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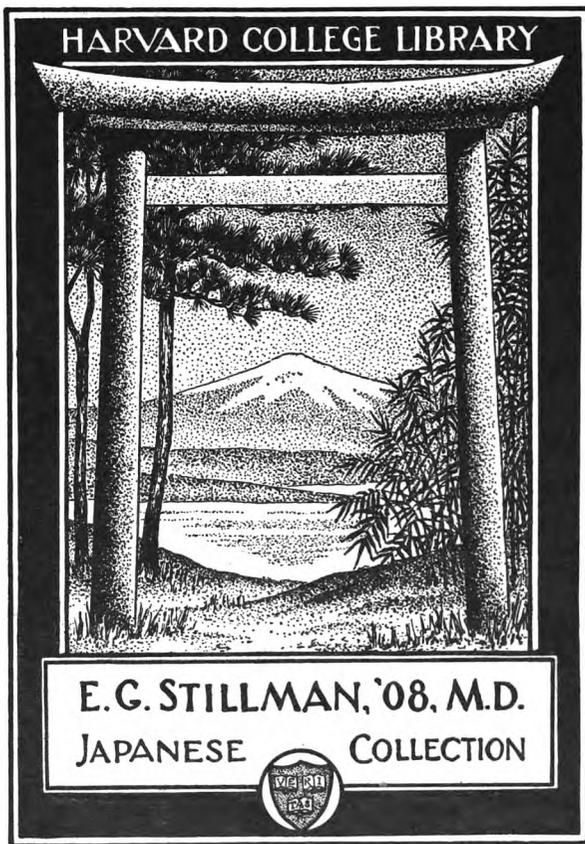


*The Doctrine of Nichiren
with a Sketch of His Life*

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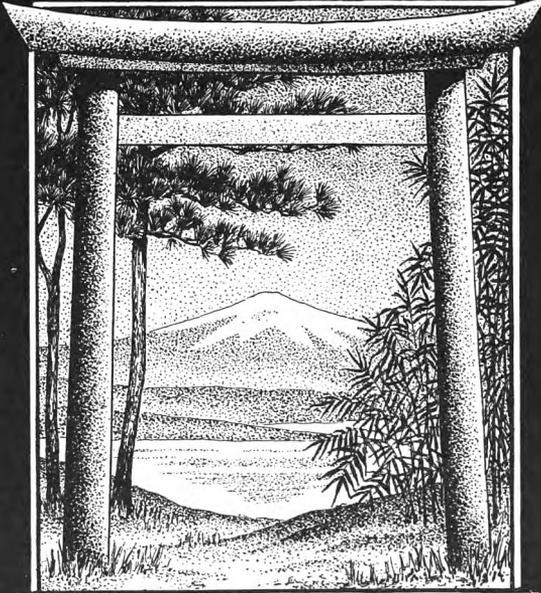
DOCTRINES OF NICHIREN

Compiled by

THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS ABBOT KOBAYASHI.

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WITH A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE

COMPILED BY

THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS ABBOT KOJAYASHI,

President of the Nichiren College, Tokushima.

Tokyo :

KELLY & WALSH, LIMITED,

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INTRODUCTION.



*(By the Right Virtuous Abbot KOBAYASHI, President of the
Nichiren College, Takanawa.)*



A few words only are necessary in order to introduce this essay to the public.

Captain J. M. James, of Shinagawa, is an English gentleman who has lived in Japan for more than twenty years. He is a professional man, and the consistent way in which he has always devoted his skill and genius to the interest of both Government and people has made him universally beloved. No sooner did he arrive among us than he was struck with astonishment at the great predominance of Buddhism in the country, and this led him to enter upon a systematic study of Buddhist doctrines. His researches resulted in the discovery that Religious Truth is contained only in the religion of Buddha, especially as set forth in a sacred book of ours called 'The Lotus,' and that the teachings of this book are best exemplified in the doctrines and practices of the

Nichiren school of thought. Thenceforward he directed his exclusive attention to the Nichiren form of Buddhism, and frequently visited our late lamented prelate, the Most Learned and Virtuous Archbishop Nissatsū Arai, at the temple of Ikegami, in order to receive his instructions. His knowledge thus increasing, his faith in what he learned kept pace with it. This faith, on his part, was doubtless due in a measure to the unfolding of his predestined nature; but must also be attributed to the high intellectual power he exercised in testing and observing truths.

Some time ago Captain James made me acquainted with a friend of his, Mr. Frederic H. Balfour, who had made a special study of the philosophico-religious systems of China. This gentleman, at my request, undertook to write out in its present form the essay now given to the world, which is from the pen of the late Archbishop of Ikegami above referred-to. This was most excellent and meritorious on the part of Mr. Balfour, who has thereby rendered a great service to our Sect. Never before have the doctrines of Japanese Buddhism been published by any European author in such detail. My warm acknowledgments are also due to Mr. K. Tatsumi, Professor of Sociology in the Nobles' School, for his invaluable assistance in Englishing the original text. It is now printed for the advantage of all who are interested in the subject, and will be sent far and wide over the face of the globe. The doctrines it sets forth should not be confined to our own country; they are intended for the enlightenment of all living beings wherever such may be—in all times and ages, all spheres

and realms of life. It is for this reason that the whole world is now given an opportunity of hearing and embracing the Truth.

KOBAYASHI NITTO,
College of the Nichiren Sect, *Abbot.*
Takanawa, Tôkyô.
26th Year of Meiji (1893).



NICHIREN

This is a very good picture of our Faith. It is a picture of the Temple of Nichiren, which stands at the head of all worlds, at the Source. We have the Sonowaga Hotel, one of the most important hotels in the world, in Japan. It is this which is the source of all things.



NICHIREN.

This is a very good portrait of our Founder. It is copied from one preserved in the Temple of Minobu, which contains the sepulchre of Nichiren and stands at the head of all temples of the Sect. When Nichiren was still alive, Sanenaga Hakii, one of his most eminent adherents, employed a painter to sketch his portrait. It is this which is now preserved in the Temple of Minobu.

THE LIFE OF NICHIREN.



(By *WAKITA GYŌZIUN*, Tonsured Priest of the Nichiren
Sect of Buddhism.)



Two thousand one hundred and seventy-one years after the departure of Sâkyamûni from the world—*i.e.*, in the year 1222 of the Christian era—there was born in Japan a great religious hero ; one destined to bring about a great revolution in the Buddhist religion as he found it. This man, known to us to-day by the name of Nichiren, or Sun Lotus, was a native of Kominato, a small village in Nagase, a district of the province of Awa. His family belonged to the Fujiwara clan, and was called Nukina ; his father's name being Shigetada Jiro. It was at the early age of twelve that Nichiren entered the priesthood, assuming the tonsure when he was sixteen. As he grew older, he undertook journeys in various directions, visiting many eminent sages and teachers of Buddhism in quest of the True Doctrine. Many years had elapsed since Buddha had entered Nirvana, and meanwhile so many errors, heresies, and



misconceptions had crept into the popular expositions of the Buddhist creed that it was impossible to place full faith in what was taught. Buddhism was split up into a congeries of rival sects—the Tendai, the Shingon, the Jôdo, and the Zen, among others—and these sects were divisible into two schools or groups. One taught self-reliance on the part of the devotee; the other inculcated reliance on the merits and assistance of the Buddha. The former teaching soon became too subtle, speculative, and esoteric to commend itself to men of ordinary intellect, while the latter degenerated into a sort of vulgar sentimentalism, and was marked by a tendency to pusillanimity on the part of its adherents. In fact, the sects of both schools had strayed from the right way as laid down by Sâkyamûni; and such being the main characteristic of all the authoritative teaching of the time, it is not surprising that the gravest dangers, in a religious sense, threatened both State and people.

This condition of affairs impressed Nichiren so deeply that he determined to discard the opinions of the sectaries altogether, and search for the Truth in his own spiritual consciousness and in the sacred writings. With this in view, he ceased all intercourse with the rest of the world, and shut himself up in a storehouse of sacred books well furnished with the treatises he required. These he studied carefully, reading them through and through. The end of it all was his discovery that the true reason of the descent of the Buddha into the world is to be found, and found only, in 'The Holy Book of the Lotus of the Good Law;' he saw that the pure

doctrines of that 'Holy Book' were alone fit to tranquillize and settle both individuals and the State; and by virtue of these he determined, if possible, to revolutionise the whole religious world. From that time he set out to establish a new sect—what would be, in point of fact, almost a new religion.

Nichiren was by this time thirty-two years old. Study had occupied him hitherto; the moment for action had now arrived. It will have been observed that he seems to have regarded the influence of Buddhism in its relation, not only to individual adherents, but to the State as a corporate whole; and it was this connection of his new principles with the idea of nationality that formed one of his most prominent characteristics. Thus we find the works he wrote bearing such titles as 'To Guard the People and the State,' 'To Establish the Good Law and Tranquillize the State,' and so on. The former is, of all his books, the most replete with the idea of nationality, and it is known in Japan as the *Risshō-an-koku Ron*. It was his prevision of the invasion of the country by the Mongols under Kublai Khan that induced Nichiren to write this book and present it to the *de facto* Government of his day. The sovereignty was then in the hands of a family named Hōjō, the power of the Imperial House being merely nominal.

In this work Nichiren lays down the axiom that the prosperity or decline of a State depends entirely upon the truth or perversion of its religion, and says boldly that both the rulers and the ruled were at that time wandering in error. He insists upon the substitution of truth for falsehood as a *sine qua non* for the peace and pro-

sperity of the country, and launches defiance at the authority of the Government. It seems as though he had written the book with blood hot from his very heart, and used his own bones for pencils. The composition consists of more than ten thousand characters; his arguments cut sharp and deep, and his diction is full of sense and fire.

It must be remembered that Nichiren appeared subsequent to all the other great religious founders, and that his mission was to discredit and suppress the existing sects. Of course this made him enemies; and so hot was their rage against him that, after suffering no small persecution, he was eventually exiled from the country. But he was not the man to be discouraged or put in fear. He set so high a value upon the welfare and prosperity of the State that he was ready to sacrifice life itself in defence of the Good Law, and accepted punishment and execution as though they were sweet food and pleasant drink.

The situation of Japan at that period was very similar to that of the Frankish Kingdom during the last days of the Merovingian dynasty. The later Merovingian kings were effete and powerless, the affairs of State devolving entirely on the Mayors of the Palace, the most famous of whom was Charles Martel. During his Mayoralty the kingdom was invaded by the Saracens. Charles defeated them, and drove them back to their own country. And Pepin, Charles's son, was so powerful as to dethrone his master, and usurp the sovereignty himself. Much the same thing happened in Japan at the time of which we are writing. The country was then

de facto under the sway of the Hôjô family. The chief of this family, to whom Nichiren offered his work 'To Establish the Good Law and Tranquillize the State,' was a man named Tokiyori, whose ancestors had deposed and banished many emperors; and his son, Tokimune, defeated the Mongolian army, one hundred thousand strong, who had dared to invade Japan. In fact the power and authority of the Hôjô family may well be compared with those of Charles and Pepin. It was the good fortune of the Imperial House that the chiefs of this warlike clan stopped short of the audacity of Pepin. Bold and heroic, indeed, must he have been who dared to defy their despotism!

Besides, the Hôjô family were adherents of the Zen persuasion, tendency of which is to deny, or ignore, any difference between the Buddha and his disciples, or between the sovereign and his subjects. They were, therefore, the first and greatest foes of Nichiren upon religious grounds. It was in vain he urged them to suppress all the sects, not excepting the Zen. Unquestionably he here embarked on a dangerous and difficult enterprise; his efforts, however, were not altogether fruitless.

At the age of sixty-one Nichiren entered Nirvâna—just six hundred and twelve years ago. His most distinguished disciples at this time numbered a little over forty, and all of them bore their share in his arduous and risky work. He left some thirty or forty volumes behind him, all which are still extant. At present the Nichiren sect has five thousand *tera* or temples, seven thousand priests, and more than two millions of adherents. The largest and

most important temples are those with which Nichiren himself had some personal connection. There are some biographical critics who speak of this great reformer as the Luther of the East. The comparison, however, is open to arraignment, as being based upon a superficial acquaintance with Nichiren's character and mission. To appreciate the eminence of his virtue, the extent and profundity of his learning, the heroism and grandeur of the man himself, it is necessary to read his works. "If," says Nichiren, "my benevolence is really great and far-reaching, the 'Holy Book of the Lotus of the Good Law' will continue predominant a million years." And again: "Indian Buddhism came from the West to the East. Japanese Buddhism will go from the East to the West." There are signs even now that his words are being fulfilled.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE NICHIREN SECT.

—◆◆◆—
(By the Most Learned and Virtuous the late ARCHBISHOP
OF IKEGAMI.)
—◆◆—

I.—THE BUDDHA-NATURE OF MAN.

If a vessel be tipped on one side, its contents will overflow ; if the tranquillity of a State be disturbed, its inhabitants will be in danger. Now the original doctrine of the ' Holy Book of the Lotus of the Good Law '* is two-fold. In the first place it teaches that the visible, inhabited world, which is changeable and destructible, is but the external appearance of an underlying eternal Reality ; in the second place, it teaches the original enlightenment of all living beings. Its object is to ensure the tranquillity of the present life and relieve the future life of suffering, and therefore, whenever Nichiren preached, he claimed it as the merit of our Sect to establish the Good Law and preserve the peace of the State. Now the State prospers by virtue of the Law, and the Law receives its justification from Man. It is clear, then, that the prosperity or decadence of the State depends upon the truth or falsehood of its religion ; and this being the case, it is our duty to promulgate the Good Law with faithfulness and zeal and so bring about the well-being of our country.

* The *Saddharma pūdarika Sutra*.

And now, what is this so-called Good Law? Well, it is simply that collection of doctrines which is found in the 'original' part of the book above referred to. The Holy Book,† it must be understood, consists of two parts, the 'original' and the 'subordinate' respectively. The former treats of the original Buddha and the original reality of all living beings, while the latter deals with the subordinate Buddha and the derived or temporary condition of all living beings. Thus the Buddha is conceived of under a twofold aspect; one, as originally or self enlightened, the other as having attained enlightenment only after study and meditation. Again, the real state of living beings connotes the reality of things as perceived by the Buddha intellect—that is, their natural and true condition. Now the real state of visible things is one of emptiness and relativity. All phenomena, mental and material, in all times and spaces, are to be conceived of as existing subjectively in the consciousness of every individual, as his own physical and mental states, and thus only; so that the differences and varieties which distinguish things from one another must be regarded as purely imaginary and misleading, without any foundation in fact. Grasp this, and you have the Truth, and everything will then appear to you as it is in reality; you will see it as it is in itself.

This Truth is to be found everywhere and always—in the past, the present, and the future; it exists in every part of space, above and below, to the right and to the left, in front and behind. Look

† The phrase 'Holy Book' is hereafter substituted for the full title already given.

up—there are the sun, the moon, and millions of stars ; look down—there are mountains, rivers, plants, trees, and minerals ; between these there are human beings, animals, birds, reptiles and insects. Well, all these things are nothing but subjective phases in consciousness of each man's individual Self. They are all contained in a single act of thought ; in fact, there is no distinction between the individual Self and the whole external world. When once this Truth is apprehended, we are said to have attained to the Great Self, that is, the summit of all enlightenment. This attainment is referred to in the words of Buddha as found in the Holy Book: "I have been the Buddha of Original Enlightenment from all eternity."

This discovery was made by Sakyamûni when he was thirty years of age. It was after his perception of this truth that Sakyamûni was called the Subordinate Buddha ; while, as the Buddha of Original Enlightenment, *i.e.*, as the personification of Truth, he is called the Original Buddha. Then, desiring to teach the people that any one of them could likewise become Buddha, he advanced the doctrines contained in a sacred work called the *Kegon Kyo*.* But they were very slow to understand ; their intelligence, in fact, was insufficient to grasp so great a truth ; so he was obliged to confine his instructions for more than forty years to the Disciplines, the practice of which was necessary as a preparation for the reception of the higher doctrines. It was only when he was seventy years

* The *Buddhavatamsaka-mahavaiṣṭya Sutra*.

old that he was able to revert to his former project. Then he taught what will be found in the first chapter of the Holy Book: "It is only Buddhas, *i.e.*, enlightened ones, who can, with the Buddha, investigate the reality of things." This refers to the doctrine that all things in all times and all departments of space are, in essence, originally identical with the Buddha, and contain in themselves the three bodies of the Buddha, *viz.*, the Spiritual or Noumenal Body, the Compensation Body, and the Body of Transformation or Impermanence. The first, the Noumenal or Spiritual Body, is the Truth itself; the second, the Compensation Body, is the Intellect which can discover the Truth; the third, the Body of Transformation or Impermanence, is that which is the object of worship to the vulgar. All things and phenomena, being identical in essence with the Buddha, or Reality, are eternal and unchangeable *au fond*, and, in their true nature, one and the same as each other. The vulgar see variety where Buddhas perceive identity. This inability to see anything beneath the external variety in things arises from confusion in the minds of those who look at them. Things in themselves are *not* mutually different. It is the identity perceived by Buddhas that is the real state of things—the very Truth itself. Sakyamûni, fearing that such reasoning was above the comprehension of the people generally, embodied the Truth in the concrete form of his own person, in order that they might there see it for themselves, and thus addressed them: 'Now, the three worlds—the mortal,* the material, and the

* Technically, "the world of appetites."

spiritual—are all my own possession ; and all the living beings they contain are my own children.”

According to Sakyamûni's idea, all mountains, rivers, and lands, as well as all kinds of flora and fauna, are identical with his own person. Therefore the three worlds above specified are said to be his own possession, and all their inhabitants his own children. This last phrase means that living creatures of whatever kind are merely the images and metamorphoses of his own body. But this was not known to Sakyamûni until he was thirty years old. It is for this reason that in the above sentence he says, “*Now*, the three worlds,” and so on. The word “*now*” implies that Sakyamûni had been ignorant of his original enlightenment, or Buddhahood, until that moment, and that he recognised it for the first time then. Therefore the Holy Book says, “The Buddha *begins* to perceive and to know the intrinsicity of the three worlds, the mortal, the material, and the spiritual.” As regards perception and knowledge, it is certain that the intrinsicity of things, the Truth, was not clear to Sakyamûni until then. But as regards the real nature of Sakyamûni himself, it is not to be denied that he had been perfectly enlightened from all eternity ; for he distinctly says that from all eternity he had been the Buddha of Original Enlightenment.

To imagine, therefore, that the man Sakyamûni, of whom we are told that he stood sixteen feet high and possessed the “thirty-two glorious features” [or marks of a Grand Being], was the True Buddha, is entirely false and illusive. *So thought of*, Sakyamûni,

so far from being the True Buddha, is no more than a phantasy, an image, a delusion. What, then, is the True Buddha? The True Buddha is that Sakyamûni who has been from immemorial times sufficiently enlightened to know the underlying sameness of all things, and the identity of his own person with the external world; he is that Buddha who identifies a pure act of thought with all existences in time and space; he is *that state of mind* in which the Truth and the Intellect, the perceived and the perceiver, cease to be two, and are recognised as radically and in essence One. And if this is the case with Sakyamûni, it cannot be otherwise with the people generally. Just as all things in time and space are no more than subjective *ειδωλα* in the consciousness of Sakyamûni, so are they in the consciousness of each individual man. Just as Sakyamûni regards all living beings as his own children, so may each individual man do likewise. The Buddha and the people are, in fact, one and the same; there is neither difference nor distinction between them. In the *Kegon Kyô* it is said that the Mind, the Buddha, and the people are not different from each other, although they have different names and different appearances.

Since, then, all things are one in essence, even Buddha and the common people, the inhabited world is identical with the Paradise where all the Buddhas live. Therefore the Buddha says, "I am ever in this lower world of evils"; and again, "I am ever on the Vulture Peak."* These words signify that the world, which is

* Technically called the Saha world, or world of endurance.

apparently so full of evils, is in reality not different from the Paradise of all the Buddhas, which is illuminated with Glorious Light.* This world, so full of evils as to appear like a fiery furnace in the eyes of the vulgar, is perceived by the Buddha to be a peaceful and happy realm inhabited by beings of high spiritual order. What is the truth of it? Is the world pure and full of pleasures, or foul and full of pains? The solution will be this or that according to the confusion or the enlightenment of each individual mind. The world seen by the Buddha and the world seen by the multitude are not two, but one. When enlightenment is attained to, all worlds are found to be equally glorious and splendid. The first and greatest mission of Sakyamûni in this world is to help the multitude to unfold and develop their Buddha-intellect, and cleanse and purify their nature. When they are once able to unfold this Buddha-intellect of theirs, they will perceive the real nature of this world of evils, that is, the glory of that eternal reality which underlies the world of outward sense. Hence, to proclaim the identity of the evil or phenomenal world with the glorious underlying reality, or noumenon; to point out the way to Buddhahood; to open the path of salvation; above all, to convince the people that one and all of them may become Buddhas, here and now—this is the mission of the sect of Nichiren.

It is in reference to this that our founder, in his work entitled *Honzon Syo*, or 'The Object of Worship,' says: "The world of evils

* Technically called the Calm Light.

is now free from the three calamities of conflagration, wind, and deluge, and has got rid of the four epochs of creation, existence, destruction, and emptiness. Thus we find it transformed into Paradise. The Buddha did not die in past times, nor will he be born in the future. He is one and the same with those whom he enlightens. His mind contains all phenomena in time and space." Therefore when Nichiren began to promulgate his doctrines he composed an essay called the *Risshô Ankoku Ron*, or 'Treatise on the Establishment of the Good Law and Pacification of the State', which he offered to the Government of that day in hopes that the rulers would accept its precepts and put them into practice. The peace and prosperity of the individual necessarily depend on those of the family, and those of the family on those of the State : for when the State is unprosperous and disturbed the same condition will extend to both families and individuals. Now, as we have said, the multitude, being still unenlightened, are unable to perceive the great truth that this present world is the world of Buddhas and of Glorious Light, and are unconscious of the Paradise into which they have already actually entered. Their minds being thus confused, they give rein to the four passions of avarice, anger, folly, and pride, and find themselves in the painful regions of birth, old age, disease, and death ; so that they are obliged to pass through a series of transmigrations in the world of evils, which is ever a prey to Great Fire in times past, and present, and future. But all these pains and miseries are, in fact, voluntarily incurred by the people themselves ; they are not proper and natural to the real

state of the world, which is, in itself, free from them altogether. Sâkyamûni, explaining the real state of this world, says, "This my region is Peace and Rest." And indeed the world, rightly understood, *is* the region of peace, joy, and purity, and is free from sadness, trouble, and pain. It is the duty of its inhabitants to welcome those who are born and come, and to mourn for those who die and depart. Thus their life-work is finished, and they will be exempt from disappointment. The Buddha says: "Peaceful and happy in this life, we shall pass into the Good Regions hereafter." The inhabitants of the world are destined eventually to receive this blessing, in accordance with the Buddha's words. But meanwhile they have contracted the fatal habits of illusion and confusion, which pursue them until they find themselves enmeshed in the inextricable tangles of absurd imaginations and false ideas. And they groan in the nets from which, alas! they cannot easily escape. If, on the other hand, a man unfolds his Buddha-intellect, the world displays itself before him in its true aspect; those, therefore, who wish to follow this wise course and experience true spiritual joy, should at once believe in the Good Law, discard the false and temporary theories taught by other sects, and embrace the true and eternal doctrines contained in the Holy Book. Then both heaven and earth will be peaceful and prosperous for ever; the order of things will be preserved in harmony; climate and temperature will accommodate themselves to the health of man and the fertility of the soil; the world will appear as the Paradise of Buddhas and of Glorious Light; nation will be at peace with nation

as though they were brethren; and there will not be a single unhappy or dissatisfied person in the universe. Such is the result believing in the Good Law. Don't doubt its merits; experience them to begin with, and enquire about them afterwards if you wish. Come one and all, and let us believe in the Good Law!

The promulgation of Buddhist doctrines has been divided from the earliest times into three periods, the last of which is called the Period of the Latter-day Law. Nichiren regarded his own time as falling under this designation, and considered it as the proper occasion for promulgating the doctrines of the Holy Book. He therefore began his work in the year 1252 of the Christian era. At this epoch, the true original doctrines of the faith had become corrupted by the intermixture of much that was false and temporary, so that popular belief in the Buddha had lost its purity, and divisions had crept in. Deeply grieved at the error and confusion which reigned, Nichiren set himself very laboriously to work in promulgating the Good Law. He found, however, not only that its acceptance would be a matter of some time, but that his efforts to enforce it raised up many enemies and opponents, whose hostility gave him no small amount of trouble. The difficult position in which he now found himself coincided almost exactly with that predicted by Sakyamûni two thousand years before. "The Law," he said in the 'Holy Book,' "has many opponents and enemies, even now while I am in the world. It will necessarily have many more after my departure." Now, being determined to stake his

very life in promulgating the Good Law, Nichiren thus addressed the Buddha :—

“To despise and reject the Holy Book of our Sect, be it good or bad, is an action proper only to the denizens of hell. Suppose an emperor were to offer me the sovereignty of the empire on condition that I cast away the Holy Book and took up, instead, the religious works used by other sects : and were to threaten me with the decapitation of my father and mother unless I contented myself with repeating the name of Buddha, as the ‘Pure Land’ sectarians do, in order to be born in the Pure Land after death ; neither the bribe on one hand, nor the menace on the other, would have the slightest effect upon me. Nothing could ever move me except being outreasoned by a wiser man than myself ; and I do not believe that such a man will ever be discovered. Benefits and troubles are alike unable to make any impression on my mind. I want to be, as it were, the *pillars* for Japan ; to be the *eyes* for Japan ; to be the *ship* for Japan. Of this object I will never lose sight ; the oath I have sworn I will never break.”

Thus, attesting his professions with an oath, Nichiren founded his new sect ; sometimes called by his own name, and sometimes *Hokke*, after the title of the Holy Book.

II.—THE THREE SECRET ORDINANCES.

These, which are peculiar to the Nichiren Sect, are as follow :—

1. *Hon-son*, or the Chief Object of Worship.
2. *Daimoku*, or the Title of the Holy Book.

3. *Kaidan*, or the Place for Learning Moral Precepts.

The Chief Object of Worship is a hanging chart, or scroll, called the Great Mandala. The Mandala is a symbolical representation of Sakyamûni and the Truth; it embodies them in visible form, and constitutes a focus and an epitome of the whole doctrine. In the middle of it are inscribed the characters 南無妙法蓮華經. This group of seven characters is called the Body-in-General of the Buddha, while on either side are arranged certain delineations of a pictorial nature, known as his Bodies-Separate, and representing the Ten Worlds of Living Beings. These are as follow:—

1. The World of Buddhas
2. „ „ „ Wise Ones (or Bodhisattwas)
3. „ „ „ Those converted by Buddha's Voice.
4. „ „ „ Those who perceive [the Twelve] Causes
5. „ „ „ Devas
6. „ „ „ Human Beings
7. „ „ „ Evil Spirits, or Asuras
8. „ „ „ Beasts
9. „ „ „ Hungry Devils, or Pretas
10. „ „ „ Infernal Beings

These worlds, considered with reference to their degrees of enlightenment, are thus described:—

1. The State of Mind where Virtue and Wisdom have been fully attained.
2. The State of Mind where one can save both himself and others from evil of all kinds.

3. The State of Mind where one saves himself only, and without effort.
4. The State of Mind where one saves himself only, but at the cost of great effort.
5. The State of Mind where one merely enjoys pleasure.
6. The State of Mind where one acts well for the sake of acting well.
7. The State of Mind where one acts well for the sake of one's own fame and interest.
8. The State of Mind where one is a fool, and is not ashamed of it.
9. The State of Mind where one is covetous and sordid.
10. The State of Mind where one is lawless and hard-hearted.

The Mandala also typifies the great truth that all things in time and space are in essence one and the same, and that in their reality, or actual nature, they are pure and eternal. In short, the Mandala represents the Buddha of Original Enlightenment, not the man Buddha of gigantic stature and the "glorious features." The Buddha of Original Enlightenment is universal and omnipresent. Earth, air, fire, water, colour, sound, smell, taste, touch, and all visible objects, form the Buddha's Spiritual Body. Form, perception, conception, name and knowledge, as well as the functions of body, mouth, and will, are the Buddha's Compensation Body. Head, trunk, hands and feet, eyes, nose, tongue and so forth, constitute his Transformation Body. Things and events are all interconvertible; they do not differ from each other in the smallest

degre. When once the reason of this is understood, the three bodies of the Buddha of Original Enlightenment are displayed. Even the anger of infernal beings, the stupidity of beasts, the avarice of hungry devils, and all the base qualities inherent in other living beings, go to form the body of the Buddha of Original Enlightenment in its entirety. And it is the Great Mandala which represents and shows forth this mysterious inter-relation of entities. Just as the waters of a thousand rivers, entering the ocean, all mingle with each other and acquire one and the same flavour in spite of their individual differences, so all entities, when once brought together in the great ocean of Buddha's Truth, and perceived by the eye of Buddha's intellect, are instantly fused into one, and show themselves identical with that very intellect itself—the great intellect of the Buddha of Original Enlightenment.

In this way Sakyamûni showed that the Mandala, or Chief Object of Worship, was his own body. But his idea, in all its truth and fulness, does not stop here. He went further, and taught that the body of any ordinary person, nay of any living creature, may be the object of worship, since it is identical with the body of Buddha himself, "What is the real substance of the Holy Book?" asks Nichiren. "It is nothing else than a human being, who, born of human parents, believes in this Holy Book." The Mandala, in fact, is a great mirror of enlightenment, in which all things and all phenomena are simultaneously reflected. If a man sits in front of this mirror, and views his own body reflected therein, he will find his body at once transformed into that of the Buddha of Original

Enlightenment, and discover in his body the source from which all things and all phenomena in the external world have taken their rise. Thus the title of the Holy Book, which occupies the middle portion of the Mandala, is what represents his body proper, while the various figures that appear on either side represent its thousand transformations. These figures stand for the Ten Worlds of living beings. Therefore the body of any individual, when reflected in the Mandala-mirror, is the sum total of these worlds—nay, the sum total of all things and all phenomena in time and space; and the Ten Worlds are in reality one and the same body. And since good and bad ideas both arise from this one body, they pervade all its transformations—that is, the Ten Worlds of being. Hence, if one single thought be pure, and so identified with the mind of Buddha, these Ten Worlds become the Buddha's mind. On the other hand, if one single thought is debased into the mind of an infernal being, the same fate happens to the Ten Worlds. In spite of its insignificance, a single thought has a wide and rapid influence. This influence may be compared to that possessed by water and fire. If water be received into the mouth, the whole body is immediately conscious of a sense of coolness. If the hands are held over the stove, warmth is felt to the very tips of the toes. So a single thought produces enlightenment if good, and darkness if bad. The reason of this is that, the essence being one and the same, the influence is universal. It is clear, therefore, how careful we ought to be in allowing the rise in our minds of even a single thought.

Now selfish motives and disinterested motives form the point of

differentiation between the good and the bad. Therefore it was that Sakyamûni chiefly insisted on the doctrines that we ought to forget the difference between Self and Non-Self, that we ought to pursue the conduct of Fugen or the Personification of Reason, and that we ought to live in peace with all our neighbours. If a believer in the teachings of our sect, sitting in front of the Mandala, recognises the identity of his own body with the real state of the Ten Worlds : if he annihilates in his consciousness all distinction between his own self and all others : if he frees himself from the passions of love and hatred ; it is then certain that he will be able to exercise complete control over pleasure, cheerfulness, anger, sorrow and so forth whenever they arise, and to act justly and impartially to all with whom he may come in contact. His person will have already partly entered the region of Buddhas, even in this present life. How, then, can he doubt that he will attain to complete Buddhahood in the hereafter ? Therefore Nichiren says, —

“The doctrines of our sect stand far above those of the other eight sects. They teach us that we can become Buddhas immediately. If one only sees that the mind, the Buddha, and all living beings are one and all embodied in his own thought, and are not to be found elsewhere, he can certainly attain to enlightenment in his earthly life however low his intellect may be. And if the man of low intellect can do so, how much more a man of higher intellectual status ? He, surely, need stand in no doubt about the matter. *A fortiori*, then, must this be the case with those whose intellects are of the highest order of all. Since the doctrines taught

by Sakyamûni all his life long are those which take the nature of a living being as the basis on which they stand, any one who understands his own nature is called a Buddha, while those unable to do so are justly termed 'the vulgar.' "

Sakyamûni advanced at one step from the state of a human being to the Buddhahood, and thereby brought a thousand everlasting blessings into the world. Nichiren advanced at one step from the state of a human being to that of a Bodhisattva, or wise being, which is only one degree below the Buddhahood. The attainment of Bodhisattvaship by Nichiren constituted a great mission, the influence of which has continued unimpaired for seven hundred years. It is not difficult for any one to become a Bodhisattva, or even a Buddha. Women, too, may succeed, in spite of the exceptional difficulty which popular Buddhist teaching attributes to the female sex in such a quest. Why, even a female dragon is said to have attained to Buddhahood ; and if that is true, why not a female human being? Deva-datta became a Buddha in spite of his infernal character. Why, then, not another man ? The fact that Nichiren became enlightened proves that even the multitude, in these Last Days of the Great Law, can get free from all evils and reach the self-same goal. Indeed, to attempt to be a Nichiren and a Sâkyamûni should be the first motive of all who believe in our doctrines, and carry their self-reliance to the furthest possible point. Man is said by Chinese moralists to be the chief of all living beings in this world. But when a man is engrossed in pursuing his own interests, and cannot live in peace with his neighbours, how can he deserve so high a title ? Let

us take an illustration. There is one, say, who is entirely ignorant of the Truth. He does not know that in his real nature he is identical with the Buddha of Original Enlightenment, but regards himself as a debased and common person incapable of instruction. In short, he is such a one as Buddha would call a mendicant. But he was not always thus. He began life as the son of a rich man to whom he was very dear. Yet he left his good father, and wandered to and fro upon the earth till forty years had elapsed; during which period his father went to live in a foreign land, so that the prodigal could not rejoin him even when he wanted to, but sank into the direst poverty. But was this poverty, this beggary, his true and original condition? Was it the state proper to a rich man's heir? No! The beggar is but the image of the real man. He is like the Chinese philosopher Chuang-tzū when he dreamt he was a butterfly. The butterfly had only a temporary and subjective existence in the consciousness of the dreamer; it was not Chuang-tzū himself, but vanished when he awoke. Our wanderer, however, is still asleep; alas! he is still dreaming that he is a beggar. Under this delusion he is taken captive by the five appetites of colour, sound, smell, taste, and touch, and humbled by the seven passions of cheerfulness, anger, sorrow, pleasure, love, hate, and avarice; he becomes unjust and partial, and aims only at self-interest; he sinks into the gulfs of sadness, melancholy, pains, and troubles; he assumes that his soul is doomed to pass through a series of painful transformations in the six forms of living beings—such as hungry devils, brutes, and so forth. To enable such a one to awake from

his dream, and recover from the confusion that besets him, our Sect appoints the Great Mandala as the Chief Object of Worship, which manifests the identity existing between the Buddha and the multitude, and helps people to form a determination to become enlightened. If the beggar we have been speaking of looks steadfastly at this Mandala and sees his own person reflected there, so as to free himself from the base idea of self-renunciation, he will soon become a Buddha of Original Enlightenment in spite of his outward ordinary appearance, just as, on Chuang-tzū awaking from his dream, the butterfly disappeared and the dreamer became himself again. Thus restored, the beggar will be once more the rich man's son. Saripûtra, one of Sâkyamûni's disciples, is said to have become Kekô Buddha without undergoing any change in his appearance. Therefore Sakyamûni says, "The Mandala is the mysterious ground on which any man can acquire enlightenment and become a Buddha."

So far as regards the Chief Object of Worship. The *Daimoku*, or Title of the Holy Book, is now to be explained. We have said above that there is no distinction between the body of any given man and that of the Buddha himself. When the reason of this is understood, everyone ought to exercise the Buddha-heart as soon as any thought arises in his mind. The Buddha-heart means a heart that is set upon practising the Great Way. Each man ought to pursue the interest proper to his true nature—the acquisition of enlightenment—and to reap the fruits which accrue from the pleasures arising out of friendship for his fellow-men. But the generality of people, not being sufficiently firm in their determination, fail

to preserve and enjoy those fruits ; their will is weak, and their power of meditation inadequate. This is a human frailty for which provision is made. Instead of insisting upon the mental process, which is too severe for them, our Sect allows them to adopt a mechanical oral practice ; in other words, it substitutes the repetition of the *Daimoku*, or Title of the Holy Book, for the intellectual discipline. The formula to be repeated is *Na-mu Myō Hō Ren-ge Kyō* (南無妙法蓮華經), and these words form the *Daimoku*, the merits of which were known to Sakyamūni ages and ages ago. Indeed, the *Daimoku* contains the very essence of the Holy Book. If any one sincerely meditates upon the Truth in his mind, and repeats the *Daimoku* in his heart, he will surely receive great blessings. Even as regards the common occurrences of our daily life, be they good or bad, pleasurable or painful, if they are only recognized as the mysterious manifestations of the Truth of the Good Law, and as representations of the transcendent power of the Holy Book, we shall be able to free ourselves from the slavery of earthly rapture as well as rest perfectly content even in the midst of trouble ; pains and pleasures will be indifferent to us, we shall be confused by neither ; we shall attain to complete self-mastery, controlling our hearts and minds and not being controlled by them ; able to suppress the five appetites and the seven passions, and thus become possessed of a Buddha-body, replete with the four attributes of eternity or permanence, peace, enlightenment, and purity. Under these conditions we are enabled to rid our minds of all base and mean propensities ; for example, instead of giving rein to anger

OF THE NICHIREN SECT.

and fury, we shall quiet ourselves, and think calmly about the matter, and by this means be able to attain our object. Among the figures inscribed upon the Mandala there is that of Deva-datta, of whom we have already spoken as the bitterest enemy of Sa-kyamûni. Now Deva-datta is included in the Mandala as the representative of infernal beings. He fell into the infernal regions through having given rein to anger and fury. But even he was enabled to discard illusions and confusions, and attain to the reality which lay behind his anger and his fury—that is, the Truth. He now became Tenno Buddha without losing his infernal form. Anger and fury, in the first instance, produced the infernal world; but afterwards, as manifestations of the hidden reality behind, they produced the state of Buddhahood. And this resulted simply from the control exercised over them by Devadatta. And if it was thus with Devadatta, why should it be different with us? All we have to do is to open our eyes and look at the Truth; then, in spite of our anger and fury we shall experience peace and happiness, we shall be able to establish equality and impartiality between ourselves and others, and attain to that state of content and pleasure which they and we shall enjoy together. What possible reason is there against our succeeding to become Buddhas, except our continuance under the spell of anger and fury, unless we reduce ourselves to emptiness and annihilation? Even ignorant men and women who can neither read nor write may surely attain the Buddhahood, if they will but sincerely repeat the *Daimoku Na-mu Myô Ho Ren-ge Kyô*. This is the miraculous oral discipline in our Sect.

And now what is the *Kaidan*, or Place for Learning Moral Precepts? This is easily understood, since we have already explained the *Hon-zon* and the *Daimoku*. It has been already pointed out that our bodies are identical with the body of the Buddha of Original Enlightenment. The reality behind appearances is the miraculous scene that is reflected, as in a mirror, by the enlightenment of the Buddha; in other words, that is apprehended by the Buddha's intellect. Now we ourselves are the Buddha's intellect, and it is the reality behind appearances which we must learn to apprehend. The intellect stands in the same relation to this 'miraculous scene' as the cover of a vessel to the vessel itself. In each case, the former corresponds to the latter. If we repeat the *Daimoku*, and rigorously purify our thoughts, our bad appetites and passions will disappear of themselves, and we shall become inspired with the pure and lofty ethics of our Sect. In walking or resting, standing or lying, speaking or keeping silence, acting or refraining from action—in all these situations we may attain to the mysterious deliverance; birth, old age, disease and death will disappear of themselves; fears, sorrows, pains and troubles vanish away for ever, leaving nothing behind them but eternity, purity, enlightenment and peace. Thus we find ourselves in the Paradise of Buddhas, living in the Land of Glorious Light. Therefore the Holy Book says, "We ought to know that this place is the *Kaidan*." In other words, any place whatever, where we practise the doctrines of the Holy Book, is fit to be a *Kaidan*. And if it is fit to be a *Kaidan* it is inhabited by all the Buddhas. Such is the nature of the *Kaidan* as

taught by our Sect. In the *Rissyō-ankoku Ron* Nichiren thus writes :—

“O believers in false doctrines! Change your beliefs; be converted and return to the true. You will then find that the worlds of evils—mortal, material, and spiritual—are all the World of Buddha. And the World of Buddha”—that state of mind in which complete enlightenment has been attained—“is not subject to decay; the Land of Jewels”—another name for the same mental state—“can never disappear. The World is changeless and eternal, the Land is imperishable and secure. All enjoy rest and peace, while their minds are wrapped in ecstasy.”

To establish the Good Law and tranquillise the State is the main object of our Sect's teaching. The Sect points to the Three Secret Ordinances, above described, as the means by which Buddhahood may be attained by everybody. It also promulgates the doctrine that an eternal reality underlies all fleeting forms. In a word, we who follow Nichiren offer all men blessings in the present life, and an immunity from suffering hereafter.

—❖— THE END —❖—

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