

FUDARAKUJI

Kesa.

"Come thou tonight,

A little after midnight to my house.
I shall go back there. When Wataru sups.
I'll fill his wine-cups fast, then wash his hair,
And lull him into sleep. His room will be
The easternmost that gives upon the lane.
I'll set a lamp in it; and when I hear
Thy foot for certain, I'll extinguish it.
Have thou a care; the serving men lie thick
In the fore-court. When thou passest in the dark
Safe to his mat, thou shalt know well his head,
Being moist with water, and the locks tied back
In the noble's way. Cut off the head—and go!
And—afterwards—

Morito.

Ah! Afterwards—I see

Sweet bliss together, and no fears to mar."

In the main street of Zaimokuza an old stone monument records that in close proximity stood the celebrated temple of Fudarakuji, to which Yoritomo frequently repaired for worship; the first priest being the famous Mongaku. A few steps to the north is the diminutive building that represents the former foundation of Fudarakuji, and serves as a shelter for the few remnants of the treasures of bygone centuries. The original temple was established on a scale of great magnificence by Yoritomo in the year 1181 as an act of gratitude for the benefit of

Mongaku, who in earlier times had befriended the great *Shōgun*.

It is recorded that this edifice having fallen into decay, the temple was repaired and re-established in the 14th century under the auspices of another important priest, Raiki (d. 1352). This restoration lasted until the 6th year of Meiji (1874) when the entire temple of Fudarakuji was destroyed by fire: after that catastrophe for many years all that remained was a small hut, hastily constructed upon the same site for the purpose of enclosing the few temple treasures that had been rescued from the disaster. Some twenty years ago subscriptions were levied in the neighbourhood which resulted in the present microscopic structure, the former hut remaining in the capacity of kitchen to the establishment.

Certain of the relics are of historic interest and of extreme antiquity, descriptions of them existing in ancient records of Kamakura. These included a large dark figure of Fudo carved by the priest Chisho, and which is said to have been the identical image by whose powers the Taira were finally subjugated!

A '*Yakushi-Sanzon*' or statue of the healing Buddha with his two satellites Nikko and Gwakko Bosatsu—the sun and moon deities: these are attributed to Unkei. Formerly the set was completed by the *Juni-Shinsho*, or twelve warrior attendants, but in the vicissitudes of the temple these have disappeared.

A celebrated effigy of Yoritomo, representing him at the age of forty-two, and garbed in official uniform.

The *Ihai*, or soul-tablet of Yoritomo.

A threadbare embroidered altar-cloth, said to have been the gift of Yoritomo.

Another venerable memorial of the same epoch is a piece of crumbling material which was originally a scarlet ensign of the Taira, and may possibly be the sole remaining specimen in existence of that famous standard.

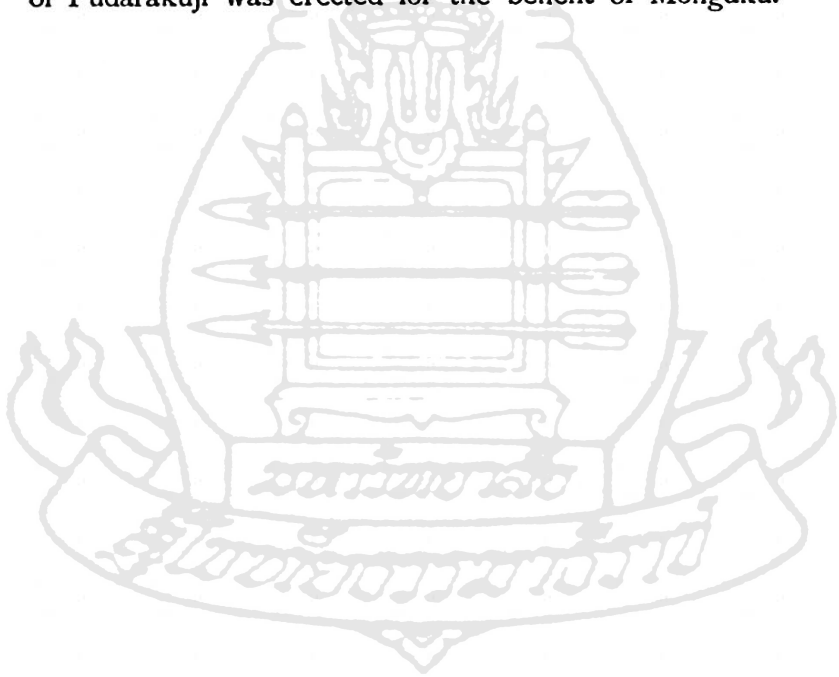
Until recent years the temple possessed a nude statue of Mongaku, the spiritual founder, but this trophy has been removed to a temple in Hongo, Tōkyō. Mongaku was a man with an extraordinary history, and had played a lurid *rôle* in a love-tragedy that is universally known in Japan, and lends itself to effective representation upon the stage. Originally a warrior of Kyōto known as Endo Morito, he conceived a passionate and consuming affection for the wife of a brother officer named Wataru—a beautiful woman known as Kesa Gozen, and one of the undying heroines of early romance. Loyal and faithful as she was fair to the outward eye, Kesa Gozen indignantly repudiated all advances of her would-be lover, but rejection merely produced the customary effect of fanning the flame, and strengthening Morito's determination to gain possession of the coveted beauty: as a last resort he swore a solemn oath that if Kesa continued deaf to his blandishments the life of her mother should pay the penalty of her decision. In desperation the unfortunate girl feigned to connive at his plot, which was to cut off Wataru's head under cover of the night, thus leaving the coast clear for Morito's marriage with his widow. All details were arranged. Kesa's part was to see that Wataru had quaffed a sufficiency of wine to ensure his sleeping heavily; then, as a sign, she would damp her lord's knot of hair, so that in the darkness the assassin could make no mistake in his victim. The fateful night arrived: Kesa wrote a farewell

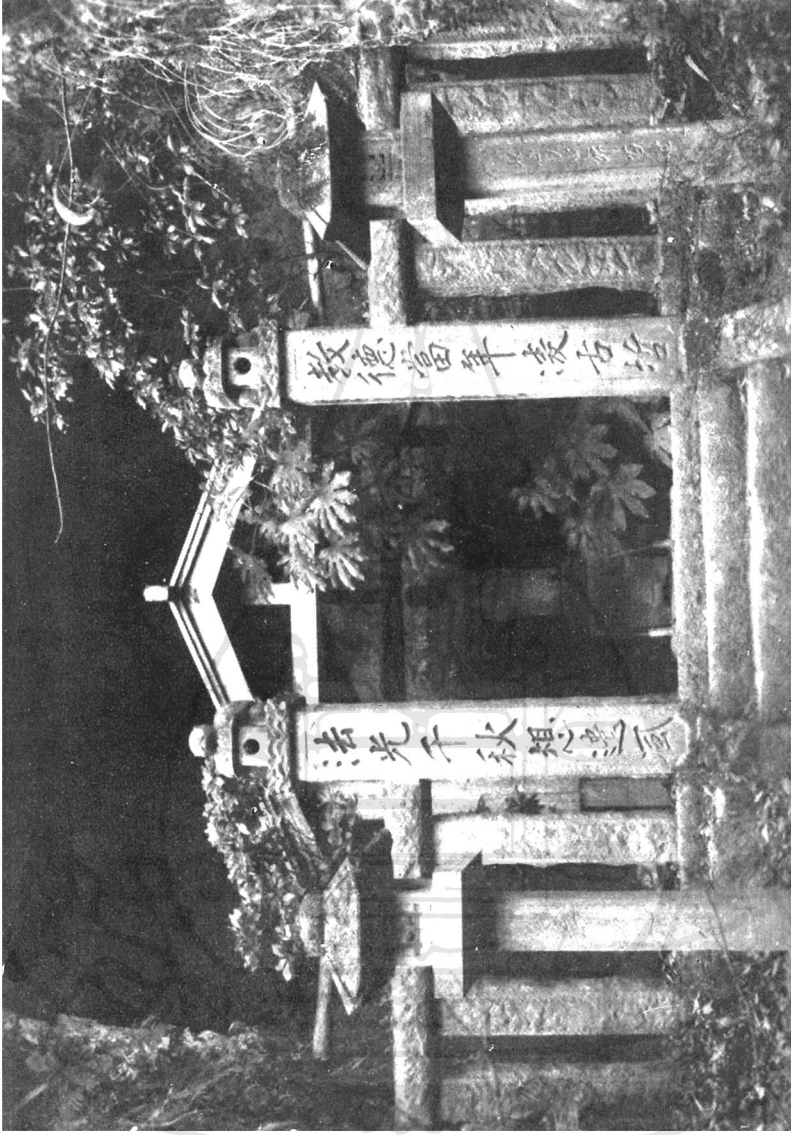
message to her beloved spouse explaining the situation, then, dressing her own hair according to male fashion, she saturated it with water, reclining in the bed her husband was accustomed to occupy. At midnight the murderer crept into the room. With one stroke the head of the beautiful Kesa was severed, and carrying it with him wrapped in a cloth, he escaped into the darkness.

When Morito examined his trophy and realised what had taken place, his horror and remorse were overpowering. He rushed to the unfortunate husband, confessing his guilt and imploring the injured Wataru to slay him with the same sword in expiation of the dreadful deed. But Wataru, seeing the proud soldier lying so grief-stricken and humbled in the dust, forbore to strike, and bade him live to purify his guilt with long years of sorrow and repentance. He moreover proposed they should both renounce the vanities of the world, and embracing religion should devote the remainder of their lives to good works and prayers for the welfare of the departed spirit. On entering the priesthood Morito assumed the name of Mongaku, and various acts of merciless penance were attributed to him: it is said that at the severest season of the year he stood for twenty-one days beneath a waterfall, with the icy torrent descending upon his nude body.

The circumstances that brought this priest into association with Yoritomo were as follows. His temple in Kyōto having fallen into dilapidation Mongaku set about collecting subscriptions for its renovation; for that purpose he repaired to the palace to seek an interview with the Emperor Go-Shikawa. However a protracted banquet being in process, the priest was left unannounced

for such a long space of time that he grew incensed, and roughly assaulted one of the officers of the court. By this impetuous action the Imperial wrath was incurred: Mongaku first underwent a term of imprisonment and was subsequently exiled to Idzu. At that time the young Yoritomo was sojourning in the same region, and formed a most favourable impression of Mongaku's abilities; the latter rendered the future *Shōgun* valuable assistance—moreover after his pardon was obtained the priest was able to secure from the Emperor an important document authorising the exiled Minamoto to raise an army. For these services Yoritomo was duly grateful, and later on, as a practical form of his appreciation, the large temple of Fudarakuji was erected for the benefit of Mongaku.





The Cave of Ankokuji.

Wherein Nichiren is said to have composed his famous essay 'Risshō Ankoku Ron.'