JAPAN IN DAYS OF YORE.

I.

HUMAN NATURE IN A VARIETY OF ASPECTS.

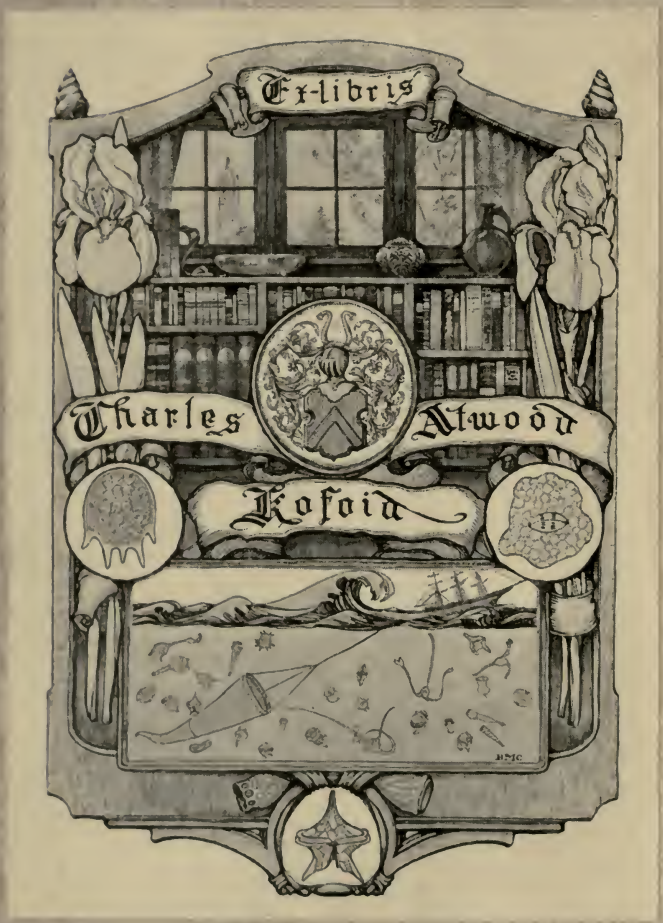
BY

WALTER DENING.

THE HAKUBUNSHA,

TŌKYŌ, JAPAN.

$1.25



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BRANCHES:

ŌSAKA. FUKUOKA-KEN.
CHIBA-KEN. SAITAMA-KEN.

1887.

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THE HAKUBUNSHA, TOKYO.

1904.

"Thou unrelenting Past!

"Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,

"And fetters sure and fast

"Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.

"Far in thy realm withdrawn,

"Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,

"And glorious ages gone

"Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb."

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

PREFACE.

THE following tale is one of a series to be published bearing on the life and manners of old Japan.

The tendency among the natives of this country to neglect to study and hence to fail to appreciate the numerous interesting phases of the lives of their ancestors, immediate and remote, however unavoidable, has the effect of keeping locked away in storehouses, access to which few foreigners enjoy, numerous treasures, literary, scientific, philosophical, and ethical, which, were they exposed to view, would be highly appreciated by the world at large, and would go far to make the national character of the Japanese better understood than it now is. It is in the

PREFACE.

calm waters of ancient Japanese life that the traits of the national character are the most clearly reflected. There is too much motion and change in the life of modern days to allow of anything being portrayed but a representation at once broken and ill-defined, that is more of a caricature than a picture.

In order to do something, however humble, towards disclosing the treasures that lie concealed in hundreds of books which few foreigners are able to read, and fewer still have the leisure to study and to reproduce in another tongue, I have undertaken to write a series of tales bearing on the Japan of the past. The series is to consist of translations, in some cases, paraphrases or adaptations, in others, of well known Japanese stories and biographies.

It is not improbable that to a certain class of readers the style adopted in this series

may seem objectionable owing to the number of slang expressions that occur.

I would remind such that in works of this kind the style of the original determines the style of the translation; and that there are cases in which it is quite impossible to give an equivalent of the original without resorting to slang. It is well known that English colloquial, contains hundreds of slang expressions, which, though frequently heard at the bar, on the bench, in the pulpit, and the Houses of Parliament, are not found in books which claim to be written in standard English. It is with this familiar language of everyday life, however, so much of which is found in our popular English novels, that the Japanese student needs to become acquainted; and I venture to think that the employment of it to describe phases of life with which he is conversant, will be of no small assistance

to him when studying foreign life. Bearing this in mind, I have invariably endeavoured to render Japanese colloquial phrases, taken as a whole, into their corresponding English ones.

The success which Mr. Mitford's well-known work and one or two less pretentious efforts have met with, seems to warrant the publishing of another book on the same lines. The present work, while intended to be larger than anything of the kind that has appeared, is to traverse new fields and to contain entirely new matter. It is hoped therefore that to some extent it may prove to be a complement to the pictures of life in old Japan which have been already drawn.

SURUGADAI, TŌKYŌ,
APRIL 10TH., 1887.

JAPAN IN DAYS OF YORE.

I.

HUMAN NATURE IN A VARIETY OF ASPECTS.

CHAPTER I.

IN the time of Yoshimune, the eighth Tokugawa Shōgun, there were in Japan a large number of noted government officials, but, for ability and nobleness of nature, there was no one worthy of comparison with Ō-oka Tadasuke, Echizen-no-Kami. For twenty years he was the *Bugyō*, or Governor, of Edo; and during this time, agreeable to the custom of those days, he had to pass judgment on some hundreds of legal cases. Though, of course, his administration of justice was not altogether free from the faults and abuses that disfigured the legal proceedings of the age in which he lived, yet, in comparison with the

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I.

HERO-WORSHIP IN A VARIETY OF ASPECTS.

CHAPTER I.

judges who were his predecessors or contemporaries, he was little given to the use of torture; and he abstained from various other of the mal-practices of the courts of that day.

The nobleness of some men's natures seems to elevate them above the meannesses, the follies, and the cruelties of the age in which they live. Such was eminently the case with Ō-oka Tadasuke. When the technicalities of law seemed to ascribe guilt to individuals, who, to his discerning eye and practised legal judgment, seemed to be innocent, he had a happy way of ignoring altogether, or of bringing forward some plausible substitute for, those technicalities. Of his mode of acting on these occasions, it may doubtless be said that, it destroyed the sanctity of law. But to this it may be replied that, when the observance of the sanctity of law and the administration of strict justice were plainly incompatible with each other, no one possessing such fine moral instincts as those with which Tadasuke was endowed, could possibly hesitate as to what course to take. Tadasuke lived in an age in which there was but little legal criticism, in which the nature of the proceedings of Courts of Law depended more on the administrators of the Code, than on the character of the Code itself. Few but the judges themselves knew what the laws were. Most

of the cases upon which Tadasuke pronounced, and where his mode of procedure strikes us nowadays as so remarkably shrewd and natural, were cases of which all the technicalities of precedence did not form a part. They were entirely new and extraordinary in character, such as had never occurred before and were likely never to occur again. His mode, or, rather, his modes, for he never confined himself to any one in particular, of extracting evidence from criminals was novel in the extreme, and such as could only be adopted by a judge endowed with extraordinary original genius. The knowledge of human nature, the fruitfulness of resource, the indomitable perseverance, which Tadasuke's judgments display makes the *Ō-oka Meiyo Seidan** one of the most charming, as well as the most instructive, books that have issued from the modern press. From this work we have extracted the matter contained in the following tale.

Among the cases which were brought before Tadasuke, those of Ten-ichibō, Echigo Denkichi, Murai Chōan, Hikobei the *Komamonoya*†, Kihachi the

* The *Ō-oka Meiyo Seidan* contains a full account of the most noted cases tried by Tadasuke.

† A *Komamonoya* is a term applied to the man who sells, or the shop at which articles of women's toilet, such as mirrors, combs, rouge, tooth-brushes, powder, etc. are sold.

Tobacconist, and the one we are now about to relate, that of Gotō Hanshirō, *are the chief.

Gotō Hanshirō, though the son of a poor peasant, being endowed with great physical strength combined with great force of character, and being propelled by unusually strong virtuous impulses from his earliest days, rose to rank and distinction. He was created some years before his death one of Yoshimune's *Hatamoto*. His life was spent on behalf of others; and he therefore stands high in the list of those to whom heroic acts are entirely unconstrained, but flow out fully and freely from their heroic natures like water from a fountain. There is a verse of Japanese poetry which runs thus:—

"Of *men* there are enough.
"A *man* there is not.
"Make men *to be* men:
"And a man *you* will be.
"Act *like* a man:
"And a man you will *become*."

With the sentiment expressed in these lines giving a colour to all his actions, Hanshirō passed through

* An account of Hikobei's case will be found in the Mombushō's English Readers (High School Series), Book III., under the title, "The Misfortunes Of A Small Shop-Keeper And How They Ended." Bk. IV. of the same Series contains a history of Ten-ichibō, under the title of 'A Deep-laid Plot And How It Was Discovered.' Several of the shorter cases given in the *Ō-oka Meiyo Seidan* are reproduced in these Readers under various titles.

the world, and left his record behind him in the hearts of those whom directly or indirectly he benefited. With an account of his career, we propose to commence our history of the "Days of Yore."

Gotō Hanshirō was born in Kōya, a small village situated in Sanuki, near the castle-town of Marugame. His father, Hanzaemon, was the owner of a few rice-fields, by the cultivation of which he managed to earn a comfortable living. Hanshirō had an elder brother called Hansaku. In disposition the two brothers were the opposite of each other. The elder one was quiet, retiring, and unambitious; the younger, full of spirit, a champion among the boys of his own age, that would not brook an insult from anyone, fond of fun, mischievously inclined, but with this propensity well under control. Though the dispositions of the two lads differed so much, they were nevertheless very good friends. Affection for his kith and kin was one of Hanshirō's most deeply rooted instincts. No son could have performed his home duties more scrupulously or more earnestly than he, arduous as some of these were. He cut wood, drew water, dug the ground, went messages, and executed with speed and regularity all the minor tasks that devolve on the sons of poor parents. The thorough way in which he carried everything through that he took in hand, made him

a favourite in the village of Kōya, and his services for day-labour were in constant demand.

But as the proverb has it:—"Even he that is supposed to be free from weaknesses has a large number." There is no man without some weakness or propensity that may lead him astray at any time. "It is owing to their propensities that men diverge from the right path," says Confucius. Hanshirō, though free from many of the vices of youth, was given to taking more *sake** than was good for him. He did not drink, however, to the extent of being unfit for work, and therefore this habit did not prevent his getting employment in the village. But, like all other weaknesses, it was bound sooner or later to prove a cause of trouble, being calculated to excite the brain and unfit him who was subject to it for the cool, circumspect action which certain occasions and situations render necessary. How this came about, we are now about to relate.

Among Hanshirō's relations, there was a man called —Sajiemon. Sajiemon was a well-to-do farmer, in the receipt of an income of about one hundred and fifty *koku* a year. It happened that when Hanshirō was about thirteen years of age, Sajiemon had occa-

* A term applied to any kind of fermented liquor.

sion to send fifty *ryō*, in those days rather a large sum of money, to a friend in Matsuyama, Iyo. Sajiemon thought that, rather than employ a stranger, it would be better to send Hanshirō with the money. "For, though he is young," said he to himself, "he is honest and brave."

It was a winter afternoon, about three o'clock, when Hanshirō received this commission. With his usual despatch, he went home and hurriedly made his preparations for starting at once. His parents, on learning the nature of the business on which he was going, were very much opposed to his setting out with such a large sum of money within an hour of sunset But his youthful intrepidity made him scorn their advice as the over-carefulness of affectionate parents. "If I meet a robber on the way, so much the worse for the robber," said he. "I will soon make an end of him." And off he went, full of spirit and daring, eager to encounter the dangers of the road.

Long before he reached Matsuno-o, it was quite dark. On his arrival at that place, between eight and nine o'clock, he felt very hungry; and, as he purposed travelling on through the night, and the road that lay immediately before him was very mountainous, he thought he had better make a good meal

there. Going, therefore, to a small wayside-inn, he ordered a quart of hot *sake*, and told the inn-keeper to get ready the best meal he could for him.

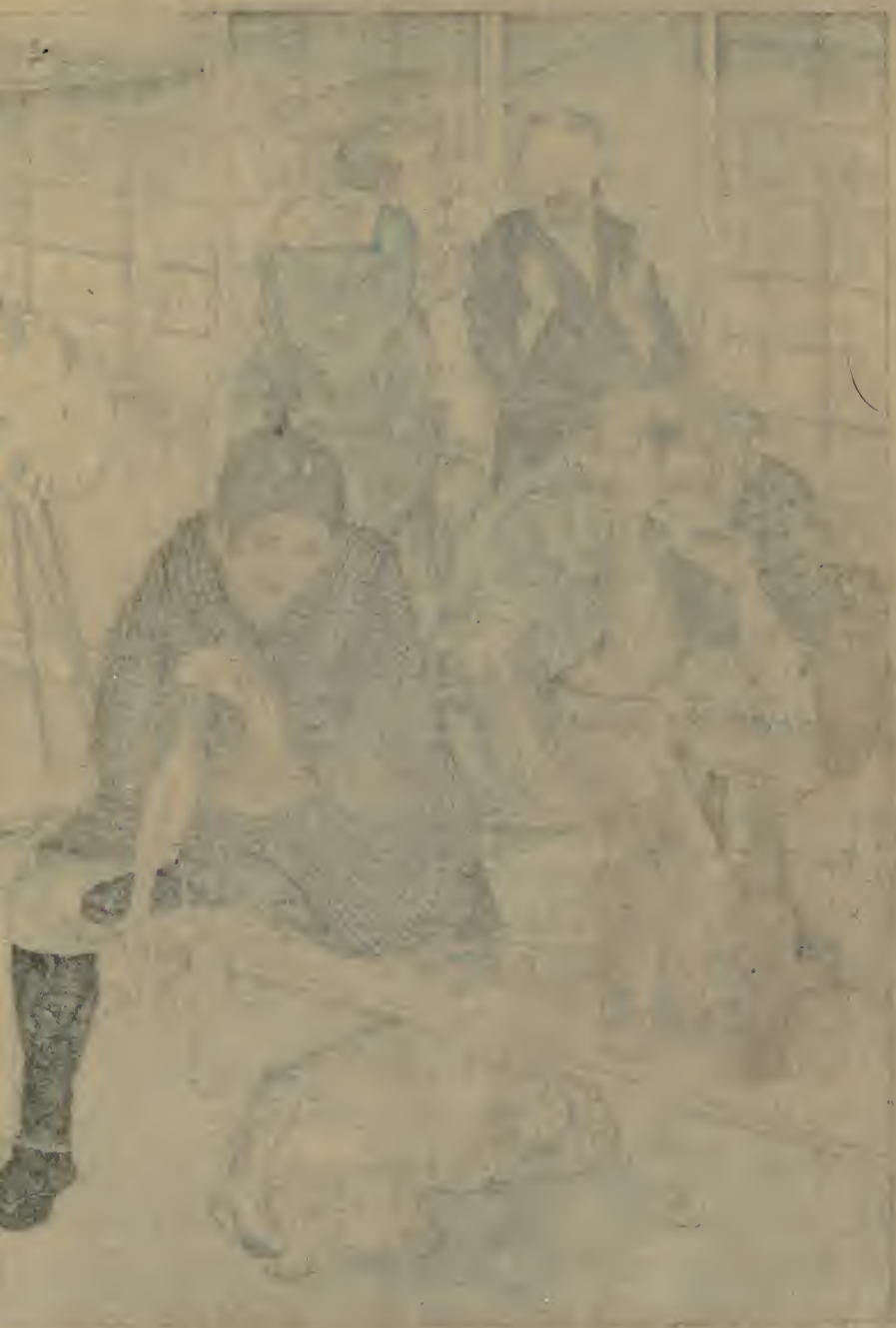
The food was poor; but to a hungry man nothing comes amiss. So Hanshirō soon demolished what was set before him, and astonished the inn-keeper by ordering another quart of *sake*.

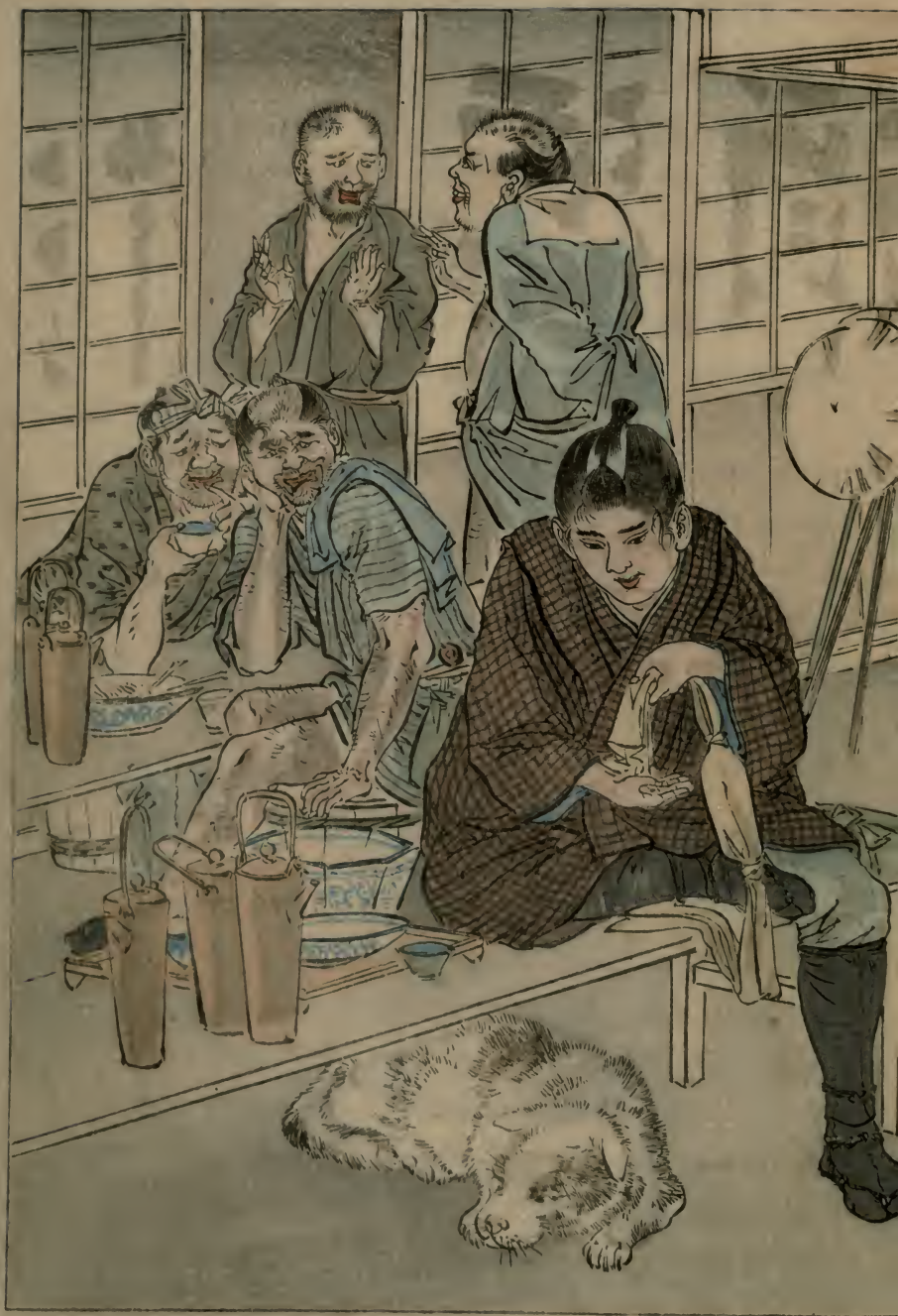
"Well, to be sure! You *do* drink!" exclaimed the inn-keeper. "Two quarts of *sake*, for such a young fellow is not bad, I must say! What makes you drink so much?"

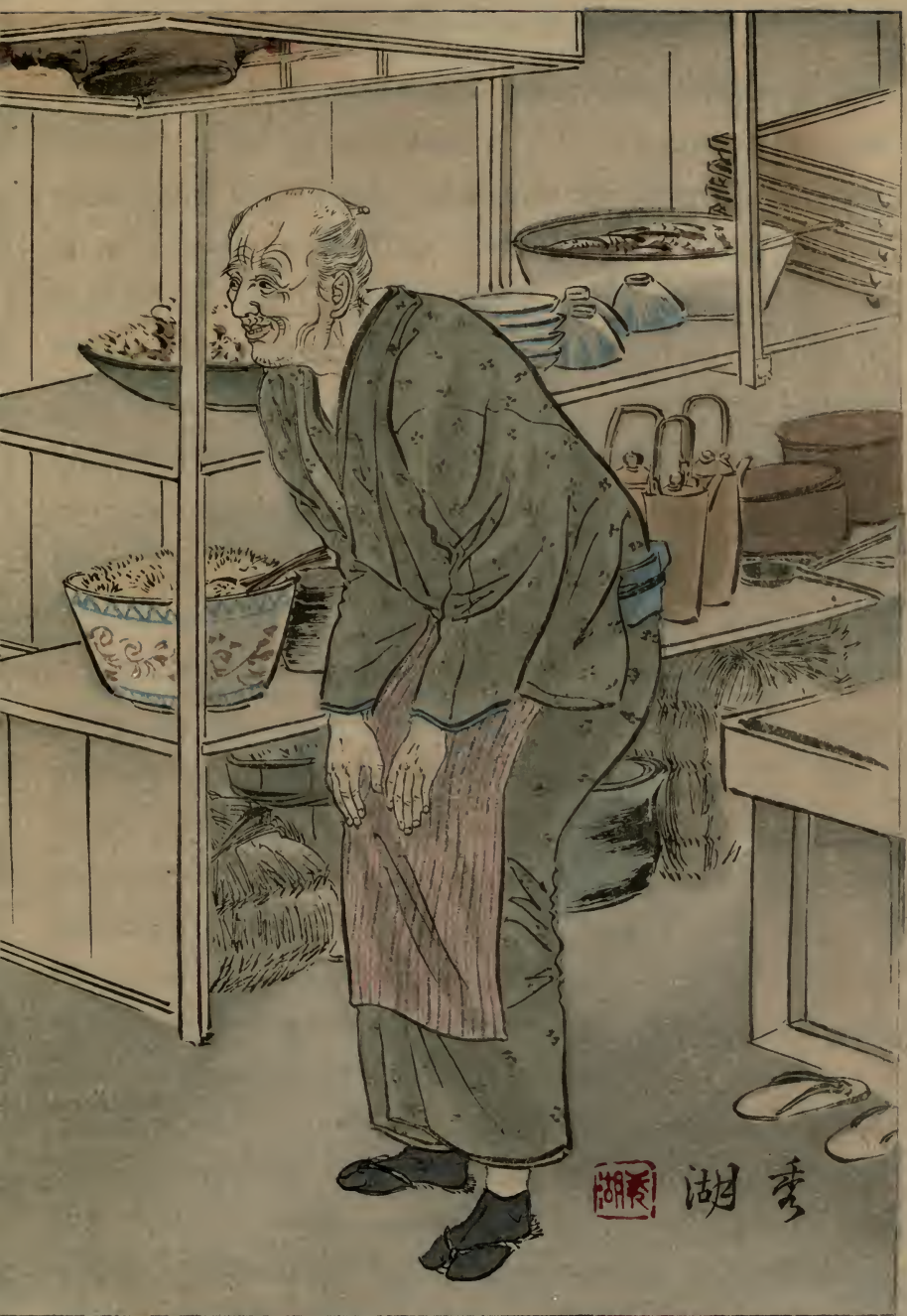
"Well," replied Hanshirō, "the road ahead is pretty stiff, so I need to fortify myself against it. The amount of *sake* I have taken is not more than I shall work off in climbing these hills."

Just as Hanshirō was drinking the *sake*, some five or six palanquin bearers came rushing into the inn. "Halloo, there! Mr. Inn-keeper! have you shut up shop?" shouted one of the bearers. "Am sorry to trouble you, but just hand us some *sake*, will you."

Here the bearers were supplied with *sake*. While they were drinking it, Hanshirō took out his purse to pay his account, and, with the thoughtlessness and carelessness of youth, his head, moreover, being somewhat muddled by the liquor he had consumed, he



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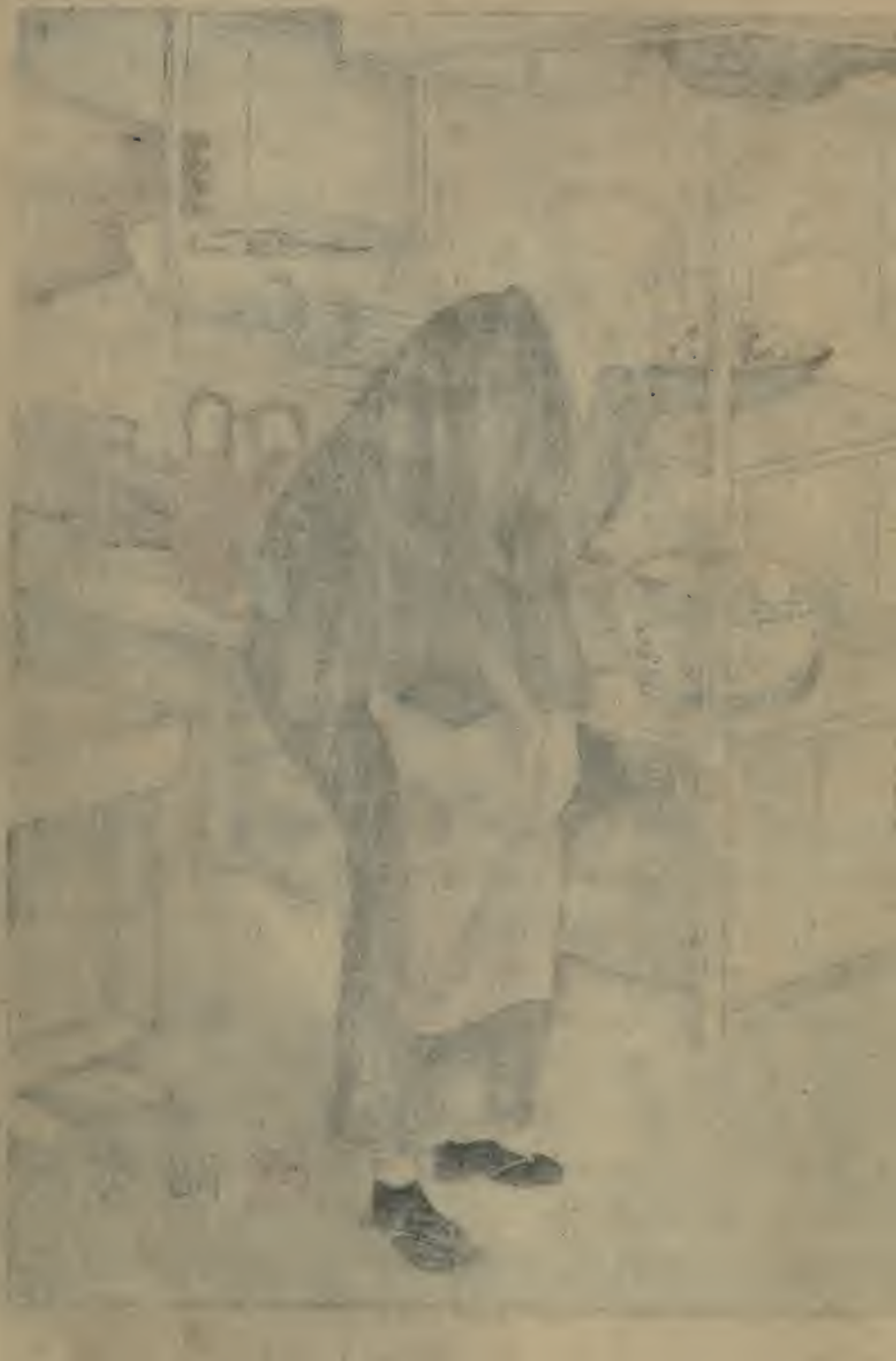

revealed to the bystanders, who were watching him narrowly, that he had a purse full of money. Instead of keeping the money he was to spend on his journey in a separate purse, he seems to have had it and Sajiemon's money all in one purse, which, by its length, shewed that it contained a large number of gold and silver coins. While Hanshirō was paying his account, two of the bearers were seen to whisper to each other, and, presently, one of them, addressing Hanshirō, inquired :—"Ay, young chap! where may be you off for?"

Without any suspicion, Hanshirō replied :—"I am going as far as Matsuyama, and purpose travelling through the night."

"It is very dangerous journeying at night, as you propose doing," replied one of the bearers; "had you not better hire a palanquin? Though it is rude of me to say it, you seem, too, to have a great deal of money with you, and, young as you are, surely it is not safe for you to travel alone."

"It is very good of you to concern yourself so much about me," rejoined Hanshirō, but, to tell you the truth, I dislike palanquins, and being naturally a good pedestrian, that thinks nothing of doing his thirty or forty miles a day, I prefer to walk."

Thus saying, Hanshirō tightened his sandals and was preparing to start, when the bearers, in a body, sprung up and began to urge him vehemently to ride in their palanquin. "Come! ride," said one of them. "There never was such a thing heard of as a lad so young as you, walking in the mountains at this time of night."

"If you won't ride" said another, "then, treat us to some *sake*."

"It may be this young fellow is a thief who has stolen his master's money, and that he is now trying to run away with it," remarked a third.

Hanshirō saw that things were beginning to look very ugly. But he determined, before having a fight with the men, to try what gentler means would do. So he quietly replied to the charge of having stolen the money by informing the coolies who he was and by explaining to them how such a large sum of money came to be entrusted to him.

"Very well;" said one of the bearers, "that may be all correct. But we want some money, so be quick and give it to us."

Hanshirō saw that further reasoning was useless and, feeling that he was no match for such a number as confronted him, he thought it best to run away. So, tying the money tight round his waist, in

an instant he made an opening in the circle of bearers who surrounded him, and was about to set off, when one of the men stretched out his hand, and, seizing him by the clothes, said:—"Do you think you are going to escape like that? Not a bit of it!"

The bearers now closed in around Hanshirō, and one of them tried to seize his purse.

The lad saw that it was no use mincing matters any longer, so, snatching up one of the forms belonging to the inn, he commenced to defend himself against his assailants in right earnest. They rushed on him pell-mell; but he was a powerful young fellow, and he wielded the form with agility and skill that astonished the coolies. One after another, with bruised limbs or broken crowns, they skulked away, until Hanshirō was left alone in the inn.

"Better I had taken the advice of my folks and waited till the morning, instead of running the risk of losing the money in this way," he muttered to himself. "But, however, 'in for a penny in for a pound,' as the saying is. 'When once on a tiger's back, there must be no getting off.'—Dangers surround me, but, encounter them, I will, yes, and surmount them, I shall, unless I am very much mistaken." Thus saying, he hurried on his way.

Nothing of importance occurred to him till he reached a forest of pines, situated at some distance from the scene of the affray just described. Here the coolies all made their appearance again, attended by some dozen associates. Springing out on Hanshirō suddenly, they accosted him as follows:—"Aha! you small boy! you are he who attacked us at the inn, eh? We are come to take your life, your clothes, and your money, by way of retaliation."

"Heavens! here's an affair!" exclaimed Hanshirō. "Now they will make an end of me! Anyhow, I will die hard!" So saying, he put his back against a pine tree; and, though he had no weapon in his hand, hoping to get hold of one in the first encounter, in a defiant tone, he shouted:—"Come on!"

"Let us kill him at once before anyone arrives to assist him," said one of the coolies. And, thereupon, rushing at Hanshirō, with a palanquin bearing-pole he dealt a heavy blow at his head.

Hanshirō, as quick as lightning, avoided the stroke; and, in an instant, adroitly seizing the pole, thrust it into the side of his assailant. The man's breath was taken away by the thrust, and, reeling over, he fell to the ground as though he were dead. Assailant after assailant, Hanshirō either

knocked down with his pole, seized and sent flying through the air, or dashed against the trees. Thus he held out against his foes for some time, but, as ill-luck would have it, the staff that he had been using so vigorously suddenly broke in two.

"Now it is all up with me," thought the lad. But with that persistent clinging to life, and that tendency to hope even when there seems nothing to hope for, which is so prominent a characteristic of heroic souls, and which so often insures the realization of their wishes, Hanshirō determined not to give up as long as there was a chance of escape. Weaponless as he was, there was nothing for it but to run away. He set off as fast as his legs would carry him, and kept well ahead of his foes for some five or six *chō*,* when he arrived at a place where the road divided into two parts. Hoping to elude his pursuers by so doing, he took the less frequented of the two roads, and was still making rapid progress when, suddenly, he was confronted by some seven or eight men, who had been placed in ambush here to intercept him in case he attempted to escape. Seeing that further flight was impossible, he seized one of the small trees that grew by the road-side

*= 358 Eng. feet, or $\frac{1}{15}$ stat. mile.

and commenced to defend himself against his new assailants. But he had been running, and he found his strength failing. In the act of aiming a blow at his foes, suddenly his foot slipped, and he fell to the ground.

The robbers, for such they were, (though, according to the custom of those days, they acted as palanquin bearers to enable them to rob with greater facility), seeing this, commenced their attack afresh, and made sure of killing the lad there and then.

Hanshirō now set up a cry of despair "*Murder! murder!*" shouted the lad.

But how useless did such a cry seem! What answer could be expected but the repetition, and hence the intensification, of its sad accents in the form of the echoes of the wood? At such an hour of night, in such a place, what likelihood was there of any but Heaven hearing the cry of distress?

But wonderful to relate, human ears heard that voice, and human help hastened to the spot from whence it proceeded. Suddenly there sprung out from the forest a powerful man, arrayed in the garb of a warrior-pilgrim.

"Away with you! away with you! you greed-loving scoundrels!" shouted the man. "Life is too

precious to allow it to be taken in this fashion. Cheer up, young fellow, I will rescue you."

Here the champion, springing into the midst of the robbers, with a huge iron bar, such as were used in those days by warriors of great strength and skill,* in whose hands they proved the most formidable of weapons, commenced to knock them about as though they were nine-pins. Flourishing the bar right and left, in a few minutes he had worked such terrible havoc among them, that he and the lad were surrounded by their disabled foes.

The man who had come to the rescue of Hanshirō was a *Musha-shugyōja*,† or warrior-pilgrim, who happened to be passing through the forest in search of adventure at the time.

The warrior-pilgrim, after the affray was over, looked round to see what had become of Hanshirō. He found that the lad had fainted, and was lying close

* The weight of some of these iron bars was prodigious. They were often rendered more formidable by being knotted or shaped, so as to inflict greater injury on the person attacked. Hideyoshi nearly lost his life by means of one of these when on his way to Kyōto to avenge the death of Nobunaga.

† A *Musha-shugyōja* was a person who, from religious motives, or with the object of perfecting himself in warlike attainments, travelled round the country as a warrior-pilgrim. The men who led this life were usually of good families. The time of their pilgrimage differed considerably. It was seldom that, as in the case of Miyamoto Musashi, the pilgrimage was kept up for life. For a short account of this hero, *vide* English Readers, (High School Series), Bk. III., p. 178. *et seq.*

to the spot where he had fallen. Speedily the good man fetched water and applied restoratives, and in a few minutes Hanshirō revived.

Hanshirō, after thanking his benefactor for the help he had given, related to him the whole history of the previous night's incidents and the events that had led to them. On hearing which, the warrior-pilgrim said to Hanshirō :— "I watched you as you withstood those villains that assailed you. Though a farmer's son, you are no ordinary lad. Your exploits to-night astounded me beyond measure."

The speaker, on being asked who he was, said ;— "I am Gotō Gozaemon Hidemori, from Funai, Bungo, I practise a style of fencing known as the *Mutōryū*. or "Swordless-style," you need not fear, therefore, any further trouble from these robbers. As the distance to Matsuyama is still something considerable, however, I will see that you reach that place in safety.

To this proposal Hanshirō gladly consented, and they set out for Matsuyama. From conversation held on the road Hidemori learnt that Hanshirō was highly esteemed by his parents and elder brother, and, having had abundant proof of his valour, he thought to himself :— "How would it be to make this lad my heir and teach him the style of fencing

which I have adopted? Such a successor would never bring reproach on my name. In instructing such a daring young fellow I shall be but 'giving wings to the tiger,' as it were, that is, I shall be making one who is already formidable still more so."

On Hidemori's making known his thoughts to Hanshirō, the latter fell in with the plan. So, after delivering the money to the person for whom it was destined, Hidemori and the lad returned to the village of Kōya to solicit the consent of Hanshirō's parents to the proposed plan.

Hanshirō's father listened with astonishment and admiration to Hidemori as he narrated to him Hanshirō's exploits. Though loath to part with so brave and noble a lad, he felt he could not well refuse to comply with the request of the man but for whom his son would have been numbered with the dead.

Hidemori now set up a fencing school in the precincts of Marugame castle, about eight miles from Hanshirō's home. This Hanshirō found very convenient, as it enabled him while living with his adopted parent to visit his real parents and elder brother whenever he wished.

From morning to night, Hanshirō practised the *Mu-tō* Style, until he became extremely proficient in it,

when Hildebrand [illegible] the [illegible] in the [illegible]-school and gave him the name of Otto Hildebrand.

What [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] direction.

CHAPTER II.

[illegible]NSIMBO [illegible] up the [illegible] school [illegible] [illegible] great [illegible]. [illegible] his [illegible] higher and higher. The [illegible] the other [illegible] to the [illegible], [illegible] only enough [illegible].

At the end of [illegible] [illegible] that the [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible] that he had [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] that of the [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] Hildebrand, who was [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

when Hidemori made him his successor in the fencing-school and gave him the name of Gotō Hidekuni.

When this had been effected, Hidemori started off on another pilgrimage, taking an eastward direction.

CHAPTER II.

ANSHIRŌ kept up the fencing school in Marugame for three years with great success. Month by month his fame rose higher and higher. The money which he received as fees, he either gave to his parents or to the poor, keeping only enough to maintain himself.

At the end of three years, it happened that the daily routine of the fencing-master's life was interrupted one day by an occurrence, which, however common-place now-a-days, was in those times a great event—a letter arrived. The messenger who brought it said that he had come from a very distant part of the country. The letter proved to be from Hidemori, who was at that time in Ōmama, Kōtsuke, a place over four hundred miles distant from Marugame.

On opening the letter, Hanshirō found that his adopted father was dangerously ill and desired to see him as soon as possible. So, entrusting his pupils to the care of a friend, he set out for Ōmama, and travelled as rapidly as it was possible in those days to do. Great was his disappointment on arrival to find that Hidemori had died some days previously.

After settling his father's affairs Hanshirō started for Marugame again, with the intention, however, of seeing Edo on his way home.

On the outskirts of Kumagaya, there were at the time of which we write, as now, numerous small taverns at which, for a few cash, travellers could obtain a meal and a cup or two of *sake*.

Late one winter afternoon, there arrived at one of these taverns an extremely well-dressed and refined looking married couple. Their costume, general appearance, and whole demeanour indicated that they were unaccustomed to travel. The man looked as though he had been brought up in ease and luxury. Though his face shewed that he was of a good family, and his equipments were those of a high class knight, his limbs lacked the muscle and the development which inurement to the hardships of a warrior's life is calculated to produce.

His wife's delicate frame and refined ladylike man-

ners showed that she too was little cut out for enduring the toils and privations which travelling in those days necessarily involved. They both seemed very tired when they reached the little tavern. After taking their meal, they were about to continue their journey, when the inn-keeper, seeing that they were inexperienced travellers, thought it would be only kind to enquire where they were going at such a late hour in the afternoon. To this query, the *samurai*,* for such he was, replied :— "We are on our way to Edo and wish to reach Kōnosu to-night. How far may it be to that place?"

"People say that it is only twelve miles from here," replied the inn-keeper; "but in reality it is more. It is now after four o'clock, and the road between this and Kōnosu lies along an embankment that is infested with robbers. Excuse me for making the remark, but your august partner does not look as though she could bear such a long journey after the fatigues of the road you have already traversed. I would strongly advise you to put up here for the night."

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* A general name for all persons who were privileged to wear two swords, from the Shōgun and *Daimyō* down to the lowest grade. Knight is perhaps the nearest English approach to the meaning of the term, though in some respects somewhat misleading.

Just at this point, five or six palanquin-bearers came rushing into the tavern. And, after taking a glance at the married couple and asking in what direction they were going, one of them, addressing the *samurai*, said :—"We are on our way home and can take you cheap, sir, please hire our palanquins."

"No," replied the *samurai*, "as it seems to be some distance to Kōnosu, and travelling, I hear, is not very safe just now, I think we had better put up here for the night."

"What is the gentleman saying? He is no doubt a stranger to these parts," rejoined one of the bearers. "The inn-keeper has evidently been trying to persuade him to put up here for the night. Of course it is to the interest of an inn-keeper to do so. It is said to be twelve miles from here to Kōnosu, but in reality it is not more than seven. We will take you for three *sen*,* sir. If we go quickly, I have no doubt the gentleman will not object to give us a drink at the end of the journey. This is all we shall ask."

The inn-keeper knew that the men were highway-robbers in disguise; but it was as much as his life was worth to interfere. So he held his tongue; and the married couple, being unacquainted with the ways

* This would be the equivalent of about thirty cents now-a-days.

of the world, and novices in travelling, were deceived by the plausible speech of the men, and, entering their palanquins, set out for Kōnosu.

"Ah!" exclaimed the inn-keeper to his servant Yasuke after they had started, "such people are to be pitied. Anyone as ignorant of the world as they are, ought not to travel at such times as these. There they are in the hands of robbers! I would have said something, but did not dare. Ill-luck take it!—We'll do no more selling to-day, lad. There is no knowing how many more of these scoundrels may turn up. Up with the shutters, boy, as sharp as you can, and bolt the door."

Yasuke hastened to obey these orders; and had nearly finished the closing in, when a huge man, wearing two swords, and carrying a large iron bar, made his appearance.

"Master is right," said the lad to himself. "We have not seen the last of the robbers yet. Here is a man who looks to be their chief."

While Yasuke was thinking of how best to get rid of the new visitor, "Here, here, boy! hand me a cup of *sake*, will you," shouted the traveller; "and get ready some fish. Goodness me! how short the days are growing!" And, on the lad delaying to bring the *sake*, he added:—"'During the

month of November employ no one who has not his wits about him'—a true saying enough that—come, boy! look sharp! What are you up to there?"

Yasuke eyed the stranger from head to foot. He had never seen anyone who looked so formidable before. His limbs were all of unusual size; his eyes gleamed with fire; his hair had been allowed to grow long in the centre of the head, where in those days it was usually shaven close to the skin, and hung in a disshevelled careless fashion, adding considerably to the general fierce appearance of the man to whom it belonged.

"This fellow is no doubt the head of the gang of robbers who have just left us," thought Yasuke. Bowing low to the ground in a most respectful manner, but with a tremulous voice, he accosted the stranger as follows:—"I am extremely sorry, sir, that you should have had the trouble to come here for nothing, but we have neither fish nor *sake* left."

"Well, well! what a place to be sure!" exclaimed the traveller, "you have rice I suppose, I will take some rice."

"I am sorry to say we have no rice ready," replied the lad.

"Well, then I will put up for the night here. I see you have a notice outside to say that you put

people up. Boil some rice as soon as you can, will you."

Thus saying, the stranger was about to take off his sandals and go up on the mats, when, again bowing to the ground, Yasuke said :—"It is most unfortunate, sir, but to-night there is a meeting to be held in this house, and all the rooms will be occupied, so we are not able to put anyone up to-night."

"The Devil take you!" said the stranger, looking fiercely at the lad, "Who *are* you? Are you a servant or the landlord of this house? You are telling me lies, you rascal!—why, here is fish in the tub—and here is *sake* too. Do you think by my appearance that I am a robber?"

The stranger now went and helped himself to some *sake*, and, taking out a quantity of money from his purse, said :—"Here, look at this! I can pay for any amount of things. You are surely not as stupid as to think that I am one that would take things by main force and run away without paying for them?"

Instead of removing Yasuke's doubts, these remarks only tended to confirm them. "There is no doubt that this fellow has stolen that money," said he to himself. "No ordinary traveller would carry about

so much money. I must get rid of him somehow or other."

"It is true, sir, that, as you say, there is fish and *sake* here, but it is in readiness for the guests who are to assemble in this house to-night," said the lad.

"What, lying again?" rejoined the stranger. "I will knock you down." Here he clenched his fist and raised his hand, as if about to strike.

Whereupon, Yasuke, thinking that, "discretion was the better part of valour," and that, as things were beginning to look very serious, the sooner he was out of the reach of this giant's fist the better, scampered away into the next room.

The inn-keeper,—Hachigorō, had heard all that was going on and now thought it high time to interfere.

"I am afraid," said Hachigorō, bowing low to the ground, "that my servant has been very rude to you. He is a stupid fellow. We have both fish and *sake* in the house, so please take as much as you like of both; and if there is anything else you wish for, please order it."

"Come, come!" replied the stranger "you need not make so many apologies. I was in the wrong. I had no business to take *sake* without leave. My wearing two swords and carrying this iron bar, my size and general appearance, may make me look

something like a robber. But it is hard on account of one's appearance to be taken for a robber."

"Of course it is," replied the inn-keeper. "Though I do not mean anything personal, people are not to be judged by appearances. Even Kanshin, who afterwards became so great, was seen receiving a little rice from an old woman who was washing clothes. And, subsequently, the same man did not mind creeping beneath the legs of vulgar rustics. You too, though your outward appearance may be against you, are a man the lustre of whose heart is unsullied. Like the lotus in the mud, you are undefiled by your surroundings."

"Well, well! now you are overrunning the mark!" rejoined the traveller. "There is no need for praising me after this fashion. You are a rare man though. It is not often that one finds a countryman who knows anything about the great men of China."

"Excuse me for being so rude as to say so, but if I am not mistaken," remarked the inn-keeper "the gentleman comes from the neighbourhood of Sanuki."

"There you are right," replied the stranger. "But how did you find it out?"

"By your language, of course," said the inn-keeper.

"Well, you are a sharp man," rejoined Hanshirō.

"Yes, I hail from that part, and am no other than Gotō Hanshirō, instructor in a style of fencing known as the *Mu-tō-ryū*."

"Ah!" exclaimed the landlord, "many a time have I heard of you. Gotō Hidemori was well known in this town; often has he been here teaching; and many a time has he put up in this very house. He frequently spoke of his adopted son, who, he said, was a most skilful fencer. And now I have the pleasure of seeing the said son before me. This is interesting, indeed." Here the two men commenced to converse together at a great rate, Hanshirō giving a history of the whole of his past life.

At the close of the conversation, the inn-keeper remarked:—"I only wish you had reached my house a little earlier. A distressing thing happened here just now."

The landlord now related what had occurred. On hearing which, Hanshirō exclaimed:—"I will go and rescue these travellers." And forthwith, springing up, he prepared to set out.

"It is no use. It is too late," said the inn-keeper.

"Even if it is too late," replied Hanshirō, "I will go and meet the scoundrels on their way back with the spoil, and will cut them to pieces and restore the money and the stolen goods to their former

owners. I am just the man for such a time as this: I have no one dependent on me; I am fond of fighting; I am strong and fearless. Where the weak are oppressed, thither does Hanshirō delight to go. 'To see the right thing to be done and not to do it, this is cowardice.' Away I go to look into this affair. If my search prove fruitless, never mind; at any rate I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that I have done my best." Then, after a pause he continued:—"As the travellers may be wounded, do you get a doctor and wait here till I come back. Here, please take charge of my money till my return: I shall not need it."

The troubles of the two travellers are soon told. Unsuspicious, they were conveyed to a lonely spot situated about half way between Kumagaya and Kōnosu, where there stood at this time a small shed, which contained a Buddhist idol. Here the palanquins were lowered, and the bearers, surrounding them, said to each other:—"Come! we have gone far enough. Here we will take our ease. Reckoning the value of their clothes, we have a prize worth quite a hundred *ryō*, so we'll have a jolly time of it."

The *samurai* heard this, and said to himself:—"A pretty trap we have fallen into! Well, it is fight or die—and so, little as I know how, to save

my wife from disgrace and myself from death—*fight I will.*"

One of the bearers now came forward and said :— "I may as well tell you at once that we have brought you to this place for the sake of robbing you, and therefore you had better make up your mind to deliver up quietly all that you possess. If you resist, we shall take your life."

"He has stolen the money and the woman too, and we will relieve him of both," said another of the men.

"Don't parley with him, but make haste and kill him," remarked a third.

Ill-prepared as was the *samurai* to contend against such odds, he was not altogether unacquainted with the art of fencing, and, urged on by the desperateness of the situation in which he found himself, he drew his sword and commenced to fight vigorously.

Better armed than his assailants, at first it seemed as though he were going to hold his own against them. Several of them fell wounded around him; but his lack of training began ere long to shew itself in failure of strength, and, the men surrounding him on all sides, he found it no longer possible to protect himself against the blows of their clubs.

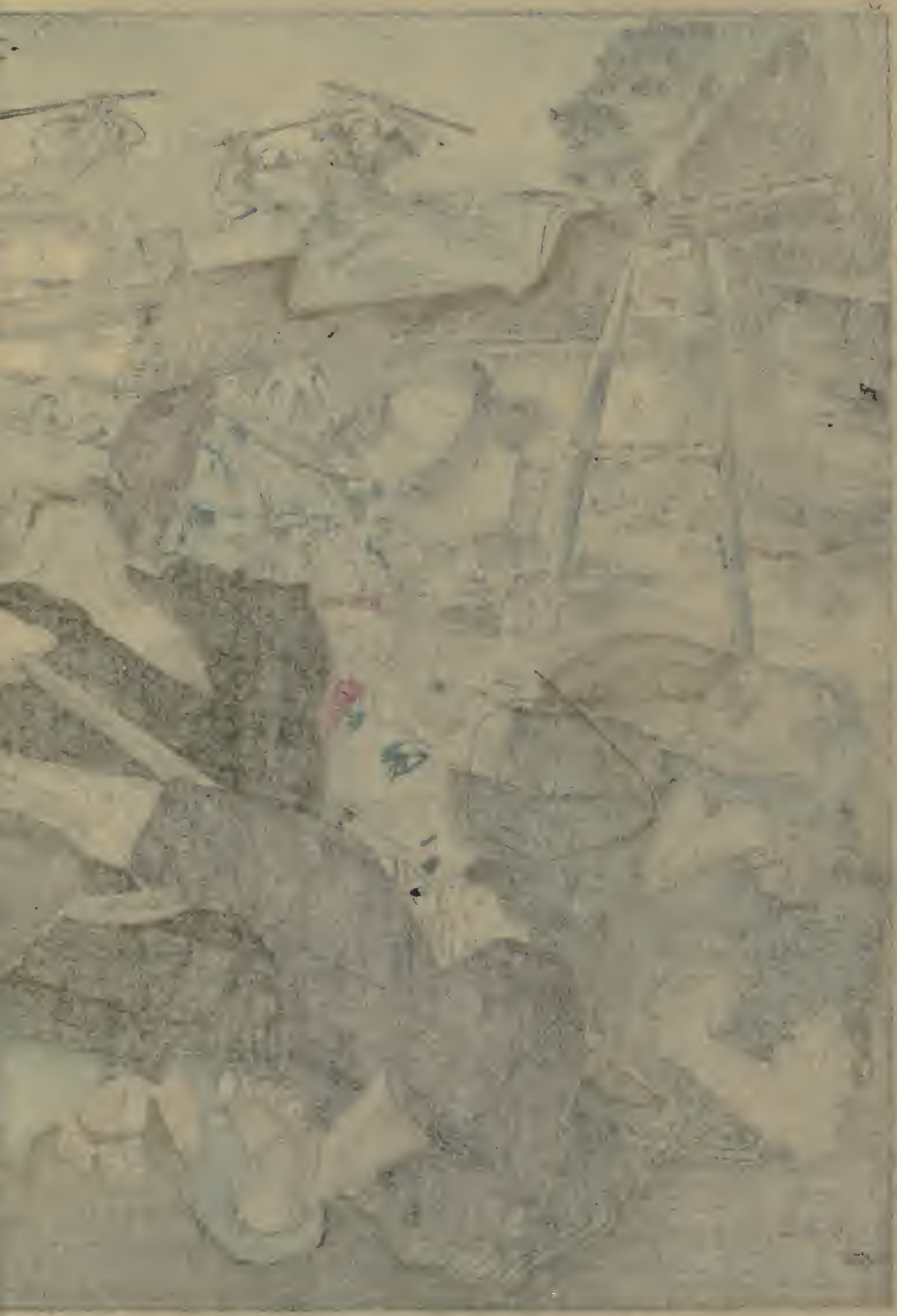
Having time after time been struck, he began to

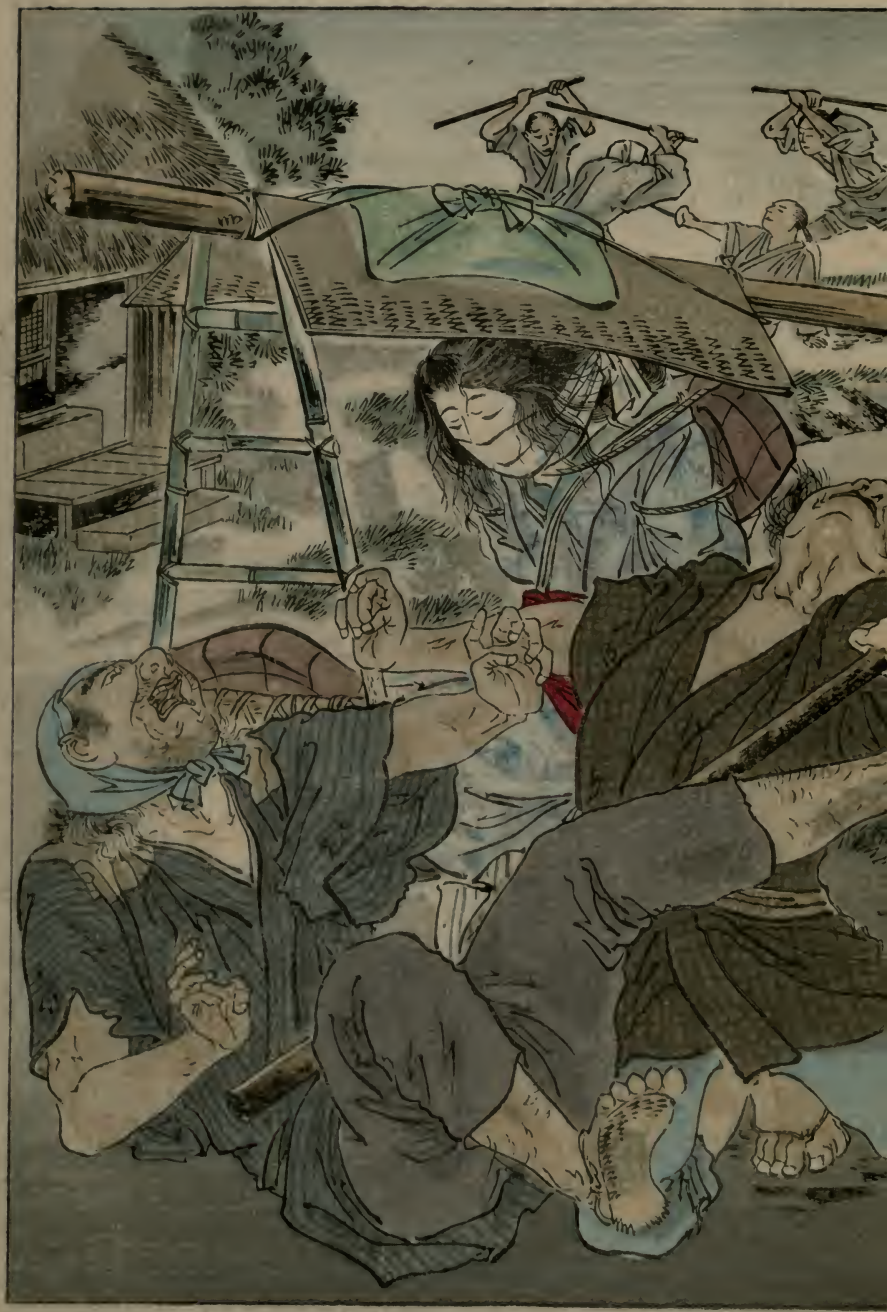
feel that all was over, when his attention was suddenly attracted by a great stir and hubbub which was taking place among the robbers. He looked anxiously in the direction of the noise, when lo, and behold! a giant form dashed into the midst of his foes.

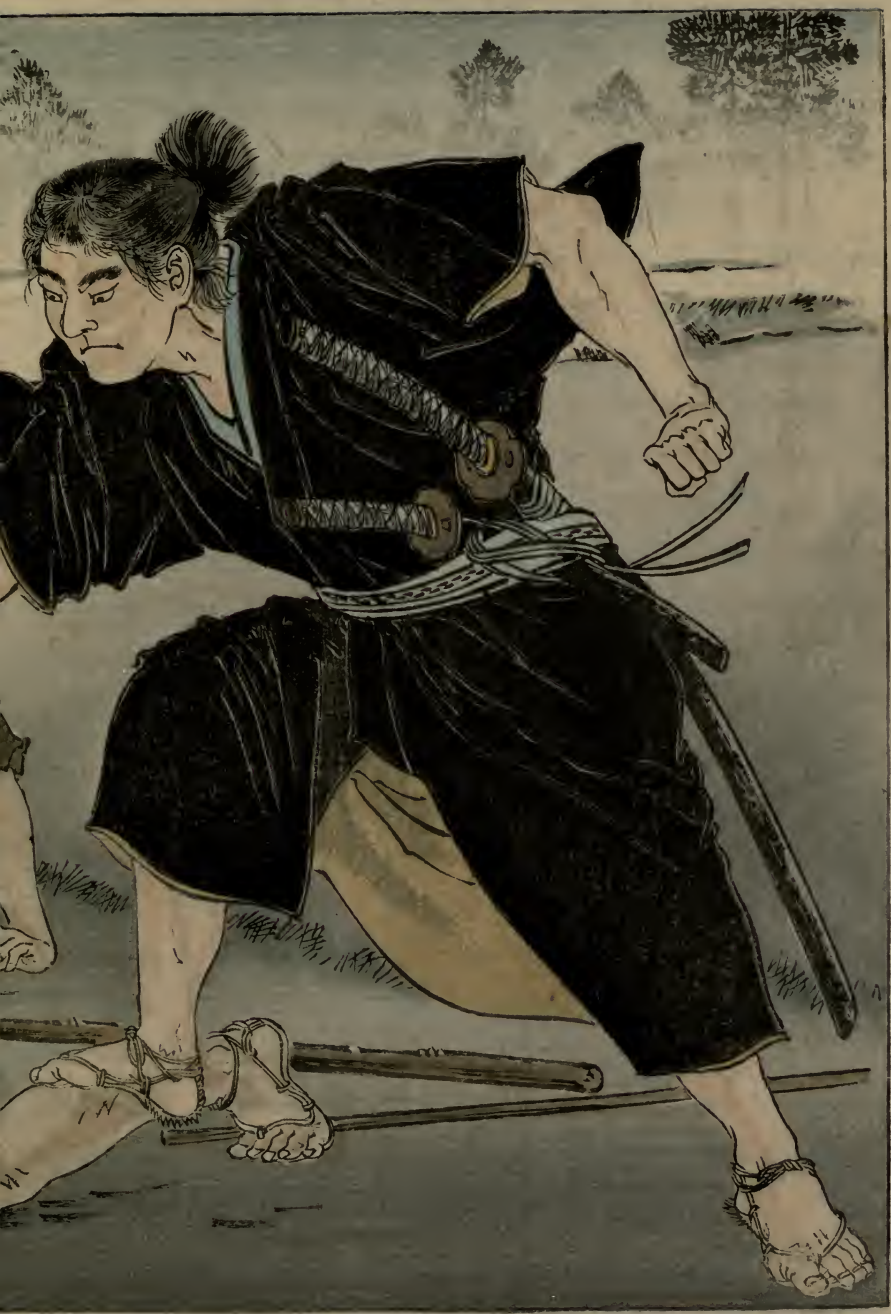
"A new assailant," thought the *samurai* for a moment. But no—the new arrival was not such. In an instant, man after man fell before the crushing blows of a heavy iron-bar, which this giant-warrior wielded as though it were no heavier than a feather, until not a robber was left, and the *samurai* found himself confronted by this mysterious stranger. Was he a friend or a foe? His general appearance and his arrival on the spot at such an hour seemed unmistakably to indicate that he was the latter. He perhaps was the head of another gang of robbers and had come for the purpose of plundering the plunderers.

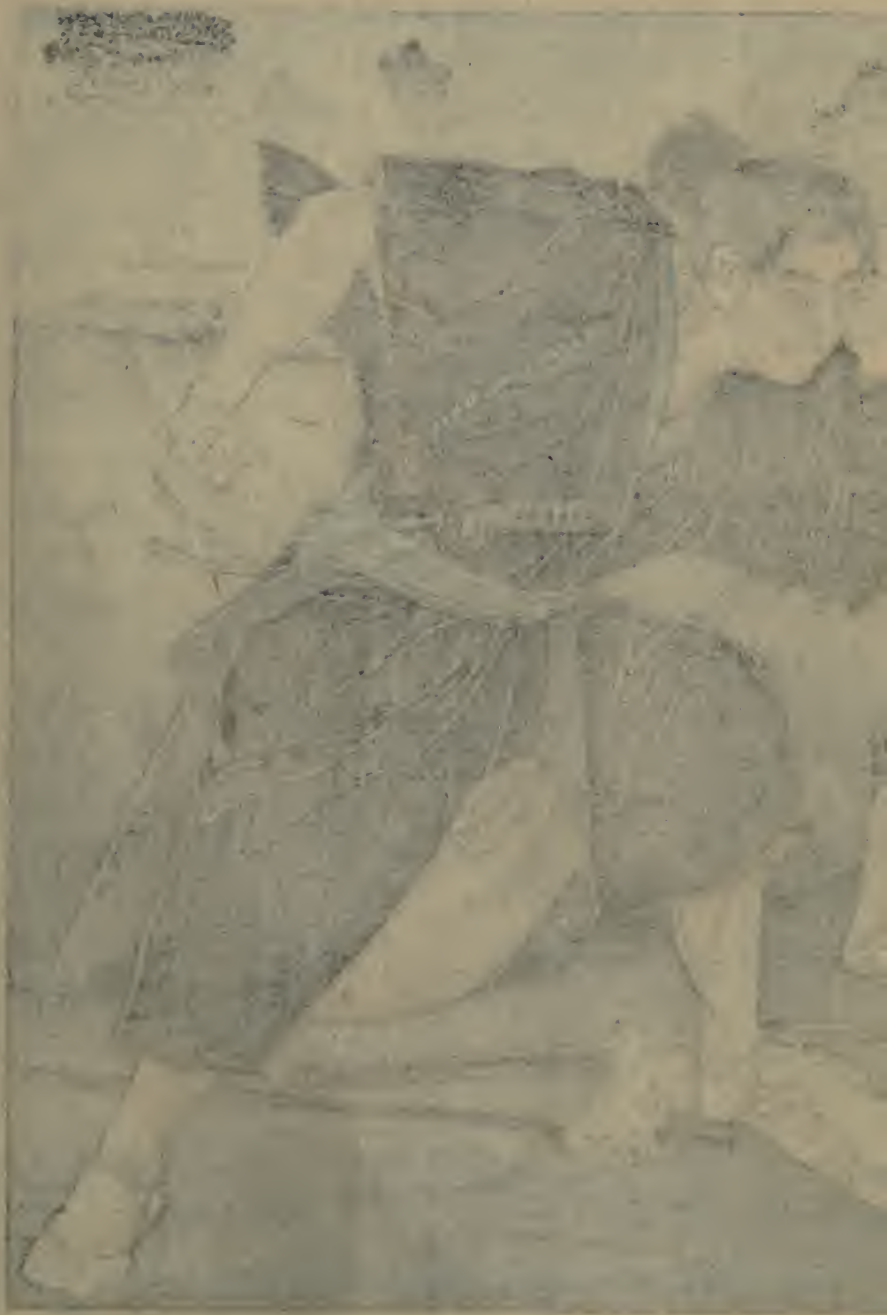
The reader does not need to be told that this new arrival was Hanshirō. Attracted by the loud weeping of the lady, who, while her husband was being attacked, had been tied to a tree, Hanshirō had found out the scene of the affray. To him the work of slaying or scattering a dozen robbers was mere child's play.

While the *samurai* and his poor frightened wife were thinking that they had but "escaped from the









wolf to be devoured by the tiger," Hanshirō made known to them who he was, and told them how he had obtained the information which had enabled him to put in such an opportune appearance.

The *samurai* was badly wounded. Hanshirō attended to his wounds, and then bade the married couple enter one of the palanquins. When they had entered, Hanshirō struck his hands together and exclaimed :— "*There now!* I was a stupid not to have kept two of those fellows alive and made them bear the palanquin back to Kumagaya! Well, 'an after-thought is as good as no thought at all.' So I must make a shift somehow and carry them myself."

Hanshirō took his two swords and his iron-bar, and tying them to the end of one pole of the palanquin, managed to partially balance the weight of the persons inside, and then, making up for the deficient weight by heavy pressure on the other end, succeeded in bearing the conveyance along the road. Tremendous as was the strength required to carry a heavy burden any distance after this fashion, Hanshirō, who had trained himself to succumb to no obstacles whatever, managed to convey the travellers back to the little tavern at Kumagaya.

Knocking at the door of the inn, he shouted—"Eh! Hachigorō!—I was just in time! I have come back!"

The doctor was in readiness, and the *samurai's* wounds were promptly attended to.

On inquiry, Hanshirō found out that the *samurai* was from Echigo ; that his name was Shindō Ichinojō ; that he had been a retainer of Matsudaira, Echigo-no-Kami, the Baron of Takata ; but that for an offence committed for which he expected heavy punishment, he had left the Baron's service ; and that one Ōhashi Bun-emon had assisted his flight and supplied him with money for his journey to Edo. Ichinojō, then, was on his way to this place, when the incidents which we have just described took place.

Hanshirō, who though too full of fortitude to know what it was to fear danger, had a heart capable of deep sympathy for the distressed. He listened with deep interest to Ichinojō's tale of suffering, and at its close, offered to conduct the married couple to Edo in person and to set them up in business there.

So after they had remained some ten days at Kumagaya, Ichinojō's wounds being healed, Hanshirō paid all the expenses that had been incurred at the inn, and, bearing a letter from Hachigorō to his brother—Chōbei, who kept a small tavern in Bakurō-chō known as the Musashiya, the party set out for Edo ; which they reached without any further mishap.

Hanshirō remained in Edo about a month with Ichinojō and his wife: on the expiration of which time, after making them a present of twenty *ryō*, exhorting them to be diligent in business, and requesting Chōbei to do all he could to help them, he took his leave, and set out for Marugame.

Having passed through Kanagawa, Hanshirō was on his way to Hodogaya, when he was accosted by a man who was walking behind him as follows:—"If it is not a rude question to put, may I ask for what part of the country you are bound, sir?"

"I am going to Marugame, in Sanuki," replied Hanshirō.

"I am from Ōmi," said the man, "and am now on my way home, and so our road is the same. If you have no objection, I should like to keep you company as far as Ōmi."

"Well, there is a saying:—'Go to Ōmi for robbers and to Ise for beggars,'" replied Hanshirō. "So it will not do for me to be off my guard with an Ōmi man as a travelling companion."

"The gentleman is fond of a joke, I see," replied the man. "Because people have given the Ōmi folks a bad name, it is not to be so supposed that every man who comes from that part of the country is a rogue. I am a trader who has been to Edo on

business. Having plenty of money in my purse, and the road being somewhat dangerous, I should be glad to have protection on the way. The gentleman being an honourable knight, I shall feel quite safe if allowed to travel in his company."

"Very good then," replied Hanshirō, "you may accompany me if you will."

For some days they travelled together. The Ōmi man grew more and more familiar, until after some days he spoke and acted as though he had known Hanshirō for twenty years. This gradually awakened the latter's suspicions; so one night, while the two were drinking *sake* at an hotel at which they had put up, Hanshirō determined to bring the matter to a point. He quietly remarked:—"It is said that this Tōkaidō is infested with those robbers in disguise known as *Goma-no-hai*, who pretend the greatest friendship to travellers and then take the first opportunity of robbing them unawares. You seem to me very much like one of these."

"I am discovered," thought the man. "But Hanshirō has no proof to go on, and therefore he can do nothing."

"So, without a change of countenance, he replied:—"Well, the gentleman *is* fond of saying extraordinary things. Had I been a robber, do you suppose I

should have travelled with you all these days without robbing you?" Thus saying, the man took another cup of *sake*.

"A keen fellow this!" thought Hanshirō. "He is not to be caught napping. I will lay a snare for him, however, and make him shew himself in his true colours."

"So then you are not one of the sharpers of whom I have heard," said Hanshirō. "To tell you the truth, I am rather anxious to meet with one of those fellows, to see whether he could get over me or not. Here, see! I have a hundred *ryō*!" taking the money out of his pocket and shewing it to the man, "suppose now that you were a rogue, I would defy you to take this from me." Then pausing, he added:—"But I am forgetting the proverb—'Though the thief may take his ease, the man who wishes to keep his property never should.' Perhaps I am presumptuous in boasting in this way."

This was done in order to inform the man that there was money to be had and to induce him to take prompt action. The man was aware that Hanshirō was very fond of *sake*, and so he thought that the best way of acting would be to induce him to drink himself tipsy and then rob him while he was in a dead sleep. So he urged Hanshirō to help himself to wine freely.

Hanshirō saw what was intended and his fertile mind immediately suggested to him that by first feigning to be tipsy, and afterwards pretending to be asleep, he could catch the man in his own trap.

So, after taking as much *sake* as would have intoxicated most men, but which, from long use and great strength of constitution, had no serious effect on him, Hanshirō pretended to be quite tipsy. He sang songs and shouted, much to the annoyance of his next door neighbours, who remonstrated with him, though in vain, till, at last, he stretched himself out on his bed and pretended to fall asleep. His money lay near him beneath the quilt in a long purse, a part of which was under his body.

He had not been in that position long, before his travelling companion, creeping stealthily over, seized the money and was about to flee, when Hanshirō, raising one of his legs, placed it on the man's back and held him down, whilst he shouted :— "*A thief! a thief!*"

Before the alarmed guests had entered the apartment, partly for his own, and partly for the guests' amusement, Hanshirō had covered the man with a quilt, whilst he held him tight between his legs. The people of the house and the guests, after searching the room, said that there was no thief to be found

anywhere. "Here he is beneath the bed clothes!" exclaimed Hanshirō.

"Nonsense!" they replied "The idea of a thief hiding beneath your quilt. You are humbugging us!"

"Come and see then," said he.

On removing the quilt, they found the thief, looking as though he were in a vice, between the gigantic legs of Hanshirō. He had his sandals on and all his equipments ready for taking a journey.

"As it is late to-night," said Hanshirō "we will tie this fellow up to the post till daylight." Thus secured, the thief remained till the morning, when he begged hard to be forgiven.

Hanshirō's feeling of pity overcame his sense of justice, and, fearing nothing himself, it concerned him little how much others had to fear from the liberty which he was granting to this robber. So, in an off-hand way, he said to the man :—"Death is the punishment the law assigns for the crime you have committed, but I will spare you. You may thank your stars that you have met with such a man as I."

Here some of the guests at the hotel interposed :—"It is not right of you, sir, to treat the man so leniently. He ought to have some mark put on him whereby to remember his crime. Allow us to deal with him."

"Very well;" replied Hanshirō "as your sleep was disturbed by him last night, I suppose I cannot very well say no."

"The guests took the thief and, after plucking the hair from one side of his head, they tattoed him on both the face and the head with ink. When they had finished, Hanshirō exclaimed:—"That will do! that will do!" Then calling the thief, he said to him:—"Let this be a lesson to you not to thieve in future. Whenever an evil heart tempts you to steal, take a look at your tattoed face and say:—'*I had better not.*'"

This little episode being over, Hanshirō set out on his journey and reached Marugame without any further adventures, where he resumed his duties at the fencing-school.

CHAPTER III.

OUR story returns to the fortunes of the married couple who were left by Hanshirō in Edo in charge of Chōbei at the Musashi-ya, Bakurō-chō. We have already alluded to the easy

life which Ichinojō had lived in Takata, and to his lack of all soldier-like qualities. When forced to make a living for himself and his wife, the deficiencies of his training came more and more to light.

Some days after Hanshirō had left, Chōbei came to Ichinojō one day and said :—"I think, sir, it is high time for you to commence something whereby to obtain a living. Being a *samurai*, I have no doubt you know how to fence, could you not open a fencing-school ?"

"Goodness me !" replied Ichinojō, "I know absolutely nothing about fencing. How to brandish a sword I have no more idea than the man in the moon ; and my knowledge of spear-exercise is no better."

"Then" replied Chōbei, "I have no doubt you can write well, having been educated as a gentleman's son. Why not start a writing school ?"

"This would be impossible", replied Ichinojō, "I write a very bad hand."

"Really !" exclaimed Chōbei, "Well—let me see now—what can you do to earn some money ?" Chōbei turned his head now on this side and now on that, looking immensely puzzled for a few seconds, and then continued :—"If you will allow me, I will tell you how to make a living. The thing I

and going to august, though, is somewhat ridiculous; but by acting carefully, you can make it pay very well. I propose that you should become a purchaser of waste-paper and such like things."

To this the 'amateur' consented, without realizing what the following of such an occupation involved.

"It will never do for you to have such a grand name as Shindo Ichinojo as a waste-paper buyer," continued Chōbei, "you had better change your name. And to show that you are connected with me, the first syllable of your name shall be Chō; and the second hachi. Chōhachi, then, shall be your name."

Chōhachi took up his quarters in a 'nagaya'* near Chōbei's house, where he commenced his new life.

The first day, bearing with him a scale of rates at which he was prepared to purchase paper and other articles, that had been drawn up by Chōbei, Chōhachi set out on his rounds. Without opening his lips, he passed through the streets. As he walked along, he soliloquized thus:—"Ah! true is the saying:—

'Of blossoms the cherry is the best:
'Of men the knight excels the rest.'

To think that I, who have been receiving one hundred

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* A long row of houses under one roof.

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* A long row of houses under one roof.

koku a year, should have come to this! It is true that it was brought on by my own folly; but it is hard to bear nevertheless. Oh, that I could forget that I was born a *samurai!* Though unknown to those I meet, the very sight of a military man makes me feel utterly ashamed of myself."

With his mind full of such thoughts, stealthily he crept along through street after street, only studying how he should get out of people's way. The consequence was that, though he carried a basket in which he was to have to put the articles that it was intended he should purchase, no one took any notice of him, and he wandered on and on, till, when night-fall reminded him that it was time to retrace his steps, he found himself far away from Bakurō-chō, and without a notion of the direction in which it lay. So, not having the sense to ask the way, he paid two *sen* for a guide to conduct him back to his house.

On reaching his home, he found that Chōbei had just come over to hear how he had got on. Disappointed enough was the inn-keeper to hear the result of his dependent's first day's toil.

The next day Chōhachi set out again; but he found the same difficulty in adapting himself to his altered circumstances. Do what he would, he could

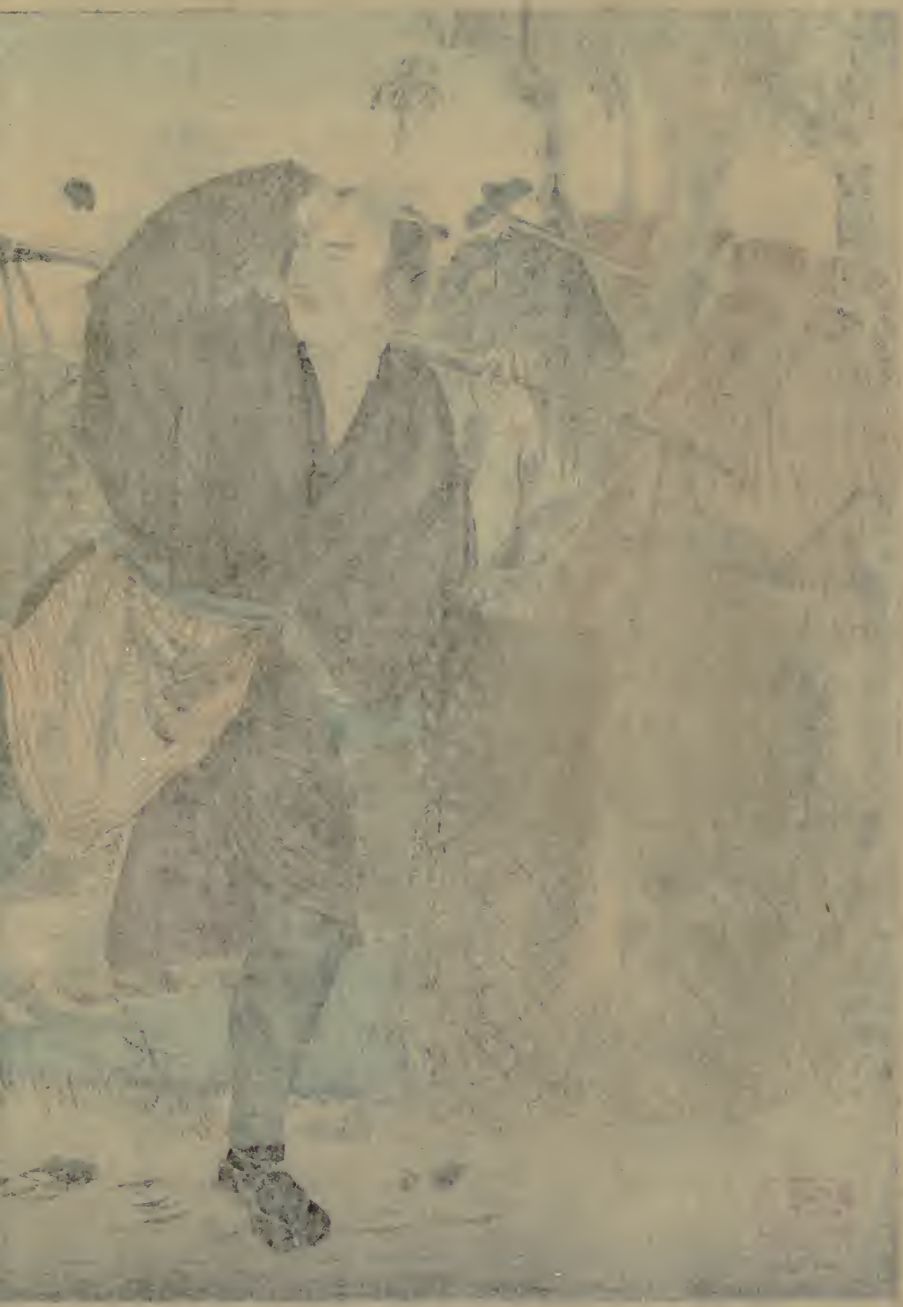
not summon courage to call out, "waste-paper! waste-paper!" The words seemed to stick in his throat when he tried to utter them. But he determined to make an effort to familiarize himself with the call by repeating the words aloud in some unfrequented place where no one could hear him. So he went out to the fields at the back of the Asakusa temple, and in a lonely spot, where he thought no soul could overhear him, raising his voice to a high pitch, he called out:—"*Kami kuzu ya de gozai!—Kuzu wa tamarimasen ka!*"*

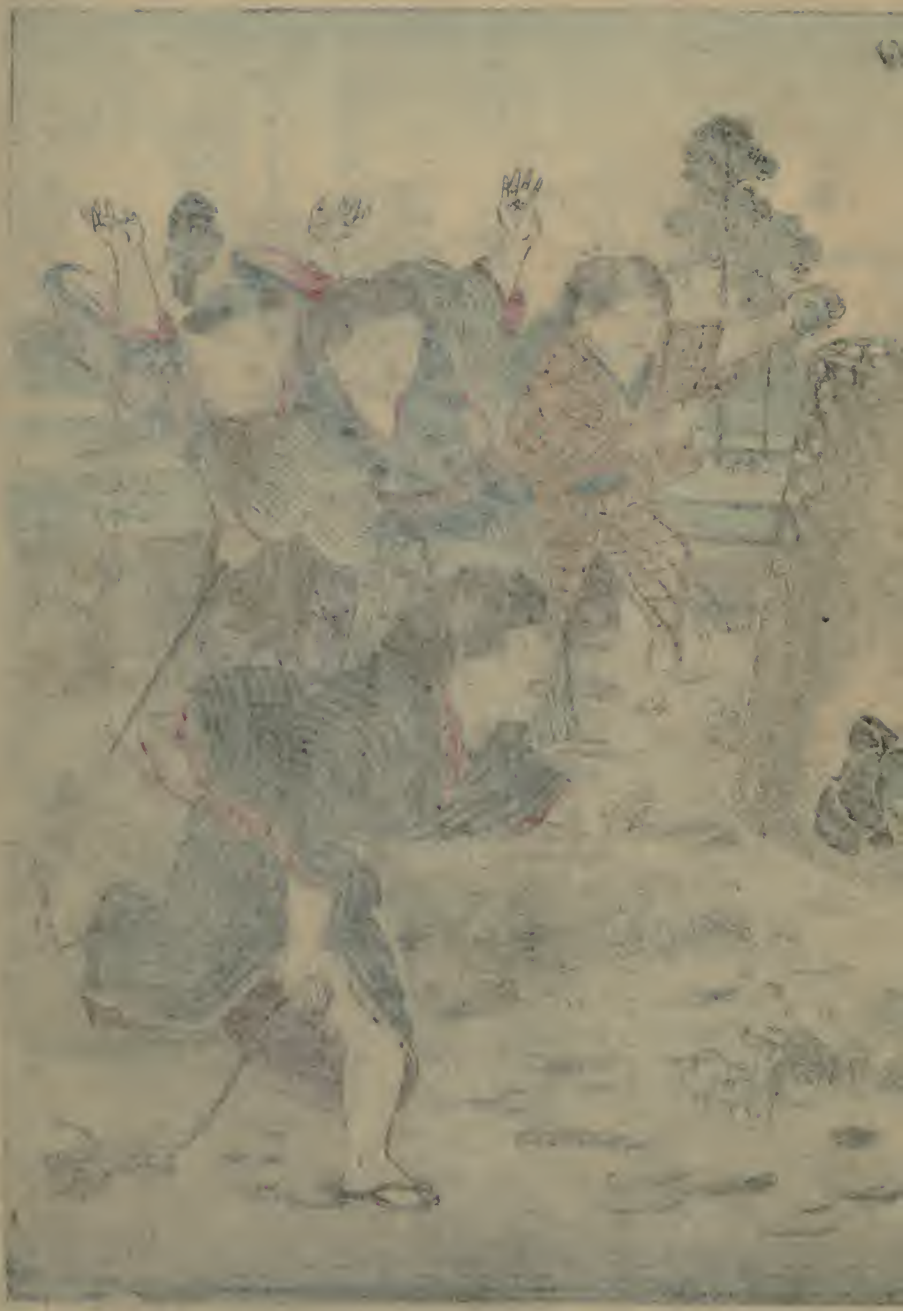
Near the spot which Chōhachi had chosen for practising his cry, some children were playing, who, hearing a man shouting out, "waste-paper," in such a place, thought that he must be bewitched. "Come, come!" said one of the lads to his companions, "here is a paper-buyer that has been bewitched by a fox! Let us pelt him."

Whereupon they commenced throwing stones at Chōhachi; who, running away as fast as his legs would carry him, exclaimed:—"This Edo is a bad place, and no mistake! Even the boys here can't let a stranger alone without molesting him."

Thus ended the second day's work; for Chōhachi

* "The waste-paper man! Have you no accumulation of waste-paper?"





was far too much upset by this occurrence to do anything more that day.

Chōbei was excessively amused by the account that Chōhachi gave of his experiences on his return; and, bursting with laughter, he said:—"It was quite natural that the boys should say what they did: for who would suppose that anyone but a madman would be shouting, 'waste-paper,' in a place where not a soul resides. It is natural, too, for a man who has occupied your position to be ashamed to call out, 'waste-paper,' in the public thoroughfares. I can fancy how the words must stick in your throat. But you must try and get over this feeling. I will endeavour to help you out of the difficulty. There is a line of poetry which says:—

'The small trader who,
'Day by day,
'Acts as a clock.'

If a hawker or purchaser of small things goes by the same places at the same time every day, gradually his punctuality serves to tell people what time of day it is; and thus his regularity tends to attract attention to himself, first, and then to his trade. As he passes, people say:—'There goes the paper-buyer;' or, 'There goes the tea-man;' 'It is no doubt such and such o'clock,—it is high time to

be cooking the rice for dinner;' or, 'My husband will soon be home from his work;' or, 'Ofusa will soon be back from school;' and so there springs up a kind of intimacy between the residents and the punctual tradesman, which leads the former to prefer to carry on business with him rather than with any one whose visits have been less frequent or less regular. Thus it is that continual keeping at a thing, brings its reward in the long run. Now there is little use in going, as you have been doing, through the grandest streets of the town. You should go to the back alleys and pass the same houses at the same time every day, and as you pass, speak a civil word to the inmates of the houses. Such as:—'This is a very cold day;'—or, 'There is no doing anything such rainy weather as this;' or,—'A busy time this Mrs. Hikobei;' or, 'What a long spell of hot weather we are having.' Then, just before you take your leave, you should say:—'I suppose you have not any old scraps of paper to sell?'"

The next day Chōhachi started on his rounds again. Acting on Chōbei's advice, he went to the back alleys, and saluted the residents in a most civil manner.

But, knowing no other language save that in general

use among *samurai*, and no civility but that practised by gentlemen and ladies, his salutations were far above the heads of those for whom they were intended, and often excited their laughter. The following is a specimen of the language which he used in addressing his would-be customers :—"To-day the weather is superb! That you and your august family are all in the enjoyment of health is a subject for the most hearty congratulations. I am Chōhachi, a paper-buyer who lives with a householder named Chōbei in the second ward of Bakurō-chō. I earnestly beg that you will be good enough to allow me to make your acquaintance.—Do you happen to have any old paper to sell?"

The old women in the back streets listened to his polite speeches without understanding a word, but were very pleased nevertheless; for they felt that his looks and gestures shewed that he meant to be very polite to them. As he was civility itself, he went by the name of "The Civil Paper-buyer," and gradually people grew to be fond of him and preferred to deal with him rather than with anyone else.

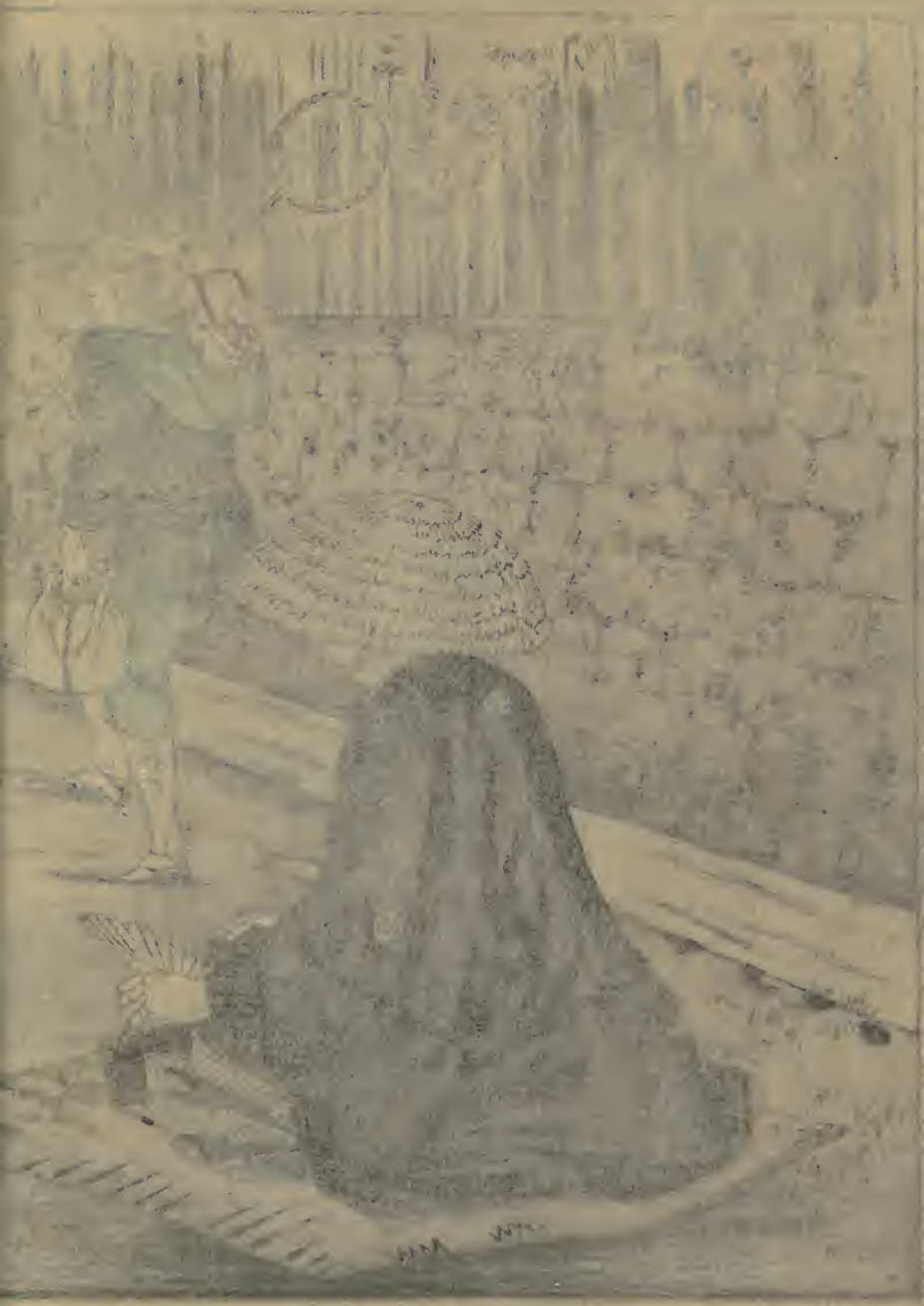
Thus, as had been predicted, Chōhachi became unusually popular; and, with the advantage of

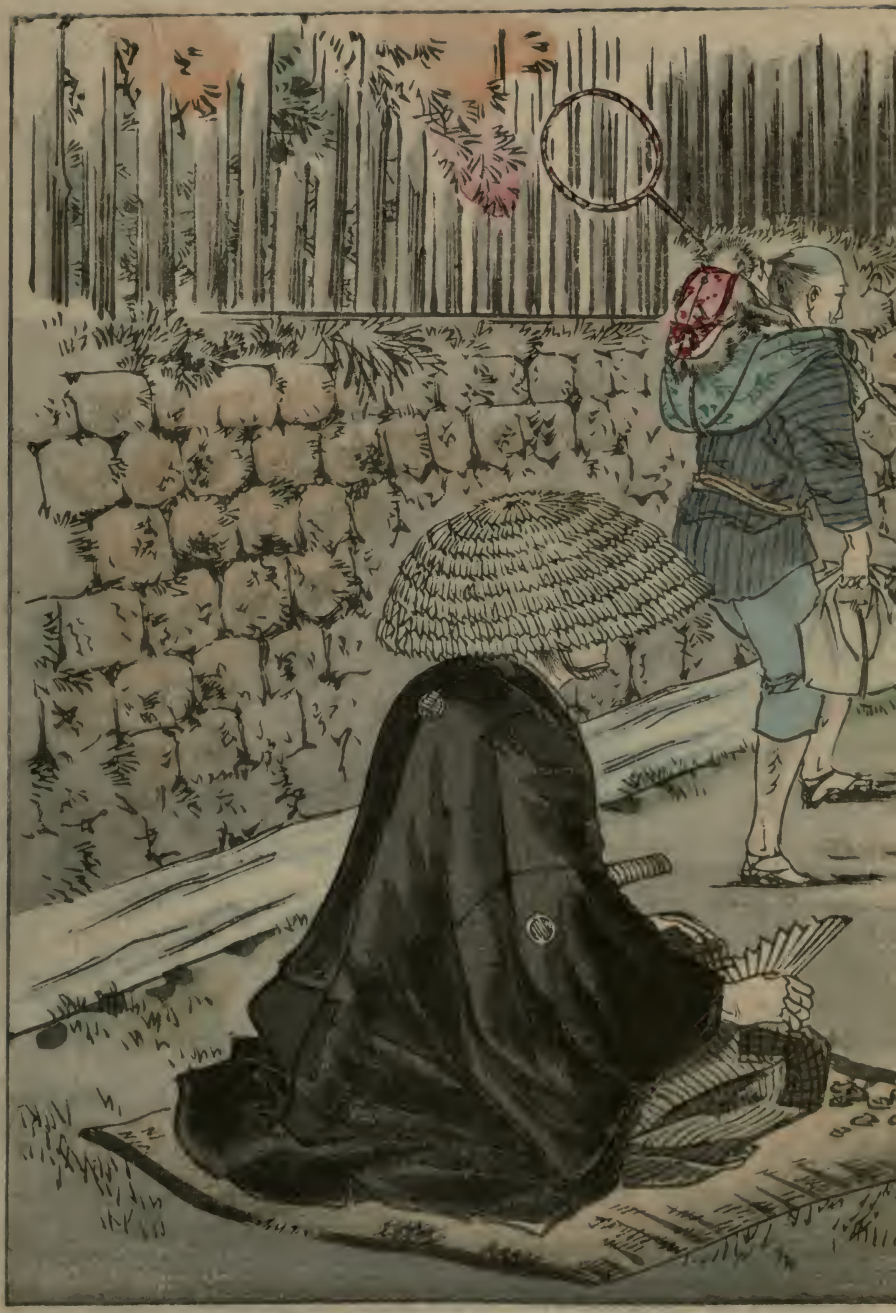
Chōbei's advice in all matters of difficulty, managed to maintain himself, his wife, and a little girl who had been born to them shortly after their arrival in Edo.

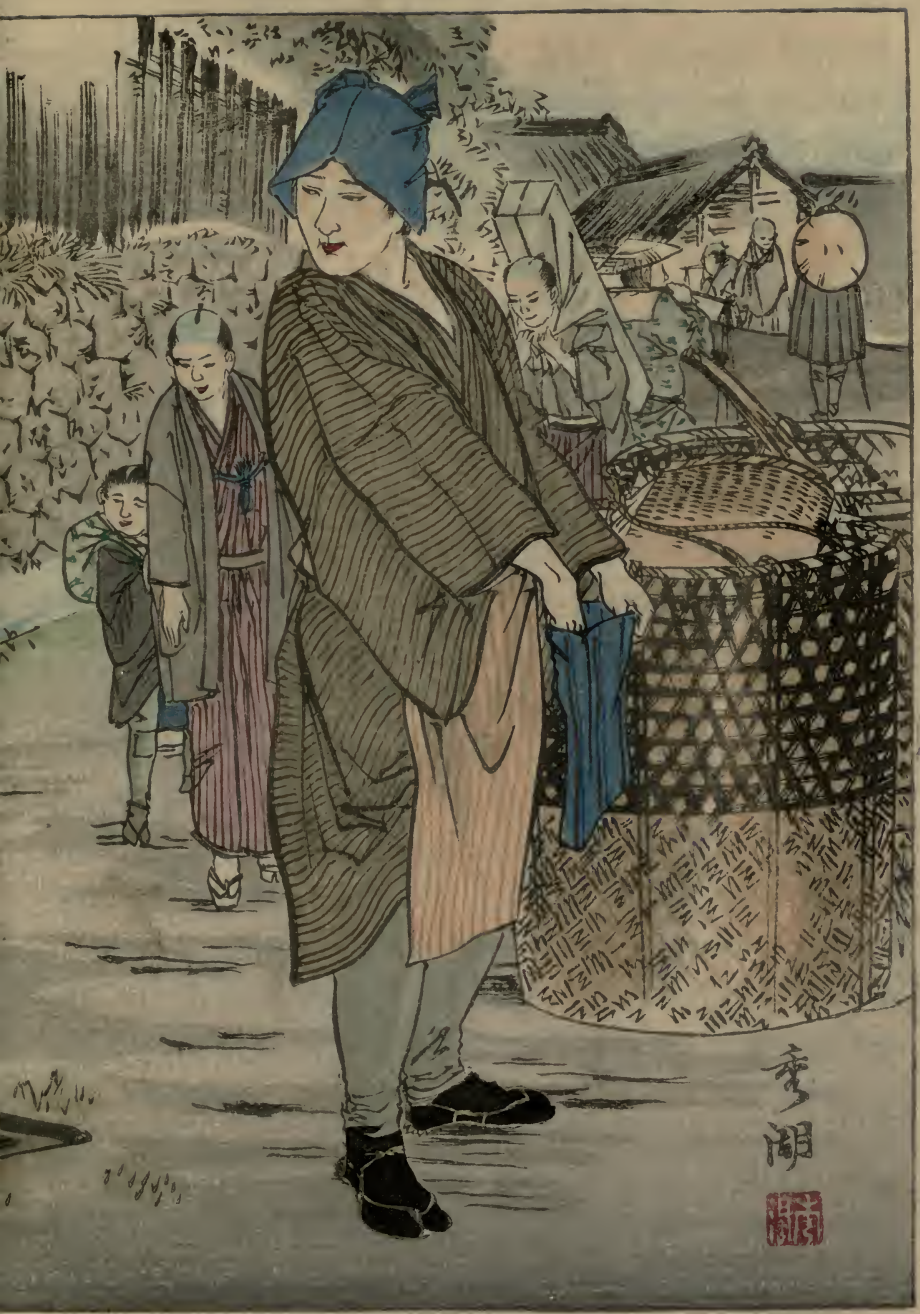
CHAPTER IV.

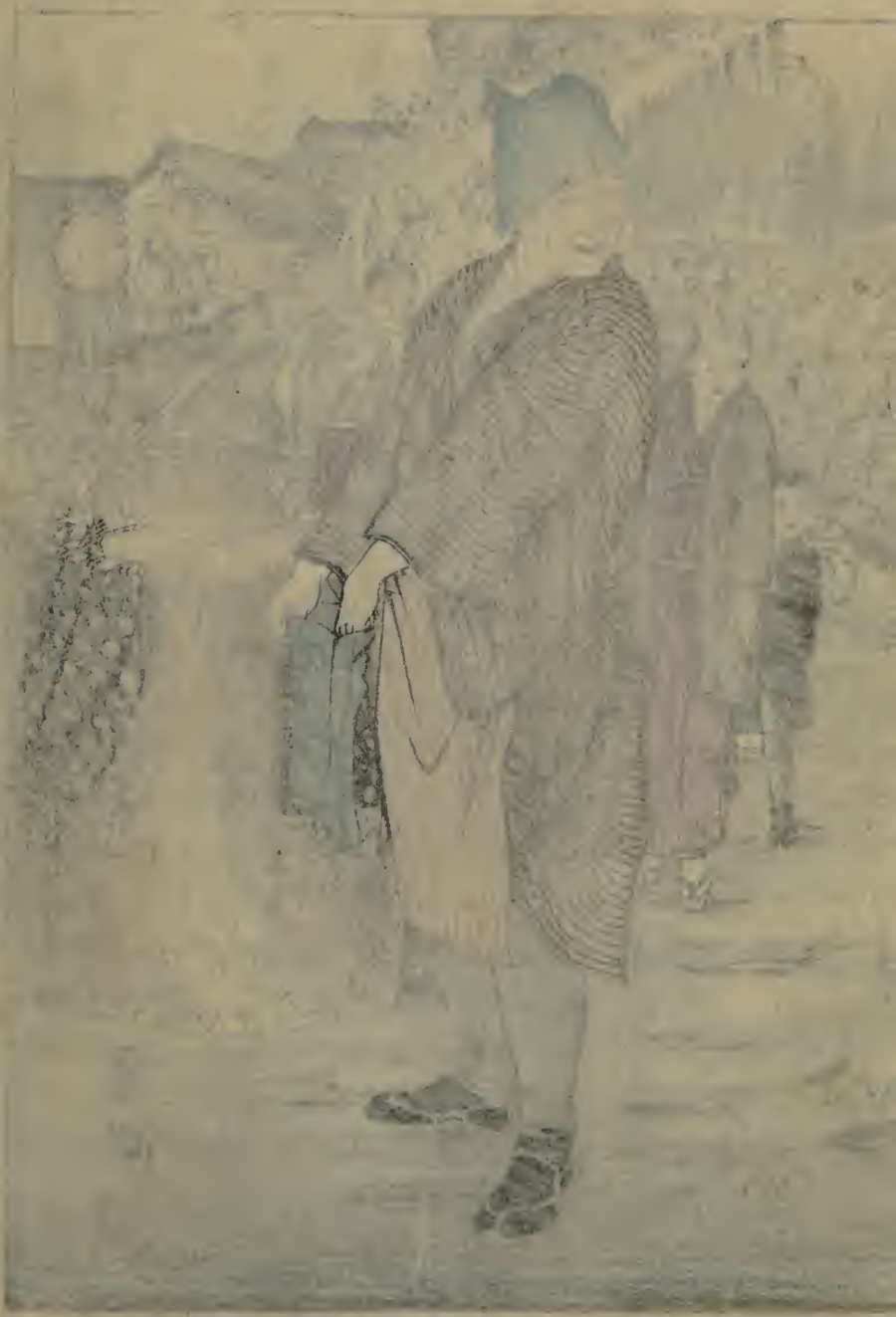
THE uncertainties of life are so great, that it is impossible to say from what affluence to what poverty men may fall. The events we are now about to relate afford a striking illustration of this.

One day, some seventeen years after Chōhachi had settled in Edo, he thought that it was incumbent on him to offer up his thanksgivings to Kwan-on, the goddess of mercy, for the blessings he had received. Though no more of a believer in supernatural help than most of the knights of his day, occasional homage to the gods being one of the recognized obligations of a gentleman, Chōhachi felt that his good breeding demanded a certain amount of devotion. So, with a light heart, full of holiday,









rather than religious, feelings, after arraying himself in his very best clothes, Chōhachi set out for the Asakusa Kwan-on temple, where he made his contributions to the priests and offered thanks to the goddess.

After this, with the intention of worshipping at Ueno, he started for that place and got as far as the foot of the little hill which leads up to the temple. Here he noticed that a number of beggars were asking for alms. One of them especially attracted his attention : partly, because of the extreme poverty which his dirt and rags seemed to indicate, partly, on account of his wearing a *fuka-amigasa*,* and partly, owing to his having a crest on his ragged garments, which Chōhachi seemed to remember having seen somewhere at some time or other. On thinking over it, Chōhachi remembered the crest as that of his old friend in Takata, Ōhashi Bun-emon. With the object of inducing the beggar to speak, and of thus having a further opportunity of testing the correctness of his surmises, Chōhachi threw down a few coppers in front of him. These the beggar

* Lit: A deep braid-work hat: so made as to completely hide the face from view, resembling therefore the visor of the west. These hats were worn by men who had some special reason for not wishing to be known.

picked up, immediately thanking for them in a most polite way.

Chōhachi no sooner heard the beggar's voice than he said to himself:—"I am not mistaken. It is no other than Bun-emon."

Not wishing to confer with him in any way in public, Chōhachi determined to follow the beggar to his lodgings and satisfy himself about his identity there.

This he did; and found that the beggar was living in an abominably filthy place. He occupied a small room in a very low class *nagaya*. The *nagaya* was inhabited by beggars of all ranks and grades, who, at the time of Chōhachi's visit were engaged in practising over their various arts and devices for obtaining money: some were training birds, others monkeys; some were dancing, others wrestling; some were imitating the cawing of the crow, the screech of the owl, or the roar of some wild beast; while others were raving with cranky voices the words of some old song.

On Chōhachi's making himself known to Bun-emon, for such the beggar proved to be, the latter gave him the history of his fall. Unlike that of Chōhachi, Bun-emon's fall had been brought about by no fault of his own; on the contrary, it was the result of the

most scrupulous honesty on his part. Bun-emon related to Chōhachi how, as was so frequently the case in those days, his lord had surrounded himself with flatterers; how these flatterers had combined against all the baron's most faithful councillors; how, in consequence of this, one after another, the best of his retainers had been dismissed from his service, until he (Bun-emon) was the only one left; and how that he had determined to hold on and endeavour to oust the flatterers from the position they had obtained, but that they had proved too strong for him. "I might," said Bun-emon, "have gone into the service of another lord; but, as the saying is:—'A faithful servant can only serve one master,' so, rather than take employment elsewhere, I prefer to wait for the dawn of a better day—to live in hopes of being able at some future time to return to the service of my first and only master, Echigo-no-Kami."

Chōhachi went home and told his wife what had occurred. The two agreed that, as they were now in a comparatively prosperous condition, it was incumbent on them to make a present of money to an old friend and benefactor who had been reduced to such abject poverty. To neglect to do this, would be base ingratitude. The sum they fixed on as

suitable to the occasion was twenty five *ryō*; rather a large amount for a waste-paper buyer to provide, in fact, entirely too large a sum for Chōhachi to procure in any ordinary way.

After consultation, they agreed that, under the circumstances, painful as it might prove, it was their solemn duty to sell their daughter Kō. This they did, receiving the sum of twenty-five *ryō* for her.*

Shortly after, Chōhachi went, one night, to Bun-emon's house, and with many apologies for the smallness of the sum, presented the twenty-five *ryō*.

"I appreciate fully the kind feelings evinced by the offer you make," said Bun-emon, "but I cannot think of accepting the gift. The help I gave you years ago, was not afforded with the expectation of any return being made for the same. I am not so poor but that, did occasion call for it, I could appear in the Shōgun's ranks all equipped for battle at a moment's notice. "Look here," said he, producing a sword, a coat of armour and other weapons, which were all in good order, "I am not so poverty stricken as my beggar's garb may seem to imply. I have no use for much money just now. What I receive as charity is ample to supply my few wants."

* This was a very common practice in ancient Japan.

On Chōhachi's pressing the matter, Bun-emon grew angry, and said :—"You know, Shindō, that having once said that he will not do a thing, that no words of yours can make Ōhashi Bun-emon alter his mind. So please say no more about it."

Chōhachi, still continuing to press his acceptance of, if not the whole, at any rate a part of the money, Bun-emon suddenly left the house, saying as he went :—"Excuse me! I have some business that must be attended to at once."

Chōhachi took this opportunity of placing the money in the tobacco-box ; having done which, he left the house.

Bun-emon, on his return, discovered the money, and was very much annoyed. "You," said he angrily to his wife, "womanlike, have been weak enough to allow this, have you? Why did you not return the money to Shindō before he left the house? It is said that people are no longer themselves when they become poor, so I suppose you have been tempted by poverty to act in this way. But I am extremely grieved that such a thing should have happened."

The wife replied that she had not discovered the money till after Shindō had left the house. Bun-emon wished to return the money at once, but as neither

he nor his wife knew where Chōhachi lived, this was impossible.

Bun-emon's wife was a woman that had her wits about her ; and, seeing that her husband was boiling over with angry feelings at being left with the money on his hands, she addressed him as follows :—" That the money cannot be returned at once, is very plain. That it is not well for us to keep so much money by us, is no less plain. You have lately put one of your best swords into pawn. Suppose you redeem this sword, by paying the sum borrowed out of this twenty-five *ryō*. After selling the sword, you can make good this money again. By the time you have the money ready, Shindō will be paying us another visit, and will be only too pleased to hear that, failing to accept it as a gift, you have notwithstanding made some temporary use of his money. There is every reason for your doing something of this kind ; as the pawnbroker is constantly coming and saying that, if we do not pay the money at once, he will be obliged to sell the sword."

Bun-emon agreed to this plan ; and the next day he went to the pawnbroker's shop. The said shop went by the name of the Aburaya and was kept by one—Gohei. The pawnbroker was absent but his head-clerk, a man named—Kyūbei, of whom more

anon, was at home ; and to him Bun-emon payed the sum of thirteen *ryō* fifty-six *sen* in redemption of his sword and several other articles ; which articles he at once conveyed to his house in Yamazaki-chō.

On reaching his home, Bun-emon arrayed himself in his very best attire and went off to a rich baron's mansion to sell his sword.

Kyūbei, the pawnbroker's head-clerk, was extremely annoyed by the sudden arrival of Bun-emon at the shop for the purpose of redeeming the weapon. He knew that the sword was a very valuable one, and he thought that the money lent on it, though not a fourth of what the weapon was worth, was far too much for such a man as Bun-emon to pay back. So, up to the morning of its owner's arrival, he had looked upon the sword as belonging to his master, or rather as his own property, for, to tell the truth, Kyūbei was a most dishonest servant, and, having *carte-blanche* to do as he pleased in the business, he took good care to give his master as few of its profits as possible. "By this redemption," he argued to himself, "I have lost, certainly, eighty, perhaps, a hundred *ryō*."

It is only with the worst of men that disappointment prompts to malicious action against the persons who have, in some way, been instrumental in bringing

it about. Kyūbei, however, was such a man. So enraged was he by the loss of the sword that he at once determined to give vent to his chagrin by ruining the man who had robbed him of his spoil. Bun-emon's poverty would have shielded him from the attacks of most men occupying the position of Kyūbei. To wish to persecute the powerful and the rich, when, for some reason or other, they have excited hatred, is a feeling which is shared alike by a large number of human beings, but the cases are rare in which a man who is begging his bread, becomes the object of a malicious attack, and specially when no result of the persecution can be looked for beyond the imprisonment, and perhaps the death, of the offender. But a life full of evil deeds had made the dastardly heart of Kyūbei capable of all this and of much besides.

No sooner had Bun-emon left the shop, than Kyūbei resolved that he would accuse him of theft. Knowing that the greater the theft the more certain would be the ruin of the accused, and having determined that, to make up for his disappointment in not getting the sword, he would relieve his master of the sum of money which Bun-emon was to be accused of thieving, Kyūbei fixed the sum at one hundred *ryō*. Of this sum he took immediate pos-

session, and set out the same afternoon for Bun-emon's house, to accuse him of having stolen the money when he came to the shop to redeem his property.

When Kyūbei reached Yamazaki-chō, Bun-emon had not returned from the baron's mansion, whither, as will be remembered, he had gone to sell his sword. Before entering Bun-emon's house, Kyūbei, anxious to pick up some little information whereon to found his accusation, chatted a little with the beggars who were lounging about near the entrance of the house, with most of whom his occupation had made him familiar. From them he learnt that Bun-emon had been seen going away that afternoon, decked out like a fine gentleman, and that people were wondering where he obtained the money to purchase such grand clothes, being only a beggar by profession.

"*Just the kind of information I wanted,*" exclaimed Kyūbei. Entering Bun-emon's house, he forthwith accused him to his wife, Masa, of having stolen that very morning the sum of a hundred *ryō*. "And," said Kyūbei, "in my opinion, my master is not the only one who has been robbed by your husband; for it is not to be supposed that a man in Bun-emon's reduced circumstances could obtain in any honest way money enough to pay to a pawnbroker thirteen or fourteen *ryō* at one time, in addition to

buying fine clothes in which to go swelling about the town like a fine gentleman whenever he takes it into his head to do so."

Masa, seeing at once that what had occurred might easily give rise to suspicion in the case of anyone so poor as her husband, after indignantly denying the charge of theft, proceeded to relate to Kyūbei how it happened that Bun-emon was in the possession of so much money. "It was a gift" she said "from a waste-paper-buyer named Shindō Ichinojō."

Her story was no sooner finished than Kyūbei inquired where the donor of the twenty-five *ryō* lived.

"This, I am sorry to say I cannot tell you," replied Masa.

"*There* you are!" replied Kyūbei. "The idea of anyone receiving money from a person whose place of residence they do not know! The name of the person who, you say, gave your husband the money, too, was never that of any waste-paper-buyer in the world. Such a name when applied to a grand gentleman sounds natural enough, but used of a waste-paper-buyer, what does it sound like?—why, a fictitious name,—which I have no doubt it is."

To these retorts, Masa replied with spirit and

tact. But neither her arguments, her tears, nor her anger made any impression on Kyūbei. He still persisted that her husband was a thief and that he would have him sent to prison.

In the midst of the altercation between the two, Bun-emon returned. Kyūbei at once met him with the words :—"You are a thief."

The day had been when the utterer of such words in Bun-emon's ears, would have paid the price of them then and there with his life-blood. But Bun-emon had assumed the garb and was living the life of a beggar, and, though as valiant a knight as ever brandished a sword, he was shrewd enough to know that the ignominious social position to which his reverses had driven him to descend, demanded that the proud carriage and self-assertion of a great baron's retainer, in receipt of an income of five hundred *koku* a year, be exchanged for the humble mien and retiring manners of the beggar, in as far as such was possible. He therefore, with extraordinary self-restraint, quietly but earnestly denied the charge brought against him, and asked what Kyūbei meant by such an insolent accusation.

As we have already indicated, Kyūbei had set his mind on ruining the man who had come between him and his gains. Bun-emon's remonstrances and

arguments, therefore, were alike wasted on such a man. He treated them with undisguised contempt. The only answer he deigned to give to Bun-emon's remarks consisted of a repetition of the charge.

The clerk's rudeness became more and more unbearable—his insulting speeches more and more galling, till, at last, he called out with a loud voice :—"Bun-emon! You are a big thief! You are an obnoxious fellow!"

Bun-emon could contain himself no longer. "Say that again," he retorted, "and you shall die on the spot."

Again the offensive epithets were repeated.

Bun-emon's rage knew no bounds. Springing up, he drew his sword, and, rushing at Kyūbei, tried to cut him down; but the latter, accustomed to flight, was out of the door in an instant. Bounding away through the street, he set up a cry of, "*Murder! murder!*" Bun-emon followed him closely, but did not get near enough to reach him with his sword.

Alarmed by the cry, the people came flocking out of their houses to see what was the matter. The two men had not proceeded far before they

encountered some watchmen* on their rounds, who saw at once what was taking place, and tried to apprehend Bun-emon. But he was a powerful man, and though he had no inclination to use his sword against government employès, he was annoyed by their interrupting him in his chase after Kyūbei, so, one after another, he tossed them from him, as though they were no heavier than feathers. But, assembling in force, they at last succeeded in binding him. He was taken off to the nearest guard-house, and it was decided that, pending inquiry into his case, he should be imprisoned.

His wife was allowed to remain in her house, but under strict surveillance.

CHAPTER V.

WATCHED from morning to night and from night to morning, Masa could do nothing but lament that the twenty five *ryō* which had led to all this misfortune should ever have been brought

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CHAPTER V.

WATCHED from morning to night and from night to morning. Mine could do nothing but lament that the twenty five ryō which had led to all this misfortune should ever have been brought

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to the house. "Cruel fate seems to have set us up as a mark for its arrows!" she exclaimed. "When will Heaven be propitious to us? Misfortune upon misfortune seems to be our lot! From wealth to poverty; from poverty to disgrace, or, it may be, to an ignominious death! Such is our life!—But need I despair? Though we have lost everything besides, our integrity we retain. Could it but be known that we are upright; that no dishonesty has characterized our actions; that no meanness has tarnished the purity of our hearts; there would not be wanting men who would vindicate our cause, who would readily become the instruments of bringing about the triumph of right over wrong, of virtue over vice. A thought strikes me! The *Bugyō* of this city, Ō-oka Tadasuke, Echizen-no-Kami has the reputation of being the most discerning judge that has ever presided over a court. It is said that no amount of artifice ever embarrasses him. In a moment he sees through the subterfuges of the wicked and brings the truth to light. Could I but gain access to him, I am sure he would vindicate my husband's cause and punish this villain Kyūbei. But watched as I am, I fear there is little chance of my being able to do this. Yet I do not despair. Something may occur to throw my keepers off their guard;

and then I will fly to the house of Echizen-no-Kami."

It was not long after these thoughts had been passing through Masa's mind that, on the twelfth of December A. D. 1719, a fire broke out in the neighbourhood of her house. Her guardians, who consisted of the landlord and the inmates of the *nagaya** in which she resided, were busily engaged in moving out their goods. "Heaven has granted my request!" exclaimed Masa, when she saw what was taking place. Speedily she seized the money which her husband had left behind, and his two swords, and, strapping the box that contained his coat of armour to her back, she rushed out of the house.

The landlord saw her making her escape; and, running after her, exclaimed:—"The fire is not coming here. You need not run away. Come back! come back!"

He soon overtook her, and laying hold of her clothes, was about to lead her back to the house. But she was a determined woman, and had made

* It was customary in these times for the landlord and inmates of houses to receive orders from the government not to allow persons suspected of or implicated in crime to leave their dwellings. This custom proved beneficial: in that it made the landlords of houses careful as to the persons they received as tenants, and the tenants themselves on the look-out for such misdemeanours in their neighbours' conduct as were calculated to bring trouble on all who resided near them.

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up her mind to die rather than be defeated in her purpose, so, drawing one of the swords that she bore, she brandished it high and left with such power and skill that her pursuer thought it was as much as his life was worth to approach her; and consequently allowed her to escape.

But the very casualty which made it possible for her to escape from the house in which she was confined, now impeded her progress step by step. The streets were thronged with people who had come out to see the fire. Masa, jostled from side to side in the crowd, and hindered by the weight and cumbersomeness of the box of armour which she carried on her back, despaired of ever getting to the residence of the Daigyō, when, suddenly, loud voices arrested her attention:—"Make way! make way! make way for Ō-oka Ichiun-no-Kami, the City Daigyō," shouted the Governor's body-guard.

No words could have been more welcome to Masa at that moment. Just as she was despairing of being able to go to the house of the man who, she was sure, would prove her deliverer, he was actually on his way to her.

"Now or never!" she exclaimed; and, pushing with all her might, managed to reach the spot where, riding on his horse, the popular Governor

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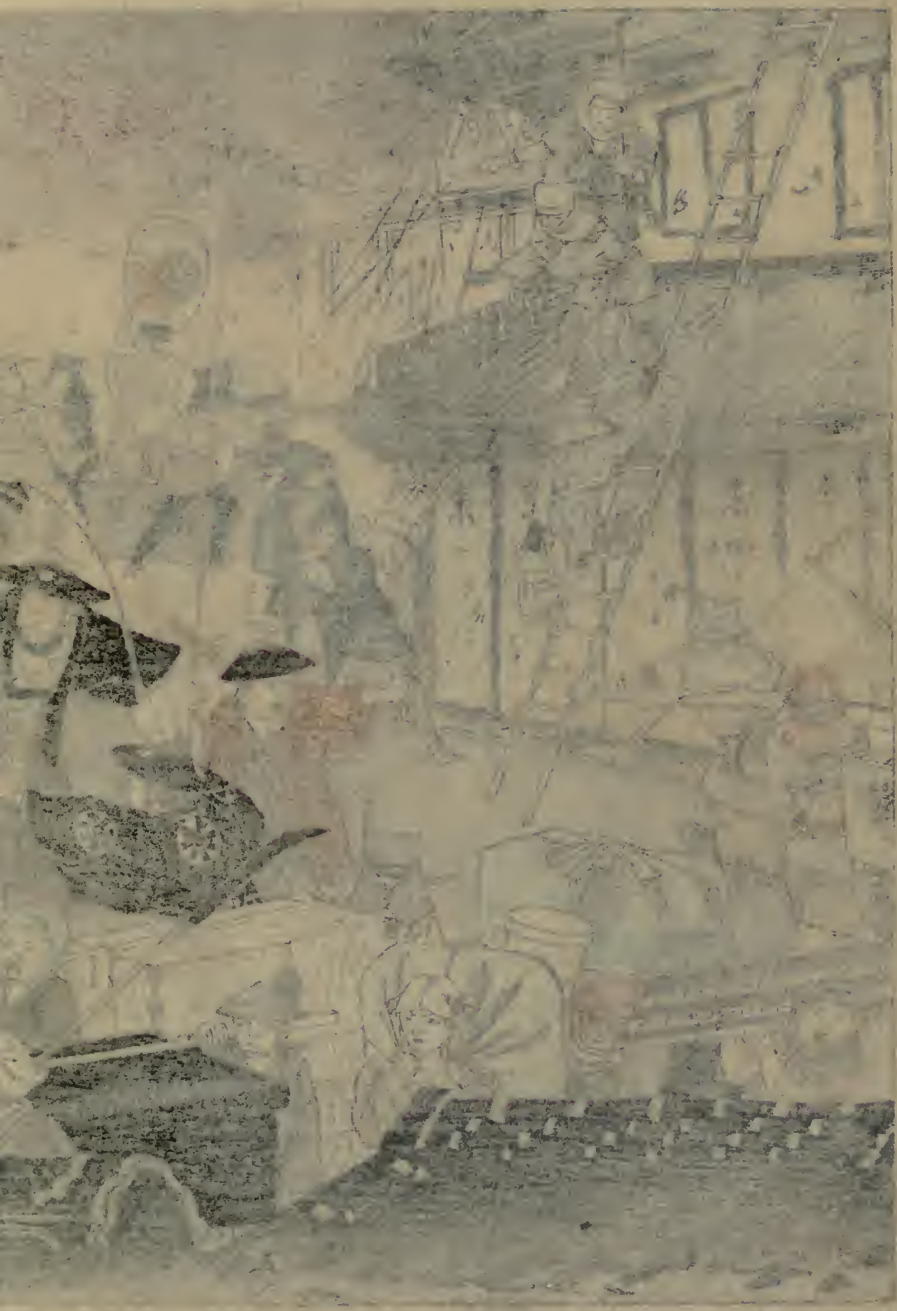

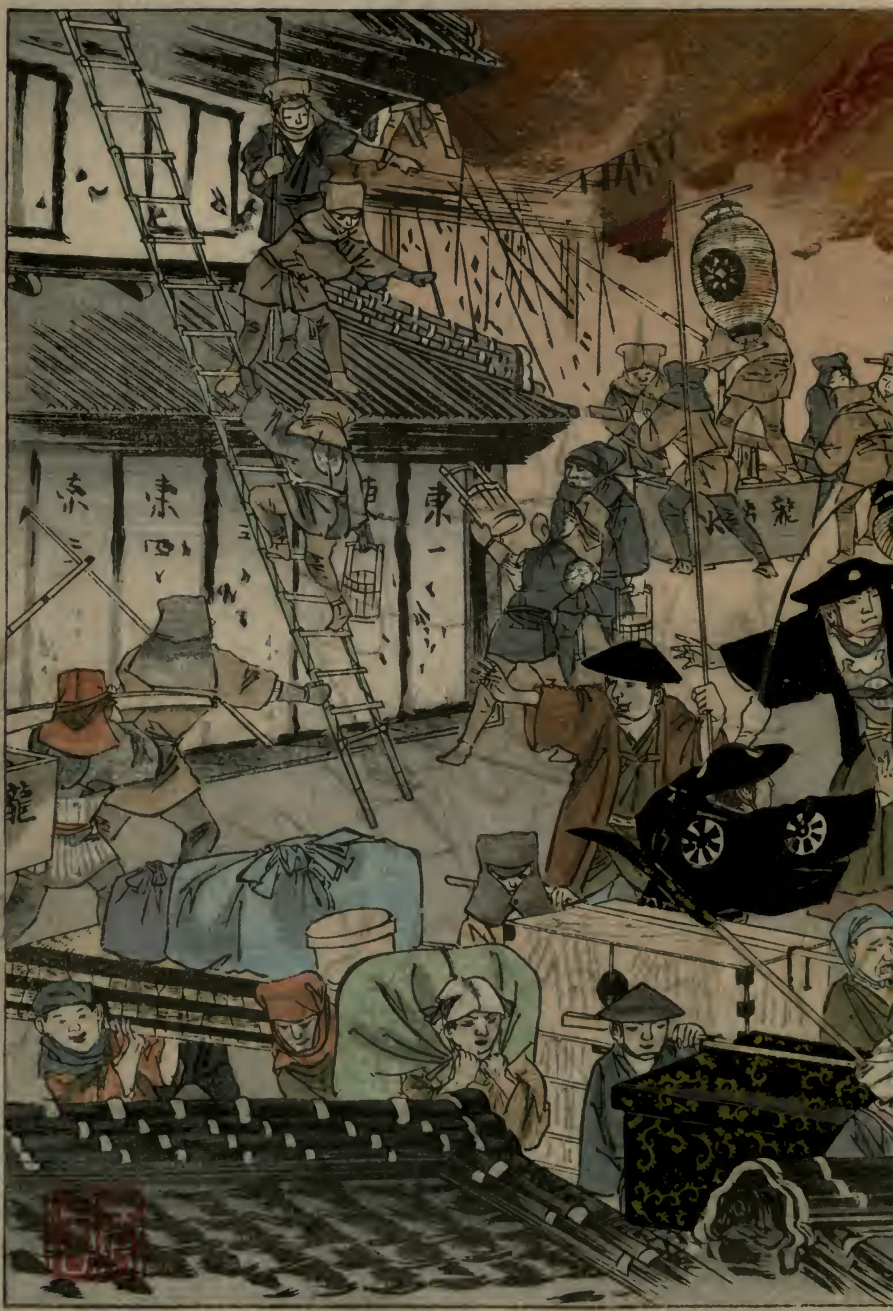

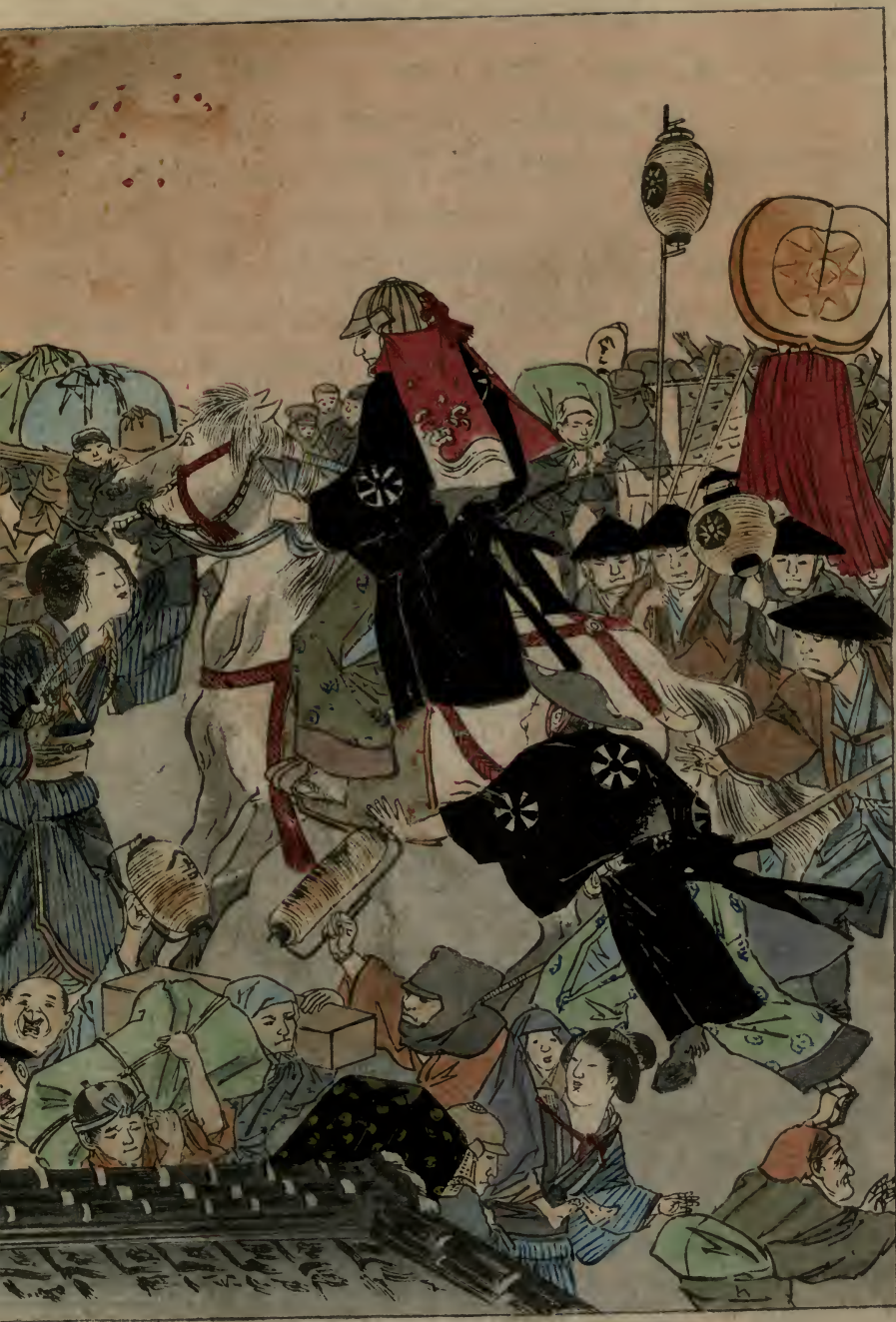

and Judge (for he was both) was to be seen making his way to the seat of the fire.

Tadasuke had lately organized forty-eight fire-brigades; and, partly to see how the firemen worked, partly in his official capacity as the head of the police of those days,* he now made his appearance.

Masa determined to make her request known to the *Bugyō* by some means or other. Hearing that he was a compassionate man, who never turned a deaf ear to a cry of distress, she resolved that she would arrest his attention, even though it involved her acting somewhat rudely. With this intention, she strained every nerve to get near the *Bugyō's* horse, but was thrown to the ground by the pressure of the crowd. And there she lay on the road which the feet of the Governor's horse were about to tread.

No better position could she have possibly chosen, had it fallen to her lot to choose, for attracting the *Bugyō's* attention. The kindly feeling of that noble-hearted man was immediately elicited by the picture of helplessness and utter forlornness which Masa presented as she lay on the ground with the box on her back and the swords in her hands.

* At this time, the *Bugyō*, in addition to his numerous municipal and judicial duties, used to perform the functions of the head of police; which corresponded to those performed by the *Keishi-Sōkan* of modern times.

"Help that woman, will you!" said the *Bugyō* to one of his retainers.

No sooner was Masa lifted from the ground by one of Tadasuke's followers, than she seized the bridle reins of the *Bugyō's* horse and, despite the angry remonstrances of his attendants, refused to relax her hold. Looking up into the Governor's benevolent countenance, she said :—"Please, my Lord, I have an important matter to speak about, which concerns my husband's life. I humbly beg your Honour to lend an ear to my tale."

"The woman is mad," said one of the attendants.

"Obstinate creature!" exclaimed another.

"Drag her away!" added a third.

"Let there be no rough handling of the woman," commanded the *Bugyō*. "There is something important connected with her husband which she wishes to relate to me. This I am willing to hear; but as nothing can be done in this hubbub, let her be placed in charge of the nearest *nanushi** till I send for her."

Directly the fire was over, Tadasuke went in person to the place to which Masa had been sent —a practice of which he was very fond; for there

* The head of a city-ward or a village, now called a Kochō.

was no one more given to breaking through the conventionalities of official life than he. "Your request that I would lend an ear to your tale, is granted," said the *Bugyō* to Masa. "I have now come to hear it."

After expressing her gratitude for his condescension, Masa related the tale of her many misfortunes to the *Bugyō*. At its close, he asked why she carried such a heavy box about with her.

"This," she said, "contains my husband's armour."

The *Bugyō* ordered the box to be opened. On being informed that it was locked, and that Masa did not know what had become of the key, the *Bugyō* told his retainers to call a locksmith to open the box.

"Why call a locksmith?" asked one of his followers. "Why not break open the box?"

"Nothing of the kind shall be done," said the *Bugyō*. "My being the city *Bugyō* does not give me the right to injure another person's property."

The locksmith was called and the box was opened. It was found to contain a fine coat of armour, and beneath it a small paper parcel: this last immediately caught the *Bugyō's* eyes. It was sealed at each fold of the paper to prevent any but its owner from opening it, and on the out-

side the following words were inscribed :—"*Money borne by Ōhashi Bun-emon* Minamoto-no-Kiyozumi to the battle of Sekigahara, in the fifth year of Keichō.*" (A. D. 1600). On the paper being opened, it was found to contain gold coins† to the value of one hundred *ryō*.

It was customary in those days for soldiers to carry money with them to the field of battle. This money was designed to serve for funeral expenses, if they perished ; for doctor's bills, if they were wounded, or to cover personal expenses during a long campaign, when required for this purpose. In feudal times each soldier of any rank bore his own expenses in time of war. This was the condition on which he received grants of land from his lord.

To return to our story, the *Bugyō* was immensely pleased to be in possession of the fact which the contents of the box had revealed. Echizen-no-Kami was a man who was always on the look out for the display of virtue in the lives and experiences of the poor and the persecuted, and posterity is indebted to him for bringing to light hundreds of noble actions which, but for his painstaking

* The grandfather of the man mentioned in this tale.

† *Koban* ; a coin equal to four *bu*. The sum mentioned would be the equivalent of about $500 at the present day.

investigations, would have been consigned to lasting oblivion. "Here," said the *Bugyō*, "is a case of a man, who, notwithstanding his extreme poverty, forbore to spend the money that was bequeathed to him by his ancestors. He kept it for some occasion when his own services might be required in defence of the Shōgun." Then, after looking well at the swords, Tadasuke continued :—"These swords are not the swords of an ordinary soldier. Bun-emon is doubtless a knight of wide renown. Would such a man thieve?—*Never!*" Turning to Masa, he said :—"Your case shall have my attention at once."

The *Bugyō* lost no time in summoning the parties concerned. Among them, the first persons examined were the pawnbroker Gohei, and Kyūbei, his clerk.

The first question the *Bugyō* put to Gohei was :—"For what time precisely do you lend money on security?"

"In accordance with your honourable decision*, for eight months;" replied Gohei.

"If this be so, why was Bun-emon informed that after the fifth month, in case his goods were not redeemed, they would be forfeited?"

* This referred to a regulation which had been recently enforced bearing on loans.

"I have not the least idea;" replied Gohei.

"Don't talk such nonsense!" rejoined the *Bugyō*. "Fancy a pawnbroker ignorant of his own business!"

"The arrangement of such details as your Honour is inquiring about, I entrust to Kyūbei," replied the pawnbroker, "and therefore I beg that your Honour will examine him in reference to them."

On being questioned about the matter, Kyūbei said:—"It is true that eight months is the fixed time, but at Bun-emon's request I made it five."

"Well, there are fools in the world, indeed!" exclaimed the *Bugyō*, laughing. "Who would have thought that such a man as Bun-emon could be found? While allowed to keep the money for eight months, if convenient to do so—to bind himself to return it in five! A rare man this Bun-emon! —Well, we will take it for granted that such a man really exists, and suppose that what happened was just what you represent. The next question I have to put has reference to the hundred *ryō*. What proof have you that Bun-emon took the money?"

"The proof I have is this," replied Kyūbei. "The day before the sword and the other articles were redeemed, Bun-emon came to our shop and begged me to be lenient with him. It was on this night that the money was found missing. The next morning,

Bun-emon brought the thirteen *ryō* and redeemed his property. Now it is not to be supposed that, in one night, a beggar such as he could by any fair means procure such a sum of money.* When I inquired where he had obtained the money, his answers were all most evasive, and I could get no satisfactory information out of him. I told him that I would let him off the thirteen *ryō*, if he would return the hundred which he had taken, but he refused to do it. In fact, he was so angry with me for accusing him of the theft that he tried to kill me."

Here the *Bugyō* cast a scrutinizing glance at Kyūbei. The marks of tattoing that were visible on one side of his head, close to the temples, did not escape the Judge's keen eyes. This, combined with several unprepossessing features of Kyūbei's face, were pretty sure indications to one so versed in human physiognomy as Echizen-no-Kami that Kyūbei was not the man he pretended to be. His bare-facedness

* It will be observed that in several particulars the account of what occurred given here, differs from that found some pages back. The most natural way of explaining the discrepancy, is to suppose that Kyūbei altered his tale when under examination to make it sound more plausible. Nothing is said in the early account about Bun-emon's having gone to the shop the day previous to that on which the redemption of the articles took place.

seemed to the Judge to be like that of one whose heart had been hardened by a life of crime.

"Your answers become more and more unsatisfactory," said the Judge. "As the thirteen *ryō* was due to your master, and not to you, what right had you to exonerate Bun-emon from payment?"

To this no answer was given.

"Have you any proof," continued Tadasuke, "that the thirteen *ryō* paid to you consisted of coins taken from the hundred *ryō* which you say was stolen? Did you place any mark on the coins of which the hundred *ryō* consisted by which you might know them again?"

"I did not;" replied Kyūbei.

"Then your assertions are all without an iota of proof," said the *Bugyō*," and more than this, you appear to be a rogue yourself. You evidently have not dealt honestly with your master's property." Then, turning to Gohei, he added :—"Gohei, see that this man does not leave your premises. You are responsible for his re-appearance at court."

Orders were given to the city authorities to take care that Kyūbei did not make his escape.

Bun-emon was now called and closely examined. After minutely questioning him in reference to

everything which had taken place, the *Bugyō* said :— "Bun-emon, there is not one particular in which your account differs from that given by your wife Masa."

The *Bugyō* was thoroughly convinced that Bun-emon was not the thief. But he thought it best not to set him at liberty till the real criminal was discovered. "I am sorry," he said to Bun-emon, "that I have to send one who has acted as you have back to prison. But the law leaves me no alternative."

The next step the Judge took, was to endeavour to find out who was the donor of the twenty-five *ryō*. With this object, he sent orders to those heads of the city wards whom it concerned, to the effect that all the waste-paper-buyers residing in Bakurō-chō, Yokoyama-chō, and the vicinity of Ryōgoku-bashi, were to appear at Court on a certain day.

The waste-paper-buyers, all in a great state of alarm as to what had occurred, on the appointed day made their appearance at Court. Bun-emon was directed to scan them narrowly, to see whether Shindō Ichinojō was among them.

A look of bitter disappointment came over the face of the brave knight as he finished scrutinising

the faces before him. "Alas!" he sighed, "it seems as though fortune was never going to smile on Bun-emon again." A tear was seen to steal down his cheek as he said:—"I am sorry, sir,—but Shindō Ichinojō is not among the men whom you have been good enough to summon."

"I am sorry, too," replied the Judge; "but I will try other means of eliciting the truth."

The reason of the non-appearance of Chōhachi was that, having some business in Marugame connected with a younger brother of his who had taken up his residence there, and being anxious to see his old friend and benefactor, Hanshirō, he had gone to Marugame some time before the issuing of the summons to the waste-paper-buyers.

Chōhachi spent some days in conversing with Hanshirō. At the close of which, the latter decided that he had lived long enough in comparative obscurity, and that he would do well to go to Edo and set up a fencing-school there.

So, entrusting his fencing-school to one of his pupils, and bidding farewell to his friends, in company with Chōhachi, Hanshirō set out for the Shōgun's capital.

On their arrival at Chōhachi's house in Bakurō-chō, his wife exclaimed:—"I *am* glad you have

come. I did not know how to wait for your return. There has been no end of fuss here! In the beginning of December it was reported that a *samurai* residing in Shitaya had been accused of theft and arrested; and some days after, all the waste-paper-buyers of this neighbourhood were summoned by the *Bugyō* to appear at Court. I am very much afraid that the money we gave to Bun-emon has been the cause of all this trouble. But, not knowing Bun-emon's address, I could not inquire into the matter."

The next morning Chōhachi held an interview with Masa, and, after learning from her what had happened, promised to appear at Court as a witness and vindicate her husband's honesty.

Chōhachi now lost no time in conferring with Chōbei and Hanshirō as to the steps it was necessary for them to take to prove Bun-emon's honesty and to bring Kyūbei to justice. Chōbei was for writing a polite letter to the *Bugyō*, stating just how things stood and offering to give information on the case. But Hanshirō, on hearing how Kyūbei had acted, and that as yet he had not been punished for his misdemeanours, was for going to the pawnbroker's, and, taking the law into his own hands, administering some wholesome reproof,

in the form of heavy blows on the back of the offender, previous to their reporting Chōhachi's arrival to the authorities. In order to carry this out, he induced Chōhachi and Chōbei to shew him the way to the pawnbroker's shop.

"Do you go and confer with him first," said Hanshirō, "and if he is troublesome, call me."

This they did; Hanshirō waiting very impatiently outside, till, at last, being summoned, he dashed into the house, and before Kyūbei, who was a great coward, could make his escape, seized him and tumbled him about like a nine-pin, cuffing him with his hands and knocking his head against the floor. "An outrageous villain of a clerk, indeed!—stealing your master's things, and, not content with this, imputing your crimes to others!—Do you think you are going to be let off?—Not a bit of it."

"Please, Sir Knight, forgive me! please forgive me!" cried the clerk. "I will do anything you bid. Please spare me! I will tell the truth! Really I will!"

"See that you do then," replied Hanshirō. "If you don't, you know what to expect."

The three men returned to Bakurō-chō, and at

once sent in a request to the authorities that they might be called as witnesses in Bun-emon's case.

The next day, orders were received from the *Bugyō* summoning every person residing in Gohei's house, with the exception of Kyūbei, to the Court.

On their appearing, a young man named Jūsuke was the first to be examined. He stated that he was twenty-one years of age, and had been in the service of Gohei for the space of ten years.

"You are a persevering young fellow to remain in one place so long," remarked the *Bugyō*. "Has any one been dismissed from Gohei's service within the past few years?"

"Yes;" replied Jūsuke, "a friend of mine, one Tōsuke, was dismissed last June, on account of his suffering from eye-disease."

"What is Tōsuke doing now? How is he situated? Has he parents? Is he married?"

"He is not doing anything to get a living. He is a single man, living with his sister; and has no parents."

"How old is his sister?"

"About eighteen."

"How do they manage to live? Does any one supply them with money?"

"That I do not know."

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"How old is his sister?"

"About eighteen."

"How do they manage to live? Does any one supply them with money?"

"That I do not know."

"I suppose you are in the habit of paying visits to inquire after Theodore's health from time to time? Tell the truth, if you please; and hide nothing."

"I do not pay such visits."

The clergyman, turning to Gotzi, said:—"As Theodore is an old servant of yours, I dare say you visit him sometimes?"

"No;" replied the pawnbroker, "I do not go myself, but I think Kybbel often goes."

"Very good;" replied the clergyman, making a note of the answer given by Gotzi. "Now you may all go with the exception of this little boy," pointing to a small boy called Sandchen, aged ten years, who was employed by Gotzi, and had come to the Court with the other members of the household.

The boy was very much alarmed by being detained in this way, and commenced to set up a bellowing in the Court House.

"Come, come!" said the clergyman. "There is nothing to be afraid of. There, look! I have a *wurjie* for you. Don't be shy. Eat it, that's a good boy! I have kept it for you specially, because you are such a clever little fellow."

When he had finished eating one of the cakes,

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* A cake, made of wheat-flour, sweetened with sugar, and having musical beans in the centre.

"I suppose you are in the habit of paying visits to inquire after Tōsuke's health from time to time? Tell the truth, if you please; and hide nothing."

"I do not pay such visits."

The *Bugyō* now, turning to Gohei, said:—"As Tōsuke is an old servant of yours, I dare say you visit him sometimes?"

"No;" replied the pawnbroker, "I do not go myself, but I think Kyūbei often goes."

"Very good;" replied the *Bugyō*, making a note of the answer given by Gohei. "Now you may all go with the exception of this little boy," pointing to a small boy called Sankichi, aged ten years, who was employed by Gohei, and had come to the Court with the other members of the household.

The boy was very much alarmed by being detained in this way, and commenced to set up a bellowing in the Court House.

"Come, come!" said the *Bugyō*. "There is nothing to be afraid of. Here, look! I have a *manjū** for you. Don't be shy. Eat it, that's a good boy! I have kept it for you specially, because you are such a clever little fellow."

When he had finished eating one of the cakes,

* A cake, made of wheat-flour, sweetened with sugar, and having mashed beans in the centre.

Tadasuke gave him another, and then allowed him to play about a little in the Court House, until he felt quite at home with the officer he had dreaded so much. After praising him a little more, the *Bugyō* commenced :—"Now, there are some matters about which I wish to ask you. Be sure you tell me the truth about everything ; if you don't I will not send you back to your parents, nor shall you go to the Aburaya any more. Now you very often go to Tōsuke's house in company with Kyūbei, eh ?—You see how well we officers know what you do !"

"To be sure I do," said the boy. "How does the honourable *Bugyō* get to know about such things, I wonder ? Well, I like to go to Tōsuke's house with Kyūbei, because Kyūbei always has a smiling face when he goes to Tōsuke's, whereas, when at the pawnbroker's, he is often very cross."

"Ah, to be sure, that is very natural."

Tadasuke thought there was little doubt that Kyūbei had made the inmates of this house his confidants, and that the money stolen was intrusted to their care. So, his object being to find out exactly where the house was situated without its getting to the knowledge of Kyūbei that he was on the scent, he continued in the same strain of pretended omniscience :—"In going to Tōsuke's house, you

go-away-up there." Here the *Bugyō* made a motion with his head, in a way that to a sharp adult would have appeared to be very indefinite, but which to the unsuspecting and admiring mind of the child seemed to indicate that the place was well known to the speaker, and continued, "You then turn and go to a back house."

"Exactly," exclaimed the boy. "It is behind a fruiterer's house, and to the left of a large well."

"To be sure!" replied the *Bugyō*; "and a little further on than the well, eh?"

"It is! it is! Well, I never would have thought it! if the honourable *Bugyō* does not know everything!"

"You are a clever boy!" replied the *Bugyō*. "Now you may go home. But, look here! You are not to say a word about anything that you have mentioned to me. Remember that now!—If you say anything, I shall be sure to hear of it. For the *Bugyō* knows everything, you see!"

"I will not say anything about it, sir"; replied the lad, and forthwith returned to the pawnbroker's house.

After Sankichi had been in the house some little time, Kyūbei came to him and asked:—"Why did the *Bugyō* keep you back? What did he say to you?"

Sankichi remained quite silent.

Whereupon, Kyūbei angrily put the same question to him. But not a word did the wary lad utter, thinking that Echizen-no-Kami might be listening somewhere, as he seemed to know everything.

Kyūbei's suspicions were now thoroughly aroused. "Things are beginning to look ugly," he muttered to himself. "This lad evidently knows something that he will not reveal, and Hanshirō, too, is a man who is not to be deceived. I had better think about absconding, or I shall find that it is too late to do so. But if it comes to this, I may as well carry off a little more than I have already appropriated; as the saying is:—'If you eat poison don't stop at the plate.'* I will take all I can and be off."

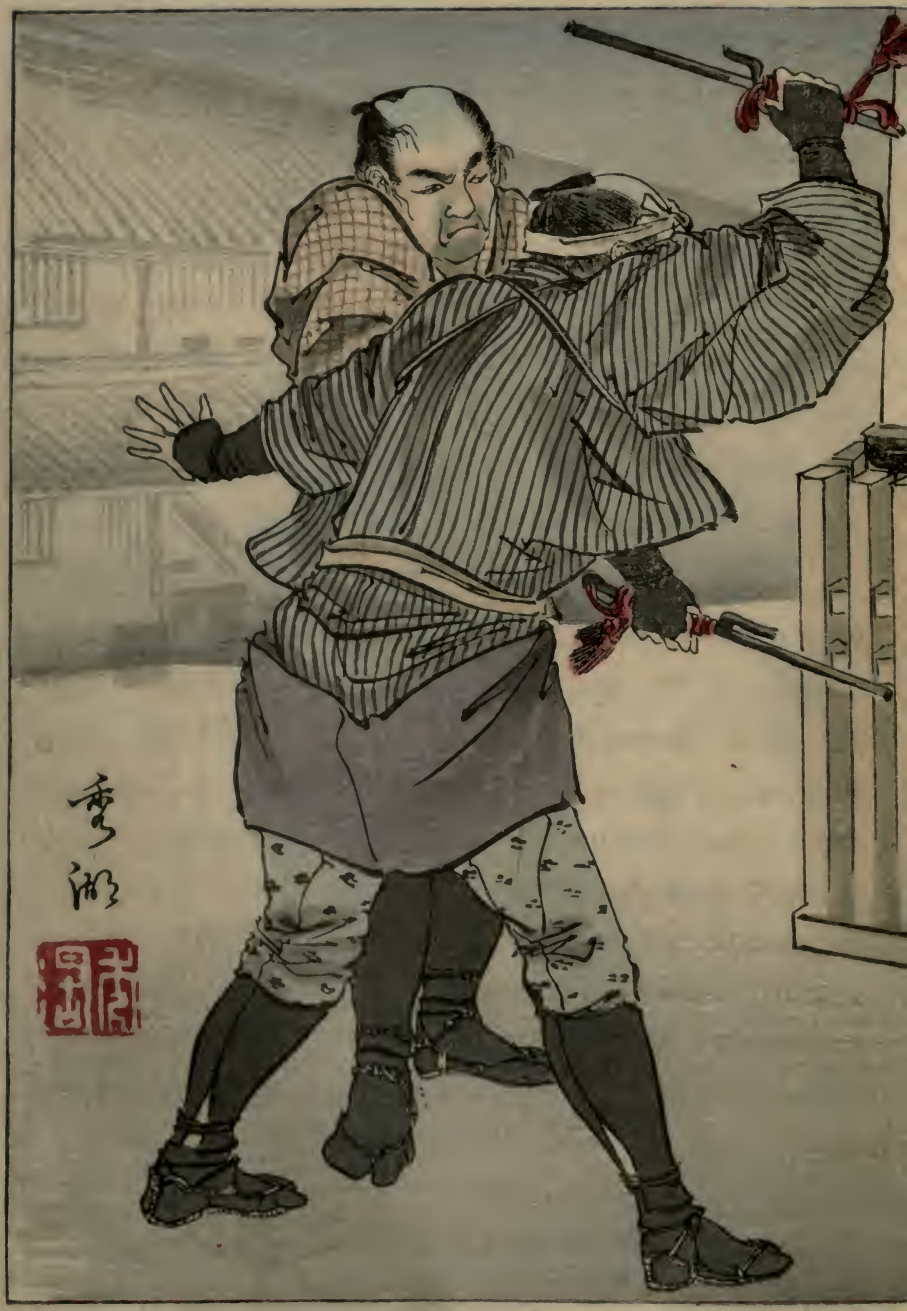
That night Kyūbei stole into the pawnbroker's shop, and, taking all the most valuable things he could find, made them up into a parcel; and then, going to the place where the money was kept, he quietly took possession of the moderate sum of three hundred and fifty *ryō* (equal to over fifteen hundred at the present day), and, after girding on a sword (one of the best that was in pawn), was just making

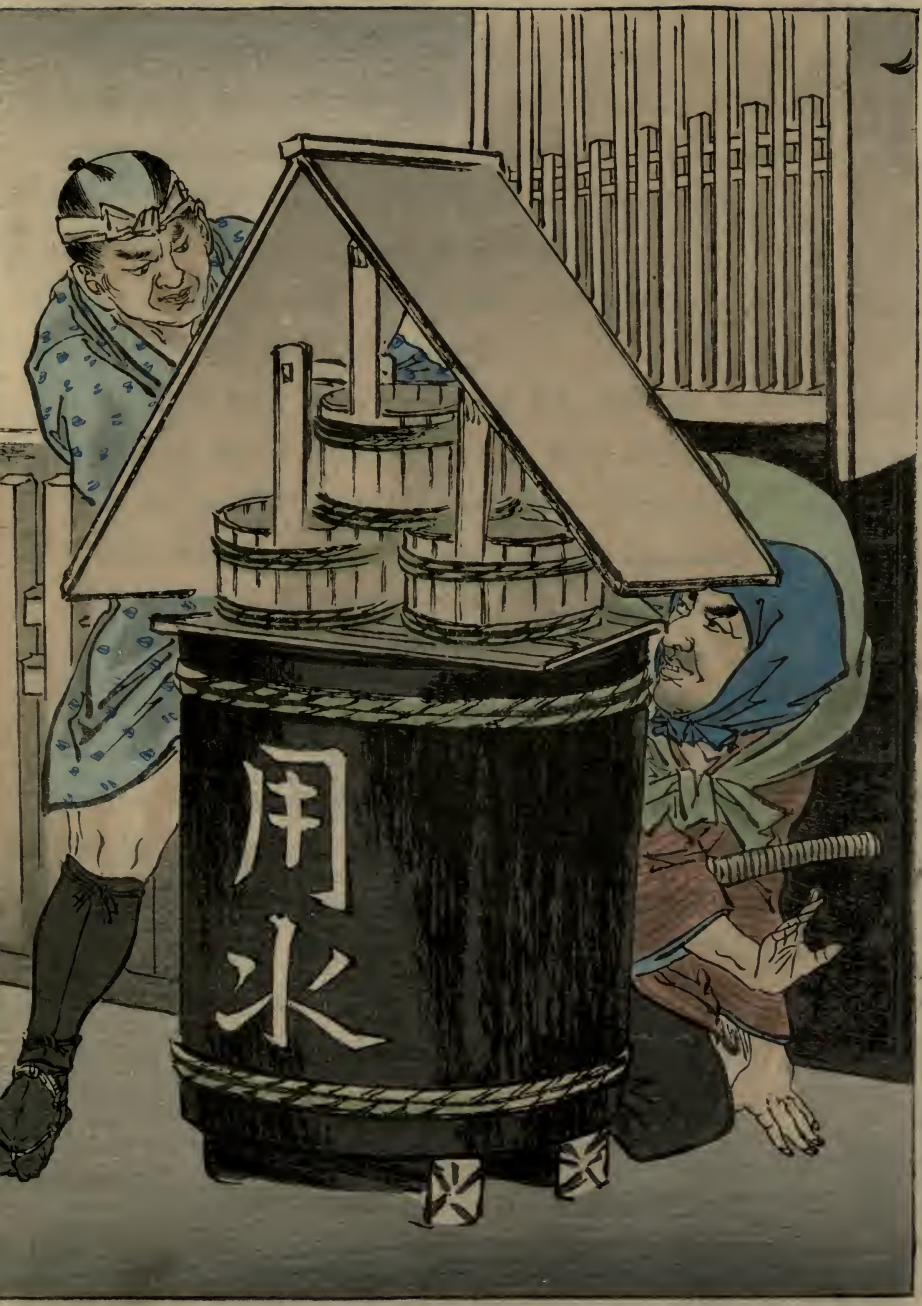
* "'Tis as well to be hung for a sheep as a lamb," conveys the same idea.

his escape when, in one of the verandas of the house, he encountered his master's only son, a young man, then about twenty years of age, who was somewhat demented. "Ah, Kyūbei!" exclaimed the son with a loud voice. "Where are you off for at this time of night?"

"The devil take it!" ejaculated Kyūbei to himself. "I shall be discovered through this fool! *There*—die; you idiot!" he muttered between his teeth as, thrusting his sword into the young man's mouth, he killed him on the spot.

Pushing the murdered man's body under the veranda, Kyūbei made his way out of the house as rapidly as possible. There happened to be a watchman passing the house at the time, who just caught a glimpse of Kyūbei as he glided out of the door. The whole thing was so rapid that Kyūbei thought it was hardly possible that the watchman could have seen him. So, instead of running away, he crouched down behind a water-tank, where he hoped to conceal himself till the man had passed. But the watchman's suspicions were aroused, and, summoning several of his companions, he walked up to the spot where Kyūbei was secreted and arrested him on suspicion.

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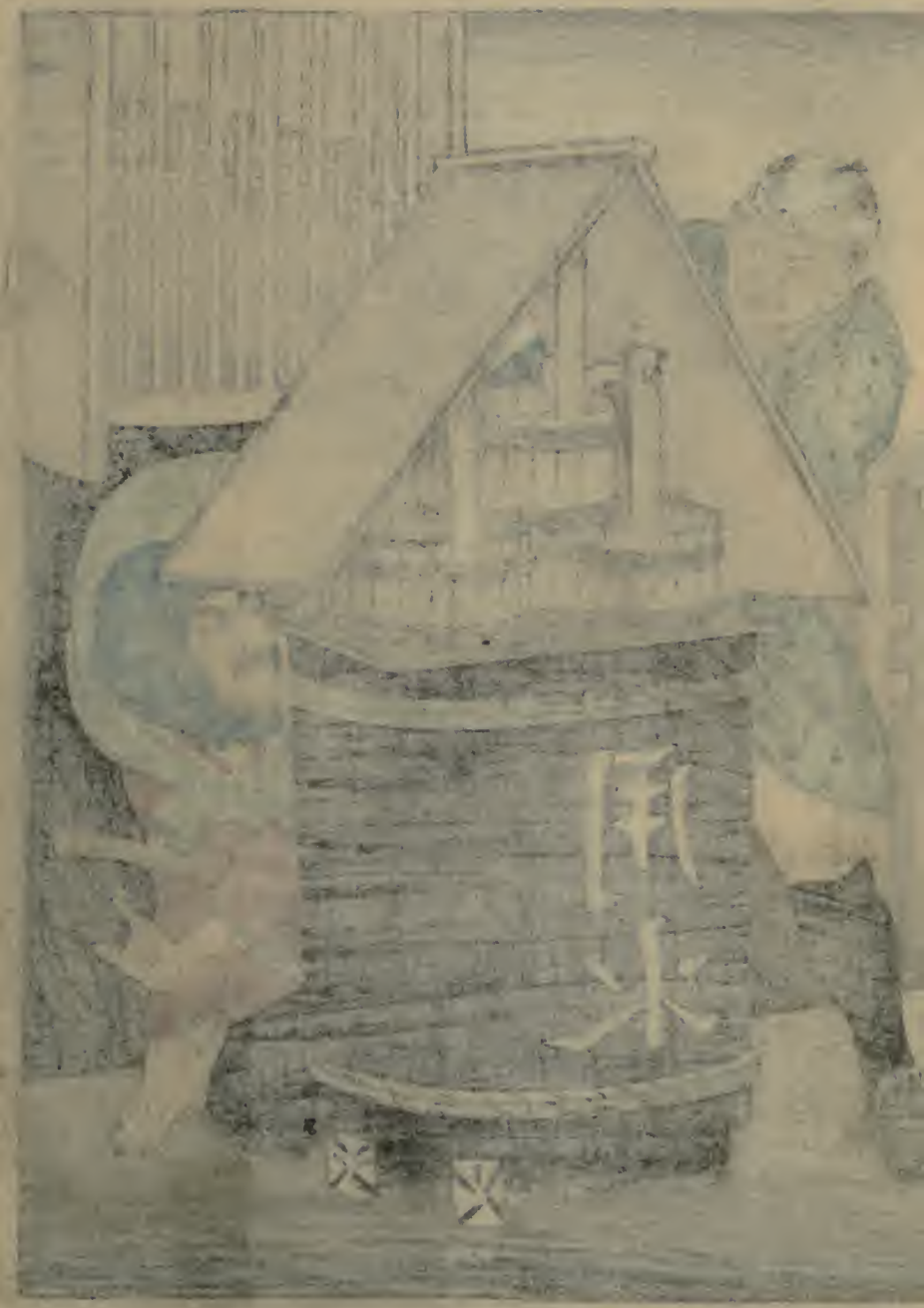

Ever ready with his tongue, Kyūbei tried to induce the men to release him. But on his clothes being examined, they were found to be covered with blood, and so deception became an impossibility. The inmates of the house were aroused, the murdered man was found, and the occurrence was at once reported to the City *Bugyō*.

Kyūbei had now forfeited his life by this his last criminal act. But Tadasuke was anxious to induce him to confess that he was the perpetrator of the crime which he had imputed to Bun-emon, but of which overwhelming evidence went to shew that he himself was the author.

The state of the law in Japan in those days was very peculiar. However conclusive the evidence to prove that a certain person had committed a crime might be, unless that person confessed with his own lips, that he was the perpetrator of the crime, and was prepared to set his seal to the confession when written out, no puuishment could be assigned. This it was that proved to be one of the most powerful of inducements to a judge to make use of torture. The work of a judge, with the law in the state it then was, whenever an obstinate criminal was under trial, became most tedious ; and in order to expedite matters, torture was had recourse to. With

Echizen-no-Kami, however, torture was one of the last resorts. He first tried every other means imaginable to elicit from criminals a confession of their guilt. And he was usually successful. The tedious questionings, the heaping of evidence on evidence, to which he resorted in the present case to induce the criminal to confess his guilt, would occupy too much space if reproduced in full here, though, as proofs of the wonderful perseverance and ingenuity of the judge, they are well worth careful examination in detail. We shall content ourselves with just stating the outlines of the process adopted by the *Bugyō*, not to convict Kyūbei of crime, for that was a comparatively easy matter, but to induce him to confess his guilt.

It must not be forgotten that Kyūbei's case was a very peculiar and an extremely difficult one. The prisoner was a doomed man. No power on earth could rescue him from death. Seeing that die he must, there seemed no reason why he should be expected to gratify the authorities by giving evidence in Bun-emon's case. But more than this, there still lurked in his heart the most deadly hatred to Bun-emon. And the knowledge that his bitter enemy was to perish by the hand of the law, was the only solace which his heart, in the depth of its

depravity, was capable of appreciating, and therefore the only solace for which he longed. If he could only feel that he was not to perish alone, but that Bun-emon would follow or precede him to the land of shades, he would die content, if not happy. Tadasuke thoroughly understood all this, and effectually counterbalanced it.

After the disclosure of Kyūbei's latest crime, the first persons examined in reference to Bun-emon's case were Chōbei and Chōhachi; the next Tōsuke and his sister Tami; and the last Hanshirō.

In the course of the examination of Hanshirō, it came to light that Kyūbei was no other than the robber that Hanshirō encountered on the road to Marugame and that was tattoed by the guests at the hotel nearly twenty years previously.

Kyūbei stood in mortal fear of Hanshirō. His piercing eye, his knowing looks, his huge physical development, were something of which the criminal had the most unpleasant recollections and before which he quailed with instinctive dread. So, though the *Bugyō* heaped argument on argument to prove to Kyūbei that it was useless hiding his crime, it was not till Hanshirō came to address him that he began to relent. The *Bugyō*, seeing the way in which Kyūbei shrunk from Hanshirō, gave the

desperate, and capable of anything, and therefore the only evidence for which he longed. If he could only feel that he was to perish alone, but that Burnaby would follow or precede him to the land of shades, he would quit contest, if not happy, fearless. Shrewsbury understood all this, and effectually counterbalanced it.

After the disclosure of Sybilla's latest crime, the first persons examined in reference to Burnaby's case were Clubbe and Chilcott; the next Stanley and his sister Tami; and the last Burnaby.

In the course of the examination of Burnaby, it came to light that Sybilla was no other than the robber that Burnaby encountered on the road to Maryport, and that was tattooed by the pirates at the hotel nearly twenty years previously.

Sybilla stood in mortal fear of Burnaby. His piercing eye, his knowing looks, his deep physical development, were something of which the criminal had the most unpleasant recollections and before which he quailed with instinctive dread. So, from the first, he longed urgently on arguments to prove to Sybilla that it was useless hiding his crime; it was not till Burnaby came to address him that he began to relent. The despair during the way in which Sybilla shrunk from Burnaby, gave the

latter full power to deal with him, and so, partly by threats, partly by appeals to such sparks of virtuous or manly feeling as remained unquenched in a heart so totally depraved as that of Kyūbei, the prisoner was induced to confess that he stole the one hundred *ryō* and to place his thumb on the written and sealed confession of his guilt.

The sentences passed on the persons implicated or concerned in Bun-emon's case as given in the *Ō-oka Meiyo Seidan* read as follows :—

(1)—"Gohei, the landlord of the Aburaya, you, having, though unwittingly, harboured a thief in your house, are to be blamed, and might be punished severely. Treating you leniently, however, I decree that you pay one hundred *ryō* to Bun-emon.

(2)—"Tōsuke, you, in addition to giving shelter to a robber, having made use of money that was obtained unlawfully, also merit heavy punishment. But, on account of your blindness, I take pity on you, and do no more than require you to pay a fine of seven *kwammon*.*

(3)—"Tami,† you, for maintaining your brother when he was nearly blind, are to be commended.

* Seventy cents then, the equivalent of five or six times that amount now.

† Tōsuke's sister.

For this you are to receive the sum of five *kwammon.*

(4)—"Musashiya Chōbei and Gotō Hanshirō, you have rendered great assistance to Shindō Ichinojō and various other persons. These actions of yours are worthy of the highest praise. As a remuneration for the same, I award ten silver *ryō* to each of you.

(5)—"Chōhachi, your remembrance of the kindness you received from Bun-emon even after the lapse of years, was most commendable. For this I award to you the sum of five *kwammon.*

(6)—"Kō, the daughter of Chōhachi, you were obedient to your parents. In consideration of this, the sum of five silver *ryō* is awarded to you.

(7)—"Kyūbei, you, having stolen your master's money, and, afterwards, having imputed the crime to Bun-emon; and having subsequently been guilty of murder and theft, in addition to committing various other crimes previous to the forementioned ones, are condemned to be exhibited throughout the streets of Edo and then to be crucified at Asakusa.

(8)—"Ōhashi Bun-emon, you are declared guiltless. You are to receive the sum of one hundred *ryō* from Gohei, twenty-five of which is to be expended in repurchasing the daughter of Shindō Ichinojō."

For this you are to receive the sum of five *kwammon*.

(4)—"Munashiye Chōbei and Gotō Hanshirō, you have rendered great assistance to Shindō Ichinojō and various other persons. These actions of yours are worthy of the highest praise. As a remuneration for the same, I award ten silver *riyō* to each of you.

(5)—"Chōbachi, your remembrance of the kindness you received from Hansemon even after the lapse of years, was most commendable. For this I award to you the sum of five *kwammon*.

(6)—"Kō, the daughter of Chōbachi, you were obedient to your parents. In consideration of this, the sum of five silver *riyō* is awarded to you.

(7)—"Kyūbei, you, having stolen your master's money, and, afterwards, having imputed the crime to Han-emon; and having subsequently been guilty of murder and theft in addition to committing various other crimes previous to the forementioned ones, are condemned to be exhibited throughout the streets of Edo and then to be crucified at Asakusa.

(8)—"Ōhashi Han-emon, you are declared guiltless. You are to receive the sum of one hundred *riyō* from Sōbei, twenty-five of which is to be expended in repurchasing the daughter of Shindō Ichinojō."

The above sentences are a curiosity, looked at from a modern point of view. The rewarding of virtue, as well as the punishment of vice, was one of the functions of a Court of Justice under the Tokugawa *régime*. There is a queer mixture of law and sentiment in these judgments. They reflect very distinctly the spirit, the morality, and the social customs of the age in which they were passed.

The custom of selling daughters whenever money was needed for some special emergency, is approved of in sentence No. 5; and No. 6 is commended and rewarded for having bowed to one of the most degrading of practices, though the probabilities are all against her having any power of choice in the matter.*

There is something romantic about Bun-emon's having awarded to him the very sum which he was accused of stealing.

Now, to bring our story to a close, we are pleased to be able to state that the events recorded above reached the ears of Echigo-no-Kami, Bun-

* It is stated in the account given of this case in the O-oka Meiyo Seidan that Tadasuke advised that, in making proposals to her owner for the repurchasing of Chōsuke's daughter, a conciliatory tone should be adopted. This remark shows that the law of those days was powerless to compel the owner of a girl to restore her to her parents or guardians.

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emon's former lord, and that he was so impressed by what he heard of Bun-emon's conduct on this occasion that he decided to re-install him in his former position and grant him an income of five hundred *koku* a year.*

The conduct of Hanshirō was reported to the Shōgun, Tokugawa Yoshimune, who was so pleased with it that he ordered Hanshirō to be summoned to his presence. When he arrived, the Shōgun set him to fence with the chief fencers of his Court, and on his defeating eighteen noted swordsmen in succession, he created him a *hatamoto*,† and granted him an income of two hundred *koku* a year; which was subsequently increased to five hundred.

Thus ends a story, in which human nature is displayed in a variety of aspects, its bright and its dark side, its nobleness and its baseness, forming strong contrasts to each other in the lives and the characters of the principal actors and actresses who have appeared on the stage.

The curtain drops: but to rise again and reveal other scenes.

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* Equal to an income of $3000 at the present time.

† A name given to the Shōgun's vassals, knight-banneret is the nearest English equivalent to *hatamoto*, though the duties of the latter differed considerably from those of the former.

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發行所

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