

wear," and would not return it. When the district governor's wife asked him what had happened to the robe, he said to her, "My lord took it away." Then the wife asked him, saying, "Do you miss it?" He replied, "Yes, I miss it very much."

Thereupon, the wife went to see the lord and implored, "I beg you to give the robe to me." The lord said, "What a crazy woman! Drive her away." Then, with two fingers, she picked up the bench where the lord was sitting, carried it outside the provincial office⁸ with the lord on it, and tore into pieces the hem of his robe, still imploring, "I beg you to give the robe to me!" The lord was so terrified and embarrassed that he returned it to her. She brought it back home and, after cleaning it, folded it and put it away. She could crush a piece of bamboo into strips as fine as silk threads. At that the parents of the district governor were so terrified that they told their son, "Because of your wife you will incur the enmity of the lord and have some trouble," and they continued in panic, "She behaved like that even to the lord. If he decides to punish her for her offense, what shall we do? We cannot make our living." Therefore, they sent her back to her parents and abandoned her.⁹

Some time after that she happened to go out to the Kusatsu River 草津川¹⁰ in the village to wash clothes. A merchant passed in front of her on a big boat heavily loaded with goods. The captain of the boat saw and teased her, treating her lightly. "Be quiet!" she said to him. "Those who play tricks on others get slapped on the cheek!" Angry at that, the captain stopped the boat and hit her, but she did not feel the pain. She drew the boat half way up the beach, leaving its stern sunk in the water. The captain hired men who lived near the ferry to lift the cargo out and then reload it in the boat. She said, "Because he had no manners, I pulled the boat up. Why do you people humiliate a humble woman like me?" She again dragged the loaded boat for about half a furlong. The sailors were struck with such awe that they knelt and said, "We were wrong. We are sorry." Therefore she forgave them. Even five hundred men could not pull the boat, and so it was evident that she had greater strength than five hundred men.

One scripture¹¹ has a passage to this effect: "If you make and offer

8. 國府 *ko (ku) fu*, a provincial office under the *ritsuryō* government which became an administrative, cultural, and military center of the province.

9. The law prescribes seven grounds for divorce of a wife by her husband as follows: childlessness; adultery; disobeying of parents-in-law; excessive talking; stealing; jealousy; serious disease (see *Ryō no gige*, "Ko-ryō," Article 28; Sansom, "Early Japanese Laws," Part Two, 142). In this case, the only possible grounds are disobeying of parents-in-law or excessive talking.

10. Unidentified.

11. Unidentified.

rice cakes to the Three Treasures, you will get the strength of Nārāyaṇa,¹² who was as strong as diamond. . . ." Accordingly we learn that this woman was endowed with such strength because of having made big rice cakes to offer to the monks of the Three Treasures in her past life.

28

*On the Destitute Woman Who Prayed to the Sixteen-foot
Śākyamuni Buddha for a Share of Benefits
and Immediately Attained a Great Fortune
Brought by a Miraculous Event¹*

In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, there lived a woman on the west side of Daian-ji² in the capital of Nara. She was extremely poor and, being without any means of livelihood, suffered from hunger. Having heard that the Sixteen-foot Buddha³ of Daian-ji was ready to grant wishes immediately, she bought flowers, incense, and lamp oil, and went to make a petition before the Buddha, saying, "As I did not produce good causes in my previous lives, I am suffering from extreme poverty in my present body. Please give me some wealth to save me from dire poverty." She never ceased to pray for days and months.

One day she went as usual to pray to the Buddha for wealth, offered flowers, incense, and oil lamps, and went home to sleep. The next morning she got up to find four *kan* of coins⁴ by the gate bridge. Attached was a plate which said that they were the Dai-sutaraku 大修多羅供 fund of Daian-ji.⁵ In awe she sent them immediately to the temple. Thereupon, the monks of the Sutaraka seminar group checked the treasury and found that the seal was not broken but that four *kan* of coins were missing. So they put them back in the safe.

12. In the Buddhist tradition the name is used to refer to a legendary hero of great strength.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari* (XII, 15).

2. See II.24, n. 4.

3. 丈六佛; see I.32, n. 6.

4. 四貫錢; see II.6, n. 6.

5. At Daian-ji there were five seminar groups, namely, Sutaraka, Sanron, Betsusanron, Ritsui, and Shōron. See II.24, n. 6. Each of them had its own office, treasury, and officers.

Again she went to the Sixteen-foot Buddha, offered flowers, incense, and lamps, and returned home to sleep. The next morning she found the four *kan* of coins in the garden. The attached plate said that they were from the Jō-sutaraku 常修多羅供⁶ fund of Daian-ji. Therefore she sent them back to the temple. The monks of that group checked the iron safe, but it was sealed. When they opened it, they discovered that four *kan* of coins were missing. In wonder they sealed the safe.

As usual she went back to the Sixteen-foot Buddha, praying for a share of benefits, and came home to sleep. When she opened the door the next day, there were the four *kan* of coins in front of the threshold. The plate attached to them said they were from the Jōjitsu-ron 成寶論⁷ group fund of Daian-ji, so she sent them back to the temple. The monks of that seminar checked their safe, but it was sealed. When they opened it, they found exactly four *kan* of coins missing.

Accordingly, the treasurers of the six schools⁸ got together in wonder, asking her, "Which practice have you been observing?" She answered, "Nothing in particular. As I am extremely poor with no means of livelihood, no one to depend on, and nothing to take recourse to, I have only been asking for a share of benefits." Hearing that, the monks consulted and said, "Since this is the money Buddha gave her, we won't keep it in our safe anymore." They returned the money to her. She made the gift of four *kan* of coins a step for further advancement,⁹ attained a great fortune, and enjoyed a long life.

Indeed, we know this took place by the miraculous power of the Sixteen-foot Śākya and the woman's utmost devotion.

6. At both Daian-ji and Gufuku-ji there are Dai-sutara and Jō-sutara groups. According to Tamura, these groups were devoted to the study of the *Dai hamya-kyō*; the prefixes "Dai" and "Jō" are taken from the word 大業 *daijō*. Since this scripture consists of six hundred volumes, Tamura maintains that the scripture was divided between the two groups (See Tamura, *Asuka Bukkyōshi kenkyū*, 129).

7. The group seems to be devoted to the study of the *Jōjitsu-ron* (*Taishō*, XXXII, No. 1616), although the "Daian-ji garan engi" does not have any record of such a group. Inoue Mitsusada infers that Sutara and Jōjitsu are the same and interchangeable ("Nanto rokushū no seiritsu," *Nihon rekishi*, No. 156, 11-12), but they seem to be separate groups with separate offices and treasuries. Since the Sanron group has the second largest fund at Daian-ji, it is possible that Kyōkai may have confused it with the Jōjitsu, since the two are similar in their tenets.

8. The Six Nara Schools came into existence between 747 and 751, from the latter years of Emperor Shōmu's reign to the beginning of Empress Shōtoku's reign. The six schools in this story may mean the Six Nara Schools (see Chap. I(1)c, n. 63), or the seminar groups which existed at Daian-ji at that time, five of which are recorded in the "Daian-ji garan engi," or in Kyōkai's general statement.

9. 増上縁 *zōjōen*, all causes which contribute to the emergence of a thing.

29

On the Most Venerable Gyōgi, Who Accused a Woman of Having Smeared Her Hair with Animal Oil Recognized with His Penetrating Eye¹

In the village of Gangō-ji in the old capital,² there was once held a service at which the Most Venerable Gyōgi³ was invited to preach Buddhist teachings for seven days. Accordingly, both clergymen and laymen gathered to listen. In the congregation a woman whose hair was smeared with animal oil, listened to the preaching. He saw and accused her, saying, "That smell is offensive to me. Take the woman whose hair is smeared with blood far away." Greatly ashamed, she left the place.

Although our mediocre eyes⁴ see only the hue of oil, the sage's penetrating eye⁵ sees real animal blood. He is an incarnation of the Buddha,⁶ the sage in disguise.⁷

30

On the Extraordinary Sign of the Most Venerable Gyōgi Who Perceived a Woman with a Child Loaded with Past Enmity and Made Her Throw the Child into the Stream¹

The Most Venerable Gyōgi opened up a canal from Naniwa, built ferries, and preached Buddhist teachings to convert people. Clerical

1. One of the Venerable Gyōgi cycle. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 3), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XVII, 36).

2. See I.3, n. 9.

3. See Chap. I(1)d.

4. 凡夫肉眼 *banbu no nikugen*; physical eyes of ordinary men.

5. 聖人明眼 *shōnin no myōgen* (天眼 in the heading), sage's clairvoyance; see Chap. II(2)c, n. 109.

6. 化身聖.

7. 隱身聖.

1. One of the Venerable Gyōgi cycle. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XVII, 27).