

BOOK REVIEWS

JAPANESE-ENGLISH BUDDHIST DICTIONARY. Tokyo:
Daitō Publishing Company, 1965. Pp. XV+ 340.

The publication of a dictionary of this kind has long been awaited. About a decade ago a *Japanese-English Glossary of Buddhist Technical Terms* was printed in mimeograph form at Toyo University in response to the urgent need of Japanese Buddhist scholars engaged in translating articles into English for the Buddhist Encyclopedia that had been proposed by the Ceylonese Government. It was compiled tentatively for the occasion by a number of young Buddhist scholars, but due to its provisional nature and limited number of copies the range of its distribution was fairly limited.

The general need for a reliable dictionary of this kind, however, was amply requited December 1965 by the appearance of this *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary*. Its publication was prompted by Rev. Shin'yu Iwano, head-priest of Jōkanji Temple, and president of Daitō Buddhist Publishing Co. in Tokyo.

The dictionary contains 5,000 entries, arranged in alphabetical order. Each heading in romanized Japanese is followed generally by Chinese characters, Sanskrit, Pali and the English equivalents or succinct explanations of the terms. The volume contains a three-part index: Chinese characters listed according to the number of strokes; Sanskrit; and Chinese sounds in the Wade style of transliteration.

The compilation committee, made up of a number of Buddhist scholars including Dr. Hajime Nakamura of Tokyo University, was organized in the summer of 1959. After seven years of cooperative work by these scholars, this epoch-making project was accomplished. The following are the supervisors who contributed to the scheme: The late Dr. R. H. Blyth, Dr. Robert Huntington, Mr. Masayoshi Kanayama, Prof. Stanley Weinstein.

The selection of entries in this dictionary is said to have been made on the basis of those found in the *Bukkō Jiten* (Concise Buddhist Dictionary) edited by the late Dr. Ui. Accordingly, it is only natural that the mode of explications in this dictionary is generally for Japanese readers rather than for Westerners. A number of the proper nouns (temples, place names, etc.)

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could be dispensed with in this kind of dictionary in favor of a greater number of philosophical and metaphysical terms. While there is much to be desired in the selection of entries as was mentioned above, this dictionary may serve as a useful link connecting beginners with the technical knowledge of characteristically Buddhist ideas and general background, as well as Westerners with typically Buddhistic expressions, Theravada or Mahayana.

A special characteristic of this dictionary lies in the fact that a general knowledge of Buddhism, as expressed both in Chinese and Japanese languages, has been herewith brought within reach not only of Western students of Buddhism, but of students of philosophy and humanities in general.

Explanations may be felt insufficient or simple enough by specialists, but it is nonetheless to be noted that this simplicity of expression itself is an invaluable asset of this dictionary. The format is, in various respects, obviously patterned in the fashion of the Pali Text Society's *Pali-English Dictionary*.

Upon the publication of this dictionary Dr. D. T. Suzuki, referring to its significance, expressed congratulatory remarks as follows:

"A dictionary of this nature has been long awaited by scholars and writers on Japanese Buddhism. Its delay was due to the fact that the labor involved in carrying out such an undertaking is enormous, scholastically as well as financially. Before us is the fruit of Mr. Shin'yu Iwano's enterprise and untiring effort. To him we owe our deep gratitude.

"A number of points still require solution. The 5,000 vocabulary entries of the present work were selected from Mr. Iwano's 1938 publication, *The Concise Buddhist Dictionary*, which is in Japanese and contains some 24,700 listings. We await the day when a larger, unabridged edition, encompassing Chinese as well as Japanese Buddhism, may come to see the light. But we warmly welcome this greatly needed tool that will help pave the way for better East-West communication."

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