

Arrival at Ikegami



I WOULD like to make a report. The journey from Minobu went smoothly, and we have come as far as Ikegami. Whether it was the mountains or rivers, there were great obstacles along the way, but protected by your sons and other clan members, we have arrived here without incident. I am most grateful and delighted. When we eventually return, however, it will be necessary to retrace our steps, and because I am ill, I fear that an accident may occur.

But be that as it may, for no less than nine years you have put your trust in a man who is seen throughout Japan as more than a bit of an embarrassment. I am more grateful than I can express in words for your sincerity. That is why, no matter where I should breathe my last, I would like my grave to be in the valley of Minobu.

Also, that chestnut-colored horse you sent along with us is such an extremely fine one that I would really prefer to keep him with me as long as

possible. Much as I might wish to take him all the way with us to the hot springs in Hitachi,¹ however, it is quite possible that someone might steal him. In addition, I feel it would be hard on the horse, and so until we return from taking the waters in Hitachi, I will leave him in the care of Mobarra in Kazusa.² But because I would worry about having a groom unused to the horse look after him, I think it is better to have the present groom stay with him until we return from Hitachi.

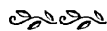
I am explaining this so that you understand the reasons for my actions in these matters.

With my deep respect,
Nichiren

The nineteenth day of the ninth
month

Report presented to Hakiri

I apologize that because I am ill I have had to refrain from adding my official signature.



Background

This report was written at Ikegami in Musashi Province to Hakiri Sanenaga in Minobu on the nineteenth day of

the ninth month in 1282, making it perhaps the last of Nichiren Daishonin's letters. He had just arrived at

Ikegami the previous day, after a journey that had begun when he left Minobu on the eighth day of the same month, ostensibly for the hot springs in Hitachi to treat his illness. The Daishonin was sixty-one years old at the time. One account says that Nikkō wrote out the report on the Daishonin's behalf because he was both ill and exhausted from the journey.

The Daishonin expresses his grati-

tude for Hakiri's sincerity in providing not only the protection of his family and clan members, who traveled with the Daishonin during his journey, but also a fine horse for his use during the trip. The Daishonin also conveys his gratitude for Hakiri's protection in the Minobu area over the previous nine years and says that he would like his gravesite to be at Minobu, no matter where he should pass away.

Notes

1. Hitachi Province covered most of present-day Ibaraki Prefecture and part of Fukushima Prefecture.

2. "Mobara" is thought to refer to Saitō Kanetsuna, a follower of Nichiren Dai-

shonin and a resident of an area called Mobara in Kazusa Province, which bordered Awa Province, the Daishonin's birthplace.