

The Kintaikyo Bridge



Ladies and gentlemen,

Very hot outside, but even inside, my heart is now heated.

I've been searching, but I can't find it out yet. I miss it very much. You may wonder what or who it is. It's that happy and warm smile of **Terada San** that I've been looking for in vain today.

Now, let me talk about an energetic activity of our college classmate. I hear we have a matter for congratulation on **Terada San**. To our great joy and surprise, **her female chorus won the gold prize in the local choral competition** and they're going to take part in All Japan, or national representatives' choral competition. She's been the conductor. They are now busy with vocal exercises and singing in chorus. That's why she can't be here now. But it's our great pride. I heartily wish her chorus will rank high, such as gold, or silver or at least copper class. I pray she may do a good job.

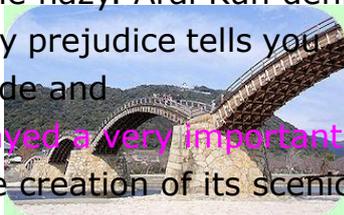
I'd like you to come back to last Aug.18 in **Nagato City**. Please think about how happy it was! We were so much obliged to **Ogata Kun** for his wonderful watch and consideration at the meeting. At that time, the great joy was that **Nishimura Kun** looks very young and that he has very young sensitivity. He reminds me of **Saigo Teruhiko San**, once one of the three male Idols '御三家'. His participation has made the course of our annual reunion turn for brilliancy and the meeting will be all the sweeter for it.

Today, we cannot thank enough **Iwamoto Kun** and **Nishimura Kun** and for their well-planned preparation for the time. Their efforts will surely make deeper mutual friendship among us.

We just now enjoyed a fine view of **the Iwakuni Plain**, from the castle tower of **Iwakunijyo**, though it seemed to me a little hazy. Arai Kun denied it, saying it's one the fair days.



My prejudice tells you the history of **the Kintaikyo Bridge** is the history of the pride and self-confidence of **Iwakuni citizens**. **The bridge has played a very important role in the historical backgrounds of the city, let alone in the creation of its scenic beauty.** In other words, the bridge has long been a backbone of the citizens both in mind and money.



Repaired overall **after fifty years' interval**, the bridge is now called the New Kintaikyo. Regardless of its realization, talks of "a World Heritage" will urge those who cross it to stride for their future courageously, in spite of **US Marine Base** troubles and the issue of relocation from other bases. To be brief, today's crossing of ours is sure to enrich our daily mental lives.

Please let me change the topic.

There's no knowing what may happen next year. So I daren't say anything about next year, but I say I can clearly think back to the day when I visited **the art exhibition** in **Yamaguchi City**, held by **Matsuo Kun** and his painting mates last year.

Every time I visit Yamaguchi, I find a new surprise and wonder, and come across a little thing that is associated with my college student days: **without studying much, without loving each other, with heavy drinking and busy part-time work**: and I feel a longing for good old days of my youth. I expect all of you to see what it's hinting at. At any rate, let's be intoxicated by the blessing of this meeting.

That's the end of my speech. Thanks a lot for your patient attention.