

THE CAESAR KIDAN

—The Earliest Japanese Translation of Shakespeare's
Julius Caesar and Its Performance —

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I

In the first year of this century, a play called *Caesar Kidan*, or *The Strange Story of Caesar*, was performed in Japan. It was a Japanese version by Shoyo Tsubouchi of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, and the play was presented by Yoho Ii's Company at the Meijiza Theatre in Tokyo. Its *première* was the 14th of July. The Meijiza Theatre was one of the main Kabuki theatres of the day, while Yoho Ii's Company was a group of actors who had newly arisen from outside the Kabuki world where conventions had been established, traditions firmly maintained, and the principal actors mostly hereditary. To those who belonged to that closed world, and to those who were very familiar with it, the new actors looked somewhat upstart and amateurish, but they were gaining popularity among those who approved their intention to create in this country a new style of drama with a tendency toward realism, and their general spirit of freedom and democracy. With regard to the appearance of Ii's Company at the Meijiza Theatre, Kinka Kimura, in his *Meijiza Monogatari* (*The Meijiza Story*), says:

The theatre decided, on the recommendation of Umekichi Takada, landlord of the Hanaya, a tea-house attached to the theatre, to invite Ii's Company to play for the theatre's July presentation. It was the very beginning of the New Actors appearing on the stage of the Meijiza.¹

Ii's Company chose three plays to present on that occasion. The first of them was *Shiobara Tasuke*,² which was a new dramatization, this time calling itself "An Educational Play," of a very popular story of sentimentalism that had already been made familiar to music-hall fans and theatregoers, and the third was *Kodanna Toza*,³ a new play based on a 'true story' kind of story of a gentleman-burglar, written by Seiseien Ihara, and first published serially in the *Jiji Shimpō*, a daily newspaper. Placed between those two plays, and called a *naka-maku*, or a "middle play," was the *Caesar Kidan*, "originally written by Shakespeare."

Kinka Kimura's book supplies us with further information about the performance of this play by Ii's Company:

The middle play was, (Kimura writes,) an adaptation by Kohei Hatakeyama of Dr. Tsubouchi's translation of Shakespeare's play. It is said that the adaptor had taken much

¹ Kinka Kimura, *Meijiza Monogatari* (*The Meijiza Story*), 1928, p. 230.

² The name of the hero of the play.

³ The name of the hero of the play.

care not to distort the general import of the original work ; but, in fact, it hinted at the assassination of Toru Hoshi, a political boss, which had taken place on the 21st of the previous month. Severe was the interference in the performance of the Metropolitan Police who considered the printed picture of a parliament house on the program-sheet as well as the stage directions for the scene in which Julius Caesar is murdered to be dangerously allusive. It was only after every possible means had been tried by the Company that the performance was at last permitted on condition that "it shall be banned whenever it is deemed harmful to public peace and order." The play, however, proved a considerable success, Fukasawa acting the arrogant Caesar very well and Ii delivering Antony's address to the Roman citizens very tactfully.⁴

When the *Kabuki Shimpo* (*Kabuki News*) went out of existence in March 1897, after issuing 1,670 numbers during its eighteen-year history, a new magazine which had started two months before, the *Kabuki*, took its place and became the leading theatrical journal of the time. The chief editor of the new magazine was Takeji Miki. Takeji Miki was the pen name of Tokujiro Mori, younger brother of Ogai Mori, a great master in modern Japanese literature. And in editing the *Kabuki* Takeji Miki could avail himself of his brother's precious help and advice. It is in the fifteenth number (August, 1901) of this magazine that we can gather plenty of varied information concerning the performance of the *Caesar Kidan* by Ii's Company at the Meijiza Theatre.

In an article called 'Meijiza Nozoki' ('Peeping at the Meijiza'), a general review of that theatre's July presentation, Takeji Miki himself gives the following comments on the performance.

Praise should be accorded to Mr. Kohei Hatakeyama for the great care he took not to distort the general import of the original work. Ii as Antony was very smart in appearance and made me think that the real Antony must have been just like that. The calmness he held when he confronted Brutus and other conspirators was very good, and his address to the Roman citizens, a point in the whole play, was delivered very tactfully and admirably. When he saw everybody else had gone out and that he was left alone, he smiled to himself very subtly with the corners of his lips, and made a little step forward with his right foot changing thus the mood, and then he made a slow exit at the right of the stage. All the movement was very sober and well restrained. The arrogant air of Fukasawa's Caesar was, as intended, exactly like that of Hoshi. He became as if transported after exclaiming "Et tu, Brute!" It was very effective. Fukushima's Brutus was taken to be an honest and upright man. Matsudaira's Cassius appeared to be a man quite different in character from Brutus though they were comrades. Kanaizumi did Metellus very well when he was paralysed with terror and could not get up after falling on his buttocks.

It is quite plain that Kinka Kimura borrowed in part from Takeji Miki when he made in his *The Meijiza Story* the remarks on this performance which I have quoted above.

The *Caesar Kidan* was one of the new plays which the *Kabuki*, in its fifteenth number, took up to introduce to its readers. In a small column in it entitled "Guide to New Plays" we read as follows :

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 231.

The play [*i.e.* the *Caesar Kidan*] is an adaptation by Gohei [a misprint of 'Kohei'] Hatakeyama of Dr. Tsubouchi's translation.

Caesar, on account of his abuse of his power, becomes the victim of the blades of Brutus, Cassius and others. Antony pretends to approve of their deed, but he censures them in his funeral speech over Caesar's body, causing the citizens of Rome to rush off [to assault the conspirators' houses] in great excitement. Antony smiles to himself, pleased to see that his scheme has succeeded.

The *Caesar Kidan* also supplied the magazine with a topic to be taken up in its "Zappo" ("Miscellaneous News") section, where, under a subtitle of "The Assassins Are Many," we read:

It is said that at the Meijiza they have been made to have Caesar slain not by Brutus alone, but by many, for the reason that for a single assassin to murder him would be suggestive.

What the reporter of this news refrained from plainly referring to, leaving the statement rather vague, is told more revealingly in the "Kabuki Nikki" ("Kabuki Diary") which is found near the end page of the magazine.

On July 4, (the Diary says,) the Metropolitan Police summoned Ii to their headquarters and warned him not to make the *Caesar Kidan*, which his Company was going to produce at the Meijiza, suggestive of the murder of Toru Hoshi.

Incidentally, another entry in the "Diary" tells us that "in the middle of July, in Sendai,⁵ a troupe led by Sutesaburo Aoyagi dramatized and played the murder of Mr. Hoshi." The murder of this haughty political boss was not only a sensational incident but also a matter of serious national concern. A considerable portion of the population, at least, could find reasons for taking sympathy with the man who had committed the crime, while the government and police authorities feared that it might create a seditious mood among the people.

Beside all this, the fifteenth number of the *Kabuki* contains an article, one of the main articles in it, entitled "Gikyoku *Caesar* no Hanashi" ("Talks on the Play of *Julius Caesar*"). It is a discourse, a little pedantic one, dictated by a man called Geigaku Seimin by pseudonym to Shumpo Suzuki, a reporter to the magazine.

"I make these talks," says Geigaku Seimin, "partly because I have been surprised by the boldness of a certain Mr. Ii's Company who, I hear, intend to produce this great historical play of Shakespeare's in near future at the Meijiza, and partly because I personally wish that they would succeed in their project, and astonish those modern, stylish dramatic critics who wear their hairs long and ostentatiously ride about in the town on their bicycles." Geigaku Seimin began his discourse with the questions of the date of composition of the play, and its sources, mentioning the names of such scholars and critics as Knight, Craig, Gervinus and Halliwell-Phillipps, and then he gave a very brief account of the Roman history at the time of Julius Caesar. Geigaku Seimin's scholarship, however, was not good enough to prevent him from giving his readers some misleading notions and information. It is misleading, for instance, to tell, as he did, innocent readers that Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* first appeared in the world about 1623, which is, of course, the date of publication of the First Folio, even though he also referred to other (more suitable) dates of the play's composition suggested by the

⁵ A city in the North-Eastern District of Japan, the principal one in the District.

scholars and critics mentioned above. There are many other points in this discourse which make us wonder what Geigaku Seimin's conceptions were. Though he was not an erudite scholar, he was one of the very few Japanese at that time who had actually seen the English stage. He was conscious of it, and, in this discourse, he soon proceeded to talk about "a very successful performance of *Julius Caesar* which has recently been given in London." It was "a performance given by a company led by a famous actor called Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree at the Haymarket Theatre, four years ago (in January, 1898) [*sic*], which won greater popularity than any other dramatic presentation had done in the past three or four decades." The success, Geigaku Seimin says, was such as astonished the London critics who had expressed negative opinions about the project of putting the play on the stage. Geigaku Seimin applauded Tree for his courage to have carried out his project in the face of those critics, but complained that his acting of Antony had been too showman-like, and his speech to the Roman mob too like one by a professional orator, and not truly moving. This Japanese spectator thought very highly of Lewis Waller, who acted Brutus, according to him, really wonderfully. Geigaku Seimin wished Ii would win the same success as Tree had done in London, and before closing his discourse, he added a passage in which he gave his special advice to a man who would play Antony. Geigaku Seimin told him that Antony's speech to the Roman citizens was "the point of the whole play," and, after noting how artful Antony is in manipulating a mob, he went on to say :

When Antony sees the citizens have all rushed away and left him alone, he will smile to himself pleased, and will begin to speak these famous lines :

[Now let it work.] Mischief, thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt!

These lines are worth a full display of an actor's abilities. So, mind it, Mr. Ii; and good luck!

The identity of the man who made this discourse under the pseudonym of Geigaku Seimin is not certain, but it is very probable that his real name was Kozo Chiba. Kozo Chiba was son to Katsugoro Chiba, who was, in partnership with Genichiro Fukuchi (better known by his pseudonym, Ochi-Koji), manager of the Kabukiza Theatre⁶ in the earliest period of its history. Kozo Chiba, after graduating a certain college in Tokyo, went to Europe for further study, chiefly at the University of Berlin, and naturally had plenty of opportunities to visit European theatres, including ones in London. A hint for this identification is found in a letter which Kohei Hatakeyama, the adaptor of the *Caesar Kidan*, wrote to the editors of the *Kabuki*. Although it is not for that reason alone, but rather for many other things, I shall quote it below at some length.

The letter is dated August 3, and addressed to Takeji Miki and his co-editor Seiseien Ihara, and it was published in the sixteenth number (September, 1901) of the *Kabuki*, with the title of "About the *Caesar Kidan*" given by the editors. The letter is, indeed, an all-round response by Hatakeyama to what the magazine had been saying in its previous number about the performance of the play, and adds to as well as corrects the information we have hitherto obtained. The letter reads as follows :

I have read with much delight the latest number of the *Kabuki* which was

⁶ Founded in 1889, it has been the principal Kabuki theatre in Tokyo ever since.

issued the day before yesterday. The gentleman who made the "Talks on the Play of *Julius Caesar*," and called himself Geigaku Seimin, might be, I suppose, Mr. Chiba who resides in Ataka-machi.⁷ That *Julius Caesar* is a play that has seldom in recent years been acted in England, and that Mr. Tree's performance aroused enthusiasm in London, are what Mr. Mizuta of our Company has also told me. Even Irving, who is famous for his acting of Iago, has never tried it yet, I hear. It would be our great joy if you would let us know now and then, through Mr. Chiba, what is going on in the European theatre. As for the scene in which Antony's lines beginning with "Mischief" count a great deal, and to which Mr. Chiba at the end of his discourse required our special attention, I had to do a little reshaping, and end it in such a manner as you saw, because I feared that it would be beyond the ability of an actor who was not a Danshu⁸ to speak the lines to their full theatrical effect. Mr. Miki was kind enough to praise me in his review, saying that it was to my credit that the play was saved from distortion of the general import of the original work, but I am afraid the praise was misplaced. Nor is it true that I adapted Dr. Tsubouchi's translation as your "Guide to New Plays" had it, but I made my own translation directly from Shakespeare's text, although I confess I borrowed from Dr. Tsubouchi in those passages where my ability failed. So those speeches in the play which sounded beautiful to your refined ears should be accredited to the Doctor, and whatever is amiss and poor in it is due to my inability and the willfulness of the actors of our company. I am afraid we have caused Dr. Tsubouchi much trouble, and I feel I am bound to explain, and ask his pardon.

It was only after every possible means had been tried by us that the program which bore in it a printed picture of a parliament house at last passed censorship, and that on condition that whenever the performance proved harmful to public peace and order it would immediately be banned. The local chief of police of the district of Nihonbashi and some other inspectors used to come by turns and watch the performance every evening, each with a copy of the censorship-approved text of the play before him. Under these circumstances lots of beautiful lines in Caesar's speech of self-glorification were ruthlessly crossed out.

Although you wrote as if the assassins had been made large in number because a single murderer would be suggestive of the slaying of Hoshi, the number of those who stab Caesar is eight in all, including Brutus, in the original work of Shakespeare.⁹ I admit that we were not faithful to Shakespeare's text in that we had no senators to sit in the back stage, which could not be helped because of a shortage of actors in our company.

What this letter tells us about the immediate authorship of the *Caesar Kidan* which was presented at the Meijiza is of special interest. It has usually been said that the play was Dr. Tsubouchi's translation adapted by Hatakeyama. Dr. Tsubouchi himself regarded it that way, as we shall see later. But the letter tells us that it was not entirely the case, that the truth was a little different from what we have been accustomed to assume. It is to be regretted

⁷ A street in Fukagawa, Tokyo.

⁸ Danshu or Danjuro IX (1838-1903) was a Kabuki actor of the greatest grandeur and fame, sharing the popularity of the whole town with Kikugoro V (1844-1903).

⁹ The editors of the *Kabuki* insert a parenthesis here, requesting Hatakeyama to re-read the "news" because their reporting, they say, has nothing to do with Shakespeare's text.

that it seems impossible for us now to have a producer's copy of the *Caesar Kidan* so that we can read it just as it was produced by Ii's Company in 1901.

The performance by Ii's Company of the *Caesar Kidan* was chronologically the fourth one that had been given in Japan of Shakespeare's plays. The three preceding performances were all those of *The Merchant of Venice*, in the form of a very free adaptation by Bunkai Udagawa, a play known in Japan as *Sakuradoki Zeni no Yononaka* (*Money Talks While the Cherry-trees Are All in Bloom*). Of Shakespeare's plays, therefore, *Julius Caesar* was the second earliest play that had been acted in Japan. And it was the first Shakespearean play that had ever been seen in Tokyo.

Bunkai Udagawa's adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice* was first produced in May 1885, by Sojuro Nakamura's Company, at the Ebisuza Theatre in Osaka. This performance marked the first introduction to the Japanese stage of the Shakespearean drama. Sojuro Nakamura was a Kabuki actor in Osaka, who has sometimes been compared to Danjuro IX in Tokyo. He was progressive in view, eager to refine the Kabuki play so that it might keep up with the progress of the time. He made trials, just as Danjuro did in Tokyo, to base the Kabuki play on the principle of historical accuracy, under the slogan of "the play true to the real history." He was also regarded as a leader in Osaka of the movement for "the Improvement of the Theatre," a movement to reform the Japanese theatre after the European models, which, although it fizzled out before it achieved its full purpose, once counted among its advocates a number of preeminent statesmen, scholars, writers and theatre-managers of the time.

The *Sakuradoki Zeni no Yononaka* was acted soon again, in the next month of its first performance, in June 1885, at the Asahiza Theatre in Osaka, and also in November 1893, at the Bentenza Theatre in the same city.

In connection with the fact that the earliest three productions in Japan of the Shakespearean drama were all given in Osaka, instead of Tokyo, the capital of the country, the following remarks Dr. Tsubouchi made in one of the appendices to the first edition (1916) of his translation of *Macbeth* would be informative.

What may be wondered at by some is that the first performances of the Shakespearean play, though, of course, in its free adaptation, were all given in the commercial city of Osaka, instead of Tokyo, the centre of the new culture and civilization. That is no wonder, however; for, then in Tokyo Danjuro and Kikugoro were still at the zenith of their prosperity and the Old Drama held a complete sway over all the theatres of the town, while, on the other hand, in Osaka people were, as they have ever been, more liberal and unprejudiced in their appreciation of arts, tending to delight in anything which was novel to such an extent that the life of Paris as told in Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* had found a place in the Old Actors' successful repertoire even many years before. This temperament and taste of the people of Osaka caused the Shakespearean play to be acted there long before it was done in Tokyo.

The performance by Ii's Company of the *Caesar Kidan* at the Meijiza, in July 1901, was thus the first production of the Shakespearean drama given in Tokyo. The people of Osaka, however, were not to wait long before they could also enjoy this new play; for, soon after, in September of the same year, Mohei Fukui's Company acted it in their city, at the Kadoza Theatre. Strictly speaking, it is not quite certain, even though it is very probable, that the

play which the people of Osaka saw at the Kadoza was the same play as that which had been presented by Ii's Company in Tokyo two months before. Even Dr. Tsubouchi, in his chronological list of the earliest Shakespearean performances in Japan which he appended to his first version of *Macbeth*, has left this point in doubt. Of this play which was seen at the Kadoza in Osaka, and which comes in his list immediately after the *Caesar Kidan* in Tokyo, Dr. Tsubouchi assigned its Japanese authorship to "the same as the above," meaning himself and Kohei Hatakeyama, but added to the phrase a question mark in parentheses.

Dr. Tsubouchi's translation of *Julius Caesar* had been published as early as in 1884. What accounts for the rather abrupt appearance on the stage in 1901 of the play that had been published seventeen years before is, as indicated in some of the quotations I have made above, the murder of Toru Hoshi, which happened on June 21 of that year. Hoshi was a political bigwig, and his high-handedness produced him enemies, and he was assassinated in the Aldermen's Room of the Tokyo Metropolitan Office by a man called Sotaro Iba, who was a local official in charge of school education in Yotsuya, Tokyo. Ii's Company, when they were invited to play at the Meijiza, wanted, it seems, to make use of this sensational incident for the purpose of attracting audiences, and they thought a performance of the *Caesar Kidan* would serve the purpose very well. The play with a scene in which, it seemed to them, a great political magnate is victimized for the cause of liberty would be sure to win popularity by its possibility of topical allusion. I think a hope for a success at the booking office was the principal reason for Ii to have chosen this particular play as one of the plays to be presented by his company at the Meijiza in July 1901.

That a local troupe led by a certain Sutesaburo Aoyagi dramatized and played the murder of Hoshi in Sendai about the same time as Ii's Company presented the *Caesar Kidan* in Tokyo has already been noted. By Shinichi Iwaya's "Kabukiza Monogatari" ("The Kabukiza Story"), in *The Kabukiza*,¹⁰ we can know that they at this leading theatre in Tokyo also attempted to utilize the sensational incident for a larger sale of tickets.

Kikugoro [V], (Iwaya says,) wanted to dramatize and put on the stage the murder by Sotaro Iba of Toru Hoshi, chairman of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly, which had happened on June 21 of that year, but he knew that the police would not permit a straightforward dramatization of the incident. So he decided so to modify a scene in an old play called *Okehazama Narumi Gundan* (*The Story of the Battle at Okehazama*) where Konai Kori assassinates Yoshimoto Imagawa in the pine grove in front of the Nanzenji Temple that the scene would become suggestive of the recent incident. A large picture of a man wearing a *hakama* and holding a dagger in his hand was put up outside the theatre near its porch in order to attract the people's attention. For all these devices on the part of the theatre, the severe interference of the police authorities caused the play to be unpopular, and the performance could not run more than seventeen nights.

In a general review of the Kabukiza's July presentation published in the 15th number of the *Kabuki*, the critics make no mention of the police interference which Iwaya says there was, but they attribute the failure of the production simply to a bad assortment of the plays presented and the mediocrity of the acting. "They might have found a more suitable play," one of the critics said in special reference to the above-mentioned play, "if

¹⁰ A book privately published by the theatre in January 1951, in commemoration of its reconstruction after World War II, during which it was badly damaged. The following quotation is from pp. 97-8.

they wanted one that could be made suggestive of the recent incident." And another critic observed that "something of a theatrical success in the Meiji era is being achieved by the Caesar."

Incidentally, the police also interfered, on July 7, in a performance by Teiken Sudo's Company at the Kirakuza Theatre in Yokohama. Among the plays they there presented was a crime play called *Nyobo-Goroshi* (*Murdering the Wife*). Naojiro Matsuyama, a pickpocket in Yokohama, had killed his common-law wife on the 23rd of the previous month. The play was a quick dramatization of this homely tragedy. But the play was soon banned by the police, for the reasons that the actual speeches and actions on the stage were different from those in the book that had been submitted to censorship, and that the play would corrupt public morals.

II

It was in his fourteenth year, when he entered the Prefectural School of English in Nagoya, that Shoyo¹¹ Tsubouchi first got acquainted with Shakespeare, whose sole complete translator in Japan he was to become. His interest in the dramatist, however, was not particular until about four years later, 1876, when he came up to Tokyo and became a student at Kaisei School, which was to be re-organized into Tokyo University just the next year. At this first university in Japan William A. Houghton, an American, taught English literature from March 1877 to July 1882, and Tsubouchi read Shakespeare under his guidance. The following passage¹² is from Tsubouchi's "Kaioku Mandan" ("Desultory Talks of Recollection") which appeared in No. 233 of the *Waseda Bungaku*, a literary magazine published by Waseda University in Tokyo, where he taught.

Despite the name of the Department of Literature, to which I belonged as a student, what they taught there in those days was chiefly politics and economics. Western History, History of Philosophy, and Japanese and Chinese Classical Literature were the principal subjects which occupied most of the class hours, while English Literature was taught only six hours or so [per week]. The teacher of it was a very gentleman-like professor called Houghton, who mainly read and lectured on Chaucer, Spenser, Milton and Shakespeare. He seemed to be a man of ample learning, but his lectures were purely those of a scholar, delivered in a low, slow, somnolent voice, and nearly half of what he was saying I failed to follow. So, though not uninterested in the subject, an indolent student like myself could not gain much from him. In a test on *Hamlet* he once required us to analyze the character of Gertrude, but I was so ignorant then that I could not see what I was really asked to do, and interpreting the phrase "comment on the character" in the question in my own way I wrote a criticism of Gertrude mainly from the moral point of view, and got a very bad mark. It was a lesson to me, however, and I began to hunt in the library of the university for European literary studies and criticisms, which I read with some ardour. This time, too, I owed initial guide to them to Sanae Takada. The library of Tokyo University at that time was yet extremely poor in collection, and the only

¹¹ Shoyo is his pen name. His real first name is Yuzo.

¹² Quoted in Tokutaro Shigehisa's *Nihon Kinsei Eigaku-shi* (*A History of Earlier English Studies in Japan*), 1941, pp. 165-66.

editions of Shakespeare I could find there were Rolfe's and some volumes of the Clarendon Edition which had just begun to come out.

The "bad mark" Houghton gave Tsubouchi for his analysis of the character of Gertrude proved a very beneficial stimulant; for, it drove him to a more ardent and serious study of Shakespeare, or rather literature in general, and indirectly caused him to produce in 1885 his *Shosetsu Shinzui* (*The Quintessence of the Fiction*), a monumental work that marked the birth of modern literary criticism in Japan.

While he was a student at Tokyo University, in 1882-3, Tsubouchi also applied his energies to translating Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.¹³ He had made a Japanese version of Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor* earlier than this, and published it in 1880, giving it the Japanese title of *Shumpu Jowa* (*Love in Springtime Breezes*), and inscribing as the name of the translator a borrowed name of Kenzo Tachibana instead of his own; but *Julius Caesar* was the very first of Shakespeare's plays that this future complete translator of the dramatist ever took up to make it available in Japanese. The translation was published in 1884, given by the translator a Kabuki-like title: *Caesar Kidan, Jiyu no Tachi Nagori no Kireaji* (*The Strange Story of Caesar, or The Everlasting Sharpness of the Swords of Liberty*).

The publishers of this memorable work were Toyokan Publishing House, which had recently been founded, for the purpose of "sending to the world better books," by Azusa Ono, who was also one of the founders of a school which was soon to become Waseda University. The *Caesar Kidan* came out in a very fine volume of 304 pages, far better printed and far more prettily bound than any ordinary book published in this country about that time.¹⁴ The book opens with a motto in verse chosen by Azusa Ono and printed in the facsimile of his handwriting, and then follows a preface in Classical Chinese by Hyakusen Yoda. At the end of the book is found a commendatory verse, again in Classical Chinese, by Kinoshige Yamada. According to Tsubouchi, all this appendage to his text was made without his least previous knowledge.¹⁵

In the *Caesar Kidan* Tsubouchi cast the Shakespearean play into a very special mould of literary composition, which is traditional in Japan and known as the *yoruri*. It is a semi-dramatic and semi-recitative kind of writing to be delivered chantingly by one person to the accompaniment of the *shamisen* guitar. It is old, but still very familiar to any lover of the Kabuki play, since many of the older Kabuki plays we see today are *yoruri* plays, plays acted to the recitation of the *yoruri*. Although Tsubouchi, in translating Shakespeare's play, modified its style a great deal so that it might fit into the form of the *yoruri*, in the general structure of the play he was quite faithful to Shakespeare; and in act and scene divisions he constantly kept to what we see usually done in the ordinary text of Shakespeare. The first act, for instance, is divided into three scenes, just as it is in Shakespeare's text, though Tsubouchi gave each scene its descriptive title, calling the first scene "the Scene of welcoming the triumphal return," the second "the Scene of a Roman public park," and the third "the Scene of a Roman street." So is it with all the other scenes. In the phrasing and wording, on the other hand, his translation is far from literal, but very free; the words and phrases

¹³ Cf. Shoyo Tsubouchi, *Shakespeare Kenkyu Shiori* (*A Guide to the Study of Shakespeare for Japanese Students*), 1928, Chap. XVI, 'Of My Own Translations.'

¹⁴ The Hitotsubashi University Library possesses a copy of it.

¹⁵ Cf. T. Kamishiro's Introduction to the *Caesar Kidan*, the "Meiji Bunka Zenshu" ("The Culture in the Meiji Era: Textual Series"), Vol. XIV.

are so chosen and arranged that they conform to the unique style and rhythm of the *yoruri*. In order to show how Tsubouchi conducted his work, I would quote as an example his passage that corresponds to III. i. 58-70 of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, re-translating it into English as literally as possible. (Incidentally, the passage should contain some sentences and phrases which Hatakeyama was obliged to cross out on account of the police intervention when he prepared a text of the play to be produced by Ii's Company at the Meijiza in 1901, seventeen years after.) The passage runs as follows:

(Caesar) Oh, you shut up! Shut up, I say! If Caesar were, like you, a man of such base character that he would humbly bow and bend his knees in public, and implore another for mercy, flattering him like a dog or a cat, he might grant you your entreaty. But I am as immovable as a huge mighty rock; and like that star in the north, I can never, no, never be moved; never! The azure firmament is infinite, and the stars that shine in it are beyond number; but only one star, the star of stars, is ever constant like a fixed rock: the star of the northern pole. So are men as stars, and though each has alike a human face, there is only one among thousands of millions that truly is a man. And that is Caesar, the northern star in the human world. Why should he be moved by your prayers and flatterings, he who rises above all the passions of petty men, and spurns them as dust and rubbish.

In the murder scene that follows we can see how Tsubouchi made free additions to the original text out of his own invention, additions mainly of the nature of the stage direction, but so incorporated into the body of his composition after the manner of the *yoruri* that the whole writing became a very vivid narrative of the actions on the stage. What reads in Shakespeare's ordinary text as:

Caes.

Doth not Brutus bootlessly kneel?

Casca Speak, hands, for me!

[*Casca first, then the other Conspirators and Marcus Brutus stab Caesar.*

Caes. Et tu, Brute! Then fall, Caesar!

[*Dies.*

was amplified and transformed by Tsubouchi into a narrative quite in the *yoruri* style, at once dramatic and descriptive, and became as follows:

(Caesar) No; no, I say. What, Decius, do you mean to kneel in vain, and bow and bend to no effect? You fool! (Decius) Then, even though we so earnestly, (Cinna) entreat you. (Caesar) Oh, shut up, you all! *At this, they eye one to another. Catching the glance and understanding the signal thus conveyed, Casca from behind Caesar exclaims loud:* (Casca) But, my Lord Caesar—(Caesar) No more, you tedious fellow! *So bellowing, Caesar turns back to Casca, who then, striking down his dagger, makes a thrust at him. Caesar dodges the blow; but the tip of the dagger has touched his shoulder, which begins to trickle with blood as red as scarlet.* You base villain! *roars Caesar, surprised and enraged, and, seizing Casca by the arm, he twists him up until he shrieks with pain, and cries:* Oh, help me, friends! Help! *At this, all the conspirators reveal their daggers which they have unseathed under their garments, and attack Caesar indiscriminately from front and behind, from right and left, showering blows and thrusts all over him with their blades, which flash like lightnings in the darkness and glimmer like silvery pampas grass in the moonlight. Caesar now stoops and narrowly escapes a violent blow*

here, now he dodges a gleaming blade there, and now, furious and desperate as a wounded lion, he kicks away an assailant, and now treads upon another. All the house is now in a clamorous, tumultuous confusion, as if a huge mountain were collapsing amid raging floods. Marcus Brutus, who has hitherto been watching the scene standing apart, now rushes to Caesar, and stabs him deep just under the armpit with his sharp, thrusting blade. Et tu, Brute! utters Caesar groaning, his last words in this world. And, pulling up his cloak over his head so as to hide his face, and covered with a score of scars all over him, Caesar reels, staggers and falls down at the foot of one of the statues there stand, that of Pompey, and there breathes his untimely last.

In the Preface to his work Tsubouchi tells us what he was aware about what he had been doing.

The original text of this play, as if an imperfect book of a play, solely consists of speeches, and is not like what commonly passes as a drama in this country. It is done in a manner utterly different from that of our *yoruri* play. But, in translating it into Japanese, I deliberately tried to turn it into a play in the *yoruri* style for the sake of the people of this country. If a man should compare my work with the original text of Shakespeare, I fear he would find in it, because of that, much he would not approve of. To him I beg his tolerance.

I have endeavoured above all to make the play intelligible to the general public of our country, and for that purpose, I have put some part of the play into the form of the *yoruri* writing, and some part into the ordinary sequence of dramatic speeches, according as it seemed to me to serve the purpose best. All I wanted to do was correctly to represent in my translation the general meaning of Shakespeare's original work. It has not been my immediate intention to have this play performed at once by our actors in Japan. I ask the learned to forbear to laugh at any breach I may have committed of the rules of the *yoruri* writing. Although I have tried to do my best to represent the general meaning of the original work of Shakespeare as correctly as possible, I must confess that, owing to the fundamental differences between European and Japanese ideas, there have been some passages which I was quite unable to find any way of translating. Those passages have sometimes been omitted in my translation, and sometimes transfigured on my own responsibility and according to my own artistic design. Those omissions and transfigurations will be found oftenest in the comic scenes. A man who should compare my work with Shakespeare's text in the corresponding passages would easily see what embarrassment was mine there.

In the days when Tsubouchi made this translation the belief was still stubborn in this country that the form of the *yoruri* play, or a form derived from it, was the only proper form of dramatic writing. Kido Okamoto (1872-1939), a very popular Kabuki playwright of the recent times, once confessed that he had been quite at a loss, when he first wanted to write a play in 1887, because he had so little technical knowledge of that traditional form of dramatic writing.¹⁶

Today an attempt, such as Tsubouchi's in his *Caesar Kidan*, to convert a Shakespearean play into a *yoruri* play would seem fantastic or even absurd. But that should by no means

¹⁶ Cf. Kido Okamoto, *Meiji no Engeki (The Drama in the Meiji Era)*, pp. 78-9.

diminish the significance of this translation of Tsubouchi's. That should not blind us to the fact that he was the very first man that had ever tried to transplant and naturalize the Shakespearean drama in the Japanese soil; the first man that had ever made an attempt to translate the Shakespearean play as it should be, that is, as the drama. When we think of what Tsubouchi intended in his translation we cannot but say that his attempt was an entirely right one. Indeed, Tsubouchi was the first Japanese translator of Shakespeare in the proper sense of the word; for, the so-called translations of Shakespeare that had appeared in Japan before his *Caesar Kidan* were all, in fact, crude adaptations or simple retellings of the stories of Shakespeare's plays.

In December 1877, the *Minkan Zasshi* (*The People's Magazine*), a periodical published in Tokyo by Keio Gijuku School (which was to become a university in a dozen years), began, in its ninety-eighth issue, to carry a story entitled *Kyoniku no Kisho* (*The Strange Case of the Breast Flesh*). It was, of course, a re-told story of *The Merchant of Venice*, completely Japanized: Venice was transmuted into Sakai, a seaport near Osaka; Portia, renamed Seiko (Fragrance), became the daughter of a millionaire in Sumiyoshi, Osaka; and, Shylock changed his name and character to become Yokubari Gampachi (Avarice Stubborn) in this earliest attempt in Japan to introduce Shakespeare to her people. Two years later, in 1879, Kenzo Wadagaki, then a student at Tokyo University just as Tsubouchi was, retold the story of *King Lear* in Classical Chinese, though it was never published. It was a work by "a young, green student," who had been impressed at once by the meaningfulness of Shakespeare which he read under the guidance of Houghton and by the peculiar stylistic charm of a classical history of the ancient China which he read in Keiu Nakamura's class, and who thus entertained a wish to combine them both in a single literary work, while he wanted just as much to have something to kill the time of two months of a summer vacation.¹⁷ In 1883, the year just before the publication of Tsubouchi's *Caesar Kidan*, appeared Tsutomu Inoue's *Jinniku Shichiire Saiban* (*The Case of the Human Flesh in Pledge*), another narrative version of *The Merchant of Venice*, and also a similar work of adaptation from *As You Like It* by a certain Doctor Suiran.

Although it is not to be doubted that those early Japanese introducers of Shakespeare were acquainted with him by his original texts, it is also evident that they were very familiar with Mary and Charles Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*, and used it very often as their guide, or even source, in retelling in Japanese the stories of Shakespeare's plays. Tsubouchi's *Caesar Kidan*, which appeared after those primitive and synoptical "translations," was, even in its peculiar, *yoruri*-ish style, and even with its many free additions of its own and frequent partial transfigurations, the first orthodox endeavour to introduce Shakespeare into Japan in its true character, and was definitely different in nature and intention from the works that had preceded it in the field of Shakespearean translation in this country. So far as a translation of Shakespeare was concerned, at least, Tsubouchi's *Caesar Kidan* well deserved the praises the *Yomiuri Shimibun*, a leading newspaper at that time, extended to it, observing in the editorial that "this is the first real translation that has ever appeared in the East."

It is almost needless, however, to say that this "first real translation" left much room for improvement as well. In 1886, two years after its publication, another book of translation of *Julius Caesar* which sought to be a faithful rendition of Shakespeare's play was published, bearing the title of *Roma Seisui Kagami* (*The Mirror of the Rise and Fall of*

¹⁷ Cf. Tokutaro Shigehisa, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

Rome). It was a work of collaboration of Tenko (or Keisuke) Komiyama and Orin (or Keizo) Kawashima, and had first been published as a serial in a daily newspaper in Osaka, the *Rikkenseito Shimbun* (*The Constitutionalist*), a year earlier than Tsubouchi's work appeared in the world. But it was in September of 1886 that the *Roma Seisui Kagami* was published in book form by Shinshindo Bookstore, in Osaka, to reach the reading public at large. In the Preface to their book the translators said: "The style of the *yoruri* play is, though very familiar to the common people of this country, too vulgar, and not suitable for Shakespeare to be put into. We, therefore, did not mind at all to discard it, while we, in some passages, made use of the style of the text of the Noh play."

Osamu Watanabe, who translated *The Comedy of Errors*, re-entitling it in Japanese *Kyoka Suigetsu* (*The Flower in the Mirror and the Moon in the Water*), and published it in 1888, gave a warning that "a man who wants to know the subtle and profound beauty of Shakespeare's drama solely by Lamb's *Tales* might as well climb up a tree for fish." And then he continued: "There has recently been an attempt made to adapt Shakespeare into a *yoruri* play, but the result was, in fact, nothing but an adulteration of Shakespeare, admixing Shakespeare's original ideas and images with the translator's own, and thus obscuring too often the true quality of Shakespeare's work." That those are words of accusation of Tsubouchi's translation of *Julius Caesar* is obvious. Later, even Tsubouchi himself condemned this particular translation of his own, calling it "a too liberal, slovenly translation done in a poorly imitated style of the *yoruri*," or more frankly, "a very capricious work."¹⁸

The *Caesar Kidan* was published, as noted above, in 1884. Its first edition, however, gives May 1883 as its date of publication. This is evidently a mistake on the publishers' part; for, Azusa Ono dated the motto he contributed to the book March 1884, and we see the motto with its date printed in the facsimile of Ono's hand-writing, testifyingly. It will also be remembered that it was June 6, 1884, that the editors of the *Yomiuri Shimbun* extolled the translation in their page.

In 1884, the Constitution of Japan was to be promulgated in five years for the first time in her history, and the initial session of the Diet to be convened in six years, and the political consciousness of the people of Japan, with this prospect before them, was very much heightened, and they were eager to talk about liberty, democracy and natural rights of man. "Liberty and People's Rights" was the catchword among the "progressive," who were opposed to the government, and whose campaign, now a dozen years old, to take over the national executive power had reached its high-water mark. Scholarship and journalism were also busy in political controversy. In 1882, Chomin Nakae's translation with a commentary of Rousseau's *Le Contrat sociale* was published, while in the same year Hiroyuki Kato voiced a conservative, or "reactionary," view in his *Jinken Shinsetsu* (*A New Dissertation on Human Rights*). The following year saw the publication of Tatsuo Baba's *Tempu-Jinken Ron* (*The Theory of the Natural Rights of Man*), which was a warm refutation of Kato's view, and also the publication of Emori Ueki's equally progressive and enlightening *Tempu-Jinken Ben* (*An Apology for the Natural Rights of Man*). The "political novels," which were in the main adaptations and translations from European sources, were also greatly in vogue.

It was in these circumstances that Tsubouchi thought of translating Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*; and the reasons for his choosing this particular play among all the plays of Shakespeare seem to be easy to surmise. He considered it a political play that corresponded to

¹⁸ Cf. Shoyo Tsubouchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 317 and 323.

the political novels which were then being read by the people with great interest. Especially, he thought that the play was accordant with the ideas of "Liberty and People's Rights," the greatest topics of the day, and sure to win popularity by virtue of its accidental topicality. Ryukei Yano's *Keikoku Bidan* (*A Political History of Thebes*), which had been published in the previous year and welcomed with great enthusiasm by the younger generation of the time, might also have stimulated Tsubouchi to turn to translating what seemed to him a play of the political history of Rome. The phrase in the Japanese title he gave to the play, "The Everlasting Sharpness of the Swords of Liberty," tells us a great deal about his intentions and expectations in his effort, as well as the historical background against which he made that effort.

It is not right, however, to suppose that Tsubouchi in translating *Julius Caesar* was predominantly interested in politics, and particularly positive in making propaganda for any ideology, even that of popular rights and democracy. His principal concern was artistic much more than political. He was by no means averse to his work being considered to be one that served for promulgation of the democratic ideas, nor was he unwilling to regard the political zeal of the nation as a favorable social condition for his work to be better received; but, his real wish was to introduce the Shakespearean drama into the theatre of this country as a new element to enrich it, and give his countrymen a new joy of life. Politics and the contemporary thought of "Liberty and People's Rights" were made use of by him for the sake of his artistic purpose, and not *vice versa*.

The *Caesar Kidan, or the Everlasting Sharpness of the Swords of Liberty* opens with the following passage, which is, as is usual with the *yoruri* writing, so full of rhetorical devices and figures of speech in its peculiar way that it is very difficult to translate it into English adequately. My translation is only tentative here as elsewhere.

If government is free, the nation is in harmony; and if the nation is in harmony, the country is in peace. If a dictator appears, and wields his power arbitrarily, the country will immediately be thrown into disorder. This precious teaching is exemplified in the history of the ancient Rome: while it was a democratic republic, where high and low were alike participants in the affairs of state in a harmonious peace, it was as prosperous and glorious as the rising sun, and dominant over the distant barbarous countries to their extreme corners, like a golden eagle spreading its wings. But once the republican system went out of joint, the governors became arrogant and the people base, and, as is the use of a decaying world, every wicked man gathered the discontented about him to form a faction, and each faction for its own interests quarreled with another, bringing the country into a constant disturbance.

The passage is an introductory or a prologue which was added by Tsubouchi out of his own device and invention to Shakespeare's text, where, of course, is found no counterpart. From the outset, in this opening passage, a view is clearly perceived which sets a high value on freedom and democracy rejecting despotism and authoritarianism, and it was quite natural that most of those who read this work when it was first published should have taken the play of *Julius Caesar* to be a play singing since centuries ago the praises of the rosy cause of "Liberty and People's Rights" of their own time.

It should also be noted that Tsubouchi himself began his translation maintaining that manner of general interpretation of the play. The speeches of Brutus and Cassius just after

their murdering of Caesar were so amplified by Tsubouchi that they would become more appealing to the Japanese public of the day, and run as follows:

(Cassius) Oh, this lofty scene of ours shall not be the last of the kind, but peoples yet unborn of the states yet inexistent shall, just like ourselves, cry "Liberty!" and shout "Freedom!" in accents yet unknown, after accomplishing the same feats of justice as ours. (Brutus) And each time the act is performed a tyrant like this Caesar shall shed his purple blood, as a sacrifice offered by the people to the altar of Liberty. And this Caesar shall each time be remembered as a notorious model of the tyrant, as he, wretched fellow, well deserves. (Cassius) And, contrariwise, the knot of us shall each time be called with respect the men of honour and justice, by the people living long hence and strange to us, and our memory shall awaken like the morning bells the people in slavish sleep to the dawn of liberty. How happy we are to have this prospect of immortal fame!

On the other hand, Antony, as he has succeeded in agitating the Roman citizens against Brutus and Cassius, is made by Tsubouchi to smile a villainous smile, and, when he sees the mob rush off to burn the conspirators' houses, to say:

(Antony) 'Well, they are now just like I intended them to be. From now on, you work whatever mischief you like! Ha, ha, what fun! What a pleasure! *And he chuckled to himself, satisfied.*

Incidentally, this is the scene which Geigaku Seimin wished Yoho Ii, when his company proposed to act this play at the Meijiza in 1901, to play with special care because, he said, it was the scene of the greatest interest in the whole play.

If one interprets the play in such a way that one regards Caesar as a despotic tyrant simply to be condemned, and Brutus, Cassius and others who overthrew him as entirely laudable men who gave their country liberty, one will necessarily be led to regard Antony, Lepidus and Octavius Caesar, the triumvirs, who induced the Roman people to be hostile to Brutus and his associates, and took actions to destroy them, as reactionaries or harmful powers that would suppress liberty. A prefatory passage with which Tsubouchi opens Act IV, and in which he takes the triumvirs to be new tyrants that appeared after the fall of the first Caesar, makes it evident that he maintained that way of interpretation. It reads as follows:

Wretched is the decadent state of Rome, where violence is replaced by violence, and tyranny by tyranny. Octavius Caesar, son-in-law to the fallen Caesar, and Lepidus, general of the cavalry, and Antony, councilor, shared the State of Rome among them, giving themselves an august appellation of the triumvirs,.....

This manner of interpretation of the play is, however, superficial, and does not hold after all. Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* is not so simple a play as to allow us to regard Brutus and his associates exclusively as advocates of liberty who are to be praised. It is true that in the play despotism is rejected and liberty and equality extolled. But it is only one aspect of the play. There is another aspect that is opposed to it. Indeed, the co-existence in the play of the two conflicting aspects makes it really dramatic.

The two aspects of the play, or two co-existing meanings of the play, are seen concentrated in the double meaning that the death of Caesar can and does have in it. The death of Caesar in this play means at once a triumph of liberty over tyranny and a catastrophic fall of the world. The cry of joy, "Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!" and that of lamentation, "O what

a fall was there, my countrymen!" can both be uttered with the same validity and truth.

With Brutus, even personally, the meaning of the death of Caesar was not single. For him it meant primarily, to be sure, destroying a despotic power that was inimical to the cause of liberty which he upheld, but it also meant, what is obvious, murdering a man in the plainest sense of the words. The former was what he wanted, and the latter what he did *not* want. He had to solve this dilemma before he determined to kill Caesar. He sought its solution in completely spiritualizing the proposed act of murder and heightening it to a sacred ritual of offering sacrifice to Liberty. That they should "be sacrificers, but not butchers" (II. i. 166) was his absolute demand when he decided to take part in the murder. Therefore, when Antony looked upon Caesar's dead body as that of a "brave hart" slain by his "hunters," and called his murderers "butchers" (III. i.), he challenged Brutus's only claim to the justice of his act.

Apart from Brutus, and in a more general view of the play, the meaning of Caesar's death is also twofold. After the death of Caesar, and over his wounds, Antony prophesies that "the dogs of war" shall rage all over Italy:

A curse shall light upon the limbs of men ;
 Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
 Shall cumber all the parts of Italy ;
 Blood and destruction shall be so in use
 And dreadful objects so familiar
 That mothers shall but smile when they behold
 Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war ;
 All pity choked with custom of fell deeds. (III. i. 262-69)

This prophecy is in accord with the one which the Bishop of Carlisle makes in *Richard II* when he has seen the king dethroned (IV. i. 137-47), and it foretells the same state of things which Macbeth brought about in Scotland after he murdered King Duncan. The strange phenomena of natural disorder that appeared in Rome just before the fall of Caesar is what is remembered by Haratio in *Hamlet*, a play filled with the sense of "the times out of joint," and they signify the same thing as the disorderly happenings in heaven and earth seen just before and after the murder of Duncan do in *Macbeth*. In short, the murdering of Caesar in Shakespeare's play meant an "unnatural" deed that overthrew the universal order of the world to produce a cosmic tumult, just as much as it meant a lofty deed that destroyed despotism and tyranny for the cause of the fundamental human rights of liberty and equality. There was a conflict there, so to speak, between the medieval thought of Natural Law and the modern one of Natural Rights. To overlook this conflicting co-existence of two meanings which the death of Caesar carries in the play would be to miss the dramatic quality of it. The dagger Brutus stabbed into Caesar was an evil dagger of rebellion to the universal order just as much as it was a "Sword of Liberty." If Shakespeare had conceived Brutus simply as an advocate of liberty to be extolled, and one-sidedly supported his cause, the phrase "the glories of this happy day" in the concluding line of the play Octavius Caesar speaks in the plains of Phillippi, after Brutus and his party have completely been suppressed, would be quite wrong and out of the place. In this connection the concluding scene of *Macbeth* where the joyous cries by all, "Hail, King of Scotland!" signify the return of the universal order may be recalled and compared.

Now, returning to Tsubouchi's translation, let us see how he concludes the play. The

concluding passage begins with Octavius's final speech, but it soon shifts to an epilogue which Tsubouchi added to Shakespeare's text on his own account, just as he did the prologue at the beginning of the play :

Now that all the rebellious knaves have perished, the complete peace of the world is restored: let's away in triumph, *sounded Octavius Caesar. His gracious virtues now spread over all the creature like gentle breezes that stirred not a twig, and there began the Roman Empire as peaceful as the calm sea; and the honour and renown of the Caesar, wise and sagacious, who had laid the foundation for the Empire was made to remain permanent in human history, and a good government brought about by destroying the swords of liberty became an everlasting lesson for all the light and frivolous people of the world.*

A striking contradiction surprises us here. We have hitherto been made to assume that what we see in Tsubouchi's translation is his sympathy with, and consent to, the contemporary thought of Liberty and People's Rights. But how can what he here calls "an everlasting lesson for all the light and frivolous people of the world" be compatible with the "precious teaching" in his opening passage that "if government is free, the people are in harmony, etc."? How can it be in accord with his view in Act IV that the triumvirs are new tyrants?

What accounts for this sudden appearance of the contradiction at the end of Tsubouchi's work, is, above all, that his concern in translating Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, was, as I have asserted above, artistic much more than political. If otherwise, this contradiction which would have compromised his political position could never have been made. He desired most of all to bring Shakespeare into the Japanese theatre to invigorate and enrich it, but he was careless enough, at first, to try to adapt the play to the political thought of Liberty and People's Rights which was then interesting the people of Japan a great deal. Shakespeare's play, however, was to deny him by its inherent nature his unheeded attempt. The play was not simply an eulogy of liberty and democracy. There were contained in it elements that were negative of them, and the co-existence of conflicting values constituted the true dramatic quality of the play. It was, therefore, inevitable that Tsubouchi, who had started his translation in such a manner that it might become a work to extoll the "Liberty and People's Rights" and so carry topical interest, should face the dilemma sooner or later. He managed to stick to his initial intention as far as he could. But the true nature of the play did not fail to exert influence upon him until he was compelled to realize towards the end of his work that he could not be artistically honest unless he abandoned his one-sided view of the play. Hence the abrupt incoherency we see at the end of his work. It might be possible to account for this incoherency by asserting that it was only reflective of the general character which the movement for "Liberty and People's Rights" showed in the actual scene of history. But it would be more appropriate to regard it as expressive of the young Tsubouchi who was ready to sacrifice ideological consistency in order to save his integrity as a literary artist.

Tsubouchi's *Caesar Kidan* was generally taken by his contemporaries as a play in support of the cause of "Liberty and People's Rights," and Tsubouchi never tried to protest against it. But he must have been aware that his work's being taken in that connotation was due to his technical blunder; and he must have been the first man in Japan to know that Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* was a play of the nature of the double-edged sword, cutting the human world on both sides.