

**THE PRAISES OF
AMIDA: SEVEN
BUDDHIST SERMONS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649500086

The Praises of Amida: Seven Buddhist Sermons by Tada Kanae & Arthur Lloyd

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TADA KANAE & ARTHUR LLOYD

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AMIDA: SEVEN
BUDDHIST SERMONS**

E. C. Henningst.

*{ Further
April '07*

The Praises of Amida

SEVEN BUDDHIST SERMONS

TRANSLATED

FROM THE

JAPANESE

OF

TADA KANAI

BY

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CAMBRIDGE.

TOKYO.

Published by the Kyōbunkwan.

YOKOHAMA: KELLY AND WALSH.

1907.

Printed at the Rikkyō Sha Printing Office.

THE DEDICATION.

'Take these, O Christ! I would not give Thy Praise
 To others, Sole True Lord of Life and Light;
 For Thine the Vow, that camest Sworn to do
 Thy Father's Saving Will, Who loveth not
 That sinners perish; Thine the Life of toil,
 The world's sharp enmity and bitter scorn,
 And all the Passion, long drawn-out, which closed
 In the great pain of Thy most Holy Cross.
 Perfect through Suffering, Thou didst gain for us
 The Rest of Paradise, where now, enthroned
 As King, Thou reign'st in Bliss, and whence Thou call'st
 Poor men to come to Thee, to Whom is given
 A Name above all Names, O truest Lord
 Of boundless Life and Love uncircumscribed.
 Long years Thy Shadow, brooding o'er these Lands,
 Hath told of Peace and Hope for sinful men;
 Now turn the Shallow to Reality,
 And bless us as we gather round Thy Feet,
 Oh Amitábba-Christ, Sole Lord of All.

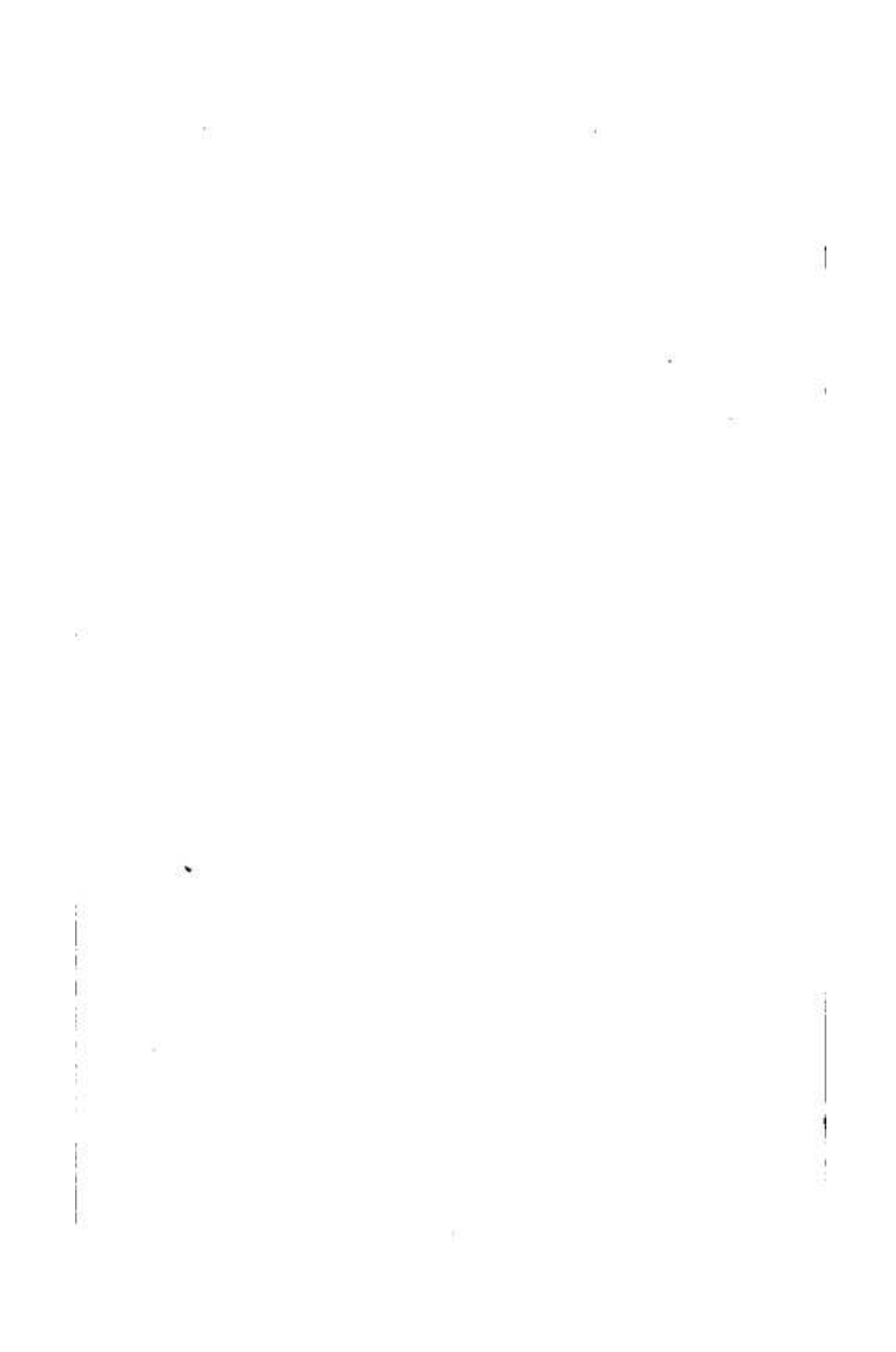
A LL.

Tokyo, Easter-tide, 1907.

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INTRODUCTION.



AS I read my Translations of Rev. K. Tada's Sermons, I feel that they sound so very Christian in thought that a reader might almost be tempted to suppose that I had made them up for purposes of my own, and that they were not translations at all. The expenditure of a few *sen* on the original book (its name is *Shūdō Kōwa* 修道講話, and it is published by *Bunmeidō, Hongō Shichōme, Tōkyō*) will show any person acquainted with Japanese that my translation, though far from perfect, is in the main faithful, at least to the ideas of the original. The Sermons are written in a beautifully clear Japanese, and are quite worthy of being made subjects of linguistic study.

It will suffice, by way of introduction, if I say but a few words of the Buddhist Saviour in whose honour Mr. Tada has written. Of ancient royal descent, this Being, in the most remote Past, emptied Himself of the splendour

of His rank in order to lead a religious life. His own salvation had been completed, and He was on the brink of Nirvana, when He looked back and saw His suffering brethren, whom He was about to leave behind in the miseries of human life. For their sakes He turned back: He would not enter into His rest until He had worked out a salvation for all mankind, one which even the most ignorant and helpless could lay hold of and be saved, a large ship which should take all men safely across the tempestuous waves of life and death. It was not done without a struggle, but it was done; and when the Vow had been accomplished, and the last ordeal endured, Paradise had come into existence in the Pure Land beyond the Setting Sun. The King of that Land is Amida Who has "entered into His rest in Paradise." His "Name, through faith in His Name," is said to save those who believe on Him, and He comes both now and at the hour of death to those who call upon Him with a thankful heart.

A question of real significance, not merely to

the student of comparative religion, but, practically, to the Christian missionary, and to every one interested in the religious movement of to-day, is, Who is Amida? The points of resemblance between Amida and Christ are too striking to be passed over unnoticed, even by a casual reader. Can the two stories in any sense be said to have a common origin?

No attempt has ever been made to give Amida a historical embodiment, and it must be remembered that there are very many Buddhists, even in Japan, who place no trust in Him and His Paradise. I believe, however, that such an embodiment is possible, and I hope to show at some future date that the Amida legend is an Oriental adaptation of the Life of Christ. Amida is first mentioned, so it is said, in the writings of As'vaghosha, who flourished in the reign of the Indo-Scythian Sovereign Kanishka. Kanishka's date is sometimes assigned to the middle of the 1st century A.D.; but Dr. Bhandarkar* of Bombay gives extremely good reasons

* Trans. Bombay Branch R.A.S. vol. XX (1900).