

SAKA'S DIARY OF A PILGRIM TO ISE

By

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Translated into English by A. L. Sadler, Professor in the University of Sydney, Australia, and formerly Professor in the Peers' School, Tōkyō. With an Introduction by Dr. Genchi Katō, Professor in the Kokugakuin University, Tōkyō. Edited and published by the Meiji Japan Society of Tōkyō (Zaidan Hōjin Meiji Seitoku Kinen Gakkai), 84 pp, 1940.

A preface to this volume written by Count Hirotarō Hayashi, President of the Meiji Japan Society, speaks of the work as one of the finest examples of Japanese literature, both in elegance of style and in profundity of fourteenth century spiritual insight. An introduction from the pen of Dr. Katō provides an indispensable critical appreciation dealing with thought, style, author, and standard commentaries. Regarding style, Dr. Katō pronounces the work, as it appears in the original Japanese, in a class by itself in its beauty of diction and the mystic quality of its imagination. In thought it is a texture beautifully woven of the theology of the Gegū school of Shintō and the philosophy of Buddhism. Dr. Katō says in regard to this Shinto-Buddhism syncretism: "The happy way in which he [the author] introduces historical details to illustrate the past and to stimulate the imagination of his readers, and the descriptions of the beauty of the scenery to charm them, while he affirms his steadfast faith in the Way of the Deities through the medium of the mystic blending of Buddhist philosophy with Gegū Shintō, makes his work a remarkable piece of writing." Concerning authorship, we learn that the book was written by the Buddhist priest and physician Saka

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[probably Jūbutsu, the father of Shibutsu, to whom the writing has sometimes been attributed] in order to commemorate a pilgrimage made to the Grand Shrines of Ise in the third year of Kōkoku [1342 A.D.].

The work as it stands in the English translation is a masterpiece. It is full of genuine gems of literary expression and noble ideas beautifully stated. Prof. Sadler who has brought a thorough knowledge of the Japanese written language to the task, is to be congratulated on the magnificent manner in which he has rendered not merely the thought of the original, but also its refined literary flavor. The book is an excellent example of the kind of work that can be done in collaboration by competent Japanese and foreign scholars in promoting the better understanding of Japan's finer resources of spirit on the part of the West.

ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

BY

M. IZUMIKAWA

For the convenience of Occidental readers the following abstracts, translated from the Japanese into English by Mrs. Michiko Izumikawa, are here published.

I.—ON THE COMPILATION OF THE NIHON SHOKI OR CHRONICLES OF JAPAN

As this year happens to be the 2600th Anniversary of the Accession of the Emperor Jimmu, it is the greatest honour and also duty for such a historian as I am to give my opinion about the study of