs hard to understand. Why a sentry or a policeman should advertise his exact whereabouts to all and sundry is, I know, incomprehensible in our western world. It is out of date. But at the time of which we speak, it was the habit. Even nearer home, at considerably later times, could be heard the dangerous and sometimes doubtful cry of "Ten o'clock and all's well." Perhaps less damaging than making a continual clatter but the habit not only existed. It was "regulations." While on the subject, it may not be without interest to say, that no later than the year of Japan's great earthquake, and not long before that catastrophe, I stood on a bright, moonlit midnight on the splendid road to Chusenji. As I stood, I listened to the local policeman clapping his two billets of wood together as he climbed the hill. It was certainly cheerful but of doubtful utility. Having more than once since then, in the intervening few years, again stood on the same road at the same hour, I heard no

noise-making watchman. The ancient custom has probably gone into limbo during the short intervening time.

Continuing the watchman's indicative clapping after they had captured, bound and gagged the watchman himself, all was ready. The Ronin whistle was blown as a signal for action on every side. The agreed passwords were hurled back and forth. Forced by the bamboo poles and the giant mallet, the gates fell with a crash. Men clambered up the walls. From outside to the attack. From inside to the defense. The battle was on in good earnest. The desperate courage and the stunning surprise lay with the Ronin. Everything fell before them.

Good men and true stood ready to defend Moronaho. He himself fled to hide in a dusty outhouse. Even most of his own men did not know where he was. Rikiya, youngest of the Ronin, covered himself with glory. Cornered in a difficult spot, he was fighting valiantly when his father came up. Needing every man, Yuranosuke exclaimed to his beloved boy that Rikiya could look for no help in engaging opponents. If he

died, he died. What booted it whether a fine youngster died in honourable combat or committed seppuko shortly later? There was no choice in any case.

At last the uproar subsided. But no Moronaho had been found. Discover him they must. If they did not, then, like Lord Yenya, they would surely lose their lives without accomplishing revenge. They discovered Moronaho's bed. It was still warm under the clothes. He could not have been gone long. Frantically they searched. In desperation, it was even proposed that, before they were discovered, they should then and there perform their seppuku. Wiser, calmer, and braver counsel prevailed. They continued to search, not stopping with such quarters as might be expected to house a Daimyo. They ransacked the kitchens, the closets, the sheds, the out houses. At last from some distance came the voice of Yazama Jiutaro. Seeing a closet full of fire-wood and charcoal, he had plunged his sword through it, only to bring a groan from some coward hiding behind. Dragging out his victim, he felt certain that, in spite of dust and dirt, it was the Daimyo Moronaho. He

dragged his captive to the presence of Sir Yuranosuke. For a moment even he could scarcely believe that so sorry an object was in truth so powerful an adversary. One sure identification he could resort to, however. Stooping over the squirming man, Yuranosuke carefully examined the wounds on his scalp and shoulder. Without question, they were the ones inflicted by Lord Yenya, with the very dirk which lay so snuggly in Yuranosuke's garment. How long it had waited. How hopelessly.

Respectfully, as became samurai, they carried the Daimyo into a nearby room. There Yuranosuke begged the rascal to follow custom by decently disposing of himself. But Moronaho had no stomach for self-destruction. Though every consideration due his rank was offered him, he would none of it. The Ronin had no time to waste on a man who would not even consider his own honour. They might, at any moment, be interrupted by relatives of Moronaho with forces far superior to their own little band. Whipping out the dirk sanctified by the blood of Lord Yenya, the courtly Sir Yuranosuke apologized for violence

to one so much higher in rank than himself, and then cut the offender's head clean from his body. Moronaho lay on the floor stone dead, with his head separated from the trunk. An unbeautiful sight. A deserved end. The vengeance of the Ronin was complete. Now must follow what must follow.

While the Ronin can gather themselves together, bind up their wounds and make ready for the completion of their plans, we may take a look at the representations of the thrilling scenes which have just passed. In the dramatic version, all is ended with the death of Moronaho. That was the climax which terminated the work on the stage. Not so, either history, legend or pictorial art. The tragedy must in fact be permitted to go its course.

The actual revenge is generally covered in all series of the Chushingura. Nearly all of them may be followed through further episodes. Only one series shows more than two episodes, that of the Hiroshige series published by Senichi. We shall not need, under the present heading, to consider any depictions other than the ones displaying the actual revenge.

The attack on Moronaho's castle, within and without, is the common subject if the artist has chosen only one. If two are represented, then it is nearly without exception, one of the two. This is true of the two Hokusai series. True of the upright Toyokuni as well as his other sets. We find the same in both Shunsen series, in Sadahide, Kuninao, Kuniteru and others. The famous Toyokuni triptych shows the figures of Yuranosuke and Rikiya arriving ready for vengeance while Kunisada's upright shows Moronaho being dragged out from his hiding place.

This Act being the most dramatic climax of the work, we must expect fuller illustration in the series than in any other portion. Hiroshige's Senichi series opens the Act with a glorious picture of the Ronin crossing the bridge on their way to Moronaho. The snow falls and they are huddled up into their coats. Glad, if we but knew it, that the snow deadens all sound and blinds all eyes. It is with great regret that I have not selected this as one of our few illustrations, but the reasons are too compelling against it. True, it is the masterpiece of its series,—perhaps, pictorially, of all of

the Chushingura prints. But, beautiful as it is, it is not nearly so instructive nor informative as the Helmet scene, also by Hiroshige. And we have purposely restricted ourselves in prints by any one artist. In the same way I shall be obliged, when we reach it, to omit from illustration the eleventh act from the series signed Ippitsuan Yeisen, where the action is surrounded by a border composed of the interspersed crossed feathers of the Mon of Lord Yenya. It is very rare and in it we begin to see, not only the uniforms of the Ronin, heretofore shown only in the testing of Gihei, but also the lighted lanterns with the word "Loyalty" inscribed on them. But having already reproduced one of Yeisen's works, the print of another artist will be chosen. Hiroshige carries his many series through further depictions of the revenge,—Rikiya breaking into the inner buildings, and the final discovery of the coward in hiding. The Arita-ya and Marusei series confine their interest to the discovery of Moronaho in his hideout. Kunisada and Kuniyoshi both put out triptychs which are well worthy examination, but space forbids their inclusion here.

As classing among the prominent artists who have taken part in this work, Shunsen must not be without mention and I have selected one of his prints for illustration. Hung over by conventional clouds we see a long walled street with one of the great doors of Moronaho's yashiki in the left foreground. Here stands the sturdy Ohowashi Bungo, dealing smashing blows to the door with his huge mallet. Already the door has developed two gaping holes. The Ronin have scaled their ladders onto the wall. One half-wakened captive from the inside already lies naked and struggling on the ground. Yuranosuke, batton in hand, directs the fight. The lanterns glean their promise of loyalty from all sides. The spearmen stand ready, prepared to rush the gate as soon as it falls.

While we have been going over the pictorial side, Sir Yuranosuke and his Ronins have been busy. Hurriedly they bind up the wounds of their companions. None have been killed. All are preserved for their sacrificial death, to which they will surely come. Respectfully they take up the severed head of Moronaho. It is bound in a cloth and placed in a small casket. No one troubles them

Japanese Colour Print

Shunsen

Act XL Night Attack on Moronaho.

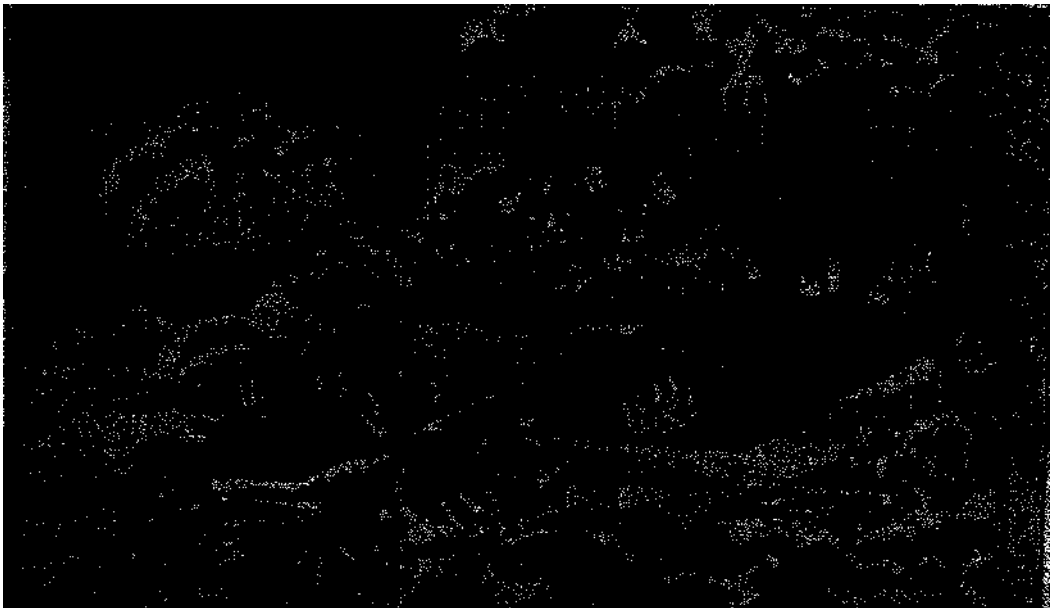
as they silently make their way to the shore. No one is about. All of the followers of Moronaho have fled or been slaughtered while not one of the Ronin has fallen. So much for months of weary preparation. So much for overwhelming surprise.

XVIII

LONG-CONTEMPLATED SACRIFICE

I HAVE said that the dramatic versions practically ended with the killing of Moronaho. A small connecting link of drama is left, but since the entire finale of the tragedy falls to the portion of accurate history, we must take history up at the point where we left the versions of the stage.

By the act of finding and killing Moronaho, the vengeance of the Ronin was near to being ended. It remained to them to escape the hands of Moronaho's friends until full duty could be performed in honour of their Lord Yenya. We shall see through what scenes and formalities this leads them. First, the head of Moronaho must be conveyed to the tomb of Lord Yenya at Sengaku-ji, where we have become acquainted with much of the story. Here, in a quiet corner which we shall presently visit, he lies. Now quite alone. Perhaps soon he will have loyal company.



Final Episode. The Ronin at Sengajuki

First, then, Yuranosuke must press on with his men to the Spring-Hill Temple. There they would honour their Lord Yenya by presenting his enemy's head at his grave. Formally, quietly, majestically. Another battle on the way would be unseemly. Hence, no time must be lost. No chance must be permitted whereby the precious head of Moronaho be recaptured before the ceremony is carried through.

The Ronin, still in the snow of bitter winter, attempt to cross by Ryogoku Bridge. It was their best and shortest way from the yashiki of Moronaho to Sengaku-ji Temple. But word had already spread. The two Daimyo who ruled the ends of the bridge had become terrified at what might be the outcome. At the first step the Ronin were met by a hatamoto, who is an officer of the Shogun between the rank of Daimyo and samurai. In the name of the governors of the two adjoining provinces passage over the bridge was forbidden. Even to these weary Ronin, just over fighting for their lives, the proclamation of the law meant something. One more thing to overcome. **Well, so be** it. They marched on to **Yetai Bridge, where**

their passage was unimpeded. Both these bridges are familiar to all who understand anything about Japan. Crossing Yetai Bridge, they packed themselves into their boat, carefully guarding the head of Moronaho in its casket as Yuranosuke guarded the now doubly sacred dirk of Lord Yenya. The crossing was accomplished. Presently they came to the hill road leading up here to Sengaku-ji. That they climbed, stopping first at the invitation of the Prince of Sendai to have breakfast.

Arriving at the Temple, the Abbot met them with every sign of affection and approval. They were conducted to a spot near the grave of their master. Here there was a well fed by a clear, cool spring. Respectfully they unwrapped the head of Moronaho from its wrappings. Carefully they washed it in the well. It was soiled from the hiding in a coal closet. Nothing soiled could be offered to their Lord Yenya. When the head was carefully cleansed it was returned to its handsome casket which they had brought with them for the purpose. All must be properly done. Formal—Ceremonious. They could not offer their Lord Yenya pomp nor rich service. To him they offered

dignity and supreme sacrifice. The Abbot of Sengaku-ji led the way. Not as a guide, for they well knew the way to Lord Yenya's tomb. As a fitting honour he bade them follow.

The tomb was reached. A suitable stand appeared. On this the casket containing the head of a coward was placed, duly covered. It was no coward's sacrifice which brought it there. An incense burner was brought. The Abbot took his position by the grave, with the Ronin in front. First Sir Oboshi Yuranosuke, then Oboshi Rikiya, his son, who was hereditary claimant to the chief adviser to the Lord Yenya. Then came Kanamaru, the oldest of the Ronin. Thus by their rank and standing, the youngest and oldest came together. A light was touched to the burner. The incense was in a bowl beside it.

It was then expected that Sir Oboshi Yuranosuke would first arise as his rank and position gave him the right to do, to offer incense before the tomb of the Lord Yenya, and Mitford tells us that the Ronin did in fact offer incense historically in the order of their rank. Legend and drama have several versions but taken as a fair composite

one may conceive that instead of going first forward, ahead of the others, Yuranosuke would reply, "Not so. When we had burst the gates and obtained an entrance to the yashiki of Moronaho, we all fought to capture our enemy. The fight was a valiant one. When we had fought, we all searched to discover his whereabouts. He was cowardly and hid from us. The search was prolonged and careful. At last, almost we gave up every hope. But one persisted and found Moronaho. Well hidden he was shunning not even dirt under which to hide. But one persisted and found him. Found Moronaho, without which all our efforts had been in vain. Yazama Jiutaro found him and dragged him forth. Yazama Jiutaro shall be the first to offer incense. Not I, but Yamaza Jiutaro. What say you?"

All were instantly agreed and pleased that such justice should be meted out. Forthwith, out stepped Yazama Jiutaro. He bowed low to Sir Yuranosuke and expressed his pride in the situation. Bowing to the tomb and to the Abbot, he advanced. Taking incense, he burned it reverendy before the tomb and retired.

Again the Ronin supposed that Sir Yuranosuke, by his rank and right, would advance. Yuranosuke again checks them somewhat as follows: "One of the trusted of all of the samurai of the Lord Yenya was our friend Hayano Kampei. Hayano Kampei is long dead. So long I have mourned both his misfortunes and his untimely end." Feeling in his garment, Yuranosuke brought out the striped purse which Yoichibei had carried on the night that he was killed by Sadakuro. "This purse," continued Sir Yuranosuke, "contains an offering on behalf of Hayano Kampei. With his last breath he was admitted as one of us. His offering should be next. During this night's struggle the offering has been among us, borne by Tera-oka Heiyemon. He is not a samurai it is true, but no samurai could have striven more fiercely than he. Moreover, Heiyemon is brother-in-law to Hayano Kampei. In the name of Hayano Kampei, let Heiyemon offer the next sacrifice. So will Kampei be the second to burn incense to the Lord Yenya."

There being no others whom the Ronin were satisfied especially to honour above the rest, Sir

Yuranosuke then advanced to offer incense before his Lord Yenya's tomb. He was followed, slowly and respectfully, by the remainder of the Loyal League.

No other duty remained to be performed except to report themselves to the government for its instructions. They had deliberately attacked a Daimyo. They had killed him in cold blood. They acknowledged it cheerfully. Their vengeance was safe. No answer but one could possibly come.

Until we hear the result of that answer, we shall delay the final climax of our pilgrimage. While we wait, may we not see in what wise the artists of Japan have honored the Faithful Ronin, even beyond the killing of Moronaho?

As I have said, many of the artists have confined their work on the last chapter or Act of the Chushingura to a single depiction of the capture of Moronaho. Others have gone farther. Among these others we shall expect to find Hiroshige in his set published by Senichi, for the reason that there were sixteen prints in that set,—four more than in any other. The attempt to cross Ryogoku Bridge frustrated by the hatamoto; the delay at

the invitation of the Prince of Sendai; the Ronin climbing the hill approaching Sengaku-ji. In the Arita-ya, the Marusei and the half plate sets, the scene on the way to Sengaku-ji is unanimous, as is the case in the oblong set of Kunisada.

It is a pity that one cannot include at least one of the splendid triptychs of Kuniyoshi as an illustration, but we may at least describe it. The colouring on the copy which I have just taken from my portfolio is perfect. Both the individual faces and the massed figures are worthy praise beyond almost anything on the subject. The snow clad hills lie in the background. Inside the fenced enclosure of the graveyard we see the worshippers. The tomb appears in the midground of the central sheet with the Abbot on one side and Sir Yuranosuke on the other. A white canvas curtain or maku hangs at the rear of the left panel, covered with figures of the Mon of Yenya. Rikiya is seated at right of the middle with all of the Ronin at respectful distance around him on each side. From a pictorial sense, the effect is greatly impaired by the insertion of the name of each of the Ronin on a tiny cartouche, opposite his head. In its full size,

it is imposing. Reduced to the diminutive space of a book page, it would be a mass of confusion.

Chosen for the illustration here, has been the second episode of the eleventh Act in the series by Kuniteru. It is a single sheet, upon which the figures are uncrowded, and reduces within our compass brilliantly. There are no features about it which will not instantly be understood upon glancing at the illustration.

Having finished their homage to their Lord Yenya, the Ronin gathered once again under Sir Yuranosuke to thank the Abbot. To him Yuranosuke told without reserve, their certainty of what their end would be. They made one simple request of him. It was, that when their sentence to seppuku had been transmitted and they had duly done away with themselves, the Abbot would see to it that they were allowed to lie in Sengaku-ji with their master, the Lord Yenya. This, with tears in his eyes, he solemnly promised.

In those days governments were prompt. Separated into four groups, the Ronin were placed in the care of four Daimyos, even Rikiya being pur-

posely assigned to a group other than that in which his father waited his fate.

Though all the country round them showed unbounded sympathy and admiration, and even though the government had softened its heart somewhat since the Lord Yenya's death, still the precedent of their master's sacrifice stood against them. Lord Yenya had gone. So the Ronin must go. The verdict was delayed only from the depth of winter until spring.

Only a short time expired before they were called upon to perform self-execution according to the immemorial forms of ceremony. Terrible as the tortures were, no Ronin flinched. From seventy-eight-year-old Kanamaru down to youthful Rikiya, bravely and honourably they faced and carried out their awful rites. They slept peacefully.

Let it not be supposed that either writer or readers view vengeance or self-destruction from the same standpoint that they did. They can teach us enough of sturdy character without that.

In honour of their acts and in accordance with the promise of the Abbot of the Temple, their

bodies were reverently taken to Sengaku-ji and laid, with prayers, beside their avenged master, the Lord Yenya. Modest graves, touching in their simplicity, but

BRAVE MEN LIE HERE.

XIX

OUR PILGRIMAGE ENDS

THE tale is told. Yonder the story saw its finish. Here, all around us, the Faithful Ronin walked after they had burned incense to their Lord Yenya over the head of his enemy Kono Moronaho, known to history as Kira Kotsuke-no-suke. From this spot of ground the faithful few left for a horrible death. To this spot their mortal shreds were brought back for sepulcher. Yonder they lie beside their master, Lord Yenya. No drama about this. All sober, dread, courageous truth.

We have seen the precincts about which they walked. We have seen the very gate through which Rikiya and his companions brought their master. Through this same gate came the Faithful Ronin, bearing the head of their enemy. Through this same gate they departed to their death. Through this same gate all that was mortal of them re-

turned. There they lie. Let us go to honour them.

As we pass along, we are not far from the entrance. It now has rich and new meanings for us. All is so peaceful and quiet at the Spring-Hill Temple. Then we turn to the left. We go up a gravel path. It is perhaps the same path which these few brave men trod when they would go to the tomb of their lost master. There were not so many graves there then. Shortly we pass a cool spring, enclosed by a small well. Pause with me. This is not just any spring nor any well. It is veritably the well at which these men of long ago respectfully stopped. It is the cool water in which they washed so carefully the blood-clotted head of their enemy Moronaho. Slowly they washed it in this precise place. Thus it might be fit to offer before their Lord Yenya.

Again we walk thoughtfully along. Around us are many moss-covered tombstones, clearly marked. Two are larger than the rest. These two are surrounded by an inconspicuous railing and covered by little roofs no higher than a man's upraised hand. In the farther tomb lies Lord Yenya Hanguwan Takasada, known to history

as Lord Asano Takumi-no-kami, Lord of Ako in the Province of Harima. He fell because of the lust of his enemy Kira Kotsuke-no-suke, whom we have learned to despise as Moronaho.

The nearer of the two covered tombs is that of Oboshi Yuranosuke. He is known to history as Sir Oishi Kuranosuke, Chief Councilor to Lord Yenya. He lost his life by his own honourable hand because, after long hardships and privations, he succeeded in avenging his master by killing Moronaho, the Kira Kotsuke-no-suke.

In this act of vengeance, Kuranosuke was upheld by his faithful band of Ronin. In their simple graves, they lie all about. Among them are also the foot-soldier Heiyemon, who, not permitted to commit a samurai's self-destruction, was faithfully buried amongst the loyal band when he finished life; also that other man, whose name we do not know, who spurned Sir Yuranosuke when he thought that leader was lying drunk. Learning later how valorous a man Yuranosuke was, the man from Satsuma sacrificed himself to his ideals by killing himself on Yuranosuke's grave.

If the burning of incense means to you only a

sacrifice to the Holy Saints of your religion, you will not wish to join the solemn Japanese who have gathered here while we stood respectfully studying the ground. If your ideas are different, and to you, it is mete and right to join Buddhists in burning incense as a fragrant offering to the memory of beings sanctified in one sense, but entirely human, then how tearfully appreciative they will watch as you kindle the flame. It is as you prefer. No place can hold dust such as this without being set apart.

Will you spare me a few minutes more? We will visit the treasury of the temple. Here will we see no jewels nor gold. No magnificence nor beauty. But what a pitiful collection. Here lie gathered together all that remains after well over two hundred years of the arms and armor, the gear and equipment with which the Faithful Few gained their victory and earned their deaths. Bits of rusted iron. Scraps of broken leather, rags that once were cloth, helmets that once crowned valiant heads, swords that once swung in a madly vicious circle. Little enough to see. But with these and such as these, brave men, long since dead,

have lived in the hearts of a Nation since Cotton Mather was trying witches in Salem.

We shall have to pass by the silent tombs again as we return through the gateway so many times used.

Calmly in Sengaku-ji we leave the Faithful Ronin.

TREAD NOT HERE. THIS IS SACRED GROUND.

XX

A WORD ON JAPANESE COLOUR PRINTS

MOST of what has been said about Japanese Prints in the body of the book has had reference solely to such prints as covered the story of the Chushingura. Certain statements aside from such specialization, need saying also.

Many of you have taken pleasure in looking at beautiful Japanese Colour Prints. Many of you may have great knowledge of them and of the masters who created them. A criticism may arise to your lips before you have time to examine its justice. It would be easy to say, how many masters of this art have been ignored by the author. Has he never heard of Kiyonaga and the other Torii? Does he not know Sharaku and his amazing portraits? What of Moronobu, the first Shigenaga, Haranobu and their kind? Were Toyonobu and Utamaro mislaid? The answer is simple. The author

did nothing of the kind. Many of those named lived entirely too early to have been included in the list of artists who worked on Chushingura subjects. A few did not join this work from whatever choice was in their minds. Being a book on the Chushingura, only the artists who included these subjects had any bearing on it.

Again, it is with no oversight that mention has not been made of what are called "Brother Pictures." Certain artists indulged in picturing scenes which were portrayed by the use of an analogy. Women took the place of men. A joke was substituted for a threat. A play upon words appeared instead of the meaning to be conveyed. Many of these appeared in serious incidents of the Chushingura. While, in collecting Japanese Colour Prints, "Brother Pictures" are frequently catalogued along with the subject to which they properly belonged, they are entirely unsuited to reference in such a work as this. Most "Brother Pictures" are too subtle. They do not mean what they appear to mean. They are frequently a pun among pictures. My purpose is neither to codify Japanese Prints nor to confuse such readers as

are not sufficiently advanced in their pursuit of them as to understand their hints and innuendos. They have been intentionally omitted.

The famous Sharaku, himself exponent of the classic No drama, designed many striking portraits of actors in their stage presentation of parts in the Chushingura. I have several in front of me now. But actor pictures do not appeal to me as being the kind of representation which would convey much to a reader of this work, since they do not show the scenes as our minds endeavor to visualize them, but only the separate actors. Moreover, while I am personally piqued by the work of Sharaku, it is of a peculiar quality the appreciation of which generally has to be acquired by practice, like the eating of olives.

Ichiyusai Kuniyoshi, in addition to the Chushingura triptychs already referred to, designed a notable series of figure prints, each of which represents one of the Loyal Ronin or other characters of the drama, with a short biography attached, under the title of "Lives of the Loyal Warriors." Being in the nature of portraits however, they, like the Sharaku pictures of the same nature, do

not lend themselves readily to illustration or further description for our purposes.

Shunyei is another who indulged in depictions of the Chushingura. But in his case the reason for omission is slightly different. Shunyei's work is charming enough and understandable at the first glance, but in the Chushingura his habit was to select some two or three characters, divorced from much in the way of surroundings. Scarcely anything but the figures appear and this leaves the impatient reader with too little basis for his presumably scant knowledge to feed upon. He runs ashore before being fairly in the water.

One might go on with many more examples, but it is unnecessary to multiply instances. Enough to say that all of the well-known artists who have worked on the Chushingura have been mentioned, examples from various series have been explained and a few illustrated. If I have not made a full sweep, it is from no oversight. With a limited subject, I have also a limited space. If you, happening to be a connoisseur, feel that the treatment has been scamped, I can only regret it. You, how-

ever, being a connoisseur, would in no event have had need of the slightest help from me.

To have gone more deeply into the Japanese Print angle of our subject, would have turned the whole effort into one of those very "one facet" affairs of which I spoke rather plainly in the **JOBUN.**

The JOBUN was one of the portions of the work which you probably omitted to read.

XXI

APPRECIATION

WHETHER or not the custom of summarizing sources from which information is drawn in writing such a book as this is wise or needful is a debatable point. That numerous works of authority must be consulted during the process goes without saying but whether a list of these added to a work intended for casual readers would pay for the printing and space occupied seems to me not so certain. Many of the authorities disagree on details and incidents, thus placing the burden of assembling and reconciliation on the shoulders of the author. In the final net, the result is gleaned "here a little and there a little."

Primarily I owe thanks to many friends both Japanese and Occidental whose interest has been both keen and informed, but whose help is too modest to permit separate acknowledgment in print. They have been among the pleasantest as

well as the most essential associations in the work.

Once I step up to the shelves of the library and try to enumerate the published works in which research has been made the trouble begins. In the process of checking up, more than one authority has been consulted from whom, in the end, not a line has been quoted or a fact taken.

Bowing however to custom, I will pick out the names of a few, most of which will be familiar to any one who has pursued the subject.

"Tales of Old Japan;' A. B. Mitford (later Lord Redesdale, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.)

"Masterpieces of Chickamatsu, the Japanese Shakespeare," translated by Asataro Miyamori

"Japanese Wood Engraving," by William Anderson, F.R.C.S.

"Subjects Portrayed in Japanese Colour Prints," Basil Stewart

"Romance of Old Japan," Yukio Ozaki

"Chiushingura or The Loyal League," translated by Frederick V. Dickins, Sc.B.

"The Loyal Ronins," as translated by Greey & Saito from I-ro-ha Bunko of Tamenaga Shunsui

"Japonica," Sir Edwin Arnold, M.A., K.C.J.E., C.S.I.

"Unabridged Dictionary of Japanese," by Capt. F. B. Brinkley, R.A.

"The Loyal Samurai of Ako," by Aisaburo Akiyama

"History of Japanese Colour Prints," W. von Seidlitz

"Plays of Old Japan," Marie C. Stopes

"Chats on Japanese Prints," Arthur Davison Ficke

"Book Illustration in Japan," Louise Norton Brown

"Japanese Colour Prints," Laurence Binyon and J. J. O'Brien Sexton

"Colour Prints of Hiroshige," Edward F. Strange

Fenollosa's numerous works

"Japanese Colour Prints and their Designers," Frederick W. Gookin

"Things Japanese," Basil Hall Chamberlain

It is scarcely possible to ignore the author's constant access to his own collection of over fifteen hundred Japanese Colour Prints, of which a section numbering many score is devoted solely to

the Chushingura; nor to overlook a collection of a large number of instructive catalogues including such prized reference works as the Hiroshige Memorial Catalogue, British Museum Catalogue of Japanese Prints with annotations by Binyon, Catalogue of the famous Hayashi Collection, as well as those of S. Bing, Happer, etc. To these, as well as to the books above, all of which are in his collection and many others which are not, it is needless to say that the author has turned for information with every assurance that it would be authentic beyond peradventure of a doubt.

THE END