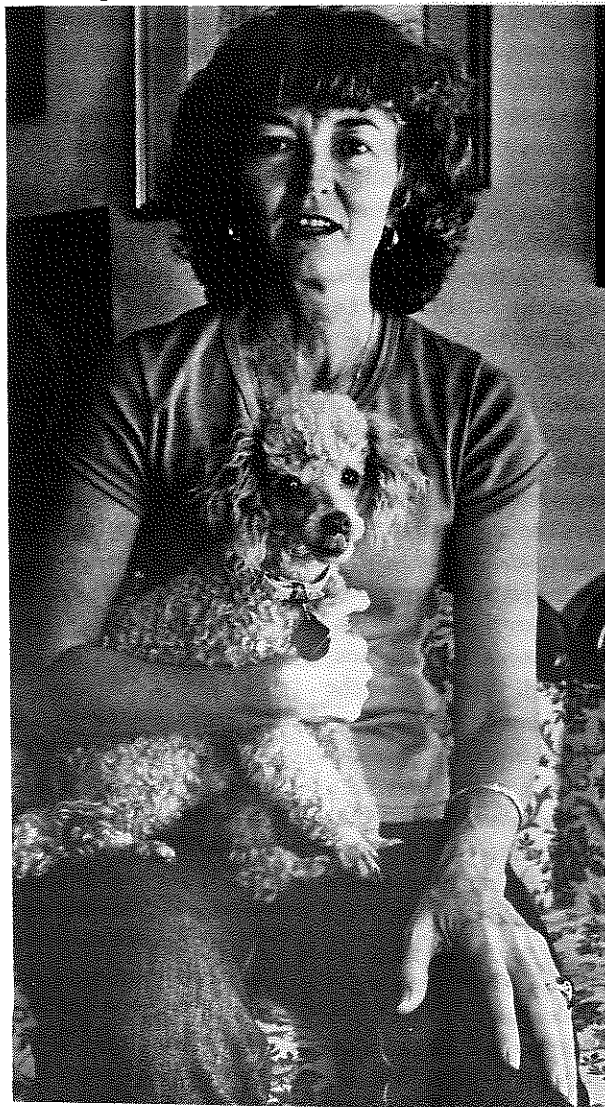


ZEN NOTES



Elinor (who asked that her surname be withheld--of course Zen friends will recognize her) has been praised by the sheriff's officers for the way she captured a burglary suspect she encountered in her apartment. The 18-year-old suspect was booked on suspicion of nighttime burglary, a felony.

W O M A N A R R E S T S B U R G L A R

As Elinor stood, 38 S&W revolver in hand, in the early morning dimness of her apartment, she was aware of two choices, to shoot or not to shoot.

The burglar was lurking in the shadows of the bathroom, ice pick in white gloved hand. He'd had a chance to leave before she came downstairs to look around, roused by the loud and continued barking of her poodle, Tanuki. Instead, he was waiting for her as she approached the kitchen, after checking out the living room.

"The gun is cocked, all I have to do is squeeze the trigger. Don't move." Since her aim was near perfect, and he was only about three feet from her, the odds were pretty well on her side, although he was a six-footer and armed.

"Don't move," she repeated. Her voice was firm enough, though her hand was shaky. Her decision had been reached. If he moved, she would shoot. She didn't want to shoot him, but she knew she might have to.

The burglar's resolve, whatever it may have been, crumpled. Fortunately for him, the sight of the gun made him abandon whatever he may have had in mind to do. "Let me go," he pleaded. "Let me go." Pulling nervously at his gardening gloves, he tried to engage her in talk (it's what they advise rapists' *victims* to do in self-defense courses, Elinor remembered). He was only after a few dollars, he told her, and lived in the neighborhood. Please, please let him go.

She ordered him to leave the bathroom and stand where she could

keep an eye on him as she went to the telephone, dialed "Operator" and asked for the sheriff.

The sheriff's dispatcher, with a quick grasp of the situation, told Elinor not to hang up, to keep her up with what was going on while she sent detectives to the apartment. "Tell the burglar to lie on the floor, hands away from the body," she directed Elinor. The burglar complied with the order.

Shortly after, the detectives arrived. A reassuringly large hand slid over hers, took over the gun and along with it responsibility.

The sheriff's detective commented her: "In all honesty, I don't think a police officer could have handled it better.

"It's rare to see that," he added. "Usually people either over-react and start shooting or won't use a gun at all."

"I just hope this experience changes the burglar's mind about crime," Elinor said, after telling the story to a reporter. "He's just a kid."

She had bought the gun five years before but had been thinking about getting rid of it. In fact, three weeks before, she had signed a petition to ban handguns and felt guilty about having one. It had been an afterthought to get it from the closet where she had hidden it, half distrustful the impulse that prompted her to get it before checking out her dog's suspicion.

Because of the incident, she has decided to keep the gun: "I'm going to the pistol range next weekend."

INSIDE THE FZI, 5

The day after he first arrived in New York, October 1, 1916, Yeita Sasaki (the name under which he was employed), got in touch with the well-established Yamanaka Company on East 57th Street. Yamanaka sent him to Mogi's Third Avenue repair shop, where he began at once to work, carving and repairing, and continued off and on, for years, sometimes at night. Downstairs was a restaurant.

Three years later, Mr. Mat-
aichi Miya, a member of the Yamanaka Company, said to him: I hear you are a Buddhist monk." " No, I am not a Buddhist monk." " For," Sasaki explained in recounting this incident, "we must wait to be discovered. It is a shame to say, 'I am a monk.' "

September 9, 1922, Sasaki returned to New York from Japan, after two more years devoted to Zen study with Sokatsu. Sokatsu was then the president of the Ryomo-kyokai, a cluster of lay Zen groups. After Sasaki "finished his Zen" at forty, he told, "Sokatsu sealed my diploma and gave it to me--Your Zen is over." With certain limitations, Sokatsu at that time gave him permission to instruct. And he could lecture.

From 1922 through 1926 he lectured frequently at Orientalia, a bookshop on East 57th Street in New York. He had been introduced to Mr. Brown there by Mr. Miya. In the summer of 1926 he gave weekly lectures there, with an attendance of ten or fifteen people.

Another Japanese, Jusabro Iwami, Edna Kenton's notes say,

first met Sasaki at Orientalia, heard his lectures and "began to be crazy about Zen."

In October 1926, Sasaki sailed again to Japan, to study still more with Sokatsu, who had recalled him for that purpose because of his observation of Sasaki's progress through correspondence. The day before he left Japan to return to America, August 14, 1928, he received full recognition from Sokatsu, once again according to Kenton's notes.

In New York, during Sasaki's absence in Japan, a committee of five had been formed. Mr. Miya, who frequently traveled to Japan in his capacity as buyer for the Yamanaka Company, had seen Sokatsu and made inquiries.

Iwami, according to a verbatim reminiscence by Sokei-an in 1945, noted by Edna Kenton, had "got one of Goddard's circulars he was always sending around--or letters, and wrote to him about the Zen religion, and Dr. Goddard was terribly moved that he never knew Zen Buddhism, and Iwami invited him to the Nippon Club and fed him with sukiyaki and sake; and Dr. Goddard came with his (3rd) wife (they were married in 1927) and ate sukiyaki and sake until Iwami was anxious that he would die of indigestion. And then Goddard said he would study Zen and he went to Japan."

On this trip Dr. Goddard studied Zen with Yamazaki Roshi at Shokokuji.

In 1928, Goddard, having met Iwami on the street according to one account, was invited to sign a

letter requesting that Sasaki be sent to teach in America. That was how it came about that his name was among those who signed the formal letter to Sokatsu asking him to send Sasaki to the New York group of five.

*From a file of early correspondence
copied by Audrey Kepner*

April 8, 1928
Reverend Shaku Sokatsu Zenji
President, Ryomo-Kyokai
Tokyo, Japan

Your Reverence:-

We take this opportunity of inviting the attention of Your Reverence to our long contemplated plan of instituting a Group of Buddhist Followers in this city, for the purpose of learning the esoteric teachings of Gautama under the personal tutorship of an eminent Mahayanist of Japan.

There are a great number of faithful adherents of Buddhism throughout the Eastern States of this Continent. However, it seems quite difficult for those struggling Buddhists to pursue their work without the adequate guidance of able leaders who are sadly lacking in this neighborhood.

We know the reputation of Shigetsu Sasaki Koji who once taught here and inspired enthusiasm among Japanese as well as American Buddhists, and they were deeply impressed with his splendid teachings. His vast knowledge of English, Sanskrit, Chinese and Japanese languages, coupled with

his remarkable understanding of social conditions in this country, fit him for a return to this country in this capacity. May we then urge his visit to this country, even if only for a brief period, say, six or eight months, so that we could continue our study of Dharma with his invaluable aid; at the same time keep the Smeru-torch burning for the benefit of the second generation of Japanese settlers on this side of the Pacific, as well as of the succeeding generations of American Buddhists.

If your Association so justly proud of the noble work of salvation which is being conducted by Your Reverence, could spare him at this time, his coming would produce a pronounced advancement of our plan. We are trusting in your good graces, Your Reverence, and your influence no doubt will be a great help. If our request is granted, we will be pleased to arrange the passage for Sasaki Koji, and will make our best endeavor to justify the privilege of having him with us.

In anticipation of due consideration and favourable reply, we, the undersigned, beg to remain,

Yours most respectfully,

Unsigned

New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

P.S. Please address your reply to Jusabro Iwami, (Acting Secretary)
621 Broadway
New York City, U.S.A.

*Translation of Reverend Shaku
Sokatsu (Zen-jī's) reply to our
Letter-of-Appeal.*

Mr. Jusabro Iwami and
Ladies and Gentlemen:-

It gives me pleasure to extend my sincere greetings to you and rejoice in your happiness and good fortune.

I went over carefully the contents of your courteous letter of appeal sent to me in behalf of Sasaki Shigetsu Koji. For years, I have cherished a desire of sending missionary to the United States for the purpose of teaching Dharma. To my deep regret, however, my advanced age and illness have prevented me from carrying out this plan. On the other hand, it has been contemplated for some time that my disciple, Shigetsu Koji, should take my place in this capacity, in order that my aim can be readily accomplished.

It is gratifying that your letter of request came at this opportune moment in sympathy with my plan; therefore, I am only too happy to grant your request and appoint Shigetsu Koji for this important task of preaching the Gospel of Buddha in the United States.

Now that Shigetsu Koji will come to you not only as one of the officials of our Associated Temples, but also in the capacity of Reverend, and assume the responsibilities of opening the American Branch of Ryomo Temple Association, by filling my place and conduct the work of mission. While no effort will be spared on his part in

making this undertaking a success, I graciously ask of you to render him every possible aid and cooperation.

In concluding this letter as my response to your letter, I sincerely pray for your good health and that your confidence and faith in Dharma shall always remain unshaken and unmolested.

Respectfully yours

SHAKU SOKATSU (Autographs Seal)
President, Ryomo Kyokai

May 16th
The Third Year
of Showa Era. (1928)

Right Reverend Shaku Sokatsu Zenji
President, The Ryomo Kyokai,
Tokio, Japan

Your Reverence:-

We have the honor of informing Your Reverence that Koji Sokei-ann Sasaki has arrived in this city safely, and have extended him our cordial welcome.

Your Reverence will be pleased to know that many good men and women who came to pay their tribute to the Bodhi Dharma, were deeply impressed with the splendor of his personality, and they have pledged themselves to offer their hearty support for his religious work. The City of New York, as the greatest metropolis of the world, will soon proclaim the honor of being the first city in the Eastern States of this Continent, for having received the true blessing

of your Rinzai Doctrine as an immortal gift of Your Reverence to the American Commonwealth.

Many members of our Group now absent from the city, owing to the vacation period, will soon be returning to hear the Gospel of your teachings, and the American Branch of the Ryomo Kyokai will be quickly formed under the direction of Sasaki Koji.

May Your Reverence swiftly recover from illness, so that we may look forward to the pleasure of your visit to this country sometime in the future.

With our profound regards and highest esteem, we are

Most Respectfully yours,

Acting Secretary for the Members
of the Group of Buddhistic Followers
(in New York)

Temporary Office: Suite 629, No. 621
Broadway, New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

New York City,
August Thi rty-first
1928

THE RECORD OF BANKEI
Translated by Haskel

A monk asked: "I have heard that the masters of old attained great enlightenment through difficult and painful practice, and that

the masters of our own day too realized the truth of Buddhism by various sorts of difficult practice. I can't quite accept (the idea) that someone like myself, without engaging in religious practice or attaining enlightenment, can realize the Unborn Buddha Mind, just as I am."

The Master said: "Suppose there's a group of travelers who, passing through tall mountain peaks in a place where there's no water, become thirsty. One of their number goes looking for water in a distant valley, and after strenuously searching all over, at last finds the water and returns to give it to his companions to drink. Without making any strenuous efforts themselves, the people who drink the water can satisfy their thirst just the same as the one who did make such efforts, can't they? (On the other hand), those who harbor doubts and refuse to drink the water will have no way to satisfy their thirst. Because I didn't meet up with any clear-eyed men (in my youth), I went astray and engaged in (all sorts of) strenuous efforts (till) finally I uncovered the Buddha within my own mind. So when I tell you all that without painful practice, you (can uncover) the Buddha in your *own* mind it's just like (the travelers) drinking the water and slaking their thirst without (having actually gone in search of it themselves). In this way, when you make use of the Buddha Mind that everyone intrinsically possesses, just as it is, and attain serenity of mind without delusory difficult practice, that's the precious true Dharma, isn't it?"

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SOKEI-AN SAYS

*From one of the early lectures
of Sokei-an dated Wednesday,*

April 26, 1933

Recorded by Audrey Kepner

Reconstructed by Vanessa Coward

Kashmir is situated in the northern part of India. In ancient days, it was a very important country, the meeting place for caravans from Rome, Greece, and Egypt as they passed into China and India. Travelers passed through Kashmir whether they were going from China to Europe, India to Mongolia or vice versa. It was the cross-roads of civilization. All the religions of the world met there.

It was from the fourth century to the ninth that Buddhism came up to the North from Magadha, met the universal currents of religion coming from Europe, China and India and formed a new faith for the human being. The old form of Buddhism was put into new form and became the Mahayana Buddhism of today.

It is like this in New York now; certainly the people of the twentieth century will put religion into a new form, and it will be done here.

We cannot change the truth that was left to us by the ancient teachers. We need only to simplify, brush off the unnecessary parts, separate from the superstition of the past. Because of the science of the twentieth century, we find much in the old forms that we cannot use in our daily lives, so we must put the truths into a simple form that a child can believe. Then we

can live in it, knowing the law of the universe.

You know the name of Mt. Fuji in Japan? "Fuji" means "not two, but one"--one peak that reaches to heaven.

There are 10 sections to pass in order to reach the top. It is shaped like a fan standing upside-down. From the first to the third section, you can go by horse--and then you start to climb on foot. From the third to the fifth is easy; from the fifth to the sixth is difficult--you go singing a song; from the sixth to the eighth--you see the peak straight upon your head, bending back to see the summit; you begin to use cane, chain and rope; sometimes you are met by thunderstorms and some are carried away by the terrific winds; perhaps a stone will roll down and smoke will burst from under your feet--this is a volcanic mountain and you can feel it palpitating! The last two sections are sheer desperation--getting to the peak is like the hard struggle of life. On top there is a big crater. Today we see no smoke--just steam--but we do not know when it will again become active. From the summit we descend by a straight sand road, You cannot walk down this road--you sit upon a straw cushion and slide! It is the lava that has left this path down to the bottom. When you reach there, your straw pillow is thin as paper. Coming back is easy!

I experienced the same thing in coming to America and returning to Japan. To get my passport from Japan, I waited a month, was inves-

Zen notes

tigated as to my money, occupation, etc. Two men must sign a document to assure my personality. Then the American consul in Tokyo must examine my visa. There were fifty others waiting for this service, and as the consul could only do three in one day (sometimes making an error and beginning all over again), I waited there for two months!

Coming into the port of the U.S., the immigration officer examined me. Someone raised a bond of \$ 1000 for permanent residence. It takes about a year to reach New York. But if you wish to return--it is as easy as coming down Fuji Mountain.

Of course, I am not speaking of Fuji Mountain nor of New York. I am just giving an illustration of the way of meditation according to the method of Buddhism.

THANK YOU! To keep our low, low price, we do not send receipts or bills to subscribers, and trust their thoughtfulness to give us extras if they feel to and can. A surprising number do. And we always get a lift from those encouraging words. Some are delightful, such as "morsels of spontaneity," someone wrote recently. Thank you, one and all. ED.

CONVERSATIONS WITH FARKAS
Noted by Hackney

Mindfulness includes monitoring your own system, being conscious of getting yourself in good running condition. I think of it as being alert to your various mechanisms without being too attached to them.

If one is a good guardian of one's own body, which you should be, then you would be aware of the effects of what goes into it and what comes out. You need to some degree to inform and educate yourself about these matters, but you must, too, be mindful of what your body is telling you when you do something with it. You should take care of it the same way a good mechanic would take care of something he is using.

Therefore you would not unconsciously do things that would be harmful to it. This is not a strain--you are not moved by emotional needs to do anything to the body which would not be appropriate or truthful. If you are on the path of discipline--or maybe we would better say, training--you have to be mindful and have some idea of what you are doing. You must give up all superstition and hysteria.

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RENEW ZEN NOTES?

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