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THE LIFE OF SHINRAN SHONIN *

PART I

1

THE Shōnin in his worldly relation was a scion of the Fujiwara family. The twenty-first descendant of Prince Amatsu Koyane was the Grand Minister Kamatari, and after five generations there was Lord Uchimarō, of the first court rank, junior grade, who was General of the Imperial Guards and a state minister; and six generations after him there was Lord Saishō Arikuni, Police-General; and when five more generations passed there was Lord Arinori, who was a high court officer belonging to the service of the Empress Dowager of the time; and the Shōnin was born (A. D. 1173) as son of this noble personage. In consequence of his distinguished birth, his earthly prospects were full of promise. If he desired, he could have become a high dignitary at the Imperial court and enjoyed whatever prosperity he would have aspired to the end of his life. But his heart was inclined towards things unworldly; for he wished to devote himself to the holy cause of Buddhism and to increase the spiritual welfare of all beings. This looked-for opportunity came when he was nine years old. Accompanied by his uncle Lord Noritsuna, of the

* The author of this Life is Kakunyo Shōnin (1270-1351), the third Abbot of the Hongwanji. He was great-grand son of Shinran Shōnin. This is the earliest record in our possession of the life of Shinran. The translation is by D. T. Suzuki.

third court rank, junior grade, he went to the monastery of the venerable Jiyen. Jiyen had held till then a high ecclesiastical position called Daisōjo. The Shōnin had his head shaved by this noble priest and was given the Buddhist name Hanyen. After this he applied himself most earnestly to the study of the deep philosophy of the Tendai school concerning the three aspects of the mind and especially to the mastery of a profound system expounded by Yeshin who used to live at the Ryōgon-in, Yokawa. There was thus nothing in the Tendai philosophy which escaped his penetrating insight, including the doctrine of the four grades in perfect harmony which are distinguished in the teaching of the Buddha.

2

During the first year of Kennin (A. D. 1201, when he was twenty-nine years old) his earnest heart, ever intent on spiritual and unworldly things, induced him to call on Genkū Shōnin at his Yoshimidzu monastery; for he wished to walk in the high way of Easy Practise, finding it very uncertain to plod along the narrow path of Difficult Practice in these later days when humanity is so degraded. The venerable Genku (i. e., Hōnen) in whom the True Sect finds a most illustrious transmitter of its doctrine, took special pains to explain to him in a most exhaustive manner the essentials of his teaching and their ultimate signification. As soon as this was done, the Shōnin instantly came to realise the inmost meaning of the doctrine of salvation through Amida and his all-embracing love for sentient beings; and to his heart's fullest content, he found his faith firmly established in the truth that leads every sentient being, however ignorant, to the direct path of the Pure Land.

3

On the fifth day of the fourth month in the third year of Kennin, the Shōnin had a vision at night in the hour of the

Tiger. According to the "Record," "Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara of the Rokkakudo manifested himself before the Shōnin in the form of a holy monk whose serene countenance was awe-inspiring. He was clad in white robe (*kashaya*), sitting quietly in a huge white lotus flower, and spoke to Zenshin (i. e., Shinran) in an authoritative voice: 'When the devotee finds himself bound by his past karma to come in contact with the female sex, I will incarnate myself as a most beautiful woman and become his object of love; and throughout his life I will be his helpmeet for the sake of embellishing this world, and on his death I will become his guide to the Land of Bliss.' 'This,' continued the Bodhisattva, 'is my vow. Thou, Zenshin, shalt announce the signification of this my vow to the world and make all sentient beings know of it.' At this time, Zenshin still in a state of trance looked eastward facing directly the Rokkakudo, and descried a range of high mountains, on the highest peak of which were found congregating an immense number of people. He addressed them as commanded by the Bodhisattva, and when he imagined that he had come to the end of his address, he awaked from the dream."

When we think of the purport of this vision as described in the "Record," we notice herein symbolised an auspicious opening for the establishment of the True Sect and the propagation of its doctrine of salvation. Thus says the Shōnin later on: "Buddhism was first founded in the West, and that we have its sacred books in this country now is altogether due to the perfect virtue of Prince Jyōgū, which was higher than a mountain and deeper than the ocean. It was during the reign of the Emperor Kimmei of our Imperial House that the Buddhist literature was brought here over the sea, and with it came those Sūtras and Śāstras on which the doctrine of the Pure Land Sect is based; if in those days the Imperial Heir were not disposed to spread his benevolence

far and wide, how could the poor and ignorant become acquainted with the Buddha's vows for universal salvation? As Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is the original abode of the Imperial Heir, Jyōgū, he revealed in his august original abode in order to make known his vows, that is, to incarnate himself in a human form and thereby to advance the cause of Buddhism.

“And again, if my Great Teacher, the venerable Genkū, were not sent away into a remote province by the authorities, how should I ever live a life of banishment? And if I did not live a life of banishment, how could I hope to have the opportunity to convert the people living far away from the centre of culture? This too must be ascribed to the virtue of my venerable Teacher.

“My Great Teacher, the venerable Genkū, was no other personage than an incarnation of Bodhisattva Mahāsthama, while Shōtoku, the Imperial Heir, was an earthly manifestation of Avalokiteśvara. It devolves upon me under the guidance of these two Bodhisattvas now to proclaim far and wide the original vows of the Tathāgata, through which it is that the True Sect has arisen and the doctrine of *Nembutsu* (recitation of the Buddha's name) is gaining ground. This, however, is all due to the instructions of the holy ones altogether independent of the achievements of my humble self. The twofold vows as offered by these two august beings are to recite the name of the One Buddha with singleness of heart. The followers of Buddhism these days ought not to go astray and pay their reverence to those two personages who stand by the Buddha; let them adore the One only.”

Thus the reason why the Shōnin Shinran pays his respect to the Imperial Heir along with the Buddha himself is that he is grateful for his greatest deed of benevolence which made it possible for Buddhism to spread all over this land.

4

On the ninth day of the second month in the eighth year of Kencho (A. D. 1256), at the Tiger's hour at night, Shaku Renyi had a vision in which he was told of the Imperial Heir, Shōtoku, who, prostrating himself before the Shōnin Shinran, said: "I must reverently bow to the Great Merciful Buddha Amida, who has revealed himself on earth in order to propagate the doctrine full of spiritual meaning; for it is through him that I, born in a world of evils and at the time of the five defilements, was enabled most assuredly to attain the highest wisdom." According to this, it is evident that the Shōnin, the founder of the True Sect, was no other personage than an incarnation of Amida Tathāgata.

5

While the venerable Teacher, Genkū, was yet on earth, he was so kindly disposed towards the Shōnin that the latter was graciously allowed to have access to the writings of the Teacher and even to copy them, and again that the Teacher himself condescended to write the name of the Shōnin and gave him the inscription. Thus, we read in one of the Shōnin's writings, entitled *Passages Collected to Show the Truth of the Pure Land Doctrine*: "Thus, I, Shinran, the simple-hearted man with a shaven head, during the era of Kennin abandoned the practise of unessential work and found the home in the original vows of Amida. During the era of Genkyu, I was permitted through the gracious consideration of the Teacher to copy his work, *Selected Passages*, while in the same year, on the fourteenth day of the first summer month, he inscribed in my copy the inside title of the book, which is, *Selected Passages Concerning the Original Vows of the Pure Land*, and together with it: 'Na-mu-a-mi-da-bu-tsu: for those who wish to be born in the land of Amida, the one thing needed is to recite the name of the Buddha. Given to

Shaku Shakkū.' This was written by the Teacher's own hand. On the same day I was permitted to carry his portrait home in order to make a copy of it.

"In the second year of the same era, which was a leap year, on the twenty-ninth of the seventh month, I was given his own portrait with an autograph inscription: '*Na-mu-a-mi-da-bu-tsu*: Upon my attainment of Buddhahood, if sentient beings in the ten quarters of the world, who recited my name once or repeated it up to ten times, were not to be born in my land, then I would not embrace the supreme wisdom. This Buddha is at present abiding in Buddhahood; therefore let it be known that his original vows, his grand vows have already been fulfilled, and whoever recites his name will assuredly be born in his land.'

"Again, according to a vision, my Teacher had my name, Shakkū, changed into Zenshin, and on the same day with his own hand he inscribed my new name.

"My venerable Teacher, Shōnin Genkū, is seventy-three years old this year. His *Selected Passages Concerning the Original Vows of the Pure Land* was compiled in compliance with the request of the devout Buddhist Prime Minister, Tsukinowa Kanezane, and it comprises all the essential teaching of the True Sect and the inmost signification of *Nembutsu*, which will readily be comprehended by those who study them. The work is the efflorescence of faith so rare and unsurpassable; it is the holy treasure of Buddhism unfathomably deep. Though there have been hundreds of thousands of people who come to receive instructions from the Teacher—the period of their discipleship ranging from days to years—and whatever relationship to the Teacher, distant or near, they may have had, still they have all found quite a rare occurrence to be permitted to see and copy his work; whereas I have had all these privileges granted, that is, the copying of his literary production as well as his own portrait. This I must ascribe

to the merit of engaging myself in the orthodox work with singleness of heart. It is symbolic of the assurance of one's rebirth in the country of Amida. And for this reason, restraining my tears of sadness and gratitude, I have hereby recorded all these circumstances."

6

While the venerable Genkū was still alive, he was ever devoted to the propagation of the doctrine of salvation through "The Other" and rebirth in Amida's country and the entire world was then anxious to listen to his teaching. Not only were the Imperial personages ready to pluck the golden flowers of the Pure Land, but the noble lords of the highest ranks were glad to gaze at the moon shining on the forty-eight vows of Amida. Nay, even the people, remote and humble, were glad to come to the venerable Teacher and pay him homage. Thus, his followers, noble and lowly, coming thick upon him, converted his residence into a sort of busy market. Those monks who were in constant attendance on him numbered about three hundred and eighty. In spite of this, however, those who were personally cared for by the Teacher and who earnestly followed his instructions were not many, hardly numbering more than five or six.

The Shōnin Zenshin once said to his Teacher: "Since my abandoning of the Difficult Practise for the Easy and entering into the Gate of the Pure Land away from the Path for the Wise, I have ever been under your wise guidance whereby I was made to walk along the path of emancipation. If not for you, what would become of me? For that reason, I know not how to give vent to my feeling of happiness and gratitude.

"There are however many fellow-believers of mine, all of whom have had the friendship of belonging to the same company under one director, and yet we know not one another well as regards our inner faith, whether it is such as

to enable us to be born in the country of Amida or not. Besides, I have a desire to know who among us could be real spiritual friends in our coming lives, and also to have a sort of meeting to test our faith while still living here. Will you kindly permit me to say a few words to my fellow-believers on such an occasion as seems proper?"

To this the Teacher replied, "Your request is most reasonable. You shall speak to them when they all come here tomorrow."

The next day when they were assembled, the Shōnin requested them to arrange themselves into two groups according to their views on what constitutes the stage of infallibility, that is, whether it is attained by faith or by work. Some three hundred fellow-believers of his, who were present at this meeting, seemed not to comprehend fully the sense of this request. There were two, however, who declared themselves as belonging to the group of those who believed in the all-importance of faith: they were Seikaku, who was a Hōin, Daikwashō-i, and Shaku Hōren called Shinkū Shōnin.

Later came in Hōriki, Kamagaye Nohozane, a lay-disciple of the Teacher and asked, "My venerable Zenshin, what are you engaged in?" Replied the Shōnin, "Sir, we are trying to make a distinction between those who believe in the all-importance of faith and those who believe in work as most essential." Said Hōriki, "If this be the case, I must not be omitted, for I will join the rank of those who believe in the all-importance of faith." Thereby, Zenshin took down his name as requested, while the rest of those present numbering several hundred had not a word to say concerning the matter in question. Perhaps this silence was due to their inability to free themselves from the bondage of "self-salvation" and to the darkness of their inner faith which was not so solid and genuine as a diamond. Thus, as they remained

silent, the Shōnin who was acting as recorder, put his own name down. After a while, the venerable Teacher said, "I also will take a seat with those who believe in the all-importance of faith." Then among his disciples, some humbly and devoutly expressed their willingness to follow his example while others felt dejected over their weakness of faith.

7

Said the Shōnin: "When we were once gathered in the presence of the Teacher, the venerable Genkū, including such personages as Shōshimbo, Seikwambo, Nembutsubo, and many others, we entered unexpectedly into a heated discussion. This was raised by my remark to the effect that the faith entertained by the Teacher and myself so completely coincided that there could not be any distinction whatever between his and mine. The others present did not agree with me and raised an objection, saying, 'We cannot see any reason in your remark that the faith of the Teacher and your own are one and the same. How could they be one?' I then said, 'Why should I not say that they are one? Of course, I am not so presumptuous as to imagine for a moment that I am equal to the Teacher in deep wisdom and wide learning; but as far as my faith in the Pure Land of Amida is concerned, it has been firmly established since my listening to the doctrine of salvation by "The Other" and I have ever been free from the notion of "by one's self." Now, the faith of the Teacher is based upon a power other than oneself, and so is mine. Hence my declaration that they are both one and the same.'

"Thereupon, the venerable Teacher truly observed: 'Faith varies so long as it is based on one's self, for we all have different intellectual capacities, and the faith based upon them cannot be identical; whereas the faith based upon a power other than oneself is one that is given by the Buddha

to us ignorant beings regardless of our moral attainments; and therefore, what makes up my faith cannot in any way differ from the faith embraced by Zenshin, they are identical. My faith is not the outcome of my ingenuity. Those who entertain a faith other than that which has just been referred to, may not go to the same Pure Land where I am bound for. Let this be thoroughly understood by all.'

"With this, they held their tongues and did not speak a word."

8

Nyūsaibo, one of the disciples of the Shōnin, was wishing for some time to have his portrait painted, and the Shōnin reading his thought told him to engage the artist, Jōzen Hōkyo, for the purpose, who was living near Hichijo. Feeling grateful for his kind insight, Nyūsaibo sent for the Hōkyo, who immediately responded to the invitation.

As soon as he came to the presence of the Shōnin, he said, "Last night I had a wonderful dream and the holy personage who appeared to me in it had exactly the same features as those of the one whom I now confront." Saying this, he was instantly moved with the feelings of deep gratitude and adoration, and related the story of the dream: "Two holy-looking monks came in, and one of them requested me to paint a picture of this spiritual being. I asked him who this spiritual being was, to which the reply was: He is the venerable monk who is enshrined at the Zenkōji temple as its founder. Though in a dream, I folded my hands together and knelt down most reverently. I was awe-struck and trembled all over, for I realised that I was facing Amida himself. The monk told me that the portrait might be simply that of his head. After this dialogue I awoke from the dream. On coming here, as I looked up at the venerable features before me, I perceived their perfect identity with the

holy monk in my vision." Saying this, he was in tears from excess of his grateful feelings.

Then he painted, according to the miraculous advice given in the vision, only the head of the Shōnin. The vision is said to have taken place on the night on the twentieth day of the ninth month in the third year of Ninji (A. D. 1242).

When we weigh the significance of this singular incident, it is evident that the Shōnin was a manifestation of Amida Nyorai. Therefore, his teaching must be regarded as the direct communication of Amida, which is on the one hand to dispel the darkness of this defiled world by means of the pure light of wisdom, and on the other to give the necessary moisture by sending down the spiritual rain of nectar, to us who are ignorant and confused and dying of dryness of heart. So let us adoringly believe this.

PART II

1

There were many Buddhist scholars, then, living in the South and the North of Kyoto, who were greatly irritated to see the rise of the Pure Land Sect at the expense of the Path for the Wise, which was steadily losing ground. They attributed this to the baneful influence of the venerable Genkū, and wished to have him incriminated without delay.

We read in the *Passages Relating to the Land of the Transformed Body, VI*: "All the schools, I observe, belonging to Path for the Wise, have long been on the decline, as far as their practical discipline and spiritual attainment are concerned; while the True Sect of the Pure Land is now making it possible for every one to come to spiritual attainment. The Buddhist monks belonging to the various other schools, however, have no adequate understanding of their

doctrine and are unable to distinguish truth from falsehood. Even so with the learned scholars of the Imperial capital, they have no definite ideas concerning practical morality, they are at a loss how to discriminate between right and wrong. The Buddhist monks of the Kōfukuji naturally took advantage of this fact, and early in the mid-spring of the first year of Jyōgen (1207) during the present reign, they maliciously denounced us to the Ex-emperor as well as to the reigning Emperor. Both master and subjects ignoring the law and regardless of the sense of justice, took offence and vowed vengeance. In consequence of this, Genkū the Teacher, the great illustrious founder of the True Sect, and several of his disciples were charged with crimes, of which they were quite innocent; some were summarily condemned to death, while others were deprived of their ecclesiastical orders, given secular names, and banished to the remote countries. Of the latter, I was one. Thenceforth, I am neither a monk nor a layman, and for my family name I have adopted the title 'Toku,' (bald-headed). Since the banishment of the Teacher, Genkū, and his disciples into various remote parts of the Empire, five years have now passed...."

The venerable Genkū was given the criminal name Fujii Motohiko and banished to Hakata in the province of Tosa; while the criminal name of the Shōnin Shinran was Fujii Yoshizane and banished to Kokubu in the province of Echigo. As to the execution and banishment of other disciples of his, no details will be given here.

During the enlightened reign of the Emperor, in the first year of Kenryaku (1211), on the twenty-seventh day of the eleventh month, Lord Norimitsu Okazaki, a high court official, delivered the Imperial message of pardon to the Shōnin, and to his receipt of the order he signed "Toku" (bald-headed man) as afore-mentioned.

Though thus pardoned, the Shōnin remained for some

time yet in his place of banishment, for he wished to continue his religious work already started there.

2

After Echigo, the Shōnin transferred his abode to Hidachi, where he settled at the village of Inada in the country of Kasama. Though his cottage was a lonely one far from town, there was always a large number of anxious truth-seekers, noble and lowly, lay and monkish, who knocked at his rustic gate. His long cherished desire to see the Buddha's Law widely propagated, as well as his ever-abiding desire for the welfare of all beings, were thus satisfactorily brought to a consummation. "This," said the Shōnin then, "fully coincides with what in my former days I was given to understand in a vision through the order of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara."

3

When the Shōnin was thus engaged in the propagation of the doctrine of *Senju Nembu'su* (recitation of the Buddha's name with singleness of heart) in the province of Hidachi, few reviled him, and there were many who faithfully followed his instructions. There was however one monk (said to be a *yamabushi*) who at times harboured a deep hatred against the Buddha's Law, and this hatred finally ripened into an evil intention upon the person of the Shōnin. He was occasionally seen looking for a timely chance. As the Shōnin was wont to travel a mountain-pass called Itajiki-yama, the man frequently waited for him coming up that way, but could never have an opportunity to meet the Shōnin. He pondered over this and considering it altogether extraordinary, he awakened a desire to see the Shōnin. So he visited him at his residence. The Shōnin without much ado bade him enter. As soon as the man came to the personal presence of the Shōnin, the evil intention he harboured at once vanished, and

overcome by repentance, he could not forbear weeping bitterly. After a while he frankly confessed all the evil desires that had been possessing him. But the Shōnin remained perfectly calm. Thereupon, the man instantly broke his bow and arrows, threw away his sword and stick, took off his headgear, and changing his persimmon-coloured garment, embraced the Buddha's teaching. It is said that he finally came to realise the faith. It was a miracle, indeed. The man was no other personage than Myōhōbo,—the name given him by the Shōnin.

4

The Shōnin, now leaving his abode beyond the eastern frontier, was on his way to the capital. When one day towards the evening he was labouring up the long weary pass of Hakone, along the track beaten only by a few travellers, he at last came to a solitary house. It was now past midnight, and the moon was about to wend her way down behind a neighbouring hill. The dawn was already approaching when the Shōnin walked towards the house and knocked at the door. In response, a man far advanced in years and in full dress, came out of it, betraying not the least sign of surprise, and said to the Shōnin: "Living as I am near a Shinto shrine, I was spending the whole night in the company of the priests, when I thought I fell asleep just for a few seconds. I was not exactly dreaming, or seeing a vision; but the god of the shrine addressed me, saying, 'A visitor whom I revere is just coming up this way, and you shall serve him most faithfully and hospitably, and prepare for him an especial feast....' I had hardly recovered from this divine revelation when all of a sudden you appeared at the door. How could you then be an ordinary personage? The divine words leave no room for doubt, and their instant actualisation commands my utmost respect." So saying, he

treated the Shōnin most worshipfully both in heart and body, serving him with various foods and some rare delicacies.

5

After returning to his native town, the Shōnin reflected upon the past, and realising how years come and go like a dream or a vision, he came to look upon his earthly abode in the metropolis as a thing not worth troubling his mind. He moved from one place to another, sometimes in the west and sometimes in the east. And there was one near Gojō and Nishi-no-Tōin, to which he took a fancy for a while as he considered the site fine. Here were gathered those disciples of his, coming from various quarters, who had in former days received his personal instructions, and renewed their friendship.

In those days there was living a commoner called Heitaro of an unknown family in the village of Ōbu, Nakanosai county, in the province of Hidachi, who embraced the doctrine of the Shōnin with singleness of heart. This Heitaro was on one occasion obliged on account of his profession to pay homage to the Kumano shrine and came to the Shōnin to get enlightened on the matter. The Shōnin then said to him :

“Now, the Holy Teaching has many forms, and each one is productive of great benefits when it is in full accordance with the character of a believer. In these latter days, however, the practise of the Path for the Wise is by no means to be recommended. For we read: ‘In the time when the Law begins to decay, not one among myriads of beings could be found who could gain the Path, however he might discipline himself (according to the Path) and try to observe the Law’; and again, ‘But there is one gate of the Pure Land through which only he may enter the way.’ These are the words unmistakably set forth in our sacred books and

commentaries as uttered by the golden mouth of the Tathāgata himself.

“It was upon this true doctrine of the Pure Land, the only reality, that those venerable patriarchs in the three countries founded their teachings; so what I advise you is not from my selfish will. Absolute single-heartedness as they expound it constitutes the essence of the doctrine of rebirth in the Pure Land, and is the backbone of our religion. While this doctrine is sometimes esoterically and sometimes exoterically set forth in each of the three canonical books, we cannot fail to recognise everywhere in an unmistakable manner where the context and the general meaning tend. In the Larger Sutra, the three classes of believers are mentioned, and yet they are all urged to accept the ‘absolute single-heartedness,’ and in the concluding part of the Sutra this doctrine is committed to Maitreya. In the Meditation Sutra, the threefold heart is mentioned in connection with the nine grades of rebirth, and the Sutra is entrusted to the hands of Ananda. Finally, the one heart referred to in the Smaller Sutra is testified by all the Buddhas. Therefore, the author of the *Discourse on the Pure Land* treats of the one heart and Donran comments on the doctrine of absolute single-heartedness. Whatever texts we thus resort to, they are all one in upholding this doctrine.

“The original abode of Shōjōden is no other than Amida, the ever-present master of our faith, who, desiring to come in contact with all sentient beings in every possible relation, has left his earthly trace (in Kumano). The ultimate signification of this—his leaving an earthly trace here—is to let in all such sentient beings to the seas of the original vows as have come in touch with him in whatever way. Therefore, whoever believing in the vows of Amida, the original abode, are engaged in the recitation of the name of the Buddha with singleness of purpose, are entirely free from the work-

ings of a selfish heart, even when in conformity to their public duties or to their master's instructions, they tread on the grounds of a god to pay homage to his shrine or temple. This being so, it is not necessary to put on any outward form of wisdom or goodness or purity, though we are holding within ourselves all manners of falsehood and unreality, only let the vows of Amida, the original abode, work themselves out. O, be thou ever reverent! O, be thou ever reverent! Never think this is slighting the dignity of a god; and there will be no divine wrath whatever visited upon thy own person."

Accordingly, Heitaro on his way to the Kumano Shrine did nothing special towards the formal observation of the ceremonial rules; but as an ordinary mortal drowned in the mire of ignorance, he did not trouble himself much about the purification of his person. As to the original vows of Amida, however, he always kept them in deep reverence, not for a moment forgetting the instructions of his teacher. At last he arrived at his destination in safety. While in a dream that night he was visited by a layman who in full dress came out by opening the doors of the Shōjōden. He said to the man, "Why dost thou hold me in disrespect by not cleansing thyself from impurities?" When this was said, lo, all of a sudden there appeared the Shōnin directly confronting the layman, and said, "He is one who spends his days in the recitation of the name of the Buddha as instructed by me, Zenshin." Thereupon, the layman holding his *shaku*, respectfully bowed to him and did not utter another word. Heitaro awoke from his dream, and his wonderment at the incident was beyond description.

On his way home from the shrine, he stopped at the Shōnin's residence and told him every detail of his experience. To this, the Shōnin simply said, "That was what I meant." What a remarkable event!

6

Towards the latter part of mid-winter in the second year of Kōchō, (1262), the Shōnin showed the symptoms of a slight indisposition, and after that his talk never referred to earthly things, dwelling only on how deeply grateful he was to the Buddha; he uttered nothing but the name of Amida, which he constantly repeated. On the twenty-eighth of the same month, at noon, he laid himself on his right side with his head towards the north and his face towards the west; and when at last his recitation of the name of Amida was no more heard, he expired. He was then just completing his ninetieth year.

His abode was then in the western parts of the capital, (south of Oshikōji and east of Madenokōji,) and his remains were carried along the road east of the river, to Yenninji, on the western slope of Higashiyama and south of Torinobe. His ashes were gathered there and then deposited at Ōtani, which is situated north of Torinobe at the foot of Higashiyama. Not only those disciples who were present at his death-bed, but all other people, young and old, who received his instructions, unanimously mourned the passing of the Shōnin, recalling the days of his earthly life and lamenting his Shōnin, recalling the days of his earthly life and lamenting his disappearance from their midst.

7

In the ninth year of Bunye, (1272), the tomb at Ōtani, north of Torinobe, on the western slope of Higashiyama, was removed sometime during the winter to the western part of the same grounds north of Yoshimidzu, where the remains were deposited. A temple was built and his image enshrined there.

In those days, the religion transmitted from the Shōnin was flourishing with more vitality than ever, and the teach-

ing bequeathed by him found a wider acceptance than during his lifetime. His disciples filled every province and every county, and his followers increased all over the land, numbering many millions. Those who kept his instructions in deep reverence and felt sincerely grateful to him, monks as well as laymen, the old as well as the young, year after year, all came here to pay their homage at the shrine.

As to so many wonderful things which happened in his lifetime, I cannot begin to enumerate them now, and it is to my great regret that I have to omit them.