

THE KOYASAN MONASTERY AND ITS ART TREASURES.

BY HARADA JIRO.

THE Koyasan is the greatest Buddhist monastery in Japan. It was founded by Kobo Daishi, the most celebrated of all Japanese Buddhist saints, in 816 A. D., in the reign of Emperor Saga, who made a grant of an extensive piece of land for that purpose. Properly speaking, Koyasan is the name of a mountain not very



FUDO MYO-O.



GOZANZE MYO-O.

far from Nara, the capital of Japan from 709 to 184 A. D. But it is popularly applied to the monastery situated on that mountain on a table land some 3000 feet above the sea level. The place was chosen by Kobo Daishi as best suited for spiritual meditation and religious discipline, being far removed from human habitations and

surrounded by two rows of eight peaks each, symbolic of a lotus flower, the flower which stands for the purity of religion—growing out of quagmire and blooming, as it does, pure and unsoiled.

During the eleven hundred years of its existence, the monastery has had its history. Once it had more than two thousand temples, with an extensive dominion for its support. Now there are only about one hundred temples, the land having been taken over by the government soon after the restoration of 1868. However, they have thousands of tributary temples throughout Japan and annually tens of thousands of pilgrims from all over the empire visit the mauso-



THE FUDO-DO.

leum of Kobo Daishi on Koyasan, and the monastery still has a great influence over the minds of the people. Until about forty-five years ago, no women pilgrims were allowed on the mountain, and it was only a few years ago that they were permitted to dwell on its sacred soil. The priests have omitted flesh and fish from their diet, strictly following one of the Five Rules:

“Kill not—for Pity’s sake—and lest ye slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way.”

The priests and pilgrims to the present day subsist on vegetables only, still following the will of its founder.

Repeated conflagrations, the most of which were caused by lightning, destroyed many temples, though they have been rebuilt from time to time. The latest great fire lasted for two days and destroyed buildings of more than seventy temples. Such being the case, in spite of its long history, the number of very old buildings is remarkably small. The oldest building on the mountain is the Fudo-do (*do* meaning a sort of chapel with an object of worship) now under the special protection of the central government. It was built 720 years ago and now contains nine wooden images of surpassing workmanship classed as "National Treasures." They are Fudo Myo-o, God Immovable, and Hachi Dai Doji, or the



INTERIOR OF FUDO-DO, SHOWING FUDO MYO-O.

Eight Great Boys attendant on Fudo Myo-o. Of these Kongari Doji personifies obedience and wisdom and along with Seitaka Doji most usually accompanies Fudo Myo-o. The Tahoto, a pagoda, in the complex of the Kongo Sammai-in, *in* meaning "temple," is nearly seven hundred years old and is also under special government protection, containing five wooden sculptures representative of serene religious qualities, known as Gochi Nyorai, *Gochi* meaning "Five Wisdoms," *Nyorai* being a title of honor for all Buddhas. These figures, in excellent state of preservation, are also included among the "National Treasures." The central figure is Dainichi

Nyorai, the personification of wisdom and absolute purity, while to the right of it is Ashiku Nyorai, signifying non-movement, non-anger and steadfastness in helping to destroy all evil thoughts and in fostering pure religious aspirations. On the left is Shaku Nyorai, the founder of Buddhism. Behind them is visible only a part of the halos of the other two: of Hosho Nyorai, controlling the life



KONGARA DOJI.



SEITAKA DOJI.

of all things with the power to bestow the enjoyment of life; and of Amida Nyorai, an ideal of boundless light.

The most stately building in the whole monastery is the Kondo, the chief sanctuary. In the interior, in a mass of flame, stands the figure of Gozanze Myo-o, who overcame the evils that hinder the soul's upward aspirations. The present building is only about sixty years old, now containing, among others, seven wonderful specimens

of wood sculpture, attributed to Kobo Daishi himself, and included among the "National Treasures."

Kobo Daishi, the founder of the monastery, who died in 834



THE KONGO SAMMAI-IN, ONE OF THE OLDEST TEMPLES.



THE TAHOTO.

A. D., was celebrated equally as preacher, painter, sculptor, calligraphist and traveler. Like Unkei, the famous medieval sculptor of Buddhistic images in wood, and like Hidari Jingoro, the left-

handed wood carver of unusual talent and skill, who died in 1634, Kobo Daishi, even if his life had lasted six hundred years instead of sixty-one, as it actually did, could not have written all the sutras,



KONGO YOSHA MYO-O, ONE OF THE FIVE GREAT DIVINITIES.

carved all the sculptures and painted all the paintings now popularly ascribed to him. However, history conclusively shows that he was truly a wonderful person and a genius in art.

Though there are comparatively few really old buildings on the mountain, the monastery is rich in old art and historical relics. No one place in Japan has such a splendid collection of Buddhist art, as emperors and feudal lords richly endowed and embellished the temples in the days of yore. The proposed art museum, the work on which has already begun, on Koyasan is bound to be a most valuable institution of the kind.

Beside those above mentioned, there is a large number of splendid wooden sculptures, as the Shingon sect of Buddhism, to which the Koyasan monastery belongs, has given fitting and plastic



THE KONDO, THE CHIEF SANCTUARY OF KOYASAN.

expression to all forms of religious ideals. The tenets of the Shingon sect were introduced into Japan by Kobo Daishi, who studied them when he was sent to China as a student in 804 and was charged by his great teacher Abbot Hei-kwa to carry back to Japan the teachings of the sect, which aims at the direct interpretation of the perfected mind of Buddha, and occupies itself greatly with mystic formulas, magic spells and incantations. The Aizen-do contains three excellent images in wood: Aizen Myo-o, the fierce-looking god of love, and Jinja Taisho, a converted demon serving as a guardian of Buddhism in a grewsome form, and Kongo Taisho, another

powerful guardian of Buddhism. The figures are remarkable for their expression of power and strength.

For the expression of power, two small wooden figures at the Henjoko-in are also remarkable. They are Jikoku-ten and Tamon-ten, two of the four heavenly kings guarding the four quarters of the horizon, Jikoku-ten guarding the east and bringing peace to the nation, and Tamon-ten, also called Bishamon-ten, guarding



JINJA TAISHO.



JIKOKU-TEN.

the north and bestowing wealth and happiness on mankind. These two figures are classed as "National Treasures." The Bishamon-ten of the Bishamon-do, belonging to Eko-in, is one of the most popular images on Koyasan. Though little heed may be given to the popular belief that it was carved by Kobo Daishi, it is old, possessing some good qualities in its simplicity.

There are a large number of excellent images of Fudo Myo-o (the god immovable) on the mountain. Perhaps the most famous

is the one known as "Namikiri Fudo" (*nami* meaning "waves," *kiri* "to cut") which is said to have been carved by Kobo Daishi from his memory of a vision appearing on the tempestuous sea on his way back to Japan from China. With his sword, Fudo cut the turbulent waves and enabled Kobo Daishi to return safely. It is a standing figure, though Fudo is usually in sitting posture. The famous Fudo of the Fudo-do and of the Kondo—the former at-



TAMON-TEN.



BISHAMON-TEN.

tributed to Unkei and the latter to Kobo Daishi—and of the Okuno-in, at the mausoleum, are all in sitting form and of excellent workmanship. It is invariably with *kayen* (flames) carved in wood and painted red. Fudo Myo-o generally has two attendants, Seitaka Doji and Kongara Doji, and is the highest among the myo-o, those closely related to Dainichi Nyorai, the personification of wisdom and absolute purity, and he occupies the central position in Godai-son, or Godai Myo-o, meaning five great divinities. We have al-

ready mentioned these attendants as among the eight "Great Boys," among whom another, Eki Doji, symbolizes the fulness of good luck and wisdom.

Among many objects of worship, which are said to have been carved by the founder of the monastery, there is a small portable shrine, a "National Treasure," known as "makura honzon," *makura*



EKI DOJI,
one of the eight Great Boys.



JIZO BOSATSU.

meaning "pillow," *honzon*, "the main deity," in possession of the Fumon-in. According to the inscription on the back of it, it was donated to the temple in prayer for the welfare of the soul of Honda, the lord of the province of Hida. The shrine contains an image of Shakamuni, the founder of Buddhism, with Seishi, who awakens a desire in the human soul to follow the ways of Buddha, and

Kwannon, who helps to foster that desire, on either side. These figures are covered over with an intricate pierced carving of angels, trees, Niwo, two guardian kings, and figures in worshipping attitude. The carving is well done.

No image of Amida, a powerful deity, the ideal of boundless



THE MAKURA HONZON AT THE FUMON-IN.

light, has such grace of form, dignity of pose, and spiritual radiance of the countenance as that of the Shojoshin-in. The work is attributed to Unkei. Remarkable also is an image of Jizo Bosatsu, the compassionate Buddhist helper of those who are in trouble, in charge of the Myo-o-in. The sculpture is classed among "National

Treasures" and ascribed to Ono Takamura, a man of letters and artist of high attainment, who died in 852. It is a standing figure with a benevolent countenance holding a staff called *shakujo* with metal rings attached to the top of it and a jewel, *hoju*, in his left hand. The jewel represents the *bodai-shin*, bodai meaning Buddhist knowledge, shin meaning mind: the wish to know the ways of Buddha, the righteous awakening of humanity. The inmost desire, the yearning of the human soul, is kept constantly awake by the



KYŌ-DO, OR SUTRA-BUILDING, A REVOLVING LIBRARY OF SACRED BOOKS.

sound of the *shakujo*, thus assisting the soul in its upward struggle. This masterpiece in sculpture strongly resembles a smaller counterpart at the Henjoko-in, also included among "National Treasures." The exquisite flow of the lines of the robe, the peaceful and benevolent countenance of the shaven priest, seem to express deep inner qualities of a spiritual helper, of which this is a visual representation.

The Koyasan has many more masterpieces in wood. No less in number and in importance are the Buddhistic paintings which have also served as objects of worship. The monastery is justly proud of possessing an unusually large collection of illuminated sutras. There are also many pieces of lacquer and porcelain of highly artistic value. All in all, the Koyasan is a rare storehouse of valuable Buddhistic art objects.

THE PROPHECY OF LIBUSHA.

BY C. E. EGGERT.

LIBUSHA is the legendary ancestress of the royal family of Bohemia, which bore the name of Přemysl from her husband, and ruled until 1526, when the sovereignty passed to the house of Hapsburg by election. This house founded its greatness on the success of Kaiser Rudolf I in contracting successful marriages for his numerous offspring, one of whom married the daughter of Přemysl Ottokar, King of Bohemia, who was slain in the battle of Dürnkrut in 1278. Consequently through this and other marriages, the present Kaiser Karl of Austria has in his veins the blood of Libusha, and to him Bohemians would be enthusiastically loyal if—he would voluntarily accord Bohemia what he could not deny to Hungary.

Unfortunately Bohemia occupies a position analogous to that of Ireland toward its masters, only Ireland has yielded its Keltic idiom before the march of the all-conquering English, while the Czechish revival of the early nineteenth century arrested a similar process of Germanization in Bohemia, and it too has its Ulster in the fringe of German counties, which are as irreconcilable as ever the followers of Sir Edward Carson tried to be. As in Ireland, so in Bohemia, the religious question has played a terrible and decisive role. Cromwell settled by force a militant colony of "God-fearing" Scotch Presbyterians in Erin for the express purpose of keeping the Green Island straight according to English notions. Just three hundred years ago the harsh attempts of Ferdinand II to undo the work of the Reformation turned Bohemia into a shambles for thirty hideous years, and the wealthy land of the ancient "Golden King," Ottokar, became a waste. The Catholic party was successful and Bohemia is to-day outwardly devotedly Roman Catholic, but there burns within the proud race a sullen conviction that the German has been the source of all their past