

Kikigaki 3 (344 to 399) Sayings and deeds of Lord Naoshige and his family

344) Moved by a deed based on a sense of justice

One day Lord Naoshige said, "I feel moved to tears when I am told stories of faithful men in the past, though I did not shed tears at the news of my cousin's death. Nothing is so moving as those deeds based on a sense of justice, though I did not know them personally."

345) Lord Naoshige meets a man dispatched by another lord.

A man was sent to Lord Naoshige by Kobayakawa Takakage for an advice in making an oral statement to an important person. Naoshige listened to his speech and said, "It is good of you to have spoken it without faltering. The problem is whether you can impress the other party or not. We are moved to tears at the stage of a great actor. On the other hand, a poor actor never impresses us, even if he recites the same message. This is my advice to you." The man left for home with deep gratitude.

* Kobayakawa Takakage was the lord of a clan in present-day Hiroshima. He died in 1597 aged 65.

346) One winter day Lord Naoshige talks of prisoners with his wife.

As he warmed himself with a *kotatsu* heater, Lord Naoshige said to Lady Yodai-in, his wife, "It is so cold tonight I cannot warm myself up with this alone. I wonder how people are spending such a cold night in the villages. Who do you think are feeling coldest now?"

"All the farmers must be very cold, for they do not have heaters in their houses."

"Yes, but they can at least burn straw to get warm, can they not?" said the lord. "Are there not any other people suffering more with this cold?"

They talked together for some time and came to think of those in prison. "They are not allowed to use fire and have to sleep in a large room without any partition, and they live on a scanty food. How miserable their life must be!"

All of a sudden the lord summoned an attendant and told him to report to him how many men are in prison. All the officials in charge got together to make a list immediately, wondering what had happened so late that night.

Looking at the list, Lord Naoshige told the attendant to prepare warm porridge and deliver it to all the prisoners. They ate it in great delight, moved to tears by the unexpected gift.

* A *kotatsu* is a low, covered table with a heater underneath.

347) Lady Yodai-in makes a request to Lord Katsushige, her son, about the appointment of officials.

Lady Yodai-in said to Lord Katsushige, her son, "Please promise not to appoint any member of the Ishi-i family to the accounting section. I have seen that some officials were sentenced to death for embezzlement. Anyone will be tempted to that with a cash box close by. If they work for other sections, they will not commit such a sin. I really ask you to appoint them for some other section. As you know, I am from the Ishi-i family and feel anxious about their honor."

348) 80% or eight tenths?

One day Lord Naoshige summoned his attendant and said, "Go and see how much water is in the pond." In a moment he came back and said, "It is about 80 % full, sir." Then he called another attendant and gave him the same order. The second attendant said, "It is about eight tenths full." The lord praised the second attendant for his way of expressing it.

349) Taiko Hideyoshi winks at a violation by the Ryuzo-ji team.

In April, 1587, Taiko Hideyoshi attacked Satsuma, when he was told of a violation by the Ryuzo-ji troops. "They will go their own way. Please tell them to keep in line," they said. But the Taiko scolded him and said, "Nothing regulates a battle. To defeat the enemy is the only rule. Ryuzo-ji are the vanguard of Kyushu. It is their own way. Do not make a fool of yourself with absurd meddling."

* Satsuma is present Kagoshima Prefecture.

350) Lord Noahsige is praised for arranging flowers.

One day many *daimyo* were arranging flowers with Taiko Hideyoshi. He said to Lord Naoshige, "Why do you not try it?" Soon a set of flowers and vase were brought in. Actually he had never done it before, but he seized a bunch of flowers with one hand and thrust them in the vase without hesitation. Looking at his arrangement, the Taiko said, "The flowers are not arranged neatly but your way is dynamic!"

351) Lord Naoshige's words hit a sore spot in Katsushige.

In November, 1611, the building of Saga Castle was finished. Invited by Lord Katsushige, Naoshige, his father, visited the newly completed castle in a palanquin. As he looked at the stately buildings, Lord Katsushige explained each building with delight. After he went round them, Naoshige said to his attendants, "My son explained how well it was prepared for attacks from outside, but he seems to have forgotten to prepare a place in which to take his own life."

Lord Naoshige did not pay much attention to the layout of the castle or defensive posts, though he tried his best to unite his attendants together. He always said they could defeat the enemy by close cooperation. And he would disclose his tactics just before he went into battle, because he was afraid someone might leak it to the enemy. Then his tactics would come to nothing. Naoshige's secret strategy was transmitted to his sons when they inherited their households. It was also passed to the lords of the Ogi branch clan. The strategy is said to be made of 13 articles.

352) "I use a newcomer for running errands."

There was a new attendant much favored by Lord Naoshige. The other attendants resented such partial treatment by the lord. "We have been serving you for a long time not only on the battlefield but in the castle," they said. "Who knows if that fellow will make himself useful to you in the future? Why do you treat him so favorably?"

"I fully understand what you mean," said the lord. "I am using him to look after my personal needs, not for emergencies. He is very attached to me and I am fond of him, but in an emergency I depend on you alone."

353) Lord Naoshige builds a chapel in Kyoto.

Before he went to fight in Korea, Lord Naoshige built a chapel at Itoku-in Temple, in Kyoto. Soon Lord Hosokawa also built one there, followed by the Shogunate. When

Naoshige's chapel was burnt down, Lord Katsushige rebuilt it. Later it was destroyed again and just left as it was. In the reign of Lord Yoshishige the head priest of Itoku-in Temple complained about it, and it was rebuilt by the good offices of Takagi Yosobey, a caretaker of the Kyoto residence of Saga.

- * Yoshishige was the 4th lord of the Saga Clan. He reigned from 1706 to 1730.
- * Takagi Yosobey was an important retainer. He died in 1731.

354) The priest Kimpo rejects Lord Naoshige's offer.

The priest Kimpo of Gyokurin-ji Temple was an instructor of Lord Naoshige in his religious life. When the priest retired, Lord Naoshige said, "You have been serving me such a long time, so let me offer you a hundred *koku* of land."

To the great surprise of the lord, Kimpo got furious and said, "Do you not remember my ardent prayers for you until now? Your exploits have been brought about by them. Are you going to wipe out all my efforts in exchange for a hundred *koku*? You would not be so cold to me if you knew of my devotion. Now I can see your plot. I hate to think what will happen between us!"

"I am very sorry to have offended you," said the lord. "Please forgive me. Let me withdraw my proposal."

- * Kimpo was deeply trusted by Lord Naoshige and his wife. He died in 1627.

355) The head priest asks for *kon-nyaku*.

Around 1551 Lord Naoshige was a little boy studying calligraphy at Bairin-ji Temple. At that time the priest of Hoji-in, a small temple nearby, would sometimes give him presents as well as clothes. When he grew up, Lord Naoshige said to the priest, "I still remember what you did for me. Thank you very much for your kindness. Please tell me whatever you want. Let me meet your request in any way I can."

"There is nothing to ask for," he said. "But if possible, I would like to eat *kon-nyaku* for the rest of my life." Every other day after that, a piece of *kon-nyaku* was brought to the temple till he breathed his last.

- * *Kon-nyaku* is a savor jelly made from vegetable starch.

356) The priest Kimpo is embarrassed.

Whenever he paid a visit to Lord Naoshige, the priest Kimpo got into deep conversation with him and would always stay with him at the castle. One day the priest stayed and slept with the lord and Lady Yodai-in in the same room. When the day broke he awoke to find himself alone lying there with Lady Yodai-in! In a panic he got up and stepped into the next room, where he found Lord Naoshige sitting alone with his sword at his side. It was his habit. Since he did not know that, the priest protested against him vociferously.

357) Taiko Hideyoshi makes gifts to Lord Naoshige and meets Ryuzoji Takafusa.

On April 5, 1597, Taiko Hideyoshi summoned three *daimyos* to Osaka Castle and instructed them to discuss the Korean Expedition. They were Hachisuka Awa-no-kami, Ankokuji Ekei, and Lord Naoshige. On the following day the Taiko entertained Lord Naoshige, Ikeda Iyo-no-kami, and Kyogoku Jiju at his tea house. Lord Naoshige was awarded a sword, a set of clothes, and 50 silver leaves. He was also presented with a roll of cloth by Hideyori, the Taiko's son.

On May 9 at 8 o'clock in the morning, Taiko Hideyoshi appeared at the guest house accompanied by Hashiba Dainagon and Tomita Sakon-shogen, where Lord Naoshige entertained them with tea. Then the Taiko went to the library and met Ryuzoji Takafusa, Masa-ie's son. He then moved to the main hall to see the presents from Lord Naoshige and Ryuzoji Takafusa, attended by Ryuzoji Sakuju, Goto Kiheiji, Nabeshima Heigoro, and Ogawa Heishichi. The four attendants sat with their swords on the floor.

Taiko Hideyoshi moved to the Noh stage hall and then on to the living room. He returned to the library after looking at the bathroom. He spent the rest of the day talking with them in the library, where he handed his own meal to Lord Naoshige, as well as 300 silver leaves. That evening Taiko Hideyoshi returned.

When Lord Naoshige visited the castle to express his gratitude on May 11, he was again given a meal by Taiko Hideyoshi. On the same day he entertained Lord Naoshige, Terasawa Shima-no-kami, Ikoma Uta-no-kami and Yuraku.

- * Hachisuka Awa-no-kami was the lord of Tokushima Clan, in present-day Shikoku.
- * Ankoku-ji Ekei, an influential priest trusted by Taiko Hideyoshi, died in 1600.
- * Ikeda Iyo-no-kami was an important retainer of Taiko Hideyoshi.

- * Kyogoku Jiju was an important retainer of Taiko Hideyoshi. He died in 1609.
- * Hashiba Dainagon was Taiko Hideyoshi's brother. He died in 1519.
- * Tomita Sakon-shogen was an important retainer of Taiko Hideyoshi. He died in 1599.
- * Ryuzoji Takafusa was the son of Lord Ryuzoji Masa-ie. He took his own life in 1607 aged 22.
- * Terasawa Shima-no-kami was the lord of Karatsu Clan, about 60 km northwest of Saga..
- * Ikoma Uta-no-kami was an important retainer of Taiko Hideyoshi. He died in 1603.
- * Yuraku was a well-known tea master. He died in 1622.

358) Lord Naoshige returns to Japan temporarily without visiting his castle.

In March, 1597, Lord Naoshige was summoned by Taiko Hideyoshi to return to Osaka. Without returning to Saga Castle, he stayed overnight at Tsuten-an Temple in the north of Saga. On May 9 he arrived at Osaka Castle to see Taiko Hideyoshi. It was in the middle of June that he would have come back to Saga, but he had to leave immediately for Korea. On the day of his departure he spent the night at an inn at Takeo spa. The following day he reached the port of Imari.

- * Takeo is a well-known spa about 35 km west of Saga.
- * The port of Imari is about 50 km west of Saga.

359) Saito Yo-no-suke is let off in spite of his extraordinary conduct.

Saito Yo-no-suke's wife complained to him that they had run out of rice for supper, when he said to her, "Stop worrying about the rice! A *samurai's* wife should not make such a mean appeal. I will get some for you right away. Wait a minute."

When he went outside with his hand on his sword, a man passed by with a lot of bags of rice on 10 wagons. "Wait here," he said. "Where are you going with those bags of rice?" The driver, a farmer, said, "To the castle kitchen, sir." "Download them here at my house, man. My name is Saito Yo-no-suke. It will not be easy to take them to the officials at the kitchen. Drop them off here. Let me issue a receipt for you. Then you have only to show it to your boss." "What a selfish excuse you make! I cannot do what you ask," said the driver and began to move off.

Saito Yo-no-suke got angry. Drawing his sword he said menacingly, "I will not let you pass by alive!" The poor farmer had to download all the bags and carry them inside his house. Downhearted, the driver accepted a piece of paper from him and went his way.

"Look, we have a lot of rice. Do not worry anymore," he said to his wife. "We can use as much rice as we wish!"

Soon after, Saito Yo-no-suke was summoned by the superintendent. He confessed his sin readily, and soon was sentenced to death for his outrageous conduct. When Lord Katsushige was told of his sentence, he said. "He deserves it," he said. "But report it to my father as well."

When the retired Lord Naoshige heard of it, he made no answer to the administrative retainer but said to his wife, "Did you hear the news? My son has sentenced him to death for his misconduct. What an unfortunate man he is! He is the type of man I cannot exchange for any another in the world! How often he saved me from serious situations in the past! We are now living such a peaceful life, simply thanks to his efforts at the risk of his life. He was someone I trusted most strongly, you know. I am to blame for his present situation. He was sentenced to death because he threatened a driver for bags of rice. I ought to be criticized as the one who put him into that miserable situation. He is not to blame at all. How can we live if he is to lose his life for his desperate behavior?"

When Lord Katsushige was told of his parents' grief, he said, "I understand how sorry they felt to hear of his sentence. I have been thinking how I can return my parents' favor to me. Now is the time to repay it. All right, let me acquit him of his misconduct. Please go right away to their residence and tell them good news."

Hearing of the man's acquittal, Lord Naoshige was so thankful to his son and bowed in the direction of his son's residence together with Lady Yodai-in. "Our son has presented us with a fine gift," said Lord Naoshige.

* Saito Yo-no-suke was a brave and faithful servant of Naoshige. He died in 1657.

360) Naoshige scolds Lord Katsushige for his thoughtless conduct.

When a shooting exercise was held in Saga, Lord Katsushige was watching his servants practice shooting. When Saito Yo-no-suke was called, he began to shoot into the air! The inspector shouted, "Missed the target!"

"Who on earth shoots at a target set on the ground?" he said. "I have never shot at such a target in my life, though I have not missed the bellies of the enemy soldiers! Go

and ask the former Lord Naoshige. He is my living witness!"

Lord Katsushige got so mad with his rude behavior he might have killed him on the spot. He spoiled the mood of the class. The lord went to see his father at once. "He is such a rude fellow," said Lord Katsushige. "He put me to shame in public. I was thinking of killing him on the spot but stopped, because he is your favorite attendant. Please punish him as you like, father."

"I understand what you mean. All right, then put his leader to death," said Naoshige. "It is not his leader's fault. Yo-no-suke is to blame. Please punish him," said Lord Katsushige.

"Listen, my son," said ex-Lord Naoshige. "I have always told all the leaders of each group that we have to be well prepared in such a long-lasting peace, because there is no telling when we will meet another war in the future. Younger *samurai* are immersed in the present peace, without knowing how to handle their weapons. I told them to train their men in shooting in the company of the new lord. I told them to train younger attendants, not veterans like Saito Yo-no-suke. His group leader dragged the veteran to shoot at a target on the ground. How stupid of him! You should punish him first, not Yo-no-suke. As he said in public, I can bear witness to his superior technique in shooting. Put his leader to death at once." The matter was solved, because Lord Katsushige apologized to his father for his thoughtless conduct.

361) Lord Naoshige is transmitted promotion by a royal envoy.

On January 7, 1589, Lord Naoshige was honored with a document from the Emperor's envoy appointing him *jugoi-ge*.

* *Jugoi-ge* was the highest rank awarded to a person who was not a nobleman. It was given to a lord of a large clan.

362) "Quarreling against my elder brother might have serious consequences."

Lord Naoshige advised his own attendants strictly that if they had a quarrel, a fight or a suit against his elder brother's attendants they should remember that they would lose it.

363) Kobayakawa Takakage is a farsighted person.

At a conference in Osaka Castle on April 5, 1597, Kobayakawa Takekage showed a map of Korea to Lord Naoshige and two other *daimyo*. “If you take this route, you can go to this region colored red,” he said. “To go to that region colored white, take that route.” He talked as if he knew everything about that unknown country, though he had never been there. Lord Naoshige thought his strategy would not be helpful at all. However, he kept silent because Taiko Hideyoshi was in the company.

To his great surprise, Lord Naoshige found Kobayakage a really learned man when he was in Korea. The illustration he produced at Osaka Castle was so correct that Lord Naoshige was relieved that he had not spoken against him.

364) Lord Naoshige’s words stop ghosts from appearing.

A man and a woman were put to death for adultery. Both of them had worked at the tertiary enclosure. Soon after they were executed, a couple of ghosts would appear every night, and all the female servants were too afraid to go out.

This was reported to Lady Yodai-in, and she told them to pray for their spirits and hold a religious service, but in vain. Finally they reported to Lord Naoshige. Hearing of the news, he said, “Good! That is what they deserve. They were such a disgraceful pair and their spirits are wandering about without going to Heaven. I am really glad to hear they are in torment after death. I wish they would go wandering forever!” Strangely enough, the ghosts stopped appearing after that.

In 1606 an outbreak of adultery was detected while Lord Naoshige was in Edo on business. All the adulterers except one man were arrested on the day when the lord came back. Eika, a male servant, fled into the storehouse and barricaded himself with door panels. Muta Mosai entered the storehouse without a sword, talked with him, and took him out peacefully.

The female servants were O-tora, O-chiyo, O-kame, Matsukaze, Karumo, O-fuku, and Aicha. Male servants were Nakabayashi Seibey, Nakabayashi Kan-uemon, Miura Gen-no-jo, Tasaki Sho-no-suke, Keika, and Shichi-uemon. All of them were put to death at Honjo Shrine.

* Honjo Shrine is one of the oldest shrines in Saga near the castle.

365) Lord Naoshige would not meet an elderly man.

When Lord Naoshige was passing by Chiriku Village, his attendant said, “A 90-year-old man lives in this village. He is blessed with such a long life, so why not see him?” “No, I will not,” he said. “He must have seen lots of sad incidents like deaths of his children and grandchildren and suffered many hardships in his life. I do not feel like congratulating him on his longevity.”

* Chiriku Village is located about 25 km east of the Saga castle.

366) Lord Naoshige divorces his former wife.

Lord Naoshige’s former wife was a daughter of Takagi Hizen-no-kami. She remarried Kanega-e Jimbey of Chikugo, and her grave is at Shoho-ji Temple in Takagi, Saga.

Lady Tenrin, wife of Mondo, was born by the former wife of Lord Naoshige. Mondo is a son of Lady Yodai-in’s niece’s. Mondo’s mother was told to remarry Fukahori Motaku after Ishi-i Aki was killed in a war.

- * Lord Naoshige divorced his wife in 1569 because her father betrayed in a war.
- * Lady Tenrin was the eldest daughter of Naoshige. She died in 1643 aged 73.
- * Lady Yo-dai-in married Naoshige in 1569.

367) Lord Naoshige builds Soryu-ji Temple for Ryuzo-ji Takanobu.

When Ryuzo-ji Takanobu was killed in the Battle of Shimabara in March 1584, Nabeshima Naoshige said to his spirit, “I should have followed you in the battle, but I chose to survive because I thought we must revenge ourselves on the Satsuma troops. Besides, we have lost many brave soldiers. Most of the survivors are old or too young as soldiers. We have not held a memorial service for you, because I think you will not accept it before we succeed in avenging you. Dear General, I do ask you to bless us in our battle of revenge.”

In the meantime, Taiko Hideyoshi came over to Kyushu for the purpose of suppressing Satsuma Clan. Nabeshima Naoshige met him and said, “They are a sworn enemy of ours. Please allow us to rush in as the vanguard.” His request was granted. He spoke to the late general’s spirit again, “We have been allowed to serve as the vanguard in the coming battle. I have decided to build a temple at the unlucky quarter of the castle when we come back. Please protect us in battle.” Praying to the spirit of

the late general, he led his troops to Satsuma.

Thanks to their victory, Prince Masa-ie, the eldest son of the late general, was granted the same family name as the Taiko, while Lord Naohsige was granted the middle name of the Taiko and presented with two wadded silk garments.

When they returned to Saga, Naoshige built Soryu-ji Temple for the spirit of Ryuzoji Takanobu, their general. They held a funeral service for him after seven years and also held a memorial service for all the victims in the Battle of Shimabara. The list of the victims written by Naoshige is still kept at Soryu-ji Temple. One of the silk garments given by the Taiko was donated to the temple and the other is kept at the castle. It has become a custom for the priest of Soryu-ji Temple to wear it and pray for peace and good luck on New Year's Day.

It is said that on the roof ridge of Kawakami Shrine can be seen the name of Ryuzoji Masa-ie as well as the name granted by the Taiko. The tombstone at Sochi-ji Temple bears the name of Nabeshima Naoshige as well as the name given by the Taiko. Masa-ie was awarded it at Osaka Castle by the Taiko when he visited it in 1588.

- * The northeast corner of a piece of land is believed unlucky.
- * Satsuma is present-day Kagoshima Prefecture. It was governed by Lord Shimazu.

368) Nabeshima Naoshige returns the head of Ryuzo-ji Takanobu.

In March, 1584, the head of Ryuzo-ji Takanobu was brought back and arrived at Enotsu, about 10 km southeast of Saga. Nabeshima Naoshige thought Satsuma was testing his determination, so he sent O-kuma Aki to Enotsu, telling him what he had in mind. O-kuma refused to accept the head. After that the Satsuma became wary of Saga. The messenger from Satusma Clan deposited the head at Gangyo-ji Temple, Tamana, and returned to his castle.

- * Tamana is located in the north of Kumamoto Prefecture.

369) Sochi-ji Temple is built at Lord Naoshige's residence, Tafuse.

Around 1615 a lump formed on the earlobe of Lord Naoshige. "Please tie it up with a spider's web and then remove it," said a man. "It will heal." Though he was not inclined to do so, he tried it. The lump was removed, but the earlobe became infected and pus began to ooze out. He tried this and that to stop it, to no avail.

“I have done everything so far for the sake of all the people round me,” he said. “However, I might have done something wrong in my life. This pus must be some punishment by the gods. I cannot bear to think of dying from pus coming out of my earlobe. It must be a disgrace to my descendants, too. Ah, I would like to go over to the other world before I rot to death!”

He did not make it public and would not take any food or medicine after that, however earnestly he was encouraged to eat or drink by his attendants. Lord Katsushige, his son, said, “I will be criticized as an unfilial son unless you take some medicine before you pass away. Please take the medicine at least.” Naoshige said in the end, “All right. I will take it for your sake. Give me a light one, though.”

Hayashi Eikyu, the doctor, offered some medicine he had prepared, but Naoshige was furious when he saw it. “I am not blind!” he said. “I asked you to prescribe it for me, because I believed in you as my faithful physician. Look at this, Eikyu. Why have you mixed rice in it?” The doctor replied in tears, “I was told you had given up eating for the past several days, so I added some rice to it for your quick recovery.” “Never do that again,” said Naoshige.

One day Naoshige called Ishi-i Shosatsu and said, “Could you dismantle the library tonight without making any noise?” “Yes, I can,” he said. It was pulled down overnight very silently. The next morning Naoshige saw it and said to him, “How on earth did you do it?” “I made the workmen hold a leaf in their mouth while working,” he said.

“Well done. I was right to ask you to do the work,” he said. “Now I would like you to remove the rock in the pond to the site of the library as my tombstone. My mother and wife often tell me that we should not use a natural rock for a tombstone because it never fails to bring a curse on us by making our posterity childless. It also looks strange to others. So do not forget to carve an inscription on the back.” After thinking a while, Naoshige told him to inscribe his name and rank on it. This is the place where Sochi-ji Temple was built by Lord Katsushige in August, 1618. Naoshige passed away on June 3 in the same year at his residence there. In the previous year a tombstone was set by the late lord himself.

* Ishi-i Shosatsu was an important retainer of Naoshige. He died in 1602.

* Sochi-ji Temple was built at Tafuse, about 3 km northwest of the castle.

370) “There is time for everything. Break your household when the time comes.”

Lord Naoshige said to Motoshige, his grandson, “Any family is destined to decline some day, whether it belongs to a nobleman or an ordinary citizen. The harder you struggle against it, the uglier you appear for your vain efforts. When the time comes, do not hesitate to abolish it. Perhaps you can reconstruct later.”

371) Lord Naoshige donates a lantern to Yoka Shrine.

One night Lord Naoshige had a dream, in which he was repeatedly called by name as he passed by Yoka Shrine. When he looked back, he could see a man dressed in white on the stone bridge. He complained to him that it was so dark.

Lord Naoshige awoke and thought that the god had demanded a lantern, so he donated a lantern quickly. After retirement, he continued to offer candles for the lantern. The Ogi branch clan is now in charge of offering candles to the shrine.

372) Yodai-in entertains her husband's former wife.

After returning to her family, Lord Naoshige's former wife would often visit his residence with her own attendants to play all sorts of pranks on Yodai-in, the present wife. Each time, however, Yodai-in entertained her and her attendants so well that they returned without making a big fuss.

- * There was a custom for a divorced wife to play pranks on the new wife as long as the husband had married her within one year after divorcing his first wife.

373) Nabeshima Naoshige is worshipped as a live god.

Whenever at a loss to decide on something, all the villagers in Saga would bow in the direction of the castle. Holding sticks they prepared for drawing lots, they asked him to show them the best way to solve their problem.

- * They made their decision by drawing lots after making a wish to Lord Naoshige.

374) Lord Naoshige reads the priest's true intentions.

One early morning the head priest of Honjo-in Temple visited Fujishima Sho-eki at

his house and said, "When I opened the door of the repository to clean the statue, I found its head fallen on the floor. Here it is." He showed him the head wrapped in cloth.

"This is not something to show to the lord," said Sho-eki. "Please take it back. I will report to him about it." When he brought the news to Lord Naoshige, he said angrily, "What a disgusting fellow he is to try deceiving me!" He told Sho-eki to examine the priest right away for his mean trick. He even said, "Let him confess his sin under torture."

"I am very sorry but cannot understand why you tell me to put him on the rack," said Sho-eki. "He came to my house just to report about the fallen head." The lord got even more furious and said, "Go away. I will ask some other person!" "I will do as you say. Let me go and examine him," said Sho-eki.

Soon he went to Honjo-in Temple with Oribe, the head jailer. When the priest extended his hand in greeting, Sho-eki took it and said, "Listen. Our lord is very offended by your behavior. He even ordered me to torture you."

"Really?" he said. "But I have no idea why he said so."

"Then we must put you on the rack," said Sho-eki. "But do you not think it disgraceful as a priest to confess after being arrested by an official?"

"I quite agree with you," said the priest. "All right, let me tell you everything honestly. It was true that the head dropped off when I was cleaning the statue. Seeing the fallen head, I thought of rebuilding the temple. If I told the lord about it, I thought he might think of reconstructing the old building. Then my temple would be more popular in Saga."

Fujishima Sho-eki returned to the castle and reported to Lord Naoshige about the priest's confession. To his surprise, the lord burst into laughter. Sho-eki felt offended and said, "He tried to deceive me with his story. Please allow me to put him on the rack."

"Do not be so upset, Sho-eki," said the lord. "You believed him at first, and now feel so angry with him. As for me, I felt very angry because I knew his mean intention, but now I am not so angry with him. Each time I went to the shrine, he would implore me to see his temple. When I did so, he served me a cup of soup whose base was stained with dirt, and yet he told me he appreciated seeing me from the bottom of his heart as he bowed his head to the floor. If he really thought so, he should have offered me the soup in a clean bowl. So I have felt uncomfortable with his behavior and been afraid he might do something absurd in the future. Now that he betrayed himself, I'd like to punish him severely but it is his temple where prayers are said for my wishes.

Therefore, let him be transferred to some other temple and find a good person in place of him.” Sho-eki was deeply moved with the lord’s explanation.

* Fujishima Sho-eki used to be a monk but returned to secular life to serve Lord Naoshige. He died in 1649.

375) Inagaki Gon-uemon is dismissed by Lord Naoshige.

In the reign of Lord Naoshige very few attendants of Saga Clan were familiar with the customs of Kyoto and Edo. It was only Kuramachi Kuro who knew something about them, because he had served the Shogunate for some time.

One day a Shogunate envoy visited Saga with his attendants, so Kuramachi Kuro was told to entertain them. After they left Saga, he said to the other retainers, “The envoy put a silver bit in his horse’s mouth. Please do the same right away with our horses.” He also reported about the field picnic he attended, “I was served a lunch box on a red mat but little knew what the mat was for. So I spread it on my lap and ate the lunch.”

The bit was just a polished one and the mat was for sitting on, of course. His knowledge was so limited that it hardly sufficed to entertain the guests from the Shogunate. So a man named Inagaki Gon-uemon was employed for that purpose. The problem was he was offered a high salary of 200 *koku*.

When Lord Naoshige visited Koden-ji Temple, he noticed a bill posted on the gate. It read: “*A total stranger was employed at such a high salary. Is that not extraordinary?*”

“Look at this bill. The writer is quite right,” said Lord Naoshige. “It is not shameful for us to be unfamiliar with the customs of the Shogunate or Edo. I was wrong.” When he explained the matter to Inagaki Gon-uemon, he understood and soon left Saga.

376) Lord Naoshige does not return to his domain for 8 years.

In autumn, 1590, Taiko Hideyoshi demanded that the Korean king allow his troops to go through his country to China, but was refused. So he made up his mind to conquer Korea first. He told Naoshige to build a castle at Nagoya as an advance base.

At the end of March, 1592, Nabeshima Naoshige left for Korea with 12,000 soldiers as the vanguard. So did Kato Kiyomasa, the lord of Kumamoto. They arrived at Pusan on April 28, after leaving Saga at the end of March.

In 1594 most of the generals were called back for a short rest. In March, 1597, Lord

Naoshige was told to go to Osaka Castle and stay there till early June. Naoshige was appointed leader in the Korean campaign, together with Hachisuka and Ankokuji.

In December, 1598, all the generals were told to return on the death of Taiko Hideyoshi. Lord Naoshige went with Katsushige, his son, to Fushimi, where they met Tokugawa Ieyasu. Then they met Hideyori, the Taiko's son. In March, 1599, Naoshige could finally return to Saga in 8 years after his departure.

- * Nagoya is a village by the sea located about 70 km north-west of Saga.
- * Taiko Hideyoshi died in August 1598 aged 63.

377) Every rose has its thorn.

Lord Naoshige would say, "Do not be complacent about small successes. You will end up regretting it in future."

378) Young Naoshige stands on guard for his master.

When Ryuzo-ji Takanobu's reputation as a brave leader was becoming known far and wide, one winter evening he gave a feast at his residence. All of a sudden, a maid servant cried, "Look! Someone is over there!" Most of the guests came out to the verandah and recognized a man standing in the garden.

Lord Takanobu shouted, "Who is that over there?" "It is Saemon-dayu, sir," said the man. He was standing in a corner of the garden holding his spear. "What are you standing there for?" "We must be always on guard against enemies. I have come over because I heard you were giving a feast here tonight."

Ryuzo-ji Takanobu was deeply impressed with his behavior and invited him to the feast for a cup of wine. Saemon-dayu came up to the verandah but his spear would not come away because it was frozen to his hands.

- * Saemon-dayu was the name of Naoshige when he was young.

379) Taiko Hideyoshi praises Ryuzo-ji Takanobu for trusting Naoshige.

Taiko Hideyoshi said, "Ryuzo-ji Takanobu is really a great leader, because he has entrusted the governance of his domain to Nabeshima Naoshige. He is a good judge of

people, I should say. I am impressed with Naoshige's capacity as a premier."

380) Lord Naoshige stays overnight in Shimonoseki.

In 1590 Lord Naoshige went to do battle at Odawara. On his way there he stayed at Michiyama Heibey's house in Shimonoseki.

- * Odawara is located about 85 km west of Tokyo.
- * Shimonoseki is a town by the sea, at the far west of the main island, Honshu.

381) A long moat is dug.

In November, 1603, a group of farmers under Nakano Jin-uemon, the magistrate, visited Nabeshima Shozo to make an accusation against Yatsunami Zen-zaemon, an official at the magistrate's office. However, the man proved innocent of the charge, and the farmers were sentenced to crucifixion.

Hearing of this, Lord Naoshige said, "If they are crucified on wood, their bodies will rot and so will the wood. Jin-uemon, the magistrate, will not agree with such a sentence, either. Let the accusers dig a moat at Hasu-ike Village." In this way the so-called 1000-*ken* moat was dug by them.

- * A *ken* is about 2 meters long, so 1000-*ken* moat was about 2 km long.
- * Hasu-ike Village is about 10 km southeast of the castle.

382) Naoshige brings home several potters from Korea.

Nabeshima Naoshige brought back several master potters from Korea with the purpose of making them pioneers of ceramic industry in Saga. They were first compelled to live in Kinryu Village, to make pottery there. Then they were moved to Fujiko-chi, Imari, where they made ceramics. Soon Japanese people learned it from them. By and by the Arita and Imari regions became known for pottery production.

- * Kinryu Village is about 10 km north of Saga, while Imari is about 60 km west.

383) Nabeshima Naoshige apologizes to the god of Kanoko Shrine.

Kanoko Shrine was built by Ryuzo-ji Takanobu. As a boy, Nabeshima Shigemasa shot at a pigeon in the shrine but missed his target. He got angry and said, "It must be the god's wicked design. What a detestable god!" He shot through the side wall of the main building.

When the boy told Naoshige about it, he got furious and said, "Your behavior was deplorable!" Immediately he purified himself with water, dressed himself in a formal *kimono*, and went to the shrine. Kneeling down on the ground, he said, "Please forgive him for his rudeness. I am really afraid the villagers in this village will suffer from your punishment. He is such a mischievous boy, but please do forgive him for the sake of heaven." He made his apology in a loud voice.

* Kanoko Shrine is about 3 km south of Saga.

* Nabeshima Shigemasa was the son of a niece of Yodai-in, Lord Naoshige's wife.

384) What is unpleasant can be useful.

Lord Naoshige would often say, "Things unpleasant to you will turn out to be useful."

385) Nabeshima Naoshige is impressed with Yodai-in's efficiency.

Lady Yodai-in had returned to her parents' house after Nodomi Jibudayu, her husband, was killed by a sniper in May 1566. One day Ryuzo-ji Takanobu and some of his attendants dropped in at her house to take lunch.

"Roast the sardines and offer them to our general and his attendants," said Ishi-i Hyobu, her father, to his maid-servants. However, there were so many soldiers that they could not cater for them all in time. Yodai-in, his daughter, had been watching their work from inside the house, and suddenly came out to join the maid servants. She stirred round the burning charcoal under the range, threw the sardines into a big pot, and began to fan it with a big round fan. Then she put them into a big bamboo box and took it to the warriors.

Nabeshima Naoshige was moved by her brisk conduct and said to himself, "I would like to marry such a woman!" Later he visited her house quite often to win her love. One day he was mistaken for an intruder and was run after by a servant with a sword. Unfortunately he got slightly wounded on the sole of his foot with the servant's blade.

* Lady Yodai-in was 29 years old at that time.

386) Lady Yodai-in meets Taiko Hideyoshi with her face made up to look ugly on purpose.

When Taiko Hideyoshi was staying at Nagoya, he would entertain the wives of the Kyushu lords at his castle. One day a letter of invitation came to Yodai-in. She refused it through the Taiko's maid servant, but she asked Yodai-in to come over at least one time because she did not like to make a bad precedent. Finally Yodai-in went up to see him at Nagoya Castle, wearing an ugly-looking makeup, but she never visited the castle again after that.

* Lady Yodai-in was about 52 years old.

387) Lord Naoshige hands over some money to a mountain monk.

One day a mountain monk visited Kuroda Nagamasa, the lord of Fukuoka Clan, and said, "Last night I had a dream, in which you were a tycoon governing five countries." "What a lucky dream you had!" said the lord. "Thank you for your information. Let me reward you when it becomes true." He then had the monk withdraw.

The same monk came to Saga to see Lord Naoshige. He said the same thing to our lord. "A lucky dream indeed. Thank you for informing me of it," he said, and gave him 100 coins.

One of his attendants said, "You gave the money to the same monk who was not paid anything in Fukuoka. Everybody is gossiping about why you did such a thing."

"Those monks earn their living by flattering everybody they meet," said the lord. "So I gave him the money."

388) Nabeshima Naoshige praises Kobayakawa Takakage.

One day an attendant to the lord said, "I heard there are two great generals in Japan. One of them is, of course, yourself. And the other is Kobayakawa Takakage, they say."

"Nobody is as great as Takakage," he said. "A couple of years ago I was sitting with all the other *daimyo* at Osaka Castle. There Taiko Hideyoshi said, 'I would like to reward all of you with land for your past contribution. As you know, however, Japan is too small to make a parcel of land for each of you. I have an idea of giving each of you enough land in Korea and China. What do you think of that?'"

“I thought Taiko Hideyoshi must have gone insane at first, but of course nobody could give their opinion about his idea,” said Lord Naoshige. “Then Takakage raised his hand to speak. He said that he quite agreed with the Taiko. It made Taiko Hideyoshi feel pleasant. Taking out an illustrated map of Korea, the Taiko showed such places as mountains, rivers, bridges, and so on, some of which Takakage confirmed. I thought him rather shallow. How on earth can we know the topography of such a far-away country? To my great surprise, I found out his knowledge was correct when I went to Korea. Yes, he is a really great man in Japan.”

389) “Saga *samurai* seem to have lost their vigor and drive.”

One day Nabeshima Aki went to the tertiary enclosure to see Lord Naoshige but he was absent. He asked the lord’s attendants where he had gone, but nobody knew his whereabouts. The following day he paid a visit to the tertiary enclosure again only to find him absent. Looking for him this way and that, he finally found him standing at a turret.

“What are you doing here?” he said.

“I have been watching people passing by for a couple of days,” said the lord.

“Why have you been doing this?” asked Aki.

“To find out something about them.”

“Then what have you found?”

“To my disappointment, it seems the people of Saga Clan have lost their pluck, the *samurai* spirit. Look, they are slouching about looking down at the ground. We have to be aware of this behavior of our people. I am afraid they could not fight on the battlefield as bravely as they used to. It is important to be honest and polite, but if they lack bravery they cannot perform exploits in an emergency. A *samurai* has to remain gallant as long as he lives. Sometimes they may talk big and boast about themselves.”

Nabeshima Aki began to boast of his own feats after that, someone said.

390) Young Naoshige returns to his parents’ house with 12 brave guards.

In 1551 Nabeshima Naoshige returned to his parental home from Ogi where he had been adopted by the Chiba family. His father-in-law assigned twelve strong men to him. They were his first attendants.

* Naoshige was adopted by the Chiba family in 1542 aged 4 and returned to his parental house in 1552 at the age of 14.

391) Nabeshima Naoshige lies in bed as he listens to his retainers gossiping.

When Lord Naoshige went to bed, some of his retainers would sit in the next room and talk of past days, smoking the tobacco he had given them. He enjoyed listening to them as he lay there. If he heard something new or strange, he would ask them about it before he went to sleep.

392) Preach faithfulness to others. Join a picnic if you are invited.

One day Lord Naoshige said to the attendants who were supposed to amuse him, “A *samurai* must be always on his guard. You cannot tell what will happen at any time. Unless you are careful, you are sure to fail some day. Do not speak ill of a man because others are doing so. Preach to others what to do, but as for going out, wait till you are invited. When others talk to you about unfamiliar topics, do not pretend to know about them. Answer promptly when you are asked about things you know.”

* Most of the lords employed several men who entertain them with interesting news and stories, as well as consult with.

393) Lord Naoshige praises Kobayakawa Takakage.

Lord Naoshige was paid a visit by Ayabe Ukyo, Chibu Taro-zaemon, and O-kuma Gempa. “We heard that the *daimyo* in Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka are sizing up all the *daimyo* in Japan,” said Ayabe Ukyo on behalf of the three of them. “They were saying you are an excellent leader in wisdom and courage, together with Kobayakawa Takakage. Since you are a veteran of many more battles than Takakage, they were speaking more highly of you.”

“What made you compare me with Takakage?” said Lord Naoshige. “You are talking like that because you do not know anything about Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka. You are country *samurai*. Nobody is equal to Takakage in wisdom. Let me tell you how great he is,” said Lord Naoshige. “One year after Taiko surrendered Odawara Castle in 1590, he summoned all the *daimyo* to Osaka Castle to discuss the Korean Expedition. I was seated among them listening to his explanation. Then he said, ‘Let me surrender

Korea to make it a story of exploits to be boasted of by our descendants.’ Kobayakawa Takakage stepped nearer to the Taiko and said, ‘Please make it come true!’ Everyone said Takakage was an excellent person but I thought that he was a flatterer, because it seemed to me he was just bragging about an unknown country. What a stupid person he was! However, the discussion went on and Taiko Hideyoshi summoned an attendant to write down the strategy for the Korean Expedition correctly. It seemed that Takakage already knew something about the Taiko’s strategy and nodded to his remarks. Once in a while he pointed out that some place might be hard to get past and suggested that the route should be changed. He also said that a certain mountain should be avoided because it might be cursed by the evil spirit of the gods. At that time I was dumfounded by his pliant words. I sailed over to Korea and stayed there for seven years, during which I had to admit that everything he said was in accordance with the actual topography explained by him.”

394) Lord Naoshige makes his attendant throw away a persimmon seed.

One day Taku Yohey, Isahaya Ukon, Taeko Shume, and Suko Shimo-usa were in charge of guarding Lord Naoshige. As they were chatting in a relaxed mood, the lord gave each of them a persimmon, which they ate with delight. Taku Yohey happened to insert a seed surreptitiously between the threshold and the end of a *tatami* mat, but his behavior was noticed by the lord.

“Send for the carpenter right away,” said the lord. When he appeared with his tool box, Lord Naoshige said, “Remove that threshold and throw away the seed. Then install it again.” The carpenter did as he was told by the lord. Since he had given the carpenter such trouble, Taku Yohey would not eat a persimmon again as long as he lived.

395) Saito Sado and his son follow Lords Naoshige and Katsushige to their graves.

Saito Sado was such a courageous *samurai* and performed so many exploits on the battlefield that Lord Naoshige made him his favorite attendant. However, the period of Warring States was finished and it was a time of peace. Saito had worked splendidly during the wartime but did not know how to live in peace. All his family were suffering from poverty and hunger at the end of the year. “All we can do is to take our own lives by *seppuku*,” he said to Yo-no-suke, his son.

“We should do whatever we can to survive, Father,” said the young boy.

“But it will be of no use to live on, troubling myself about little things,” he said. “I would rather kill myself after an extraordinary evil deed!”

The son agreed with the father on the spot, and they came up to the bridge at Takao Village. They waited for some time, as lots of wagons passed by with bags of rice on them. When a team of ten wagons came by, they drove away all the drivers and took all the bags of rice to their house.

Their wicked conduct was known to everyone and it was reported by Inuzuka Sobey, a magistrate in charge of the rice transportation. The case was examined by all the magistrates and for their unlawful act they were sentenced to death. Lord Katsushige agreed with the penalty, of course.

The magistrates visited the tertiary enclosure, when the penalty was reported to ex-Lord Naoshige through Fujishima Sho-eki, the direct attendant. Ex-Lord Naoshige and Lady Yodai-in were crushed with grief and could not utter a word.

The news was reported to Lord Katsushige by the direct attendant. Greatly surprised, Lord Katsushige declared that Saito Sado, the father, should be dismissed from his post instead. Very soon the officials visited the tertiary enclosure again with the new decision. The former lord Naoshige said, “Sado committed a very serious crime, but I am to blame for his sin. He performed such great feats in action that I rewarded him with some gifts, but I was lazy in not giving him any land in peacetime. I should have been more considerate to him. He revenged himself on me by his conduct. I am really ashamed of myself, and really appreciate my son’s consideration to my old servant. When you visited me last time, I could not ask you to save him and his son because the crime was so serious. That is the reason why I kept silent.”

After the officials withdrew, Naoshige told Sho-eki to take ten bags of rice to Sado. When Naoshige died, Sado and his son asked Lord Katsushige to allow them to kill themselves by *seppuku*. “Serve me with your resolution instead,” said the lord but they would not agree. Both of them did follow Naoshige to his grave after all. Gon-uemon, the second son of Yo-no-suke, also killed himself when Lord Katsushige passed away in 1657.

* It was in 1618 when Lord Naoshige died, aged 81.

* Takao Village was at the eastern end of Saga.

396) A brave soldier is not always a man of common sense.

Lord Naoshige was so fond of Yoko-o Kura-no-jo, a very good spearman. "I wish you had seen him at the front," he said to Motoshige, his grandson. "Young and full of energy, nobody handled a spear like him." Kura-no-jo was so attached to his master as to make an oath to follow him to the grave at his death.

One day he filed a suit against a farmer and his case was discussed by the superintendents in the presence of Lord Naoshige. He lost it because his demand was out of the question. "I lost it because you took the side of the farmer," he said to the officials angrily. Turning to the lord, he said, "I cannot follow you to the grave now that I have lost my case against such a petty farmer. Please release me from the oath I offered."

"It is really difficult to reconcile both ends," said the lord. "His spearmanship is excellent, but he lacks common sense." With regret, he released him from the oath.

* Yoko-o Kura-no-jo died in 1613.

397) Thanks to Sho-eki, Lord Naoshige refrains from killing himself.

Lord Naoshige disliked traveling by boat and everything related to it. Not only a smell of a boat but the smell of a beach made him feel sick. He would not eat anything on board, either.

On October 8, one year, he was on his way back to Saga. Leaving port in the morning, the sea was calm, but around 2 in the afternoon the wind and the waves grew high. Late in the evening the boat was rolled violently in the billowing sea and soon the rudder was broken. The captain as well as the boatmen had no idea where the boat was going. On the deck one of the boatmen and Fujishima Sho-eki alone were struggling against raging waves

Fujishima Sho-eki went down to the cabin to see Mochinaga Suke-zaemon. Both of them helped Lord Naoshige and carried him up to the deck. Making him lean against the railing, Sho-eki said, "Hold on to this or anything else in case it sinks." Then he made Suke-zaemon grasp the lord from behind, when he began vomiting and so did Suke-zaemon. Their faces, breasts, and hands were badly smeared with spew. "You look like boys' playing!" said Sho-eki laughing.

He went below to the bottom with the boatman and found the spare rudder, which they managed to insert in the metal fittings. Late at night the wind abated at last. Soon a couple of boats were seen sailing by, so Lord Naoshige told his attendants to call them to stop. Their shouts were not heard because of the strong wind, and all the boats passed by. Lord Naoshige got very angry, and said, "I recognized one attendant

on board. If we land safe, I will make him kill himself by *seppuku*!” Sho-eki said to him, “No, they did not desert us. It is the strong wind which blocked out our cries.”

Soon the wind rose again. The boat lost the rudder and was being tossed about like a leaf. Lord Naoshige said, “Was the rudder ripped off again?” To which someone answered, “No, it was not. Its timber was crushed to pieces.” Hearing this, the lord cried in an angry voice, “He is a liar. Kill him on the spot!” The boat was really on the verge of sinking.

“It is all up with us now. Bring my two swords to me,” said Lord Naoshige.

“We make mistakes in emergencies like this,” said Sho-eki. “Please wait for a while. Let me bring them to you at the last moment.”

“I understand, but let me carry the shorter one at least,” said the lord. “I am a general known for bravery all over the country. How can a brave soldier lose his life unarmed? What will people say when they find my body floating on the sea with no swords? I will never bring disgrace on my descendants and my family.”

Sho-eki knew the lord’s disposition well. He had no choice but take his own life in such a situation, he thought. So he disobeyed the lord’s command. He went below, took out two bags of rice, and lowered them with a rope into the sea, and finally the boat became stable. Lord Naoshige recovered his presence of mind, too.

“The day is dawning. Look! Land over there!” cried a boatman. They were floating several hundred meters off Akashi beach in the breeze. They helped the lord onto a barge which took him ashore. He landed wearing his swords.

Hiring a hut, they helped him change his clothes. He slept a while and appeared in good spirits. Then he took a hot bath and sat to dine around 10 o’clock. Lord Naoshige thanked Sho-eki for his working night and day. He took out some special medicine from his purse and handed it to his faithful servant. In a couple of days they returned to Saga safely.

Lady Yodai-in, the lord’s wife, was told of it, and gave a hood to Sho-eki as a present, while Lord Katsushige gave some extra land. Asked to tell what happened on that stormy night, Sho-eki told Lady Yodai-in everything. She bowed to him in tears.

“It sounds ridiculous now, but on that night I was really upset,” said the lord later. “I really intended to kill myself by cutting my throat with my sword, but Sho-eki did not obey my order. I felt angry with him, but he was right. To tell the truth, I felt too weak to hold my sword.” As for the boats that passed by, he said no more about them, to the relief of his attendants.

When Sei-zaemon, Sho-eki’s grandson, asked him about the names of the boats which had sailed past, he said, “Do not ask such a stupid question! How can I tell you when

our lord did not mention it! You should know better. You are too rude for a servant.”

398) The master carpenter is sentenced to death.

When the keep of Saga Castle was built, the master carpenter was sentenced to death for a treacherous plot he had devised.

399) Lord Naoshige donates stone lanterns to three shrines.

Lord Naoshige donated stone lanterns to Yoka Shrine, Honjo Shrine, and Odo Shrine. He offered one to Odo Shrine because it was the guardian deity of Motoshige, his grandson. The reason he donated one to Yoka Shrine was interesting enough. One evening he was passing by the shrine on his way to Tafuse from the castle. “It is so dark!” said someone from inside the shrine. He told his attendant to go inside the shrine but found no one there. But as he heard the voice so clearly, he decided to donate a lantern to that shrine. He continued to offer candles for the shrines privately, even after he retired.