

**SERMONS OF A BUDDHIST  
ABBOT; ADDRESSES ON  
RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS**

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Sermons of a Buddhist abbot; addresses on religious subjects by Soyen Shaku & Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki

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**SOYEN SHAKU & DAISSETZ TEITARO SUZUKI**

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ABBOT; ADDRESSES ON  
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**SERMONS**  
OF A  
**BUDDHIST ABBOT**

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 MS BY

**DAISETZ TEITARO SUZUKI**

WITH PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR

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TO THE  
ADMIRALTY

CARPENTIER

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1906

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THIS little work is a collection of some of the lectures delivered by the Right Reverend Soyen Shaku, Lord Abbot of Engaku-ji and Kencho-ji, Kamakura, Japan, during his sojourn in this country, 1905-1906. He came here early in the summer of 1905 and stayed with friends on the Pacific coast until March in the following year. Lectures on Buddhism were frequently delivered at the request of his hostess, Mrs. Alexander Russell of San Francisco, for the benefit of her friends. He lectured on the *Sutra of Forty-two Chapters*, and naturally chose the texts for his sermons from this most popular among the canonical books. As His Reverence did not speak English, the burden of interpreting his speeches fell upon my shoulders.

During his stay on the coast, His Reverence was occasionally invited by his countrymen, scattered throughout the State, to such places as the Buddhist Mission and the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco, to Los Angeles, Sacramento, Fresno, San Jose, and Oakland. Wherever he went, his addresses were most enthusiastically received and greatly appreciated by



the Japanese residents, and by Americans when his speeches were repeated in English.

In March, 1906, the Right Reverend Soyen Shaku crossed the continent to the Atlantic coast, visiting Washington, New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. Whenever he was asked by his countrymen or by his American friends to speak on his faith, he always acceded to their wish. These addresses were added to the sermons already under my charge, and when His Reverence was leaving for his European tour towards the end of April, he left all the manuscripts with me with a view of publishing them in book form.

In going over these documents critically, I found that I could not make use of all the material as it stood; for the talks during his stay on the Pacific coast were mostly of a very informal nature, and a copy of them prepared from shorthand notes needed a great deal of revision; besides, some of the talks were suited only to special audiences and adapted to their peculiar needs. So with his permission I condensed several articles into one, while in other cases I selected a subject only incidentally or cursorily referred to in several different addresses, and made a special essay of the scattered passages. Sometimes I found his expressions too Buddhistic, that is, too technical, and intelligible only to those who have made Buddhism a special study. In such cases, I put the thoughts in a more con-

ventional and comprehensible form for the benefit of the American public. Again, when I thought that His Reverence took too much knowledge of his subject for granted on the part of his audience, I endeavored to express his thoughts more plainly and explicitly.

In spite of these alterations and the liberties I have taken with the manuscripts of the Reverend Shaku, these lectures remain a faithful representation of the views as well as the style of preaching of my venerable teacher and friend.

\* \* \*

As to the text of the *Sutra of Forty-two Chapters*, I have decided after much consideration to incorporate it here. In the first place, it is not a long sutra, and like the *Dharmapada* it contains many characteristic Buddhist thoughts. Secondly, most of the Reverend Shaku's lectures have a close relation to the sutra; and when they are read after the perusal of the text, his standpoint as a modern Japanese representative of Buddhism will be better understood. Thirdly, being the first Buddhist literature introduced by the first official Hindu missionaries into the Middle Kingdom (A. D. 67), the sutra has a very interesting historical background.

\* \* \*

I have to add that this collection also contains two articles and one letter by the Reverend Shaku, all of which previously appeared in *THE OPEN COURT*. The letter was addressed to the

late Dr. John H. Barrows as a sort of protest against his lecture delivered at the Chicago University, 1896, in which Dr. Barrows unfortunately fell in line with the popular misconception of the spirit of Buddhism. The two articles referred to deal with the problem of war as seen from the general Buddhist point of view; and I may remark that the first of the two attracted at the time the attention of such an eminent thinker of our day as Count Leo Tolstoy and was alluded to in his famous anti-war declaration.

DAISETZ TEITARO SUZUKI.

*La Salle, Ill., 1906.*