
Sudden Passing of Kan, Literary Magnate!



In Living Memory of Kikuchi Kan

(left) Kikuchi Kan in elementary school
(center) Kikuchi Kan traveling to Nagasaki with Akutagawa Ryunosuke
(right) Kikuchi Kan attained success as an author

Kikuchi Kan passed away of sudden unexpected death in angina pectoris (heart disease) on March 6, 1948 (Showa 23). He was 59 years old and was called a literary magnate or a prominent figure in the Japan's literary world. What did Kikuchi Kan leave behind?

Bungeishunju: Offering a Place to Publish Works

There were not too many places for writers to publish works around the time Kikuchi Kan was born. There was no internet then, so main forms of publishing included books, magazines, and fanzines produced by those who have similar interest. That's why Kan was delighted when his friends invited him to participate in *Shinshicho*. His success as an author lead him to establish his own magazine, *Bungeishunju*, for fledgling writers. Among them were Kawabata Yasunari who later won a Nobel Prize in literature.

Akutagawa Prize and Naoki Prize: Giving Goals and Incentives

Kikuchi Kan established the Akutagawa Ryunosuke Prize and the Naoki Sanjugo Prize to inspire and encourage up-and-coming writers. Prize money was also provided to supplement their living expenses.

Kikuchi Kan was immensely enthusiastic about nurturing young writers, and he devoted his life to improving their status and living conditions. He was eventually known as the literary magnate, since so many of his admirers came to him. Both awards created by Kikuchi Kan are given to the outstanding literary works to this day.

This concludes the Kikuchi Kan Chronicle. You can read previous issues on the website.
