



HISTORICAL SKETCH OF KAMAKURA

From misty twilights,
And the dim magic of the past.'

In the present tranquil days it seems almost incredible to recall that the plain of Kamakura,—with its green valleys intersecting the enclosing hills, was once the theatre of a vast and densely populated city, thickly intersected with busy streets; studded with the splendid mansions of officials and retainers of the ruler; abounding in rich architecture and beautiful temples—in fact the most important city of the realm, the military capital of Japan.

Yet it is a fact that some seven centuries ago this peaceful spot witnessed some of the most thrilling events in the feudal history of the nation: for, partly owing to the value of its strategical position—being entirely surrounded by mountains on three sides, with the ocean on the south—an important consideration in those bellicose days, it was selected by the great Yoritomo as the base of his operations, and in the year 1192 the First *Shōgun* of the Minamoto family was established at Kamakura.

This part moreover had long been specially con-

nected with the house of Minamoto. Here Yoritomo's father Yoshitomo had resided ; also his famous ancestors Yoriyoshi and his son Yoshiie—governors of this district, had exercised great influence and had played a most effective rôle in their military capacity.

To the former valiant warrior the temple of Hachiman owes its existence, Yoriyoshi having originally caused it to be established in Kamakura in the hope that invocations at the shrine would propitiate the war god, and secure success for his exploits upon the field of battle.

As the achievements of Yoritomo are so inseparably associated with the history of Kamakura it may be of interest to recount a brief sketch of this strange and dominant personality, whose name shines out with such lustre as one of the giants of mediæval times ; the magician whose wand caused the obscure little fishing hamlet to blossom into the most famous city of the day.

For many years Japan had been torn by the civil wars of the rival factions Taira and Minamoto, but towards the latter half of the 12th century the country lay practically beneath the sway of the Taira. Its chief, Kiyomori,—a man of dauntless courage and brilliant military capacity—had succeeded in crushing the enemy and establishing the supremacy of his party. This despot ruled with a rod of iron. All the important posts of the government were occupied by prominent members of his great family ; indeed their power was so absolute that a common saying of the time was to the effect that not to be of the Taira was to be deemed unworthy of belonging to the human race. 'So soaring

was Kiyomori's ambition that even the cloistered Son of Heaven, the Emperor himself, declared that his own position was not secure.

Yoshitomo, head of the rival faction, had been cruelly trapped and butchered by his enemies (1160): his adherents were scattered in flight and practically without a leader. His two elder sons had also fallen victims and shared the fate of their parent, but the third son Yoritomo had managed to escape with his life. From his exceptional sagacity this boy had always been his father's favourite, and although so young—only 13 years of age—he is said to have advised Yoshitomo to take the initiative in this battle instead of waiting for the Taira's attack. However fate was against them: while escaping on horse-back from their pursuers the over-wearied lad fell asleep in the saddle, and thus was left behind by his father and brothers. As he was passing through Moriyama (Omi province), the villagers recognised and attempted to seize the young Yoritomo, but the boy showed such unexpected spirit—cutting down two of his would-be captors with his sword—that the rest fell back and Yoritomo was able to continue his way unmolested, shortly afterwards falling in with the retainer who had been sent to search for him, and thus was enabled to rejoin his party in safety.

But later, on account of a heavy snow-storm, the fugitives were compelled to dismount and walk through the blinding sleet, this effort causing such distress to the fatigued and exhausted boy that again he fell behind. This time he was rescued by a sympathiser who lived in that district named Sadayasu, and by him was concealed, first in a temple and later in the house of

his preserver. Meanwhile his father Yoshitomo and his two elder brothers had all perished.

Soon afterwards Yoritomo, leaving his temporary asile, went to the province of Mino, and from thence attempted to make his way to the *Kwanto*, or Eastern Provinces. But the boy was unable to elude the vigilance of the enemy, and fell into the hands of Munekiyo, the Taira commander, who bore off his prey in triumph to Kyōto. By order of Kiyomori he was entrusted to the care of Munekiyo until his ultimate fate should be decided.

At this crisis the noble bearing of the young captive stood him in good stead. The lad's calm self-possession and fearless demeanour in the face of almost certain death softened the heart of his captor: when asked if he were ready for his fate, the young Yoritomo tactfully replied that he would prefer to live, since himself alone was left to pray for the souls of his relatives.

Through the intervention of Kiyomori's step-mother, the boy's life was spared. At Munekiyo's suggestion she detected in him a resemblance to her own son who had died in early youth, so with tears and prayers she passionately besought that the child's doom might be averted. Her supplications at last met with success. Kiyomori consented that the boy's sentence should be banishment, and he was entrusted to the guardianship of two Taira adherents whose estates lay beyond Hakone, at Hirugashima in the province of Idzu.

This act of benevolence was deplored as a lack of sagacity and sign of weakness by Kiyomori's *entourage*—a criticism to be amply justified by later events.

The lady to whom he owed his life sagely counsel-

led the boy to spend his time in the study of the Scriptures and to refrain from shooting or the practice of any warlike sports lest he might incur suspicion: the retainers of Yoshitomo moreover, on hearing the joyful news that their young lord was to be spared, suggested to him that the best way of ensuring his safety was to enter the priesthood. But as he was starting upon his journey into banishment, one Moriyasu Hanabusa secretly whispered into Yoritomo's ear to the effect that as the young master was saved, surely it must be the will of the Almighty that he should not become a priest, but the future hope of his party. This hint was not lost upon the shrewd boy, he nodded his assent in silence: the populace who witnessed his departure unanimously agreed that the young exile was quite apart from ordinary mortals, and to send him away thus was "letting loose a tiger-cub in the wilds".

The two guardians to whose safe custody the young exile was confided were Ito Sukechika of the Fujiwara family, and Hōjō Tokimasa, who later was to become the famous head of the Hōjō clan:—to whose never-failing assistance and advice much of the success of Yoritomo's career has been attributed, and whose counsels exercised so much influence upon the early history of Kamakura.

The boy first found a home in the establishment of Sukechika. Later on, during the absence of her parent his daughter succumbed to the fascinations of the youthful Minamoto scion: tender relations were established, which flourished for a time in secret, until the birth of a son to the amorous pair brought discovery and retribution in its wake. The girl's step-mother betrayed

this state of affairs to Sukechika, who promptly shattered the little drama with the bolt of his paternal ire. The unfortunate babe was cast into the water and drowned; his erring daughter was promptly united in marriage to another aspirant, and thus accorded the protection of a lawful lord and master. Vengeance was about to descend upon the head of the delinquent Yoritomo, but before his doom could be compassed he managed to flee from the scene, and escaped successfully to the domain of his other guardian Tokimasa.

Although ostensibly a loyal supporter of the Taira clan, from various causes Tokimasa's partisanship for his faction had become secretly weakened and alienated: moreover a man of his acute penetration doubtless divined the impending downfall of the Taira ascendancy. By degrees the entire confidence and devotion of the older man was gained by his *protégé*, and their relations underwent a change; Tokimasa becoming the counsellor, supporter, and prime minister of his illustrious son-in-law—a state of things that lasted unchanged until the day of Yoritomo's death.

Now Tokimasa had two daughters. The elder, Masako—who at this time was twenty-one years of age—was not only beautiful, but had inherited her father's sagacity and high order of intelligence: the younger one, the child of a second wife, was reputed of more ordinary capacity, and somewhat plain of feature to boot.

The young Yoritomo desired to strengthen his position with his guardian by espousing one of his daughters, and from motives of policy deemed it expedient to pay his addresses to the less attractive of the pair. Hence he composed a love-letter, and instructed

his messenger to deliver it secretly to the younger of the two maidens. Coming events would seem to have cast their shadows before. According to the well-known tradition, the slumbers of the prospective recipient had been visited by a strange dream, in which she had beheld herself toiling up a mountain-side with the sun and moon shining from her long sleeves, and holding on high an orange-bough laden with ripe fruit (*tachibana*). The shrewd Masako was well versed in legendary lore, signs, bodings and portents. At once deeming this incident of an auspicious nature she coveted it for herself, and worked upon the credulity of the younger girl by pronouncing it an evil omen: moreover should a dream of good-luck be related before seven years, or one of sinister portent before seven days had elapsed, the good results would be neutralised and the evil intensified.

To her alarmed sister Masako proposed a solution of the difficulty — she would buy the dream herself. “But how can one buy or sell what can neither be seen nor handled?” enquired the reluctant possessor of the dream. Masako fixed her sister with a searching gaze and over-ruled her objections as to the ill-effects of such a transaction upon the purchaser: “I will buy it!” she proclaimed. As the price of her intangible bargain she paid to the younger girl a set of silken robes and a silver mirror. It is recorded that the latter was a valuable family heirloom which Tokimasa had given into the keeping of his eldest child owing to his affection and admiration for the character of Masako.

This strange barter seems to have exercised some occult influence upon its purchaser, for the same night Masako dreamed that a white dove approached her.

offering a golden box containing a letter.* The next morning this prophetic omen was realised, and Yoritomo's message was delivered: from that time it was not long before relations of a romantic and illicit nature were established.

Meanwhile Tokimasa was absent, being engaged in the execution of his duties as guard in Kyōto. He returned from the distant capital in company with Taira-no-Kanetaka, a relative of Kiyomori and governor of the province of Idzu, and moreover to whom Tokimasa promised the hand of his eldest daughter in marriage.

But after his arrival, when tidings of this liaison that had flourished during his absence reached his ears, he was placed in a difficult position, and one that required delicate handling. However exalted might be his opinion of Yoritomo's talents and probabilities of a brilliant future, he hardly cared to risk incurring the odium of the whole Taira faction—including Kanetaka, the governor and prospective bridegroom—by uniting his daughter with their deadly enemy, the exiled scion of the hated Minamoto!

But the crafty Tokimasa proved equal to the occasion. Ostensibly ignoring the amour, he caused all preparations to be made for the celebration of the marriage with the governor, according to the original

* It will be remembered that Hachiman was the special protector and tutelary deity of the Minamoto family. The messengers of the god were supposed to be the sacred doves that, even at the present day, are always in evidence at the shrines dedicated to Hachiman. Amongst other instances, at the battle of Ishi-bashi-yama the life of Yoritomo was saved by two wood-pigeons: later on, during the battle of Dan-no-Ura, at a crucial moment a pair of doves alighted upon the flag-staff of Yoshitsune's vessel, inspiring the hard-pressed warriors to further feats of courage and heroism.

arrangement, but meanwhile there is no doubt that he was secretly conniving at his daughter's disappearance with her lover.

The nuptial festivities were celebrated with all due ceremonial. But the same evening, under cover of the darkness and a convenient storm of wind and rain, the bride disappeared into the mountains, in which congenial retreat she was joined by the partner of her affections—the pair lying concealed until the father's pardon was accorded, and which was not long withheld.

From this time, assisted by Tokimasa, Yoritomo began to communicate in secret with the clansmen round about, and the military families in sympathy with his party. Meanwhile, a rising against the Taira was gathering strength in the south, under the auspices of Prince Mochihito, second son of the Emperor Go-Shirakawa. An order from this Prince was despatched to Yoritomo, requesting him to call to arms the Minamoto adherents, and to deliver the Imperial Family, as well as the country at large, from the selfish arrogance and tyrannous misrule of the Taira. This appeal was delivered to Yoritomo in the late spring of 1180; but while engaged in his preparations to comply, the fatal news arrived announcing the defeat and death of the Prince in the battle on the Uji. Elated with this victory, the Taira were plotting to follow it up by exterminating the whole remainder of the Minamoto faction.

Yoritomo being warned of this prospect, he determined to take the field without loss of time, and as an initial attempt the stronghold of the governor Kanetaka—his former rival in the arts of love, was attacked.

The fort was stormed, set on fire, and the unfortunate governor was beheaded.

This preliminary success decided the wavering adherents of the districts to rally around their new leader with contributions of men and arms, and war was soon declared. Supported by his little force of three hundred warriors, and bearing the Prince's mandate attached to his standard, Yoritomo marched upon the foe at the historic hill of Ishibashi—a wooded eminence on the northern outskirts of the Hakone mountains. However this valiant, but premature attempt was doomed to failure. Woefully outnumbered by the enemy—who were encamped three thousand strong, and who attacked simultaneously from the front and from the rear—the Minamoto band suffered a crushing defeat and were almost annihilated; their leader only escaping from death by a hair's-breadth.

When Yoritomo was able to take cover in a grove of trees, his supporters had dwindled to the sorry remnant of six men. Acting upon their leader's advice these took refuge in flight: Yoritomo, with a single attendant, concealed himself in the hollow trunk of a tree. In this predicament signal service was rendered by Kajiwara Kageotoki—a secret sympathiser with the Minamoto cause—who indicated* to the pursuers that their quarry had taken an opposite route. However the Taira commander, Oba Kagechika, in riding past the hollow tree thrust his spear into the aperture, according to some accounts actually grazing the sleeve of Yoritomo's armour! At this dramatic moment the god Hachiman did not desert his *protégé*: two wood-pigeons fluttered out from tree—deluding the enemy into the

assumption that no human being could be sheltering within—and the life of the fugitive was saved.

After this complete defeat at Ishibashi-yama Yoritomo became almost a solitary figure, leading a precarious existence concealed in the forests of that mountainous district. After some time he reached the sea-coast, where he boarded a ship at Manazurugasaki and crossed over into the province of Awa. Here the tide of fortune speedily turned. Undaunted by the late *fiasco* he was met and welcomed with utmost enthusiasm by crowds of followers, both old and new rallying to the white banner of their chief. The latter included the Taira clansman Hirotsune, who offered his allegiance to Yoritomo with an army of twenty thousand troops.

Before the arrival of the Minamoto scion Hirotsune had been in a state of indecision whether to join forces with the newcomer, or whether to oppose and seize him. But again the force of Yoritomo's magnetic personality rescued him in the crucial hour. The Taira commander succumbed to the spell of the young hero, placing his forces at his disposal and becoming himself one of Yoritomo's loyal and important retainers. Throughout the eight provinces of the *Kwantō* manifestoes were circulated, to which the Minamoto adherents responded with alacrity, flocking to the standard in such large numbers that before long their chief found himself at the head of a mighty army: for strategical, as well as political reasons, he was advised to decide on establishing his military head-quarters at Kamakura, and where he lost no time in propitiating the guardian deity of his ancestors by the erection of an imposing shrine to the war-god Hachiman.

Naturally these demonstrations had not escaped the notice of Kiyomori. By this time, from his advancing age and the condition of his health, the crafty old Taira chief was unable to conduct an expedition in person to quell the foe, however his nearest relatives were appointed for the undertaking, and who proved anything but efficient substitutes. On October 20th, 1180, a body of fifty thousand troops was despatched from Kyōto under the leadership of Tadamori, Kiyomori's youngest brother, and his grandson Kōronori, to attack the upstart Yoritomo, scatter his followers, and dislodge him from Kamakura, his newly established stronghold. Yoritomo, at the head of a vast army two hundred thousand strong, went forth to meet the foe, whom early in November they confronted, encamped upon the southern bank of the Fujikawa—the broad and rapidly flowing torrent that rushes down to the sea from the slopes of the great mountain, and whose crossing presented so many obstacles in ancient times.

Now the Taira generals, in addition to being ill-fitted for the campaign by their effete and luxurious manner of living in Kyōto, were alarmed and thrown into a state of consternation by the sudden notoriety of the newly arisen champion of the Minamoto cause; moreover the unexpectedly imposing scale of the host that was drawn up upon the opposite bank of the river was ill-calculated to allay their apprehensions. Yoritomo decided to attack by night. As the detachments of soldiers silently crossed the dark flood, landing in the swamp below the enemy's encampment, their appearance disturbed the multitudes of water-fowl that were roosting in the reeds. To the enemy the loud whirring of the

birds' wings sounded like galloping hordes of war-steeds rushing upon their prey; the ominous sound working such havoc upon the over-strained nerves of the Taira that the entire force was soon in full flight at precipitate haste, without the exchange of a single arrow! Yoritomo's first impulse was to hurl himself upon the foe and chase the fugitive army to Kyōto, but was dissuaded from the project by the advice of his generals. It was held dangerous to withdraw the protection of so large a body of troops from the *Kwantō* while it was not yet clear of the enemy, thus leaving the military base open to attack: moreover the Minamoto force was hardly equipped for a lengthy campaign against an adversary who were retiring to their own stronghold. So in the interests of caution the chief consented to waive vengeance for the present, and withdraw.

During this retirement, and while the troops were encamped upon the banks of the Kisogawa, a dramatic incident occurred. A youthful samurai of dignified and noble mien suddenly appeared in the camp and requested an interview with Yoritomo. The new arrival proved to be the famous Yoshitsune, ninth son of Yoshitomo, and under these circumstances Yoritomo beheld for the first time the face of his youngest brother.

This most popular hero of mediæval times—around whose name tradition has interwoven such countless thrilling and romantic incidents—was the son of Yoshitomo by his beautiful mistress Tokiwa Gozen. When her lord was slain, Tokiwa with her three children—Yoshitsune being a babe in arms—took flight from the vengeance of the enemy. On a bitter winter's night she escaped from the luxurious life at the palace into the storm

without, enduring cruel hardships in the snowy mountains until shelter was found in a little hamlet of that remote region, where she and the three little ones were enabled to lie low and successfully evade detection.

But the agents of Kiyomori—determined to exterminate the whole brood of Yoshitomo, and foiled in their attempts to fathom her place of concealment—seized her mother as a hostage, threatening to inflict upon the unfortunate parent a cruel death, unless her daughter Tokiwa gave herself up. This ruse proved effective. When the fugitive—so beautiful and so forlorn—appeared before Kiyomori, her fascinations made such a strong appeal to the fierce old warrior, that he vowed her life should be spared, as well as her three children, if she would consent to transfer her allegiance from her dead lord to himself, and submit to the blandishments of her sworn enemy! Poor Tokiwa was brought to bay: she held out for a time, but such merciless pressure was brought to bear upon her, in the doom that threatened her defenceless family, that loyalty became impossible and submission was the only course.

Thus the fate was averted that menaced her mother and her little sons; but with a view to rendering their future careers as innocuous as possible, the latter were deposited in monasteries, vowed to celibacy, and educated for the priesthood.

Possessed of great physical strength and almost superhuman activity, the fiery temperament of the young Yoshitsune was soon made manifest. At the age of fifteen (1174), he determined to elude the vigilance of his pious guardians, and with the assistance of a friend

merchant, succeeded in effecting an escape to the province of Mutsu in the far north, a district too remote and too difficult of access to warrant pursuit. Here he was hospitably received, and lived for some years under the protection of Hidéhira governor of the whole province. The boy had inherited his father's spirit: passionately desirous of avenging his murder and espousing the family cause, he spent his days in equipping himself to that end, practising warlike arts and acquiring a wide reputation for his feats of skill and valour. When the stirring news penetrated to those northern regions that the Minamoto were in arms and had taken the field against the Taira, Yoshitsune deemed the hour was ripe for action. So with a little band of twenty loyal and trusted followers—including the faithful giant Benkei, hero of a thousand tales of wild adventure—he started for the south, and thus the historic meeting came about.

This valuable recruit became a general in his brother's new army, where his brilliant exploits resulted in defeat after defeat of the enemy, culminating in the final destruction and annihilation of the Taira in the famous and oft-sung battle of Dan-no-Ura (1185).

Meanwhile the Taira chief Kiyomori had died in 1181; his last request upon his deathbed being that before any prayers or religious rites were performed for the repose of his soul, the head of his bitter foe Yoritomo should be placed upon his tomb. However since the advent of the new Minamoto leader upon the horizon the star of the Taira had considerably waned, and no aspirant was bold enough to pacify the spirit of the departed with the longed-for trophy.

For the next few years Yoritomo remained at his base in Kamakura, gradually building it up into the great capital it later became, while his armies were adding laurel after laurel to his prestige; the decisive victory of Dan-no-Ura—when the sea was dyed red with blood, and even the infant Emperor perished beneath the waves—leaving the Minamoto chief complete master of the situation.

However this tragic struggle proved the undoing of the conqueror as well as the conquered; for in spite of his brilliant achievements and the valuable aid he had rendered to the cause, Yoshitsune became the object of Yoritomo's jealousy and suspicion.

After evading various attempts upon his life, the former managed to escape to his old refuge and sanctuary in the north; but there an army followed him at the command of his pitiless brother. Further retreat being impossible, and his devoted band of comrades having all perished in the cause of loyalty, the trapped hero put an end to his wife and children and then died upon his own sword, his head being sent to Yoritomo as proof that the fallen victor was no more. Yoritomo utilised this occasion to detach more armies to the north, thus adding vast and rich additions to his conquered territory; and from the year 1189 practically the whole of Japan lay at his feet.

Now that his supremacy was established upon a firm basis, and Yoritomo was virtual ruler of the country, his first efforts were to restore peace and prosperity to the war-devastated land. Justice was dispensed by a good and sound administrative system, and the judicious encouragement of agriculture, industry, and trade, were

potent factors in transforming "men's misery into happiness."

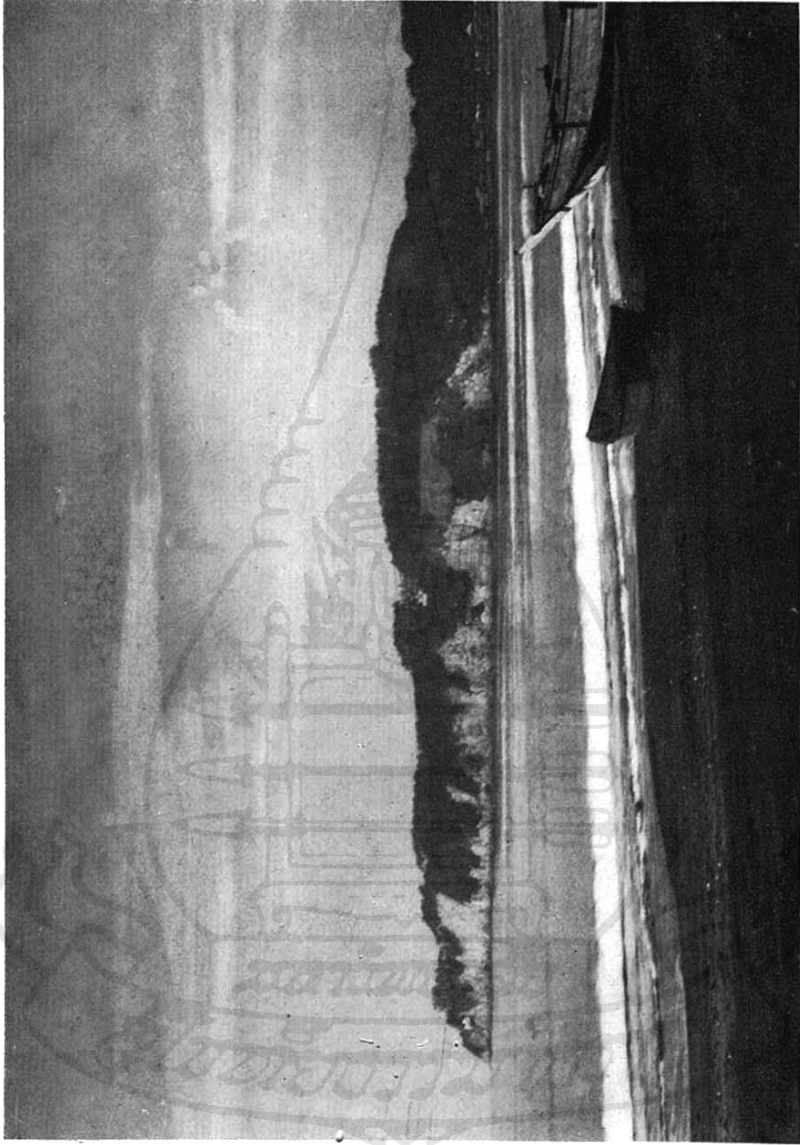
Kamakura became the finest and most flourishing city of the Empire, presenting in every respect the strongest contrast to the effete and luxurious condition of society that prevailed in Kyōto, the Imperial capital. Simplicity and frugality were Yoritomo's watchwords; the greatest encouragement being given to the sports that promoted manliness and physical vigour. Great hunting-parties were organised—indeed proficiency in archery, swordsmanship, feats on horseback etc. were so highly estimated that instances are recorded of even criminals being occasionally granted a pardon on this account.

In the year 1192 Yoritomo was at the pinnacle of his fame. The title of *Shōgun* (*Sei-i-tai-shōgun*)=Barbarian-subduing-great-general) was conferred upon him by the Emperor; thus the dual system of government was established by which the Emperor's authority was completely overshadowed, and which lasted for almost seven centuries, until the Restoration of the Imperial power in 1868. But now that the zenith of his ambition was attained, the first *Shōgun* only wielded the sceptre for a brief seven years; his death occurring in the spring of 1199. No record, regarding the mode of his demise have been preserved, the actual facts concerning the passing of this illustrious man being clouded in the mists of obscurity. But tradition credits him with a dramatic exit from the scene of his triumphs. The legend states that towards evening, as Yoritomo was returning from the function of opening a new bridge across the Sagami River—whither he had repaired with all pomp and ceremony, and attended by a regal ret-

inue—suddenly the pallid spectres of his murdered relatives appeared before him. The *Shōgun* passed this disconcerting apparition, but as his *cortège* was approaching Inamuragasaki the figure of a young child arose from the sea. This phantom proclaimed itself the departed spirit of the Emperor Antoku, in search of his enemy and slayer. The procession passed on, but the ghostly throng had fanned their destroyer with their shadowy wings;—a few days later the great Yoritomo was dead.

This event took place January 13th 1199. He was succeeded in turn by his two sons, both meeting with violent deaths, but with the assassination of Sanetomo upon the steps of the Hachiman Shrine in Kamakura, the direct line of the Minamoto *Shōguns*—that its illustrious founder hoped would last for all time—came to an end in the year 1219, a brief twenty years after the death of Yoritomo. Regarding his personal characteristics, Yoritomo's head is said to have been specially large in proportion to his height; his demeanour calm and suave. Profoundly penetrating, shrewd and cautious, he possessed the magnetic power of influencing others to an extraordinary degree, and was invariably magnanimous to those who served him loyally.

Many instances prove his gratitude to those who had helped him in the hour of need, but to the members of his own family falling under the ban of his suspicion and displeasure he proved merciless, and exterminated them without compunction. There is no doubt that Yoritomo was of a sincerely religious nature. It is recorded that upon the field of battle he carried a small statue of Kwannon (Goddess of Mercy) below his hel-



The Promontory of Reisingasaki.

met, inserted in his *mage*, or top-knot of hair; while his rosary invariably encircled his wrist. At the battle of Ishibashi-yama this latter pious emblem became detached and was lost, greatly to its owner's concern, but the beads were ultimately discovered and restored by his retainer. To his veneration for things spiritual he attributed his many triumphs; regarding the downfall of his enemies as mainly due to their disregard and contempt for the powers above, a condition specially manifested in their sacrilegious treatment of shrines and monasteries. To this attitude Kamakura owed the large number of beautiful and important temples that were erected and restored after the establishment of the military capital. Moreover throughout the whole country Yoritomo exerted his influence as the patron of temples and shrines, thus, incidentally affording a strong impetus to the development of many forms of art—painting, architecture, sculpture etc., a condition invariably attendant upon a religious awakening.

When the line of Yoritomo became extinct, the power was usurped by the family of his wife, the next chapter of history being known as the Hōjō Period. These rulers continued to reside in Kamakura, but although exercising absolute power, none of them assumed the title of *Shōgun*—they were known as the *Shikken*, (literally Power-holder) or Regents.

An important event occurred under the *régime* of Yoshitoki, the second *Shikken*, and son of Tokimasa. Owing to various causes the *Bakufu* had become on strained terms with Kyōto. The Emperor Go-Toba availed himself of disturbances in the military government to attempt to overthrow the usurpers, and reinstate

the Imperial power: to that end he issued a decree denouncing the Hōjō as traitors, and assembled an army with the object of destroying Kamakura (1221).

A large force was promptly despatched from the military capital to deal with the situation; the Imperial troops were speedily overthrown by the seasoned warriors of the *Kwantō*, and Kamakura's triumph was complete. All the nobles and courtiers that had taken part in this uprising were shown scant mercy, their estates being confiscated and many met with violent deaths. Even the Imperial family were accorded ruthless treatment; while the sacred person of the Emperor Go-Toba himself was exiled to the rocky and barren island of Oki—where he suffered great hardships and died some three years later; a disloyal and sacrilegious action hitherto unheard of—in Japan, and which has incurred the undying censure and odium of future generations.

Another event of deep significance, and one that brought his rule into great prominence, occurred under Tokimune, 6th Hōjō Regent, in the defeat of the Mongolian Invasion 1281. This was the first occasion in her long history that Japan was attacked by a foreign foe. The huge armada arrived off the coast of Japan in May—the campaign lasting some two months, and the aggressors being finally scattered upon August 14th of that momentous year.

The earlier Hōjō Regents ruled wisely and well. A council was organised by which strict justice was dispensed; the condition of the populace was ameliorated their wrongs and oppressions being righted, and they enjoyed the benefits of an admirable government and

kind treatment, as well as the blessings of peace and tranquillity after long devastation of war and bloodshed. However after the death of the wise and pious Tokimune (1284) the Hōjō prosperity began to wane.

The ascendancy of this family gradually dwindled until Takatoki (10th Regent, and last of the line) degenerated into a mere cypher and voluptuary, who devoted his time to the gratification of his own pleasures, taking little heed of the affairs of state.

A quaint and entertaining description of this decadent condition of Takatoki's time is given in the "*Tai-heiki*," the so-called classical record of the time. On one occasion some fierce dogs started a fight in the ground adjoining the Hōjō mansion. This incident afforded such gratification to the sporting instincts of the Regent that he instituted dog-fights as a regular pastime. Orders were issued for a vast number of powerful dogs to be collected: these huge beasts were housed in kennels richly decorated with gold and silver, fed upon dainty fare, and even carried abroad for exercise in *kago*, or palanquins! The number of these luxurious animals amounted to between four and five thousand: they were clad in garments of brocade and glittering tinsel, their presence causing the city of Kamakura to assume a new and unfamiliar aspect to the surprised inhabitants.

Any sort of amusement appealed to this indolent and dissipated man. Two companies of popular actors were summoned from Kyōto, and absorbed in their performances he was all indifferent to the flight of time, relegating the duties of his high position entirely to unworthy and corrupt ministers. These actors he

quartered upon various noble families in Kamakura, compelling the latter to supply the mountebanks with gorgeous costumes and valuable equipment for their shows. Moreover during the performances the Regent, as well as the other spectators, would mark their appreciation by divesting themselves of their robes of costly brocade and hurling them at the favourites! Naturally this state of things could not last. A Japanese historian describes the Kamakura of those decadent days as a tree still green and beautiful to the eye, but crumbling and rotten at the core: the days of the Hōjō dynasty were numbered.

At the command of the Emperor Go-Daigo loyalist troops were raised to attack the rebels—as the Military Government was described: two of the leading spirits of this movement being the famous Kusunoki Masashigé and Nitta Yoshisada. The campaign was waged with varying success until the fall and destruction of Kamakura was accomplished by Nitta Yoshisada. This great general hurled his troops upon the city in three divisions—the army commanded by himself advancing across the sands from Inamuragasaki; the deathknell of the military capital was sounded on the 5th of July 1333—a day traced in blood and ashes upon the pages of Kamakura's past.

Takatoki, although so wanting and worthless as a ruler, gave ample proof at the time of this catastrophe that the warrior spirit of his race was still alive (p. 266). Together with almost a thousand of his officers and adherents he died the hero's death upon his sword that was the inevitable sequel of a ruined cause—the view-point of mediæval chivalry: all perished in a scene

of dauntless valour that stands out in high relief from the pages of history, even in those heroic days. When the people of Kamakura became aware of this tragedy that marked the overthrow of the Hōjō line, so strong and unwavering was their fidelity to their fallen ruler that large numbers of them resolved to accompany the spirit of their lord in his journey to the land of shades. Over six thousand of them thus died the death of loyalty upon this dreadful day; whole families destroying themselves, and numerous priests participating in the general orgy of slaughter and extinction.

These events resulted in the Emperor's restoration to power for a short time, but the military *régime* was not destined to suffer a long eclipse. Another of his generals—one who had been effective in fighting for the Imperial cause, and who enjoyed the Emperor's confidence in a marked degree—turned traitor, and determined to succeed the Hōjō as head of the military rule at Kamakura: this was Ashikaga Takauji. His demands being naturally repudiated at Kyōto, this bold and treacherous usurper determined to assert his claim to the *Shōgunate* by force, and at the head of a vast army attacked the western capital. This campaign resulted in the flight of the Emperor Go-Daigo, (who afterwards died in exile), and the establishment of Takauji as *Shōgun* and founder of the Ashikaga dynasty, which lasted for fourteen generations, extending over a period of almost 240 years (1335–1573).

When Takauji proclaimed himself *Shōgun* he installed his residence upon the same site that had formerly been occupied by Yoritomo's mansion; but during the next year (1335), the new *Bakufu* ruler left Kamakura

in charge of a *Kwanryō*, or Governor-general, and set up his own headquarters in Kyōto, where he established himself on a scale of great luxury and magnificence, in marked contrast to the austere simplicity and economy that had been the leading motives of the Hōjō.

By this time Kamakura was beginning to rise from the holocaust of Nitta Yoshisada's invasion, and became a sort of secondary base where the laws and regulations were drawn up, and the administrative code was dispensed along the lines of Takauji's predecessors. But the Kamakura Period was at an end. The erstwhile brilliant capital never really recovered from the chaos of Nitta's attack, and the conflagration started upon that day proved the funeral pyre of Kamakura's greatness; the renaissance under the Ashikaga *régime* being but a pale reflection of its departed glories, and barely exceeding the duration of a century.

During that period a condition of great and increasing strife existed between the governors of Kamakura (*Kwanryō*) and their representatives (*Shitsuji*): members of great Uesugi family holding the latter office, which became so powerful that it would be difficult to decide which wielded the greater authority, *Kwanryō* or *Shitsuji*. This truculent state of affairs culminated in 1445, when the representative openly attacked the governor Nariuji. The latter fled to Koga in Shimosa; Kamakura losing much prestige by this undignified condition of internal discord. The populace, hoping that the fugitive governor would return and be re-instated in office, preserved his estates in readiness and kept the land cultivated; but the departed *Kwanryō* was in exile,

this fact constituting a potent factor in the final decline of Kamakura.

The city suffered extensive damage in the siege of 1454, and later on was again almost reduced to ashes by the great fire of 1526. Large numbers of its inhabitants transferred their residence to Odawara when the latter town rose into prominence as the seat of the powerful Hōjō family, Kamakura receiving its final *coup-de-grâce* in the year 1603, when Yedo was founded as the capital of the Tokugawa *Shōgun*.

The former brilliant city gradually declined into the little fishing-village of the pre-Yoritomo era: however the fortunes of this historic spot were not doomed to retrograde into permanent obscurity, and later on another renaissance was to develop, although based upon more prosaic lines.

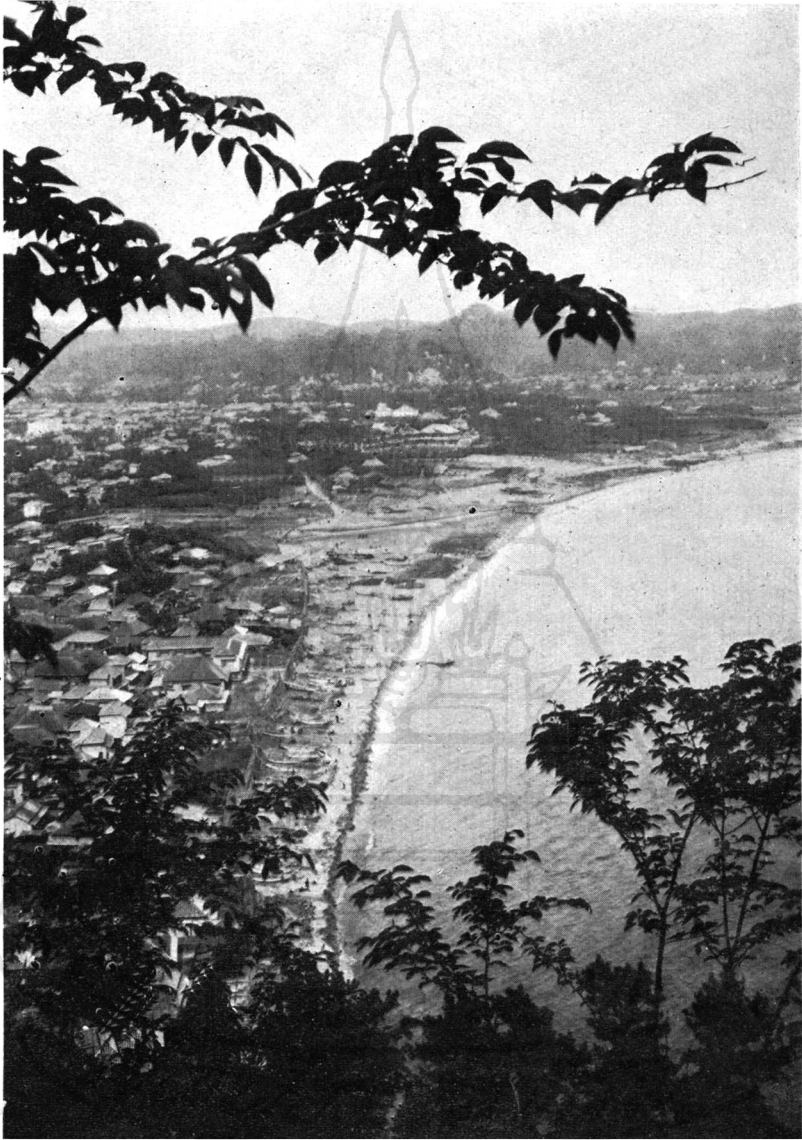
The Restoration of 1868, with Tōkyō established as the Imperial capital; the rapid expansion of other adjacent towns into large and flourishing cities; increased facilities of communication; and various other reasons, all conduced to call attention to Kamakura's obvious and indestructible assets—its charming and picturesque scenery; the glorious sweep of blue ocean fringed by its crescent of sandy beach; its easiness of access; its teeming associations with ancient history,—of which, like Rome, it has been said that “legends and romances cluster around every stone, and every cave is heavy with the bones of dead heroes”; its innumerable walks and excursions in every direction; and finally its pure bracing air and exceptionally fine climate.

However the Restoration was not an unmixed blessing, for at that time the temples were dispossessed of

their lands, and consequently fell upon very hard times ; the high-water mark of their distress being reached about the 18th or 19th year of Meiji (1886-7) ; when it is even said that some of the great structures were demolished and the timbers sold for fire-wood.

In 1890 the railroad, which before then had not come nearer than Ofuna—the junction upon the main line four miles distant—directly linked Kamakura with the capital, this fact being naturally conducive to a new era of prosperity. Since that time the ‘ *besso* ’ (seaside villas), of residents of Tōkyō and Yokohama have increased and multiplied apace—Yuigahama gaining wide celebrity as a bathing resort and acquiring a high degree of popularity with the swarms of summer visitors, who transform the beach into a scene of liveliest animation. Three years after the advent of the railway the *Shihan Gakko* (school for the training of Primary School-Teachers) was removed from Yokohama to its present quarters at Kamakura—with some 400 students, and maintaining a primary school attached, with over 500 pupils—this large group of buildings being situated on the eastern side of Hachiman. According to tradition the spacious playground of this academy is said to be the identical site of Takatoki's dog-fights. Other scholastic institutions are the girls' school in the main avenue, with some 150 pupils ; the large Primary School almost opposite, two Kindergarten, an Orphanage for poor children, etc.

Although so many temples and shrines have been overtaken by various calamities and have entirely disappeared since Kamakura's palmy days, yet there still remain the considerable number of forty Buddhist and nineteen Shinto Temples : eighteen of the former being



A glimpse of present-day Kamakura.

associated with the Nichiren doctrines, and from their intimate connection with the life and teachings of the saint attract large numbers of the devotees of this most popular sect.

An important institution in the social life of Kamakura is the Club, with its headquarters near the station. This was established in 1908, with over 200 members—practically including all the chief residents—of which a large proportion are army and naval officers, both retired and upon active service. The large naval base of Yokosuka being in such close proximity, many of the latter make their homes in Kamakura, going backwards and forwards to their daily work. The meetings and exhibitions held at this institution are both frequent and various; including pictures, flower-arrangement, billiards, 'go,' swords, archery, poems, moving pictures etc.: the club moreover possesses a species of bazaar for the sale of comestibles and manifold articles.

In 1901 a society was formed in Kamakura with the object of doing homage once a year to a guest of honour who has rendered services to the administration of the town, and who is over sixty years of age. This fraternity is called the *Shōtoku-Kai* (which may be translated as 'recognition of merit'); at the annual banquet the chief guest receives a souvenir of the occasion, all those present being placed according to priority of age.

Another association, the Kamakura *Dojin-Kai*—was recently organised by the prominent residents with the object of preserving the ancient historic sites, and attending to the welfare of the town in general—sanitation, etc. etc. Although this society has only

been in existence some two years, it has accomplished much useful work: under its auspices the noble pines on the main avenue are being cared for in order to preserve them from decay.

In many accounts wherein the ancient glories of Kamakura are depicted in glowing terms it will be observed that certain authors, in order to emphasize the contrast with greater effect, refer to the present-day condition of the town in the most abject manner, as "a mouldering hamlet"; "a miserable group of fishing-huts"; "a decayed cluster of fishermen's cottages" etc., etc.! A more inapt description could hardly be imagined. The modern Kamakura is a highly flourishing and rapidly increasing town: according to statistics of 1917, it contained a population of 15,190—(the male residents being somewhat over a thousand in excess of the gentler sex)—while the casual visitors, tourists and sightseers run into enormous numbers. At the end of August 1917 there was a surplus of some 9,000 visitors staying in the town; amongst whom the foreign element numbered over 200. During the same month, according to the railroad statistics, the number of arrivals and departures from the Kamakura station totalled 169,690 souls. The original station, having become conspicuously primitive and inadequate to the increasing flood of traffic, communications have been greatly facilitated and improved by a new and spacious railway station, constructed on modern lines in 1916: a new general post-office is expected to shortly follow suit.

The Town Office computes the number of *besso* at between four and five hundred; while three substantial banks with various offshoots contribute an *enormous* weight



Devastated Kamakura after the Earthquake-Fire.
Disaster of September 1, 1923.

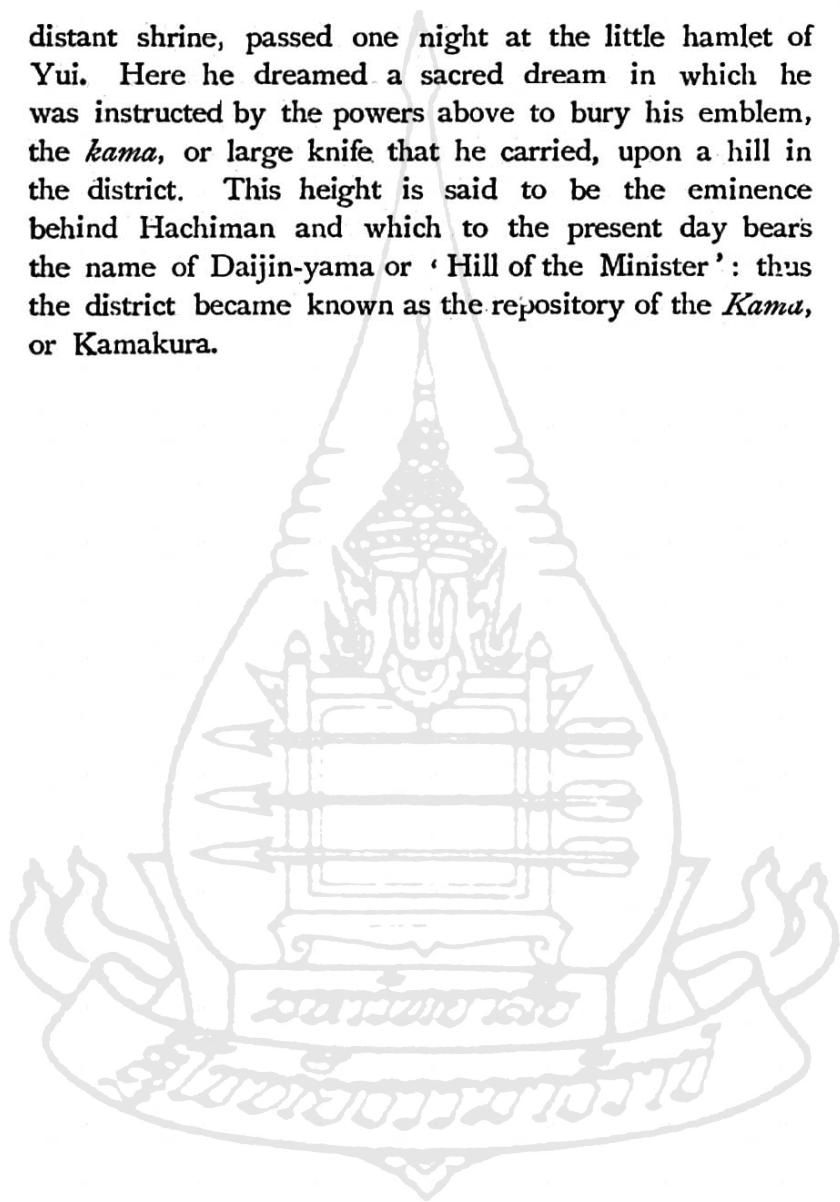
Near Yuzuhama.

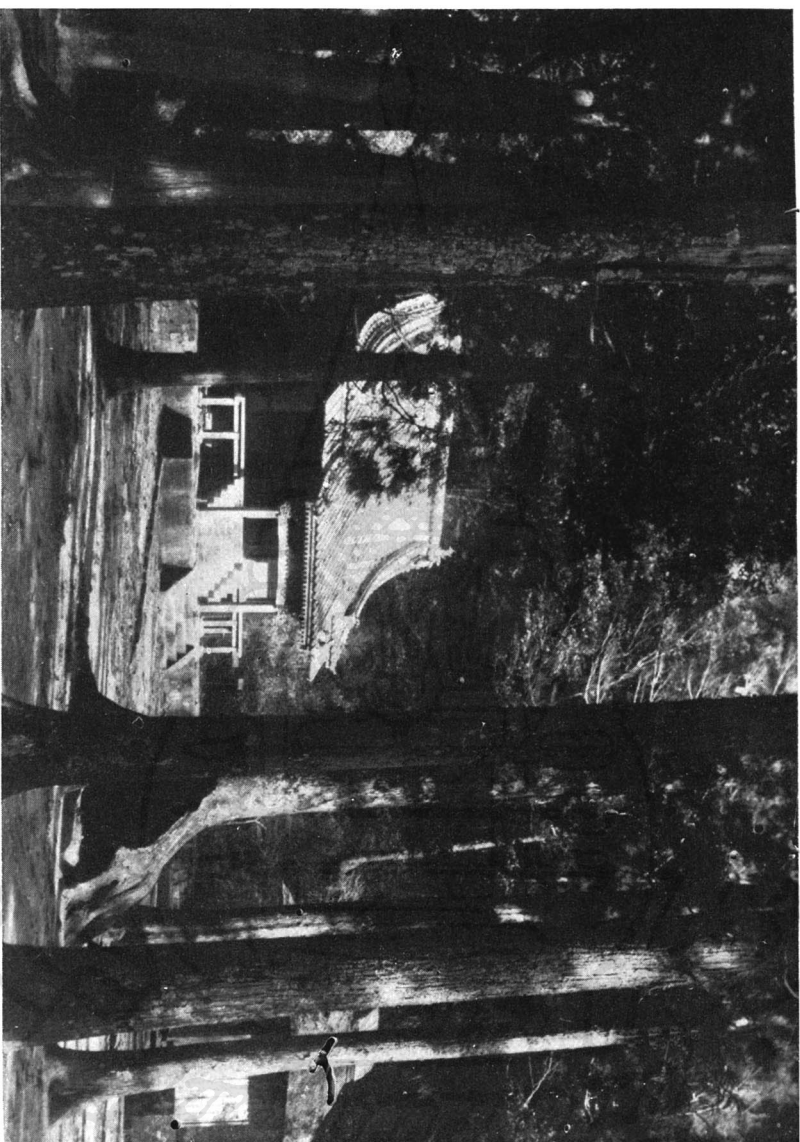
and solidity to the commercial aspect of the town. The same authority states that the highest temperature of the dog-days does not soar above 88°, while in winter the mercury descends no lower than 30° upon the coldest occasion: this agreeable mildness being due to the proximity of the *Kuro-Shiwo*, or warm current that washes its coast.

The Mecca of foreigners is the breezy and commodious *Kaihin* (sea-beach) Hotel, situated in a grove of ancient pines adjoining the shore. Originally designed for a Sanatorium upon a considerably less ambitious scale in 1888, its delightful situation was soon discovered—making a strong appeal to the foreign contingent of Tōkyō and Yokohama, and from the first it seems to have taken the place of a hotel. Becoming superannuated it was rebuilt, and assumed its present aspect some ten years ago (1907) under the auspices of a certain number of foreign residents; but since 1916 the hotel again changed hands, its fortunes being presided over at the present time by a new Japanese company.

Two versions are extant regarding the origin of the name Kamakura. According to one theory the first Emperor, Jimmu, visited this district during the course of his punitive expeditions in the eastern part of Japan. The enemy to the number of some thousands were slain by the Imperial warriors—the corpses being piled up like mountains: hence this district acquired the name of *Kabanekura*, or repository for dead bodies—which later became Kamakura. But a less sanguinary derivation, and the one that is generally accepted is the following. Fujiwara-no-Kamatari, the celebrated soldier and statesman of the 7th century, while on a pilgrimage to a

distant shrine, passed one night at the little hamlet of Yui. Here he dreamed a sacred dream in which he was instructed by the powers above to bury his emblem, the *kama*, or large knife that he carried, upon a hill in the district. This height is said to be the eminence behind Hachiman and which to the present day bears the name of Daijin-yama or 'Hill of the Minister': thus the district became known as the repository of the *Kama*, or Kamakura.





Shrine of Egara Tenjin, dedicated to Michizane, patron of learning and scholarship.