

884) Araki Kyu-zaemon slashes at his fellow attendants.

On the night of September 13, 1687, ten *samurai* were enjoying the moon at Nakayama Mosuke's house in Saya-no-moto. He was a foot soldier. They all had duties in connection with Noh drama. During the evening, Naotsuka Kan-zaemon insulted a man named Araki for his short height, and his fellow players also joined in. Infuriated by their offensive remarks, Araki cut Naotsuka to death and struck at the others. Matsumoto Roku-zaemon had his arm cut off, but grabbed the short man's clothes with his other hand as he jumped down to the garden. "I will tear off your head with one arm!" he said, and seized Araki's sword. Holding the short man down on the threshold, he pressed him under his knee. As he grabbed his head, however, he became faint and fell down dead. Araki got up again and slashed at the other men, but a servant named Hayada held him down with others. Araki was sentenced to death and all the others who did not join the fight were dismissed from their posts. Hayada was later forgiven.

My teacher said he hardly remembered the incident in detail. I will check later. According to another source of information, Hayada had left earlier with some excuse, but learned about the fight on his way home. When he returned, Hachi-dayu lay dead at the front of the house and Araki Kyu-zaemon was standing in the garden with a spear in his hand. Hayada spoke to him, got the spear from him, and seized Araki alive.

885) It is not always good to stop a fight.

O-ishi Mata-no-jo was married to a daughter of Kuranaga Rihey. When Rihey had a party on his promotion, his son-in-law entertained the guests together with Ichi-dayu, Rihey's son. During the party, they became drunk, and Ichi-dayu quarreled with Mata-no-jo so persistently that he got angry and said, "You might be my wife's brother, but you cannot speak to me like that." "Humph! So what? Are you going to kill me? All right, my brother, kill me!" said Ichi-dayu and stretched out his neck to him. The next moment Mata-no-jo cut off Ichi-dayu's ear with his sword. Eguchi Ichiro-zaemon, one of the guests, got the sword away from him by pulling the sleeve of his robe, since Mata-no-jo was very tall. Mata-no-jo was subdued by them and taken back to his own house.

Ichi-dayu was dismissed from his post and Mata-no-jo was sentenced to death by *seppuku*. All who had been present at the party were confined to their own houses. Rihey was not criticized at all.

After two years, however, Rihey was dismissed from his post. When asked about the fight at the castle, he had said, "Since I thought it wrong to neglect my duty, I did not go back to my house. So I do not know anything about it." That was why he was not punished.

However, according to another source of information, Rihey had been on his way back to his house after hearing what had happened, when he ran into Mata-no-jo halfway. "I have injured your son in a drunken brawl. I am sorry I did not finish him off. You will probably hate me," he said. Rihey proceeded back to his house, because the man holding his son-in-law barred the other way. This was known to a lot of people, so Rihey was criticized for his conduct two years later, and was dismissed. I must check it in more detail.

At drinking parties you have to be prepared for the unexpected. If you get completely drunk and cannot function, you will lose the reputation you have gained. So you must be careful not to let liquor get the upper hand. Suppose there was some commotion after you had left halfway through a banquet. Then you would be examined by the magistrate simply because you had been there. If you are informed about a fight after you have left, however, you should go to the place at once and behave properly as a *samurai*. Do not be afraid of any trouble you might suffer in future. They are all your comrades. You should not bring disgrace upon yourself. Depending on the situation it may be necessary to let one side kill the other. It is not always a good idea to stop a fight. A *samurai* must always behave properly.

When I asked Eguchi Ichiro-zaemon about Mata-no-jo's fight, this was how he explained. On that day Moro-oka Kin-uemon, Yamaro Zembey, Ikaga Bu-uemon and Sugimachi Hiko-uemon went to the wine party in the daytime. Ito Kan-zaemon, Sugimachi Densuke and Eguchi himself joined them in the evening. At first they drank in the inner room entertained by Mata-no-jo and Ichi-dayu. They moved to the living room late in the evening. Kin-uemon, Zembey and Bu-uemon returned home by themselves because they had been drinking since daytime. The others just moved in and out of the two rooms, trying not to drink any more since they had already drunk quite enough. Ichi-dayu was sitting across from Mata-no-jo, and suddenly slashed at him without uttering a word. In great surprise Ichiro-zaemon stood up and so did

Mata-no-jo. Since Mata-no-jo was very tall, Ichiro-zaemon could not reach the sword which the assailant was brandishing overhead. He pulled Mata-no-jo's sleeve down, and the tall man's sword fell, and he could be disarmed. He thought he could seize it when Mata-no-jo had raised it for the first time, but it turned out that Mata-no-jo cut off Ichi-dayu's ear with his first downswing, and Ichi-dayu grabbed it when he swung it down the second time. Ichiro-zaemon extinguished the lantern when he kicked it by accident, and his attendant waiting in the next room came through with another lantern. They all held Mata-no-jo down and took him to the inner room. Then Kan-zaemon and Hiko-uemon took him to his house. Densuke and Ichiro-zaemon remained but could do nothing with Ichi-dayu, who was in a panic, so they also returned home.

At the examination Mata-no-jo said, "When Ichi-dayu saw Kan-zaemon lying with his head on my lap, he scolded him as bad-mannered. I was afraid Kan-zaemon might be offended at this, so I said to Ichi-dayu, 'Do not talk so freely simply because your father is a direct attendant of the lord. It might end in bloodshed.' 'Why do you not cut me with your sword then?' he said. So I cut off his ear." For his part, Ichi-dayu said to the official, "When everybody was having a good time Mata-no-jo suddenly slashed at me, under the influence of alcohol." The rest of them stated that they could not remember what it was about because they had been completely drunk. They could not remember what Kan-zaemon said, either. As a result, all of them were ordered to confine themselves in their own houses.

The lord said it was very regrettable that they said they had been too drunk to remember anything about the party. He also said it was a big mistake that Ichiro-zaemon did not ask Mata-no-jo why he slashed at his brother-in-law. He should have ascertained it on the spot, but Ichi-dayu could say nothing about the banquet on account of having drunk too much.

Mata-no-jo and Ichi-dayu were said not to have been on good terms with each other in spite of their relationship. Both their fathers had been colleagues but Rihey, Ichi-dayu's father, was promoted to a higher rank, while Gumpey, Mata-no-jo's father, was not awarded any promotion. There was a rumor that Mata-no-jo had borne a grudge against his brother-in-law for his own father's sake.

886) Kizuka Kyu-zaemon's attendant admits joining a fight.

A couple of years ago there was a ceremony at Jisso-in Temple in Kawakami Village. Several men went to it from Kon-ya and Tashiro. On their way home they had a drink at a shop. An attendant of Kyu-zaemon left early for an appointment, before dark.

Later they had a fight with another group of men and killed one of them. When Kyu-zaemon's servant heard of this late at night, he went to see his friends and said, "Sooner or later we will be summoned by the officials to make a report. Please tell them that I was among you in the fight. I will tell the same to my master. After a fight each side is examined and sentenced to some penalty. I am willing to accept the same punishment as you. If I tell my master that I had to leave earlier for an appointment, he will not believe me. Since my master is a very strict person, he will put me to death even if he is told that I was not involved in it. I do not want to be killed for deserting you. If I have to lose my life, I would rather do so for having joined you in a fight. If you do not agree, let me take my own life here."

At the examination they told the officials that Kyu-zaemon's attendant had joined them in the fight, but it was discovered that he had left earlier than the others. The magistrates were impressed with his behavior and praised him for that.

* Kon-ya and Tashiro are small towns located about 2 km east of the castle.

887) Nomura Gen-zaemon writes a poem after committing *seppuku*.

Nomura Gen-zaemon was a man of great ability in the Ogi branch clan. He was second to none in accomplishments, and was also known as the best gambler in the western region of Saga Clan.

When the officials reported that he went to other clans to gamble, the lord took the notorious man into employment as his attendant for some time, because he thought him promising. Before long, however, he went to Nagasaki with a passport issued by the lord. Winning a big fortune by gambling, he bought a house and took his pleasure in Nagasaki's red-light district of Maruyama.

When it was reported to the lord, he sent a couple of men to fetch him back. He was told to commit *seppuku* for breaking the law. When he was brought to the site of execution, he said to the second staring at him, "Do not take off my head till I have well and properly cut my own belly, and have given you the word. Otherwise may there be a curse not only on you but on all your descendants down to the seventh generations."

After winding his abdomen with a cotton sheet, he cut into it down and across till his entrails came out. Turning a little pale, he closed his eyes for a time before taking out a hand mirror and looking at his own face. Then he asked a sheet of paper and a writing brush. "Are you ready?" said the second but he shook his head and said, "Wait a moment." Holding the paper he wrote a poem on it.

Called a coward by my uncle,

This will make the bastard

Think of how I died.

As he handed it to his second, Gen-zaemon said, "Show this to him. All right, you can strike." The next moment his head dropped to the ground.

Before he was taken to the site, he had said to one of the magistrates, "A couple of years ago three men were killed at Yoka Square. No one was arrested, but it was me. I killed them for a grudge in gambling. It was early in the morning and I was seen by some passers-by, but nobody reported it. Was that not strange?"

He also said, "Last year I lost money in gambling and was in a foul mood. I thought of committing highway robbery. When I came to the Tafuse River, I saw a man coming toward me. When he came close by, I slashed at him. "Who in the world are you?" said the man. "I have never done anything to incur the resentment of others. I am afraid you have mistaken me for someone else. My name is such and such. I am in charge of tools and things at the castle. I am on my way to my office. Tell me what you are about." But I went on slashing at him in silence. "You are a highwayman, are you not? All right, let me show you who I am!" he said and slashed at me. For a while we had a heated fight but I found that he was better than I, so I fled down the east bank in the direction of Kono Village. When I looked back, the man was still running after me shouting, "Stop the coward!" Soon he stopped chasing after me. He probably thought that I had managed to get back to my house. If he had caught me, I would have had to fight for my life."

He also said, "Once I was involved in a gambling party at someone's house. When we were sitting in a circle, his two-year old son climbed on my back. I brushed him away. Unfortunately, the boy was killed on the spot because my hand had struck him on a fatal point. His mother bawled at me, crying bitterly, so I said, 'Stop your crying. If you go on crying so loudly the neighbors will hear and report to the magistrate's office. Then all of us including you will be put to death. Please stop crying and be patient. Let us give you the whole pot of bets. We also want to live. I am sorry but it is no use crying over your lost child. Unless you agree to this proposal, we might as well kill you and your husband and then take our own lives here and now.' His wife agreed to the offer, so we gave her all the money. Then we sent for a doctor on the pretext of the child's sudden illness. Soon we sent another person, who met the doctor on his way, and he said, 'The boy just died away. You do not have to come, thank you.' The case was settled when the sad news was transmitted to the neighbors that the infant had

passed away from a sudden illness.”

888) The head priest of Seisho-ji Temple greets Lord Mitsushige as a commoner.

The head priest of Seisho-ji Temple in Edo was from Saga. When Lord Mitsushige paid a visit to the temple for worship, the head priest in his official position said a word of welcome to him. When the lord left for his residence, however, the priest came out at the back gate and sat on the ground to see him off. He said to the lord, “Please accept my deep gratitude as a man from your clan.”

* Seisho-ji Temple was a noted temple with a long history in Edo.

889) Never say that everything is in peace.

When Nakano Jin-uemon was living in Momo-no-kawa, a man came to see him. Jin-uemon said to the man, “I wonder how the situation is in Saga and how Edo has changed. I live in such a remote place and have no idea about them. Please tell me what you know.” “Everything is peaceful in Edo, and also in Saga,” said the man.

After the visitor returned, Jin-uemon said to his children, “I wanted to entertain the guest with a feast but decided not to, because I did not like his answer to my question. He should not have answered me like that in the company of all of my children and attendants. He should have said, “There has not been much change in Saga, but all the *samurai* in Saga are always on guard against an emergency.”

When anyone came to see him, he made it a rule to ask him about the current situation. If the visitor said, “Everything looks fine,” he would say, “That means that we have to be careful about the present situation.”

* Momo-no-kawa is located about 50 km west of Saga.

* Jin-uemon is Jocho’s grandfather, and he owned Momo-no-kawa as his territory.

890) Nabeshima Aki eats the leftovers of his servant.

When Nabeshima Aki was at table, he had to leave it because a man visited him on a matter of emergency. Soon after he left the table, his attendant came to the dining room and sat in his master’s place. Noticing a roast fish half eaten, he began to eat it. Just then his master returned, so he hurried back to his post. “He ate the fish. How

sly of him!” he said, and finished eating the leftovers. The man followed Nabeshima Aki to the grave by *seppuku* at his death in February 1645.

891) A young master saves his old servant.

When Nabeshima Shichi-zaemon was twelve or thirteen years old, his attendant was punished by the master Nabeshima Shima for some misconduct. He was sentenced to remain confined in a small shack. Two days later, at night, Shichi-zaemon went in secret to see his old attendant in confinement in the hut with a young boy servant. The attendant was greatly surprised to see his young master, and said, “Please go back quickly. I will be back with you sooner or later. I was not ordered to go to Fukahori Village, but to stay here, because the lord intends to reprieve me before long. If your father should hear that you came to see me late at night like this, he will surely send me to Fukahori. Please leave this place and wait till I return.” He wept as he spoke, so his young master returned quickly.

The next evening the boy went to see Juho, his grandfather, at his retreat. He was so glad to see his grandson, and gave him sweets and things. “By the way, you look as if you have something to ask me,” said the old man. “What do you want me to do?” “Dear grandfather, please ask my father to forgive the old attendant,” he said so earnestly that the old man was deeply moved.

In tears he said, “I do not know what will become of our family in the future, but at least it will be safe and secure till your generation.” The next morning the old servant was released. (I was told the good news by a person who visited the house.)

* Nabeshima Shichi-zaemon belonged to one of the 6 important families who serve as administrative retainers for Saga Clan.

892) Nabeshima Aki suggests to Lord Katsushige that they attack the Arima front.

During the fighting in Arima in 1637 Nabeshima Aki said to Lord Katsushige, “They will approach our position tonight. Let us attack them on their way back and force their castle to surrender. Do you not agree?” “I have the same view, but the envoy does not seem to agree,” he replied. “We must wait for their order.”

893) Nabeshima Aki’s numerous defects will be cancelled out by his three merits.

Nabeshima Aki was known for his egoistic behavior. His senior retainers made a list of as many as 23 of his defects, and offered it to Isahaya Iwami, the lord of the Isahaya branch clan. Looking at the list, the lord said, "But he has three big qualifications. First of all no one is better suited as a messenger in an urgent situation. Second, when there is a battle anywhere, he is the most reliable person as leader of the relief troop. And last, when some problem comes up for discussion, senior retainers and young attendants meet separately in their rooms. As a result the senior retainers always accept Nagato-no-kami's ideas, while the young men's group accepts Aki's. Then we compare the suggestions and almost always the better one is what is offered by the young group, whose leader is Nabeshima Aki. Those three merits of his are great enough to make his defects count for nothing. He has great talent, so do not say anything against him." But according to his family, it was not Aki but his son that was worthy.

894) Ishi-i Gen-zaemon lets a man on horseback pass by.

Ishi-i Gen-zaemon was the second son of Yashichi-zaemon, who was known as the man who climbed the wall first at the Battle of Shimabara in 1637. He was also prepared to rush in as his father did. One day he accompanied Lord Tsunashige to the Naeki-yama residence in Edo. On their way, the lord dismounted from his horse and proceeded on foot.

Looking back at Gen-zaemon, he said, "You are wrong to stick your sword in your belt like that. Such a manner is not favored by the Yagyu school. Kaga-no-kami, the lord of the Ogi branch clan, taught me how to wear the sword. Look at mine. I fear you are not able to draw it quickly if you wear it as you do." Gen-zaemon said, "Well, just look," and rapidly drew his sword and put it back into the scabbard. "What an amusing fellow you are!" said Lord Tsunashige.

Another day he was attending the lord, when suddenly a man on horseback tried crossing just in front of the lord's palanquin. He looked like a messenger from another clan. One of Gen-zaemon's attendants jerked up the stirrup, making the rider fall to the ground. Kneeling on one knee, the fallen man put his hand to his sword. Gen-zaemon shouted at him with a fierce look, "You can pass by. Go on." Greatly surprised, and yet believing what he said, the man mounted his horse and rode past.

Gen-zaemon told his attendant to accompany the man to his house and find out his name from the plate on the door. That evening Gen-zaemon said to the senior

attendants, "Today we had an unexpected incident on our way. Maybe the man will interrupt us again. None of you will recognize him, but I can because I looked at his face. Please allow me to accompany you again tomorrow when the lord goes out." Each time the lord went out after that, Gen-zaemon went along. Meantime, he managed to make friends with a commoner who frequently visited the horse-riding *samurai's* house and collected pieces of information regarding him.

On August 15, 1699 the priest Seikai left Saga without obtaining permission, so Gen-zaemon was dispatched to bring him back. He caught up with him at Uchino Village in Fukuoka, and asked him to return to Saga. Those who were with the priest would not accede to his request, and made excuses. Ignoring them, he said to Seikai, "If you do not consent, I will have to take you back by force. Otherwise I will lose face." The priest agreed and returned to Saga after telling his men to go back to Osaka.

895) Lord Mitsushige decides to learn Noh.

Lord Mitsushige decided to learn Noh and thought of employing Tomioka Kaku-no-shin as a teacher. When Tomioka was told of the news by a retainer, he said, "I have never met the lord by myself and would feel very nervous to see him directly. I am really afraid that I might hurt his feelings by acting disrespectfully. Could you tell him how I feel, please?"

In spite of his repeated refusal, he was summoned to the library room of the castle and was told of several requests from the lord. Finally he met the lord and greeted him by bowing his head to the floor. When he was asked to perform a piece, he turned to Nakashima Zen-dayu, the agent, and asked, "I was told to perform such and such piece. Is that correct?" Lord Mitsushige replied instead of the drummer, "Yes, that is the piece I requested."

After a pause, Tomioka said to the lord, "Please allow me to explain the incident which this piece is about." Lord Mitsushige said, "I see. Now show me your performance." After bowing to the lord again, he turned to Zen-dayu, who said, "Now stand up and begin." Tomioka took his fan and performed the piece gracefully. It was indeed a beautiful performance.

Tomioka Kaku-no-shin was a fellow to play Noh with Nabeshima Naoyoshi, the second lord of the Ogi branch clan. The lord was particular about the etiquette of his servants, so all his servants were well-mannered. Every time he encountered them, he

would check their manners. If it was not courteous enough, he would correct it repeatedly till they master good manners. His servants looked like country *samurai*, but they were all neatly dressed, thanks to the lord's strict training. He was particular about the servants' manners in entering and withdrawing. "They cannot master it unless they study the tea ceremony," he would sometimes say.

896) Taku Mimasaka makes good friends with Ohki Hyo-bu.

Nabeshima Shigetsuna, the head of the Takeo family, thought of granting a piece of land to his second son Mimbu, not to his first son. All the family members were divided about their master's idea. When they were discussing this and that noisily at the residence of Nabeshima Naohiro, the head of the Shiroishi family, Taku Mimasaka said, "We do not have to talk about everything right now. An urgent matter has to be discussed, namely, the confusion in the Takeo family."

"But we cannot settle it so easily. Do you have any ideas?" someone said. "If you leave the matter to me, I can fix it," said Taku Mimasaka. "I will see Mimbu and make him understand. I will tell him that division of land should not be permitted." But they said, "He cannot agree to such a proposal." "If he does not agree, I have an idea up my sleeve," said Mimasaka. "Now let me go and see him."

While he stood holding his sword, Ohki Hyo-bu said, "Your behavior does not befit your post as an administrative retainer. Mimbu is of a much lower rank than you. Since he is my *go* partner, let me go and see him." Then he left for Mimbu's house.

"He looked so determined," said one of them. "I am afraid he will kill Mimbu. We must fetch him back." Narimatsu Shinju ran after him with bare feet and brought him back. Taku Mimasaka said, "I remember now. Nakatsukasa is a relative of Mimbu, is he not?" So he was dispatched to see Mimbu and tell him about the situation. Thanks to Nakatsukasa, the urgent problem was solved.

After that Taku Mimasaka and Ohki Hyo-bu came to be on good terms with each other.

897) Yamamoto Jin-uemon encourages his men to boast and to bet money.

Jin-uemon, my teacher's father, would always say to his servants, "Spend your money in gambling, and brag a lot! Unless you can talk big seven times before you go half a mile from your house, you will lose face as a man." In the past a man required nothing but bravery, and anyone too honest was not supposed to be able to perform any feat.

We should consider the circumstances in order to understand what he meant by that remark.

He would sometimes overlook his men's misconduct, saying that they had done well. Sagara Kyuma also forgave his men for theft and adultery, so that they changed their ways completely to become faithful servants. Jin-uemon would often say, "Nobody can be relied upon unless he was once a hoodlum."

898) Nakano Shigetoshi resigns from his post.

Nakano had been serving Lord Katsushige as a senior counselor, but he thought he would be unable to perform any great exploit as long as he served the lord close by. Before anyone noticed, he stopped coming to the castle. Even when he was asked by the lord himself, he would not appear. At last he was told to leave his post. But later he was called up again to the castle and his supply was increased.

His son Kazuma was also appointed as a senior counselor. Since he did not inherit his household, he was granted 500 *koku* afresh. His father heard of it and said, "Do you think you can serve the lord working as a senior counselor? Remember you cannot expect to perform great feats by serving the lord so close by."

899) Nakano Takumi says that he is a good judge of men.

Holding a hawk, Lord Katsushige said to Nabeshima Aki, "I am sure this is a very good bird of prey. I am confident of distinguishing a hawk's ability." Aki said, "Yes, it is a really nice bird. You have an excellent eye for birds. On the other hand, I have an eye for men." Nakano Takumi happened to be in the company and said to him, "How impolite of you to say such a thing to the lord! As for judging men I am not inferior to you."

900) Getting decisions by the manner of reading indictments

Hamuro Gon-uemon was a *yoriki* or patrol leader for the *Shogunate*. Since his wife was required to breast-feed O-haru, the third daughter of Lord Mitsushige, he had a chance to see the lord's retainers and was eventually employed as an attendant, following his earnest entreaties.

Gon-uemon made it a rule to read indictments in a dull monotone in court, not attracting any attention from the magistrate officials. He said, "If I read them

properly with expression, they can comprehend them well. As a result they may be severe with the accused.”

901) Ishi-i Kuro-uemon draws up a good plan.

One day Lord Tsunashige summoned Ishi-i Kuro-uemon and said, “I heard you are to accompany my sister to Kawakami for a picnic. Since there will be a lot of women with her, you must be careful. How are you going to handle it?” He explained his plan to the lord on the spot. Having listened to him, the lord was satisfied and said, “Very good. You have thought it through carefully.”

After that, Lord Tsunashige often mentioned him, “He is excellent. Few men are as organized as Kuro-uemon.” He was later given a gift. He might be said to have been specially talented in that way. It is very important to express yourself without looking at your notebook.

902) Ishi-i Goro-uemon is ordered to go as a messenger.

One day in the reign of Lord Tsunashige all the administrative retainers, senior counselors, direct attendants and caretakers of the Edo and Osaka residences were called to discuss the matter of Lord Tsunashige’s message to O-kubo Kaga-no-kami, a *roju* or one of the four elder members of the Shogun’s council. At the end of the meeting, the lord asked them who to select as a messenger, but they were at a loss which man to recommend. Then Lord Tsunashige said, “Let me appoint Goro-uemon as my envoy.” Actually he was present at the meeting as a representative of the caretakers who worked at the Edo residence looking after things in general. “All of us already have seen his way of speaking at meetings,” said the lord. “He needs no lesson in delivering verbal messages in detail. Goro-uemon, show us what you will say right now.”

“How embarrassed I feel to do so in the company of such dignitaries!” he said in breathless excitement, but the next moment he said, “Very well. Let me show you what I have in mind.” After listening to his statement, the lord said, “You have done it as I expected. Please go and see O-kubo Kaga-no-kami, the *roju*.”

903) Behave as if your duty will be over within the day.

Ikuno Oribe said, “You can bear any hardship in your duty if you think it will be over

within a single day. The next day, adopt the frame of mind that it will be over within that day again.”

904) Nakano Matabey goes to the front in spite of his smallpox.

In October, 1637, the Christians rose in revolt against the Shogunate, when Nakano Matabey was serving as the local administrator in Nishime. He was 21 years old and was suffering from smallpox. When the Saga troop was about to go to attack Arima Castle where the Christians were holding out, Matabey was visited by several men. At his bedside, they all said, “Our troop has just started for Arima Castle. Please do not worry. You can join us after you have recovered from your disease.”

Nabeshima Goro-zaemon, his sister’s husband, also sent an attendant to see him. “We feel very sorry for you in your illness,” said the messenger to him on behalf of his master. “Please resign yourself to having been deserted by the god of war.”

When he heard the messenger’s greetings, he sat up and said, “Yes, I am deserted by the god of war. How unlucky I am! But let me go to the front!” This was only 12 days after he had fallen ill, but he got ready to run in the direction of Arima Castle. His attendants were very concerned about his condition and thought that he had gone mad. “No, I am not mad,” he said to them. “Goro-zaemon’s anxiety is quite natural. How can I preserve my honor as a retainer if I stay away from the front on account of illness? Even if I should lose my life halfway, I do not mind at all. It is my decision as a *samurai*. Let me go right away.”

“We understand, sir,” said his attendant. “Now let me bathe your smallpox with hot water.” But the man poured cold water on it by mistake. It gave him unbearable pain but he endured it by clenching his teeth. Soon he started for his destination, accompanied by Nakano Takumi. Since he rode a horse without a saddle, his legs got swollen. That night his attendants rubbed his legs with a cloth soaked in water with which rice had been washed. Thanks to that, the swelling was reduced. He could reach the Arima position the following day, and strove so hard that he was given 20 silver coins as a reward. He was able to preserve his honor as a *samurai* and recover his spirit, thanks to what Goro-zaemon had said. “Smallpox be hanged! It could not beat me!” he said to my teacher directly.

Goro-zaemon’s household was inherited by Sensu Geki, while Goro-zaemon’s father was a well-known swordsman by the name of Ki-un, and his attendant Kakuzo was a first-rate lancer. Goro-zaemon’s daughter was married to Ishi-i Hahciro-zaemon.

When she came to see her father with her children, he showed them his sword, which he had polished by himself, and said, "I will give this to one of you as a keepsake if you are brave."

905) Yamamoto Goro-zaemon risks his life to meet the priest Cho-on.

Before inheriting the throne, Prince Tsunashige had been absorbed in studying Buddhism under the priest Cho-on. When the priest decided to award him a certificate, there was a heated discussion among the retainers. When word of this reached Yamamoto Goro-zaemon, his chief attendant who accompanied trips and also acted as superintendent, he judged it untimely. He thought it necessary to have the priest cancel his certificate, so he went to see him at his residence, prepared to kill him unless he agreed to his request. The priest met him politely. "I would like to talk with you in secret," he said and the priest ordered the room to be cleared of people.

"I heard that Prince Tsunashige is to be awarded a certificate soon, on account of his diligent studies," he said. "I am sure that you understand the customs of the Ryuzo-ji and Nabeshima families, because you are from our clan. Hitherto, it has been governed peacefully by those families. No lord of our clan has ever been awarded a certificate in Buddhism, so we are very surprised at the news. If you grant him a certificate, he will feel so self-confident that he will not listen to any other clan member. He will think nothing of us and everyone else in the clan. A person of high birth is apt to boast of his achievements. So we would like you not to award him such a certificate. If you refuse to withhold it, I know what to do."

Cho-on listened to his statement with a pale face, and said, "I understand what you mean. You are a faithful servant indeed." "That is very diplomatic of you," he said. "But I did not come to listen to your compliments. Please tell me whether you will stop the certificate or not." "Of course I will not grant it," the priest reassured him. So he returned to the residence. (My teacher was told this directly by Goro-zaemon.)

906) O-shima Geki commits *seppuku* at news of the death of Lord Katsushige.

The death notice of Lord Katsushige was brought to Saga by an express messenger. That day, O-shima Geki was out in his vegetable garden. His wife came and told him the sad news. He hurried back to his house and told her to prepare a bath for him to wash in, and also a linen *kimono*, because he intended to perform *seppuku*.

When he was dressed, several people appeared and said, "Do not do this. There is no

need for this, because you are not of high rank.” He replied, “A couple of years ago when I accompanied the lord hunting in Nishime, I killed a big wild pig with a single stroke. He saw it and called for me. ‘Whose group are you in?’ he asked, so I answered that I belonged to Fukuchi Kaku-zaemon’s group. ‘You are very brave. He has a good servant,’ he said, and gave me some silver coins from his purse. It was then that I made up my mind to follow him to the grave when he died. Do not hold me back from following him.” He then committed *seppuku*. His grandson Zensuke said, “I was nine years old at the time, and have some memory of the scene.”

According to Kanamaru, in a chest Geki had kept a bundle of dried taro stems and a white linen *kimono*. After boiling water by burning the taro stems, he washed himself and then changed clothes. He put the silver coins and a cup of rice wine on the stand, and performed *seppuku* with his servant acting as second.

907) A big carp is brought to Lord Katsushige.

One evening Lord Katsushige went hunting with a hawk. When he was walking around, he came to a riverbank. A fisherman was throwing a net. “How is it today?” said the lord. “Lucky for me,” he said. “I have got a big catch of carp.” When he lifted his net, there was a big carp in it. “Some days ago I caught two,” he said. “Really? So you are going to eat it tomorrow. How I envy you!” said the lord. “You know nothing!” said the man. “Since my master likes carp, whenever I catch a big carp I take it to him. I get to eat only the small ones. I do not feel like eating big ones before my master does.” “Good attitude,” he said and returned.

The next morning when the chief cook asked about breakfast, the lord said, “Wait a moment. A carp will come.” Soon the magistrate Ishi-i Hachiro-zaemon brought in a big carp and said, “This is the carp caught yesterday evening. Please try it.”

In the reign of Lord Katsushige, everyone used to bring their first crop to the castle. They also brought pieces of fruit, saying that they picked them from a grafted tree or something like that.

908) 18 servants follow their master to the grave.

When Nabeshima Aki died on February 21, 1645, 16 servants and two others committed *seppuku*. The administrative retainers told the two others not to do so, because they belonged to another group. They tried to dissuade them, but they said, “In October 1600 we were told to fight for Master Aki in the Battle of Yanagawa. We de-

cided to die together if he was killed in it, but he survived and so did we. We have made our decision as *samurai*. Why must we remain even a single day, letting him alone go to the other world?" They followed their master by *seppuku*. Those 18, together with four other attendants, lie at Myogoku-ji Temple.

909) Ogawa Toneri is appointed a senior counselor at the age of 27.

In the reign of Lord Mitsushige Ogawa Toneri was appointed as chief attendant with 500 *koku*. One day Isahaya Buzen said to the senior counselors, "I do not say this on account of my relationship with him, but it is not good to put him under all of you, in view of his lineage. I would like you to recommend him for senior counselor. Otherwise he should be excluded from his present position." When Lord Mitsushige was told of this, he agreed to the idea and appointed Toneri as a senior counselor at the age of 27.

910) Sagara Kyuma is a quick-witted man.

A big fire broke out when Lord Mitsushige was at the Edo residence. "It is likely that some other lords will go to the Shogun's castle about the terrible fire," said the lord, who was at the gate. He discussed it with the caretakers of the residence. Kyuma said, "Let me go and have a look at it," and he started for the site on horseback. On his way he recognized a lord on horseback, so he dismounted and asked one of his attendants who he was. "He is Matsudaira Nagato-no-kami," he said.

"I am a servant of Lord Mitsushige, and came here by his order," said Kyuma. "This is a very great fire. Should we not go to the Shogun's castle?"

"We were also worried about that and were waiting for some other lords to come out. Shall we go to the castle together?"

Kyuma returned and reported to the lord, so the lord went to the castle. When Kyuma had ridden away earlier, Lord Mitsushige said to Tanaka Kyu-zaemon, "I want another servant like Kyuma, though he lacks refinement." Kyu-zaemon said to the lord, "Sir, that is due to his young age. Let us wait and see how he turns out."

911) Nakano Kan-uemon is dismissed for killing his old housemaids.

The wife of Nakano Kan-uemon was an adopted daughter of Edayoshi Ri-zaemon. After divorcing her, he called her back with her three attendants and spoke to her again

about her adultery with a young man. Then he put her and three attendants to death. After examination he was dismissed from his post for the reason that he killed the three maids even after having dismissed them.

912) Ishi-i Kura-no-jo speaks up for his old master.

After Nakano Sho-gen committed *seppuku*, Ishi-i Kura-no-jo and Naramura Seibey were examined, because they had been his attendants. When the magistrate asked Kura-no-jo about something, he answered that Sho-gen had known nothing about it. He ascribed it to his own carelessness. When he was asked about something else, he said, "I did it. My master was too busy to get involved in it. We dealt with it by ourselves. Of course we told him about it to some extent but he left everything to us. So he did not know anything. It was our fault."

"We do not think so," said the magistrate. "Nakano Sho-gen must have done it himself. Tell us the truth." Kura-no-jo said again, "If he was alive, I would say he was partly in the wrong, but he is dead. How can I put the blame on him? It is against the code of a *samurai*."

All the other inspectors were moved by his attitude, and did not punish him at all. In contrast, Seibey made excuses, and was ordered to be confined to his house. Later Kura-no-jo was employed as a witness in the border dispute with Fukuoka, on account of his fidelity.

913) Nabeshima Fushu recommends Ohki Sasuke for his courage.

After retirement Nabeshima Fushu lived in Kitahara Village. It was decided that officials would go up to Edo in connection with the border dispute with Fukuoka. Fushu met the priest Kai-on of Eimyo-ji Temple, and said, "Let me recommend Ohki Sasuke for that. If we lose the dispute, we will have to commit *seppuku* in Edo. He has the courage to do that." (My teacher was told this by Kai-on.)

914) Ishida Go-zaemon wins the dispute and tries to renounce the world on his way.

The border dispute between Saga and Fukuoka ended in success for the Saga side in 1694. When Ishida Go-zaemon was returning to Saga with Ishi-i Kura-no-jo, he cut his hair. "I attended the dispute at the risk of my life," he said. "Fortunately we could prevail over them. I have no further earthly desire, so I will renounce the world and

become a monk.” They all managed to dissuade him from doing so. When they returned to Saga, both men had their salary raised.

Someone said that Go-zaemon appeared honorable in cutting his hair, but that his arrival in peace looked much more victorious.

915) Mitani Sen-zaemon cuts his attendant’s hair at the death of Lord Katsushige.

Mitani Sen-zaemon was the most prominent among the ten foot soldiers of Lord Katsushige, and was eventually promoted to his present post. He always said, “Mental attitude is the most important thing. Even if you are in such a critical condition that you may breathe your last today, you can live on a day or two. When you are entrusted with a very important mission and think that you should not die by any means, you can live for a couple of days by concentrating your energy.”

When Lord Katsushige died in Edo, most of his attendants followed him to the grave, or renounced the world to enter the priesthood. Ishi-i Rokuro-zaemon and Okuma Kahei did not do so, because they had to take the lord’s ashes to Koden-ji Temple. They returned to Saga from Edo without cutting their hair, and in tears offered the lord’s ashes to the head priest. Sen-zaemon was sitting on the ground in front of the main hall of the temple. When he saw them he ran up to the hall, dressed in his travelling attire, and cut their hair with his sword. He did so in order not to miss the opportunity, in spite of his shabby dress

Once Lord Mitsushige thought of learning about Noh, but no one close by could teach it to him. After some time Gen-shichi, an adopted son of Anju Gon-ueemon, was summoned, because he had learned it as a student of Fujishima Sei-zaemon. He was working in the castle kitchen, but was soon promoted to a *samurai*. Every evening he appeared before the lord, feeling very nervous. Mitani Sen-zaemon said to him, “I understand how anxious you are. Let me tell you something. You have been promoted to *samurai*. Do you not think that your long-cherished dream has been realized? Now you can have nothing to regret even if you are told to commit *seppuku* or are dismissed from your post. Take it also for an honor that you should be dismissed from your post.” With that encouragement, Gen-shichi recovered his self-confidence and felt easy, he said.

916) Murakawa Den-ueemon trains his attendants to behave well.

It was said that every attendant of Den-uemon was well trained in the etiquette of greetings. First he taught young leaders how to make greetings, and then made them train their own attendants like foot soldiers. Whenever his attendants approached him, Den-uemon checked their greetings and corrected them. Other manners were also taught strictly.

Murakawa Den-uemon was a master of swordsmanship, who attained full proficiency in the Yagyu school under Yagyu Munenori, the famous teacher of the Shogun. He served as a partner in swordsmanship with Nabeshima Motoshige, the first lord of the Ogi branch clan. When Lord Motoshige sent his pledge to the prominent teacher, Den-uemon was dispatched to receive the admission certificate. When he reached the residence of Yagyu Tajima-no-kami, illness prevented the great teacher from signing the document, so Den-uemon helped him to put his seal on it.

* Murakawa Den-uemon was an uncle of Yamamoto Jocho.

917) Revenge cannot be achieved by discussion.

One day Komori Eijun, Ohtsubo Jin-uemon, Muto Roku-uemon, Kano-e Mo-zaemon, Yoshi-i Yoichi-uemon, Ezoe Jimbey, Muta Roku-no-jo, and Niwa Ki-zaemon went for a boat trip in Edo. Eijun and Jin-uemon went into a roadside restaurant near Asakusa Temple, where they quarreled with the customers and were beaten to their knees.

Hearing of this, Roku-uemon said, "Let us go and take revenge!" Yoichi-uemon and Jimbey agreed, but the others said, "It may be disgraceful to our clan," and stopped them from going out. They returned to the residence together. Roku-uemon said he would take revenge by himself, but was again restrained. Eijun and Jin-uemon, whose very arms and legs had been so useless, were sentenced to death, and the others were admonished severely. (I have to check this in more detail later.)

Someone said about the affair, "Revenge cannot be got by discussion. You must take it yourself, and be prepared to lose your life. Some who shout 'Revenge, revenge!' do not really mean it. The crafty fellow calls for it just to win a good name later. A man of courage goes for revenge without a word, prepared to die. It does not matter at all whether you will win or lose. To rush in and lose your life is the proof of *samurai* with bravery. That is the very state of mind to succeed in taking revenge."

918) Naridomi Kume-no-suke, 13 years old, takes revenge on his brother.

Naridomi Kurando's eldest son Chu-bey was 14 years old. He happened to see several men beating a thief on the bridge. Soon they went away and Chu-bey, left alone, also started to beat the thief. All of a sudden the thief got to his feet, deprived Chu-bey of his sword, and stabbed him to death. The thief ran off southwards.

When the report reached his house at Taka-shoji, his younger brother Kume-no-suke, aged 13, ran to the bridge. He covered his brother with his coat, and immediately ran after the thief.

Hearing the sad news of her son, Kurando's wife handed a sword to Kan-zaemon, an attendant, and said, "Please catch up with Kume-no-suke and help him avenge his brother." The attendant was told that the thief had run toward Nanri Village. When he arrived there, he saw the thief being held down by the villagers. Kan-zaemon spoke to the man, and cut him.

Soon Kume-no-suke arrived, covered all over with mud from running along the footpath between rice fields. "Stab your sword into his throat," said Kan-zaemon. The younger son did so, and returned home. This was on March 4, 1653.

Kume-no-suke is now called Ji-zaemon and his mother is a sister of Araki Umpachi. Yamamoto Gon-no-jo got back at night after having been to a remote place on business. He was met by his attendant halfway, and told about the incident, so he went to see Kume-no-suke right away.

* Nanri Village lies about 3 km south of the castle.

919) Shimomura Sho-un offers a cup of water to Lord Naoshige.

One day early in the morning Lord Naoshige went hawking in the fields. Feeling thirsty, he dropped in at a temple and asked for a cup of hot water. The priest boiled water at the fireside, poured hot water into a cup, and added some cold water. Then he offered it to the lord. The lord drank it with a gulp and asked for another. This time he made it a little warmer. The lord enjoyed the warm water, deeply impressed by the priest's thoughtful act. Later he was called to serve the lord. He took the name Sho-un.

* Shimomura Sho-un was engaged by Lord Naoshige in 1571. After serving Naoshige and performing many deeds, he retired in 1601 and died in the same year.

920) Taku Nagato never leaves Saga even after he retires.

Taku Nagato's retirement was slightly different from other men. His servants came over to his residence from Taku and said, "Please come back to Taku and spend your retirement there. We will come here to meet you when you are ready." "Thank you very much for your concern," he said. "But there are certain considerations which prevent me from ever leaving Saga. Please understand."

My teacher told me more about this, but bad me keep it under my hat.

* It was in April 1686 that Taku Nagato retired.

921) Ohkawachi Kageyu enters a room wearing his sword.

In September 1608 Taku Nagato got furious when he was told that Nakano Jin-uemon had slashed his attendant Ogawa Uma-no-jo at Hamamatsu. For a couple of reasons, however, Jin-uemon was sentenced only to be confined at his home. At the end of the year Jin-uemon was released from his confinement, and visited Taku Nagato. When he was ushered to the inner room, his attendant Kageyu accompanied him, wearing his sword. Nagato's attendants criticized him for that, but he said, "I cannot leave my master's side, and I always wear my sword like this, whether in peace or war. Forgive me." You might say he was a match for a thousand.

922) Nakano Jin-uemon encourages all his family members.

Nakano Sho-gen was employed as a boy attendant for Lord Mitsushige. He was later promoted to senior counselor but was abruptly dismissed from his post. "Since your ancestors performed great exploits, you can appoint one of your family members as your successor," said the lord. "Recommend someone to me."

It was a very unexpected decision, and all the family were quite at a loss. Soon Yamamoto Jin-uemon came along and was told about Nakano Sho-gen's case. Hearing what was told by the lord, he said in tears, "How gracious the lord is! Everybody, turn toward the castle and bow to him." Bowing toward the castle himself, he said, "He is the lord, and could punish Sho-gen any way he wanted, even by crucifixion, to say nothing of dismissing him. However, the lord not only lightened his penalty but told us to recommend a family member as a successor on account of our ancestors' past exploits. We cannot thank him too much for his generous treatment. I have never heard such a compassionate decision in my life. All of you seem to be unhappy about his treatment

but we should be pleased with it. Now bring out the cups. Let us drink a toast to our good luck.”

All the family including women and children were encouraged by their master's words and spent a fine time together. The senior leader's timely suggestion brought about a wonderful result.

Nakano Sho-gen's land was passed to Nakano Ichi-zaemon, now known as Ju-uemon. When Sho-gen was released from his confinement, however, Ichi-zaemon asked that it be returned to him. As a result, 400 *koku* was granted to Sho-gen and 100 *koku* was granted to Ichi-zaemon.

923) Fuka-e Ni-zaemon's attendant impresses the magistrate.

Fuka-e Ni-zaemon worked in the Osaka residence as a caretaker for several years, but he was dismissed from his post for misconduct, and subjected to examination. All his attendants were obliged to return to Saga and were told to present themselves at the magistrate's office. Before they appeared there, they gathered at their master's house to consult with him. But his secretary met them and said, “Tell everything frankly to the officials. He has nothing to say to you about it.” Their master would not see them.

At the office one of the attendants said, “I do not know anything about it.” “If you pretend not to know, we must put you to torture,” said the official. The servant said, “I understand a servant is not supposed to divulge his master's misconduct. I cannot speak about it, even if I were to die under torture.” The officials were moved by his statement. The attendant was taken out by Fukahori Shin-zaemon, Ni-zaemon's elder brother, while Ni-zaemon, a grandson of Nabeshima Aki, was entrusted with Nabeshima Mondo.

924) Kitajima Jin-zaemon is awarded a top gown.

When Kitajima Jin-zaemon was working at the Osaka residence as a secretary, the misconduct of some officials was detected and reported to Saga. When he returned to Saga he was questioned as to why he had not reported it when it was noticed. Jin-zaemon said, “It is true that all the workers at the Osaka residence went to the red light district. I saw it with my own eyes. If I had reported it to you, it is certain that all of them would have been punished. Since the number was so large, I was afraid it might disgrace the name of our clan all over the country, so I did not report it to you,

though I held the post of a general secretary. I am ready to accept any penalty for this. Please order me to commit *seppuku* rather than punish others. I hope it will bring them to their senses and make them abandon their evil ways. I am content to lose my life if it helps to preserve the good name of our clan.” However, he received no punishment whatsoever, but was awarded a top gown for his behavior by the lord. He continued with his service as diligently as before.

925) Anju Dohko reveals what he has in mind.

Anju Dohko, a descendant of Anju Hideyoshi, was entrusted with the Ogi branch clan to serve the lord Motoshige. He used to say, “What is most important for a man is his state of mind, more than life itself. Like a flower, life comes to an end some day. Now Buddhism has spread over the country and lots of people follow its teachings, but I am afraid they will become timid at the crucial moment. Buddhism attaches great importance to life and you often hear “Both life and death are serious matters.” “Life and death are to be cut off from each other,” and “Depart from life and death.” But few come to enlightenment by practicing meditation and continuing to train alone. They cannot keep themselves aloof from death. If they meet their end before they attain enlightenment, they are afraid to die because they think life and death are such serious matters. As a result they will disgrace themselves at the crucial moment. However, nothing is as light as death. A girl will throw away her life for such a trivial indiscretion as breaking wind in public. For her death is lighter than life.

“Today it is fashionable for young people to have drinking parties, but I think such things worthless. Young men who think they are clever mock the defects of their masters and senior counselors. This may appear not quite so bad as wild merrymaking, but it is of no use. Their words are mere noise.

“If you have an incompetent lord or senior counselor, you have to think about redeeming your clan. If the lord has his domain confiscated, you have to get it back for the Nabeshima family. So prepare for the worst by making the lord’s youngest son a monk. At the same time all of you who are servants had better entrust your sons to farmers or make them into monks, except for the eldest. When a new master comes to your land, make a failure out of him by disobeying him and spreading rumors against him. You will soon have another master. Then employ the same wicked means on him. Repeat this each time you have a new lord.

“Then you must all complain to the Shogunate, together with the farmers and monks. Say to them, ‘We have served the Nabeshima lords since the beginning of our clan.

We cannot be comfortable with any lord appointed by the Shogunate. We are really concerned that our clan will long survive under strange lords dispatched from other clans. Fortunately for us, there is a son of the old lord at a temple. We are all eagerly waiting for his return. Please tell him to come back to us. Then we are sure that the clan will be successful.”

Dohko made his second son a monk and his third son a farmer. He also said, “The sharp edge of the Nabeshima family’s spear seems to be broken. First, few people remember the exploits and teachings of Lords Naoshige and Katsushige. On the other hand, more and more have hardly any understanding of the spirit of the Nabeshima family. They laugh at old stories of the clan. Second, we used to live on brown rice and simple vegetables, and saved as much as possible to feed our horses with rice and beans as if they were human. We did that to prepare for the possibility of war breaking out, but nowadays they have sumptuous meals, go out in a palanquin, and dress their children with fine clothes. And few men keep a horse. Third, more and more people go to Osaka and Edo and follow the fashion, looking down on local traditions. They have become weak both in mind and in body. In a word, the Nabeshima spirit has been well and truly lost.”

926) Sugino Tokudayu, the Shinto priest, never speaks ill of an acquaintance.

When Yamamura Miki was examined, Sugino Tokudayu was summoned as a witness and was commanded to tell everything about his misconduct. “I have no idea about his deeds,” he said, while composing a poem about wisteria twining round a pine tree. Later he was asked again, “Since you belong to the same family, you ought to know something about him. Confess what you know.” Tokudayu said, “I am a servant of the gods, and every day in the morning and the evening I pray for the peace of all people. Even if I knew something bad about him, I would not tell you about it. It is against the will of the gods, so I will say nothing, even at the risk of my life.” After that the investigation was wound up.

* Sugino Tokudayu was a Shinto priest of Ise Shrine of Saga.

927) Nagamori Den-jiro refuses to act as agent for a disloyal person.

When Muto Shume was examined, Nagamori Den-jiro was asked, “Did you not act as

his agent in contacting Hayashi Do-shun?" He said, "I am a humble student of Confucianism, and was employed by the lord for that reason. I am deeply indebted to him. Furthermore, Muto Shume has been very kind to me, and I cannot forget that. However, when I was told about his disobedience to the lord, I regretted it very much. As I told you I am greatly indebted to the lord. How in the world should I repay his kindness with evil by acting as an intermediary for Shume? However earnestly I am implored, I have no ears to hear from a person disobedient to the lord." All the officials were moved by his answer.

* Hayashi Do-shun was a scholar of Confucianism for the Shogun.

928) A fight at Kawakami

Tsuchiyama Mo-uemon, Higashi Yaichi-uemon, Ohki Jidayu, and Ishi-i Izaemon went to Jisso-in Temple at Kawakami, to attend a ceremony. A *sumo* wrestler named Tetsutaku Cho-uemon also attended it with several of his students. The *samurai* quarreled with them about something, and started fighting them, ending up being defeated by the wrestlers. Mo-uemon and Yaichi-uemon got bruised by their sticks.

All of four *samurai* were put in a custody of group members. Mo-uemon and Ohki Jidayu were held by Ohki Hyobu, but both of them escaped from his house and went to Cho-uemon's house. They called out in a loud voice, and when the wrestler sneaked out of the back door, Mo-uemon killed him with a single stroke. Then they shouted loudly, "We fought with several men, but cannot say who they were. Let us kill all the men in Kawakami Village!" Most of the villagers scattered away in fear. Seeing this, Mo-uemon and Jidayu returned in triumph.

Soon Mo-uemon and Yaichi-uemon were ordered to commit *seppuku*, Jidayu was dismissed from his post, and Ji-uemon was ordered to be confined to his own house. In *seppuku*, when Mo-uemon made a cut with his sword in the left side of his stomach, Mori Mombey sitting across from him said, "If you stick it in too deep, your intestines will come out. It looks ugly. Do not thrust it too deep." Mo-uemon listened and said to him smiling, "You are a clever man, but I do not think you have ever cut your belly." His second was Nakashima Shichi-zaemon. Mo-uemon sliced with his sword to the right. He found it difficult, but with Shichi-zaemon's shouts of encouragement he managed it. One of the offenses of the four was that they had gone to the temple wearing only one sword. That was thought unbecoming for a *samurai*. They were all living near Kasuga Village at the time.

According to other information, on September 26 Izaemon, Jidayu, Mo-uemon, and Yaichi-uemon were entertained at the priest's house. Izaemon and Jidayu did not drink very much wine, but Mo-uemon and Yaichi-zaemon got completely drunk. All of them left the house late at night. When Mo-uemon was tottering about, he was jeered at by a gang of young men. "You should not have drunk so much if you cannot hold your liquor," they said. Mo-uemon got angry with that and said, "Eat shit!" The young men struck at him, but the other three managed to pull them apart and took him to the river bank. The young men still came after Mo-uemon, so he turned his backside to them again and said, "Kiss my ass!" Some held down his three friends, while all the other young men knocked poor Mo-uemon to his knees. Then all fifteen or so of the young men ran away.

The three *samurai* rented a palanquin for Mo-uemon and returned together, not knowing whom they had fought against. When they reported it to the office, Mo-uemon was put in the custody of Tsuchiyama Yosobey, Izaemon of Ayabe Gon-no-jo, Jidayu of Ohki Hyobu, and Yaichi-zaemon was put in the custody of his group leader.

One day in October, Jidayu sent a letter to Mo-uemon and said, "We cannot preserve our honor like this. Let us go and get revenge on them early tomorrow morning. Come out in secret." The next morning they went to the Todoki Bridge. Close by lived a famous teacher of *sumo* wrestling with more than 1,000 students. His name was Tetsutaku Cho-uemon. Since his two sons turned out to have been in the fight, the *samurai* shouted at the gate, "Tsuchiyama Mo-uemon and Ohki Jidayu have come back to get revenge on you. Come out!" "My sons are away. Let me fight you," said Cho-uemon. Jidayu was waiting at the front door, and Mo-uemon was at the back door.

When Cho-uemon came out of the back door, Mo-uemon let him pass about 2 meters and then slashed him from behind and stuck his sword in his throat. Since nobody else resisted him, he reported to the priest of nearby Komyo-in Temple, and returned to Saga.

Izaemon had not been told about the retaliation by his two friends, but he knew about it from his family. He rushed to Kawakami Village in the evening and shouted at the gate of the wrestling teacher's house, "This is Ishi-i Izaemon. Let me fight against Cho-uemon and your two sons. Come out!" But no one appeared, so he went to Komyo-in Temple to report, and then returned home.

* The fight occurred probably in the end of the 17th century.

929) Five *samurai* hold an archery game, and bet on the result.

In November, 1682 Fukuchi Mago-no-jo, Mukai Mo-uemon, Ikeda Zen-jiro, Ohkuma Shin-no-jo, and Nakano Kyu-suke started gambling at the house of Sawabe Hei-zaemon, Kyu-suke's big brother. At first they were just enjoying archery, but soon bet money on shooting the target. During the betting, Fukuchi Mago-no-jo accused Kyu-suke and they grappled with each other, but were pulled apart by the others.

There was a rumor that Mago-no-jo was badly beaten, though it was not true. Soon they were investigated, and both Mago-no-jo and Kyusuke were sentenced to death by *seppuku*. Kyusuke's brother Hei-zaemon was also ordered to commit *seppuku*. Mo-uemon and Shin-no-jo were dismissed from their post.

Ikeda Zenjiro was investigated, because he reported that he had been at the house, but the others said he had not joined in the betting. On re-examination he said, "They did not ask me to join in, because I was better, so I just watched, but it was true that I was with them. That is why I reported it." He was ordered to be confined to his own house.

Mago-no-jo's second was a man named Kamochi. He missed his stroke by drawing his sword too far from Mago-no-jo, but finally managed to hit the neck and sever the head.

930) Lady Mitsushige's cook makes up his mind to follow her to the grave.

Furukawa Santa-zaemon was appointed by Lord Mitsushige as a cook to serve Ryu-sen-in, his wife. When she was told that the cook could hardly eat due to a severe carbuncle, she sent her attendant Sakabe to convey her sympathy to him. He was also given a meal by the lady. In deep gratitude he sat up and managed to eat a bit of porridge. Then his condition took a turn for the better, and he finally recovered from his illness completely. He made up his mind to commit *seppuku* to follow her to the grave.

She passed away in December 1657, and Santa-zaemon accompanied the funeral procession, dressed in white. However, he was not allowed to commit *seppuku*, so he returned to Saga in grief. On February 15 the following year he killed himself by *seppuku*, in order to follow her to the grave.

Those attendants who had come to Saga with her from her parents' house were told the news that San-zaemon killed himself at the temple. They were told to do the same, but did not respond to the request from their old family very quickly, because they

themselves had not been courageous enough. Before long they were summoned back to their old family and dismissed from their posts later, according to San-zemon's grandson Masuda.

931) Hashino Sho-gen promises to commit *seppuku* if the lord's daughter dies.

When Ryuzo-ji Takanobu's daughter married Hata Mikawa-no-kami of Karatsu, she was met by Yatsunami Musashi, an escort dispatched by Mikawa-no-kami. However, she had fallen ill and was in a critical condition. The escort said, "I was told to meet the princess and accompany her back to Karatsu. If she does not recover, I am ready to commit *seppuku*." He was strongly advised not to do so, but his resolution was firm.

The administrative retainers discussed it, and said, "We should also make someone commit *seppuku* if she does not recover. But nobody will agree to do such a thing for the princess. Hashino Sho-gen might accept our nomination, though." They summoned him and said, "In the circumstances, we would like you to commit *seppuku* in case she is not saved. What do you think?" Hashino said, "What an unexpected and honorable instruction! However, I do not think myself suitable for such duty. I think it better for someone of high rank to undertake, because it involves our clan's name. But I am quite prepared to do it." He visited Yatsunami Musashi-no-kami at his inn and said, "I am deeply indebted to the princess. Let me discuss our *seppuku* now." But she recovered from her illness, and her wedding went ahead successfully.

* Hata Mikawa-no-kami's castle stood about 45 km west of Saga. His marriage was held probably in 1574.

932) Hirohashi Ichiyu-ken fills his cut in the head with green leaves.

Hirohashi Ichiyu-ken was a petty servant in the castle kitchen. He killed several men over a grudge about *sumo* wrestling, and was sentenced to death. Hearing of his barbarous act, Ryuzo-ji Takanobu said, "It is important to have such a tough fellow in wartime. He certainly has guts." He pardoned him and took him to battle at Ane-gawa Village. He performed such exploits that his fame rose in time.

In the battle at Takagi he was sometimes called back because he went too far into the enemy front. The master told him to stand by his horse, but whenever their troop could not move forward, he would run out. So General Takanobu had to hold the sleeves of his armor. In the fighting at Takagi the brave man got several wounds to his

head. He put green leaves in each wound and tied a band round his head.

Hirohashi Ichiyu-ken had a special ointment which he had made up. It was known as "Ichiyu-ken's black ointment." In those days there was no good ointment, so they used it to cure swelling. It was compounded by mixing navel fluff with salt. When it was pasted on the injury after cutting the top off the swelling, most sufferers fainted from the sharp pain.

When Naoshige had a swelling on his arm, Ichiyu-ken said, "Please try my ointment." He abruptly opened the top of the swelling with a needle. Naoshige said, "What is that for?" "Does it hurt?" said Ichiyu-ken. The next moment Naoshige cut him on the cheek with his needle.

Ichiyu-ken was not in good terms with Naoshige. In 1574 when they attacked Hirai Castle in Suko, Ichiyu-ken was killed in the field while under the command of Naoshige.

933) Tsuruda Yashichi-bey rises up after being shot and makes an oral report.

On January 1, 1638, Ohki Hyobu was visited by Tsuruda Yashichi-bey, Mimasaka's attendant. While he was giving his message, he was shot in the lower stomach by an enemy gun, and fell on the ground face down. But he sat up again and gave him the rest of his message before he succumbed and died. Hyobu told Taira Yashichi-bey to carry the body but he was also shot dead on the way.

934) Akashi Mo-uemon is investigated for embezzlement.

When Mo-uemon was working in the accounting section at the castle, a case of embezzlement was detected, which was investigated by Ishi-i Den-uemon and Yoh Ri-zaemon. When Lord Katsushige saw the report, he was not satisfied with it, so he told Nakano Daigaku and Ohno Saku-uemon to re-investigate the case with Den-uemon and Ri-zaemon attending the examination. The office was located at Yamashiro's residence in Mizugae.

Mo-uemon was summoned to appear there. Each time he said something, Den-uemon and Ri-zaemon interrupted him, adding something of their own. Daigaku said to them, "The last time you examined him the lord was not satisfied with your report, so he told us to do it again. Please listen in silence." He then asked Mo-uemon to make his statement properly, saying that they would listen to him carefully. Mo-uemon said, "I understand." When he bowed his head, it hit against the corner of the desk, spilling blood about.

When the examination was over, all four men met the lord. Their statement was totally different from the last one. When they were about to withdraw, Daigaku said to Den-uemon and Ri-zaemon, "If you have anything to say, you should do so now, directly to the lord. We will not allow you to do so later." Both of them left without saying a word. Ri-zaemon was dismissed from his post, but Den-uemon, in consideration of his exploits at the Battle of Arima, was merely confined to his own house.

935) Nabeshima Uneme takes his colleague's guilt on himself.

Before Lord Katsushige went up to Edo for biannual attendance, he bought a glass screen in Nagasaki. It was such a rare and precious article that the lord took it to Edo with the intention of donating it to the Shogun. He said repeatedly, "Look after it carefully, because it is very fragile." A special case was ordered for it, and Nabeshima Uneme went to collect it because he was the official in charge of gift giving.

When he came back with it, his colleague Edayoshi Ri-zaemon said, "Please let me have just one look at it!" "Sorry, but we cannot do so. It is already packed in the case." But Ri-zaemon persisted, so he picked it up and showed it to him. When Ri-zaemon was scrutinizing it, however, he accidentally dropped it. It broke in pieces.

"Who knows a man's fate?" said Ri-zaemon as he left the room. Looking at his pale expression, Uneme called him back and said, "You did not do this on purpose. Let me report to the lord. Please do not worry, and say nothing about it to anyone." "I have broken a very precious thing, so I must commit *seppuku* for my great clumsiness." "How narrow-minded you are!" said Uneme. "Nothing can be purchased with a man's life, however precious the glass screen was."

Uneme went to see the lord and said, "When I was examining the precious screen at my home I dropped it, and it broke in pieces. What a terrible thing to have done!" He looked so serious that the lord stopped him and said, "Do not mind, Uneme. That is all right." Ri-zaemon and Uneme were not given any punishment, and neither mentioned it at all after that.

Ri-zaemon did not forget it, and decided to repay the kindness some day. When the lord passed away, he was told that Uneme was going to follow him to his grave. He presented Uneme with a light *kimono* and a large carpet. Uneme told his attendants to spread the carpet in an upstairs room, and committed *seppuku* wearing the gown which his friend had given him. His second was Mitani Sen-zaemon. Important items should not be treated carelessly, indeed.

936) Ishi-i Nui-no-suke transfers his household to his adopted son.

Ishi-i Yo-zaemon, a *samurai* of the Ishi-i Nui-no-suke group, was convicted of a vicious plot. Lord Katsushige ordered Nui-no-suke to kill him on the spot. He did not mention of the lord's command to any member of his family, but he disclosed it to his attendant Hiko-uemon alone. Late in the evening he went to the house of Yo-zaemon with the attendant. Yo-zaemon was burning pinewood at the brazier. Nui-no-suke said to him, "I was told of your case and felt sorry about your punishment. I came to see you to check whether you have anything to say about it." "Thank you very much for coming to see me. Would you care for a cup of wine?" he said and went into the kitchen.

Nui-no-suke thought he should not miss his chance to spring on the criminal, but he kicked down the brazier by mistake. It became pitch dark in the house. As arranged, Hiko-uemon drew his sword, and stabbed at Yo-zaemon, but it was his own master he struck, on the low back. "It's me!" said his master, so the attendant rushed out in confusion, to kill himself in the garden. Nui-no-suke's back was badly injured, but he managed to cut off Yo-zaemon's head before he died.

Hearing about the lord's command, Ishi-i Rokuro-bey, Saburo-dayu's grandfather, arrived at Yo-zaemon's house, followed by others of the family carrying spears. They were resisted by Yo-zaemon's attendants with spears and halberds, but killed all of them in the end.

Hearing of the incident, Lord Katsushige called the administrative retainers and said, "Tell Endo, Nui-no-suke's 13-year-old son that I will allow him to inherit his father's household." When Endo was told of the lord's decision, he said, "I appreciate the lord's kindness, but I must refuse it. I am an adopted son. I do not think it proper to inherit the household. My adoptive father has his own son, Kura-hoshi. He was born after I was adopted. I think my father was thinking of passing his household to him. Please understand me, and let him inherit the household. My desire would be for the lord to take me on as an unpaid servant."

When the lord was told about this, he said in admiration, "What a faithful young man! Very well, I will grant Kura-hoshi 600 *koku* and Endo 100 *koku*." Endo said again, "It is very generous of the lord to grant me such an allotment, but I greatly regret the reduction in Kura-hoshi's share. His father did no wrong. I am satisfied to serve the lord without an allotment." The upshot was that Kura-hoshi was granted all 700 *koku* for his household. Behind the scenes, Lord Katsushige told the administrative retainers to help Endo, so he was granted 70 *koku*.

Endo was a son of Rin Eikyu, who had been brought from Korea in 1591. Rin Eikyu's household was inherited by his second son, Gyo-zaemon, who followed Prince Tadanao to the grave in 1635. The third son, Tohdake Gen-uemon, served the Ogi branch clan. Endo grew up to be a fine *samurai* and took the name Ishi-i Yashichi-zaemon.

Kura-hoshi took the name Hyogo-no-suke, and later obtained an official post. When Lord Mitsushige visited Ryuzo-ji Hachiman Shrine, Hyogo-no-suke was engaged in archery but missed the target. His arrow dropped in front of the lord's palanquin. He was dismissed from his post for that. His son Hyogo Shuri was allowed to take up an office, and was granted 500 *koku*. This incident tells us that we have to be careful with our arrows and bullets when we practice firing.

937) Yamamoto Jin-uemon, old and wounded, goes out in a palanquin to make an arrest.

Ishi-i Mo-uemon was the son of Saburo-bey. On August 11, 1661 he went insane and connected two carts with a chain, removed their screens, and made his wife get on board. He went into a farmer's house in Hayatsu-e Village, and closed the door. Drawing his sword he shut himself inside with his wife, a daughter of Nakano Sho-gen.

Hearing of the incident, Lord Katsushige said, "I will leave everything to the Nakano family. Go and kill Mo-uemon, but save his wife." Since the village borders another clan and lots of onlookers might show up, he told the captain of foot soldiers to go with them as a guard. All the Nakano family discussed it, and rushed to the village, about 15 km southeast of the castle.

At that time Yamamoto Jin-uemon was in retirement and not fully recovered from the injury he got in the Battle of Arima, but since he was head of the Nakano family, he declared, "My injury is not fully recovered and I have difficulty in walking, but let me go to the village." "You are injured and elderly," they said. "Please do not push yourself too hard." He got furious and said, "What do you know, to say such a stupid thing to me? I am not young and cannot move my limbs freely, but I will take command of you, because we must not disgrace the name of our family!"

He went out in a palanquin with an attendant to carry his spear. As arranged in advance, his men broke into the house at the same time at the front and the back. When Mo-uemon ran from one side to the other in confusion, they rescued his wife and held him down with long sticks. Taking the wife into his palanquin, Jin-uemon said, "My role is over. The lord told us to take her back safe and sound. I came here to perform that mission." He went back with her in the palanquin.

Mo-uemon was ordered to commit *seppuku* on the spot, with Naridomi Ji-zaemon as the second, who was at the time an attendant of Nakano Kazuma. Rolling up his sleeves with a frilled rope, he bent down on one knee to sever Mo-uemon's head, because the ceiling was very low. Shortly, holding the man's head in one hand and his sword in the other, he met the inspector.

938) How Yamamoto Goro-zaemon manages to get his sword into his opponent's throat.

On the evening of July 17, 1660, Yamamoto Goro-zaemon, about 20 years old, was walking to Tashiro to see his uncles, O-tsuka Katsu-uemon and his brother Gon-no-suke. On his way a man with a fishing net passed by and put some dirt on the shoulder of Goro-zaemon's white clothes. His attendant shouted, "How rude!" "What nonsense! I stepped aside and it was your master who bumped into me," said the man.

Goro-zaemon turned back and said to his attendant, "Stop quarreling. Come with me." But the pair kept up their heated quarrel. Then the man struck at the attendant, waving his wood stick, so Goro-zaemon grabbed his hair and held him down. He said to him, "You have picked a quarrel and refuse to apologize. And into the bargain, it was you who struck the first blow. What a villain!" He said to his attendant again, "Come with me," and headed for his uncle's house.

The son of the quarrelsome man was practicing singing in his house, but hearing the confusion came out with a sword and shouted, "What is going on?" "That fellow's attendant picked a fight with me," said his father, grappling with Goro-zaemon's attendant. The son ran to Goro-zaemon and slashed at him, cutting him from the right shoulder down to the breast. Goro-zaemon turned to him with his sword, but the son slashed at him again, injuring his left shoulder and arm in five places.

Though his arms were numb, Goro-zaemon fought against the young man and managed to wound him badly. Retreating little by little, the boy finally lay collapsed at the gate of his house. Goro-zaemon leapt on him and tried running his sword through his throat, but it was prevented by weakness and the numbness in his arms. He put the hilt of his sword under his chin, held the weapon with his feet, and stabbed the boy in the throat.

Feeling exhausted, Goro-zaemon supported himself with his sword and called out for his attendant. He had fallen down the bank of the moat and was wrestling with the man. "Here I am!" he said. "I will kill him," said Goro-zaemon, and stepped down to slash at him. Fortunately, the wound on his shoulder was closing up. The man ran into the precinct of Zui-ryu-an Temple, and Goro-zaemon ran after him and struck at

him as he jumped over a pond. He cut the man with the edge of his sword, from head to foot. (The man survived, nevertheless.)

Leaning on his attendant's shoulder, Goro-zaemon said, "I lost my sandals around here. Find them." But his attendant said, "Please leave them as they are." Goro-zaemon said, "It might be rumored that I ran away without them. We must find them." The attendant retrieved them, and Goro-zaemon put them on and went to the house of O-tsuka Gon-no-suke, where he reported about their fight with the two men.

When Yamamoto Kichi-zaemon, Goro-zaemon's father, in his own house, was told about the fight, he said, "He must have been fighting with O-tsuka Sadayu, Gon-no-suke's son. I will kill all of his family!" So saying, he went out with his long sword. Soon Jin-uemon, Goro-zaemon's grandfather, came to the house and took him to the surgeon. He said to the surgeon, "Please take care of his wound till he recovers. Then he will be able to commit *seppuku*. Thank you." Lots of people came to see him at the bedside and his injury was cured completely in the end.

Jin-uemon said to Nabeshima Ken-motsu, "There is no telling one's fortune. Little did I dream I would commit *seppuku* at this age." "What do you mean?" asked Ken-motsu. "My son, Kichi-zaemon, was born weak and seemed incapable of performing his service properly, so I tried everything to raise him to become healthy before I yielded my household to him, but he is too weak to maintain it. Goro-zaemon, my grandson, grew up healthy and was my only hope. He would have been able enough, but got involved in a fight with an attendant of Nabeshima Mondo, master of the Anegawa family. He will be sentenced to death sooner or later. I will not be able to bear that, so let me commit *seppuku* before he loses his life."

But Nabeshima Mondo said, "Yamamoto Goro-zaemon's ancestors performed exploits for the lords, and we are related to each other. Goro-zaemon's opponent happened to be my attendant. I asked the lord to pardon him for his misconduct and not to put him to death." Thanks to Mondo's entreaty, no penalty was inflicted.

According to Goro-zaemon, he had first left his house with a long sword, but returned to change it for a shorter one, which he felt like wearing. That was what he used to fight the young man with. Since he was wounded and numbed on both shoulders, he would not have been able to wield a longer one. Even a two-sword man uses one in a pinch. "If only I had wounded him first, I could have easily prevailed," he said. "But since he struck me without warning, I was injured badly, and could not see well. I could do nothing but slash at the dim figure, trying to cut him with my sword. When he wounded me with his sword, it felt as if I had been lashed with a whip. I took off my sandals so as not to lose my balance." Since then, none of the Nakano family has worn

sandals.

939) The priest Denko determines to avenge the deaths of his mother and nephew.

The priest Denko was from Taku. He had an elder brother named Jiro-bey and a younger brother. In September his mother visited a temple with Jiro-bey's son to listen to a sermon. After it was over, the boy trampled on another man's foot when picking up his sandals at the exit. The man scolded him angrily, getting into a quarrel with him. The man drew his sword and killed him. Jiro-bey's mother was astonished by the incident, and clung to his body, and the man stabbed her to death, too.

The man returned to his house. Named Goro-uemon, the murderer, was the son of Nakashima Mo-an, who had been dismissed by the lord. Goro-uemon had a brother, Chuzo-bo, who was a mountain monk. Their father was a friend of Taku Mimasaka, by whom Goro-uemon had been granted a piece of land.

Hearing of the incident, Jiro-bey's younger brother rushed to Goro-uemon's house, but the door was closed. He pretended to inquire after him, and called his name in a soft voice. The moment Goro-uemon opened the door, he announced who he was and struck at him. Both men fell into a rubbish pit, where Jiro-bey's brother killed Goro-uemon. Very soon Chuzo-bo appeared and killed Jiro-bey's brother.

The priest Denko was told of the incident and rushed to Jiro-bey's house. He said to his brother, "They lost only one life, but we lost three. It is insufferable! Let's go and kill Chuzo-bo." But Jiro-bey rejected his entreaty. Denko was a priest, but he felt very resentful, and made up his mind to avenge his mother and his nephew. He must get himself promoted to a head priest, he thought, otherwise Taku Mimasaka could exploit his position by talking him into giving up thoughts of revenge. After making every effort, he finally became the head priest of Ryu-un-ji Temple.

He had a well-known craftsman make two swords, plus one more as a present to a student of his at the temple. The following year on September 23, he left the temple by himself. On that day they were supposed to have a guest, but he told the young priests to prepare food for the guest. He left through the back gate. Dressed in ordinary clothes, he went to Taku to see the mountain monk Chuzo-bo. That night the moon was full and his enemy was with a lot of other people to enjoy the rising moon at the shrine. It seemed impossible to do away with Chuzo-bo in such an environment. But he could not think of choosing another day for his revenge, so he decided to kill Chuzo-bo's father Mo-an instead. He went to Mo-an's house and got into his bedroom. Announcing himself, he stabbed him to death when he sat up. When the neighbors

came to the house he explained what he had done and discarded his sword. Soon the incident was made known to the members of his temple, and scores of them rushed to bring him back to Ryu-un-ji Temple.

Taku Mimasaka got very angry, but could do nothing about it, because Denko was the head priest of Ryu-un-ji Temple and highly respected by the lord. He told Nabeshima Toneri to see the priest Tan-nen of Kodan-ji Temple. Toneri visited Tan-nen at the temple and said, "The priest Denko killed a man. Even if he is a priest, he should be put to death." Tan-nen answered, "We take no orders from others. The affair is none of your business." Taku Mimasaka got all the more furious with his attitude, and sent Toneri again to ask what the head priest had in mind for Denko. "It is pointless but I will tell you anyway, because you are so anxious to know. Anyone who breaks the law is liable to exile. That is all."

Denko put off his priestly garments, and was accompanied by scores of his fellow monks and students as far as Todoroki, a border village. On their way they were asked by several men carrying guns if they were from Taku. Denko settled in Chikjuzen, the neighboring fiefdom, where he made friends with the local people and *samurai*. They soon became well disposed to him when they were told of his revenge.

* It happened probably in 1662.

* Chikuzen is a neighboring domain to the east of Saga.

940) The felon Hori-e San-uemon never changes color with tortures.

Hori-e San-uemon was in charge of the storehouse at the Edo residence. He stole gold and silver coins from it and absconded with his lover, but was eventually arrested. He confessed to the crime, and was sentenced to death by torture. Nakano Daigaku was dispatched to the execution ground as inspector.

First, his hair was burnt off, over his whole body. Next he had his nails torn out. Then he had his tendons severed. Holes were bored in him, too. Every sort of torture was done to his body, but he uttered not a sound, and the color of his face did not change at all. Finally, his back was cut in two and doused with boiling soy sauce, whereupon his body bent backwards, and he died.

* It probably happened in 1633.

941) Fukuchi Rokuro-uemon spares the life of a murderer, for his chivalrous spirit.

When Fukuchi Rokuro-uemon was leaving the gate of Saga Castle, he saw a man in front of the residence of Taku Nagato. He was bowing to a noble lady in a palanquin. Suddenly a man with a halberd shouted at him, "Get your head down!" and struck him on the head. When he touched it, it was bleeding. "How dare you do such a thing! I was bowing to the palanquin. This is an outrage!" He roared at the man, and killed him on the spot. The palanquin went on its way.

Rokuro-uemon approached him, unsheathed his spear and said, "Please put your sword in its sheath. While we are in the castle, we must keep our swords sheathed." The man said, "Did you see what I did? I killed that man under force of circumstances. You tell me to sheath my sword, but I cannot do so. I am afraid you will have to fight with me." Hearing this, Rokuro-uemon cast aside his spear and said, "I understand. My name is Fukuchi Rokuro-uemon. You have behaved splendidly. Let me bear witness to your conduct and defend you at the risk of my life. Please put your sword in its sheath." The man agreed. When Rokuro-uemon asked him whom he served, he answered, "I am a servant of Taku Nagato."

Rokuro-uemon went with him to the magistrate's office and gave a statement about the incident. It transpired that the lady was a member of a prominent family, and he was commanded by his master Taku Nagato to commit *seppuku*. Rokuro-uemon said to Nagato, "I promised to witness to his conduct as a *samurai*. If you order him to commit *seppuku*, you must let me do so first." The upshot was that neither Rokuro-uemon nor the *samurai* received any punishment.

Rokuro-uemon was a well-paid *samurai*, but would often weave straw mats at home. "It is unworthy of his rank," his attendants would say, and Rokuro-uemon knew it. One day he got up on horseback to go and meet a messenger from another clan. He said to his attendant, "Check my clothes carefully for pieces of straw." He was also a member of the group attached to Nabeshima Mondo, the administrative retainer, whose residence he visited sometimes. In the kitchen he used to weave straw mats by himself. That was a kind of casual relationship there was between master and his attendants in those days.

942) Nabeshima Aki admonishes his son Shima.

A messenger from Nabeshima Shima came up to Aki and said, "We would like to visit Atago Shrine in Kyoto." "For what reason?" asked Aki. The messenger said, "He is

the god of warriors. Our master has decided to worship there, for good fortune in battle.” “Nonsense!” said Aki angrily. “We do not need to ask protection of the Atago god. Our family is the vanguard for our clan. If the god himself is our opponent, I will cut him in two and rush onward!”

* Atago Shrine in Kyoto was worshipped by numerous warriors as the god of victory.

943) Fukae Suke-uemon shelters a refugee, out of honor as a Nabeshima member.

Fukae Suke-uemon was an attendant appointed by Lord Mitsushige for his daughter Lady Yanagi-hara, when she married into the Doi family. One day a foot soldier of Doi Ohi-no-kami’s administrative retainer injured a colleague, and fled into Suke-uemon’s house for protection. Suke-uemon agreed, and hid him in his house. Soon a messenger from the important retainer visited his house for the man, but Suke-uemon declined to hand him over.

When another messenger arrived from Lord Doi Ohi-no-kami, he said, “My master Tango-no-kami always told me that I should follow Ohi-no-kami in everything as a servant. Until now, that is what I have done, but this time it involves with the honor of the Nabeshima family. The soldier dashed in here, looking to me for help as a man. How can I accede to your request by giving him up? I would lose face as a *samurai*. I am determined to protect him at the risk of my life. Ohi-no-kami ordered you to bring him back, but I cannot accept his request. Please understand.”

Ohi-no-kami said to his wife Lady Yanagi-hara, “I have no intention of sentencing the man death. Please ask Suke-uemon to surrender him to us.” After he confirmed how the master intended to treat the refugee, he finally handed him over.

* To risk one’s life to protect a refugee was a long cherished *samurai* custom.

944) Fukae Suke-uemon admonishes Sagara Kyuma for visiting the red-light zone.

Fukae Suke-uemon was appointed a magistrate by the lord and accompanied him to Edo. Sagara Kyuma, a senior counselor, would often visit the red-light district, and several men tried to persuade him to refrain from his bad behavior, but in vain.

One day Suke-uemon went to see him and said, “I have sometimes seen you going to the red-light zone. I have to report your behavior, but you are responsible for the general affairs of Saga Clan. If I report you to the lord, you will be punished in some

way. If so, I am afraid our clan will cease to function. But if you do not stop going to such places, I must report you to the lord. If I do so, he will punish you without mercy, in spite of your position as a senior counselor. So please stop going there, for the honor of our clan.” Kyuma said in tears, “I have been in the wrong.” He then stopped his visits.

When Lady Ryokuju-in, Lord Mitsushige’s eldest daughter, died, Suke-uemon renounced the world in Edo before being given permission to do so by the lord. He went to the Koya mountains to offer her ashes to a temple, and returned to Saga. After her funeral ceremony at Kodon-ji Temple, he retreated to an old house in Kusaba. He rebuilt it into a hut without windows, except for a small gap, through which he had meals supplied, and lived a solitary life till the seventh year commemoration of her death. He then moved to a hermitage he built in Kitayama.

945) Nakashima Ju-uemon’s mother avenges her husband.

When Nakashima Ju-uemon’s father was fast asleep, someone sneaked into his room and killed him, and was about to flee. His wife woke up and cried, “Who is that? Stop, murderer!” She ran after him and grabbed him from behind with all her strength in the kitchen. She called for her son but he was out studying at a temple, so she called for the servants and together they killed the criminal.

Her son Nakashima Ju-uemon was dismissed from his post twice, and later was sentenced to death by *seppuku* for renting out his house for gambling.

946) Kurokawa Ko-uemon’s wife takes revenge for her husband.

Kurokawa Ko-uemon’s wife was a daughter of Kamohara Kihey, an attendant of Yamashiro. Ko-uemon lived in Ashihara Village on the income of only 3 *koku*. His neighbor was Tokunaga San-zaemon, very rich and an important retainer of Nabeshima Ju-dayu.

On the evening of August 15 there was a festival in Ohmachi, and Ko-uemon and his wife were about to go to the village where her parents lived. Ko-uemon had rented a mosquito net from Kihey, but he pawned it to his rich neighbor for some money. He went to see San-zaemon and asked for the net back, because he wanted to take it to Ohmachi thinking they would have many guests for the festival and that the net would be needed. “Please rent us the net a few days,” he said, but San-zaemon refused.

“You owe me a lot of money, which you still have not returned,” he complained. “And yet you ask me to give you back the mosquito net. How unreasonable! Do not come to my house again! If you do, I will kill you. Give me your written word now.” Ko-ueemon was obliged to return to his house after giving to San-zaemon a written undertaking. So they could not go to Ohmachi after all.

He made careful preparations in secret before August 27, and finished pounding some of the first crop of rice into cakes on August 28. That evening he placed the rice cakes at the side of his two sons. Without saying anything to his wife, he went to San-zaemon’s house.

Over the window he shouted his resentment, saying, “I am going to kill you. Come out, San-zaemon!” But the door stayed shut and his neighbor would not come out. San-zaemon sent his daughter Oshichi to fetch his younger brother Yo-zaemon, who lives in a small house at the back. Yo-zaemon approached Ko-ueemon and slashed at him from behind. Though his head was cut, Ko-ueemon turned round and fought against the brother for a while. Then Yo-zaemon stepped on straw and lost his balance. When he fell down, Ko-ueemon also fell down to the ground. He wielded his sword as he lay, and cut Yo-zaemon in the stomach. Both stood up and slashed against each other. Soon Yo-zaemon lost his color, but kept striking at Ko-ueemon and finally finished him off. Shinsuke, a neighbor, rushed to the site and carried Yo-zaemon home on his shoulders.

When Ko-ueemon’s wife was told of her husband’s revenge, she rushed to help him with a scythe, but all she saw was his body. Voicing her remorse, she struck the ground repeatedly with the scythe. She took out her husband’s sword and went to the neighbor’s house. She shouted at them again and again, without any response from inside. They would not come out, but slashed at her from inside with a halberd. She grasped it and pulled it with all her strength. The window broke away, and she entered the house and struck at San-zaemon, injuring him. Then his servants came out and killed the woman.

Yo-zaemon expired on September 1, and San-zaemon killed himself by *seppuku* on September 4. Their ashes were kept at Komyo-ji Temple.

* This fight happened probably in 1710.

947) Do-haku holds up his own head.

Do-haku, an attendant of Nabeshima Sadayu, lived in Kurotsuchi-baru. His son was Goro-bey. One day Goro-bey was walking along with a bundle of straw on his shoulder.

Iwamura Kyu-nai came towards him. He was an attendant of Kumashiro Sakyo, but had been dismissed from his post at that time. Goro-bey had a grudge against him, so he threw the bundle at him, knocking him into the moat, and returned to his house with Kyunai's curses at his back.

Kyu-nai went home and told his elder brother Gen-uemon, about Gorobey. Soon the two brothers went to Goro-bey's house to get revenge on him. The door was slightly open, and Gen-uemon sneaked in, unaware that Goro-bey was waiting for intruders with a naked sword. He was seriously wounded, and staggered out supporting himself on his sword like a stick.

Then Kyu-nai rushed in and found Katsu-uemon, Do-haku's son-in-law, sitting by the fireplace. Kyu-nai slashed at him, cutting away half of his face, but his sword hit against the pot which hung above the fire, and he was grabbed by Do-haku and his wife.

"I have done what I came for," said Kyu-nai. "I am going back with my brother. Please give it back to me." In response to his earnest request, they returned it to him. The next moment he cut Do-haku's back and part of his neck. Then, outside, he fought Goro-bey and cut off his arm. Kyu-nai was also wounded in several places. He took his brother Gen-ueon on his shoulders, only to have him expire on the way. Goro-bey also died from drinking water while treating his own wounds. Dohaku's wife had a finger severed, too.

Do-haku had his neck severed, but not his throat. His head hung down, but he took it in his hands and lifted it up. Then he called at a surgeon and had a poultice pasted to his chin and the cut sewn with a needle. After he got home, he covered it with cloth and supported it with a rope from the crossbeam. He set his body in a barrel filled with rice, and remained in that position. By and by the bones were jointed again and he recovered completely. While he was in the barrel, he did not lose his presence of mind or display any unusual behavior. Nor did he take any restorative. On the third day there was some bleeding, but he fixed that by drinking some Chinese medicine called *dokusanto*.

When Iwamura Kyu-bey and his son Kyu-nai performed the *daikoku* dance, they quarrelled about it. Kyunai, the son, cut his father on the head, and for that he was dismissed from his post.

* The *daikoku* dance was performed on the New Year's Day in front of the house to bring good luck.

948) Naridomi Kurando holds down an insane *samurai*.

Nishimuta San-no-jo was in charge of the castle entrance. One day a man dressed in a hemp suit came up with something in his clothes. San-no-jo challenged him as he was about to enter the hall. The man said, "My name is Otonari Shichiro-bey. I have something to tell the lord." Thinking the man was insane, San-no-jo took him to the kitchen. They were bewildered with him. Naridomi Kurando jumped at him and held him down. They tied him up with a rope. The man turned out to have been dismissed from his post and to have gone insane.

949) Ishi-i Gon-no-suke threatens a man to write a letter of apology.

Ishi-i Gon-no-suke was an attendant of Kumashiro. He had lost his right arm in the Battle of Arima in 1637, and everyone called him "Gon the Armless" in admiration. He was a man of guts. One day several men were talking at Ayabe Ichiro-zaemon's house. Nishimuta San-no-jo said, "It seems Hohki failed to accomplish any great deed at the Battle of Arima." Gon-no-suke stood up and said, "I heard what you said with my own ears. What proof do you have to say such a thing about him? I joined the battle with him and lost my arm, as you all know. 'Gon the Armless' everyone calls me, and I am taken for a real man. I cannot bear to hear my master being insulted like that. But I cannot fight with only one arm. So, just stab me in the belly and kill me. It would be a pleasure to lose my life for my master. And you will lose face if you leave without doing anything when you have been challenged like this. Come on, stab me." The next moment he stripped himself to the waist. They tried to dissuade him, but in vain, and his anger would not stop. Eventually, San-no-jo apologized to him, wrote a notice of repentance, and handed it to him. Thus the incident was settled.

* Hohki was the second lord of the Kumashiro family, one of Lord Nabeshima's relatives.

950) Nishimuta San-no-jo kills himself by taking a guilt upon himself.

When Nishimuta San-no-jo came back to Saga after service in the accounting division at the Osaka residence, there was an investigation about a misdemeanor by officials. San-no-jo was summoned to the magistrate's office, when he told them what he knew about it, and returned to his house. He then took his own life. That was on August 6,

1675.

The rumor was that he had taken the guilt of other officials' upon himself. If the investigation had continued, many would have been imprisoned, and so would San-no-jo himself. So he committed suicide, they said.

He had a younger brother named Genchi. San-no-jo was jocular by nature. One evening while he was on night watch with Ohno Ichi-bey, they had a wrestling bout with each other. San-no-jo lost the match and bit Ichi-bey's forehead out of spite. It began to bleed, and Ichi-bey told San-no-jo to wipe it off. He took off his loincloth and said, "Wipe it with this. I have no towel with me."

951) Nakashima Ni-uemon determines to kill himself after throwing a man in the sea.

When a British ship entered the Nagasaki Port on June 25, 1673, Kumashiro Sakyō went there by sea with Ohki Hyōbu as aide-de-camp. On the ship Hyōbu said to Sakyō, "Hōki didn't work very much at the Arima Battle." Nakashima Ni-uemon overheard it and whispered to Sakyō, "I just heard Hyōbu speaking ill of Hōki. We should not allow him to say like that. Let me throw him in the sea, feigning insane, and I will commit *seppuku* then. Please allow me to do so."

"I see. I understand what you mean," he said. "However, our visit to Nagasaki is deeply involved in our clan's fortune. Please be patient for the lord and for yourself." As he told him earnestly, Ni-uemon recovered his presence of mind.

Ni-uemon had no sons, so he adopted Gen-zaemon, his own brother. He was such a capable person that he was good at every art. He studied hard and learned Buddhism from two monks named Mokuden and Jakutan. Later he took Buddhism into swordsmanship and taught women in swordsmanship, too. However, he was dismissed from his post for committing some extraordinary things. Someone said he was dismissed because he admonished his colleagues too harshly.

Ni-uemon was not so brilliant as his brother but served as an administrative retainer till he retired. Gen-zaemon, his adopted son, became a monk later and called himself Issui. He is father of the priest Reisei-do, the 74th head priest of Kojo-ji Temple.

* Sakyō was the 5th lord of the Kumashiro family.

* Kojo-ji Temple is located about 10 km north of the castle.

952) Shida Kichi-no-suke argues against Taku Mimaska, an administrative retainer.

Shida Kichi-no-suke was an attendant of Ryuzo-ji Masa-ie. When Katsushige was appointed lord, Shida passed his household to his adopted son Ishida Keishun and retreated to his own house. He was a good friend of Taku Mimasaka and met him quite often. Mimasaka consulted him in secret because he was such an able man, whom he thought of employing as an attendant in the future.

Learning of this, Kichi-no-suke pretended to be greedy and stupid. He sold eye drops like a peddler, lent money at high interest, and danced in the street. He even hoisted up his clothes and said to a dog that was trying to bite him, "A torn leg gets better, but not torn clothes!"

Naturally, Taku Mimasaka read his true intention and wanted to hire him all the more. Then Kichi-no-suke made himself out to be a coward. He ran at a full speed under the gate of a shrine and chose to walk along the fence rather than along the bank of a moat. When he had to pass a moat, he mumbled, "It is no bad thing to walk along the moat, because I can dive into the water when I see a burglar." He also said, "I would rather be crucified to death than killed with a sword. In that way I can survive a few more minutes." "If I had to choose to live or to die," he said. "I would choose to live without question!" So stubborn was he not to accept his friend's request.

One day he went to Chikugo to sell his eye drops. On the way he was stopped by burglars in the mountains. He killed three of them and seriously injured the other two, whom he let away. By and by this exploit became known to many in Saga, though he himself had kept it secret. "He certainly has guts!" they said, but he denied it. "No, I am no hero. I am very timid," he said. "I did not want to be killed, so I just waved my sword about. Then they fell dead." He demonstrated queer behavior in other ways, too. Once he hid his gold and silver coins in the ground, under a pillar, and hung the money bag from a beam.

In his old age, however, he donated a gate to Ryutai-ji Temple and lived in a hut by the side of Lord Masa-ie's graveyard till his dying day. His life in retirement was spent pretending greedy and stupid.

When Mitsushige was appointed the second lord, Taku Mimasaka said to Kichi-no-suke, "We have a new lord, but the beginning is most important. I have made a list of Lord Katsushige's teachings, which he told us before he passed away. I would like to show it to all the attendants. What do you think of it?" After reading a couple of articles Kichi-no-suke said, "Let me go home. I am bored." In disgust Taku Mimasaka asked him the reason. "I thought you were more worthy, but I was mistaken," said Kichi-no-suke. "You are only a useless retainer. Let me explain why.

An administrative retainer is responsible for making sure that all attendants respect the lord, is he not? If they see this list, they will think highly of the late Lord Katsushige and feel all the more attached to him. They will also respect you for showing it to them. It is not very long since he died, and everyone is in grief. If they are shown such a thing, they will only miss him. As you know, they are not familiar with the new lord, since he was born in Edo, and they are wondering what kind of lord he will be. It is quite natural for them not to feel attached to him. That being a case, a wise administrative retainer would ascribe everything in the list to the new lord. He would tell no one about his ploy. As a result they would think the new lord must be as wise as the last one, and come to respect him.” “Yes, I quite agree with you,” said Taku Mimasaka. “That is why I showed it to you to get your opinion.” He tore the list to pieces on the spot.

* Chikugo is a neighboring clan to Saga. It lies about 35 km to the east.

953) The physician Saku-an cures Lord Mitsushige’s smallpox.

When Lord Mitsushige contracted smallpox in Kami-no-seki, the physician Shojima Saku-an prescribed medicine for him. All the servants were really worried about his condition. Soon after he took the medicine, all his scabs turned black, sending everyone into the depths of despair. When they asked the doctor about it anxiously, Saku-an said, “What a good omen! His smallpox will be cured soon, without fail. You can hold a party to celebrate.” Hearing this, they said, “He has gone mad. What an unreliable doctor!”

After screening off the lord’s bed, Saku-an prescribed another dose of medicine for him. Very soon his scabs fell off and Lord Mitsushige recovered completely. Later Saku-an said, “I tackled his smallpox at the risk of my life. If he had not recovered, I was determined to kill myself and follow him to the grave. I prayed when I prescribed that medicine.”

954) Nakano Takumi’s last words

When Nakano Takumi was on his deathbed, he said to all of his family, “Three things are important for a retainer. These are: to obey the lord’s commands, to try your hardest, and to give up your life in the cause of justice.”

955) An attendant of the lord is sentenced to death for homosexual love.

Kitajima Sakubey served Lord Mitsushige as a direct attendant. One day when he was summoned, he appeared wearing crimson undergarment. Questioned by the lord, he said, "Last night I stayed with my lover Kumashiro Ben-no-suke. I borrowed his underclothes."

Sakubey was sentenced to death by *seppuku*. Lord Mitsushige told Ohishi Ko-suke to use a blunted sword when taking off his head. "As you please, sir," he said and went to the temple, but in fact he used a sharp sword when performing his job as the second. Sakubey's family name was abolished and replaced with the name Tahara.

956) Tasaki Geki is put to death by Lord Katsushige.

Tasaki Geki was appointed supervisor of the boy attendants. When he noticed a man flirting with one of the boys, he said, "Stop that. If you do it again, I will report you to the magistrates' office." Hearing this, the man thought he would be turned over sooner or later, and went to see Lord Katsushige. He said, "I saw Geki flirting with a boy attendant."

The lord said, "Have Geki go home and wait till he is summoned," and told Nakano Kazuma to issue a warrant for his confinement to home. When Kazuma was leaving, he found Geki in the next room. Learning of the lord's anger, Geki had come to see Kazuma, who was the lord's direct attendant. "The lord has just made his decision. You came in good time," he said smiling. "Please go back to your house and wait."

So Geki simply returned home. Very soon after that he was sentenced to death by *seppuku*. He killed his wife and children before he committed suicide. Some suggested that Kazuma's light-hearted speaking had distracted Tasaki Geki from his excited feelings.

957) A *samurai* sheds tears of sorrow at the prospect of *seppuku*.

Ishio Matabey's brother was a master of the tea ceremony. He fell in love with Sakabe Mata-uemon, a boy attendant. However earnestly he proposed, Mata-uemon would not accept him. Giving up all hope of gaining the boy's heart, he threatened to kill him. As it turned out, he was sentenced to death by *seppuku*.

When an acquaintance came to see him, Matabey's brother was shedding tears of sorrow. People said that he was a coward to weep at the last moment. A *samurai*

should always consider his behavior.

958) Nakano Kazuma has a discussion with his members in advance.

Nakano Kazuma made it a rule to discuss in advance what to say at the magistrates' office if a member of his family should appear in person to be examined. "If he does not provide a proper statement, it will be a disgrace to our family," he said. "We should put our heads together to reach a perfect solution."

959) Nakano Jin-uemon is dismissed from his post.

Nakano Jin-uemon was appointed chief attendant of the lord. At that time Lord Mitsushige was living in the Koyo-ken residence and all the officials were working at the main hall of the castle.

One day Lord Mitsushige was waiting for word from Jin-uemon, and told Kuranaga Rihey to urge him to bring it as quickly as possible. Rihey conveyed him the lord's command, but still no word came. Again the lord told Rihey to ask Jin-uemon to respond immediately. Jin-uemon handed him a letter, which looked like a private letter addressed to Rihey. In his haste, Rihey brought it right away to Nakano Sho-gen, the lord's direct attendant.

Looking at the letter, Lord Mitsushige became furious, because in it was written: I am supposed to bring this letter to the lord. Please tell Nakano Sho-gen that I did so." He had also written something of a private nature in it. "Examine him without delay," said the lord, but Nakano Sho-gen, said, "No examination is needed. You ought to punish him now." So Jin-uemon was dealt with by being dismissed from his post.

Rihey felt responsible, and said to Sho-gen, "Please let me resign from my post." Sho-gen said, "The lord did not punish Jin-uemon out of any animosity towards him. Jin-uemon simply ran out of luck." So Rihey continued to serve the lord.

Some said that Rihey should have been more careful. He should have told Sho-gen, "I made a careless mistake by bringing his private letter to you without checking it. As a result he received punishment. It is the same as if I had made a false charge against him. Nor can I face my comrades, either. I am guilty of a mistake equal to Jin-uemon's, and am no longer fit to serve the lord. I must resign from my post. Please inform the lord of my intention."

Naturally, Rihey's appeal to Nakano Shogen was not made from cowardice. He simply could not think of a better way to express his thought at the time. It is im-

portant to form the habit of asking for advice from your colleagues or family when you are in trouble.

960) Nabeshima Mondo recommends Hisano Ichi-uemon for a pay rise.

Lord Katsushige thought of raising a salary for the stipend of Hisano Ichi-uemon for his service but refrained from it, because Hisano did not get along with Nabeshima Mondo. Meantime, Mondo heard about the lord's visit to the house of Ichi-uemon. He said to the lord, "I beseech you to raise his salary for his great service."

Lord Katsushige was very happy to hear that, and called Ichi-uemon to his room to tell him the good news. "Mondo proposed that I raise your salary for your remarkable contribution," he said. "His hatred toward you seems to have melted away. Go and express your gratitude to him."

Very soon Ichi-uemon visited Mondo's house and was met by his attendant. He expressed his thanks for the recommendation. He also thanked Mondo for lending him 300 sheets of cloth for the lord's visit to his house. When Mondo's attendant told him about Ichi-uemon's gratitude, he came out to see Ichi-uemon. He said, "I suggested your pay rise to the lord because of your exploits. I also lent you the 300 sheets for the lord's visit, but do not assume that I did these things to become reconciled with you. Please go back, and do not come here again. Remember to return the sheets to me when the lord leaves your house." The sheets were returned to him soon after the lord's visit.

Ichi-uemon was invited by Mondo before he died. He said, "You are a very capable man, but too proud and arrogant. That is the reason I never got along with you. I have always held you in check. After I die, who is there to do so? Please listen humbly to the voice of others. It is for the good of the lord and our clan." Ichi-uemon listened to this final advice in tears and went back to his house.

961) Uchida Sho-uemon says, "Draw a line on your head."

There were several men at the entrance hall of the castle. One of them said to Uchida Sho-uemon, "You are an instructor in swordsmanship. Judging from your normal disposition you must be training your students quite roughly. When you are asked to assist someone in *seppuku*, you might even cut off the top of his head." "Not quite," said Sho-uemon. "Draw a line on your neck, and I will cut it clean through right

there.”

962) Rokuro-zaemon tosses aside a lout who breaks into the procession.

When Lord Mitsushige was in Edo, he was on a visit in his palanquin, accompanied by Nagayama Rokuro-zaemon in front. Suddenly a *samurai* broke into the line, so he grabbed him and threw him into the gutter. Standing beside the man, he shouted, “All my attendants stop here!” Actually, he did not have any attendants. Then he turned to the man and said, “Anything complaint?” “I am very sorry,” he said, and off he went hurriedly.

When they came back to the residence, they were all entertained with a cup of wine. Lord Mitsushige said, “Thank you for your work today. All of you must be tired. Please have some wine. Rokuro-zaemon, you too drink your fill.” He did not mention the incident, though.

963) Nagayama Rokuro-zaemon rejects a *ronin* who begs for money.

When Nagayama Rokuro-zaemon was passing through Hamamatsu along the Tokaido highway, he met a *samurai* begging from passers-by. Coming up to his palanquin, the man said, “I have been exiled from Echigo and have run out of money. *Samurai* are supposed to help each other in trouble, are we not? Please help me.” Rokuro-zaemon said in an angry voice, “What an obnoxious story! If I were in your situation, I would surely kill myself. Why do you not do so rather than disgrace yourself?” And with that, the man went away.

* Echigo is present Niigata Prefecture.

964) Nozoe Jiro-zaemon serves as second at Kichi-zaemon's *seppuku*.

Uchida Kichi-zaemon, a member of the Mondo family, was condemned to *seppuku*. All the family gathered at the master's house to discuss whom to select as his second. Time passed with no proposal from anyone. At last Jiro-zaemon raised his hand and said, “I do not believe that there is any limit for the role, such as rank or personality. If no one else offers, let me do it.” He performed splendidly as second, according to Suke-uemon.

965) Makiguchi Yohey serves as second at his friend's *seppuku*.

Makiguchi Yohey served as second several times in his life. He accepted the role when a man named Kanahara committed *seppuku*. Kanahara thrust his sword into his stomach, but could not draw it to the side. Seeing this, Yohey shouted and stamped the ground, at which Kanahara managed it. After Kawahara was dead, Yohey said in tears, "We were such good friends."

966) How to perform decapitation as second

According to Suke-uemon, a man was assisting a *samurai* in his *seppuku*. When he cut through the neck, it did not drop to the ground because part of the skin was still attached. "It is dangling," said the inspector. Angry with these words, the second detached the head and lifted it above his eyes. "Look, everyone," he said. The inspector felt sick at the sight.

In the old days it was considered a refinement to leave the head attached by the skin, because once in a while the head had happened to roll towards the inspector. Now, however, it is thought preferable to sever it completely.

A man who served as second more than 50 times said, "Some heads feel as heavy as the abdomen. The first two or three heads are easy to cut off, but after that it feels really hard. If you swing your sword down as if you were aiming to hit the ground, you can do it all right."

967) Nabeshima Mondo's last words to his brother

Nabeshima Mondo was on his death bed at Sarushi Village. His brother said to him, "Do you not have something to tell me?" Mondo said, "Yes, I have, but I am afraid it will be of no help to you." "Please tell me anyway," said his brother.

"I fear there will be another battle in five years or so in Osaka," said Mondo. "Judging from the present situation, it will be the last civil war. Everyone must be involved in it. If I were alive, I would like to be the first to rush into the enemy line, to have my lord promoted by the Shogun. It is a pity that I will be no longer able to do so, because I am too weak now. Osaka Castle is such a solid building that you cannot subdue it easily. For the past several years I have been thinking how to take it, and finally found one point where we might break into it." "Which point is that? Please tell me," said Aki. "I promise to breach through into it after you have departed this

world.”

“There is not much difference in bravery between us, Aki,” he said. “However, it cannot be achieved by bravery alone. You have to have earned the respect of everyone. You cannot persuade the lord to behave as you wish as well as I can. In battle you should seize your opportunity to rush to the front, otherwise some other person will do it before you. I am afraid no one will follow your order when you command them to break through the enemy defenses. Nor will the lord listen to you, of course. Probably Ju-uemon will ramble on and on, saying ‘This is serious! This is serious!’ Then he will call a meeting. During which time other clan leaders will take the castle. If I were alive, I would rush in without listening to such voices. Yes, brother, let me tell you the weak point of Osaka Castle. It is at such-and-such a spot. I think Hachisuka will be the only person in the country to breach it. He will perform a great deed carrying it out.”

As Mondo had predicted, the Battle of Osaka occurred after five years. Aki went up to Osaka but, just as his brother had foretold on his deathbed, he was not able to render any distinguished service. Aki was very sorry for that, but when the Shimabara rebellion broke out in 1637, he resolved to risk his life by arriving at the front before anyone else.

Aki had been given a suit of nightwear as a keepsake from his brother, which he wore as long as he lived. In the Shimabara campaign he used it as a lucky charm to bring victory. It is still preserved at the house of Shin-zaemon, his grandson.

- * Ju-uemon, a prominent *samurai*, had a weak point in that he was too cautious.
- * Hachisuka was a leading warrior in the service of Shogun Hideyoshi.

968) Iwamura Kura-no-suke admonishes the lord’s attendants.

Iwamura Kura-no-suke was appointed counselor for young Tsunashige. One day he found several coins in front of the young prince. “What did you bring these coins for?” he asked one of the attendants. “When he heard of coins brought as a present, he showed a keen interest in them because he had never seen them before,” the attendant said. “So I showed these to him.”

“How thoughtless you are to show them to the prince!” said Kura-no-suke in an angry voice. “He is too noble to look upon such vulgar items.” Turning to the young master, he said, “Dear Prince, please understand these are not for your eyes.” Then he said to all the attendants, “Be more careful from now on.” He scolded them severely.

When he was about twenty years old, the prince went to his villa in Naeki-yama. When he came close to the house, he asked for a walking stick. The attendant Miura Jibu-zaemon, made a stick and was approaching the prince to hand it. Kura-no-suke seized it and broke it in two, scolding Jibu-zaemon severely. "Are you trying to make our prince a weakling?" he said. "Do not give him any such thing, even if he orders you. All of you, be more thoughtful." Jibu-zaemon was promoted to reserve warrior in 1659. My teacher heard of this incident directly from Jibu-zaemon.

969) Sugimoto Do-seki looks for his tobacco tray.

When Lord Mitsushige went to Nagasaki, Sugimoto Do-seki accompanied him with his own tobacco tray. He was smoking in the hut attached to the kitchen, when he was summoned by the lord, so he went out leaving his tobacco tray there. Soon he returned to the hut but it was gone. In fact, someone had brought it upstairs. When he was ascending the stairs for it, a drunkard called from upstairs, "It is up here! How rude you are to call a *samurai* a thief!" Do-seki looked up, then turned back, saying, "He is just bluffing," and went back to his lord's residence.

970) Ishi-i Jin-zaemon is condemned to *seppuku* for betting.

When he was in Edo as caretaker, Ishi-i Jin-zaemon bet with Ishi-i Moku-no-suke at the residence, and won his swords. The upshot was that both of them were sentenced to death by *seppuku*. Matsuno Kihey was also put to death. He was in charge of the living room at the Edo residence. Juro-dayu, Moku-no-suke's father, was dismissed from his post, too. Since he was working at the Edo residence, he had taken his son with him from Saga.

Jin-zaemon was summoned back to Saga for investigation, and was confined in the house of detention. At the inquiry he confessed everything about his gambling. "I have no regrets about being put in this house for my misconduct," he said. "My only regret is that the entrance is locked with a chain. Confining a *samurai* suggests that he is an unworthy person who might run away anytime. Whenever I see it, I feel resentful."

On the day of Ji-zaemon's *seppuku* Fuji-i Kahey came to see him, sitting in the grounds of the temple. When they were exchanging a farewell cup with some titbits, Jin-zaemon said softly, "I am afraid this taro will come out." "What do you mean?" said

Kahey. "It is not easy to swallow. It would be disgraceful if it emerges out after my head is off." He threw it aside and said, "I have always thought I had guts, but I was wrong. Now I understand that I am a coward. I might crawl in terror. How embarrassing it would be! Kill me as soon as possible. A *samurai* of courage never changes his demeanor at his end, they say. I thought that would be me, till last night. But I regret to say that my mind is shaken after coming to this temple." Assisted by Ohtsuka Sadasuke, his end was splendid, said Fuji-i Kahey.

* Jin-zaemon committed *seppuku* in December 1705.

971) A man with a box jumps into the horse of Ishi-i Saburo-dayu.

Ishi-i Saburo-dayu, a caretaker at the Edo residence, was sent as messenger on an errand for the lord. When he was turning a corner in Yamashita-cho, a man with a box collided with the rear of his horse. The box-carrier was killed on the spot when the horse kicked him with its back legs.

His master on horseback dismounted and said, "I am an attendant of Matsudaira Aki-no-kami. You saw that, did you not?" Saburo-dayu also got down and said, "Yes, of course, but I will not apologize to you. I do not mean to make you lose face, because it was not your fault, either. If the horse had stamped him to death with its front legs, we would be to blame, but your attendant barged into its hind legs. If he had not done so, the horse would not have kicked him. I think we should take it for a piece of bad luck. There is a commoner in this district who keeps in close contact with our clan. Please speak to him and have him make whatever arrangements you wish to clear the body. I am on my way to see a man on a matter of emergency." Saburo-dayu introduced him to the shop of the commoner Kame-ya Hiko-zaemon.

The attendant said, "I understand what you said. Actually this is my first job as a messenger for my master. I have just been appointed today. I had been serving as a boy attendant, and back at the castle I was told something about service at our Edo residence, but little expected to run into such a situation. I will return to our residence. If they say that I should have taken some action, I will have to visit your residence to see you again. So would you please tell me your name and address?"

"You are welcome, anytime," said Saburo-dayu. "And if it turns that you should have taken action, we can discuss it then." He continued on his way after giving his name and address to the man.

The next morning he man came to Saburo-dayu's house with two others. "All my

colleagues told me you behaved quite properly, and that I should thank you for your conduct. I have come here because they told me I should do so as soon as possible. Thank you very much.” He was a young man aged around 20.