

# THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

SAYINGS OF A MODERN TARIKI MYSTIC

## PART I

JAPANESE Buddhism may be divided into two groups : *Jiriki* (自力) and *Tariki* (他力), or "Self-power" and "Other-power." The Self-power School teaches the doctrine of individual salvation, according to which moral purity and enlightenment are the necessary conditions of emancipation; while the Other-power School teaches an absolute reliance on the grace of Amitabha Buddha; for finite beings are not by themselves able to attain to a state of perfect freedom and saintliness. What is needed of a Tariki devotee is therefore an unqualified and whole-hearted faith in the love of the Buddha, and in the absolute efficacy of his Original Vows<sup>1</sup>. He may be full of moral shortcomings and cherish evil passions (*kleśa*) which he has not brought under control, but he need not worry about this if only his heart overflows with joy and gratitude for the merciful care of Amitabha; for such a heart which is above morality and intellection, will not be bothered by its moral imperfections, as it knows that the latter are no hindrance to one's rebirth in the Pure Land.

Amida's<sup>2</sup> love for finite beings and the latter's absolute confidence in his love are often compared to the relations

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<sup>1</sup> *Pārvapranidhāna* in Sanskrit. They were made by Amitābha Buddha innumerable ages ago when he was still a Bodhisattva practising the six *pāramitās*. Finally he realised supreme enlightenment and became the Buddha, which fact, according to the Shinshu followers, most conclusively proves that all his vows are fulfilled. They are forty-eight in number and the most important one, the eighteenth, is that salvation or rebirth in his Land is promised to all beings who would even once sincerely think of him.

<sup>2</sup> Amida is the Japanese reading of the Sanskrit Amitābha, which literally means "Infinite Light."

between mother and child and have been specified by one<sup>1</sup> of the recent Shinshu scholars as follows :

1. As the child makes no judgments, just so should the followers of Tariki be free from thoughts of self-assertion (*jiriki*).

2. As the child knows nothing of impurities, so should the Tariki followers never have an eye to evil thoughts and evil deeds.

3. As the child knows nothing of purities, so should the Tariki followers be unconscious of any good thoughts they may cherish.

4. As the child has no desire to court its mother's special favour by making her offerings, so should the Tariki devotees be free from the idea of being rewarded for something given.

5. As the child does not go after any other person than its own mother, so should the Tariki devotees not run after other Buddhas or Bodhisattvas than Amitabha himself.

6. As the child ever longs for its mother, so should the Tariki followers think of just one Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light.

7. As the child ever cherishes the memory of its own mother, so should the Tariki followers cherish the thought of one Buddha, Amida.

8. As the child cries after its mother, so should the Tariki followers invoke the name of Amida.

9. As the child, thinking of its mother as the only person whom it could absolutely rely on, wishes to be embraced by her on all occasions, so should the Tariki followers have no thought but to be embraced by Amida alone even when in peril.

10. They should have no fears, no doubts, as to the infinite love of Amida, the One Buddha, whose vows are not to forsake any beings in his embrace. When once embraced in his light, no beings need entertain the idea of being deserted by him.

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<sup>1</sup> Gido (義導), sometimes called Iriki-in (威力院), 1805-1881. The translation is a free rendering of the injunctions which he left for his disciples.

Though somewhat repetitious, the above sums up what the Shinshu faith is, and why it is called "Other-power" in contradistinction to "Self-power." While Amida or God or The Other stands all by himself asserting his absolute independence, the "I" symbolising all that is mortal, finite, imperfect, sinful, and bound for Naraka<sup>1</sup> or eternal annihilation is made to find the meaning of its existence in The Other only.

Kōjun Shichiri (七里孝順), the author of the sayings reproduced below, belonged to this sect of Tariki. He lived at Hakata, a city in the south-western part of Japan, and was sixty-six years old when he died in 1900. He had a large following, and his spiritual influence was great among all classes of people. A burglar once broke into his house and demanded of him to give up his valuables. The way however the intruder was treated by the follower of the all-merciful Amida moved him greatly. When he was later arrested, he confessed everything and told the police how he came to be an entirely new man after his encounter with Shichiri. Shichiri was also a great scholar and left quite a few learned writings; but what interests us here is his practical faith and not his scholarly discourses filled with technicalities, which generally marks those of the learned followers of the Shin sect. The following passages in this section of the article are principally culled from a small book entitled "Sayings of Reverend Shichiri" (七里老師語錄) which was compiled by Chizen Akanuma, 1912; the translations made from its eighth edition are somewhat free.

As the Tariki doctrine denies the efficacy of "self-power" as the means of salvation, it naturally cultivates the feeling of absolute dependence as the one thing that is needed.

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<sup>1</sup> Naraka or Nirriti is Buddhist hell. It is divided into many compartments. The principal difference between Hell and Naraka is that in the latter sinners suffer only as long as their karma is effective, for their souls are never condemned to eternal suffering as is traditionally taught in Christianity.

Negatively, or from the devotee's subjective point of view, this feeling may best be cherished by abandoning all thoughts of selfhood and filling his consciousness with the infinite love of Amida, who does not ask for moral perfection as the condition of rebirth in his Pure Land. This simple faith unadulterated by reflection or self-criticism is all that is demanded of a Tariki follower. Therefore says Kōjun Shichiri :

“Even when you understand that the Nembutsu<sup>1</sup> is the only way to salvation, you often hesitate reflecting within yourselves, ‘Am I all right now? Is there something more to be done?’ This is not quite right. Better be fully confirmed in the thought that your karma has no other destination but that for Naraka. When you are fully confirmed in this, nothing will be left for you but to hasten forward and take hold of Amida's helping hands. You may then be assured of your rebirth in his Pure Land. Have no scruples in your minds thinking how to curry favour with Amida or whether you are really to be embraced by him. These scruples come from not having fully abandoned the thought of selfhood. Resign yourselves to the grace of Amida and let him do what he chooses with you; whether you are to be saved after or before all your sins are wiped clean, is the business of Amida and not yours.”

“Here is a blind man going along the mountain pass. He is about to cross a log-bridge over a river. Being a self-confident man, he walks straight ahead beating his way with a stick. When he comes halfway the bridge turns over. Quickly throwing the stick, he holds on to the log with both hands. The realisation of his impending fall down in the rapids and the consequent sure loss of life frightens him terribly. A merciful man with a boat happens at this moment to be waiting just below the bridge ready to receive the poor blind venturer. ‘Let go!’ cries the boatsman, ‘let go your hold on the log. I am ready to get you down here.’ The blind man however refuses to listen to him, saying, ‘I cannot. If I let

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<sup>1</sup> Invoking the name of Amida.

go my hold, I shall surely be swept down in the rapids.' The boatsman is insistent and urges him to come down. Being still undecided and wavering, he tries to release one hand. Finally, the impatient boatsman tells him that if he does not do what he tells him to do, he will not be bothered any longer. In utmost despair and with the thought of certain death either way, he lets both hands off the log, and to his greatest joy finds himself safely and comfortable in the boat below.

"In a similar way, people at first wander from one god to another sounding their way in vain with the stick of 'self-power,' until they come to Amida's one passageway. But they tenaciously hold on to this passageway and refuse to leave it. Amida who is waiting underneath with his boat of Original Vows ready to take them in with him, tells them to give themselves up to his embrace. But they cling to the Nembutsu believing in its efficacy. When they are told again that the Nembutsu in itself has nothing to do with their salvation, they now cling to the thought that they have a faith. This is like holding on to the log-bridge with one hand. When however even this last string of self-justification is cut off, they are truly embraced in the boat of the Original Vows and assured of their rebirth in the Pure Land of Amida, when they have a feeling of complete relaxation and indescribable happiness."

Therefore, according to this Tariki mystic, "to believe truly, means absolutely to rely on Amida, or to embrace him unreservedly and unconditionally, or to abandon all thought of selfhood and self-assertion. More technically expressed, "to believe is not to have a shadow of doubt concerning the Original Vows of Amida in which he most definitely assures us of our rebirth in his Land of Eternal Bliss. This assurance being absolute, Amida does not lay down any conditions, nor does he expect of us any self-sacrificing and merit-accumulating practice. For where faith is once established, our life will be entirely at Amida's disposal. It is like giving up all our possessions in his hand which distributes them in the way he

thinks best. We receive from him what we need, and we are perfectly satisfied with him as well as with ourselves. Here lies the ultimate signification of Tariki faith."

Theologically, Christian faith and the Tariki seem to be irreconcilably opposed, but psychologically I am inclined to think that the Tariki Buddhist will not hesitate to accept whole-heartedly everything that is quoted below from one of the sermons delivered by the German mystic, Gerhard Tersteegen. Even the terminology may not stand in the way. "Place no confidence whatever," says Tersteegen, "in your own hearts, your courage, your strength, your light, your virtues, or your faithfulness; but, like myself, be as little children who must perish without a mother's care. All that is our own is worthless, and everything else is free grace, for which we must every moment wait and receive. But we can never trust too much to our gracious Redeemer; to Him, the most miserable may approach on the footing of free grace, cordially seek His favour and friendship, pray to Him without ceasing, filially depend upon Him, and then boldly venture all upon Him. Oh, He is faithful, and will perform that in us and through us which neither we nor any other mortal would be able of himself to accomplish."

The Tariki devotees thus come to Amida not only with their feeling of absolute dependence but with all their troubles, passions, and moral imperfections whatever they may be. They have thrown themselves down, body and soul, at the feet of their Lord, with the most unselfish faith that Amida will dispose of them in whichever way he likes. They accept everything and anything from Amida. According to Shinran, the founder of the Tariki School, he is willing even to go to Naraka because of his faith in Amida. Affirmation, "Everlasting Yea," marks the life of the Tariki followers.

This "Yes" attitude towards the world, accepting everything, good or bad, pleasant or painful, and viewing life *sub*

*specie æternitatis*, is one of the characteristics of all genuine mystics, and we read the same general attitude of mind in the sayings of Shichiri, who has this: "To hear the call of Amida, or believe in his Original Vows, ultimately comes to utter this one word, 'Yes,' in response. Don't say 'but,' and get away from the embrace of merciful Amida." Again, "To trust or to place reliance upon the Original Vows of Amida means to understand or to nod assent to what is given to you, —and this without any thinking or reflection or deliberation. As soon as you hear the call, you respond at once, saying, 'Yes, I come.' In the teaching of Tariki, nothing more is needed, for we just let the Original Vows work by themselves." "It is like the moon reflected in the tub. When we try to take hold of it, the harder we try the more turbulent grows the water and the more disturbed the shadow. But by letting them alone, the full moon serenely shines on the water. Just so, when we are too anxious to feel joyful, this defeats its own end. Better have no such anxieties, but simply believe in the efficacy of the Original Vows, and all that is needed for your happiness will follow by itself."

Zen is generally regarded as the Jiriki end ("self-power") of Buddhism, standing in diagonal opposition to the Tariki. But extremes meet, for Zen is one with Shin in saying "yes," "yes," in response to the kaleidoscopic changes of the objective world. When Hui-chung, the National Master of Nan-yang (南陽忠國師), called his attendant, the latter responded. When this was repeated three times without the disciple's awakening to the knowledge of Zen, said the master: "Until now I thought I was not worthy of you, but I find that you have not been worthy of me all this time." This may sound unintelligible as it stands, but what Zen wants us to see here is to have us realise the "yes" attitude of mind in its simplest and most original type. There is however a difference metaphysically between Zen and Shin in this respect. While Shin regards the one who responds to the call of Amida and says "Yes" un-

conditionally, as Amida himself in you, that is, The Other standing in opposition to "I"; Zen merges the "I" in The Other, and this synthetic merging forms the basis for the Zen psychology of affirmation. In Zen this consciousness of identification is read in terms of the enlightened "I", whereas in Shin The Other always stands out prominently and the "I" is considered to have been embraced in the wholeness of The Other. Zen is therefore richer in the intellectual elements and Shin in the affective or emotional. Isolation is one of the features of Zen, and sociability of Shin.

The doctrine of identification which is characteristic of all schools of Buddhism as distinguished from Christianity is also taught by the Shin mystic: "When the founder tells us to place reliance upon Amida, it means to make his power my own. It is like a child being carried on the back of its parent. The strength of the latter is the strength of the former." "When we speak of Amida and sentient beings, they appear to be different one from the other; but when in one thought beings are thrown into the fire of mercy, they are one even with Amida himself. Like a piece of live charcoal, fire is charcoal and charcoal is fire, they cannot be separated." Further, writes the Shin mystic, Shichiri, "If I say I have sins of one thousand kalpas, there is Amida on the other side with merits of ten thousand kalpas. But when all is told, these imperfections, these merits,—they both belong to Amida as well as to myself. When we understand this, we realise the state of absolute freedom. In a poor family, there is but one coat for both father and son." Again, "it is like throwing a handful of snow into boiling water, no trace of it will be visible in the cauldron. Let all the faith, all the joy, all the Nembutsu, that you can find in your heart be thrown into the pot of the Original Vows, and you will find yourself in one water of identification."

We must not however forget that with the Shin devotees

this one water of identification is always described in terms of The Other and not "I." "Look into the tub filled with water: how deep it looks! and how gleaming is the crystal at the bottom! But, halt, do not rush to the conclusion, as in the other schools of Buddhism, that the Buddha-Nature is in me, that Amida is an idealistic creation, and that the Pure Land lies nowhere else but in my Mind. But really there is no depth in the tub-water, the depth is the reflection of the sky; there is no crystal at the bottom of the tub, it is the shadow of the moon which shines far above. Therefore, says the founder of the Shin faith: The water looks deep because of the unfathomability of Amida's love, and the crystal shines because of the moonlight of his Buddha-Nature. I therefore tell you, Put your reliance upon Amida."

This putting everything upon the shoulders of Amida may seem to encourage moral irresponsibility and to create the habit of utter indifference to social welfare and advancement. But we must remember that religion has its transcendental domain of activity where facts and events are judged and valued by a standard of its own. It does not teach mere passivity as we may superficially infer. For before one comes to the realisation of absolute dependence one has to go through much of inner struggle; the Tariki realisation is never attained until the last straw of self-assertion is given up. Passivity marks the end of the utmost strenuosity and tension. Without the latter no Tariki experience will take place in anybody's spiritual life. As the Egyptians would have it, "the archer hitteth the target, partly by pulling, partly by letting go; the boatsman reacheth the landing, partly by pulling, partly by letting go." There is something in the mechanism of the human soul that cannot be worked by self-consciousness and critical philosophy.

"To be delivered does not mean to run after Amida while he flees away from you, but it means to pick up the drowning persons on to the boat and save them from death. When the

boatsman says he will save you from being drowned, will you try to swim up to him by yourself? Have you strength enough to do so? Understanding, as you do, how sure your death is and how merciful The Other is, why do you hesitate? The only thing you may do in this case is to let your life-saver do whatever he knows best for your welfare. There is no need for you to look backward and forward and to carry along such old stuff as Nembutsu or faith or joyful heart. As soon as you realise the destiny of your sinful existence and the infinite, unconditional love of The Other, be gone with the last trace of self-assertion in whatever form, and abandon yourself, heart and soul, at the feet of the saviour."

The giving up of everything of mine and the embracing of The Other unconditionally, is to be preceded by humiliation and helplessness. Without the latter no salvation will be possible. Humiliation comes from the sense of unworthiness, and helplessness is the consciousness of finitude and limitation. Being finite and limited on all sides and in every way, we do not know how to get out of this, how to realise the state of freedom. When reflection turns upon the infinite perfectability of moral character, that is, on the impossibility of attaining to a state of self-perfection in which all sinfulness has been thoroughly purgated, we are placed at the last stage of despair and hopelessness. If The Other demanded purity, perfection, and strength as the conditions of rebirth in the Pure Land, who on earth could ever hope for salvation? All is destined for Naraka, every one of us, and the world will be the valley of the utmost misery. Thus, we can see that the background of Tariki mysticism is deeply stained with blood and tears and that the doctrine of absolute passivity is heavily lined with the ugly wounds of merciless self-criticism. "Let go and you come up to the surface," is the Japanese saying. Renunciation is however the last resort we can come to and means so many vain efforts previously made for our own salvation. We clung to one thing after another always connected with the "I", we

could not renounce this last possession, we failed to come up to Amida all naked, all shorn of selfhood. The last possession was the hardest to give up. Riches, fame, honour, and worldly pleasures were abandoned, but the self-consciousness or self-conceit that "I" have abandoned, that "I" have faith, still clings to us. As long as this "I" is still with us, we cannot rise to the surface, we cannot be born in the Pure Land; for we are not yet in the state of absolute passivity, that is, perfectly ready to receive the Original Vows of Amida. The giving up which is the mystic's ambition is by no means an easy task. But when this once takes place in its liveliest form, the infinite light of Amida fills up the darkest corners of our minds, and all the imperfections, weaknesses, and turbulences turn into so many rays of the Infinite Light. "When the stalks are burned, not only their form disappears but they turn into fire. So when the virtues of Amida fill us not only the stalks of our evil passions disappear, but they are transformed into virtues. In the Psalms we read: As the more ice produces the more water, so do the more karma-hindrances the more virtues. This is because Amida's virtues are boundless and know no hindrances."

Renunciation is effected when we make a sudden turn in the course of march which has come to its end. Believing that the thing we seek lies in a certain direction, we make steady efforts towards it; we come to the terminus, there is no way to go further, it is a blind alley, we beat against the wall, when suddenly we turn backward and lo! there lies an open field with an ever-receding horizon and with nothing to hinder one's freest movements. This is the occasion when the Tariki mystic feels as if every piece of luggage he has been carrying was suddenly transferred on the shoulders of Amida. A monk came to a Zen master and asked, "What would you say when I have nothing on my back?" "Throw it down!" said the master. "But, sir, did I not say I carry nothing on

my back?" "If so," roared the master, "carry it on." The monk was not yet free from selfhood, of his individual and self-assertive will, he was not walking in the open field empty-handed. Even when he said he had nothing on his back, his "I" was still at the tip of his shoulder, which was at once detected by the master's trained eye.

Shichiri writes: "When Shên-tsan (神讚), a Zen adept of the T'ang dynasty, was one day sitting in his room he saw a fly trying hard to pass through the paper-screen. It buzzed and fluttered its little wings violently but to no purpose. Shên-tsan composed a poem:

'Why dost thou not fly away through the empty door?  
How so very strangely thy thought moveth!  
For a hundred years thou mayest strike against the  
old paper-screen,  
But no time will ever come to thee when thou canst  
get thy head through.'

The master here means to say this: However self-confident a man may be in his power to go ahead, it is in vain. It is best for him to turn backward where he will see an extensive field. Learning, memory, or intellect is of no help as far as salvation is concerned. Abandon the course of your Jiriki efforts and turn round to the Tariki way where Amida awaits you with his Original Vows and infinite love."

Here is a kind of Shin catechism summing up the gist of its teaching:

"Q. What is the Shin faith?

"A. The easiest of all faiths. You have been in it for the last ten years only that you are not conscious of it yourself.

"Q. What shall I do to have the faith?

"A. Nothing much but to hear.

"Q. How shall I hear?

"A. Just as The Other wills. When you hear a story-teller, you just hear him. All the labour is on his side. As

he talks you hear him. There is no special way of hearing. When you have heard, that is the time when *Namu-amida-butsu* has entered into your heart.

“Q. If so, is just hearing enough?”

“A. Yes.

“Q. Even then, I have fears as to my really hearing it: Did I hear or not? What shall I do with this?”

“A. That is not hearing but thinking. No thinking is needed here. Faith is awakened by hearing. Don't be caught here. If you reflect and begin to ask yourself whether you have faith or not, you turn your back towards Amida.”

## PART II

The second section of this paper will consist of thirty-eight sayings by Kōjun Shichiri culled from Akanuma's aforementioned work as well as from Ryōtai Koidzumi's compilation, whose fifth edition appeared in 1920. While writing this paper the author has come into possession of another work on Shichiri entitled, “Anecdotes and Sayings of Shichiri Wajo,” (七里和上言行錄) by Yeshō Hamaguchi, in two volumes. It first appeared in 1912 and is published by Kōkyō-shoin (興教書院), Kyoto. It saw its fifth edition last year.

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(1) According to the other schools of Buddhism, good is practicable only after the eradication of evil. This is like trying to dispel darkness first in order to let the light in. It is not so with us, followers of Tariki: if you have some worldly occupations such as shop-keeping, etc., just begin saying the *Nembutsu* even with your mind busily engaged in the work. It is said that where the dragon goes there follow clouds. With faith, with your thought directed towards the West, invoke the name of Amida with your mouth, and good actions will follow of themselves. You fail to hit the mark just because you try to catch the clouds instead of looking for the dragon itself.

(2) You cannot stop evil thoughts asserting themselves because they belong to the nature of common mortals. In the "Sayings of Yokogawa" we read that if we recite the Nembutsu we shall be quite certain of our rebirth in the Pure Land like the lotus blooming above the muddy water. The founder of our sect preaches that if we, instead of waiting vainly for the water to recede, start at once to wade through it, the water will recede by itself from under our own feet. Now when the heart is gladdened in the faith of Tariki, there are in it no waters of greed, anger, etc.

(3) Dedicate your mouth to the Nembutsu. When you regard the mouth as belonging to yourself, it always tends to foster the cause of your fall into Naraka.

(4) After enumerating the sins of common mortals, the reverend master said: It is thus that, in spite of our wish to attain the Pure Land, we find ourselves destined for Naraka. Therefore, let us realise that Naraka is, after all our efforts, our destination. As far as our ignorant past is concerned there is no help for it; but as we have now come to the realisation of our own situation, nothing is left for us but to embrace the way of salvation; for herein lies the purport of the Original Vows.

(5) There are some people who think that they understand what is meant by absolute devotion to the Nembutsu, but who are still doubtful as to their possession of the faith and inquire within themselves whether they are really all right. To such I would say: Give up your self-inquisition and have your minds made up as to the inevitableness of your fates for Naraka. When you come to this decision, you will be serener in mind ready to submit yourselves to the saviour's will. To express the idea in a popular way, such people are like those wives whom their husbands do not seem to care for; they are in constant fear of being divorced. Being uncertain about Amida's love, they are anxious to court his favour. This is because they have not yet altogether given up their selves. When we

know that *Naraka* is inevitable for common mortals filled with evil thoughts and passions,—and in fact we all are such mortals,—there is nothing left for us but to be cheerfully grateful for Amida's promise of salvation. Whether we should be saved after or before our sins are expiated is the business of The Other and not ours.

(6) What? Is it so hard for you to surrender yourself? For, you say, when my advice is literally observed, you cannot carry on your business. Well, if you cannot, why would you keep it up? "If I don't I shall starve to death," you may say: well, but is it after all such a bad thing as you think, this dying? When I say this you may regard me as inhuman and heartless, but is not your real aim to be reborn in the Pure Land of Amida? If so, when you die your wish is fulfilled. If this was not your original wish, what was it? What made you come here to listen to my sermons? You are inconsistent.

(7) Some people are not quite sure of their state of faith. They seem to put their faith on the scale against Amida's miraculous way of salvation, and try to weigh the latter with their own understanding; while salvation is altogether in the hands of The Other. To think that our attainment of the Pure Land is conditioned by our understanding of Amida's plans so that we cease to harbour any doubt as to the wonderful wisdom of the Buddha,—this is relying on the strength of our faith and setting Amida's mercy away from us. When his mercy is not taken into our own hearts and we only ask whether our doubt is cleared and faith is gained, this faith becomes a thing apart from mercy and the one is set against the other. This we call a state of confusion.

(8) The great Original Vows of Amida are his Will, and the ten powers and four fearlessnesses are his Virtues. Both cause and effect are sealed up in the one name of Amida. A paper parcel superscribed as containing one thousand yen may consist, when counted in detail, of so many ten-sen notes and

so many fifty-sen notes, but all the same the total is one thousand yen. Whether we know the contents in detail or not, we are the owner of the one thousand yen as we have the parcel in our hands. Similarly, in whichever way we may embrace Amida, whether knowingly or unknowingly as to his Original Vows and manifold Virtues, we are, as soon as we accept him, the master of Namu-amida-butsu. So says Rennyō, "One is the master of Namu-amida-butsu when one accepts Amida." When his name resounds in your mind you have faith, and when it is expressed on your lips it is the Nembutsu. Oh, how grateful I feel for the grace of Amida! the Pure Land is drawing nigh day by day!

(9) In case we are depending on others, for instance, if we are working as servants we must first win the confidence of the master by showing our loyalty; for otherwise we can never serve him for any length of time. When a poor man wants to borrow money from a rich man he must prove first how honest he is; for otherwise the latter will never have enough confidence in the debtor. The faithfulness of the debtor must be recognised by the creditor. So in the other sects of Buddhism people are encouraged to rely on their own sincere desire to be saved, which they would have Amida accept for the price of his grace. But "reliance" or "dependence" is differently understood in the teaching of Tariki. The feeling of dependence the child has for its mother has not been bought by its own filiality. When the sincerely-loving heart of the parent is taken into its own little heart and when these hearts are made into one heart, the child is truly said to be filial. "Think of your parents with even half as much of the love as is entertained for yourself by the parental hearts," — so goes the old saying. If you had even one-tenth of such love, you would be the most filial child in the world. In like manner we can't come to Amida and ask him to accept us as the reward of our sincere desire to be saved. [From Amida's infinite point of view our sincerity is not worth being taken notice of by

him.] What we can do is to accept his own sincere desire to save us and rest assured of the fulfilment of his Vows. This is the adamantine faith of Tariki.

(10) You say that you never count on the Nembutsu as the efficient cause of your rebirth in the Pure Land because it is only the expression of your grateful heart, but you feel uneasy when you find that you do not say it well. As long as an old lady has a stick in her hand she may not be conscious of its utility, but she would feel unsteady with her feet if she should leave it altogether. In like manner while you can say the Nembutsu you feel all right, but as soon as your Nembutsu becomes rarer you are uneasy. Then you come to think that the Nembutsu has nothing to do with your rebirth in the Pure Land. So far so good, but still feeling that faith is somehow necessary you try firmly to take hold of it after all. While getting out of a boat one sometimes falls into water because one kicks off the boat in the effort to jump over to the bank. You fall into the fault of self-power because you jump at faith just as you let go the Nembutsu. Viewed in this light, this is also a sort of self-power, a self-power of mind if not of mouth. If you say that the Nembutsu is not the efficient cause of rebirth in the Pure Land, why should you not advance another step in your way and also quit the faith itself? Then there will be but one mercy of the Buddha that works, and indeed there is nothing to surpass this state of mind.

(11) Referring to children the reverend master said, "Carried on the back of Amida as they are on the mother's, even the wanton, capricious ones will attain the Pure Land."

(12) "To hear" is the whole thing in the teaching of Tariki. Says the sutra, "Hear the name of Amida!" The Buddha, let us observe, does not tell us to *think*, for hearing is believing and not thinking. How do we hear then? No special contrivance is needed; in thinking we may need some method to go along, but hearing is just to receive what is given, and there is no deliberation here.

(13) We should live in this world as in a branch office of the Pure Land.

(14) We feel serene in mind, not because we are assured of attaining the Pure Land, but because we believe the words of Amida who promises to embrace us, to save us in his love.

(15) When holes are stopped in the broken paper screen, no draught will pass through: when we say the Nembutsu continually with our mouth, no evil language will have chance to be uttered. Be therefore watchful.

(16) We read in the sutra, "It is ten kalpas now since the Enlightenment of Bhikshu Dharmakara." This means that family-fortune of father and children is merged in one; that is to say, the merits of Amida are now those of all sentient beings and the sins of all sentient beings are those of Amida. Here lies the uniqueness of the Enlightenment of Amida which distinguishes itself from Enlightenment attained by other Buddhas. According to the latter, thousands of virtues and merits are the sole possessions of the Buddhas themselves, whereas we poor creatures are altogether meritless. There are therefore in this case two independent family legacies; the one rich in endowments and the other next to nothing: while in the Enlightenment of Amida all is merged in one, for in him there is the virtue of perfect interpenetration. When bundles of hemp are burned, not only their original shape is transformed, but they all turn into fire. In like manner, when the merits of Amida enter into our hearts and fill them up, not only the evil passions we have are consumed like bundles of hemp, but they themselves turn into merits. We read in the Wasan: "The greater the obstacles the greater the merits just as there is more water in more ice. The merits of Amida know no boundaries.

(17) The lamp itself has no light until it is lighted, it shines out only when a light is put in. As Amida is in possession of this light of virtue, eighty-four thousand rays shine out of him; broadly speaking, his light knows no impediments and fills all the ten quarters. "Long have I been in

possession in myself of the Original Vows made by the other power and also their fulfilment! and yet how vainly I have wandered about deceived by the self-power's tenacious hold on me!" Again, "There is in the light of the Buddha of Unimpeded Light the light of purity, joy, and wisdom, and its miraculous virtues are benefiting all beings in the ten quarters." Again, "As this is the teaching of Amida who turns all his merits towards the salvation of all beings, his virtues fill the ten quarters." It is thus evident that Amida is surcharging us with his merits.

(18) Certain Tariki followers imagine that as Amida attained his Enlightenment ten kalpas ago which determined the status of sentient beings as ultimately destined for the Pure Land, all that they have to do on their part for salvation is but to remember the fact of Amida's Enlightenment, and that as to their understanding of the meaning of Tariki nothing is needed, for the remembrance is enough. This however is not the orthodox teaching. If we have no inner sense of acceptance as to Amida's infinite grace, it is like listening to the sound of rice-pounding at the next-door neighbour's which will never appease our own feeling of hunger. The ancient saying is, "A distant water cannot put out a near fire." A man comes into town from a faraway frontier district; while staying in an inn, fire breaks out in the neighbourhood and confusion ensues. The traveller quietly remarks: "In my country there is a big river running in front of my house, and there is a great water-fall behind, besides the canals are open on all sides: you need not be afraid of the fire's getting ahead of you." But all the waters thousands of miles away will not extinguish the fire at hand. The inn is reduced to ashes in no time. You may imagine that in your native country of Amida's Enlightenment there securely lies the assurance of your rebirth in the Pure Land ten kalpas ago and also that there runs the great river of oneness in which are merged subject and object, Buddha and sentient beings; and you may nonchalantly say

that you have no fear for hell-fire : but inasmuch as you have no inner sense of absolute dependence your house is sure to be consumed by the flames.

(19) Such old Chinese remedies as kakkonto (arrowroot infusion) may do us neither harm nor good, but with a strong effective medicine there is something we may call toxic after-effect. The grace of Amida as is taught by the other-power school is so vast and overwhelming that its recipients may turn into antinomians. This is the danger one has to be on guard against. Such Tariki followers are inferior to the Jiriki, who cherish a feeling of compunction even in innocently destroying the life of an ant. Whatever the Buddha-Dharma may teach, we as human beings ought to have a certain amount of conscience and the feeling of compassion ; when these are missing, there will be no choice between ourselves and the lower animals.

(20) Some say that Buddhism is pessimism and does not produce beneficial results on our lives. But could Buddhists be induced to love this world so full of evils? If they were addicted to saké-drinking, a life of wanton pleasures, an insatiable thirst for fame and gain, how would they ever be expected to see into the true signification of this life? As they are detached from all these evils, they really know how to benefit the world. Since olden days there has been no one who truly worked for our welfare by leading a life of dissipation.

(21) The lower grow the mountains as the further we recede from them, but the nearer we approach the higher they are : so with the grace of Amida.

(22) When they are told this : "If you are going to take refuge in the teaching of Tariki, you must refrain from committing evil deeds such as drinking, smoking, etc.," they are apt to hesitate. Well, let them drink then, let them wander away from the ordinary moral walks, if they are positively so inclined : but let them at the same time only believe in Amida, believe in the Original Vows of the Buddha. When the faith gradually takes possession of their hearts, they

will naturally cease from evil doings. Through the grace of Amida their lives will be made easier and happier.

(23) Knowledge is good, its spread is something we have to be grateful for. But it is like fire or water without which we cannot live even for a day. But what a terrible thing fire is and water too, when we fail to make good use of them! How many human lives and how much property, we cannot begin to estimate, were lost in fire and flood! In proportion to its importance to life, knowledge is to be most cautiously handled. Especially in the understanding of Tariki faith knowledge proves to be a great hindrance.

(24) Knowledge is the outcome of reasoning and knows no limits: faith is the truth of personality. Faith and knowledge are not to be confused.

(25) Knowledge grows as we reason, but love stands outside of reasoning. In the education of children the mother ought to know how to reason about their future welfare and not to give way to her momentary sentiment. Love is the string that binds the two.

(26) Amida holds in his hands both love and knowledge for the salvation of sentient beings. So we read: "In the depths of Amida's love there lies his wisdom beyond calculation." "Namu-amida-butsu" signifies the union of love and wisdom and is the free gift of Amida to us sentient beings.

(27) Doubt is impossible when our salvation by Amida is so positive; and when salvation is so positive we cannot but help saying the Nembutsu.

(28) According to the Tariki teaching, all that we sentient beings have to do in the way of salvation is to accept and believe. Have you ever seen a puppet-show? The marionettes are worked from behind, somebody is pulling the strings. We are all likewise moving through the absolute power of Amida.

(29) While Amida's Original Vows are meant universally for the salvation of all sentient beings in the ten quarters, we

may not experience real joy if we are to receive only portions of Amida's grace as our shares. According to Shinran, Amida's meditation for five kalpas was only for his own sake, for himself alone; why then should not each of us take the whole share of Amida's grace upon himself? There is but one sun in the world, yet wherever we move does it not follow each of us?

(30) "To return to the great treasure-ocean of merits" means throwing oneself into it, that is, throwing oneself into a mass of wisdom, into the midst of Light.

I read somewhere a fine story about a rabbit. As it ran into a heath of scouring rush (*tokusa*), the hunter followed it but could not find any trace of the animal. When he closely searched for it, he noticed that it has been rubbed off by the rush into a nonentity. In a similar way when we throw ourselves into the Light of Amida, all the evil karma and evil thoughts we may be in possession of altogether disappear. When flakes of snow fall into the boiling water they all at once melt away. When we have returned into the great ocean of Merits, that is, when we have thrown ourselves into the midst of Light and Wisdom, nothing of evil deeds and thoughts will be left behind. Think of it, O you, my brethren in faith, while enlightenment is impossible for us unless we reach the forty-first grade, or realise the first stage, we common mortals possessed of ignorance are now firmly established in the faith that we are to be born in the Pure Land of Amida when we have thrown ourselves into his Light where the boiling water of Wisdom melts all our evil karma and evil thought without even leaving a trace of them. This being proved, have we not every cause to be joyous?

(31) We are told to believe deeply in the mercy of Amida, but if you are too concerned with your state of mind the very mercy of Amida may prove to be a hindrance to the growth of your faith. If you strive to grow in faith thinking this must be accomplished for your salvation, the very effort will smother it. For faith means unconditionally to submit oneself

to The Other, and the straining is the outcome of self-power; the heavier you step the deeper you go into the mud of self-power, and the further you stand away from other-power. In this case a step forward means a step backward, and when you think you are deep in it, that is the very time you are receding from Amida.

(32) "To have faith" means not to have any doubt about the Original Vows of Amida; when there is not the least shadow of doubt about the Vows, other things will take care of themselves.

(33) The principle of the Tariki teaching is: "Just ask and you will be saved," and not "You do this and salvation will be its reward." Nothing is imposed upon you as the price of salvation. When you give sweets to your children you do not tell them to do this or that, you simply give them away, nothing is expected of them, for it is a free gift. With Amida, his gift has no conditions attached to it. Let your mortal weaknesses remain what they are, and be absorbed in the infinite grace of Amida.

(34) Saké cannot be poured into an overturned cup, but when it stands in its natural position, anybody can pour saké into it and as fully as it can hold. Therefore, have the cup of your heart upright ready to receive, and hear; it will surely be filled with Amida's mercy.

(35) There are some people who have heard of the Original Vows and say that they believe in them, but somehow they feel uneasy when they think of their last moments. They are like those who feeling dizzy at the surging billows are not at all sure of their safely sailing over the ocean. If they are too frightened at the evil passions that are stirring in their hearts, which they think will assuredly interfere with their ultimate salvation, there will be no end to their vexations. Look at the spacious boat instead of the billows; for the boat is large enough and safe enough for every one of us, however sinful and numerous we are, and there will be no feeling of

uneasiness left in us. When you think of the mighty power of Amida, you cannot have any fear as to your salvation.

(36) We must pay fair prices for things that belong to others. But when they are our own parent's they are justly ours too and we do not have to pay for them. This is because of the parental love that we are allowed to inherit all that belongs to him regardless of our mental capacities. So with Amida, he bestows upon us freely all that he has, — and here is the secret of the Tariki teaching.

(37) There are two ways to get rid of illusions and be enlightened. The one way is to accumulate our own merits and thereby gain enlightenment. The other way is to gain enlightenment depending upon the promise of the Original Vows of Amida ; we are then admitted to the Pure Land, not indeed on account of our own wisdom or merit, but solely through the grace of The Other, who is the father of all beings. When we seek the Pure Land, we feel uneasy reflecting on our moral imperfections and the lack of a yielding, believing heart. But this is a state of mind not in accord with the spirit of Tariki, for our attitude here is that of the one who would receive things from strangers and not from his own parent. As we followers of Tariki are all naked with no outward vestments such as virtues or merits, we jump right into the water of the Original Vows of Amida where good men do not stand out any higher than wicked ones ; for Amida's grace makes no preference between the two sets of beings.

(38) According to the old Chinese legend, the jelly-fish has no eye and relies upon the crab for its sight. Supposing this true, we are all like the jelly-fish, for we have no wisdom-eye to see through the triple world ; and it is only when we are given Amida's own Light of Wisdom that we are really relieved of worry and can see the truth as the one who is destined for the Pure Land.

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