

translation of his lecture appears in the present number of *The Open Court*, which has been delayed over a week to insure its speedy publication. Professor Delitzsch is one of the most eminent scholars of modern times, and one of the very foremost authorities on Assyriology. The present article therefore will give our readers an opportunity of acquainting themselves with the present state and the immense scope and import of Assyriological research, from the pen of one of its most accredited exponents. The publishers, J. C. Hinrichs of Leipsic, are to be congratulated upon the promptness with which they have put Professor Delitzsch's work¹ before the public. They also issue the proceedings of the German Oriental Society, which contain many other interesting and popular expositions of Oriental research. The illustrations which appeared in the original have in our translation been enlarged and greatly improved and their number considerably augmented, so as to afford as complete a view as possible of Assyrian art and civilisation.

THE MEMOIRS OF KAMO NO CHOMEI.²

Kamo No Chomei is a Buddhist recluse who lived and wrote in the beginning of the thirteenth century, and ranks in style as well as sentiment with Mediæval mystics and other pious authors. His booklet is entitled *Hô Jô Kî*, and means literally "The Memoirs of Three Meters," that is to say, it is the diary of a hermit who lived in a hut not more than three meters square. The title has been appropriately rendered by Daiji Ichikawa, his modern translator: "A Little Hut."

Kamo No Chomei describes in this booklet his life and philosophy. He contemplates the transitoriness of existence, which is a constant change like the current of water, full of froth and without rest. He further considers the dangers of human existence: fire, inundation, storm, famine, states of anarchy, earthquakes, epidemics, and other tribulations. True happiness can be found only in contentment. He explains why he left his home to seek peace; how he built his first hut, which, however, was abandoned because it was too large; and then he built his second hut, a portable room sufficient to accommodate him and an image of Amítâbha Buddha. The Buddhist recluses of his stamp did not trouble their minds with the question: What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? Kamo No Chomei lived on the berries which he gathered in the woods; and the same old dress, though faded and worn, served him as a protection. He visited neighboring shrines, e. g., one place where he pays homage to the great musician Semimaro; and another where the great poet Sarumaru Dayu lies buried. The beauty of the landscape is his joy; it is not private property, like the soil and other marketable goods. The loneliness of the mountains is such that the animals which inhabit the woods are not afraid of him; they approach his hut, and the deer of the forest are tame in his presence.

The seasons remind him of spiritual conditions: Spring is an allegory of Paradise: summer, with the repeated call of the cuckoo (the mysterious bird of the spirit land), indicates that man will have to travel through the dark path of the valley of death; in the fall, the cricket sings of the vanity and transiency of life; while the snow of winter, when it covers mountains and valleys, is like sin,—it increases and increases, and finally melts away.

¹ The original German may be obtained, bound, for M. 2.50.

² This article is a review of a German translation of Kamo No Chomei's *Hô Jô Kî*, which appeared under the title *Eine kleine Hütte*, von Kamo No Chomei, übersetzt von Dr. Daiji Itchikawa. Berlin: Schwetschke & Sohn. 1902.

His delight is music; he does not claim to be an artist, but following the instruction of the famous musician Gentotoku, he delights in playing on his instrument and singing pious songs. There are few persons with whom he exchanges thoughts; among them is a young man, the son of a forester, who lives at the foot of the mountain where his hut stands. The young man is sixteen, the recluse sixty; but they harmonise in spirit, and the youth learns of the religious wisdom of the hermit. Thus, his time passes in quiet happiness, and in a foretaste of the greatest joy that will come to him in Nirvâna: it is the salvation of his soul in which all his interest centers. His conscience remains clear, and he says: "All the world's glory and splendor is not worth as much as one single soul. Has the soul no peace, neither palaces filled with gold nor temples decorated with gems are of any avail; but I can live full of happiness in my lonely dwelling, in this simple little hut."

The memoirs of Kamo No Chomei conclude with a contemplation of the eternal light of Nirvâna. At his advanced age he feels his life drawing to an end. He fears that even the love of his hut may become dangerous to his longing for the eternal treasure of Nirvâna, and so he is bent on purifying himself of the last clinging to anything transient and mortal. The diary closes with a self-criticism, questioning himself whether the joy that his very poverty and renunciation had given him might not become a source of danger. He says: "My soul has no answer, but on my lips involuntarily trembles the name *Buddha*, and then I sink into silence. Written in the second Genreki (1212), on the last day of March, in my hut in Toyama, by a monk Renin.

Beyond the mountains the moon fades away,
Oh! had I the light which forever will stay."

P. C.

THE PLAY OF LIFE.

Born but to view the passing Show,
Within this world, and then to go,
Grim, silent, into darkness deep,
That wraps us in a dreamless sleep.

In youth, to join the moving throng,
With quickened hopes; desires strong;
And then, with noon-heats blinding glare,
To feel a piteous heart despair.

To watch a pageant made of shams;
A warfare waged with battering rams;
That crush with cruel force the heart,
As sadly we play out our part.

At evening, gray of purple shade,
A voiceless moor, where unafraid,
With fading eyes we turn to death,
Whose gentle hand shuts off our breath.

And this is Life! And Death? Ah, well,
'Tis we ourselves make heaven or hell.