PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS OF THE TRUE SECT OF PURE LAND

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The doctrine of Amida represents the practical phase of Buddhism, and in the True Sect of Pure Land we see the deep meaning of salvation by faith most thoroughly revealed; and it is in this that the essence of Buddhism as religion, apart from its philosophical and ethical aspects, consists.

Thus, the ultimate aim of the appearance of Sākyamuni on earth was to teach us this doctrine of Amida. Most of the Buddhist priests or savants in all the Eastern Buddhist countries, who studied their religion from scholarly points of view, practically professed their faith in the doctrine of Amida. Among the various forms of this doctrine, we recognise in the True Sect of Pure Land as taught and established by our Shinran Shōnin about seven hundred years ago, the most pure, perfect, and incomparable one. The True Sect is, indeed, the efflorescence of Japanese Buddhism. Everywhere we perceive such signs as to justify our belief that his teaching is being better appreciated not only by his own countrymen but by foreigners, and that the number of those foreigners who express their sincere desire to know more deeply the signification of the True Sect is steadily increasing.

In the present year, our Illustrious Emperor is to perform His coronation in the old palace of this City. We have therefore revised this pamphlet to commemorate the great event, while we desire to elucidate herein briefly the teaching of our Shōnin for the benefit of our general readers. No happiness will be greater than ours if this excites our readers’ interest in Buddhism better than ever, be it sympathetic or antagonistic.

The original of this pamphlet was compiled by late Yejitsu Okusa, to commemorate the six hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the death of our founder, Shinran Shōnin. It was just five years ago, so that a revision was necessarily made in the narration.

Ōtanihà Hongwanji.
Kyōto, October 13, 1915.
1. HISTORY

I. SHINRAN SHÔNIN.

During the past thirty centuries that have elapsed since the death of Shâkyamuni, his Good Law has grown into a huge tree with many outstretched branches; and each of these is now everywhere endeavoring to propound the Law according to its own way of interpretation, and also to perpetuate its own religious practice. Among these branches, the one that most clearly indicates the Blessed One's way of salvation and that most thoroughly teaches his life of faith is the True Sect of Pure Land; for surely it is the doctrine of this Sect that the ultimate signification of the Buddha's will to save is faithfully preserved. While it goes without saying that this True Sect of Pure Land is the doctrine preached by the World-honored Shâkyamuni Buddha himself, it was not until some seven hundred years ago, that is, until the founder of the True Sect, Shinran Shônin, stayed in the Province of Hidachi to promulgate a new Buddhist teaching, that this Sect came to be recognised as such, forming an independent organisation among the Buddhists.

Shinran Shônin was born on April 1 in the third year of Jôan, 1173 A.D., in the village of Hino near Kyôto. His family was of the Fujiwara clan that occupied at the time the most important position in the empire, and his noble father, Arinori Hino, held an honorable office at the imperial court. The Shônin was the eldest son, and from this fact we can easily see what an auspicious prospect he had before him; for could not he, as heir to a noble family, occupy a high official rank, wield his influence as he willed, and indulge in the enjoyment of a worldly life? But the death of his parents, while he was yet a child, made him depend upon his uncle, Lord Noritsuna; and this unfortunate circumstance left a very deep impression on his young mind, which, naturally sensitive, now brooded over the uncertainty of human life. At the age of nine, he left home to lead a monkish life at a Buddhist monastery called Shôren-in at Awada-Guchi, where Jiyen Sôjô, the high
priest, took him as disciple, shaved his head, and gave him the Buddhist name, Han-yen.

After this, the Shōnin went to the Mount Hiye, and staying at the Daijō-in which was in the Mudō-ji, pursued his study under various masters in the deep philosophy of the Tendai Sect, and disciplined himself according to its religious practices. He also sought to enlarge his knowledge by delving into the doctrines of all the other Buddhist sects; but he was unable to reach the true way leading to a release from this world of pain. He went even so far as to invoke the aid of the gods as well as the Buddhas to make him realise an immovable state of tranquillity; but all to no purpose.

While thus vainly seeking his way of release, many years passed on; and he came to be looked up and paid high respect by all his teachers and friends as one whose deep learning and unimpeachable morality were incomparable. His priestly rank advanced, and when he was twenty-five years old, he was made Monzeki (chief priest) of the Shōkō-in. All these successes, however, were far from satisfying his noble spirit, which was ever hankering after the truth. His spiritual vexations increased the more. When will the light come to this poor yet earnest truth-seeker?

His twenty-ninth year which he attained in the first year of Kennin (1201 A.D.), still found him in a state of mental uncertainty. Determined to arrive at the settlement of all his doubts, he went daily to the Rokkaku-dō, Kyōto, for one hundred days beginning with Jan. 10 of that year, and offered his final prayers to Avalokitēçvara Bōdhisattva (Kwannon Bosatsu) to suffer him to see the light. At last, he had a vision of the Bosatsu, and through his instruction he went to Yoshimidzu in order to be taught by Hōnen Shōnin. Now, according to his doctrine, all sentient beings were sure to be saved and embraced in the light of Amida¹ and to be born in the Land of Happiness, eternal and imperishable, if they, however sinful, only believe in the name of the Buddha, and, forsaking all their petty cares of the world at present and to come, abandon themselves to his saving hands so mercifully extended towards all beings, and recite his name with singleness of heart. It was through listening to this doctrine that our Shōnin came to remove from

¹ "Amida" in Sanskrit, and "Omitho" in Chinese.
his mind every shadow of his spiritual doubt. Then, for the first time, he
came to perceive that Amida was the name of his true Father, and could not
help realising that, during these twenty-nine years of his existence, his life
had ever been actuated by this Father's will to save, and that this true
Father, from the very beginning of all things, had been uninterruptedly at
work to save his sinful children through his eternal mercy. The Shōnin was
filled with joy and gratitude unspeakable. To commemorate this occasion of
his spiritual regeneration, he was given by his master a new Buddhist name,
Shakkū. Abandoning his former adherence to the faith of the Tendai Sect, he
now embraced the Pure Land Sect; that is to say, forsaking the uncertainty
of "self-salvation" (jiriki, meaning "self-power"), he became a believer in the
efficacy and surety of salvation through a power other than his own (tariki,
meaning "other-power").

After this, he resigned his priestly position as Monzeki, and becoming a
mere Buddhist monk in black, he built an humble hut at Okazaki, where he
continued to receive further instructions from Hōnen Shōnin. His faith grew
ever deeper until he thoroughly understood the signification of his master's
doctrine. In October, 1203 A.D., our Shōnin decided to follow the advice of
Hōnen Shōnin to enter upon a conjugal life and to give the world an
example concretely illustrating their faith that the householder could be
saved as much as the celibate monk. He was, therefore, married to Princess
Tamahi, daughter of Prince Kanezane Kujō, formerly prime minister to the
Emperor. He was thirty-one years of age while the Princess eighteen. This
marriage, in fact, was undertaken to settle the religious doubt then
prevailing as regards the final redemption of those secular householders,
who, living with their family, have not completely destroyed the root of
passion. Prince Kujō was one of those who were in doubt about this point,
and our Shōnin made the practical demonstration of his belief by marrying
one of his daughters and living the life of a man of the world. In the year
following, a son was born to him, who was named Han-i.
In 1205 A.D., our Shōnin was given by his revered master a copy of his work entitled, "The Sen-Jyaku Hon-Gwan Nen-Butsu Shū"—which we have reason to consider a memorable event in the life of Shinran Shōnin; for it was to a very selected few that the master was pleased to give his own writing,—only to those disciples of his who distinguished themselves in learning and virtue. Our Shōnin assumed yet another name this year in accordance with his master's wish. The name was Zenshin, meaning "good faith." In this wise, the relation between the Shōnin and his master grew closer and closer, every one recognised in him a spirit that harbored a most powerful faith equal to that of his master.

Fortunately or unfortunately, this fact led to a series of sad events in 1207 in the life of the Founder of the True Sect. The beginning of it was the conversion of two court ladies into the faith of Pure Land, who finally entered a nunnery. This greatly offended the feeling of the court and set it against Hōnen Shōnin and his followers. Taking advantage of the court's displeasure, those Buddhist monks belonging to the Kōfuku-ji monastery at Nara, who were for years observing the spread of the Pure Land Sect with unmitigated jealousy, now maliciously denounced its chief propagators to the court and asked for an imperial order to forbid the preaching of the doctrine of the Pure Land Sect. The court at last lent its ear to this vicious counsel and ordered Hōnen Shōnin to leave the Capital for Tosa Province. Our founder, too, as the foremost disciple of the venerable Hōnen, could not escape the misfortune and was banished to Kokubu in Echigo Province.

Our Shōnin had now to be separated from his revered master as well as from his beloved family. We can well understand what sorrowful feelings were then astir in his heart, which, however, was not so darkened as to be altogether insensible to the other aspect of this sad event. Perceiving the gracious design of the Buddha even in the midst of the calamity, he thought in this wise: "Echigo, which is so remotely situated, could perhaps never have chance to listen to the Good Law of the Buddha if there were not such an opportunity as this. My banishment serves an excellent purpose of proselytism. If I happen to find even one soul embracing the same faith as

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2 A collection of those passages from the sūtras and other works with their explanation, which relate to the thinking of the Buddha (nembutsu) or the reciting of his name,—this reciting being Amida's original prayer (hongwan) most thoughtfully selected by himself.
mine in that remote province, I shall regard it as owing to the wisdom of my venerable master." Thus thinking, he departed for his destination with cheerful spirits.

Therefore, all the way along his long journey, our Shōnin made use of every occasion to give utterance to his faith and to make his people interested in the Good Law. When finally he reached his place of banishment in Echigo, he was ever active in his missionary work, going about in his neighboring villages and exercising his personal influence over the country people. In the meantime, Princess Tamahi, who, being left behind in the Capital, had spent days and nights in sorrow and without consolation, made up her mind to share with her husband the provincial loneliness in the faraway snowy region of Echigo, and let herself suffer the misery of banishment.

Five years passed, and in November, 1211, the court issued an order to terminate the banishment of our Shōnin. The message carried by Lord Norimitsu Okazaki did not arrive at the destination until December of the same year.

To his receipt of the message, our Shōnin signed himself Gutoku (which means "simple-hearted bald man"). He inwardly wished, by thus designating himself, to determine his own status among followers of the Buddha, which was neither that of a monk nor that of a layman,—his was indeed a most peculiar one. What other signification he wanted to give to this unique title was that he was one of those simple-hearted Buddhists who were not wise, nor intelligent, nor learned. He used to believe himself as an ignorant and sinful soul, as it implied in the literal sense of the title, Gutoku. This critical valuation of himself was an aspect of his religious belief. Afterwards, he had another name given himself, Shinran, by which he is popularly known now.

When he received the message of release, he wished at once to proceed to the Capital and see his venerable master; but being prevented by various circumstances, it was not until January of the following year that he could start from Kokubu. When he reached Kōdzuke on his way to Kyōto toward the middle of February, an unexpected news made him plunge into the deepest sorrow and despair; for it was the news of the death on January 25 of his revered master, Hōnen Shōnin, whom he wished to see fervently for
once before his final passing. His heart-breaking was so great, indeed, that he threw himself down on the ground and cried most piteously. He now abandoned his plan to proceed to the Capital, and making his way for Hidachi Province, he visited several towns along his route and preached his faith to the people.

Since January, 1217, he settled at Inada of Hidachi Province, and began writing his "Kyō-Gyō-Shin-Shō"³ (The Teaching, Practice, Faith, and Attainment), in which are laid down the fundamental principles of the True Sect of Pure Land. This was his first literary work, and the greatest, for on this is built the entire structure of the True Sect. After the passing of his master, there were many of his disciples, who failed to grasp the spirit of their master and grossly misrepresented its vital signification. To save the latter from a wreckage, therefore, and to make known the true purport of the Pure Land Sect (that is, the True Sect of Pure Land) free from all possible misinterpretations, he wrote this most significant book. It was completed in the year 1224, when our Shōnin was fifty-two years of age.

In the year following (1225 A.D.), the Shōnin built a temple at Takada of Shimodzuke Province. In 1226, the temple received the name, Senju Amida Ji, by an imperial order. After this, the True Sect of Pure Land began to draw its circles of propagation wider and wider around these two centers, Inada and Takada; and many men and women of good family gathered about him, who led them to the truth of the Buddhist faith. For twenty years in these localities he had thus been indefatigably engaged for the cause of the True Sect of Pure Land, when he conceived an idea to visit the Capital in 1232. He was then sixty years old.

He left his monastery at Takada to the care of his disciple, Shimbutsu; and accompanied only by two of his disciples, (while his wife remained alone at Inada,) he started for Kyōto where he had been long absent. In Kyōto he had no fixed residence, and moved from one place to another, among which we may mention Gojō-Nishinotōin, Okazaki, Nijō-Tominokōji, etc. He was never tired of preaching the Good Law of the compassionate Buddha to whomever that came to him for spiritual guidance and helpful instructions;

³ An exposition of the essential principles of the True Sect as to what it teaches (kyō), practises (gyō), believes (shin), and attains (shō). 6 fasciculi.
and to those who could not pay him a personal visit, he sent letters dwelling upon the joyful life of a devout Buddhist. Towards the end of his life the Shōnin wrote various messages for the sake of uneducated followers of his faith, in which he expounded the essentials of the True Sect in the plainest possible terms.

In 1262, he reached the high age of ninety, and began to show symptoms of an illness on November 23; but he complained of nothing particularly, except speaking of the deep love of Amida and reciting his name with profound devotion. On the twenty-seventh, he bid farewell to his disciples, saying that he would be waiting for them in Pure Land when the time come for them to join him there. After this, he kept on reciting the name of Amida. On the following day, according to the example shown by the Great Muni of the Shākyas at the time of his Nirvāna, he had his head turned towards the North, facing the West, and lying on his right-hand side, in a room at the Zembō-in; at noon his reciting came quietly to an end, showing that he finally returned to the Land of Light, when it is said that an odor of indescribably sweet fragrance filled the room and a flash of white light was seen across the Western sky, as if unfolding a long piece of immaculate linen.

His remains were cremated on the twenty-ninth at the Yennin-ji, south of Toribeno, and his ashes were buried at Ōtani, Higashiyama, over which now stands tombstones.

The Shōnin was apparently a manifestation of Amida-Butsu, he was indeed a saving light who came among us some seven hundred years ago to dispel the darkness of this world. His life of ninety years on earth was an imprint eternally engraved on the hearts of sinners not yet freed from impurities. He lived among us to typify the life of a sinful soul, who could yet be saved through his faith in the boundless love of Amida, and left a unique example for us who are intoxicated with the wine of passion. So, our Shōnin did not follow the steps of an ancient sage, who, leaving his home and severing all the family tics, would fly away from this world, in order to cleanse the heart, to sanctify the conduct, and to be thoroughly imbued with the purest religious sentiment, and who by virtue of these unw worldly merits was permitted to be born in the country of the Buddha. The Shōnin, on the
contrary, married Princess Tamahi and lived a family life, even after his confirmation in the Buddhist faith.

Four sons and three daughters were born through this union. The first, third, fourth, and fifth children were sons who were named respectively, Han-i, Zenran, Myōshin, and Dōshō; while the second, sixth, and seventh were daughters, whose names were: Masa-hime, Saga-hime, and Iya-hime. The Shōnin could not help but deeply love these children, so dear to the heart of the father that he once confessed with a truly human weakness: "I am the one who, not knowing how to be blessed by the saving love of Amida, is drowned in the tempest of passion and has lost his way in the mountains of worldliness." The founder of the True Sect, thus unlike most religious leaders, was a husband and father, who loved his family with all his heart and found his salvation in the eternal love of Amida.

It is due to this fact that in the True Sect of Pure Land there is no distinction made between the monk and the layman as regards their outward religious practice; while in all the other Buddhist sects the monk leads a life of celibacy and refrains from eating the animal's flesh, the followers of the True Sect have no such special order among them, for their "monks" marry and eat meat. Their religious life, therefore, consists in continuing to live an ordinary, everyday human life, not necessarily struggling to free themselves from the so-called "defilements" of the flesh, and in leaving the grave matter of salvation entirely in the saving hands of Amida; for theirs is only to be grateful for the Buddha's saving love and to express this gratitude by the observance of all the moral laws and the efficient execution of their respective duties. This faith and this way of living were exemplified by our venerable Shinran Shōnin, the Founder of the True Sect of Pure Land.

The Shōnin had many devoted disciples, among whom the following were the most noted: Shōshin, Shimbutsu, Jun-shin, Muyishin, Myōhō, Yuiyen, Nyūsai, Saibutsu, Kakushin, Ren-yi, etc. There were among these disciples some who had at first entertained an idea to murder the master, imagining him to be the enemy of Buddhism; but as soon as they approached the Shōnin, his personality so powerfully impressed them that they at once abandoned the evil design and became the most devoted of his disciples. There were, again, others who grew more attached to the master, because
he was revealed to them in a vision as an incarnation of Amida. It is not, therefore, difficult for one to realise even in these remote days with what veneration he was regarded by these people; indeed, who could refrain from revering him as a Buddha? In spite of these facts, the Shōnin refused to regard these devoted followers of his as disciples, but considered them as his best friends embracing the same faith, or as his younger brothers growing under the guidance of the one spiritual father. He respected and loved every one of them as such, declaring: "I, Shinran, have no disciples in faith." It is evident then that the master entertained no thought of styling himself as a religious leader or teacher, he only regarded himself as a blessed child living in the all-embracing love of Amida.


Besides these, we have two volumes of his letters collected by his disciples, which are entitled, "The Mattō-shō" 15 and "The Go-shōsoku-shū." 16 Still

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4 Literally, "the simple-hearted bald man's copy-book." This is the name given by Shinran Shōnin to his own writing in which he declares his religious faith as a simple-hearted monk. By "bald" is meant a shaved head. 2 fasiculi.
5 A book in which such passages in the sūtras as relate to the Pure Land doctrine are systematically collected.
6 "Stanzas concerning the two gates, entrance and exit" The entrance is to enter into Pure Land, and the exit means coming back from Pure Land to this world of defilement in order to save one's fellow-beings.
7 Such passages collected from the sūtras of the Pure Land doctrine, and compared, as relating to the birth in Pure Land.
8 A classified collection of those passages which relate to the Buddha's grace towards us in its twofold operation, going and coming back. The going means being born in Pure Land, and the coming back is re-appearance in this world.
9 Hymns of Pure Land in easy Japanese.
10 Hymns in easy Japanese dedicated to the Seven Great Fathers of the True Sect.
11 Hymns concerning the three periods of religion, orthodox, representative, and terminating, in which it is explained that for us born in the terminating period the True Sect is the most appropriate religion.
12 A commentary work on the venerable Seikaku's book on faith, in which is set forth the doctrine of salvation by faith alone.
13 The scriptural passages explained which are inscribed on the paper bearing the honorable names of the Buddha as well as the portraits of the Fathers.
14 "My view concerning the controversy between the One Thought and the Many Thoughts."
15 "The Light of the Terminating Period." A book in which are collected some of Shinran's sayings and letters.
later, Nyoshin Shōnin, grandson of the master, compiled sayings of the latter under the title, "The Tan-i-shō." By the aid of these books, we are able to look into his faith and conviction as it was alive in his heart; and our exposition of the doctrine of the True Sect will be according to these works.

II. THE HONGWAN-JI.

After the entrance of Shinran Shōnin into Great Nirvana, the True Sect of Pure Land gradually gained followers, and has at present become the most influential one among the various Buddhist sects in Japan. And the True Sect itself has come to be differentiated into ten minor branches, which, however, do not mean so many different ways of interpreting its main faith or doctrine. The differentiation has grown only out of some historical or external relations that came to be established between the principal churches in charge of their devotees. The history of each of these several churches, among which the Hongwanji, is quite complicated; and the following tabular view gives only a general scheme of the pedigree of the ten principal branches of the True Sect of Pure Land:

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A Schematic View of the Ten Branches of the True Sect of Pure Land

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16 "Letters of the Venerable Shinran."

17 A work written with a view to settle the heterodoxical opinions that were entertained by some True Sect followers concerning the real signification of the teaching of Shinran.
Among these ten branches, those most flourishing at present are the Ōtani and the Hongwanji. They trace back their origin of existence to the two brothers, Kyōnyo and Junnyo, and formerly composed one Hongwanji Branch. The reason why it came to have the largest number of followers under its charge, is because its successive Hosshus (literally, "masters of the law", that is, head-priests) trace their line of descendence directly to Shinran Shōnin, the Founder of the True Sect, and also because its eighth Hosshu, Rennyo, was a most remarkable spiritual power, exercising great influence over his followers. Let us now go on at some length with the history of the Hongwanji.

It was in the winter of the ninth year of Bunyei (1272) that the tomb of the Shōnin at Ōtani, Higashiyama, was removed to the western part of the same grounds, where a hall was constructed, and his image was enshrined in it. The Emperor Kameyama ordered it to be named the "Kuon Jitsujō Amida Hongwan-ji," whence comes the name "Hongwanji" which is an abbreviation. Kakushin-ni, or Iyahime, the youngest daughter of the Shōnin, was made the guardian of the shrine, while Nyoshin, son of Zenran, became the Jyūshoku or "residing priest" of the Hongwanji. Thus, we have Shinran Shōnin for the founder of the Hongwanji and Nyoshin Shōnin for the second patriarch.

Kakunyo, grandson to Kakushin-ni, succeeded Nyoshin, and it was he who compiled "A Life of Shinran, the Hongwanji Shōnin, with Illustrations,"18 in two volumes, which is also known as the "Godenshō" simply, meaning the "Honorable Biography." The author was then twenty-six years old. His other works are: "The Shūyi-kotoku-den,"19 "The Kuden-shō,"20 "The Gai-jashō,"21 "The Shū-dzi-shō,"22 "The Hon-gwan-shō,"23 "The Gwan-gwan-
In those days, Japan was divided between two rival dynasties, Northern and Southern, and their struggles for the ascendency reduced the country, especially the Capital, into a state of constant disturbance; and the shrine at Ōtani was burned to the ground by the soldiers in 1336. Kakunyo Shōnin, therefore, retired to the Kuon-ji in Yamashiro, where he stayed for two years until the shrine was rebuilt in 1338, and in the year following he came back to Ōtani. For some one hundred and twenty years thence, the shrine suffered no misfortune.


24 A book explaining the five essential ones out of the fortyeight prayers of Amida.
25 A work explaining the significance of the eighteenth prayer of Amida.
26 A work on the fundamental meaning of the appearance of Shākyamuni on earth.
27 "A manual for the memorial service of the Founder."
28 A commentary work on the Kyō-gyō-shin-shō. 10 fasciculi.
29 A commentary work on Hōnen's Sen-jyaku-shū. 5 fasciculi.
30 A work refuting seventeen erroneous views as regards the teaching of the True Sect, and revealing its truth. 3 fasciculi.
31 "A treatise on the essential truths of the doctrine of Pure Land." A revised work of the Jōdo-monrui-shū, given by the author to his disciple, Ryōgen. 2 fasciculi.
32 "A treatise on the fundamental intention of all the gods." A revised work by Zonkaku of a book bearing the same title. 2 fasciculi.
33 A book recording the successful debate with the followers of the Nichiren Sect in the first year of Rekiō. 2 fasciculi.
34 "Questions and answers in the controversy with the Nichiren Sect." 2 fasciculi.
35 A work in which the teaching of Pure Land is compared to travelling on water by boat and that of the "Path for the wise" to walking on foot, showing how easier it is to travel by the first method. 2 fasciculi.
36 A book explaining how deeply grateful we should feel towards our parents and teachers. 2 fasciculi.
37 A book revealing the merit contained in the name of Amide.
38 A work urging to hold the name of Amida.
39 "A religious discourse by Zonkaku," written especially for Kaiyen.
40 A book treating of women's salvation.
41 A book describing the loathsomeness of the defiled world and the joys of Pure Land.
42 A tract praising the virtues of Shinran Shōnin.
however, did not succeed Kakunyo as Jyūshoku (or "residing priest") of the Hongwanji. Zennyo, Shakunyo, Gyōnyo, and Zonno are the names appearing in the patriarchal line after Kakunyo; and it was not until after these "residing priests" that the eighth patriarch, Rennyo Shōnin, who was the eldest son of Zennyo, came on the stage to give a new impetus to the development of the True Sect in Japan. Before the appearance of this remarkable personage, the Hongwanji was far from being an influential Buddhist denomination. Without him, it was perhaps impossible for the Hongwanji to achieve such a phenomenal progress and gain its full strength as it really did.

Rennyo Shōnin was born at Ōtani on Feb. 25 in the twenty-second year of Oyē (1415). His boyhood name was Hotei-marou, and he proved even in his early life to be a remarkable genius. On December 28, 1420, his mother mysteriously disappeared, leaving an advice for her now six years old boy, saying, "My dear child, make it your life's duty to revive the True Sect of Pure Land." Nobody knows where she retired, but her instruction left such a deep impression upon the boyish mind of Hotei-marou that he well remembered it later; and when he was fifteen years old he firmly made up his mind to carry out actually what his mother commanded him before.

When he attained seventeen years of age, he had his head shaved at the Shōren-in and assumed the Buddhist name, Kenjū. After he had first studied the philosophy of the Hossō Sect at Nara, he returned to Ōtani, and confining himself in a monastery there, he applied himself most assiduously to the study of the doctrine of his own Sect until he was thirty years old. In 1447, he travelled in the Eastern districts of Japan, and in 1449, in the North, everywhere visiting those historical landmarks associated with the memory of his forefather, the founder of the True Sect; and whenever he went, he was never tired of preaching the Good Law and giving a new life to the decadent faith of his followers.

In 1457, his father Zonno died, and as Rennyo Shōnin he now succeeded him at the age of forty-three and became the Jūshoku ("residing priest") of the Hongwanji. In June, 1460, he wrote a book entitled the "Shō-shin-
getai"⁴³ at the request of his disciple, Dōsai. It was about this time that he began writing the "Letters" (called in Japanese Ofumi) explaining the doctrine and faith of the True Sect in most plain language in order to make even the plainest seekers of the truth comprehend what he wishes to convey to their simple hearts. These "letters" are numerous, and it can be said without exaggeration that the revival of the faith of the True Sect is mainly due to the writing of these "letters" by the Shōnin. His influence, thus, gradually gained the ground all over Japan, and the increasing number of pilgrims steadily pressed on to the founder's shrine at Ōtani. The growing popularity, however, of Rennyo attracted the envious attention of the monks on the Hiyesan, whose bitter hatred of the rival finally induced them to destroy the Ōtani shrine by fire on January 10, 1465.

This compelled Rennyo to flee from Ōtani carrying the image of Shinran with him. For a while he settled in Ōtsu where he made his residence at the Chikamatsu-dera, a temple belonging to the Miidera. He did not stay long here, and moved from one place to another until in April, 1471, he made a trip to the northern district of Japan; and after preaching at various places in Echizen and Kaga Provinces, he built a temple at Yoshizaki, Echizen. Here again he attracted numerous followers from all the neighboring districts, who came to him earnestly inquiring about the faith of the True Sect and asking for his personal instructions. His success was most phenomenal.

The governor of Kaga Province, Togashi by name, however, who had been harboring an antagonistic feeling towards the Hongwanji and its supporters, made a sudden attack by force upon the temple at Yoshizaki in August, 1475. The Shōnin had to run away from his abode to the neighboring province, Wakasa, where he reached by boat. The True Sect followers of Kaga grew most indignant at this unjustifiable conduct on the part of their governor, and rose one man, declared war on him, and having succeeded in overturning his government, they took possession of the entire province of Kaga as under the dominion of the Hongwanji. This violent action of his devotees, however, did not please Rennyo, and they were severely reprimanded.

⁴³ A short commentary work on Shinran's Shō-shin-ge.
After this, he went on with his preaching without disturbance; and in 1477, aided by Dōsai, his disciple, he made up a plan to build the main temple of the True Sect at Yamashina. The Hall of Image was completed in August, 1480, where the image of Shinran was removed from its temporary shelter at the Chikamatsu-dera. The main hall was finished in June of the following year.

When, in 1489, Rennyo Shōnin was seventy-five years old, he resigned his position as "residing priest" of the Hongwanji, whose duty now fell upon his son, Jitsunyo. In 1496, he built a branch temple at Ōsaka in Settsu Province, which was made his residence for four years. In February, 1499, he again removed to the main temple at Yamashina, and on March 25 of the same year he died at the advanced age of eighty-five.

Rennyo Shōnin was a rare religious genius. He may be regarded as an avatar of Shinran Shōnin, the Founder of the True Sect, who came on earth over again from his abode in Pure Land to save his faith from decline and fall. His preaching, the outcome of an overflowing heart, was full of love and kindliness, and was like water for the thirsty, like medicine for the sick. After his death, Jitsugo wrote a biography of his illustrious predecessor in one volume, called "Rennyo Shōnin Goichidai Ki Kikigaki," while another biography, "Rennyo Shōnin Yitoku Ki," was compiled by Rengo, another son of Rennyo. His letters, eighty in number and in five volumes, were collected by Yennyo, son of Jitsunyo, under the title of "Ofumi," which means the "Honorable Letters." Since then, the followers of this Hongwanji Branch have made it their daily religious practice to sing the "Shōshin Nembutsu Ge" and "Wasan" and to recite the "Letters" before their family shrines of the Buddha.

Thus was the Hongwanji established by Rennyo, at Yamashina. After him came Jitsunyo, who, in 1525, handed over his high-priesthood to Shōnyo, son of Yennyo. During the latter's office, that is, in August, 1532, Rokkaku Sadayori, helped by unruly followers of the Hokke Sect, assailed the Hongwanji and burned it to the ground. Thereupon, Shōnyo, carrying the image of the founder with him, removed to the branch temple in Ōsaka (at Ishiyama), where he died in 1554.
He was succeeded by his son, Kennyo. In 1570, he was forced to wage war on Oda Nobunaga, the famous general, who frequently hurled his strong army against the Hongwanji, but with no perceptible success; for the followers of the True Sect were so devoted to their cause that they were ready to sacrifice their lives whenever necessary.

In 1580, Kennyo Shōnin, in accordance with the Imperial command, contracted terms of peace with Oda Nobunaga and removed to Sagi-no-mori in the Province of Kii. In 1582, however, the unfaithful General planned an unexpected assault upon Sagi-no-mori with a large army. To capture Kennyo as prisoner of war, his soldiers were about ready to force the gate of the Hongwanji on June 3, when the news of the assassination of the General by his retainer, Akechi Mitsuhide, reached the attacking enemy, which thereupon beat a hasty retreat. Kennyo Shōnin and his temple were thus miraculously saved from the impending peril.

In 1583, Kennyo moved to Kaidzuka in Idzumi; in 1591, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the illustrious general, donated a tract of land at Nishi-Rokujō in the city of Kyōto for the rebuilding of the Hongwanji. Kennyo lived only one year after his last removal to Kyōto, for he died in the year following (1592). The mantle of the residing priesthood now fell upon the shoulders of Kyōnyo, the eldest son of Kennyo.

III. THE EASTERN HONGWANJI.

In September, 1594, Kyōnyo Shōnin resigned his position as "Jūshoku" (residing priest) of the Hongwanji at Horikawa, Nishi-Rokujō, in favor of his brother, Junnyo, while Kyōnyo himself made his residence at the new Hongwanji built (1602) at Karasu-maru, Higashi-Rokujō, the site of which was donated by Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa Shōgunate government. Since then, the Hongwanji at Horikawa was designated the Western Hongwanji and the one at Karasu-maru the Eastern Hongwanji. With the co-existence of these two centers of power, the followers of the True Sect and their numerous local temples were naturally divided into two groups, alleging their loyalty to either of their two mother Hongwanjis. Those who went to the Eastern Hongwanji were called the Eastern Branch,
and the other the Western. Ever since that time, these two branches of the Hongwanji have kept on their brotherly relations, each endeavoring to contribute to the prosperity of their common cause. In 1881, the Eastern Branch came to be known as the Ōtani Branch, while the Western the Hongwanji Branch.

After the division, those who successively occupied the position of Jūshoku ("residing priest") or Hosshu ("the chief abbot") at the Eastern Hongwanji were: Kyōnyo, Sennyo. Takunyo, Jyōnyo, Ichinyo, Shinnyo, Jyūnyo, Tatsunyo, Gonnyo, and Gennyo. The present Hosshu is Shōnyo who is called Kōyen.

Since its first establishment in 1602, the Eastern Hongwanji had suffered no disaster until 1788 when the great fire of Kyōto consumed the greater parts of the city, and the temple too could not escape its devastating progress. It was rebuilt in 1798, but in 1823 it was again destroyed by a fire. The building was restored in 1835, and burned again in 1858 when Kyōto suffered another great fire. Though a temporary hall was constructed in 1860, it met the same disaster as before, when a war broke out within the city in 1864. The present magnificent building was finished in 1895.

The Eastern Branch, since its early history, has encouraged the study of its canonical writings and the education of able preachers; and it was during the Kwambun era (1661-1672) that the Lecture Hall of the Kwanzeon-ji was removed from Tsukushi, and the first school was established in Shōsei Garden, better known by the name of Kikoku-tei. In 1754, this school was transferred to Takakura, Kyōto, and the curriculum was prepared on an extended scale. This is what is known as the Takakura College. Among the many noted scholars that were educated at the College, there were the following: Yekū, Yenen, Yerin, Zuiye, Jinrei, Senmyō, Ton-ye, Hōkei, Gitō, Hōkai, Daigan, Tokuryū, Reiwō, Relyō, Shūzon, Giyō, Ryūwon, Gidō, Jingō, Giten, Gyōchyū, Sengan, Senryū, Kakuju, etc.

By these savants, the philosophical foundations of not only the True Sect but all the other Buddhist sects were minutely investigated. Since the introduction of Western sciences into the Far East, the College granted the establishment of a new department where Buddhism as well as the sciences
and philosophies of the East and West will be studied. In 1901, this new department was transferred to Sugamo, Tōkyō, and another enlargement and innovation was carried out in order to meet all the requirements of modern education. It can safely be said that this College at present offers a most complete course of study for investigators of Buddhism. After its removal to Tōkyō, the College was first presided by Kiyozawa Mansi; and Nanjō Bunyū was his successor.

In 1911, this College was again transferred to Takakura, Kyōto, and the name of Shinshū Daigaku was changed to that of Shinshū Ōtani Daigaku. It was first presided by Ōtani Yeiryō, younger brother of the present Hosshu, Shōnyo Shōnin. He was then the chief of the educational department of the Eastern Hongwanji. During his presidency, the present new buildings were completed at Oyama, in Kami-gamo, north of Kyōto. In the last year, Nanjō Bunyū became its president.

Since 1888, the Eastern Hongwanji has been building schools for boys as well as for girls in various parts of Japan, the largest of which is now at Imakumano, Kyōto, where are educated 700 boys belonging to the True Sect. One can judge from this how increasingly influential is growing the educational activity of the Eastern Hongwanji in these days.

Several monthly periodicals are issued by this branch of the True Sect. "The Shūhō" is the official organ containing the business reports of the Sect and the accounts of the missionary activities at home and abroad. The paper in which are published the results of scholarly investigation relating to religion and philosophy in general is called "The Mujintō," while those periodicals which concern themselves with the practical side of religion are "The Seishinkai," "The Fukyōkai," "The Kyūdō," "The Kwanren," "The Futoku," "The Shinfukyō," "The Makoto," "The Dōhō," "The Hōzō," "The Hōwa," "The Hikari," "The Shinsekai no Tokufū," etc. Besides these, there are many important writings yearly coming from the pen of scholars belonging to the True Sect.

The Eastern Branch of Hongwanji is at present showing the tendency to become a spiritual center of Japan. The Buddhist families belonging to this denomination amount to more than several millions, and it has over fifty
Betsuin (or branch temples), some 8160 Matsuiji (or local temples), and several hundreds of lecture halls (or in Japanese Sekkyōjo) distributed all over the country. The managers of these places are called either "Rimban," or "Jyūshoku," or "Shunin"; and the Jyūshoku of the local temple, that is, Matsuiji, is hereditary as is the master (hosshu) of the mother Hongwanji.

The followers of this Sect belong either to a branch temple (betsuin), or to a local temple (matsuji), or to a lecture hall (sekkyōjo); and they are called its "Danke" (supporters or donors) or "Kōjū" (members or associates). The relation between the local temple and its supporters is close and cordial.

Missionaries are regularly despatched from the headquarters, who will preach on fixed dates at a branch temple, or local temple or lecture hall. We have at present about 2500 of such travelling preachers. In the larger towns there are some stationary teachers whose mission is to visit factories, educational institutions, young men's associations, etc.; they may also respond to invitations from the military post stationed there. There are about 120 stationary teachers. We have, further, several tens of the religious advisers who are sent to teach in the penitentiaries at the request of the government.

The Eastern Hongwanji also spends much for philanthropy. One of its successful works attracting much public attention is the establishment of a free lodging station for the poor, in Tōkyō.

The building of a branch temple (betsuin) at Shanghai in 1876 marked the beginning of the foreign missionary work by the Eastern Hongwanji. Since then, the missionaries have been sent to several places in China, Korea, and other lands. These foreign missionaries are called Kaikyōshi, meaning carriers of the Good Law throughout the world in order to bring our brethren to enlightenment.
2. Teachings of the True Sect of Pure Land

I. The Canonical Books.

The Buddha Shākyamuni left no writings of his own, and all we have of his teachings come from what his disciples retained in their memory and committed to writing after his death. These writings are called "sūtras" or canonical books, of which a large number is still in existence. Among them, there are three sūtras giving a full account of Amitāyus Buddha who brought his effective name into perfection in order to save all sentient beings from sinking into the abyss of sin. The following are the three:

1. The Amitāyus-sūtra or Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra. Two volumes. In this the venerable Shākyamuni talks to Ānanda and Maitreya on the Mount Grāhrakūta concerning the spiritual history of Amida. It was translated into Chinese in 252 A.D., by Samghavarman.

2. The Amitāyur Dhyāna-sūtra. One volume. This records what Shākyamuni preached for Ānanda and Vaidehī at the Royal Palace in Rājagṛha concerning the possibility of all sentient beings to be born in the Pure Land of Amitāyus Buddha after the deliverance from this world of suffering. It was translated into Chinese in 424 A.D., by Kālayashas.

3. The Amitāyus sūtra, or Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra. One volume. In this is recorded what Shākyamuni preached for Shāriputra at the garden of Anāthapindika, Shrāvasti, concerning the magnificence of the land of happiness and the virtues of Amitāyus Buddha. It was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva in 402 A.D.

Of these three sūtras, what is most important is the Amitāyus sūtra in two volumes; for it is in this sūtra that the true signification of Amida to save all sentient beings is explained with thoroughness, and the teaching of the True Sect of Pure Land is no more than the doctrine enunciated in this sūtra. As to the signification of the other two sūtras, we assume a double interpretation, apparent and inward. The apparent signification of these sūtras, then, is that they supply us with a provisionary means whereby we
are finally led to the ultimate reason of salvation by faith in Amida, while inwardly they unfold the real purport of salvation by faith in Amida, which is also the teaching of the Amitāyus sūtra in two volumes. Thus, all these canonical books constitute the sacred lore of the True Sect, whose essential doctrine is to show the way of salvation through the grace of Amida.

There were a great many Indian, Chinese and Japanese predecessors of Shinran Shōnin, who like him preached the true doctrine of salvation by faith. And of these we regard the following seven as most contributing to the development of the teaching of the True Sect: that is, in India we have Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu; in China, Donran (T’an-liuan), Dōshaku (Taoch’ao), and Zendō (Shan-tao); and in Japan, Genshin and Genkū (also called Hōnen). They are designated the Seven Fathers (Kōsō, meaning "great patriarchs") of the True Sect. Each one of them left special writings elucidating the faith and philosophy of it; they are:

Nāgārjuna—"Dashabhūmi-vibhāsha-shāstra," the ninth chapter on "The Easy Practice."

Nāgārjuna—"The Twelve Reverences" (Jyūni-rai).

Vasubandhu—"Discourse on Pure Land."

Donran—"Commentary" on the above work by Vasubandhu. 2 vols.

Donran—"Hymn Praising Amida Buddha."


Zendō—"The Jōdo-hōji-san."

Zendō—"The Kwannen-hōmon."

Zendō—"The Wōjō-raisan."

Zendō—"The Hanju-san."


Genkū—"The Senjaku-hongwan-nembutsu-shū; 2 vols.
From this, it is evident that the fundamental truth of the True Sect was first taught by Shākyamuni himself, which was later developed in detail and made more manifest by these seven fathers of the Sect, while Shinran Shōnin synthesised all these teachings severally brought forward by his predecessors into one system and gave it the name of the True Sect of Pure Land, whereby the doctrine of salvation by faith gained a new and deeper and clearer significance. In this sense, therefore, he is the founder of the True Sect, and his work on the "Doctrine, Practice, Faith, and Attainment" of the True Sect is its fundamental book. As to the other authoritative books published later than the one just mentioned, we have had occasion to refer to them in a previous chapter.

II. SYSTEMATISATION.

Buddhism is a most complex system of religion, and its founder, Shākyamuni, taught his followers in various ways according to their different abilities, characters, and dispositions; the Buddha opened many a gate of entrance for his disciples, and of these we now distinguish generally two main entrances or pathways to salvation. One of them is the way directly leading to the truth of salvation whereby one can escape from a world of suffering; while the other is a provisionary way which will prepare one to enter finally upon the path of truth. It is necessary for students of Buddhism to keep this distinction in mind. Let us now see what an insight Shinran Shōnin had into the essential truth of Buddhism, according to what it taught in the above-mentioned three sūtras and by those seven great predecessors of his.

Buddhism divides itself into two principal schools, the Lesser and the Greater Vehicle; the former is for the Shrāvakas and Pratyeka-buddhas, who are satisfied with a comparatively inferior attainment, while the Greater Vehicle teaches the way of great enlightenment whereby is made possible the attainment of Buddhahood. Therefore, the doctrine of the Greater Vehicle must be regarded as superior to that of the Lesser Vehicle. But in the former we again distinguish what is called the "Path for the Wise" (shōdōmon) from that of "Pure Land" (jōdomon). The "Path for the Wise" is
one that will lead a Buddhist to sagehood while on earth, by uprooting the passions and disciplining himself in all virtues; whereas the "Path of Pure Land" teaches us to attain to Buddhahood by being born in the Pure Land of Amida. The "Path for the Wise" requires one to gain enlightenment through one's own efforts, and its prescribed discipline is naturally beset with difficulties. Therefore, it is properly called the "jiriki-kyō" or the doctrine of self-salvation, by which it is meant that one can be saved by one's own efforts; or the "nangyō-dō," which is to say, the way difficult to practise.

The "Path of Pure Land," on the other hand, teaches the possibility of attaining enlightenment through a power other than oneself; and, therefore, this way must be considered far easier than the other, and we call it the "tariki-kyō," that is, the doctrine that teaches salvation by a power other than one's own; it is also called the "igyō-dō," which means the way easy to practise. It is evident, then, that if a man is not highly endowed with wisdom and intelligence, the following of the "Path for the Wise" must be said to be extremely difficult. For such people as ourselves who were born in these latter days far from the time of the Buddha, and who are not endowed with wisdom nor intelligence, the best policy will be to walk along the "Path of Pure Land," believing in salvation through the grace of Amida.

The Buddhism of the Greater Vehicle can also be viewed as having two classes of teaching, the "Gradual" (zen) and "Abrupt" (ton). The "Gradual" is the doctrine that teaches the attainment of final enlightenment after gradually passing through stages of discipline; while, according to the "Abrupt" teaching, one can reach the goal, as if by a sudden leap, without successively passing through various stages of ascension.

This distinction of the "Gradual" and the "Abrupt" can also be applied to the "Path for the Wise" as well as to the "Path of Pure Land." The "Gradual" teaching in the "Path for the Wise" says that Buddhahood is attainable by practising the six virtues of perfection (pāramitas) for a period of three asamkhyas and one hundred great kalpas. The "Abrupt" teaching in the "Path for the Wise," on the contrary, shows no such patience, for it declares that when a man gets enlightened as to his spiritual oneness with the Buddha, he is a Buddha. While this latter teaching of Buddhism points out the direct way of attaining Buddhahood, the "Gradual" way must be said to
be provisional in its relation to the one just mentioned, in as much as its function is to prepare one for the final and real comprehension of the truth.

Now, the distinction of the "Gradual" and the "Abrupt" in the "Path of Pure Land" is that, according to the former, one is able to enter into the Pure Land of Amida only by degrees, and not, as it were, at a stroke; for a man can only be born on the outskirts of Pure Land if he wishes to be there by the accumulation of good deeds through his own efforts, and it is after another accumulation of merits that he can have his faith firmly established and at last be a resident in the Pure Land proper: whereas the "Abrupt" doctrine teaches that when a man, having an immovable faith in the absolute saving power of Amida, completely resigns himself into the hands of the Buddha, this faith of his at once determines his destiny to be born in the Pure Land proper, and he is able to have a spiritual insight into the enlightenment of the Buddha. It is apparent, then, that this latter teaching penetrates more deeply into the truth of the doctrine of Pure Land than the other one, which is merely a provisionary or preparatory step leading up to the ultimate truth.

There are, thus, two classes or grades of teaching in the doctrine for the Wise as well as in that of Pure Land, provisionary and ultimate. But the ultimate teaching in the doctrine for the Wise, when compared to the corresponding grade of teaching in the doctrine of Pure Land, must be regarded as still belonging to the preparatory grade; for the former is the path beset with difficulties requiring an extraordinary amount of discipline to overcome them. The tabular view that follows will make us understand the foregoing argument more graphically:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buddhism</th>
<th>The Lesser Vehicle (Hinayāna)</th>
<th>for Shrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas</th>
<th>The Provisionary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Greater Vehicle (Mahāyāna)</td>
<td>&quot;Gradual&quot;</td>
<td>Path for the Wise—Provisionary one (Shu-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The conclusion of all this is that the "Abrupt" teaching in the doctrine of Pure Land is the final path leading to the truth of Buddhahood attainable by all sentient beings; and this is no more than the teaching of the True Sect of Pure Land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Abrupt&quot;</th>
<th>Path of Pure Land—Provisionary one (Wō-shutsu)⁴⁵</th>
<th>Path for the Wise—Ultimate teaching (Shuchō)⁴⁶</th>
<th>Path of Pure Land—Ultimate teaching (Wō-chō)⁴⁷</th>
<th>The Ultimate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

⁴⁴ "Lengthwise going-out."
⁴⁵ "Crosswise going-out."
⁴⁶ "Lengthwise passing-over."
⁴⁷ "Crosswise passing-over"

These four terms are too technical to be briefly explained here; suffice it to quote a passage from the Shinshū-kyōshi ("Principal teachings of the True Sect" by K. Ogurusu), relating to the subject. The translation is by Mr. James Troup of England.

"Again, within the Shōdōmon there are the methods (schools) of 'lengthwise going-out' and 'lengthwise passing-over.' The Hossō and San-ron Sects belong to the school of 'lengthwise going-out'; the Ke-gon, Tendai, Shin-gon, and Zen Sects belong to that of the 'lengthwise passing-over.' In the Jōdo-mon there are the methods of 'crosswise going-out,' and 'crosswise passing-over.' Salvation by various actions constitutes 'crosswise going-out.' This depends on the power of one's self. Salvation by remembrance of the Name of Buddha constitutes 'crosswise passing-over.' This depends on the Power of Another."
III. WHY CALLED THE TRUE SECT OF PURE LAND?

By the True Sect of Pure Land is meant the true teaching in the doctrine of Pure Land, that is to say, the way of truth that assures one's rebirth in the Pure Land of Amida.

We can imagine the existence of three paths leading to the Pure Land of Amida, one of which is broad and safe, while the other two are rough and narrow. This broad and safe one is the true way that assures our rebirth in Pure Land.

The Pure Land of Amida is a land of perfect beauty founded upon the truth of goodness, and not a particle of impurity could be brought in there. Therefore, however apparently good and praiseworthy in this world, human morality issuing out of a heart ever full of defilement cannot be said to be a good which is truly free from every trace of impurity; and it will be an impossibility to be born in Pure Land through our human will and moral discipline; nay, if indeed a person wants to be born there, he must absolutely renounce his self-will.

Through what power shall we be allowed to be born in Pure Land? The question has been answered in the very beginning of things, for the will of Amida entertains no doubt as to this point. That pure and beautiful land of happiness is for us; Amida, wishing to have us join him in Pure Land, is ever showering his light upon us in order to make us grow in wisdom and to become conscious of our sinfulness and falsehood, whereby we might come to entertain the desire of being born in the land of truth and goodness. It is thus entirely due to the effulgence of Amitābha (the Infinite Light) that we have at all grown conscious of the darkness existing in our hearts and awakened an aspiration after a land of eternal light. Amida who has brought up our minds to this state while we were altogether unaware of his existence, is now beckoning us, saying: "Hear my name of truth and goodness, awaken your consciousness of the impurity and falsehood darkening your hearts, and have your destiny absolutely entrusted into my hands that will save you from sin and ignorance." Those who listen to this call of Amida, and growing aware of their sinfulness, surrender themselves to the will of the Buddha, and grasp his hand of salvation with absolute
confidence, are embraced in the truth and goodness of his love that saves; and after death they will no more be the owner of such a defiled mind and body as they have now, but being born in the land of happiness and purity, will be given infinite wisdom and love. If it is not for the love of Amida that wills to save all beings, we shall have no opportunity to be born in his Land of Purity. Therefore, the true way of being born in the Buddha-country lies in crossing this sea of suffering on board the boat of love steered by Amida. This way is called the "Gugwan," by which is meant the Buddha's will to save all beings.

But there are some who can not resign themselves entirely to the Buddha's will to save; though approaching the true way, they are not yet quite ready to surrender themselves to Amida, whose arms are extended towards them for their salvation, but desire to be born in Pure Land through the merit of reciting his name with singleness of heart. These people, believing there is no other way of being born in Pure Land but through the reciting of Amida's name, place too much emphasis on the reciting itself and have the tendency to repeat the name of the Buddha as many times as they could. These are the people who want to be in Pure Land partly through their own efforts. They would be born on the outskirts of it if their hearts remain serene at the time of their death. We call, however, this way the "Shimmon," or real gate.

There are still others who can not enter even upon the path of the so-called "Shimmon"; for they so strongly believe in their own efficiency that they desire to be born in the Pure Land of Amida through the accumulation of merits gained by their own moral and religious deeds. Such people would be born on the outskirts of Pure Land if by the accumulation of merit their hearts remain undisturbed. This way is known as the "Yōmon," meaning the gate of importance.

These two gates or ways, the "Shimmon" and the "Yōmon," are not the true road leading to Pure Land. As there is mixture here of one's own impure will, one is barred from the Pure Land proper; only by the love of the Buddha, one is able to approach a region lying on the outskirts. To such one, the time will come when he will realise his own fault after years of self-discipline in the outlying district of Pure Land, and then he will for the first time come to the path of truth. It is, then, evident that these two gates are merely
provisionary, narrow ones furnished for those who are unable to enter at once upon the path of truth, while the "Gugwan" way is the only, true, ultimate one directly carrying us to the abode of Amida.

When a man thus perceives the existence of these three different roads to Pure Land, he must guard himself against going astray, and follow the true, straight road of the "Gugwan," The doctrine that teaches this, is called the True Sect of Pure Land, or briefly the True Sect.

IV. SALVATION.

In the True Sect of Pure Land, we have the true, all-embracing love of Amida to save all beings from ignorance and pain. It is the net of boundless compassion thrown by the Buddha's own hand into the sea of misery, in which the ignorant rather than the wise, the sinful rather than the good, are meant to be gathered up. This love and compassion is eternally abiding with the Buddha, whose will to save all beings knows no temporal limitations; and on this account the Buddha is called Amitāyus (Eternal Life). His power to save is manifest in his light. Though invisible to our defiled eyes, this light is constantly shedding its rays upon all sentient beings ever leading us onward to the awakening of faith. Those who have awakened this faith in the love of Amida which saves, are at once embraced in his light and destined to be born in Pure Land after death. This light is the will of Amida under whose merciful care all beings are made to grow; it reaches every part of the universe, knowing no spatial limitations. Therefore, the Buddha is also called Amitābha (Infinite Light). His will to save is, thus, infinite not only in time but in space, hence his two attributes, Amitāyus and Amitābha. In China and Japan, he is briefly known as Amida, meaning the Infinite.

Amida is the Father of all beings; he is the Only One; he has, from the very beginning of all things, been contriving to save the world, and once incarnated himself in the person of Dharmākara Bhikshu to deliver the message of happiness among us. Amida made the Bhikshu invoke forty-eight vows as recorded in the Amitāyus-sūtra, the main idea of which is that "I will make every one enjoy a rebirth in Pure Land if he listen to my name and believe in my will to save and rejoice in it." It is said that, before making
this wish, the Bhikshu cogitated for a period of five kalpas; that, in order to fulfil the wish, he accumulated innumerable merits by practising the six virtues for innumerable kalpas with a heart full of love and compassion and free from all defilement; and, finally, that the fulfilment of this vow took place ten kalpas ago. Amida is now summoning us to his Land of Purity by showing us his name that saves.

This world of ours is a defiled world filled with sin and suffering; neither the wise nor the ignorant are free from sin, the noble as well as the poor are suffering from pain. He that declares himself to be sinless must be either an insane man or an idiot. Even when, judging from our own ignorant conditions, we imagine ourselves happy, we may be deceiving ourselves; for in the Buddha's eye our apparent happiness may be a real pain. In such a world of impurity as this, it is impossible to find a true state of peace and happiness. Fame, wealth, love, learning,—so many evils are ever leading us downward into the abyss of utter darkness. Where can we then find a region which harbors no pain? There stands Amida pointing to his Land of Purity and Happiness (Sukhāvatī), where our worldly sufferings and tribulations are no more. In this land there always smiles the spring of peace. No pain, no sin, but all beauty, goodness, and joy. Those born there enjoy a happiness that knows no ending; they are endowed not only with infinite wisdom and liberty, but with pure love and compassion which has the power to save all beings from the world of pain. All this happiness enjoyed by those who are in Pure Land is the outcome of Amida's love and will to save.

Amida thus grudges nothing for our deliverance from sin; with various contrivances, good and excellent, he ever leads us to the way of salvation, and it is through his grace that we have in ourselves the reason of salvation and are allowed to enjoy its fulfilment. Now, Amida has two ways of showing his grace towards us: the one is called the "wōsō yekō," which means that the Buddha supplies us not only with the cause of our rebirth in Pure Land, but with its result; and the other is called the "gensō yekō," meaning that he confers upon us the power to come back to this world of pain even after our rebirth in Pure Land, in order to deliver our fellow-beings from sufferings. In the "wōsō yekō" there are four things to be
distinguished, which are teaching, practice, faith, and attainment. The following scheme will make us understand this better:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Wōsō yekō</th>
<th>1. Teaching, as set forth in the Amitāyus-sūtra (in two volumes).</th>
<th>Cause.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Practice, or reciting the name of Amida.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Faith, or believing in his will to save...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Attainment, or being born in Pure Land and becoming a Buddha...</td>
<td>Effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gensō yekō</td>
<td>Coming back to the world of suffering to save the fellow-beings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This will be explained more in detail:

*The Teaching.* Amida once assumed a human form and appeared on earth in order to save us from sin and ignorance; and Shākyamuni was he. The most important of all his teachings is the Amitāyus-sūtra translated into Chinese in two volumes, 252 A.D., in which is brought forth the true signification of salvation by Amida. In fact, the very object of his appearance on earth was to teach this sūtra and to establish the foundation of the True Sect of Pure Land. In other words, therefore, we can say that the True Sect is the direct revelation of Amida Buddha.

The Practice. We are now acquainted with the name of Amida according to the discourse by Shākyamuni, and we know that in this name is embodied the significance of Amida’s will to save; for to hear the name is to hear the
voice of salvation, saying, "Trust in me, for I will surely save you,"—a word coming directly from Amida. Such, indeed, being the sense embodied in the name of Amida, we must express deep feeling of gratitude by reciting his name as he wills when we have been able to hear the call of our Father so full of love and compassion. In Sanskrit, the recitation runs: "Namo ’mitāyushe Buddhāya" or "Namo ’mitabhāya Buddhāya," but in Japanese briefly "Namu Amida Bu."

While all other deeds of ours are more or less defiled, the reciting of "Namu Amida Bu" is an act free from impurities; for it is not we that recite it, but Amida himself, who, giving us his own name, makes us recite it.

The Faith. When we hear the name of Amida, we cannot help but believe in the certainty of our salvation, and this belief, too, comes from the grace of Amida. For (1) when we come to think of his will to save, we are unable to deceive ourselves as to our inner life full of falsehoods, and to behave as if we were thoroughly wise. This must be, because the will of Amida, pure and free from falsehood, descends upon us.

(2) The moment we hear the name of the Buddha and surrender ourselves to his will, we grow convinced of our own salvation through his grace and gain peace of mind; this will, however, be impossible, if not for the fact that Amida's will to save everyone who enters into his love affirms itself in us.

(3) The moment we believe in our salvation through his grace, we awake within ourselves a desire to be born in his Pure Land, and are happy in the conviction that it will be done as we desire. This must be due to the influence upon us of Amida's overflowing love which invites us to join him in Pure Land. Therefore, we conclude that, that we come to rely upon Amida for our salvation is entirely due to his grace and not to personal efforts. Indeed, this feeling of dependence, or this faith in Amida, is no more nor less than his own will.

The Attainment. The instant the belief is confirmed in our salvation through Amida, our destiny is settled that we are to be reborn in Pure Land and become a Buddha. Then it is said that we are all embraced in the light of Amitābha, and, living under his loving guidance, our life after the confirmation of faith is but filled with joy unspeakable, which is a gift of the
Buddha. Then we have no need to pray the gods or Buddhas for more happiness in this life; for are we not already enjoying all the happiness that could be obtained here? If we still have to suffer misfortune, it is the outcome of evil deeds committed by ourselves in the past; and this no amount of praying will remove. It is only after our rebirth in the Land of Happiness that we are allowed to lead a life absolutely free from pain.

At the end of our earthly life, we cast aside every trace of this defiled existence; and upon being born in the Land of Purity and Happiness, we attain to the enlightenment of the Buddha. And it is not necessary at this moment of rebirth to keep our last thoughts on earth in tranquillity, and wait for the coming of the Buddha to take us into his country. As we have already been living encircled by the rays of Amitābha Buddha, however disturbed our last moments, we are sure to be led into Pure Land through the mysterious operation of the Buddha's light.

The Land of Happiness is the garden of Nirvana. Those who are born there, gain the great enlightenment of Nirvana, enjoy a life everlasting, and are forever free from the bondage of birth and death. Not only this, they are then able to manifest themselves over and over again in the world of suffering in order to deliver their fellow-beings from sin and ignorance. All these innumerable happinesses we can enjoy come from no other source than the grace of Amida Butsu.

V. FAITH

What kind of faith does the True Sect require of its followers? Not much, only to surrender themselves to the will of Amida; and his will is: "Trust in me with singleness of heart, and you will assuredly be saved." Let us, therefore, surrender ourselves to his will and harbor no other thought than to be embraced in his arms of grace, wishing to be saved in the life to come. Amida is the leader of all the Buddhas. It is he who holds the key to all the mysteries of existence. When we bow before him in all humility, we shall be protected from evils by all the gods and Buddhas. All those followers of the True Sect who pray to a Buddha or Bodhisattva other than Amida are either misunderstanding, or do not fully believe in, the love of Amida, that
saves all beings without exception. A faith one entertains for an absolute being must also be absolute and unconditional. Let us, therefore, rely upon no other mystery than Amida himself, who is the mystery of mysteries; and it is he alone that can save us unconditionally and supremely.

The name of Amida is the most worshipful one in the whole universe; and all the roots of goodness and all the stock of merit are gathered up in this name; and the reciting of it is the noblest thing to do in the world, the best of all good deeds one could think of. When we recite the name of Amida, we grow conscious of the inferiority of all other deeds to the reciting itself. However noble, honorable, and beautiful a moral or religious deed may appear to our vulgar eyes, it has no power to lead us into the Pure Land proper where abides Amida himself, for we have nothing to add, even an iota, to the love of Amida which alone can save us from sin. All that we can do is to surrender ourselves,—our sin, our ignorance, our destiny, and our all,—into the all-embracing love of Amida, and to express our inmost feeling of gratitude for the grace of the Buddha by reciting his name.

To thus resign oneself to the will of Amida and to follow his guiding hand to salvation, is the faith required by the True Sect of its followers. In this faith we recognise two things: (1) that we are such sinful beings as are destined to be inhabitants of Hell, that we are prisoners forever to be confined in the world of pain, that our eyes of wisdom are closed and our legs of morality broken and we are spiritual invalids; (2) that it is the love of Amida who has cherished the thought of saving these sinful creatures and taken vows that he will not stop his efforts until every single being is carried to his Pure Land, that however sinful, all who believe in Amida and his will to save will surely be born in the Land of Happiness. How could we then but rejoice in the surety of our salvation through his grace?

In these two facts of faith all the followers of the True Sect agree, and know that this is altogether due to the will of Amida himself. and that we are absolutely dependent upon him. So long as we are not aware of our salvation through Amida, we may think that we are something, not altogether a negligible quantity; but we find ourselves entirely at fault, when we come to realise the merciful design of the Buddha to save us through his will of goodness and truth, our spiritual eyes are open to the inner darkness
of our hearts, full of impurities and falsehoods; and we are most penitent over our utter ignorance. While we were not acquainted with Amida's will to save, we thought we were lonely travellers not knowing whither to go, or like helpless orphans who have no loving parents, no greeting home. But the moment the name of Amida opens our hitherto unknown spiritual region in us, we are deeply grateful and happy. We now know that we are his children, he is our worshipful father who protects us every moment of our existence, that the home we are going to abide is already magnificently built, and that we, led by the guiding hand of our father, are approaching our home step by step. Such in brief is the faith entertained by the followers of the True Sect of Pure Land.

VI. LIFE.

The True Sect of Pure Land is a religion for the home, teaching to be loyal to master, filial to parents, affectionate to wife and children, to be industrious in work, doing all things that contribute to the general welfare, and believing in Amida's will to save. There is no necessity, according to the doctrine of the True Sect, to flee from the world and to discipline oneself in certain religious austerities; one may lead an official life, engage in business, or be a soldier, or farmer, or fisherman, each diligent in his chosen occupation, and believing in Amida with devoted heart. The life of the follower of the True Sect is not difficult; only let him, while continuing on his sinful and ignorant life, be most deeply grateful for the grace of Amida, who loves us so much as he is willing to save us as we are, ignorant and sinful; let us then recite his name from fulness of heart and be ever industrious in our daily work.

The will of the Buddha is manifest everywhere and in everything, it is present in the person of our teacher, parents, brother, wife, children, friends, and also in the State or community to which we may belong; the Buddha is protecting, nourishing, consoling, and instructing us in every possible way. What we owe to the Buddha is not only when we are carried into his Pure Land, but even when we are living our daily life on earth, for which latter fact we must also be deeply grateful. Let us not forget how
much we are owing to our present surroundings, and to regard them with reverence and love. We must endeavor as much as we can to execute our duties faithfully, to work for the growth of Buddhism, for the good of the family, state, and society, and thus to requite even a thousandth part of what we owe to Amida. To work thus for the world with a sense of gratitude is the true life of the Buddhist.

The Buddhist never loses an inward feeling of joy as he most deeply believes in his rebirth in Pure Land through the grace of the Buddha; but as far as his outward appearance go, let him have nothing particularly to distinguish himself as such from other people. A Buddhist officer, or Buddhist soldier, or Buddhist man of business has nothing remarkable about him as to single him out as Buddhist from among his fellow-workers; he obeys the moral laws, moves according to the regulations of the state, does nothing against habits or customs of his times and country, so long as they are not morally offensive; the only thing that distinguishes him most conspicuously from his non-Buddhist fellow-beings, is his inward life filled with joy and happiness, because of his faith in Amida's love to save all beings. For what constitutes the true Buddhist is his inner life, and not his outward features.