almost impossible, and the spokesman grimaces and says they don't waste time: they maintain a fast pace and they even walk while they eat.

By walking a hundred and fifty miles more and worshiping at the three temples along the way, the older will close the last gap: he will complete his pilgrimage on this holiday and he will have walked every foot of the way. We admire him for that and tell him so. He says that he enjoys walking and he needs exercise and release from the tensions of the office. They both envy our being able to do the pilgrimage all at once and in so leisurely a manner; they make us feel privileged.

As we are saying good night he asks whether we have heard that a man at the unlucky age of forty-two should make the pilgrimage. He does not look that old . . . is he thinking of his next pilgrimage?

Now we face the mountains of southern Iyo. From here to the plain where the city of Matsuyama rises is about a hundred and fifty miles, mostly mountainous and mostly beautiful. It is possible to walk nearly the entire distance on national highways as suggested by our modern guidebook with its primary concern for motorized henro. That unpleasant possibility we reject. We want to stay away from busy roads and we want to seek out the old henro-path.

It is not far, only a couple of hours, to Temple Forty but we stop there for the night, giving ourselves an easy day and time for long contemplation of the old woodblock that reads, “Namu Amida-butsu.” We try to sense the magical power of that carved board, the faith that has inspired countless cures, given measureless comfort.

The next two temples are forty miles away, over a mountain four times higher than Pine Tree Ascent, with views that seem to encompass all Shikoku. We spend the night up there at a bangai that through most of its history was ambiguously Buddhist and Shinto but since the 1870’s has, of course, been classified as Shinto.

Down and to another bangai in a castle town famed for bull-fighting—not man against bull but bull against bull—and the next