



PREFACE¹

THE LAYMAN, whose personal name was Yun and whose nickname was Tao-hsuan, was a native of Hsiang-yang.² His father held the office of Prefect of Heng-yang. The Layman lived in the southern part of the city. There he built a hermitage, carrying on his religious practices³ to the west of the house, and after several years his entire household attained the [Buddha-] Way. This was what is now Wu-k'ung Hermitage. Later he gave his former dwelling near the hermitage to be made into a temple. This was what is now Neng-jen Temple.⁴

During the Chen-yuan era [785-804] of T'ang he loaded the treasure of his household—several tens of thousands of strings of *cash*⁵—onto a boat in Tung-t'ing Lake to the right of the river Shao, and sank it in the middle of the stream.⁶ After that he lived like a single leaf.⁷

The Layman had a wife, a son, and a daughter. They sold bamboo utensils in order to obtain their morning and evening meals.

During the Chen-yuan era of T'ang, the Ch'an and Vinaya sects were in high favor, and the Patriarchal doctrine likewise flourished, diffusing its brilliance abroad, spreading rampant as a hop vine, and effecting its entrance everywhere. Then it was that the Layman initially visited Shih-t'ou, and in an instant his former state [of mind] melted away; later, he saw Ma-tsu and again sealed his Original Mind. [From that time on] his every act manifested his penetration of the Mystery, and there was nothing about him that did not accord with the Way. He had the boundless eloquence of Manjusri,⁸ and [everything he said] was in conformity with the Mahayana treatises on reality.

1. Here the original text has the following heading: "Preface to the Recorded Sayings and Poems of Layman P'ang." This undated, anonymous preface forms part of the 1637 Ming edition. It contains a general summary of P'ang's life and was compiled from information contained in the body of the text itself and in several other earlier accounts concerning P'ang Yun.

2. A prefectural capital on the Han River in present Hupeh, about 200 miles north of Tung-t'ing Lake. As indicated in the next sentence, however, P'ang lived here only a short time before accompanying his father to Heng-yang, a populous district capital on the Hsiang River some 140 miles south of Tung-t'ing Lake in present Hunan, where he grew up and married.

3. What these practices were we are not told. They probably included some form of Buddhist meditation, for we know (see Verse 22, p. 86) he studied Buddhist sutras, some of which give detailed methods of meditation and instructions for practice.

4. See p. 93, n. 1, for gazetteer entries concerning P'ang's dwelling.

5. A round copper Chinese coin with a square hole in the center, commonly strung together in groups of ten, a hundred, or a thousand to facilitate handling. In the early T'ang system of prices, one thousand cash were approximately equal in value to a Chinese bushel of rice, or one bolt of silk cloth forty Chinese feet long, or one small ounce of gold (about

13.92 grams). The actual buying power of a cash varied with the time and place, and was lower in P'ang's time due to inflation. See Reischauer, *Ennin's Travels*, pp. 81, 162, and *Ennin's Diary*, pp. S3, 44 (n. 191).

6. Other versions of the story have it that P'ang sank his fortune in the Hsiang River, and still others that he sank it in the ocean. There is no evidence that he was ever in fact a man of great wealth. His act of renunciation, however, caught the imagination of the Chinese and made his name proverbial. See p. 93, n. 2, for accounts suggesting his motive in sinking his fortune.

7. Like a leaf blown about by the wind, he had no fixed place of residence. Similarly, another account of him has: "After that he lived with only a traveling bag."

8. The bodhisattva representing intrinsic wisdom. He is often depicted riding a lion, holding the sword of wisdom in one hand and a sutra in the other.

After that he went about everywhere testing [men's] attainment of the Ultimate Principle.

At the beginning of the Yuan-ho era [806-20] he made his home in Hsiang-yang, living in a rock cave. (Today, the Layman's Cliff is to be seen twenty *li* to the south of Deer Gate.)⁹ At that time the Prefect Mr. Yu Ti,¹⁰ advancing his banners, investigated conditions by collecting the songs of the common people.¹¹ He obtained the Layman's works and greatly admired him. Thereupon he took advantage of a favorable opportunity and himself visited the Layman, treating him cordially like an old and dear friend. They not only pledged their devotion, but thereafter their mutual visits continued without lapse.

When the Layman was about to die he said to his daughter Ling-chao: "Illusory transformations lack reality. I comply with whatever comes. Go out and see how high the sun is and report to me when it is noon."

Ling-chao went to the door and quickly reported: "The sun has already reached the zenith, and there's an eclipse. Do come and see it."

"Is that so," remarked the Layman.

"Yes, indeed," replied Ling-chao.

The Layman rose from his seat and looked out of the window. Thereupon Ling-chao took her father's chair and, sitting cross-legged, in an instant passed away.

9. This sentence is a parenthetical gloss by the author of the Preface. The *li* is a Chinese measure of distance, said to be a little over one-third of a mile, or about six hundred meters. See Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary*, p. 2, n. 4, and also *Ennin's Travels*, p. 141.

10. Yu Ti (d. 818) became a close friend of Layman P'ang and compiled the present text as a tribute to his memory. See p. 94, n. 3, for further biographical details. For a discussion of his character, see pp. 21-23.

11. This later became a proverbial expression for a prefect's taking office. The songs of the people reflected their circumstances, and thus served as a guide to the administration.

The Layman turned and smiling said: "My daughter has anticipated me." Whereupon he gathered firewood and concluded the matter.

When seven days had passed, Mr. Yu came to inquire how he was. The Layman, putting his hand on Mr. Yu's knee, gazed at him intently for a long time, and then said: "I beg you just to regard as empty all that is existent and to beware of taking as real all that is non-existent. Fare you well in the world. All is like shadows and echoes."

As his words ended, a strange fragrance filled the room and he sat upright as if meditating. Mr. Yu hastily called to him, but he had already gone on the long journey. The wind roared over the great marsh, yet serenely carried the sound of heavenly music; the moon passed beyond Mount Sumeru,¹² yet did not change its golden waves of color. The Layman's final request was that he be cremated and [the ashes] scattered over rivers and lakes. Thereupon the ceremonial affairs were carried out in detail, and he was cremated in the usual manner.

A messenger was then sent to report the news to his wife. When she heard it she said: "That stupid girl and ignorant old man have gone away without telling me. How unbearable!" Then she went and spoke to her son, whom she saw hoeing in the field, saying: "Mr. P'ang and Ling-chao are both gone." Laying down his hoe, the son exclaimed "Sa!" in reply. After a time, he also died standing

up. His mother said: "Stupid boy, how awfully foolish you are!" He was also cremated. Everyone marveled at this [occurrence].¹³

Sometime afterwards Mrs. P'ang visited her friends throughout the countryside bidding them farewell, then went into seclusion. Later, all trace of her was entirely lost. No one knew where she had gone.

12. In Buddhist cosmology, the central mountain of this and every world. The meaning of the entire sentence is, of course, figurative.

13. The son's name was Keng-huo according to the account in the *Shih-shih t'ung-chien* {chuan 9, p. 473d). This comparatively late text is the only one which mentions him by name. This, in addition to the fact that he nowhere appears in the anecdotes of the present text, indicates that there was probably nothing noteworthy about him—except the manner of his death.

The Layman often used to say:

*I've a boy who has no bride,
I've a girl who has no groom;
Forming a happy family circle,
We speak about the Birthless.*¹⁴

Besides this [verse], his profound sayings and religious verses were circulated about, but many were scattered and lost. Now for the first time they have been gathered together from the memories of men and compiled into two *chuan*,¹⁵ that they may forever be available to posterity and admonish future students.

[People of] the world said: "The Layman was indeed a Vimalakirti!"¹⁶ How true!

*He whose name is "Nameless" has written this preface
The printing blocks are stored in the
Huang-po Tripitaka Pavilion*



14. This verse, which is repeated from the main text (p. 47), is widely known. It suggests that each member of the family is enlightened and self-sufficient, yet dwells in harmony with the others. It shows how far P'ang had departed from the Confucian tradition of his ancestors, in which for children to remain unmarried was the worst possible disregard of filial piety.

15. The text in fact divided into three *chuan* or fascicles, at least in the Ming edition followed here (see p. 28).

16. A layman, said to have been a contemporary of Sakyamuni, who possessed all the virtues of an ideal Buddhist. He is the hero of the Vimalakirti Sutra. For an illustration and succinct description of him, see Suzuki, *Manual*, p. 12.



THE ANECDOTES¹

THE LAYMAN P'ANG YUN of Hsiang-chou, whose nickname was Tao-hsuan, was a resident of Heng-yang prefecture in Heng-chou. His family had been Confucianists for generations. While yet a youth he became aware of the defiling passions and aspired to seek the absolute truth.

DIALOGUES WITH SHIH-T'OU

AT THE BEGINNING of the Chen-yuan era [785-804] of T'ang, the Layman visited Ch'an Master Shih-t'ou.² He asked the Master: "Who is the man who doesn't accompany the ten thousand dharmas?"

Shih-t'ou covered the Layman's mouth with his hand. In a flash he realized!

1. Here the original text has the following heading: "The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang. Compiled by Imperial Commissioner Yu Ti. Reprinted by Upasaka Shih-teng." Nothing is known of this Shih-teng. *Upasaka* is a Sanskrit term for a male Buddhist lay practitioner or believer. It is equivalent in meaning to *chu-shih*, translated throughout the present text as "layman."

2. Shih-t'ou Hsi-ch'ien (700-90), a Ch'an master of great renown, was the Dharma heir of Ch'ing-yuan Hsing-ssu (*d.* 740). See p. 95, n. 4, for further biographical details.



ONE DAY SHIH-T'OU said to the Layman: "Since seeing me, what have your daily activities been?"

"When you ask me about my daily activities, I can't open my mouth," the Layman replied.

"Just because I know you are thus I now ask you," said Shih-t'ou.

Whereupon the Layman offered this verse:

*My daily activities are not unusual,
I'm just naturally in harmony with them.
Grasping nothing, discarding nothing,
In every place there's no hindrance, no conflict.
Who assigns the ranks of vermilion and purple?—³
The hills' and mountains' last speck of dust*

*is extinguished.*⁴
[My] supernatural power and marvelous activity—
Drawing water and carrying firewood.

Shih-t'ou gave his assent. Then he asked: "Will you put on black robes or will you continue wearing white?"⁶

"I want to do what I like," replied the Layman. So he did not shave his head or dye his clothing.

3. The color of clothing worn by high government officials.

4. In other texts this line is also written: "The green mountains' last speck of dust is extinguished." The two lines that conclude this verse are often quoted and widely known.

5. "White-clothed" is a conventional term indicating a commoner. White is here used in contrast to the black robes of a Ch'an Buddhist monk. See Introduction, pp. 24-25; see also Leggett, pp. 18, 57.

DIALOGUES WITH MA-TSU

LATER THE LAYMAN went to Chiang-shi to visit Ch'an Master Ma-tsu.⁶ He asked Ma-tsu:

"Who is the man who doesn't accompany the ten thousand dharmas?"

"Wait till you've swallowed in one swig all the water of the West River, then I'll tell you," replied Ma-tsu.

At these words the Layman suddenly understood the Mysterious Principle. He offered the verse containing the phrase, "empty-minded having passed the exam."⁷

He remained with Ma-tsu two years, practicing and receiving instruction. He wrote a verse which says:

*I've a boy who has no bride,
I've a girl who has no groom;
Forming a happy family circle,
We speak about the Birthless.*



ONE DAY THE LAYMAN addressed Ma-tsu, saying: "A man of unobscured original nature asks you please to look upward."

Ma-tsu looked straight down.

The Layman said: "You alone play marvelously on the string-less *ch'in*."⁸

Ma-tsu looked straight up.

The Layman bowed low. Ma-tsu returned to his quarters.

"Just now bungled it trying to be smart," then said the Layman.



ONE DAY THE LAYMAN questioned Ma-tsu, saying: "What about

water, which is without sinews and bones, yet can support a boat of ten thousand *hu*?"⁹

"Here there's no water and no boat. What sinews and bones are you talking about?" replied Ma-tsu.

6. Ma-tsu Tao-i (709-88), one of the greatest Ch'an masters of all time, the Dharma heir of Nan-yueh Huai-jang. See p. 95, n. 5, for further biographical details.

7. For the full verse, its context, and implications, see pp. 26, 27-28.

8. The Chinese lute.

9. The Chinese bushel, equivalent in T'ang times to about one and two-thirds bushels in U.S. dry measure, or 59.44 liters. See Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary*, p. 50, n. 217.

DIALOGUES WITH YUEH-SHAN

THE LAYMAN WENT to see Ch'an Master Yueh-shan.¹⁰ Yueh-shan asked him: "Can you put this matter in the One Vehicle?"¹¹

"I do nothing each day but seek my fare," said the Layman. "How should I know if it can be put in the One Vehicle?"

"Am I right in saying you didn't see Shih-t'ou?" asked Yueh-shan.

"Picking one up and letting one go is not the mark of a skillful-fellow," returned the Layman.

"As head of the temple," said Yueh-shan, "I have many matters to attend to."

"Take care of yourself," said the Layman and started out.

"Picking one up and letting one go is the very mark of a skillful fellow," said Yueh-shan.

"That great question on the One Vehicle has gotten lost," said the Layman.

"Yes, yes," agreed Yueh-shan.

10. Yueh-shan Wei-yen (745-828) studied under Shih-t'ou, whose Dharma heir he became, and probably also under Ma-tsu. See p. 96, n. 6, for further biographical details.

11. Skt. *Ekayana*: the single vehicle or final teaching, embracing both the Mahayana and Theravada, which leads all beings to Buddha-hood, as emphasized in the Lotus Sutra. Cf. Miura and Sasaki, p. S89.



WHEN THE LAYMAN took leave of Yueh-shan, the Master had ten Ch'an students accompany him as far as the gate. There the Layman, pointing to the snow in the sky, said: "Lovely snow! Flake after flake does not fall another place."



MA-TSU ANSWERING LAYMAN P'ANG

"Where do they fall?" asked the Ch'an student Ch'uan.

The Layman gave him a slap.

"Don't be so crude," said Ch'uan.

"How can you call yourself a Ch'an student!" cried the Layman. "Old Yama¹² won't let go of you."

"How about you?" returned Ch'uan.

The Layman gave him another slap and said: "Your eyes see like a blind man's; your mouth speaks like a mute's."¹³

12. Skt. *Tama*: the lord of hell and impartial judge of the dead.

13. This entire anecdote comprises the Koan in Case 42 of the *Pi-yen lu*.

DIALOGUES WITH CH'I-FENG

THE LAYMAN WENT to see Ch'i-feng.¹⁴ He had barely entered the temple compound when Ch'i-feng said: "What is it that this commoner keeps incessantly coming to monasteries to get?"

Looking about him on both sides, the Layman said: "Who's talking like that? Who's talking like that?"

Ch'i-feng shouted.

"Here I am!" cried the Layman.

"Spoken straightforwardly, wasn't it?" asked Ch'i-feng.

"What's behind, eh?" asked the Layman.

Turning his head, Ch'i-feng exclaimed: "Look, look!"

"The thief in the grass met complete defeat," said the Layman. "The thief in the grass met complete defeat."

Ch'i-feng said nothing.

14. Ch'i-feng Ho-shang, a monk in the second generation of the line of Nan-yueh Huai-jang, and a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow. *Ho-shang* is a title of respect for a monk who is a teacher.



ONE DAY AS CH'I-FENG and the Layman were walking side by side, the Layman went a step ahead, and then said: "I am better than you by one step."

"There's no back and no front," said Ch'i-feng, "yet the old gent wants to get ahead."

"The suffering of sufferings¹⁵ never produces such a remark," said the Layman.

"Sir, I'm afraid you won't agree," said Ch'i-feng.

"If I don't agree, what'll you be able to do?" retorted the Layman.

"If I had a stick in my hand, I'd beat you without mercy," replied Ch'i-feng.

At that the Layman gave him a punch, and then said: "Not too good."

Ch'i-feng started to pick up a stick, but the Layman seized it. "Today this thief is completely defeated!" he cried.

"Am I clumsy, or are you skillful?" said Ch'i-feng laughing.

"We're quits, we're quits!" cried the Layman clapping his hands.

15. The expression "suffering of sufferings" (or, more freely, "extremity of suffering") became part of the following maxim in the Yuan dynasty: "Unless you experience the suffering of sufferings, it's difficult to become a man above men."



ONE DAY THE LAYMAN asked Ch'i-feng: "How many *li* is it from here to the top of your peak?"
 "Where have you come from?" asked Ch'i-feng.
 "It's so dreadfully steep that it can't be asked about," said the Layman.
 "How much [steepness] is that?" asked Ch'i-feng.
 "One, two, three," said the Layman.
 "Four, five, six," said Ch'i-feng.
 "Why not say seven?" asked the Layman.
 "As soon as I said seven there would be eight," replied Ch'i-feng.
 "You can stop there," said the Layman.
 "You may go on," said Ch'i-feng.
 The Layman shouted and went out.
 Then Ch'i-feng shouted.



ONE DAY THE LAYMAN said to Ch'i-feng: "One mustn't speak [of it] directly."
 "Show me Mr. P'ang's then 'master,' "¹⁶ said Ch'i-feng.
 "What's the use of being so dispirited?" asked the Layman.
 "[I had] a great question, but it missed you," said Ch'i-feng.
 "Just as I thought, just as I thought," returned the Layman.

16. *Chu-jen-weng*, literally "master," is here used in the sense of True Self or Buddha-nature. Freely translated, this sentence would read: "Show me your True Self when you do not speak of it directly."

DIALOGUES WITH TAN-HSIA

ONE DAY CH'AN MASTER Tan-hsia T'ien-jan¹⁷ came to visit the Layman. As soon as he reached the gate he saw [the Layman's] daughter Ling-chao carrying a basket of greens.
 "Is the Layman here?" asked Tan-hsia.
 Ling-chao put down the basket of greens, politely folded her arms [one on top of the other] and stood still.
 "Is the Layman here?" asked Tan-hsia again.
 Ling-chao picked up the basket and walked away. Tan-hsia then departed.
 When the Layman returned a little later, Ling-chao told him of the conversation.
 "Is Tan-hsia here?" asked the Layman.
 "He's gone," replied Ling-chao.
 "Red earth painted with milk,"¹⁸ remarked the Layman.

17. Tan-hsia T'ien-jan (738-823), one of Layman P'ang's best friends, was a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou. See 96, n. 7, for further biographical details.

18. This expression denotes an action that is needless, useless, or defiling. Another example is found in the *fV'u-men-kuan*, in Wu-men's Postscript following Case 48. See Blyth, Vol. 4, p. 312.



LATER, WHEN TAN-HSIA came to see the Layman, though the Layman saw him coming, he neither rose nor spoke to him. Tan-hsia raised his whisk; the Layman raised his mallet.¹⁹

"Seeing you this time is not the same as seeing you before," observed the Layman.

"Go on and belittle my reputation as you please," said Tan-hsia.

"A while ago you took a hit [from my daughter]," returned the Layman.

"If that's so," said Tan-hsia, "then you've made [my] T'ien-jan's mouth dumb."

"You're dumb because of your intrinsic nature," said the Layman, "and now you afflict me with dumbness."

Tan-hsia threw down his whisk and departed.

"Jan Acarya, Jan Acarya!"²⁰ called the Layman.

But Tan-hsia did not look back.

"He's come down not only with dumbness but with deafness as well," remarked the Layman.

19. The *fu-tzu* or whisk consisted of long white yak- or horse-hairs "Just this, or is there something else?" asked Tan-hsia.

20. Skt. *acarya*: spiritual teacher, master, or preceptor. "Jan" is an abbreviation of Tan-hsia's other name, T'ien-jan.



ONE DAY TAN-HSIA again went to visit the Layman. As he reached the gate they met. Tan-hsia asked: "Is the Layman here?"

"A starving man doesn't choose his food," returned the Layman.

"Is old P'ang here?" asked Tan-hsia.

"Heavens, heavens!" sighed the Layman and entered the house.

"Heavens, heavens!" sighed Tan-hsia; then [he turned and] went back.



ONE DAY TAN-HSIA asked the Layman: "How does today's meeting compare with yesterday's?" bound atop a wooden handle, and was used originally by Indian Buddhist monks to brush away insects without injuring them. Later the whisk was carried as a symbol of authority by Ch'an teachers. The *ch'ui-tzu* was an eight-sided wooden mallet. One of its uses was as a gavel in Ch'an ceremonies to call the assembly of monks to order.

"Showing me yesterday's affair just as it is, demonstrate your Ch'an eye," returned the Layman.

"As for the Ch'an eye," replied Tan-hsia, "can it put you into itself, Mr. P'ang?"

"I'm in your eye," said the Layman.

"My eye is narrow," said Tan-hsia. "Where can you find a place in it to put your body?"

"Why should this eye be narrow! Why should this body be put!" rejoined the Layman.

Tan-hsia desisted.

"If you will speak one word more," said the Layman, "this conversation can be rounded off."

Again Tan-hsia did not reply.

"As to this one word, above all others, no man can say it," remarked the Layman.



ONE DAY THE LAYMAN came and stood before Tan-hsia with hands folded [on his chest]].

After a little he went out. Tan-hsia paid no attention.

The Layman came back and sat down. Whereupon Tan-hsia went and stood before him with hands folded. After a little he returned to his quarters.

"I come in, you go out," said the Layman. "We aren't getting anywhere."

"This old gent comes in and goes out, comes in and goes out— when will it end!" returned Tan-hsia.

"You haven't the slightest compassion," said the Layman.

"I have led this fellow into such a state!" exclaimed Tan-hsia.

"What have you led?" asked the Layman.

At that Tan-hsia lifted the cap from the Layman's head and said: "You're just like an old monk."

The Layman took the cap and, putting it on Tan-hsia's head, said: "You're just like a young commoner."

"Yes sir, yes, yes," assented Tan-hsia.

"You still have the old-time spirit," said the Layman.

Tan-hsia threw down the cap. "It's very much like an official's cap," he said.

"Yes sir, yes, yes," assented the Layman. "How could I forget the old-time spirit!" said Tan-hsia.

The Layman snapped his fingers three times. "Moving heaven, moving earth," he said.



ONE DAY WHEN TAN-HSIA saw the Layman coming he assumed a running attitude.

"That's the pouncing attitude," said the Layman. "Now what's the roaring attitude?"

Tan-hsia sat down.

In front of him the Layman drew the figure seven using his staff. Below it Tan-hsia drew the figure one.

"Because of the seven, the one is seen; having seen the one, the seven is forgotten," said the Layman.

Tan-hsia stood up.

"Sit a little longer," said the Layman. "There's still a second phrase coming."

"May I please put a capping-phrase to this?" asked Tan-hsia.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" mourned the Layman and departed.

WHEN THE LAYMAN was walking with Tan-hsia one day he saw a deep pool of clear water.

Pointing to it with his hand, he said: "Being as it is we can't differentiate it."

"Of course we can't," replied Tan-hsia.

The Layman scooped up and threw two handfuls of water on Tan-hsia.

"Don't do that, don't do that!" cried Tan-hsia.

"I have to, I have to!" exclaimed the Layman.

Whereupon Tan-hsia scooped up and threw three handfuls of water on the Layman, saying: "What can you do now?"

"Nothing else," replied the Layman.

"One seldom wins by a fluke,"²¹ said Tan-hsia.

"Who lost by a fluke?" returned the Layman.

21. This is derived from the old Chinese proverb: "To win by a fluke is to fall into a fluke" (and thus to lose by a fluke). Additional examples of this proverb will be found in Hsueh-tou's Verse, Case 66 of the *Pi-yen lu*, and in dramas of the Yuan dynasty.



ONE DAY TAN-HSIA dangled a rosary in his hand. The Layman came up to him and, snatching it away, said: "We two are empty-handed. It's all over, now."

"Jealous old man, you can't tell good from bad," said Tan-hsia.

"I don't really get the point of your remark," said the Layman. "I won't be like this again."

"Moo, moo!" bellowed Tan-hsia.

"How fearsome you are, my teacher!" exclaimed the Layman.

"I still lack a stick," said Tan-hsia.
 "I'm old. I can't bear the stick," said the Layman.
 "You callous fellow! It's no use to hit you," returned Tan-hsia.
 "Still, you haven't a device to guide me," said the Layman.
 Tan-hsia gave up concerning the rosary and started out.
 "You thief!" cried the Layman. "You'll never come to get it back."
 Tan-hsia turned his head and laughed heartily, "Ha, ha!"
 "You're defeated, thief!" cried the Layman.
 Tan-hsia came up to the Layman and grabbing him said: "You mustn't be so reserved!"
 The Layman gave him a slap.

DIALOGUES WITH PO-LING

ONE DAY WHEN PO-LING HO-SHANG²² and the Layman met on the road, Po-ling asked the Layman: "Have you ever shown anyone the word by which you were helped at Nan-yueh²³ in former days?"
 "Yes, I have shown it," replied the Layman.
 "To whom?" asked Po-ling.
 "To Mr. P'ang," said the Layman pointing to himself.
 "Certainly you are beyond the praise of even Manjusri and Subhuti,"²⁴ said Po-ling.
 "Who is he who knows the word by which you were helped?" asked the Layman.
 Po-ling put on his bamboo hat and walked off.
 "A good road to you!" called the Layman.
 Po-ling did not turn his head.

22. Po-ling Ho-shang was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow. This first anecdote appears as Koan 4 in the *Tetteki Tosui*, a Japanese collection of old koans favored in Sot5 Zen. Cf. the free interpretation in Senzaki and McCandless, p. 23.

23. A reference to P'ang's realization under Shih-t'ou, who lived on the Nan-yueh (South Peak) in Hunan.

24. Subhuti: one of the ten chief disciples of the Buddha, said to have been the best exponent of Sunya, or Emptiness. For Manjusri, see p. 41, fn. 8.



ONE DAY PO-LING said to the Layman: "Whether you can speak or whether you can't, you cannot escape.' Now tell me, what is it you can't escape?"
 The Layman winked.
 "Outstanding!" exclaimed Po-ling.
 "You mistakenly approve me," said the Layman.
 "Who doesn't, who doesn't?" returned Po-ling.
 "Take care of yourself," said the Layman and went off.



PO-LING WAS SITTING one day in his quarters. As the Layman entered, Po-ling grabbed him and said: "Men of today speak, men of the past spoke: what do you speak?"
 The Layman gave Po-ling a slap.
 "You can't speak!" cried Po-ling.
 "Speak and there will be a fault," replied the Layman.

"Pay me back for the slap," demanded Po-ling.
 "Try giving me a slap," said the Layman, approaching.
 "Take care of yourself," said Po-ling.



LING-CHAO AND TAN-HSIA



"AS FAR AS THIS EYE is concerned, can it escape men's slander?" the Layman asked Po-ling one day.
 "How can it escape?" replied Po-ling.
 "I know well, I know well," said the Layman.
 "The stick doesn't hit a man who has nothing [further] to do," said Po-ling.
 "Hit me, hit me!" cried the Layman, turning his body.
 As Po-ling picked up his stick and raised it, the Layman grabbed him, saying: "Let's see you try to escape!"
 Po-ling made no reply.

DIALOGUES WITH TA-T'UNG P'U-CHI

THE LAYMAN HAD an interview one day with Ch'an Master Ta-t'ung P'u-chi.²⁵ Holding up the bamboo basket in his hand, the Layman cried: "Master Ta-t'ung, Master Ta-t'ung!"
 P'u-chi made no response.
 "When Shih-t'ou's doctrine reached you, ice melted and tiles broke," said the Layman.
 "That's obvious without your mentioning it," replied P'u-chi.

Throwing down the basket, the Layman said: "Who'd have thought it isn't worth a single cash!"
"Though it isn't worth a single cash, how can one get along without it?" responded P'u-chi.
The Layman did a dance and left.²⁶
"Layman!" called P'u-chi, holding up the basket.
The Layman turned his head. P'u-chi did a dance and left.
"Returning home, returning home!" cried the Layman, clapping his hands.

25. Ta-t'ung P'u-chi, of Li-chou, was a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou. Little is known of him. A few additional anecdotes concerning P'u-chi are recorded in the *Wu-teng yen-t'ung* (chuan 5, p. 126a-b).

26. This was probably a kind of brief, impromptu dance for joy.



ONE DAY P'U-CHI said to the Layman: "As for words, few men from the past to the present have been able to escape [their limitations]. As for you, can you escape them?"
"Yes sir," assented the Layman.
P'u-chi repeated the same question a second time.
"Where have you come from?" inquired the Layman.
P'u-chi again repeated the same question.
"Where have you come from?" asked the Layman.
"Not only present-day men, but the men of old also had this phrase," said P'u-chi.
The Layman did a dance and went out.
"That lunatic of himself makes mistakes," remarked P'u-chi. "Who's to examine him!"



ONE DAY P'U-CHI visited the Layman.
"I recall that when I was in my mother's womb I had a certain word," said the Layman. "I'll show it to you, but you mustn't hold it as a principle."
"You're still separated from life," said P'u-chi.
"I just said you mustn't hold it as a principle," rejoined the Layman.
"How can I not be awed by a word that astounds people?" said P'u-chi.
"Understanding such as yours is enough to astonish people," replied the Layman.
"The very statement 'don't hold it as a principle' has become a principle," said P'u-chi.
"You're separated not only by one or two lives," said the Layman.
"It's all right for you to reprove a rice-gruel [-eating] monk pike me]," returned P'u-chi.
The Layman snapped his fingers three times.



THE LAYMAN WENT to visit P'u-chi one day. When he saw the Layman coming, P'u-chi shut the gate and said: "Wise old gentleman, don't interview me."
"Whose fault is it that you sit alone and talk to yourself?" asked the Layman.
Thereupon P'u-chi opened the gate. Just as he stepped out he was seized by the Layman, who said: "Are you wise, or am I wise?"
"Leaving aside being wise," returned P'u-chi, "how much difference is there between opening the gate and shutting the gate and revealing and concealing?"
"That very question exasperates me to death," said the Layman.
P'u-chi was silent.
"Bungled it trying to be smart," said the Layman.

DIALOGUE WITH CH'ANG-TZU

THE LAYMAN WENT to visit Ch'an Master Ch'ang-tzu.²⁷ The Master was about to give a discourse at the time and the entire company of monks was assembled.

Stepping forward the Layman said: "Each one of you would do well to examine himself."

Ch'ang-tzu then addressed the assembly. Meanwhile the Layman stood to the right of the Master's chair.²⁸

"Without offending your 'master,' Master," said a monk, "will you please say something?"

"Do you know Mr. P'ang?" asked Ch'ang-tzu.

"No, I don't know him," replied the monk.

"What a pity, what a pity!" cried the Layman seizing the monk firmly.

The monk had no reply. The Layman pushed him away.

A little later Ch'ang-tzu addressed the Layman, saying: "Did that monk get a taste of the stick just now?"

"Better wait until he's willing," replied the Layman.

"You only see the sharpness of the gimlet point," said Ch'ang-tzu. "You don't see the squareness of the chisel blade."

"Such talk is all right for me," replied the Layman, "but if an outsider heard it, it wouldn't do."

"What wouldn't do?" asked Ch'ang-tzu.

"Brother, you only see the squareness of the chisel blade and don't see the sharpness of the gimlet point," replied the Layman.

27. Ch'ang-tzu K'uang, of T'an-chou, was a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou. Several other anecdotes of him are recorded in the *f'u-teng hui-yuan* (*chuan* 5, pp. 17a-18b.), the best known of which is the one of his meeting with Shih-t'ou, upon his return from paying homage to the Sixth Patriarch's tomb in Ts'ao-hsi. See Blyth, Vol. 2, p. 27.

28. This was the position usually occupied by a Ch'an Master's personal attendant.

DIALOGUES WITH SUNG-SHAN

As THE LAYMAN and Sung-shan Ho-shang²⁹ were drinking tea together, the Layman held up the stand of his teacup and said: "Everyone without exception is endowed with it: why can no one speak?"

"Just because everyone without exception is endowed with it, no one can speak," returned Sung-shan.

"How is it, my elder brother, that you can speak?" asked the Layman.

"I can't help but speak," replied Sung-shan.

"Obviously, obviously," returned the Layman.

Sung-shan then drank some tea.

"Elder brother, you're drinking tea. Why don't you bow to the guest?"

"To whom?" queried Sung-shan.

"To me, P'ang," replied the Layman.

"Why must I bow again?" said Sung-shan.

Later when Tan-hsia heard of this he remarked: "Had it been anyone but Sung-shan, he'd have been completely taken in by that old gent."

The Layman heard of this, and at once had a man take a message to Tan-hsia saying: "Why not catch on before I held up the stand of my teacup!"

29. Sung-shan Ho-shang was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow.



ONE DAY AS THE LAYMAN and Sung-shan were looking at a ploughing ox, the Layman pointed to the ox and said: "He is always content, but he doesn't yet know of *it*."

"Except for you, Mr. P'ang, who else could know his state!" said Sung-shan.

"Tell me what it is that he still doesn't know of," said the Layman.

"I haven't seen Shih-t'ou, so it's all right I can't tell you," replied Sung-shan.

"Had you seen him, what then?" asked the Layman.

Sung-shan clapped his hands three times.



ONE DAY THE LAYMAN went to visit Sung-shan. Seeing the Master holding a staff, he said:

"What's that in your hand?"

"I am aged. Without this I can't take a single step," replied Sung-shan.

"Be that as it may, you still retain your vigor," observed the Layman.

At that Sung-shan hit him.

"Let go the staff in your hand and let me ask you a question," said the Layman.

Sung-shan threw down the staff.

"This old fellow's earlier words don't agree with what he says later," said the Layman.

Sung-shan gave a shout.

"Within [the cry] 'Heavens!' there still is bitterness," remarked the Layman.



AS THE LAYMAN and Sung-shan were walking together one day they saw a group of monks picking greens.

"The yellow leaves are discarded, the green leaves are kept," said Sung-shan.

"How about not falling into green or yellow?" asked the Layman.

"Better you tell me," said Sung-shan.

"For the two of us to be host and guest is most difficult," returned the Layman.

"Yet having come here, you strain to make yourself ruler!" said Sung-shan.

"Who doesn't!" retorted the Layman.

"True, true," agreed Sung-shan.

"To speak about 'not falling into green or yellow' is especially difficult," said the Layman.

"But you just did so," returned Sung-shan laughing.

"Take care of yourselves," called the Layman to the group of monks.

"The monks forgive you for your falling into activity," said Sung-shan.

At that the Layman went off.



As SUNG-SHAN and the Layman were talking together one day, Sung-shan suddenly lifted up a ruler from the table, saying: "Do you see this?"

"I see it," replied the Layman.

"See what?" asked Sung-shan.

"Sung-shan, Sung-shan!" exclaimed the Layman.

"You mustn't say it," said Sung-shan.

"Why shouldn't I say it?" returned the Layman.

Sung-shan then threw down the ruler.
 "To start and not finish infuriates me,"³⁰ said the Layman.
 "Not so," said Sung-shan. "Today it's you who couldn't say it."
 "What couldn't I say?" asked the Layman.
 "To start and not finish," replied Sung-shan.
 "In strength there can be weakness; in weakness there can't be strength," said the Layman.
 Sung-shan hugged the Layman. "Old boy, you didn't touch on it at all," he said.

30. Lit., "to have a head and no tail infuriates me."

DIALOGUES WITH PEN-HSI

"WHAT WAS THE MEANING of Tan-hsia's hitting his attendant?" the Layman asked Pen-hsi Ho-shang.³¹
 "The family elder sees people's merits and defects,"³² replied Pen-hsi.
 "Because you and I are fellow disciples, I venture to ask," said the Layman.
 "If so, tell me from the beginning and I'll consult with you," replied Pen-hsi.
 "The family elder shouldn't speak with you about people's rights and wrongs," said the Layman.
 "I take your age into consideration," said Pen-hsi.
 "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," apologized the Layman.

31. Pen-hsi Ho-shang was a fellow disciple of Layman P'ang under Ma-tsu, whose Dharma heir he became. Little else is recorded of him beyond the anecdotes that follow.

32. An old Chinese proverb says: "Unless stupid and deaf, one cannot be the family elder." That is, in order to promote harmony the head of a large extended family household should not notice or speak of the shortcomings of the family members. The implication of Pen-hsi's remark is that P'ang is not qualified for the position of family elder.



ONE DAY PEN-HSI saw the Layman coming. He gazed at him for quite a while. The Layman then drew a circle with his staff. Pen-hsi came forward and stepped into it.
 "Thus, or not thus?" asked the Layman.
 Pen-hsi then drew a circle in front of the Layman. The Layman likewise stepped into it.
 "Thus, or not thus?" asked Pen-hsi.
 The Layman threw down his staff and stood still.
 "You came with a staff, but you go without a staff," remarked Pen-hsi.
 "Luckily it's made perfect," said the Layman. "Don't trouble to watch it."
 Pen-hsi clapped his hands, exclaiming: "Wonderful! There's not a thing to be attained!"
 The Layman picked up his staff and, tapping the ground step by step, went off.
 "Watch the road, watch the road!" called Pen-hsi.



PEN-HSI ASKED the Layman: "What was the first word Bodhi-dharma³³ spoke when he came from the West?"
 "Who remembers!" said the Layman.
 "You have a poor memory," said Pen-hsi.
 "We mustn't speak hit-or-miss about affairs of olden days," said the Layman.
 "How about affairs right now?" asked Pen-hsi.
 "There's not a word to say," replied the Layman.

"To say that in front of a wise man would be still more brilliant," responded Pen-hsi.
 "But you have a great eye," disagreed the Layman.
 "Only when it's thus can one speak without a hint,"³⁴ said Pen-hsi.
 "Not a single thing can be put into the eye," said the Layman.
 "The sun is just at the zenith: to raise the eyes is difficult," said Pen-hsi.
 "The dried skull is bored through,"³⁵ returned the Layman.
 Snapping his fingers, Pen-hsi said: "Who could discern it!"
 "What an outstanding fellow you are!" exclaimed the Layman.
 Pen-hsi returned to his quarters.

33. The Buddhist monk from South India who came to China in 520 and is regarded as the First Patriarch of Ch'an. See Suzuki, *Essays, First Series*, pp. 169-91. See also Miura and Sasaki, pp. 38-40, 147, 236, 237. For Bodhidharma's place in the formation of the patriarchal Ch'an legend, see Yampolsky, pp. 7-10.

34. Lit., "speak without the pupil of the eye."

35. This indicates a condition in which the Ch'an eye is completely eliminated.



LAYMAN P'ANG AND HIS CHILDREN

DIALOGUE WITH TA-MEI

THE LAYMAN VISITED Ch'an Master Ta-mei.³⁶ Hardly had they met when he said: "I've long wanted to meet you, Ta-mei. I wonder whether the plum is ripe or not."³⁷

"Ripe!" exclaimed Ta-mei. "What part do you want to bite?"
"Dried-fruit confection,"³⁸ returned the Layman.
"Then give me back the pits," said Ta-mei, stretching out his hand.
The Layman went off.

36. Ta-mei Fa-ch'ang (752-839) was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. See p. 97, n. 8, for further biographical details.

37. A play on words; Ta-mei's name means "Great Plum." Some twelve years had passed since Ta-mei had gone to live on the mountain of that name. See p. 97, n. 9, for the background of and motive for Layman P'ang's visit.

38. *Po-tsa-sui*, lit., "hundred miscellaneous pieces." We do not know what kind of food this was in those days. It might have been a confection of dried fruits with the pits and skins intact. A Chinese friend says that today the term means a thick soup of mutton and various vegetables that is favored by the common people.

DIALOGUES WITH TA-YU

THE LAYMAN CAME to Ch'an Master Ta-yu's place. Ta-yu³⁹ made an offering of food and presented it to the Layman. The Layman was about to accept it when Ta-yu withdrew [the food in] his hands, saying: "Long ago Vimalakirti criticized the acceptance of alms when the mind is stirred."⁴⁰ Do you acquiesce in this action [of mine]?"

"On that occasion wasn't Subhuti an adept?" asked the Layman.

"I'm not concerned with his affair," replied Ta-yu.

"When the food reached [Subhuti's] mouth it was taken away by Vimalakirti," said the Layman. Thereupon Ta-yu set down the food.

"There was no need for a single word," remarked the Layman.

39. Ta-yu (746-825) was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. See p. 97, n. 10, for further biographical details.

40. A reference to Chapter 3 of the Vimalakirti Sutra, where Sub-buti tells what happened when he once went to Vimalakirti's house to beg for food. Vimalakirti filled his begging-bowl full of food, but then said that Subhuti could have it only if he regarded all food and all things in the same manner. Vimalakirti then launched into a disconcerting lecture which left Subhuti dumbfounded and wanting only to leave. Finally, Vimalakirti told Subhuti to take the food and not be upset, because all words are illusory.



THE LAYMAN ALSO ASKED Ta-yu: "Did Great Master Ma[-tsu] bestow on you his sincere doing for others?"

"I've not yet seen him. How should I know of his sincerity!" returned Ta-yu.

"Just such a standpoint as yours can't be sought anywhere," said the Layman.

"You mustn't keep on speaking single-mindedly," said Ta-yu.

"If I keep on speaking single-mindedly, you'll lose the principle. If I double or treble my speaking, can you open your mouth?" asked the Layman.

"This very not being able to open the mouth can be said to be true," returned Ta-yu.

The Layman clapped his hands and departed.

DIALOGUES WITH TSE-CH'UAN

WHEN THE LAYMAN met Tse-ch'uan Ho-shang,⁴¹ Tse-ch'uan said: "Do you still remember the doctrine of when you saw Shih-t'ou?"

"What! you mean to bring that up to me now?" rejoined the Layman.

"I'm well aware that long-continued Ch'an study tends to make one slack," said Tse-ch'uan.

"You're even more decrepit than I," retorted the Layman.

"We two are contemporaries; there's little difference between us," said Tse-ch'uan.
"I'm even healthier than you," said the Layman.
"It's not that you're healthier, but that I lack your cap," observed Tse-ch'uan.
The Layman took off his cap. "Now I'm just like you," he said.
Tse-ch'uan just laughed heartily.

41. Tse-ch'uan Ho-shang, a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him except the anecdotes that follow.



ONE DAY AS TSE-CH'UAN was picking tea, the Layman said: "The Dharmadhatu⁴² doesn't contain a person. Do you see me?"
"Anyone but I would reply to your remark," returned Tse-ch'uan.
"Where there's a question there's an answer—that's just a commonplace," said the Layman.
Tse-ch'uan went on picking tea and paid no attention.
"Don't take offense at my casually asking a question just now," said the Layman.
Tse-ch'uan still paid no attention.
The Layman shouted, and then said: "You bad-mannered old man! Just wait till I bring this to the attention of clear-eyed men one by one!"
Tse-ch'uan discarded his tea basket and returned to his quarters.

42. The unifying underlying spiritual reality regarded as the ground or cause of all things; the absolute from which all proceeds.



AS TSE-CH'UAN was sitting in his quarters one day, the Layman saw him and said: "You only know how to sit erect in your quarters; you're not aware when a monk comes for an interview."
Tse-ch'uan dropped one leg down.
The Layman went out two or three steps, and then turned back.
Tse-ch'uan drew his leg back up.
"You're a man of complete flexibility!" the Layman exclaimed.
"But I'm the host," returned Tse-ch'uan.
"You only know there's a host, you don't know there's a guest," retorted the Layman.
Tse-ch'uan called his attendant and had him make tea. The Layman did a dance and went out.

DIALOGUE WITH LO-P'U

THE LAYMAN WENT to Ch'an Master Lo-p'u.⁴³ When he had risen from saluting [Lo-p'u], he said: "In mid-summer it's killing heat, in early winter freezing cold."
"Don't be mistaken," rejoined Lo-p'u.
"I'm old," said the Layman.
"Why not say 'cold' when it's cold, and 'hot' when it's hot," said Lo-p'u.
"What's the good of catching deafness?" asked the Layman.
"I'll forgive you twenty blows," said Lo-p'u.
"You've made my mouth dumb; I've made your eyes blind," returned the Layman.⁴⁴

43. Nothing is known of him. Whoever he was, he lived earlier than the Lo-p'u Yuan-an (834-98) who served as an attendant of Lin-chi I-hsiian (d. 866) and became the Dharma heir of Chia-shan Shan-hui (805-81).

44. By speaking of old age, deafness, dumbness, and blindness, P'ang reveals a state beyond intellect and the senses. Cf. Case 88 of the *Pi-yen lu* in Suzuki, *Manual*, pp. 120-27.

DIALOGUES WITH SHIN-LIN

WHEN SHIH-LIN HO-SHANG⁴⁵ saw the Layman coming he raised up his whisk and said: "Without falling into Tan-hsia's [manner of] activity, try saying something."
The Layman snatched away the whisk and held up his own fist.
"That is precisely Tan-hsia's activity," said Shih-lin.
"Try not falling into it for me," returned the Layman.
"Tan-hsia caught dumbness; Mr. P'ang caught deafness," rejoined Shih-lin.
"Exactly!" said the Layman.
Shih-lin said nothing.
"What I said was said casually," remarked the Layman.

45. Shin-lin Ho-shang was a Dharma heir of Ma-tsu. Nothing else is recorded of him beyond the anecdotes that follow.



ONE DAY SHIH-LIN said to the Layman: "I have a question I'd like to ask. Don't spare your words."
"Please go on," said the Layman.
"How you do spare words!" exclaimed Shih-lin.
"Unwittingly by this discussion we've fallen into a snare [of words]," said the Layman.
Shih-lin covered his ears.
"You adept, you adept!" cried the Layman.



SHIH-LIN WAS HIMSELF serving tea to the Layman one day. The Layman was about to accept the tea when Shih-lin drew back and said: "How now?"
"I've a mouth but can't speak," replied the Layman.
"That's how you should be," said Shih-lin.
"How absurd!" exclaimed the Layman and, swinging his sleeves [as he turned], started out.
"Now I see through you, elder P'ang," said Shih-lin.
The Layman turned back.
"How absurd!" exclaimed Shih-lin.
The Layman said nothing.
"You should be capable of being wordless, too," remarked Shih-lin.

DIALOGUE WITH YANG-SHAN

WHEN THE LAYMAN visited Ch'an Master Yang-shan,⁴⁶ he said: "I have long wanted to meet you, Yang-shan. Now that I have arrived here, why are you facing downwards?"⁴⁷
Yang-shan raised up his whisk.
"Exactly!" exclaimed the Layman.
"Is this [whisk] pointing upwards or downwards?" asked Yang-shan.

The Layman struck an open-air post. "Though there's no one else [here] but us, I want to have this post testify," he said.

Throwing away his whisk, Yang-shan said: "Wherever you go, you may show this [testimony] as you please."

46. Yang-shan Hui-chi (807-83) was a Dharma heir of Kuei-shan Ling-yu (771-853) and co-founder with him of the Kuei-yang school of Ch'an. Several biographies of Yang-shan contain this anecdote with Layman P'ang. But if August 3, 808, is taken as the date of P'ang's death, Yang-shan would have been only an infant at the time of their supposed meeting instead of the mature Ch'an teacher he is here. See p. 98, n. 11 for further biographical details.

47. A play on words; Yang-shan's name means "Looking-Upward Mountain."

DIALOGUE WITH THE HERMIT KU-YIN

THE LAYMAN VISITED the hermit Ku-yin.⁴⁸ "Who are you?" asked Ku-yin.

The Layman raised his staff.

"Isn't that the highest activity?" asked Ku-yin

The Layman threw down his staff. Ku-yin said nothing.

"You only know the highest activity; you're unaware of the highest matter," said the Layman.

"What is the highest matter?" asked Ku-yin.

The Layman picked up his staff.

"Don't be so crude," said Ku-yin.

"What a pity you strain to make yourself ruler," returned the Layman.

"A man of uniform activity has no need to pick up a mallet or raise a whisk; nor does he use wordy replies," said Ku-yin. "If you were to meet him, what should you do?"

"Where would I meet him?" inquired the Layman.

Ku-yin grabbed hold of him.

"Is that what you'd do?" said the Layman, and spat right into his face.

Ku-yin said nothing.

The Layman offered this verse :

You lowered your hook into flaming water where

there's no fish, And nowhere to look for one either—I'm laughing

at your chagrin. Ku-yin, the Ch'an elder Tzu, how pitiable you are; You've been spat on, and now are ashamed to look at me.

48. Tao-che, here translated as "hermit," can mean a Taoist as well as a Ch'an man. In the third line of the verse concluding this anecdote, P'ang refers to him as "Ch'an elder," so it would seem he had done some Ch'an practice. Nothing else is recorded of him.

LAYMAN P'ANG READS A SUTRA

THE LAYMAN WAS once lying on his couch reading a sutra. A monk saw him and said:

"Layman! You must maintain dignity when reading a sutra."

The Layman raised up one leg.

The monk had nothing to say.

THE LAYMAN MEETS A MENDICANT

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN was in the market place of Hung-chou selling baskets. Seeing a monk begging alms, he took out a cash and said: "Can you tell me how to appreciate alms? If you can, then I'll give you this."

The monk had nothing to say.

"You ask me," said the Layman, "and I'll tell you." "What is it to appreciate alms?" asked the monk.

"Man seldom hears it," said the Layman. "Do you understand?" he added.

"I don't understand," said the monk.

"Who is the one who doesn't understand?" asked the Layman.

THE LAYMAN MEETS A HERDBOY

ONE DAY THE LAYMAN saw a herdboy. "Where does the road go?" he asked.

"I don't even know the road," replied the herdboy.

"You cattle-watcher!" exclaimed the Layman.

"You beast!" retorted the herdboy.

"What's the time today?" asked the Layman.

"Time for planting rice," replied the herdboy.

The Layman laughed heartily.

THE LAYMAN AND THE LECTURE-MASTER

THE LAYMAN WAS VISITING a lecture-mart,⁴⁹ listening to a discourse on the Diamond Sutra. When the "no self, no person" line was reached,⁵⁰ he asked: "Lecture-master, since there is no self and no person, who is he who's lecturing, who is he who's listening?"



LAYMAN P'ANG AND HIS DAUGHTER

The lecture-master had no reply.

"Though I'm just a commoner," said the Layman, "I know a little about faith."

"What is your idea?" inquired the lecture-master. The Layman replied with a verse:

*There's no self and no person,
How then kinfolk and stranger!
I beg you, cease going from lecture to lecture;
It's better to seek truth directly.
The nature of Diamond Wisdom
Excludes even a speck of dust.
From "Thus have I heard" to "This I believe,"⁵¹
All's but an array of unreal names.*

When the lecture-master heard this verse, he sighed with admiration.

Wherever the Layman dwelt there was much coming and going of venerable priests, and many exchanges of questions. According to the capacity of each the Layman responded as an echo to a sound. He was not a man to be categorized by any rule or measure.

49. Chiang-ssu, a place where Buddhist monks other than those of the Ch'an and Vinaya sects discoursed on the meaning of the sutras to the general public. Such professional lecturers supported themselves by contributions received from the audience.
50. The line in question is probably that in section 23 of Kumara-jlva's Chinese translation of the Vajracchedikd-prajnd-paramitd-sutra, commonly called the Diamond Sutra: "Furthermore, Subhuti, this Dharma, being universally the same, has no high or low—this is called Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. Because of [having] no self, no person, no sentient being, and no life when cultivating all good practices, Supreme Perfect Enlightenment is attained."
51. Set phrases that mark respectively the beginning and end of Buddhist sutras.

MRS. P'ANG AT THE TEMPLE

ONE DAY MRS. P'ANG went into the Deer Gate Temple to make an offering of food. The temple priest asked her the purpose [of the offering] in order to transfer the merit.⁵² Mrs. P'ang took her comb and stuck it in the back of her hair. "Transference of merit is completed," she said, and walked out.

52. It was customary for a temple priest to write on a slip of paper the donor's name, the gift and its purpose, and the date. This would then be displayed in public so that the donor's merit would become known to others, i.e., "transferred."

THE LAYMAN AND HIS DAUGHTER

THE LAYMAN WAS SITTING in his thatched cottage one day. "Difficult, difficult, difficult," he suddenly exclaimed, "[like trying] to scatter ten measures of sesame seed all over a tree!" "Easy, easy, easy," returned Mrs. P'ang, "just like touching your feet to the ground when you get out of bed." "Neither difficult nor easy," said Ling-chao. "On the hundred grass-tips, the Patriarchs' meaning."



DURING THE YUAN-HO ERA [806-20] the Layman traveled northward to Hsiang-han, stopping here and there. His daughter Ling-chao sold bamboo baskets for their morning and evening meals. The Layman had these [three] verses, which say:

When the mind's as is, circumstances also are as is;
There's no real and also no unreal.
Giving no heed to existence,
And holding not to non-existence—
You're neither saint nor sage, just
An ordinary man who has settled his affairs..

Easy, so easy!
These very five skandhas make true wisdom.⁵³
The ten directions of the universe are the same One Vehicle.
How can the formless Dharmakaya be two!
If you cast off the passions to enter Bodhi,⁵⁴
Where will any Buddha-lands be?

To preserve your life you must destroy it;
Having completely destroyed it you dwell at ease.

When you attain the inmost meaning of this,
An iron boat floats upon water.

53. Five skandhas or aggregates of a sentient being: 1. rupa, form, matter; 2. vedana, reception, feeling; 3. samjna, conception; 4. sarh-skara, volition, predispositions; 5. vijnana, discriminating consciousness. The term "true wisdom" means seeing things as they really are.

54. The passions (Skt. klesa) are greed, anger, and folly. "Bodhi" (Skt. bodhi) means enlightenment; the illuminated or enlightened mind. That the very passions are enlightenment is a T'ien-t'ai teaching which is said to be the highest expression of Mahayana thought.



AS THE LAYMAN was sitting one day he questioned Ling-chao, saying: "A man of old said: 'Bright, bright, the hundred grass-tips; bright, bright, the Patriarchs' meaning.' How do you understand this?"

"What a thing for you to say in your ripe old age," admonished Ling-chao.

"Well, what would you say?" asked the Layman.

"Bright, bright, the hundred grass-tips; bright, bright, the Patriarchs' meaning," replied Ling-chao. The Layman laughed.



THE LAYMAN WAS ONCE selling bamboo baskets. Coming down off a bridge he stumbled and fell. When Ling-chao saw this she ran to her father's side and threw herself down.

"What are you doing!" cried the Layman.

"I saw Papa fall to the ground, so I'm helping," replied Ling-chao.

"Luckily no one was looking," remarked the Layman.

LAYMAN P'ANG'S DEATH

THE LAYMAN WAS about to die. He spoke to Ling-chao, saying: "See how high the sun is and report to me when it's noon."

Ling-chao quickly reported: "The sun has already reached the zenith, and there's an eclipse." While the Layman went to the door to look out, Ling-chao seated herself in her father's chair and, putting her palms together reverently, passed away.

The Layman smiled and said: "My daughter has anticipated me."

He postponed [his going] for seven days.

The Prefect Yu Ti came to inquire about his illness. The Layman said to him: "I beg you just to regard as empty all that is existent and to beware of taking as real all that is non-existent. Fare you well in the world. All is like shadows and echoes." His words ended. He pillowed his head on Mr. Yu's knee and died.

His final request was that he be cremated and [the ashes] scattered over rivers and lakes. Monks and laity mourned him and said that the Ch'an adherent Layman P'ang was indeed a Vimalakirti. He left three hundred poems to the world.





SELECTED VERSES¹

1

Of a hut in the fields the elder,
I'm the poorest man on earth!
Inside the house there's not one thing;
When I open my mouth it says "empty, empty."
In the past I had bad friends—
I saved them all, made them priests;
Sitting together in harmony,
I always have them hear of the Mahayana.
At mealtimes carrying bowls for them,
I serve them one and all.

1. The twenty-five selections that follow are representative of the style, content, and variety of P'ang's best. Their sources are as follows: Verses 1-3, from chuan 2 and Verses 4-21 from chuan 3 of The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang; Verses 22-25 are from the section on Layman P'ang in the Chodang chip [chuan 15, pp. 105-6].

2

People have a one-scroll sutra
Without form and without name.
No man is able to unroll and read it,
And none of us can hear it.
When you are able to unroll and read it,
You enter the principle and accord with the Birthless.
Not to speak of becoming a bodhisattva,
You don't even need to become Buddha.

3

I've long dwelled in the mountains,
 Having left the castle town.
 My thatch house had three rooms—
 Each room was twelve feet long.
 In one room lived Skandhas Five,
 In another lived Dusts Six-Four [Elements];²
 I myself lived in the innermost room,
 At ease all day with nothing to do.
 Last night on the moonless twenty-fifth,³
 At dusk those two got drunk drinking liquor
 And started to get out of hand.
 They quibbled words in various ways
 Till I couldn't take any more—
 So I set my house on fire.
 Skandhas Five turned to ashes and embers;
 Of Dusts Six, not two or one was left.
 Everything I had was completely lost—
 Only the bare ground remained.

Now I am stark naked,
 Without clothes to cover my body.
 I'm no longer troubled by thieves—
 Loafing, I sleep at ease. . . .⁴

2. The five skandhas and six senses are personified in these two lines. The six senses are sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and perception. The "four" inserted after Dusts Six may simply have been added to fill out the number of characters in the line, or it may refer to the four elements, which are earth, water, fire, and air.

3. The twenty-fifth day of the lunar calendar.

4. I have omitted the two lines that follow and conclude this verse. Their meaning is not clear, and the verse seems better without them.

4

White-robed, I don't adhere to appearances;
 The true principle arises from Emptiness.
 Because my mind's without obstruction
 Wisdom goes forth to all directions.
 I only consider the lion's roar—
 I don't let wild jackals yap!
 Bodhi is said to be most marvelous,
 But I scold it for being a false name.

5

Some people despise old P'ang,
 But old P'ang does not despise them.
 Opening my gate, I await good friends,
 But good friends do not stop by.
 As is my mind's endowed with the threefold learning—⁵

Consciousness-dusts do not mix with it;⁶
This one pill cures the ten thousand ills—
I've no need for the many prescriptions.

5. Threefold learning: observing precepts (morality), meditation, and wisdom.

Birthless, I enter the true Principle.

6. Consciousness-dusts: the cognitions of the six senses.

6

Traveling the path is easy,
Traveling the path is easy!
Within, without, and in between I depend upon innate Wisdom:
Innate Wisdom being non-sentient, the dharmas are not born;
Not form, not mind, a single radiance streams forth;
In the mind-ground appears the Udumbara tree⁷ of Emptiness.

7. Udumbara tree: a legendary tree said to flower once every three thousand years.

7

It is called Wisdom,
And Wisdom is the honored.
Mind and Wisdom interfusing, you penetrate the Origin,
And the ten thousand things likewise return into the Gate of
Non-duality.
Existence is not existence—the Principle is always present; Nothingness is not
nothingness—Nothingness is the root
of existence.
All Buddhas of the future also will be thus; Those of today are the same as the ancient
World-honored Ones. Throughout the three realms⁸ there is no other Way; What Buddha
imparted to Buddha is being transmitted today.

8. The three realms of desire, form, and formlessness.

8

Without no other, within no self.
Not wielding spear and shield, I accord with Buddha-wisdom.
Well-versed in the Buddha-way, I go the non-Way.⁹
Without abandoning my ordinary man's affairs,
The conditioned¹⁰ and name-and-form all are flowers in the sky.
Nameless and formless, I leave birth-and-death.

9. A reference to Chapter 8 of the Vimalakirti Sutra, where Vimalakirti says to Manjusri: "When a bodhisattva goes the non-Way, this is called being well-versed in the Buddha-way."

10. Skt. samskrta: that which is formed through causes and always produces effects; also, whatever is produced, continues, changes, and is destroyed.



PORTRAIT OF LING-CHAO

9

I have a great robe
Not of this world's silk.
It can't be dyed by any color,
Being crystalline, like white floss.
No scissors were used to cut it,
No thread was used to stitch it.
I keep it always close about me,
But there's no man who of himself has seen it.
It shelters a Trichilial Cosmos¹¹ from heat and cold,
Covering over sentient and non-sentient alike.
Should you be able to obtain this great robe,
Having donned it, you straightaway enter the palace

of the King of Emptiness.

11. A thousand to the third power, i.e., a billion worlds, which are said to constitute the domain of a Buddha.

10

Thinking, thinking, with bowed head thinking,
thinking and unconsciously sighing,
Both his eyebrows turn toward that Surpassing Land;
He sits among the ten thousand things,
Knowing nothing at all.
If his six consciousnesses resemble his eyebrows,¹²
He will attain the miraculous.
If his six consciousnesses despise his eyebrows,
He can be said to be a brainless fool.
If he discards his eyebrows,
He'll be scorned by men of the world.
Even though he be a crafty six-consciousness fellow,
In the end he'll become just a beggar.

12. The word "eyebrows" from here on apparently means one's original nature.

11

Going out of the room,
Coming into the room,
Coming and going, coming and going—therefore your weeping!
Coming and going was due only to greed, anger, and folly.
Now that you've realized, you should be content.
Being content, you should penetrate the Source,
And discard your former false teachers.
Those false teachers—
Make them your handmen!
Dharma-almsgiving has no before or after;¹³
Together you preserve the Birthless Land.

13. A reference to Chapter 4 of the Vimalakirti Sutra, where Vimalakirti says to Rahula: "The assembly for Dharma-almsgiving has no before or after: to reverently serve all sentient beings at once and for always—that is called 'the assembly for Dharma-almsgiving.' "

12

Without any cause you lose your mind,
And run out the front gate seeking [it].
Although you try to question old friends,
All's quiet, without any trace [of them].
But returning to the hall, when you carefully consider it,
Transforming sentient beings, [in] accord with tranquility,
You cannot go outside and seek friends;
Of yourself, amidst your family, you enter Nirvana.

13

A resolute man
In the past,
But not today,¹⁴
I destroyed my treasures utterly,

And ransomed back my bunch of slaves—
Six in number, male and female,
Each one having six mouths.
The double six—the thirty-six—¹⁵
Always follow me fore and after.
I do not bind them, and
They do not venture to dash away.

14. As the concluding lines of this verse indicate, he no longer has any need to be resolute.

15. The meaning of this line both here and in Verse 16 below is not clear. The "double six" may mean the six sense-organs and the six senses. The "thirty-six" may refer to a group of thirty-six physical and mental components that are said to constitute a person.

14

If it's said that Bodhi is difficult,
Bodhi is also not difficult.
Wanting little and knowing content, the least is ample.
Forever free from wealth and lust, the spirit of itself is at ease.
I clearly perceive the Three Roads' pain,¹⁶
And am not concerned with worldly fame.

16. The three mires, or roads, that lead respectively to the hell of fire; the hell of blood, where beasts devour each other; and the asipattra hell of swords, where the leaves and grasses are sharp-edged swords.

15

Difficult, so difficult!
Trying intentionally to get free of desire, you covet Nirvana.
You just seek the Pure Land everywhere else.
If it's a question of true practice, you're not concerned with it.
Uselessly striving, your coming and going is painful,
Until at last you empty forms and return [home].
Easy, so easy!¹⁷
These very five skandhas make true Wisdom.
The ten directions of the universe are the same One Vehicle.
How can the formless Dharmakaya be two!
If you cast off the passions to enter Bodhi,
Where will any Buddha-lands be?

17. This part of the verse also appears above, p. 74.

16

Precisely in the middle is Mind, the King.
As is the six roots are bright.
The six dusts are empty,
The six consciousnesses pure,
And the double six—the thirty-six—
Alike return to the Great Perfect Mirror.¹⁸

18. One of the Four Wisdoms. See Miura and Sasaki, pp. 313-14.

17

Ananda took the pattra leaves¹⁹
Kept these many thousand kalpas
Within the Seven-treasure Storehouse and handed
them down to Kasyapa,²⁰
Who arranged them into Twelve Divisions
And divided them into the Three Vehicle Dharma.

19. The palmyra, or fan-palm, whose leaves were used for writing.

20. Maha-kasyapa and Ananda were among the Buddha's ten chief disciples. Ananda was reputed to be the best among them at hearing and remembering the Buddha's discourses. He is here represented as transmitting the Buddhist Tripitaka to Kasyapa, who was in charge of the collection and codification of the scriptures at the First Buddhist Council after the Buddha's death.

18

Not old and not new,
It transforms through causal conditions into
ten thousand million bodies.
When you have the absolute Unity,
A hundred million is like a wad of dust.

19

From the Storehouse appeared a pearl,
Gloriously brilliant and radiantly gleaming.
Who in the past fled and became a beggar—
Today returns home, a rich man's son.²¹

21. The last two lines refer to the well-known parable in Chapter 4 of the Lotus Sutra about the rich man's son who forgetfully wanders away into poverty and only after many hardships returns home and receives his inheritance. See the translation by Kern, pp. 99-106. Cf. Leggett, p. 83.

20

Mind depends upon true Wisdom,
The Principle pursues activity of mind;
With Principle and Wisdom unhindered
The mind is birthless.
Deluded, there is self;
Enlightened, there is no-sentience.

With great Wisdom penetrated,
All the dharmas do not arise,
The five skandhas are masterless,
The six lands are in repose,
The seven deaths are not encountered,
The eight mirrors are completely bright,
And excellent transformations fittingly occur
In accord with the Buddha's words.

21

The past is already past—
Don't try to regain it.
The present does not stay—
Don't try to touch it from moment to moment.
The future is not come—
Don't think about it beforehand.

With the three times non-existent,
Mind is the same as Buddha-mind.
To silently function relying on Emptiness—
This is profundity of action.
Not the least dharma exists—
Whatsoever comes to eye leave it be.
There are no commandments to be kept,
There is no filth to be cleansed.
With empty mind really penetrated,
The dharmas have no life.²²
When you can be like this
You've completed the ultimate attainment.

22. A quotation from Chapter 3 of the Vimalakirti Sutra, where Vimalakirti says to Mahamaudgalyayana: "In Dharma-teaching you should teach the dharmas as is. The dharmas have no sentient being, because they are free from the defilement of sentient being. The dharmas have no self, because they are free from the defilement of self. The dharmas have no life, because they are free from birth-and-death. The dharmas have no person, because the periods of before and after are cut off."

22

Reading the sutras, you must understand their meaning;
Understanding their meaning, you can practice.
When you depend upon the meaning of the teachings
You enter the Palace of Nirvana.
When you don't understand their meaning,
With your myriad views you're worse than blind:
Congenial writings largely occupying your [mind-aground,
The mind-ox won't consent to cultivate it;
Fields all over are covered with grass—
Where then can the rice-plants grow?

23

No-greed surpasses charity,
No-folly surpasses seated meditation,
No-anger surpasses morality,
No-thought surpasses seeking relationships.²³
I manifest all an ordinary man's affairs,
And at night I sleep at ease.
In winter I turn to the fireplace—
The fire that's basically smokeless.
I neither fear the demoness Blackness²⁴
Nor seek her sister Charity.
Trust in fate produces expedients;
All [ride] together in the Prajna-boat.²⁵
If you can understand like this,
Your merit is truly boundless.

23. Seeking relationships: seeking good teachers or circumstances.

24. A legendary woman mentioned in the Nirvana Sutra who brings calamities to men. Her elder sister, named Charity, is benevolent.

25. Skt. prajna: transcendent wisdom, here likened to a ferryboat.

24

Not wanting to discard greed and anger,
In vain you trouble to read Buddha's teachings.
You see the prescription, but don't take the medicine—
How then can you do away with your illness!
Grasp emptiness, and emptiness is form;
Grasp form, and form is impermanent.
Emptiness and form are not mine—
Sitting erect, I see my native home.

25

When the mind's as is,
The spirit of itself is empty.
Without applying medicine,
Ills remove themselves.
With ill removed,
You naturally see the lotus-flower mani-jewel.²⁶
Don't trouble over affairs,
Don't bustle around!
The wise man, perceiving wealth and lust,
Knows them to be empty illusion;
Food and clothes sustain body and life—
I advise you to learn being as is.
When it's time, I move my hermitage and go,
And there's nothing to be left behind.

26. Skt. cintamani: a fabulous gem, or pearl, that grants every wish.





WORDS OF PRAISE FROM
LATER GENERATIONS
AND TWO KOANS¹

VERSE BY PRIME MINISTER CHANG
T'IENT-CHUEH (1043-1121)

I prefer to die of hunger and cold by the roadside, I don't need the pity of the God of the Soil. He
sank a boat-load of treasure in the waters of the Hsiang; Why should I envy [anyone's having] more
than one string of a hundred cash?

1. This section of six verses and two koans is found at the end of chuan 3 of The Recorded Sayings of Layman P'ang. It is typical of the type of verse appreciation which Ch'an men of later times appended to the biographical records of their most distinguished predecessors. The first koan is taken from the anecdote on p. 47; the second koan, except for a few minor changes, is the same as the anecdote on p. 70. A koan (Ch. kung-an) is a subject that consists of words or an activity demonstrating the Zen principle. As such, the anecdotes of Layman P'ang would furnish numerous additional koans. For a discussion of the koan and its use in China and Japan up to the present day, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 3-76.

VERSE BY CH'AN MASTER FO-JIH TA-HUI
OF CHING-SHAN (1098-1163)²

The Birthless is basically wordless;
To speak is to fall into words.
Kindred gather in a happy family circle;
A tiger watches the water-mill turn.

2. For a detailed biography of this great Ch'an Master, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 163-65.

KOAN: SWALLOW THE RIVER

Listen!

"Who is the man who doesn't accompany the ten thousand dharmas?" the Layman asked Great Master Ma-tsu.

"Wait till you've swallowed in one swig all the water of the West River, then I'll tell you," replied the Master.

VERSE BY TUNG-LIN KUEI-LAO

The great sea's waves are shallow,
The small man's heart is deep.
When the sea dries up, the bottom becomes visible, but
When a man dies, who can fathom his heart?³

3. These last two lines are taken from a poem by Tu Hsun-ho of the Late T'ang dynasty.

VERSE BY CH'AN MASTER YUN-MEN KAO-KUNG

To swallow in one swig all the water of West River!
One, two, three, four, seven, five, six!
Tut, tut, tut;⁴
Tra, tra, la!

4. Tut: a sound expressing disapproval. The following line expresses a carefree singsong voice.

VERSE BY PO-YUN TUAN HO-SHANG (1025-72)

To swallow in one swig all the water of West River! In ten thousand pasts and a thousand presents there's
not a single drop. One must relate to the Principle, not one's kin. Too bad Ma-tsu's mouth was so tight!

KOAN: FACING DOWNWARDS

Listen!

The Layman said to Yang-shan: "I have long wanted to meet you, Yang-shan. Now that I have arrived here why are you facing downwards?"

Yang-shan raised up his whisk.

"Exactly!" exclaimed the Layman.

"Is this [whisk] pointing upwards or downwards?" asked Yang-shan.

Striking an open-air post once, the Layman said: "Though there's no one else but us who sees, the post will testify for me."

Yang-shan threw away his whisk, saying: "You may show this wherever you please."

VERSE BY PO-YUN TUAN HO-SHANG

A couple of eight cash makes sixteen;
Counting them one by one, they still won't suffice.
But taking and throwing them hit-or-miss in the courtyard,
All the ground will be dotted with the green of spring mosses.

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

The following are longer notes of a background nature, generally biographical, to supplement shorter footnotes in the main text.

1. [Ref., p. 40, fn. 4] The following entries in two gazetteers of the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1912) indicate the interest in Layman P'ang still remaining at a later date:

"The Mr. P'ang Temple, south of the capital city [of Ch'ing-ch'uan district], was the house of Layman P'ang Yun. It was originally called Wu-sheng-an (Hermitage of Birthlessness)."—Heng-choufu-chih, chuan 28, p. 7a; 1763

"Neng-jen Temple is south of the capital city [of Heng-yang district]. At the beginning of the Chen-yuan era [785-804] of the reign of the emperor Te-tsung of T'ang, P'ang Yun of Heng-yang gave his dwelling for a temple. Later it was called Wu-sheng-an. Its present name is the P'ang-kung-ssu (Mr. Pang Shrine). Inside is the dressing-stand of P'ang's daughter Ling-chao. A pomegranate tree flowers in winter. This shrine still works miracles."—*Heng-yang hsien-chih*, chuan 9, p. 20b; 1872

2. [Ref., p. 40, fn. 6] Two accounts that suggest P'ang's motive in sinking his fortune: "Someone asked the Layman:

'Why didn't you give it away or build a temple with it?' The Layman replied: 'Since the beginningless past due to my being led by cause and effect [of gaining wealth], I was unable to attain emancipation. My life from now on will be tranquil as is.' "

—*Shih-shih t'ung-chien*, chuan 9, p. 475d

"[People of] the world, upbraiding avaricious men, invariably said: 'You really are a Layman P'ang!' This was because of a legend to the effect that the riches of the Layman's house being myriad, he worried himself about them [like a miser. Later on he had a change of heart, however,] and so he thought to him-self: 'If I give my treasures away to others, I fear they will be-come just like me. It is better to put them in the country of nothingness.' Therefore he threw them into the great ocean, and with his household cultivated the Way, to which they all at-tained."—*Cho-keng lu*, chuan 19, p. 3a-b

3. [Ref, p. 41, fn. 10] Yu Ti (d. 818) had a distinguished military career. He served ably as governor of Hu-chou from 791 to March, 793. Transferred to be governor of Su-chou, Yu Ti won a reputation for his administrative abilities, but his rule was arbitrary and his misdeeds were numerous. Only through the favor of Emperor Te-tsung (r. 780-804) did he escape impeachment. From October, 798, he served ten years as Prefect (governor) of Hsiang-chou, entrusted with the duties of Commissioner-General (military governor) of the East of Shan-nan district (Shan-nan-tung-tao chieh-tu-shih). For a description of his rule during this period, his persecution of Buddhist monks, and his conversion by one of them, see pp. 22-23. In 799, when the governor Wu Shao-ch'eng of the neighboring province of Ts'ai-chou revolted, Yu Ti attacked him and captured two of his territories; although Wu was not finally defeated until 809, Yu Ti by this partial victory performed a valuable service for the emperor.

Thereafter, Yu Ti's insolence increased. He also levied special taxes on the people to pay for the expensive presents he sent Emperor Hsien-tsung (r. 806-20) in hopes of promotion to court rank. Late in 807, Yin Ti visited Ch'ang-an, and in May, 808, his son Yin Chi-yu was married to Princess Yung-ch'ang, who was the eldest of the emperor's eighteen daughters. In October, 808, he received the coveted promotion to cabinet minister and went to live in Ch'ang-an. This and various other honorary titles awarded him pleased Yu Ti, but gave him little real power. From this time on, he seems to have mellowed some-what. After 813 he fell from favor and was demoted to be tutor of one of the imperial princes. Yu Ti retired in the spring of 818 and died later in that year. (For further details of Yu Ti see Feifel, pp. 58-60, 195-200.)

4. [Ref, p. 45, fn. 2"] Shih-t'ou Hsi-ch'ien (700-90) gained his great renown as a Ch'an master in the region south of Tung-t'ing Lake that is present Hunan. As a child, he is said to have been exceptionally intelligent. He visited the Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng (638-713) when twelve or thirteen years old. In 742 he went to live on the Nan-yiieh (South Peak), very near Heng-yang, where Layman P'ang presumably was living. P'ang visited Shih-t'ou in 785 and Ma-tsu in 786 according to the Fo-tsu kang-mu [chuan 32, pp. 253c, 254a).

For additional details of Shih-t'ou's life and teaching, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 185, 300-2. For some anecdotes of him, see Blyth, Vol. 2, pp. 20-21; and pp. 146-51 for a translation of his famous poem "Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i." See also Suzuki, *Manual*, pp. 104-7.

5. [Ref., p. 47, fn. 6] Ma-tsu Tao-i (709-88) was a native of Han-chou in present Szechwan. His family name, Ma, means "horse." He was of imposing appearance, described as a tall, powerful man "having the gait of an ox and the glance of a tiger." At an early age he became a monk under T'ang Ho-shang of Tz'u-chou and took the precepts of full ordination under Commandment Master Yuan of Yu-chou.

Later, he stayed at Ch'uan-fa Temple on Heng Mountain in Hunan, and diligently practiced seated meditation. There he met Nan-yueh Huai-jiang (677-744), studied under him for ten years, and became his only Dharma heir. Thereafter he spent a considerable period wandering about and staying at various temples.

During the Ta-li era (766-79) he went to live at the K'ai-yiian Temple in Hung-chou in present Kiangsi. While there his fame as a Ch'an master grew rapidly, and soon hundreds of students gathered to study under him. He is said to have had as many as 139 Dharma heirs, more than any other Ch'an or Zen teacher in history, among whom were Layman P'ang and several of the Ch'an monks mentioned in the present text.

For a chart showing Ma-tsu's most important Dharma heirs, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 490-91. For further anecdotes concerning Ma-tsu, see *ibid.*, pp. 269-70; Blyth, Vol. 3, pp. 20-29; Vol. 4, pp. 214-16, 228-30; Dumoulin and Sasaki, pp. 9-11; and the numerous anecdotes of him scattered throughout the works of D. T. Suzuki.

6. [Ref, p. 48, fn. 10] Yueh-shan Wei-yen (745-828) became a Ch'an monk at seventeen, and until he was twenty-nine seems to have studied the Vinaya and various sutras. In 773 he visited Shih-t'ou at Nan-yueh, and is said to have later studied under Ma-tsu for a number of years in Kiangsi. He returned to Shih-t'ou and became his Dharma heir. Sometime before Shih-t'ou's death in 790, Wei-yen left the Nan-yueh and went to live at Yueh-shan in Li-chou, west of Tung-t'ing Lake in Hunan. It was probably there that P'ang visited him. For additional details of him, see Miura and Sasaki, pp. 303-5. For some interesting anecdotes of Yueh-shan, see Blyth, Vol. 2, pp. 79-81, 184. An illustration of him will be found in Suzuki, *Essays, Second Series*, p. 257. See also Senzaki and McCandless, pp. 29-30.

7. [Ref., p. 51, fn. 17] Tan-hsia T'ien-jan (738-823), whose birthplace and family name are unknown, was originally a Confucian. While on his way to take the qualifying examination for officials at Ch'ang-an, he was accompanied by Layman P'ang, who was perhaps responsible for his deciding not to become an official but instead to go with P'ang to Chiang-hsi to meet Ma-tsu. Ma-tsu accepted P'ang as his disciple but sent Tan-hsia to Shih-t'ou. After working for three years as a manual laborer under Shih-t'ou, Tan-hsia had his head shaved by the Master and took the precepts of a Ch'an monk. On this occasion Shih-t'ou gave him the religious name T'ien-jan. He became a Dharma heir of Shih-t'ou, and then continued his travels and Ch'an study. It was during this time that he once burned a wooden Buddha-image on a bitterly cold day to warm himself. In the year 820 he settled on Mount Tan-hsia in Honan.

Further biographical details will be found in the Chodang chip (chuan 4, pp. 157-67), the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* (chuan 14, T 51, pp. 310b-l la), etc. A translation of the story of Tan-hsia's burning up the wooden image will be found in Suzuki, *Essays, First Series*, pp. 330-31, which incident is illustrated in Second Series, p. 273. See also Blyth, Vol. 2, pp. 22-25, and Shaw, Case 76, pp. 233-34.

8. [Ref., p. 65, fn. 36] Ta-mei Fa-ch'ang was a native of Hsiang-yang, in present Hupeh. His family name was Cheng. In his youth he followed the master of Yu-ch'uan Temple. Later, Ta-mei visited Ma-tsu, was enlightened by him, and went to live on Mount Ta-mei in present Chekiang. The occasion of his enlightenment constitutes the Koan in Case 30 of the *Wu-men-kuan*. See Blyth, Vol. 4, pp. 214-15, and also Vol. 2, pp. 40-42.

9. [Ref., p. 65, fn. 37] The background and motive for Layman P'ang's visit to Ta-mei is given in the *Wu-teng hui-yuan* (chuan 3, p. 49b-d) as follows:

"Ma-tsu heard that he was living there and sent a monk to go ask him: 'Ho-shang, when you saw Master Ma-tsu what did you attain that you came to dwell on this mountain?' [The monk went and did so.]

"Ta-mei replied: 'Ma-tsu said to me, "This mind is Buddha." I then came to dwell here.' 'Nowadays Ma-tsu's teaching is different,' said the monk. 'In what way?' asked Ta-mei. '[He says] "Not mind, not Buddha," ' replied the monk. 'That old fellow is just deluding and troubling people endlessly. I'll allow his "not mind, not Buddha," but as for me, this mind is Buddha,' said Ta-mei.

"The monk went back and told Ma-tsu of this. Ma-tsu remarked: 'The plum is ripe.' Layman P'ang heard of this and, wanting to test if he really was, went to visit him. . . ."

10. [Ref., p. 65, fn. 39] Ta-yu (746-825) is recorded in the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng-lu* (chuan 7, p. 253c) as follows:

"Ta-yu was from Chin-ling present Nanking, and his family name was Fan. At the age of twelve he became the disciple of Ch'an Master Chung, the sixth patriarch of Niu-t'ou Mountain and shaved his head. When he was twenty-three he received full ordination at An-kuo Temple in the capital city of Ch'ang-an.

"Later he met Ta-chi [the posthumous title of Ma-tsu], and received the secret transmission of the Patriarch's meaning.

"In the thirteenth year of the Yuan-ho era of T'ang [819] he settled on Mt. Fu-yung, at I-hsing in P'i-ling SB!."

11. [Ref., p. 70, fn. 46] Yang-shan Hui-chi (807-83) was a native of Huai-hua in Shao-chou in present Kwangtung, and his family name was She. He began his Ch'an study at the age of nine. When he was fifteen, he sought permission from his parents to become a monk, but they would not consent. At seventeen, he cut off the third and little fingers of one hand to show his determination, and subsequently shaved his head and became a monk. He first studied and was enlightened under Tan-yüan Ying-chen (n.d.), who lived at Chi-chou in present Kiangsi. Tan-yüan is said to have transmitted to Hui-chi the teachings regarding the use of the ninety-six (or-seven) circles (yuan-hsiang). (Cf. Dumoulin, *The Development of Chinese Zen*, pp. 19-20.)

After he had left Tan-yüan, Hui-chi traveled for a time, then came to Kuei-shan Ling-yü, who was then living in T'an-chou in Hunan. He remained with that Master for fifteen years, receiving the transmission of Dharma from him. Eventually he went to live at Yang-shan in Yuan-chou in Kiangsi. There he instructed many disciples in Kuei-shan's style of Ch'an and in Tan-yüan's teachings regarding the "circles," thus laying the foundations for the Kuei-yang school.

Further anecdotes of Yang-shan are translated in Blyth, Vol. 3, pp. 98-113, and in Miura and Sasaki, p. 275. A number of conversations between Yang-shan and Kuei-shan are found in the *Lin-*

chi lu (Recorded Sayings of Lin-chi). See also Senzaki and McCandless, pp. 39, 53-55, 127-28, and 133.