

ZEN

for Americans

Including The Sutra of Forty-Two Chapters



Soyen Shaku
Translated by D.T. Suzuki

SERMONS OF A
BUDDHIST ABBOT
[ZEN FOR AMERICANS]

ADDRESSES ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS

BY

THE RT. REV. SOYEN SHAKU

LORD ABBOT OF ENGAKU-JI AND KENCHO-JI, KAMAKURA, JAPAN,

INCLUDING THE SUTRA OF FORTY-TWO CHAPTERS;

TRANSLATED FROM THE JAPANESE

BY DAISSETZ TEITARO SUZUKI

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT A SERVICE HELD IN
MEMORY...

AT THE BATTLE OF NAN-SHAN HILL¹

ALL that I can say is, "It beggars description!" Verily, it is the acme of brutality and recklessness conceived in this world of individualization (*nâmarûpa*). Even the fight between the Asura and Sakrendra, the demons and the angels, witnessed by our Buddha, seems here to sink into insignificance.

As far as my unaided eye can see, nature around me is calm. The Tai-lien Bay to the left and the Kin-chou Bay to the right, both as tranquil as mirrors, and above us and over the Nan-Shan Hill, where directly in our front the Russian fortifications stand, the sky expands in majestic serenity. Nothing suggests the awful carnage which there is enacted. Guns roar, bombs burst, but we do not see whence they come, and their knell only offsets the solemnity of these peaceful surroundings. But when I look through a powerful field-glass, I behold the hillsides strewn with dead and wounded, and soldiers rush onward over these wretches, while the enemies on the hill are madly scrambling, stumbling, and falling. I shudder at the sight.

* * *

Still more appalling is a visit to the battlefield after the fight. Yesterday, when I viewed Nan-Shan Hill from a distance, imagination lent enchantment to the spectacle, and at times the cannonade even impressed me with grandeur. But I am now confronting actualities,--actualities whose terror and horror can never be forgotten. From the top of yonder hill, where, under the calm summer sky, nature smiled in beauty, I could form no true conception of the tragedy, which, as I see now, took place here in unparalleled fury and madness. What a strange paradox is this contrast,--a most horrible catastrophe of human life happening in the most delightful surroundings! It makes me meditate again on the doctrine of our teacher.

* * *

Buddhism provides us with two entrances through which we can reach the citadel of perfect truth. One is the gate of love (*karunâ*) and the other the gate of knowledge (*prajñâ*). The former leads us to the

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