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| Soganoya Gorō (1877-1948) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Japanese actor, director and playwright. Creator of a new genre of modern comedy *kigeki* (also, *shinkigeki*). He wrote around 1,000 short comedies under the pen name, Ikkai Gyojin. His comedy style was inspired by humoristic as well as satirical and ironical laughter in Western style comedy such as Moliere. Many of his works are currently played by the comedy troupe, Shōchiku Shinkigeki. His signature pieces include: *The Flower of the Luffa* (1917) and *Cherry Trees in Leaf* (1933)  Soganoya became a student of *kabuki* actor Nakamura Sangorō in 1892 and made a stage debut as utility actor Nakamura Sannosuke at Osaka’s Naniwaza in 1893. In 1902, he met Nakamura Tokizo’s student, Nakamura Jidai (1869-1925) at the traveling kabuki troupe Osaka’s Fukuiza. In 1903, using their new names, Sannosuke as Gorō and Jidai as Jūrō, they formed Soganoya Brothers Troupe in order to create new comedy replacing the old style of comedy called *niwaka* established by Tsuruya Danjurō in Osaka. Their debut in 1904 at Yūokaza in Itami near Osaka was failure, but made a first success with *Funny Kanjinchō* acted for the travelling *kabuki* troupe, Nakamura Fukuen Ichiza in Wakayama, in which Gorō acted the role of Benkei and Jūrō Togashi. |
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