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Rise and Decline of the 53 Stages on the Old Tōkaido Highway 東海道五十三宿

—Especially from the View Point of
One Day's Journey—

Hideo NISHIOKA

We travelled several times by car and bicycle and studied the old Tokaido Highway 東海道 or old national road from Yedo 江戸 (Tokyo) to Kyōto 京都 which consists of fifty-three post stations scattered along the Pacific coast line. (# Table I)

At present, some of the fifty-three stages are particularly prosperous, but the others have declined. Table II, for example, shows the rate of increase of population in each of the stages from 1843 to 1955. These villages have many different natural and social conditions. In this report, only the geographical location related to one day's journey are studied.

According to many old notes, the rate of lodging in each fifty-three stations is shown in Table III and IV. Almost all of the stations in high ratio over 40% on lodging are now big cities. The town of Seki 關 at the foot of the mountain pass called Suzuka 鈴鹿 is the only exception.

It seems to me that the geographical location of the villages on the highway which were convenient for lodging after one day's journey is one of the important causes to promote the prosperity of villages. The distance of one day's journey is now extended through the development of means of communication.

Origin of "Mountain Buddhism" in Japan

By R. E. BRINCKMEIER

Japanese Buddhism developed, in its early days, without any connection with mountains. It was in the late seventh century that the Buddhist movement in the mountains