

POEMS BY KŌBŌ DAISHI

(Rendered by B. L. S.)

THE BU-PO-SO¹

Within the quiet forest,
Alone in the straw-thatched hut,
So early in the morning,
I hear the sound of a bird.
It sings of the Triple Treasure,
'Tis the Bu-po-so.
The bird has a voice for singing,
A man has a mind for thinking.
The voice and the mind,
The clouds and the stream,
Express the Buddha-wisdom.

PARTING²

Studying the same doctrine,
Under one master,
You and I are friends.
See yonder white mists
Floating in the air
On the way back to the peaks.
This parting may be our last meeting
In this life.
Not just in a dream,
But in our deep thought,
Let us meet often
Hereafter.

¹ The Bu-po-so is a large bird found in the depth of forests in Japan, Korea, and China. It is sacred in Buddhism, for its song repeats the syllables *bu-po-so*: *bu*=*butsu*=Buddha; *po*=*ho*=Dharma=Law; *so*=Sangha=Brotherhood.

² The parting was with Giso, one of Kōbō's fellow-monks studying under Keikwa. "The master" refers to this Keikwa.

AŚVAGHOSHA

The enlightenment which you have gained
 Differs not from what belongs
 To ultimate reality itself
 Primarily-entirely:
 Such is the teaching of Aśvaghosha.

THE ENLIGHTENED MIND

1

From the beginning
 That which I sought
 Lay in my hands.
 How stupid I was
 To have thought it an echo
 Floating to me
 From beyond!

2

Now enlightened, back I look,
 And lo! this new mind of mine—
 What is it but that very one
 Which formerly was covered o'er
 With clouds?

3

Think not that the light appears
 With the clearing of the clouds;
 The moon has been there all the while
 Shining in the sky,
 For ages past.
 So does the mind
 Eternally abide in me.