

EDITORIAL

Yehan Numata



by Kenryu T. Tsuji

Over fifty years ago a group of Japanese students at the University of California in Berkeley, headed by a young man named Yehan Numata, decided to publish a bi-monthly magazine.

In the very first editorial the young Numata wrote, "This magazine is published by university students who are striving to bring the Old and the New worlds into closer relationship. Born and raised in the Orient but educated in this country, we feel that we are able to see the troubles of both. We have both these lands in our hearts, and we will strive to bring them together for the benefit of both." For young students it was an ambitious project, requiring a great deal of time, effort and funds. They were, however, willing to make great personal sacrifices because the common dream they embraced as shown above was far greater than any individual consideration. This magazine would be dedicated to international peace and understanding, especially between Japan and the United States, the two countries facing the Pacific Ocean. They would call the magazine, *The Pacific World*.

The first issue appeared in June, 1925. It covered a wide range of subjects that would contribute directly to understanding the mind of the "Orient" and the "Occident." David Starr Jordan, Chancellor of Leland Stanford Junior University wrote on "Japan and World Relations." Some of the other articles were: "Art and Peace" by Perham Nahl, Associate Professor of Art, University of California; "The Ideals of India's Youth" by Dalip Singh Saund, National President, Hindustani Association of America; "Japanese Poetry" by Yoshi S. Kuno, Chairman, Oriental Department, University of California; "Buddhism, Christianity and the Historic Sakyamuni" by Kenneth Saunders, author of *Epochs of Buddhist History*.

In welcoming the publication of *The Pacific World*, W. W. Campbell, President of the University of California, wrote to the editor, "It is a pleasure for me to say that our Japanese students are here in strict accordance with the laws of the United States; they are law abiding; they are self-respecting; they are ambitious intellectually;—and they are welcome. For the good of their country and ours they desire that the ways of their countrymen shall be understood in America, and that we and our institutions shall be understood in Japan." The Mayor of Berkeley, Frank D. Stringham wrote, "The proposed bi-monthly publication to be known as *The Pacific World* will perform a useful service . . . The customs, religions, and traditions of the different races are so divergent that the prejudices arising therefrom often ripen into erroneous judgments in the minds of some people. The peace of the world is a goal worth striving for . . ."

Thus *The Pacific World* was born. It was widely acclaimed by the readers for its readability, contents and high idealism. But unfortunately, the magazine had to cease publication after a couple of years because of lack of funds. The young Numata solicited funds from here and abroad but he could not meet the high cost of printing. He realized then that no matter how lofty a goal, without funds the project could not be sustained. This painful discovery was one of the motivating factors that prompted him to embark on a business career after his return to Japan. He founded the Mitutoyo Company which manufactured precision instruments, notably micrometers. His road to success was not easy. During the formative years of the company, he struggled against untold hardships. However, his persistence, imagination and dedication finally paid off. Mitutoyo became the world's foremost producer of the micrometer with branches in numerous countries.

Yehan Numata never lost his original dream—to use his share of the profits to advance the cause of Buddha-Dharma for the sake of world peace. He is best known for the free distribution of the book *Teaching of Buddha* in the hotel rooms throughout Japan and in other parts of the world.

The rebirth of *The Pacific World* was always on his mind. It is because of his dream and his financial support that this edition has become a reality. While it will be extremely difficult to live up to Mr. Yehan Numata's original dream, we shall publish the magazine as a journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies and shall humbly do our utmost to perpetuate the goals for which this magazine was originally dedicated.

In recent years modern means of communication have shrunk the world so drastically that the meaning of the Pacific World cannot be restricted only to its geographic

dimensions. We must now strive to realize the significance of the pacific world from a global perspective—a true peaceful world, founded on understanding and compassion.



Mr. Yehan Numata announces his project of placing the book *The Teaching of Buddha* in American hotel rooms to the Buddhist Churches of America's Board of Directors.