

CHAPTER IX

A PARADISE ON EARTH AND THE HOLY SEE

THE place whither Nichiren retired was surrounded on all sides by high mountains, and when his hermitage was finished in summer time, he doubtless enjoyed cool breezes rustling in the green trees on the slopes. "Like screens," he wrote to a lady in the following winter, "steep peaks surround my abode. On the mountains trees and grasses grow luxuriantly; in the valleys are rolling stones and rocks. Wolves howl and monkeys cry, and the echoes of their voices resound through hill and dale; deer plaintively call the does, and crickets chirp noisily. Flowers that elsewhere bloom in spring, bloom here in summer, and fruits do not ripen till winter. Occasionally human figures are seen, but they are only wood-cutters; or sometimes I have visits from some of my comrades in religion.¹ His mind often turned to retrospection on his past; but what now occupied his quiet thought was rather the future destiny of his religion. As the one foreordained to fulfil the prophecies of the Lotus, he had gone through all perils, and was enjoying the tranquillity of a hermit. A mere secluded life, however, was not his mission. What should he do for the consummation of his life-work, and for the perpetuation of his gospel? This was his question, and he formulated it immediately after his arrival at Minobu. The result was the essay referred to at the close of the last chapter, which was, in fact, intended to be the proclamation of Nichiren's plan, for the accomplishment of which he was about to prepare.

¹ *Works*, p. 1088; dated the sixteenth of the second month (March 14), 1275.

Nichiren's fervor never declined, but in his quiet life as a recluse his mind was occupied, perhaps exclusively, with enthusiasm for his ideal. His method was no longer confined to vehement warnings to the nation, and fiery attacks upon other Buddhists; he reflected calmly, and examined again and again the meaning of the ideal Kingdom of Buddha as the basis of the Buddhist Catholic Church of which his proposed Holy See should be the centre. He was always firm in the conviction that the Holy See was to be established in Japan, the land where the savior of the Latter Days was destined to appear, and where he, the man, was actually born and was doing the savior's work. Yet, on the other hand, his work was not merely for the sake of a small country, composed of many islands. Just as he recognized in his own life two aspects, the actual and mortal, on the one side, and the ideal and eternal, on the other, so he saw in Japan a similar twofold significance, one, the physically limited, and the other, to be realized through transformation according to his high ideal. In this latter sense, Japan meant for him the whole world. He said once: ¹

The great master Myōraku says in his commentary on the Scripture, "The children benefit the world by propagating the Truth of the Father." "The children" means here the Saints-out-of-earth; "the Father" is the Lord Śākya-muni; "the world," Japan; "benefit" means the attainment of Buddhahood; and "Truth," the Adoration of the Lotus of Truth. Even now, this is not otherwise because "the Father" means Nichiren; "the children," Nichiren's disciples and followers; "the world," Japan; "benefit," the life (of these men) laboring to perpetuate (the Truth) and hasten the attainment of Buddhahood; and "Truth" means the Sacred Title handed down to us from Viśiṣṭa-cāritra.

What he meant was this: Buddhahood, or Truth, is eternal. It can be, and ought to be, made a fact in our own

¹ In the "Dictated Portions of the Lectures on the Scripture"; the lectures given during his retirement and recorded by his disciples.

life. Nichiren is the man sent to lead all to that life, and he is now assisted by his followers, who are, therefore, the Saints prophesied in the Scripture. The attainment of Buddhahood is not a matter of individuals or of the aggregate of individuals, it is the embodiment of the all-embracing communion of all beings in the organic unity of Buddhahood which is inherent in them all. This realization is the Kingdom of Buddha, the establishment of the Land of Treasures, as Nichiren had declared in his *Risshō Ankoku Ron*¹ and explained on many occasions. Now this Kingdom of Buddha is, properly speaking, immanent in the soul of every one, but it can only be realized in the spiritual and moral community of those who are united in the Adoration of the Lotus, and in the worship of the Supreme Being as revealed by Nichiren. This community has been organized by Nichiren, and is growing in the fellowship of his followers. It is to be further extended among their countrymen, and finally to the whole world. The individual, the nation, the world, and the Kingdom of Buddha — these terms stand for different aspects of the one ideal.² The Holy Catholic Church of Buddhism is to have the world, the whole cosmos, as its stage; while the cosmos is not to be conceived as a mere universe in space, but essentially exists in the heart of every true Buddhist. Buddha is the Father and Lord of the Kingdom, and his children should strive for the realization of the Kingdom both in their own lives and in the community of all beings.

Nichiren's thinking always aimed, as we have seen, to unite two opposites, and to explain either by reference to the other. This method was applied to the relation between the particular and the universal, between the world and the individual, between human nature and Buddhahood. So

¹ See above, p. 37.

² For more on this subject, see below, p. 108.

also with the Kingdom of Buddha. It is individual and universal at the same time; either aspect is incomplete apart from the other; individual perfection is inconceivable without the basis of the universal truth, while the universal community cannot exist apart from the spiritual enlightenment of every individual. The Kingdom means the complete working out of the harmonious relation of these two aspects of perfection — Buddhahood. Thus, we see that Nichiren's mind was occupied as much as ever with his own mission and actual life, while at the same time he was thinking no less earnestly on the coming Kingdom of Buddha. He believed himself to be the savior of the coming ages, and was therefore concerned for the future of his religion; but the future was foreshadowed in his present life, and he saw a "Land of Treasures" even in his own hermitage.

"Behold, the kingdom of God is within you!" This was the creed of Nichiren also, witnessed by his life, confirmed by the Scripture, and supported by his metaphysical speculation. When he concentrated his thought on his own calling, he was in communion with the saints in the Lotus; when he expressed anxiety about his country, yet with confidence in its destiny, he was a prophet and an ideal patriot; when he reflected on his tranquil life among the mountains, he was almost a lyric poet, glorifying his surroundings by his religious vision; he was a scholastic philosopher when he interpreted the truths of existence and the nature of the religious community; and he was a mystic in his vision of the future realization of Buddhahood in himself and in the Kingdom of Buddha. Enough has now been said about his conception of his mission, and we shall presently see how he idealized his abode at Minobu; but before taking up this poetic side of his character, let us examine a piece of his scholastic mysticism.

The mystical strain is stronger in the writings from the years of quiet meditation at Minobu than in the preceding period of storm and stress. The best example of this is an essay written in 1279, after four years of retirement. It is entitled, "The Testimony Common to all the Buddhas of the Three Ages."¹ We reproduce the essay in extract.

It is said in the chapter on Tactfulness (chap. II): "According to the model of teaching adopted by all the Buddhas of the three ages, I proclaim the truth which has no distinction (but is universal)."² "The truth without distinction" means the perfect truth of the Sole Road. For, in everything, in grasses and trees, in mountains and streams, even in earth and dust, there are present the truths of existence of the ten realms of existence (*hokkai*, or *dharmadhātu*) which participate in one another; while the Sole Road of the Lotus of the Perfect Truth, which is immanent in our own souls, pervades the paradises in the ten quarters and is everywhere present in its entirety. The fruits (of truth), both proper and subsidiary,³ are manifest in the excellence and grandeur and beauty of the paradises in the ten quarters. All these fruits are inherent in our own soul, and the soul is in reality identical with the Tathāgata of the primeval enlightenment (in his eternal entity), who is furnished with the three aspects of his personality (the threefold *kāya*). How can there be any other truth besides the soul (in this sense)? One and the same truth pervades the paradises in the ten quarters. This is the Sole Road, and is therefore called "the truth without distinction." . . .

The perfection of truth in the Buddha's soul and the same perfection in our soul are one, and it is inherent in us, and to be realized by ourselves. Thus, there is no truth or existence besides the soul. What we know as our soul (its appearance), its nature (or essence), and its entity (or substance) — these three make up the three aspects of the Tathāgata's personality, (united in) the Tathāgata of the primeval enlightenment.

The Scripture teaches the manifestation (*lakṣaṇa*), the essence (or nature, *sva-rasa*) and the substance (*sva-bhava*) of reality. The Tathāgata of the primeval enlightenment is furnished with these three categories of reality; his body, or substance, is the cosmos, or the realm of truth (*dharmadhātu*), extending in ten directions; his essence,

¹ In Japanese, *Sanze Sho-Butsu Sōkan-mon; Works*, pp. 1892-1913.

² Verse 134; Text, p. 57; SBE., p. 57-58.

³ This point is explained below; see Appendix.

which is soul, is identical with the cosmos; and his manifestation in glories is manifest in the cosmos also. Therefore our body is one with the body of the Tathāgata, furnished with the three aspects of the primeval enlightenment; it is omnipresent, because it is nothing but a manifestation of the sole Buddha, while all realities represent Buddha's truths.

The paradise means a perfect union of the three aspects, realized in the harmony between the existence and its stage,¹ the existence being the proper fruit, and the stage the subsidiary. . . . The Paradise, or Land of Purity, is the realm of serene light, and is pure, exempt from all depravities; it exists in the soul of every being and is therefore called "The Spiritual Pedestal of the Lotus of the Perfect Truth." . . .

Then the store of truths (Buddha's teachings), eighty-four thousand in the number of its gateways,² is nothing but the record and diary of our own life. Everybody rears and embraces this store of truths in his own soul. Illusion occurs when we seek the Buddha, the Truth, and the Paradise outside of our own self. One who has realized this soul is called the Tathāgata. When this state is once attained, (we realize that) the cosmos in ten directions is our own body, our own soul, and our manifestation, because the Tathāgata *is* our own body and soul.

Out of these three fundamental categories of reality spring the following seven, and make up the ten³ which are the conditions of existence in the ten realms (*dharmadhātu*). And the ten realms, surging out of the one soul, are revealed in the gateways of truth, eighty-four thousand in number. . . . Thus, the ten categories of existence are united and realized in the origin, and in the consummation. The origin lies in our ultimate being (as defined in the ten terms), and the consummation is embodied in the realization of Buddhahood. The beings are the original (cause and substratum), and the Buddhas are the consummation (result and fruit), because all Buddhas are manifested out of the souls of all beings. And yet the Scripture says:

¹ This is an old Buddhist doctrine. By "Existence" (*bhava*) is meant the nature of being which the individuals within a certain resort of existence manifest, as the result of their common karma, in the qualities of the existence. The "stage" (*dhātu*) means the environs and circumstances of the existence. The former is, therefore, called the "proper fruit" of the common karma, while the latter is the "subsidiary."

² The whole extent of Buddha's teachings is said to have 84,000 different aspects. The number is derived from the Tripitaka counted in *Slokas*.

³ For the ten categories of existence, see the Appendix.

Now the threefold realm of existence is my dominion,
And all beings therein are my children.¹

. . . This is because Buddha, the awakened, wakes us, who are dreaming the dreams of births and deaths. This awakening wisdom reaches us like the voice of parents calling their dreaming children. Therefore Buddha says that we are his children. Think of this! then Buddha is the Father and we the children, both in the origin and in the consummation, because the fundamental nature and the final destiny are one in the Father and the children. When we perceive, thus, that the soul is one in Buddha and in us, our dreams of births and deaths are broken, and the primeval enlightenment is restored in our awakening. This is the "attainment of Buddhahood in the present life." . . .

When Chuang-Ch'ou² dreamt that he became a butterfly, there was none other than Chuang-Ch'ou, just as there was none besides himself when he awoke and knew that he was not a butterfly. When we consider ourselves to be mortals tormented by births and deaths, we are immersed in illusion and delusion, as Chuang became a butterfly in his dream. The original Chuang is restored when we realize that we are the Tathāgatas of the primeval enlightenment; this is the attainment of Buddhahood in the present life. . . . The soul, the Buddha, and existence, these three³ are laid up in our own soul, beside which there is no reality. This is the enlightenment, Buddhahood. When the truth of the mutual participation between the one and the many, between the particular and the universal, is fully realized, we shall know that everything and all things are found in each existence in the present life. . . . All truths revealed during the lifetime of the Master are only truths existent in ourselves. Know this, and your own entity is revealed. . . .

(All this is fully taught in the Lotus of Truth, and the way to grasp it is to adore the Sacred Title.) Thus maintain harmony with the Buddhas of all times and live the life of the Lotus of Truth! Thereby you will attain the final enlightenment without impediment, and know the relation between self-perfection and the enlightening of others.

This is the testimony common to all Buddhas of the three ages; keep it as a precious mystery!

¹ Chapter iii, verse 87; Text, p. 90; SBE., p. 88.

² A Chinese philosopher of the Taoist school, who writes of his metamorphosis into a butterfly, in a dream. Cp. G. F. Moore, *History of Religions*, Vol. I, pp. 56-58.

³ The three are the spiritual essence of truths, the personal realization of truths, and the objective manifestation of truths.

Every one who realizes the truth of the fundamental unity is a Buddha, and every one who lives in accordance with this enlightenment and works to propagate the Lotus of Truth is the messenger of the primeval Tathāgata. To such a man, all that surrounds him preaches the truth, and the place of his abode is a paradise. This idea of the connection between the actual life and the primeval enlightenment inspired Nichiren to such a degree that he always regarded his abode as a Buddha-land. He voiced this feeling like a lyric poet, glorifying, thus, the hills and waters of Minobu. In a note ¹ (as in several others), he gives utterance to these thoughts:

When the autumn evening draws on, lonesomely, the surroundings of the thatched hermitage are bedewed, and the spiders' webs hanging from the eaves are transformed into garlands of jewels. Noiselessly, deeply-tinged maple leaves come floating on the water that pours from the bamboo pipes, and the water, colored in pattern, seems to stream forth from the fountain of Tatsuta where the Brocade-weaving Lady is said to abide. Behind the hermitage, the steep peaks rear their heads aloft, where on the slopes the trees bear the fruits of "the Unique Truth," and the singing crickets are heard among the branches. In front, flow clear rivulets, making music like drums and flutes, and the pools reflect the moonlight of "reality as it is." When the limitless sky of "entity" is cloudless and the moon shines bright, it seems as if the "darkness of the shrouding delusion" was gone forever.

In the hermitage thus situated, throughout the day we converse, and discuss the truths of the Unique Scripture, while in the evening and late into the night is heard the gentle murmur of the recitation of passages from the sacred text. Thus, we deem that to this place has been transferred Vulture Peak, where Lord Śākya lived.

When fog veils the valley, and even when a gale is blowing, we go to gather wood in the forest, or through the bedewed bushes down to the dells to pick parsley leaves. . . . Reflecting on these conditions of my present life, I often think, so it must have been with Buddha, when he

¹ *Works*, pp. 1297-1306. The title is "*Minobu-san Gosho*," or the "Record of Minobu." It is dated the twenty-five of the eighth month (September 2), 1275.

was in search of truth and disciplining himself in expiation and in mortification.¹ . . .

Thus thinking, I sit on the mat of meditation, and in vision I see every truth present to the mind, so that even the call of a deer to its mate helps me to utter the innermost voice of my heart. Here I realize why, being shrouded by the heavy clouds of illusion, we transmigrate through the nine,² while the pure bright moonlight shines within me, the illumination of the threefold aspects of reality³ fused into one, and the light of the threefold introspection of one and the same soul.⁴ Thus, I put my thoughts into verse:

Masses of clouds and thickening fog,
 Heaping upon me and shrouding the world —
 Let them be dispelled by a freshening breeze,
 The wind that perpetually blows from Vulture Peak,
 Whence streams forth the air of the eternal Truth.

In short, everything in Nichiren's surroundings suggested to him something related to his ideal, and to his present life in service to the Truth. The poet, however, was never content merely to cherish these thoughts, but interpreted his environment by the Scripture. Thus he writes about his abode in the language of the Scripture, and describes his life

¹ There follow several illustrative stories about the former lives of Buddha. All this is summed up in the verse:

Having served the masters,
 By collecting wood and gathering herbs,
 And by fetching water for them,
 I have at last attained this enlightenment —
 The enlightenment in the Lotus of Truth. . . .

[Indeed, all this is the service of the Lotus of Truth. Similarly, all that Nichiren has done and is doing is for the perpetuation of the Truth, and the salvation of the beings of the Latter Days.]

² Nine out of the ten resorts, that is, excepting Buddhahood. The nine are: the Bodhisattava; the Pratyeka-buddha (self-satisfied recluse); the Śrāvaka (one content with learning); the Celestial Being; mankind; the Preta (hungry ghost); the Beast, the Asura (furious spirit), and the beings in the hells.

³ The three are, vacuity, phenomenal appearance, and the view of the Middle Path. See Appendix.

⁴ The introspection of the soul under the three categories of reality.

there, as if it were illuminated by the glories of paradise.¹ Not only Minobu, but every place connected with the life of the prophet, of the one who is living the life of the Lotus of Truth, was glorified by him. In a letter² written before he left Sado, he says: "I, Nichiren, am a native of Awa, a province of Japan where the Sun-goddess had her abode in the beginning, and founded this nation.³ . . . She is indeed the loving mother of the people of this country. There must be some remote and mysterious connection with my life, that I, Nichiren, was born in that province." In another letter, written after his retirement in Minobu, he repeats the same idea, and says:⁴ "Although Awa is a province far away from the centre, it is somewhat like the centre of Japan, because the Sun-goddess found there her first abode. . . . And I, Nichiren, began the propagation of the true religion by proclaiming it, for the first time, there in Awa."

Sometimes, he speaks more mystically about his spiritual presence everywhere. He wrote from Minobu to a nun in Sado who had served him during his days of exile there, saying in conclusion:⁵ "When you long to see Nichiren, look in reverence at the rising sun, or the moon rising in evening. My person is always reflected in the sun and moon. And moreover, hereafter I shall surely meet you in the Paradise of Vulture Peak."

It is by mankind, in all kinds of existence, that the ideal perfection is to be achieved, and therefore the stage of its

¹ A passage of this purport is quoted on p. 108.

² Sent to Hōjō Tokimori, dated the twenty-first of the second month (March 30), 1274; *Works*, p. 1034.

³ This is not found in any legend, but it seems that Nichiren regarded the southeastern corner of Japan as nearest to the place where the sun rises.

⁴ Dated the sixteenth of the second month (March 15), 1275; *Works*, p. 1092.

⁵ Dated the sixteenth of the sixth month (July 10), 1275; *Works*, p. 1253.

realization is this world, the abode of mankind. The Buddhist ideal of enlightenment is man's awaking to the fundamental unity of his present existence with the primeval Buddhahood; while the key to make this world a hell or to transform it into a heaven is in our own hands. The use of the key consists in first calling forth the primeval Buddhahood in the innermost recess of our own soul, and in viewing this actual world as a heaven. This transfiguration means not merely imagining that earth is heaven, but living in conformity with the assumption, under the guidance of the enlightened mind. This ideal was realized by Buddha when he preached the Lotus of Truth on Vulture Peak, and the scene of the revelation was transfigured into a paradise. Nichiren had no doubt about the Scripture narrative, and now, in Minobu, he was himself experiencing such a transfiguration of his own abode. In expressing this conviction, he sometimes spoke, as we have seen, like a lyric poet; yet his poetry was never a mere play of fancy, but an earnest belief, founded on the authority of the Scripture, as well as on his own experience. The union of poetic idealization and religious speculation can be clearly seen in the passages quoted above. Such was Nichiren's thought about the paradise on earth, or rather on the proposition that this very world is paradise¹ to those minds illumined by the truth of the primeval enlightenment.

This conception of the transfiguration of the world is very important for the understanding of Nichiren's idea of the Catholic Buddhist Church, and to make it still clearer we may quote another passage from the dictated portions of his lectures on the Lotus.

¹ In Japanese: "*Shaba soku Jakkō-do*," that is, the Sahā world itself transfigured into the Realm of Serene Light.

It is said in the Scripture:¹ "At that *time* I shall appear on *Vulture Peak, together with my congregation.*" Here, "time" means the age of the Latter Law, when the spiritual communion (between us and Buddha) shall be realized; "I" means Śākya-muni; "with," the Bodhisattvas; "congregation," the community of Buddha's disciples; "together" implies the ten realms of existence; and "Vulture Peak" is the Land of Serene Light. . . . "Appear" means to make a manifestation at Vulture Peak, while "Vulture Peak" means the manifestation of the Supreme Being, that is, the abode of Nichiren's followers who utter the Adoration of the Lotus of Truth. . . .

Any place where men practise the faith in the Sole Road of Adoration, the adoration of the Lotus of Truth, there is the castle of the eternal Serene Light, which is Vulture Peak. . . . Yet the primeval (entity) of Vulture Peak is nowhere else than in this very Sahā world, especially in Japan, the Land of Sunrise; the Sahā world furnished with the perfection of the primeval stage, where the Lotus of Truth is to be realized; the place where the unique Maṇḍala will be revealed and established — the Maṇḍala embodying the primeval import of what is taught in the chapter on the Life-duration, or the Eternal Life, of the Tathāgata.

Where there lives a true Buddhist, there is manifest in his spirit and life, the Maṇḍala, the cycle embodying the cosmic truth. Where the Truth is manifest, there, is realized the eternal light of Buddhahood, and therefore the place is a paradise. A natural corollary to this idea is that the whole realm of existence ought to be the stage of this realization. But Japan, where the prophet of this gospel has appeared, should be the centre of the Kingdom of Buddha. The man has appeared, and the stage is determined. A definite organization must now be provided for actually effecting the transformation according to the instructions given by the Prophet. This idea gradually crystallized in Nichiren's mind into a definite plan for establishing the centre of the universal church, the Holy See, the *Kaidan*. He had cherished this idea since his days in Sado, and expressed it,

¹ In the sixteenth chapter, Yam., p. 479; Text, p. 324, verse 6; SBE., p. 307.

as we have seen, in the first writing after his retirement. More definite expression was given it in "The Perpetuation of the Three Great Mysteries,"¹ which he wrote on the eighth of the fourth month (April 27), the day believed to be the birthday of Buddha, in 1281. It is also interesting to notice that this year was made memorable by the remarkable prediction Nichiren made to his followers concerning the threatening Mongol invasion. Of this prediction we shall speak later.

The treatise on the Three Mysteries begins with the question, What is meant by the following passage in the chapter (xxi) on the Mysterious Power? "In fine, all the truths possessed by the Tathāgata, all the mysterious powers under the control of the Tathāgata, all the stocks of mysteries cherished by the Tathāgata, all the profound things in the hands of the Tathāgata — all and every one of these have been revealed and proclaimed in this Scripture."² This is the famous legacy entrusted to the keeping of Viśiṣṭa-cāritra and other Saints-out-of-Earth. It had been explained in various ways by Nichiren's predecessors, but he interpreted it to mean nothing but the Three Mysteries entrusted to himself, and destined to be fulfilled in the Latter

¹ *Works*, pp. 2051-2054.

² *Yam.*, p. 563; *Text*, p. 391, line 2; *SBE.*, p. 367.

Tendai's commentary bases its famous doctrine of the five "profound principles" on this passage. The five are:

1. The Title . . . The Lotus of the Perfect Truth (*Dharma*).
2. The Entity . . . The mysterious power (*Vṛṣabhīṭā*).
3. The Principle . . . the stock of mysteries (*rahasyam*).
4. The Efficiency . . . the profound thing (*gambhīra-sihānam*).
5. The Doctrine . . . the revelation and proclamation (*desitam*).

This exegetical development is the basis of Nichiren's idea that the Sacred Title implies all the five principles, and therefore represents the cosmic truth in all its features.

Days, after his time. His interpretation was this: All truths, mysteries, etc., are actuated by the personality of the Tathāgata, while the Tathāgata is a perfect being because he is furnished with the three aspects of personality. The three aspects are: the metaphysical entity (*Dharma-kāya*), which is represented in Nichiren's religion in the Supreme Being, or *Maṇḍala*; the blissful manifestation (*Sambhoga-kāya*), chiefly consisting in intellectual enlightenment, which is represented by the Sacred Title; and the actual manifestation (*Nirmāna-kāya*), the realization of Buddha's mercy, which is to be established and organized in the Holy See, the Sacred Place of Initiation.

Of these three, the first two had already been revealed by Nichiren, and now the foundation of the third was to be laid. He writes about this as follows: ¹

When, at a certain future time, the union of the state law and the Buddhist Truth shall be established, and the harmony between the two completed, both sovereign and subjects will faithfully adhere to the Great Mysteries. Then the golden age, such as were the ages under the reign of the sage kings of old, will be realized in these days of degeneration and corruption, in the time of the Latter Law. Then the establishment of the Holy See will be completed, by imperial grant and the edict of the Dictator, at a spot comparable in its excellence with the Paradise of Vulture Peak. We have only to wait for the coming of the time. Then the moral law (*kaihō*) will be achieved in the actual life of mankind. The Holy See will then be the seat where all men of the three countries (India, China, and Japan) and the whole Jambu-dvīpa (world) will be initiated into the mysteries of confession and expiation; and even the great deities, Brahmā and Indra, will come down into the sanctuary and participate in the initiation.

Although Nichiren expressed his idea about the time and place of the establishment of the Holy See thus vaguely, he was sure that it would come to pass, and it is related that he despatched the ablest of his disciples to the foot of Fuji to

¹ *Works*, p. 2053.

select the spot for it. Whatever truth there may be in this legend, his conception of the Church and its Holy See was at the same time ideal and concrete. In the ideal, he esteemed every place where his religion should be practised as a paradise; the church embraces all beings, and its stage is the whole cosmos. But, on the other hand, the centre was to be definitely established in a place considered to be peculiarly the source of light and life, in Nichiren's own country. Thus he combined his ideal paradise with the universal church, and spent his days of retirement in silent prayer for the fulfilment of his project. It is no wonder, then, that he pronounced Minobu to be an earthly paradise, and yet planned for the propagation of his religion throughout the world.