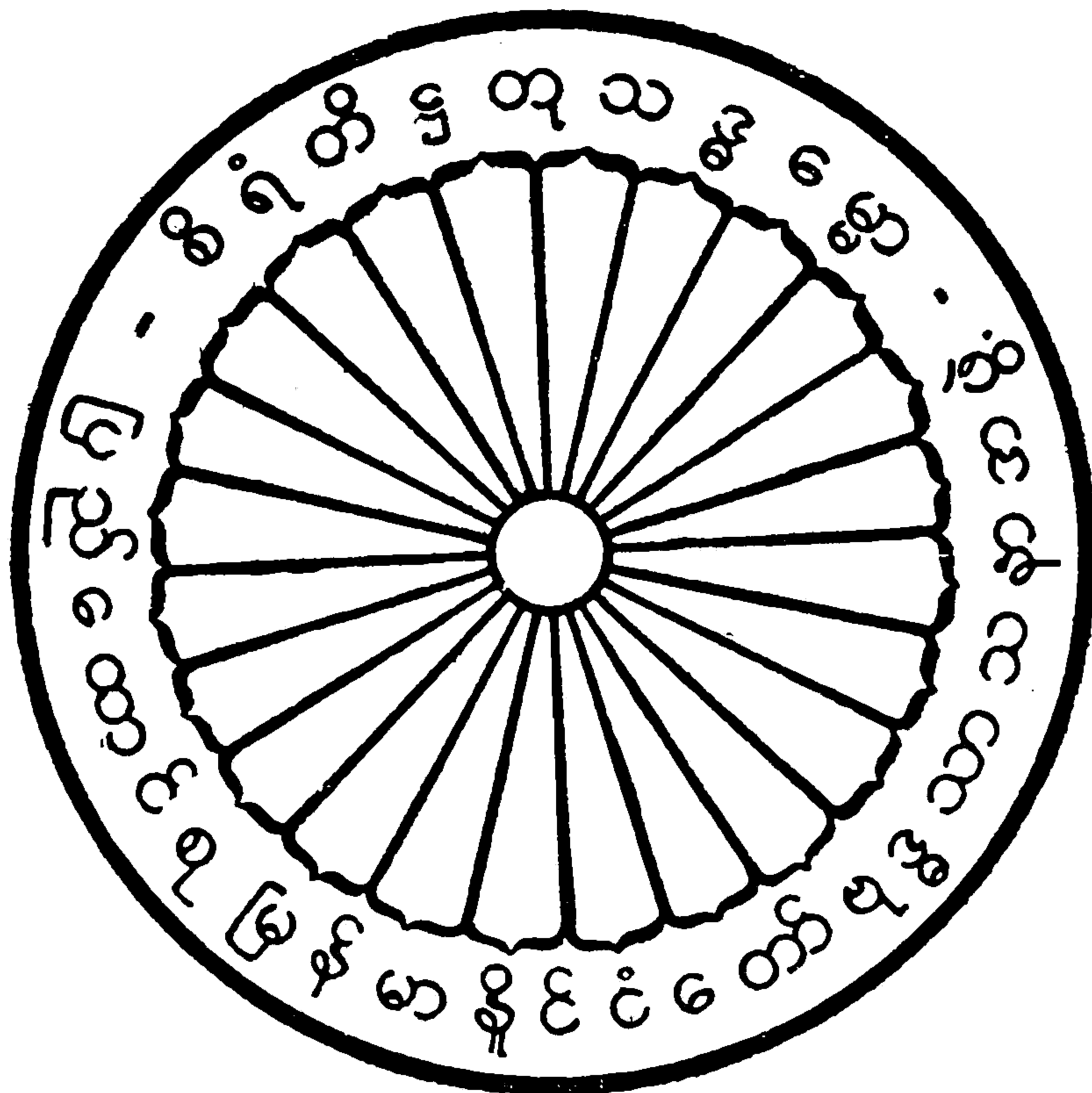


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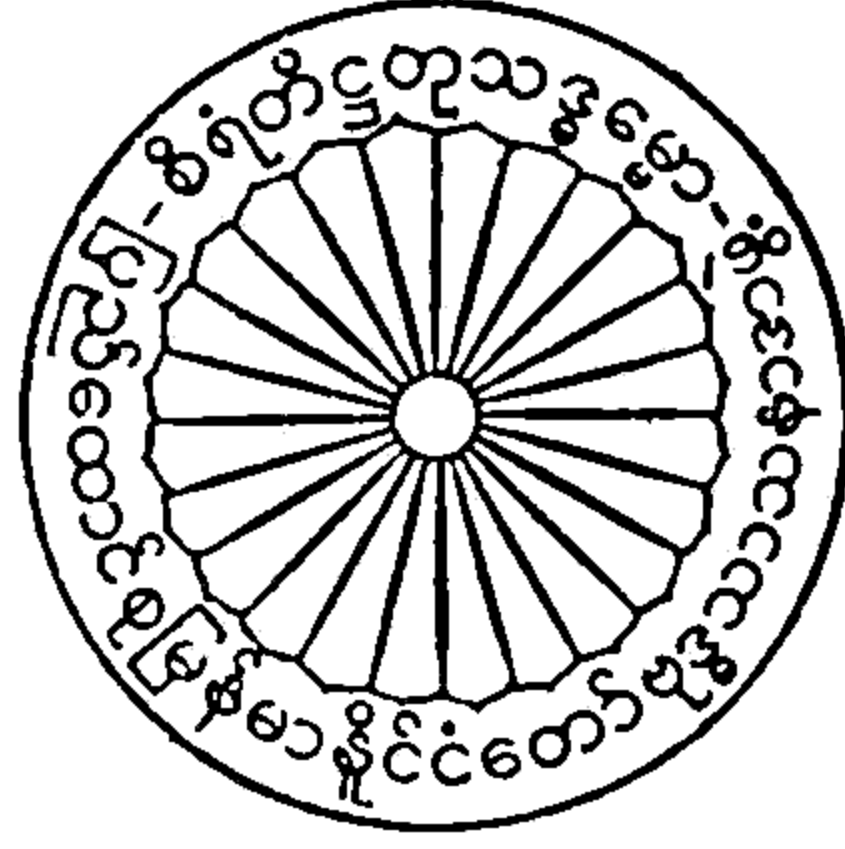
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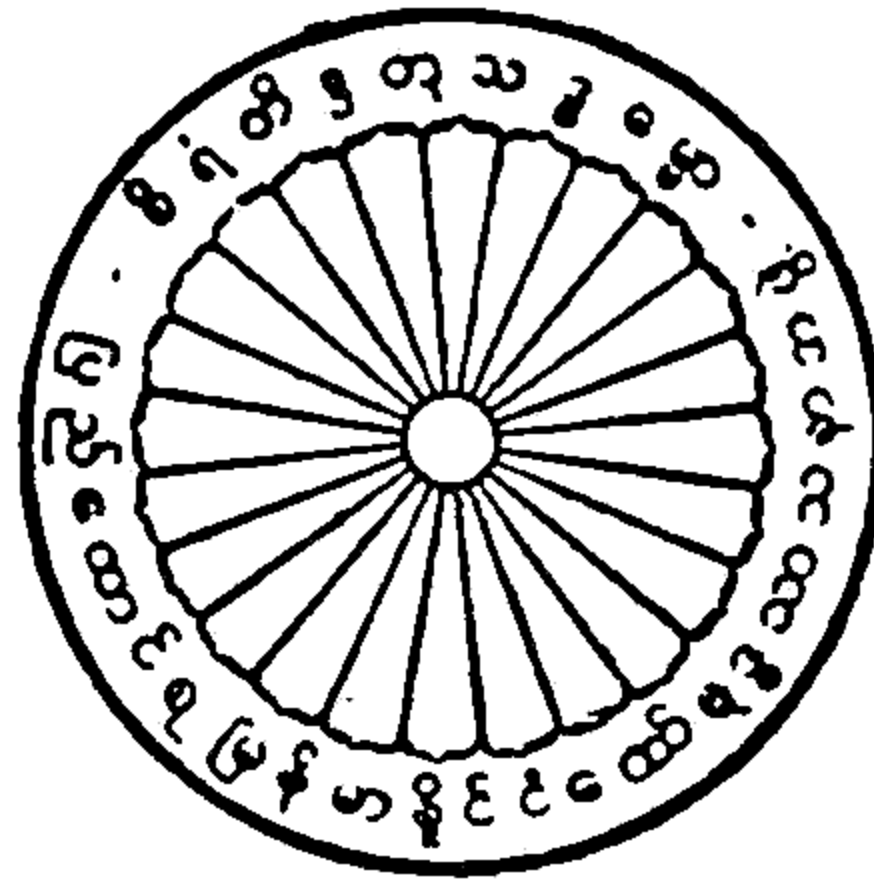
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## THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA .

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THE EDITOR,  
"THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA"  
Union Buddha Sāsana Council,  
Kabā Aye P.O.,  
Rangoon, Union of Burma.

# NIYĀMA-DĪPANĪ OR MANUAL OF COSMIC ORDER

By Mahāthera Ledī Sayadaw, Aggamahāpāṇḍita, D. Litt.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE PALI BY BENI M. BARUA, D. LITT., M.A. AND REVISED AND EDITED BY MRS. C.A.F. RHYS DAVIDS, D. LITT., M.A. WITH THE RESIDUUM TRANSLATED BY VEN. U NYANA, PATAMAGYAW.)

## I

### OF THE FIVEFOLD NIYĀMA (Cosmic Order) \*

Honour to the Exalted One, Arahāt  
Buddha Supreme.

Honour to the Norm, honour to the  
Order.

Honour to the Teachers.

And may they e'er before me stand

And commune with me as I go.

Him who became perfect by the cosmic order, him who taught that law, him the Refuge \*\* thus honouring, I shall now expound that Law.

The expression "became perfect by the cosmic order" means that this order includes laws of cosmic order for Buddhas, whereby the state of Buddhahood is completely brought to pass and achieved. These Laws bring about the attainment of Bodhi \*\*\* by the great Bodhisats—namely, the ten Perfections, each of three stages, the five great Renunciations, the Three-fold Duty, and, at the end of the days, the grappling, while on the Bodhi-seat, with the law of casuality, and the perceiving, while in Jhāna-concentration with controlled respiration, the genesis and evanescence of the five aggregates of individuality. By these things the Buddhas win Buddhahood, hence such matters are called the things of the cosmic order for Buddhas, Hereby we indicate that not by chance or accident do Buddhas become perfect.

"Who taught that law" means that He taught this and that way of applying the law of cosmic order, taught the one cosmic order of the five series of that order.

The Fivefold Niyāma is as follows :—

- (1) *Utu-niyāma* : The Caloric Order.
- (2) *Bīja-niyāma* : The Germinal Order.
- (3) *Kamma-niyāma* : The Moral Order.
- (4) *Citta-niyāma* : The Psychological Order.
- (5) *Dhamma-niyāma* : Natural Phenomenal Sequence. \*\*\*\*

(1) *Utu* \*\*\*\*\* is that which manifests, brings forth, generates what is ungenerate, develops that which is generate. But what is it? It is the specific quality we know as heat; the bare primary quality of fire. In this connection let us consider the four "great essentials" of matter.

Each of these exhibits three forms, by the first essential quality "Pathavī" we understand either (i) that constant "extended element," adaptable and pliant, which functions as the basis of the other three—fluids, fires, gases—or (ii) soil, or (iii) rock. The second essential element has the salient mark of binding together, but there can be no binding without the wherewithal to bind. Nor in the third essential can there be heat without food, without fuel. Nor as to the fourth essential can there be mobility without some moving base. Hence whatever material phenomena we take—liquid, fiery or gaseous, even the smallest atoms—the element called *pathavī* is the supporting condition of all of them by its function of serving as "basis" to all.

By the second essential quality "Āpo" we understand either (i) that constant "cohesive

\* On Niyāma, or Niyama:—"that which fixes", "fixity", see my Buddhism (London, 1912, and pp. 378f. in Points of Controversy (the Kathāvatthu), by S.Z. Aung and myself, P.T.S. 1915.—Ed.

\*\* Nātho

\*\*\* Enlightenment: Buddha-Wisdom. Mr. Barua prefers "Philosophic order, causal order"

\*\*\*\* We have no word to fit "dhamma's". The rendering use is Mr. S. Z. Aung's.

\*\*\*\*\* Cf. Compendium of Philosophy 161n4.

element," adaptable and pliant, which functions in solids, fires, gases as that by which they cohere ; or (ii) the "viscous", the moisture that is for instance in bodies, in trees, etc.; or (iii) the more obvious fluid *āpo* manifested in this or that liquid.

(ii) The "viscous" form of *āpo* denotes, as has been said, moisture in organic form, such as in an unwithered tree or an undried body. (iii) The "fluid", such as waters and juices, is obvious. Whatever conglomerates in the least atoms, all are impossible without the function of cohesion. It has therefore been said that *āpo* is primarily the variable internal cohesion of solids, fire and air.

By the third essential quality "Tejo" we understand either (i) that constant element of heat, adaptable and pliant, which as "hot" and "cold" functions in solids, etc., as that which generates and as that which brings to maturity ; or (ii) glowing heat, or (iii) flaming heat. It is due to the action of this element that all material things when they have reached maturity are reproduced, and make for growth or for maintenance.

By the fourth essential quality "Vāyo" we understand either (i) that constant element of mobility, adaptable and pliant, which functions as fluctuation (or oscillation) in solids, etc ; or (ii) compressed or tense atmosphere ; or (iii) atmosphere in motion—for instance air in a pair of bellows and air inhaled and exhaled. The mobile element (i) constitutes the element of force, of resistance in co-existent essential forms ; hence all material things through this force and resisting power carry out their functions.

Furthermore, all these elements, whilst persisting under the stated conditions, increase in magnitude when there is an efficient cause for increase and decrease in magnitude when there is an efficient cause for decrease. How may such a cause arise ? In the case of solids the cohesive element may obtain fluidity, and the solid substance begin to melt. In the case of water, heat may grow to a flaming fire, while the cohesive element can merely exercise the property of cohesion. It is on account of their intensity and magnitude that they are called the "Great Elements" (Mahābhūtāni). Their intensity

and magnitude reach the climax on the eve of the destruction and disintegration of the world-systems.

Heat in its primal form is the germinator of all material phenomena. And this element or primal form of heat is just *utu*. Conversely, as we have said above, *utu* is the primal form of fire. Now to return to the "Caloric Order."

The Caloric Order is the fixed process that determines the four-fold succession of evolution, continuance, revolution (*i.e.* dissolution), and void of the universe. It is the process that determines the ordered succession of the three seasons—winter, summer and rains... It is again the same process that determines the specific season in which trees, creepers, shrubs and grasses bring forth flowers and bear fruit. And all this order has been made and created by no "maker" whatever whether human, celestial, or divine. Inasmuch as it is accomplished entirely by the fixed (or *natural*) order that we know as "*utu*", it is called *Utu-niyāma*, or Caloric Order.\* Thus we read in the Pāli texts: "There comes, Vāseṭṭha, a time, when, sooner or later, after the lapse of a long, long period the world-system passes away.... In the course of time, Vāseṭṭha, the radiance of those celestial beings vanishes. Their 'self-radiance' having thus vanished, the moon, sun, planets and stars come into existence : nights, days, months, half-months, and the year with its seasons appear, etc.\*\*

(2) *Germinal Order*.—Germ (seed, *bīja*) is that from which trees, etc. spring and grow in varying forms. But what is that ? In its common acceptation the word "germ" denotes the five kinds of *bīja*—"root", etc. From the philosophical point of view it is just a form of "caloric energy" (*utu*). Thus the generating and growing agency of the vegetable kingdom, embracing trees etc., "seedlings and plants" \*\*\*—a form of "caloric energy", which tends to manifest itself in plant-life—is called seed or germ.

The Germinal Order signifies the sprouts, shoots, trunks, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, and fruits which spring from, say the "rose-apple seed" (*jambu-bīja*) do not cease to

\* "It is not change but the changing, and the changing is fire... this order (kosmos) which is the same in all things, no one of Gods or men has made, but it was, is now, and ever shall be an ever living fire kindled and extinguished in due measure.—Heraclitus,

\*\* *Dīgha Nikāya* iii. 84, 86.

\*\*\* An ancient Pīṭaka phrase.

be of the rose-apple species, type or family. This explanation applies to all trees, creepers, shrubs and grasses. This, too, is not made, nor created by any Maker whatever. Inasmuch as it is accomplished entirely by the fixed or natural order that we know as germinal, it is called *Bija-niyāma* or Germinal Order. Thus we read in the Pāli-texts :— “ There are, Bhikkhus, five classes of seeds, namely, those which are propagated from roots, from stems, from joints, from shoots\* and from the seed proper. \*\* ”

The subject is treated in detail in the commentary on the Vinaya, in the section devoted to behaviour towards plant-life.

(3) *The Moral Order.*— *Kamma* (action) is that by which men execute deeds, good or evil, meritorious or the opposite. What is it ? It is volition (*cetanā*), moral or immoral. We are told in the Pāli texts : “ By Action, Bhikkhus, I mean volition. It is through having willed that a man does something in the form of deed, speech or thought.” \*\*\*

Here volition (or conation) is the act of willing (voluntary, or conative action). In carrying something, good or bad, meritorious or the opposite, into effect, it deliberates and decides upon the steps to be taken, as the leader of all the mental functions involved in so doing. It provides the tension of those functions towards the desired object.

The expression “as the leader of all” implies that in doing its own works, as well as the works of all the other psychic processes involved, volition becomes the chief and supreme leader in the sense that it informs all the rest. Volition, as such, brings other psychical activities to tend in one direction. This is the explanation of our statement: “ *Kamma* is that by which men execute deeds.”

It should, however, be borne in mind that the conative process informs other psychical processes only in the case of one’s own works, not in the case of the works of others. Accordingly, the latter cannot be brought within the definition of “volition as the act of willing”. Hence B’s actions cannot be called A’s *kamma*, since there is as much difference between voluntary and non-voluntary actions as there is between a goat and a sheep.

Voluntary action alone is entitled to the name. And therefore was it said : “ By *kamma* Bhikkhus, I mean volition.”

In all acts the word *kamma* denotes (a) that which all deeds have in common, and (b) a disposition to exertion. And once well formed in the present, through either a good deed, or again through a bad deed, such a disposition serves later to call forth the co-existent aggregates (psycho-physical states), when the deed is repeated. It is due to the reawakening of those aggregates that a man is said, e.g. to be liberal. or given to violent deeds. In its persistence this disposition serves to produce the factor that leads to the concatenation of existence by way of rebirth in a life to come. It is due to the origination of such a factor that a man, having bestowed gifts or killed living beings, is reborn into a state of bliss or of woe. This sort of disposition is therefore described in the Mahāpaṭṭhāna as the relation of co-existent *kammas*, and, again, of *kammas* at different points of time.

The distinctive basis in different lines of actions \*\*\*\* is attended with great consequences. Once made and established, in one place and at one time, it continues to be the cause of some peculiarity with regard to the body or mind or both. For this reason, perseverance in reflection upon the order of things, or, in worldly matters, perseverance in reflection upon such bases, yields great fruit and reward.

Of the various forms of such bases, two are attended with greater consequences in their adjustment and re-adjustment than in their natural order. Of these, one is the conative basis of subjective experience and the other is the caloric basis (*utu*) in things external. As to subjective experience, the variety in conative tendency is accountable for the variety in consciousness. As to external life, the difference in variety of *utu* is accountable for the difference in mobility.

By the Moral Order we mean the necessary, fixed, undesirable result in an evil action, the necessary, fixed desirable result of a good action. The course of evil action results in rebirth into a state of woe. The way of meritorious deeds belonging to the realm of “ Rūpa ” (Form Sphere) leads to rebirth into

\* “ Lit. from the top ” ( agga ).

\*\* Samyutta-Nikāya, iii. p. 54.

\*\*\* Anguttara-Nikāya, iii 415 (VI. 6, “ Mahāvagga Nibbedhika ”).

\*\*\*\* Dhātuvikatinam dhātuvikāro nāma. On vikāro ; cf. Compendium ; Pāli Index.



a state of purity belonging to the realm of "Rupa". Furthermore, it is said in the Pāli texts : " The result of killing life is to make a being short-lived, and abstinence from killing leads to longevity. Jealousy begets many sorts of quarrels, while humanity begets peace. Anger robs a man of beauty, while forbearance enhances beauty. Enmity begets weakness, while amity brings strength. Theft begets poverty, while honest labour brings wealth. Pride ends in loss of honour, while modesty leads to respectability. Association with a fool causes loss of wisdom, while knowledge is the reward of association with a wise man. \* This is the significance of the Moral Order.

Here the expression " The act of killing life makes a being short-lived " implies that when a man has once killed a human being, or a being of lower order, the act of killing furnishes the cause of his rebirth in various ways into a state of suffering. During the period when he returns to the state of man, the same act as "life killing factor" makes him short-lived in many thousands of rebirths. This is the explanation of the statement : " The act of killing life makes a man short-lived". The explanation of the rest is analogous. In many hundreds of other Suttas, various instances of fixed moral consequences are to be found. Such is the Moral Order.

We read in the Pāli texts: " There is no place, Bhikkhus, no room (in the conception of the moral order of things), for a bad action to produce desirable, agreeable and delightful results, etc. " \*\*

An " action " produces two kinds of result: that which is uniform (inevitable), that which is diverse (exceptional). Here the order of moral principles is given with reference to the first kind of result. When we come to the " diverse kind of result ", we find that a man may pass his days happily with ill-gotten riches. But after death, according to the uniform kind of result, he undergoes a doom of suffering all the more.

Men inspired with pious thoughts and religious ideals forsake all worldly success, perform acts of merit, walk in the Norm, and undergo many kinds of privation. But according to the uniform kind of result, after death they may rejoice in heavenly bliss all the more. Such is the fixed Moral Order.

(4) *The Psychical or Psychological Order.* Thought (*citta*) means " one is thinking " (the act of thinking), the meaning being, one cognises an object. It may also mean: investigates or explores an object. Furthermore, thought is, figuratively, called the "varied" owing to the varying forms of thinking of objects.\*\*\* Accordingly it is said in the Pāli texts: " I see, Bhikkhus, no other thing which is so very varied as Thought (mind). I see; Bhikkhus, no other group (*nikāya*) which is so varied as beings of a lower order (beasts, birds, etc.) The beings of lower order are varied only by mind.\*\*\*\* But thought is said, O Bhikkhus, to be still more varied than those beings."

Thought becomes more varied with regard to immoral things than to such as are moral. It is said " mind delights in evil ". The beings of lower order that are made and created by mind are, therefore more varied than all other beings. How is that ? It is said in the Pāli texts: " I will declare, O Bhikkhus, how the world originates, and how it ceases. What is the origination of the world, O Bhikkhus? Conditioned by the eye and objects arises visual cognition. This triad is called 'contact'. Because of contact, feeling; because of feeling, craving, etc. Such is the origination of the entire body of ill. Conditioned by the ear and objects.....by the nose.....by the tongue.....by the body, etc.....conditioned by the sensorium and things arises mind-cognition. This triad is contact. Because of contact, feeling; because of feeling, craving, etc. Such is the origination of the entire body of ill. This, O Bhikkhus, is what is called the origination of the world.

" What is the cessation of the world, O Bhikkhus ? Conditioned by the eye and objects arises visual cognition. The triad is called 'contact'. Because of contact,

\* Cf. Majjhima-Nikāya, Cula-Kamma-vibhanga-Sutta-iii. 202 f.

\*\* Anguttara-Nikāya-i, 28 "Aṭṭhāna-vagga.

\*\*\* The word *citta* (pronounced *chit-ta*) means both consciousness, cognition and also variegated manifold. Hence the author plays on the word. "Thought" should here be understood in the widest sense as " being-aware of ", " conscious of ".—Ed.

\*\*\*\* *Citten'eva cittikata.* Samyutta-Nikāya, iii. 152.

feeling; because of feeling, craving, etc. Because of the complete cessation of that craving, grasping ceases; because of the cessation of grasping, becoming ceases, etc. Such is the cessation of the entire body of ill. So with regard to ear and other senses. This, O Bhikkus, is what is called the cessation of the world." \*

Here the expression "conditioned by the eye and objects arises the visual cognition, etc", indicates that in this world the consciousness and thought-procedure of foolish average folk vary from moment to moment and become the cause of their rebirth in different forms of future existence. Admitting this, it will be found that the different forms of their future existence are made and created by the mind in their present life. Because of the variation of consciousness, perception varies. Because of the variation of perception their natural desire varies and because this varies, action (*kamma*) varies. Some maintain also that because *kamma* varies, the rebirths in the animal kingdom vary.

Now the phenomena, termed in the philosophic truth *kamma* and mind, become in conventional standards of truth\*\* "soul" (or "being") and "person". According to the latter, just as men by manifold thoughts make divers and manifold things in this world, and just as gods\*\*\* by manifold thoughts create divers and manifold things, so actions (*kammāni*) and the results of actions, diversified by thought, are endowed with various forms of thinking, as if they were "beings" and "persons". Hence although neither action nor mind has the nature of Ātman,\*\*\*\* who, it is asked, knows how to make? who is able to make? "Beings", "persons": they know, they can make all things. But whether there is any special Being or person making the infinitely varied world-picture or not it is impossible for them to say.

By Psychological Order we mean the fixity or law of the consequences of thoughts or consciousnesses, varying in function and in occasion. It is treated of in the *Paṭṭhāna*

in the chapter on "the Relation of Succession or Sequence".\*\*\*\*\*

(5) *Natural Phenomenal Sequence (dhammaniyāma)*.— A *dhamma* is that which bears (*dhāreti*) its own nature, e.g. its own hardness to the touch, its specific, individual mark as well as its universal characters, namely, growth, decay, dissolution, etc. The *Dhammas*, categorised under the causal relation "bear" the function of that relation, and those categorised under "effect" "bear" the function of the result or effect. This meaning applies to all *dhammas* as treated of in the Suttanta and the Abhidhamma Piṭakas. It also embraces the things enumerated in the Vinaya Piṭaka under the name "the body of precepts" (*silakkhandha*). Why? Because they are not outside the given definition of *dhammas*.

The principal treatment of the order of these *dhammas* and of all other *dhammas* is in the text of the Mahāpaṭṭhāna. Among the Suttanta texts, the whole of the Mahānidāna-Suttanta, and of the Nidāna-Samyutta is devoted to the Dhamma-Niyāma; so, too, as all other Suttantas which throw light on the conception of cause and effect. In one Sutta this Niyāma is referred to as "the establishing, the fixity of things as effects" (*dhammatthitatā dhammaniyāmatā*): "Because of ignorance comes *Kamma* :— 'now whether, O Bhikkhus, Tathāgatas arise, or whether they do not arise, this element (*dhātu*) stands, namely, the establishment of *dhamma* as effects, the fixity of *dhammas* as effects. Because of *kamma* . . . and so on (through all the links of the causal formula).\*\*\*\*\* It is also referred to in the dictum : "All conditioned things (*sankhāras*) are impermanent, full of ills, and of the nature of 'not self' . . . ."\*\*\*\*\*

In some passages, this Niyāma is called *dhammatā*. "It is *dhammatā*—the rule, or order—Bhikkhus, that when a Bodhisat (future Buddha) having fallen from the Tusita-group, enters into a mother's womb, a splendid radiance appears throughout the world, including the worlds of gods and Brahmās . . . and the thousand world-systems tremble and shudder and quake . . ."\*\*\*\*\*

\* Samyutta-Nikāya, iv 87.

\*\* Cf. Exposition II.

\*\*\* Deva; it must be remembered, include all "spirits" (all of them impermanent) inhabiting either the heavens as "God", angels, gods, or this earth as "fairies, etc."

\*\*\*\* Attā, or Self, implies superphenomenal nature. Cf. Anattalakkhaṇa-Sutta, Vinaya Texts, i. 100f.—Ed.

\*\*\*\*\* This is included in the Tika Paṭṭhāna.

\*\*\*\*\* Samyutta-Nikāya, ii. 25; cf. Points of Controversy, 87, 383f.

\*\*\*\*\* Theragāthā (Psalms of the Brethren) ver. 676-678.

\*\*\*\*\* Dīgha-Nikāya, ii. 12 (Dialogues, ii. 9). *Dhammatā* is the abstract noun formed from the concrete "dhamma" as if we should say "normness". Cf. Pss. of the Brethren, p. 29, n2, 190 etc.

In some passages it is alluded to under the category of *possibility* and the opposite : It is impossible, Bhikkhus, and out of the question that the person endowed with sound views should consider a conditioned thing in the light of something eternal. Such a thing can nowise come to pass, etc. ” \*

But the character of the Dhamma-Niyāma is best summarised in the formula :— “ When that exists, this comes to be. From the arising of that, this arises. When that does not exist, this does not come to be, When that ceases, then this ceases, ” \*\*

Or again— “ These, Bhikkhus, are the three characteristics of a conditioned thing ; perceivable is its growth, perceivable is its decay, perceivable is its changing whilst it lasts. These, Bhikkhus, are the three characteristics of the unconditioned : growth is not perceivable, decay is not perceivable, changing and duration is not perceivable. ” \*\*\*

It is the *dhamma* of birth that is born, the *dhamma* of decay that grows old, the *dhamma* of dying that dies. And herein is another Niyāma : that of birth. For it is said in the Pāli texts :—

“ Then : ‘O Vāsetṭha’ said the Exalted One,  
To both of you will I discourse upon  
The question of the breeds of living things,  
In due course, e’en as it really is.  
By breed, in sooth, they differ mutually.  
Grasses and trees ye know ; albeit ye may not  
Discern it, birth-made is of each the type.  
By breed, in sooth, they differ mutually  
..... ”

and so on, in several verses, in both the Majjhima Nikāya and the Sutta Nipāta.\*\*\*\*

Here, “Type” (*linga*) means “variation in appearance”,

“Differ mutually”; is different from one another.

In these verses the Master spoke of the generic order of trees, etc., and of animals. Such an “Order of Birth” obtains also among men. Men are also seen to be of different

birth and breed, different clans, families and descent. But in this Sutta in order to eliminate the false notion that “ the Brahmin is the best of all in the world ” (the Brahmin, *i.e.* by birth only), he first shows the types, among the multitudes of human actions and efforts, are wrought by present actions (not merely by birth), and finally describes the ideal Brahmin. *Kamma* is shown, in this Sutta as the criterion of the inferiority or excellence of beings. It is *kamma* that distinguishes beings with respect to worth. Outward appearance is due to breed-variety in the parents. Born of bovine breed, one has the bovine shape and appearance ; similarly as to horses. Hence in the Birth-Niyāma a different procedure is called for when treating of animals (*pāṇā*) as distinct from higher beings (*sattā*).

## II

### OF THE TWO STANDARDS OF TRUTH

(Dve saccāni) \*\*\*\*\*

Our task here is to define the two categories under which all truths may be included :— (1) The Conventional (*Sammuti*); and (2) the Philosophic (*paramattha*) \*\*\*\*\* standard.

(1) *Conventional Truths*.—By this is meant a truth or fact, generally received as such by the common consent of mankind. What are the modes of conventional expressions ? These are “self”, “soul”, “being”, “person”, woman, man, body, head, hand, leg, hair, of the head, down on the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, nerves, sinews, bone, etc. ; the names of such external objects as tree, creeper, shrub, house, chariot, carriage, bed, seat, etc.

None of these are names of such “really existent” *dhammas* (facts, phenomena, attributes) as mind, contact, extension, cohesion, etc. They are all names which denote as well as connote only some physical appearance and its persistence as such. These names and their connotation, therefore, having but a conventional significance, are called modes of conventional expression *i.e.* terms in common use.

\* Anguttara-Nikāya, i. 26.

\*\* In the Vāsetṭha Sutta common to both works, ii 196 and verse 600f respectively.

\*\*\* Anguttara-Nikāya, i 152 ( “ Cūlavagga, ” 47 ).

\*\*\*\* Majjhima-Nikāya, ii. 32 ( 79th Sutta ) ; Samyutta-Nikāya, ii 28, etc. ; Anguttara-Nikāya, v. 184.

\*\*\*\*\* This is placed in the author’s MS. as No. 4. but I have translated it before the others, because the two standards are referred to in Exposition I—Tr.

\*\*\*\*\* Literally, having the supreme or ultimate matter.—Ed.

What constitutes the achievement or predication of Conventional Truth? "The self is (exists)"; "the living soul is"; "a being is"; "the person is"; etc. By adopting such words in common use a man becomes a conventional truth-speaker. And these are to be regarded as a correct mode of stating such truth. Why? Because otherwise constant disputes would result from want of a common language and common notions.

This is what is termed "Conventional Truth".

(2) *Philosophic Truth*.— This is a fact or truth recognised from the philosophic point of view. What are the modes of philosophic expression? These are: "mind," "mental factor," "matter," "Nibbāna," "aggregates," "sense-sphere," "elements", and so on.

These are not merely common or collective names, but imply something which really as such (*sabhāvato*), exists. These are called the modes of "highest", or "ultimate matters", inasmuch as any import beyond that which they possess is inconceivable.

What constitutes the achievement or predication of philosophic truth? "Consciousness exists"; "contact exists"; "feeling exists"; "extended quality exists"; "cohesion exists"; "Nibbāna exists"; and so on.

By expressing things as they exist in reality, a man is a Truth-speaker.\* Such speech is also to be regarded as a correct mode of stating truth. Why? Because it helps us to avoid falling into the errors of recognition, sense-consciousness and illusory opinions.

This is what is termed "Philosophic Truth". It should be noted in this connexion that "Conventional Truth" provides a safeguard against falsehood, and "Philosophic Truth" guards against hallucination. Thus when a man, from the conventional point of view, states, "The self, the soul, the being, the person exists", etc., he is not to be considered as uttering falsehoods, whether the *import* of what he affirms is really true or not, whether it rests upon valid speculation or self.\*\* Why? Because, in such a case, there is no fraudulent motive. But it comes within the province of hallucinations. Why? Because in these cases the things that are of the nature

of "not self" are taken as of "self", and stated as such. From the philosophical point of view there is nothing of "self". There are only *dhammas*. And none of these is of the nature of "self". They are, on the contrary, of the nature of "not-self", etc. And when a man speaks like this his words show neither falsehood nor hallucination. So we read in the Pāli texts: "These, Bhikkhus, are the four cases of hallucination. What are the four? The impermanent is taken as permanent." This is the first point involved in hallucinations of recognition, sense-consciousness and illusory opinion. "That which is ill is taken as well. That which is not -self is taken as self. The ugly and offensive is taken as beautiful and beneficial." These are the remaining three cases of the hallucinations of recognition, sense-consciousness and illusory opinion.

Here the expression "The Impermanent" implies the psychical and physical facts and conditions that are summed up in the term "name-and-form",\*\*\* and which are by nature impermanent. The expression "that which is ill" implies the facts of common experience that are categorised under the "Truth regarding Ill." The expression "the not-self" implies all that which is of the nature of "not-self". And the expression "the ugly and offensive" implies the psycho-physical conditions that fall under "the Truth regarding Ill" and are, therefore *a fortiori* considered to be "ugly and offensive".

By viewing "name and form" in the light of "being", "person", a man takes what is impermanent as permanent. Why? Because "being" or "person" is nothing but a concept. And a concept, as we know, has not the attribute of passing away or moving about.

On the other hand, when it is said that a being, on coming into a form of existence, is himself born, that at the end of life he himself dies, that even before he took on to himself the present form of existence, he had come from this or that form of first existence, and that after death he would be re-born into this or that form of future existence, it shows that the being is viewed as engaged in "going".

\* Saccavādī, applied par excellence to the Buddha. Cf. Pss. of the Sisters, 121 n 1, and elsewhere.

\*\* Attā, Sanskrit atman. On the implications in this term, see Exposition I.

\*\*\* Approximately equal in sense to mind and body.—Ed.

It is for these reasons that, by viewing “name and form” in the light of “being”, “person”, a man takes what is impermanent as permanent.

By holding dear and agreeable that which is merely a mental and bodily phenomenon liable to the facts of misery, a man takes that which is ill as weal, that which is ugly and offensive as beautiful and beneficial.

“Being” is a mere “concept”. There is no corresponding thing in Nature. When such a really non-existent is regarded as really existent, the result thereof is that mere name and form is made the essence of a being. And by holding that it is the self of a being; not only that, the being himself, a man takes what is not self as self.

It is said that a man sees objects through his eyes. Here seeing means visual cognition. The gaze is fixed upon a material form as the object of that cognition. And the form is a visible and tangible phenomenon, and neither the being nor the person. A man having seen such a form, contemplates it in his mind as a being, a woman, a head, a face, a tree, a chariot, a carriage.\* This is the error of cognitive consciousness originating from seeing. A similar explanation can hold true of such an error as originates from hearing etc. But the question as to the error

that originates from the mind co-ordinating sensations is rather intricate, though of pressing importance.

According as an object is discerned by the mind, it is marked, or fixed by recognition. Later on it may cause bewilderment and confusion. This is what is called the hallucination of recognition.

According as a man apprehends a thing through the understanding, he speculates upon it:—“Beings, etc., have a self.” “It is like this and that”. “There is a living soul.” “It is such and such”. This is what is termed the hallucination of illusory opinion.

In the Pāli texts the hallucination of recognition as being very obvious is mentioned first. But it may follow the hallucination of opinion. And these three forms of hallucination are rooted in “ignorance”, that is to say, they originate from it. Of these, the first two forms of hallucination have a bearing upon the immoral type of worldly consciousness. Craving, conceit, and false notions spring from them. By taking his stand upon philosophical truth, a man can discern the nature of hallucinations; and having ascertained what that is he can give them up for ever.

*(To be Continued)*

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\* “They (i.e. the surface view of sense perception) do not bring us to understand the true underlying principle or law; they rather disguise that from us. It is perhaps not too much to say that the senses tend to give us the notion of the fixity of things, and therefore to hide the truth that the law of all things is change: there is no permanence in things save only—the law of all change.”—Heraclitus.



“Householder, to bring about life in the heaven-worlds, it is of no use for an Ariyan disciple, yearning for heaven, either to pray for it or to think much of it; the steps that lead to heaven must be stepped by the Ariyan disciple, and when those steps are stepped by him, they lead to the winning of heaven, and he becomes a winner of the heaven-worlds.”

*Anguttara-Nikāya, The Book of the Fives, iii (43)*

# THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

By Nyanaponika Thera

## Part II

### *The Power of Non-violence in Mental Training*

#### THE NON-COERCIVE PROCEDURE IN THE APPLICATION OF BARE ATTENTION

**B**OTH the world surrounding us and the world of our own mind are full of unwanted experiences and frustrations, of hostile and conflicting forces. Man knows from his own bitter experience that he is not strong enough to meet and conquer, in open combat, each one of these antagonistic forces around him and within. He knows that, in the external world, he "cannot have everything as he wants it", and that, in the inner world of his mind, passions and impulses, whims and fancies, are often victorious over the voices of duty, reason and higher aspirations.

Man knows further that often an undesirable situation will even worsen if excessive pressure is used against it. Thus, passionate desires may grow in intensity if one tries to silence them by sheer force of will. Disputes and quarrels will go on endlessly and grow fiercer, if they are fanned again and again by angry retorts or by vain attempts to crush the other man's position entirely. A disturbance, during work, rest or meditation, will be felt more strongly and will have a longer-lasting impact, if one reacts to it by resentment, anger, or by attempts to suppress it.

Again and again man will meet with situations in life where he cannot *force* issues. But there are ways of mastering some of the vicissitudes of life and many of the conflicts of mind, without an application of force, by non-violent means, which may often succeed where attempts of coercion, internal or external, have failed. Such a way of non-violent mastery of life and of mind is *Satipaṭṭhāna*. By the methodical application of Bare Attention, being the basic practice in the development of Right Mindfulness, all the latent powers of a non-coercive approach will gradually unfold themselves, with their beneficial results, and their wide and unexpected implications. Here, in this context, however, we are mainly concerned with benefits for the mastery of mind and for progress in meditation that may result from a non-coercive procedure. But we shall also throw occasional side-glances to the repercussions on every-day life. It will not be difficult for

a thoughtful reader to make more detailed application to his own problems.

The antagonistic forces that appear in meditation, and are liable to upset its smooth course, are of three kinds :—

1. external disturbances, as noise, etc.;
2. mental defilements (*kilesa*), including lust, anger, dissatisfaction, sloth, etc., which may arise at any time during meditation ;
3. various incidental stray thoughts, surrender to day-dreaming, etc.

The occurrence of these distractions is the great stumbling-block for a beginner in meditation who has not yet acquired sufficient dexterity to deal with them effectively. To give thought to those disturbing factors only when they actually arise at the very time of meditation, will be quite insufficient. If caught unprepared in one's defence, one will struggle with them in a more or less haphazard and ineffective way, and with a feeling of irritation which will form an additional impediment. If disturbances of any kind and an unskilful reaction to them occur several times during one session, one will feel utterly frustrated and irritated, and may have to give up further attempts, at least for that occasion.

In fact, even meditators who are quite well informed, by books or teacher, about all details concerning the subject of meditation chosen, are often lacking in instruction as to how to deal skilfully with those varieties of disturbance mentioned above. The feeling of helplessness in face of them is the most formidable "initial difficulty" for a beginner in meditation. Many have accepted defeat at that point, abandoning prematurely any further effort in methodical meditation. As in worldly affairs so in meditation, one's way of dealing with the "initial difficulties" will often be decisive for success or failure.

When faced by inner and outer disturbances, the inexperienced or uninstructed beginner will generally react in two ways : he will first try to shove them away lightly,

and if he fails in that, he will try to suppress them by sheer force of will. But these disturbances are like insolent flies : by whisking—first lightly and then with increasing violence and anger—one may succeed (or not !) in driving them away for a while, but mostly they will return with an exasperating constancy, and the effort and vexation of “whisking” will have produced only an additional disturbance of one’s composure.

Satipaṭṭhāna, through its method of Bare Attention, offers a non-violent alternative to those most futile and even harmful attempts at suppression by force.

A successful non-violent procedure in mind-control has to start with the right mental attitude. There must be first the full cognizance and sober acceptance of the fact that those three antagonistic forces or disturbing factors are co-inhabitants of the world we live in, whether we like it or not. Our disapproval of them will not alter the fact. With some of them we shall have to come to terms, and concerning others—the mental defilements—we have to learn how to deal with them effectively until they are finally conquered.

1. Since we are not the sole inhabitants of this densely populated world, there are bound to be disturbances of various kinds, as noise, interruption by visitors, etc. We cannot always live in ‘splendid isolation’, ‘from noise of men and dogs untroubled’, or on ‘ivory towers’ high above the crowd. Right meditation is not escapism ; it is not meant for providing hiding places of temporary oblivion. Realistic meditation has the purpose of training man’s mind to face, to understand and to conquer this very world in which he lives and which also includes numerous obstacles to the life of meditation.

2. A Satipaṭṭhāna Master, the Venerable U Sobhana Mahāthera (Mahāsi Sayadaw) of Burma, said : In an unliberated worldling, mental defilements are sure to arise again and again. He has to face that fact, and he should know these defilements well, in order to apply again and again the appropriate remedy of Satipaṭṭhāna. Then they will grow weaker, more short-lived, and will finally disappear. To know the occurrence of defilements is therefore as important for him as to know the occurrence of his noble thoughts.

By facing one’s own defilements, one will be stirred to increase the effort to eliminate them. On the other hand, by trying to avert one’s glance when they arise, out of a false shame or pride, one will never truly join issue with them, and always evade the final and decisive encounter ; and by hitting blindly at them, one will only exhaust, or even hurt, oneself. But by observing carefully their nature and behaviour when they arise in one’s own mind, one will be able to meet them well prepared, to forestall them often, and finally to banish them fully. Therefore meet thy defilements with a free and open glance : Be not ashamed, afraid or discouraged !

3. Various memories and images of the recent or remote past, including those emerging from subconscious depths ; thoughts of the future : planning, imagining, fearing, hoping ; the casual sense perceptions that may occur at the very time of meditation, dragging sometimes after them a long trail of associated ideas—all these may make up the third group of intruders disturbing the meditator, in brief, various stray thoughts or day-dreams. Whenever concentration and mindfulness slacken, they will appear and fill the vacuum. Though they seem insignificant in themselves, they are, through their frequent occurrence, a most formidable obstacle, not only for the beginner, but in all cases when the mind is restless or distracted. Like the mental defilements, they will be entirely excluded only when, at the stage of holiness (Arahatta), perfect mindfulness has been obtained, keeping unflinching watch at the door of the mind. But it can certainly be achieved that, even for long, continuous periods of meditation, these invaders are kept at bay.

To all these facts about the three kinds of disturbing factors full weight must be given and they must be fully absorbed by our mind, if they are to shape our mental attitude. Then, in these three disturbing factors, the Truth of Suffering will manifest itself to the meditator very incisively through his own personal experience : “Not to obtain what one wants, is suffering”. Also the three other Noble Truths should be exemplified by reference to that very situation. In such a way, even when dealing with impediments, the meditator will be within the domain of Satipaṭṭhāna : he will be engaged in the mindful awareness of the four Noble Truths, being a part of the Contemplation of

Mental Objects (*dhammanupassanā*).\* It is a characteristic of Right Mindfulness, and one of its tasks, to relate the actual experiences of life to the truths of the Dhamma, and to use them as opportunities for its practical realisation. Already here, at this preliminary stage devoted to the shaping of a correct and helpful mental attitude, we have the first successful test of our peaceful weapons : by understanding our adversaries better, we have consolidated our position which was formerly weakened by an emotional approach; and by transforming these adversaries into teachers of the Four Noble Truths we have won the first advantage over them.

If mentally prepared by a realistic view of these three factors antagonistic to meditation, one will be less inclined to react at once by irritation when they actually arise. One will be emotionally in a better position to meet them with the non-violent weapons of which we shall now speak.

There are three devices of countering disturbances which should be applied in succession whenever the preceding device has failed to dispose of the disturbance. All three are applications of Bare Attention, differing in the degree or intensity of attention given to the disturbance. The guiding rule here is : to give no more mental emphasis to the respective disturbance than actually required by circumstances.

1. First one should notice the disturbance clearly, but lightly ; that is, without emphasis and without attention to details. After that brief act of noticing, one should try to return to the original object of meditation, and one may well succeed in it, if the disturbance is weak by nature, or one's preceding concentration of mind was fairly strong. If, at that stage, we are careful not to get involved in any "conversation" or argument with the intruders, we shall, on our part, not give them a reason to stay long ; and, in a good number of cases, the disturbances will depart soon, like visitors who do not receive a very warm welcome. That curt dismissal of them may often enable us to return to our original meditation, without any serious disturbance to the composure of mind.

The non-violent device is here : to apply Bare Attention to the disturbance, but with

a minimum of response to it, and with a mind bent on withdrawal. This is the very way in which the Buddha himself dealt with inopportune visitors, as described in the *Mahā-suññatā-Sutta* (*Majjh.* 122) : "...with a mind bent on seclusion...and withdrawn, his conversation aiming at dismissing [those visitors]". Similar was Sāntideva's advice how to deal with fools: if one cannot avoid them from afar, one should treat them "with the indifferent politeness of a gentleman".

2. If, however, the disturbance persists, one should repeat the application of Bare Attention again and again, patiently and calmly; and it may well be that the disturbance will vanish when it has spent its force. Here the attitude is : to meet the repeated occurrence of a disturbance by a reiterated 'No', by a determined refusal to be deflected from one's course. It is the attitude of firmness and patience. The capacity of watchful observation has to be aided here by the capacity to wait.

These two devices will generally be successful with incidental stray-thoughts, day-dreams, etc., which are feeble by nature, but also the other two types of disturbances, the external ones and defilements may yield quite often.

3. But if, for some reason or other, they do *not* yield, one should now turn one's full and deliberate attention to the respective disturbance, accept it as an object of knowledge, and transform it thus from a *disturbance* of meditation to a legitimate *object* of meditation. One may continue with that new object until the external or internal cause for attending to it has ceased, or one may even retain it for that session of meditation, if it proves satisfactory.

If there is, for instance, disturbance by persistent noise, we should give to it our undivided attention. But we should take care to distinguish it well from any reaction of ours concerning it, e. g. by resentment, which likewise should be clearly recognized in its own nature, whenever it arises. In doing so, we shall have undertaken the Contemplation of Mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*), according to the following passage of the Discourse: "He knows the ear and sounds, and the fetter [e.g., resentment] arising through both". If the noise is intermittent

\* See also "The way of Mindfulness" by Bhikkhu Soma, p. 52, last para of the Section on Breathing, and the corresponding passages in all following sections.



or of varying intensity, one will be easily able to discern the rise and fall (*udayabbaya*) in its process, and to add, in that way, to one's direct insight into impermanency (*aniccatā*).

The attitude towards recurrent mental defilements, as thoughts of lust, restlessness, etc., should be similar. One should face them squarely, but distinguish them from one's reaction to them, e.g. connivance, fear, resentment, irritation. In doing so, one is making use of the device of "naming", and one will reap its benefits which have been outlined before. In the recurrent waves of passion or restlessness one will likewise learn to distinguish gradually phases of "high" and "low", their "ups and downs", and may also gain other helpful knowledge about their behaviour. By that procedure, one again remains entirely within the range of Satipaṭṭhāna, by practising the Contemplation of the State of Mind (*cittānupassanā*) and of Mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*; i. e. attention to the Hindrances).

This method of transforming disturbances of meditation into objects of meditation, as simple as ingenious, may be regarded as the culmination of non-violent procedure. It is a device very characteristic of the spirit of Satipaṭṭhāna, by making use of all experiences as aids on the Path. In that way, enemies are turned into friends, because all these disturbances and antagonistic forces have become our teachers; and teachers, whoever they may be, should be regarded as friends.

We cannot forgo to quote here from a noteworthy little book, which is a moving human document of fortitude and practical wisdom acquired by suffering; it is *The Little Locksmith* by Katherine Butler Hathaway:—

"I am shocked by the ignorance and wastefulness with which persons who should know better throw away the things they do not like. They throw away experiences, people, marriages, situations, all sorts of things because they do not like them. If you throw away a thing, it is gone. Where you had something you have nothing. Your hands are empty, they have nothing to work on. Whereas, almost all those things which get thrown away are capable of being worked over by

a little magic into just the opposite of what they were. ... But most human beings never remember at all that in almost every bad situation there is the possibility of a transformation by which the undesirable may be changed into the desirable."

We have said before that the occurrence of the three disturbing elements cannot always be prevented. They are parts of our world, and their coming and going follows its own laws irrespective of our approval or disapproval. But by applying Bare Attention, we can well prevent being swept away, dislodged by them. By taking a firm and calm stand on the secure ground of Mindfulness, we shall repeat in a modest degree, but in an essentially identical way, the historic situation under the Bodhi Tree when Māra at the head of his army claimed, in vain, possession of the soil on which the seat of Enlightenment rested (as he will claim every inch of the world's surface). Trusting in the power of mindfulness, we may confidently repeat the Master's aspiration before his Enlightenment: *Mā nam ṭhānā acavayi!* "May he (Māra) not dislodge me from that place" (*Padhāna Sutta*).

Let the intruders come and go, like any other members of that vast, unceasing procession of mental and physical events that passes along before our observant eyes, in the practice of Bare Attention.

Our advantage here is the quite obvious fact that two thought moments cannot be present at one and the same time. Attention refers, strictly spoken, not to the present, but to the moment that has just passed away. Thus, as long as mindfulness holds sway, there will be no 'disturbance' or 'defiled thought'. This gives us the chance to hold on to that secure ground of an 'observer's post', to the potential 'throne of enlightenment'.

By the quietening and neutralizing influence of detached observation as applied in our three devices, the interruptions of meditation will increasingly lose the sting of irritation, and, thereby, their disturbing effect. This will prove to be an act of true *Virāga* ('dispassion') which literally means 'decolouring'. That is to say, these experiences will lose their emotional tinge that excites towards lust, aversion, etc., and they will appear as 'bare phenomena' (*suddha-dhammā*).

The non-violent procedure of Bare Attention endows the meditator with a "light but sure touch" that is so essential for handling the sensitive, evasive and refractory nature of our mind, as well as for dealing with various difficult situations and obstacles in life. When speaking of the even quality of energy required for attaining to the meditative absorptions, the "Path of Purity" (*Visuddhimagga*) illustrates it by describing a test which the ancient students of the art of surgery had to undergo as a proof of their skill. A lotus leaf was placed in a bowl of

water, and the pupil had to make an incision through the length of the leaf, without cutting it entirely or submerging it. He who applied an excess of force, either cut it into two or pressed it into the water, while the timid one did not even dare to touch it. In fact, it is something like the gentle but firm hand of the surgeon that is required in mental training, and this skilful and well-balanced touch will be the natural outcome of the non-violent procedure in the practice of Bare Attention.

End of Part II.



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# THE WORLD-FAMED SHWE DAGON PAGODA

*U Ba Htu, B.J.S. (Retd.)*

The ever-glittering and beautifully shaped Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon has been recognized as one of the World's supreme art treasures of modern times. It has been a dream and a long cherished wish of many a distinguished foreigner from far-off lands and having visited the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, he considered it as the fulfilment of his dream and wish into a reality. To a foreign visitor on approach either by air or by sea the glittering, towering pagoda, standing on a hill top amidst the green wooded landscape, presents the first beautiful sight of Rangoon ; and on his departure too the same harmoniously proportioned shrine, rising into the sky, presents the last impressive sight of the city. No doubt the magnificence and splendour of the Great Shrine has captivated the imaginations of Buddhists and Non-Buddhists as well.

Writings by foreign visitors show that the Shwe Dagon Pagoda evokes emotional feelings even amongst non-Buddhists by its size, grandeur and imposing serenity. Above all they are genuinely fascinated and charmed by its aesthetic beauty. This historic Pagoda has not only fascinated foreigners but has also attracted many thousands of the people of Burma both young and old throughout the years.

## Boyhood days.

In this connection I have a vivid recollection of the years 1907 and onwards, that is, about half a century ago, when we as young boarding-school-boys of Government High School, Rangoon, used to visit the Sacred Pagoda on Saturday mornings in batches of five, ten or fifteen before the appearance of dawn on the Eastern horizon...how on cold winter mornings we were the first to trail along the dewy grasses across the old maidan; laughing, frolicking and merry-making all the way. On arrival at the steps of the Pagoda, we bought flowers and candles worth about one or two annas specially saved from our pocket monies and with these objects for offering, quick-marched up the steps without a break. We were not content to place our offerings at the Tazaungs on the main platform but climbed up to the upper terrace which took us right on to the base of the Great Pagoda.

Only on closer scrutiny is one struck and awed by the hugeness and impressiveness of

the whole structure. Usually not many persons are to be found on the upper terrace. It is only the enterprising worshipper who can betake himself to this secluded terrace. It is absolutely clean and there is no noise to distract him. The whole atmosphere is serene and tranquil. There we lit our candles, offered our flowers and respectfully worshipped at the Shrine.

You may be tempted at this point to ask what else we did! Of course, having done these meritorious deeds with the best of youthful volitions we did pray and very fervently too, to pass our examinations. We did not stop there. At school, we implemented those prayers by earnest efforts over our lessons and when the time came, we took our examinations with courage and confidence with the result that we passed our examinations without much difficulty. On our marches back to school from the Great Pagoda, the same jollity and mirth prevailed and arrived there in time to resume and enjoy the day's work. I still recollect our contemporaries whom I can count on the fingers of my hands (most of them in Rangoon) who, I am sure, will join with me and heartily say.... "Oh, those days were really happy ones."

## Years of maturity.

Since our boyhood we have come to learn that our legitimate prayers are fulfilled provided they are strengthened by right actions and volitions. Now with years piling up and knowledge growing, the Great Shwe Dagon Pagoda conveys a far deeper significance. It not only represents the exquisite workmanship of olden and modern Burma, but represents also the loftier ideals of Ultra-Mundane Goal. History tells us that herein are enshrined the Sacred Relics of Gotama Buddha. To a devout Buddhist the sight of the Sacred Pagoda evokes a train of emotional thoughts of the past, the present and the future. It at once reminds him of the Nine Sterling Attributes of Gotama Buddha which He became possessed of on attaining Buddhahood...how Gotama Buddha voluntarily went through the vicissitudes of life for millions of World-cycles or Kappas in the past with no other object than to show the Way of Deliverance to all beings from the

labyrinth of rebirths and suffering, although he had achieved the necessary attainments for entering into Nibbana at that time....and how after attaining Perfect Buddhahood He strenuously preached for forty five years, thus holding aloft the light of the Three *Ratnas*, The Buddha, The Dhamma and The Sangha for the future good and welfare of mankind. Bearing all these in mind, a devout Buddhist cannot but be ever grateful to Gotama Buddha and thus keeps His memory in great reverence. Here, the shining beauty of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, towering majestically above the city, represents the embodiment of these incomparable qualities of Buddhahood. Is there any wonder, then, that devotees from far and near fervently worship and make offerings at the Sacred Shrine in memory of their Great Teacher, Gotama Buddha, the Enlightened One. History also records that this spirit of worship and devotion was shown by the former two rulers of Burma, that is, Shin Sawbu (1461-80 C.E.) and Sinbyushin (1774 C.E.) who had raised the pagoda to the present height and had gilded it with their weights in gold.

#### The Tabaung Festival.

The festival of this Pagoda is celebrated on the full moon of Tabaung. On such occasions in the past, thousands of pilgrims from far and near will visit the Great Pagoda dressed gaily in multi-coloured silk clothes. There, forests of flowers will be laid, tons of 'soon' (*i.e.*) that is, boiled rice, fruits and sweet cakes will be offered and thousands of candles and oil-lights will be lit before the stainless images of the Buddha. They will then worship fervently at the Shrine in memory of and honour to the Great Qualities of the Enlightened One. This is being done and all will be done in the future in accordance with His Dhamma as memorised and repeated by the Sangha after His Parinibbāna. After paying homage at the various shrines, the pilgrim walks round the open platform, makes a gift of charity to the needy whenever he finds one,

reads the names of donors shown on plaques and joyfully and whole-heartedly responds to the sharing of merit by the donor with the words, "Sādhu, sādhu". Whenever a visitor from the countryside reads the name of his co-villager among the donors, he beams with delight and resolves that he may have an early chance to do a similar act of merit. There are pandals on the platform where food and drinks are offered to all and sundry; the pilgrim goes in and has his fill and comes out with the rejoicings of "Sādhu, Sādhu".

#### The Western Observer.

To an observer from the West all these form an amazing sight. However, it is difficult for him to understand what animates the huge crowds that visit the Sacred Shrine. He finds no organised worship led by a priest as in the West. Here worship is an individual affair. This is strictly in compliance with teaching of the Buddha who enjoins that each person must work out his deliverance in conformity with the Dhamma. It may be pointed out to non-Buddhists that the sharing of merit by the donor and the whole-hearted response of rejoicing by others are laid down by the Buddha to be performed by the spiritually minded persons known in Pāli as "Dasapuññakusalāni". Again in Dhammasaganī (the first of the seven books of Abhidhamma) it is shown how a well disciplined mind may move from one noble state of thought to another without relapse into an ignoble one.

It may be pointed out to Western writers that it is not in disobedience to his mandate that fervent worship and offerings are made to Gotama Buddha, but it is in accord with the teaching in Parinibbāna Sutta where He says that after His demise the 84000 Dhammakhandhas that have been preached will remain as 84000 Buddhas and that worship and offering made in memory of and honour to Him will produce equal beneficial results as made to Him in His lifetime.

#### The flaws and frailties.

There are certain things which the Easterner takes for granted as inseparable from the

suffering of life. His tolerance at times takes him to such lengths that in the eyes of one who is of a different pattern of mind from his, the little flaws and frailties simply look ridiculous. However he should be thankful and take the criticisms as eye-openers. An infant as Burma is in the life of free nationhood, being released only a few years ago from the yoke of 100 year subjugation, she has been trying her best to keep her house in order amidst the troubles that beset an infant nation in similar circumstances. Any way it will do her a lot of good if she only summons courage and owns that the sooner the flaws and frailties are corrected and removed the better. Then she should plan and work strenuously to make the precincts of the World-famed Sacred Shrine a real dreamland

not only to the peoples of the Union of Burma but also to the peoples of the World.

#### The Distracted World.

The peoples of the World have not yet settled down to live in peace and amity in spite of the two catastrophic wars that have taken place during the lifetime of many of us. Greed, hate, suspicion and racial pride are still rampant today as before. What are the forces to combat this mounting menace? To us Buddhists, the beaming, towering Shwe Dagon Pagoda, in its majestic repose, represents a perfect symbol of peace and a beacon of Light and Truth. May this Sacred Shrine—the mighty Shwe Dagon continue to stand until the fullness of time, as the embodiment of the higher spiritual peace and bliss of Nibbāna.



‘ I have naught to do with homage, Nāgita, nor has homage aught to do with me. Whosoever cannot obtain at will, easily and without difficulty this happiness of renunciation, this happiness of seclusion, this happiness of calm and this happiness of enlightenment, which I can obtain at will, easily and without difficulty, let him enjoy that dung-like happiness, that sluggish happiness, that happiness gotten of gains, favours and flattery. ’

*Anguttara Nikāya, v, iii, 30.*

‘ But, monks, an instructed disciple of the pure ones, taking count of the pure ones, skilled in the dhamma of the pure ones, well trained in the dhamma of the pure ones, taking count of the true men, skilled in the dhamma of the true men, well trained in the dhamma of the true men, regards material shape as: “ This is not mine, this am I not, this is not my self; ” he regards feeling as: “ This is not mine.....; ” he regards perception as: “ This is not mine.....; ” he regards the habitual tendencies as: “ These are not mine.....; ” he regards consciousness as: “ This is not mine this am I not, this is not my self. ” And also he regards whatever is seen, heard, sensed, cognised, reached, looked for, pondered by the mind as: “ This is not mine, this am I not, this is not my self. ” Also whatever view with causal relation says: “ This the world this the self, after dying I will become permanent, lasting, eternal, not liable to change, I will stand fast like unto the eternal ”, he regards this as: “ This is not mine, this am not I, this is not my self. ” He, regarding thus that which does not really exist, will not be anxious. ”

*Majjhima Nikaya 1. 136.*

# SUTTA-NIPĀTA, CULAVAGGA

## ĀMAGANDHA\*-SUTTA

*Translated by the Editors of "The Light of the Dhamma".*

### Ascetic Tissa :

'Millet, beans and peas, edible leaves and roots, the fruit of any creeper ; the holy men who eat these, obtained lawfully, do not seek pleasures nor speak vainly.

'O Kassapa ! Thou who eatest whatsoever food is given by others, which is well-prepared, daintily garnished, pure and excellent ; he who enjoys such food served with rice, he eats uncleanness.

'O Brahmin \*\* ! You say that the charge of uncleanness does not apply to you who eat rice tastily cooked with birds' flesh. O Kassapa ! I enquire the meaning from you, please define 'Uncleanness'.

### Buddha Kassapa :

'Taking life, beating, cutting, binding, stealing, lying, fraud, deceiving, pretended knowledge, adultery ; this is uncleanness and not the eating of flesh. 'When men are unrestrained in sensual pleasures, are greedy in tastes, are associated with impure actions, are of nihilistic views, crooked, obscurantist ; this is uncleanness and not the eating of flesh.

'When men are rough and harsh, backbiting, treacherous, without compassion, haughty, ungenerous and do not give anything to anybody ; this is uncleanness and not the eating of flesh.

'Anger, pride, obstinacy, antagonism, hypocrisy, envy, ostentation, pride of opinion, intercourse with the unrighteous ; this is uncleanness and not the eating of flesh.

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\* Āmagandha—lit. 'Odours of flesh' which had the connotation of 'putridity' and the repugnant sense of uncleanness'.

\*\* The Buddha Kassapa was a Brahmin by birth.

‘When men are of bad morals, refuse to pay their debts, slanderers, deceitful in their dealings, pretenders, when the vilest of men commit foul deeds ; this is uncleanness and not the eating of flesh.

‘When men attack living beings either because of greed or hostility, and are always bent upon evil, they go to darkness after death and fall headlong into hell ; this is uncleanness and not the eating of flesh.

‘Abstaining from fish or flesh, nakedness, shaving of the head, wearing the hair matted, smearing with ashes, wearing rough deer skins, attending the sacrificial fire, all the various penances performed for immortality, neither incantations, oblations, sacrifices nor observing seasonal feasts, will cleanse a man who has not overcome his doubt.

‘He who lives with his senses guarded and conquered, and is poised in the Law, delights in uprightness and gentleness, who has gone beyond attachments and has overcome all sorrows ; that wise man does not cling to what is seen and heard.’

Thus the Blessed One preached this again and again, and that Brahmin who was well-versed in the ancient lore, understood it ; for the Sage free from defilement, detached and hard to track, uttered this in beautiful verses. Having listened to the well-preached word of the Buddha, which is free from defilement and which ends all misery, he paid homage to the Tathāgata with humble spirit and begged to be admitted into the Order at that very place.’

# BUDDHISM IN A NUTSHELL

By Ven. Nārada Mahāthera

(Continued from previous issue)

## KAMMA, OR THE LAW OF MORAL CAUSATION

We are faced with a totally ill-balanced world. We perceive the inequalities and manifold destinies of men and the numerous gradations of beings that abound in the universe. We see one born into a condition of affluence, endowed with fine mental, moral, and physical qualities, and another into a condition of abject poverty and wretchedness. Here is a man virtuous and holy, but, contrary to his expectation, ill-luck is ever ready to greet him. The wicked world runs counter to his ambitions and desires. He is poor and miserable in spite of his honest dealings and piety. There is another vicious and foolish, but accounted to be fortune's darling. He is rewarded with all forms of favours, despite his shortcomings and evil modes of life.

Why, it may be questioned, should one be an inferior and another a superior? Why should one be wrested from the hands of a fond mother when one has scarcely seen a few summers, and another should perish in the flower of manhood, or at the ripe age of eighty or a hundred? Why should one be sick and infirm, and another strong and healthy? Why should one be handsome, and another ugly and hideous, repulsive to all? Why should one be brought up in the lap of luxury, surrounded with amusements and pleasures, and another in tears, steeped to the lips in misery? Why should one be born a millionaire, and another a pauper? Why should one be a mental prodigy, and another an idiot? Why should one be born with saintly characteristics, another with criminal tendencies? Why should some be linguists, artists, mathematicians or musicians from their very cradle? Why should some be congenitally blind, deaf, and deformed?

These are some problems that perplex the minds of all thinking men. How are we to account for all this unevenness of the world; this inequality of man?

Is it due to the work of blind chance or accident?

There is nothing in this world that happens by blind chance or accident. To say that anything happens by chance, is no more true than that this writing has come here of itself. Strictly speaking nothing happens to man

that he does not deserve for some reason or other.

Could this be the fiat of an irresponsible God-creator?

Huxley says:—"If we are to assume that anybody has designedly set this wonderful universe going, it is perfectly clear to me that he is no more entirely benevolent and just, in any intelligible sense of the words, than that he is malevolent and unjust."

According to Einstein:—"If this being (God) is omnipotent, then every occurrence, including every human action, every human thought, and every human feeling and aspiration is also his work; how is it possible to think of holding men responsible for their deeds and thoughts before such an Almighty being?"

"In giving out punishments and rewards, He would to a certain extent be passing judgment on himself. How can this be combined with the goodness and righteousness ascribed to him?"

"According to the theological principles man is created arbitrarily and without his desire and at the moment of his creation is either blessed or damned eternally. Hence man is either good or evil, fortunate or unfortunate, noble or depraved, from the first step in the process of his physical creation to the moment of his last breath, regardless of his individual desires, hopes, ambitions, struggles or devoted prayers. Such is theological fatalism."

—(Spencer Lewis).

As Charles Bradlaugh says:—"The existence of evil is a terrible stumbling block to the Theist. Pain, misery, crime, poverty confront the advocate of eternal goodness, and challenge with unanswerable potency, his declaration of Deity as all-good, all-wise, and all-powerful."

In the words of Schopenhauer:—"Whoever regards himself as having become out of nothing must also think that he will again become nothing; for that an eternity has passed before he was, and then a second eternity has begun, through which he will never cease to be, is a monstrous thought."

"If birth is the absolute beginning, then death must be the absolute end: and the



assumption that man is made out of nothing leads necessarily to the assumption that death is his absolute end."

Commenting on human suffering and God, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane writes:— "Either suffering is needed to perfect human character, or God is not Almighty. The former theory is disproved by the fact that some people who have suffered very little but have been fortunate in their ancestry and education have very fine characters. The objection to the second is that it is only in connection with the universe as a whole that there is any intellectual gap to be filled by the postulation of a deity. And a creator could presumably create whatever he or it wanted."

In "Despair", a poem of his old age, Lord Tennyson thus boldly attacks God, who, as recorded in Isaiah, says, "I make peace and create evil."—*Isaiah*, XIV. 7.

"What! I should call on that infinite love that has served us so well?  
Infinite cruelty, rather, that made everlasting hell,  
Made us, foreknew us, foredoomed us,  
and does what he will with his own:  
Better our dead brute mother who never has heard us groan."

Surely "the doctrine that all men are sinners and have the essential sin of Adam is a challenge to justice, mercy, love and omnipotent fairness."

Some writers of old authoritatively declare that God created man after his own image. Some modern thinkers state, on the contrary, that man created God after his own image. With the growth of civilization man's conception of God also became more and more refined.

It is, however, impossible to conceive of such a being either in or outside the universe.

Could this variation be due to heredity and environment? One must admit that they are partly instrumental, but they cannot be solely responsible for the subtle distinctions and vast differences that exist amongst individuals. Why should, for instance, twins who are physically alike, enjoying the same privileges of upbringing, be very often temperamentally, intellectually, totally different?

Heredity alone cannot account for this variation. It explains only similarities but not the differences. Physical germs explain

only a portion of man. With regard to mental, intellectual and moral differences we are left in the dark. The theory of heredity cannot give a satisfactory explanation for the birth of a criminal in a long line of honourable ancestors, the birth of a saint or a noble man in a family of the wicked.

This variation is due not only to heredity, environment, "nature and nurture" but also to our own Kamma, or in other words, to our own inherited past actions and present deeds. We ourselves are responsible for our own deeds, happiness, and misery. We build our own hells. We create our own heavens. We are the architects of our own fate. In short we ourselves are our own Kamma.

On one occasion a certain young man, named *Subbha*, approached the Buddha, and questioned why and wherefore it was that among human beings there are the low and high states.

"For", said he, "we find amongst mankind those of *brief life* and those of *long life*, the *hale* and the *ailing*, the *good-looking* and the *ill-looking*, the *powerful* and the *powerless*, the *poor* and the *rich*, the *low-born* and the *high-born*, the *ignorant* and the *intelligent*."\*

The Buddha briefly replied: "Every living being has Kamma as its own, its inheritance, its cause, its kinsman, its refuge. Kamma is that which differentiates all living beings into low and high states."

He then enumerated the causes of such differences.

In connection with this variation the *Atthasālini* states:—

"Depending on *this* difference in Kamma appears the difference in the birth of beings, high and low, base and exalted, happy and miserable. Depending on the difference in Kamma appears the difference in the individual features of beings as beautiful and ugly, high-born or low-born, well-built or deformed. Depending on the difference in Kamma appears the difference in the worldly conditions of beings as gain and loss, fame and disgrace, blame and praise, happiness and misery.

"By am a the world moves,  
By Kamma men live,  
And by Kamma are beings bound,  
As by its pin the rolling chariot wheel.

\* Cūlakamma Vibhanga Sutta—Majjhima Nikāya No. 135.

By Kamma one attains glory and praise,  
By Kamma bondage, ruin, tyranny,  
Knowing that Kamma bears manifold  
Why say ye, 'In the world no Kamma  
[is' ?"]

Thus we see that our mental, intellectual, moral, and spiritual differences are mainly due to our own actions and tendencies.

Kamma literally means action ; but, in its ultimate sense, it means the meritorious and demeritorious volition (*Kusala Akusala Cetanā*). Kamma constitutes both good and evil.

The Buddha showed that this variation is due to Kamma, but He did not assert that everything is due to Kamma.

If everything were due to Kamma, a man must ever be bad for it is his Kamma to be bad. One then need not consult a physician to be cured of a disease, for if one's Kamma were such one would be cured.

There are five orders or Niyāmas :—

- i. *Kamma Niyāma*, order of act and result ; e.g., desirable and undesirable results follow good and bad actions, respectively.
- ii. *Utu Niyāma*, physical (inorganic) order ; e.g., seasonal phenomena.
- iii. *Bīja Niyāma*, order of germs or seeds ; e.g., rice produced from rice-seed etc.
- iv. *Citta Niyāma*, order of mind ; e.g., processes of consciousness (*Citta Vīthi*) etc.
- v. *Dhamma Niyama*, order of the cosmic law ; e.g., the phenomena occurring at the advent of a Bodhisatta in his last birth, gravitation, etc.

Kamma is, therefore, only one of the five orders that prevail in the universe. It is a law in itself. It is neither fate nor is it predestination that is imposed on us by some mysterious unknown power to which we must helplessly submit ourselves. It is one's own doing that reacts on one's own self.

It must also be said that such phraseology as rewards and punishments should not be allowed to enter into discussions concerning the problem of Kamma. For there is no Almighty Being who rules His subjects and rewards and punishes them accordingly. Buddhists, on the contrary, understand that sorrow and happiness one experiences are the natural outcome of one's own good and bad actions.

A Buddhist who is fully convinced of the doctrine of Kamma does not pray to another

to be saved but confidently relies on himself for his salvation.

It is this doctrine of Kamma that gives him consolation, hope, self-reliance, and moral courage. It is this belief in Kamma that validates his effort, kindles his enthusiasm, makes him ever kind, tolerant, and considerate. It is also this firm belief in Kamma that prompts him to refrain from evil, do good and be good without being frightened of any punishment or tempted by any reward.

This law of Kamma, it must be admitted, can neither be proved nor disproved experimentally.

Nevertheless it is this doctrine of Kamma that can explain the problem of suffering, the mystery of so-called fate or predestination of other religions, and above all the inequality of mankind.

Kamma is a law in itself, but it does not thereby follow that there should be a law-giver. Ordinary laws of nature, like gravitation, need no law-giver. The law of Kamma too needs no law-giver. It operates in its own field without the intervention of an external, independent ruling agency.

Nobody, for instance, has decreed that fire should burn. Nobody has commanded that water should seek its own level. No scientist has ordered that water should consist of H<sub>2</sub>O and that coldness should be one of its properties. These are their intrinsic characteristics.

Inherent in Kamma is the power of producing its due effect. The cause produces the effect ; the effect explains the cause. Seed produces the fruit ; the fruit explains the seed as both are inter-related. Even so Kamma and its effect are inter-related ; "the effect already blooms in the cause".

Kamma and re-birth are accepted as axiomatic.

## RE-BIRTH

As long as this Kammic force exists there is re-birth, for beings are merely the visible manifestation of this invisible Kammic force. Death is nothing but the temporary end of this temporary phenomenon. It is not the complete annihilation of this so-called being. The organic life has ceased, but the Kammic force which hitherto actuated it has not been destroyed. As the Kammic force remains entirely undisturbed by the disintegration of the fleeting body, the passing away of the present consciousness only conditions a fresh one in another birth.

Birth is therefore preceded by death, and death, on the other hand, is preceded by birth. This constant succession of birth and death in connection with one individual life-flux constitutes what is technically known as *Samsāra* (wandering again and again).

What is the absolute beginning of *Samsāra*? Or to put it in other words, what is the ultimate origin of life?

The Buddha pertinently says: "Without cognisable beginning is this *Samsāra*. A first beginning of beings who, obstructed by ignorance and fettered by craving, wander and fare on, is not to be perceived."

If life is an identity, it must necessarily have an ultimate origin. Life strictly speaking is a flux or a force, and as such necessitates a beginningless past.

One might argue that life must have had a beginning in the infinite past and that beginning or the first cause is the Creator. "In that case there is no reason why the same demand may not be made of this postulated Creator."

Instead of vainly seeking for a beginning in a beginningless past the Buddha advises us to find out the cause of this re-birth and utilise our energy to transfer this life-stream to the sorrowless and peaceful state—*Nibbāna*.

In the search after the cause of birth and death Buddhism takes for its starting point the being as it is, here and now, and traces back the causes of its conditioned existence.

All men and animals are composed of interrelated mind and matter (*Nāma* and *Rūpa*), which constantly change with lightning rapidity, not remaining even for two consecutive moments the same.

Though all are identical inasmuch as they possess the two common factors, mind and matter, yet they are all so varied that, leaving lower animals aside, even amongst mankind no two persons are found to be alike in any respect—each person having his particular traits of character.

Tracing back the individual, therefore, to the foetus in the womb to see where lies the cause, we again discover two common factors—the sperm-cell and the ovum-cell. Now a question might arise as to whether these two are the only materials for the production of the foetus. If so, we cannot comprehend why precisely "A" should fortunately or unfortunately spring from the particular sperm and ovum-cell and not "B", since one has equal claims as the other.

Buddhism offers a solution to this intricate problem by attributing this appropriation of cell-matter to the existence of a third factor which is vital for the formation of the foetus. "By the conjunction of three, O Bhikkhus", says the Buddha, "does the formation of life come about. If mother and father come together but it is not the mother's proper period, and the 'being-to-be-born' (*Gandhabba*) does not present itself, a germ of life is not planted. If mother and father come together and it is the mother's proper period, and the 'being-to-be-born' also presents itself, then a germ of life is there planted."

This newly discovered element is, in the words of the *Abhidhamma*, termed *Paṭisandhivīññāna* (Re-linking Consciousness)

We have now found the first term of the life's progression, but our limited knowledge does not help us to proceed further and determine the cause of this re-linking consciousness which is essential for the "being-to-be-born."

The Buddha, however, developing a supernatural insight so as to penetrate into realms beyond the reach of normal sense, comprehended the root of this third element. He tells us that the coming into being of the re-linking consciousness is dependent upon the passing away of another consciousness in a past birth, and the process of coming into being and passing away is the result of a powerful force known as *Kamma*.

But how are we to believe that there is a past existence?

The most valuable evidence Buddhists cite in favour of rebirth is the Buddha, for He developed a knowledge which enabled Him to read past and future lives.

Following His instructions, His disciples also developed this knowledge and were able to read their past lives to a great extent.

Even some Indian Rishis, before the advent of the Buddha, were distinguished for such psychic powers as clairaudience, clairvoyance, thought reading, remembering past births, etc.

There are also some persons, who probably in accordance with the laws of association, suddenly develop the memory of their past birth and remember fragments of their previous lives. Such cases are very rare, but those few isolated instances tend to throw some light on the idea of a past birth. So are the experiences of some modern reliable psychists and strange cases of alternating and multiple personalities.

Sometimes we get strange experiences which cannot be explained but by rebirth.

How often do we meet persons whom we have never met, and yet inwardly feel that they are quite familiar to us? How often do we visit places, and yet feel impressed that we are perfectly acquainted with those surroundings?

The Buddha tells us :—

*“Through previous associations or present advantage,  
That old love springs up again like the lotus in the water.”*

Into this world come Perfect Ones like the Buddhas and highly developed personalities. Do they evolve suddenly? Can they be the products of a single existence?

How are we to account for colossal characters like Homer and Plato, men of genius like Shakespeare, infant prodigies like Pascal, Mozart, Beethoven, Raphael, etc.?

Heredity alone cannot account for them. “else their ancestry would disclose it, their posterity, even greater than themselves demonstrate it.”

Could they rise to such lofty heights if they had not lived noble lives and gained similar experiences in the past? Is it by mere chance that they are born of those particular parents and placed under those favourable circumstances?

The few years that we are privileged to spend here, or for the most five score years, must certainly be an inadequate preparation for eternity.

If one believes in the present and in the future, it is quite logical to believe in the past. The present is the offspring of the past, and is the parent of the future.

If there are reasons to believe that we have existed in the past, then surely there are no reasons to disbelieve that we shall continue to exist after our present life has apparently ceased.

It is indeed a strong argument in favour of past and future lives that “in this world virtuous persons are very often unfortunate and vicious persons prosperous.”

Says a Western writer :—

*“Whether we believe in a past existence or not, it forms the only reasonable hypothesis which bridges certain gaps in human knowledge concerning certain facts of every day life. Our reason tells us that this idea of past birth and Kamma alone can explain*

the degrees of differences that exist between twins, how men like Shakespeare with a very limited experience are able to portray with marvellous exactitude the most diverse types of human character, scenes and so forth of which they could have no actual knowledge, why the work of the genius invariably transcends his experience, the existence of infant precocity, the vast diversity in mind and morals, in brain and physique, in conditions, circumstances, and environment observable throughout the world, and so forth.”

The cause of this Kamma, continues the Buddha, is Avijjā or Ignorance of the four Noble Truths. Ignorance is, therefore, the cause of birth and death; and its transmutation into Knowingness or Vijjā is consequently their cessation.

The result of this Vibhajja Method of analysis is summed up in the Paṭicca Samuppāda.

### PAṬICCA SAMUPPĀDA

*Paṭicca* means because of, or dependent upon; *Samuppāda*, “arising or origination.” *Paṭicca Samuppāda*, therefore literally means —“Dependent-Arising” or “Dependent Origination.”

It must be borne in mind that *Paṭicca Samuppāda* is only a discourse on the process of birth and death, and not a theory of the evolution of the world from primordial matter. It deals with the cause of rebirth and suffering, but it does not in the least attempt to show the absolute origin of life.

Ignorance (Avijjā) is the first link or cause of the wheel of life. It clouds all right understanding.

Dependent on ignorance of the Four Noble Truths arise volitional activities (*Sankhārā*)—both moral and immoral. The activities whether good or bad rooted in ignorance which must necessarily have their due effects only tend to prolong wandering in Samsāra. Nevertheless good actions are essential to get rid of the Ills of Samsāra.

Dependent on volitional activities arises re-birth consciousness. This links the past with the present.

Simultaneous with the arising of rebirth-consciousness there come into being mind and body (*Nāma Rūpa*).

The six senses (*Salāyatana*) are the inevitable consequences of mind and body.

Because of the six senses contact or *Phassa* sets in.

Contact leads to sensations (*Vedanā*).

These five, viz., consciousness, mind and matter, six senses, contact and sensation, are the effects of past actions and are called the passive side of life.

Dependent on sensations arises craving (*Tanhā*).

Craving results in attachment (*Upādāna*).

Attachment is the cause of Kamma, which, in its turn, conditions future birth (*Jāti*).

Birth is the inevitable cause of old age and death (*Jarā-Maraṇa*).

If on account of a cause the effect comes to be, then if the cause ceases, the effect also must cease.

The reverse order of the *Paṭicca Samuppāda* will make the matter clear.

Old age and death are possible in, and with, a psychological organism. Such an organism must be born; therefore it pre-supposes birth. But birth is the inevitable result of past deeds or Kamma. Kamma is conditioned by attachment which is due to craving. Such craving can appear only where sensation is. Sensation is the outcome of contact between the senses and object. Therefore it pre-supposes organs of senses which cannot exist without mind and body. Where there is a mind there is consciousness. It is the result of good and evil of the past. The acquisition of good and evil is due to ignorance of things as they truly are.

The whole formula may be summed up thus :—

Dependent on Ignorance arise Activities (moral and immoral);

Dependent on Activities arise Consciousness (Re-birth Consciousness);

Dependent on Consciousness arise Mind and Matter;

Dependent on Mind and Matter arise the six Spheres of Sense;

Dependent on the six Spheres of Sense arises Contact;

Dependent on Contact arises Sensation;

Dependent on Sensation arises Craving;

Dependent on Craving arises Attachment;

Dependent on Attachment arise Actions (Kamma);

Dependent on Actions arises Re-birth;

Dependent on Birth arise Decay, Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair.

Thus does the entire aggregate of Suffering arise. The first two of these twelve pertain

to the past, the middle eight to the present, and the last two to the future.

The complete cessation of Ignorance leads to the cessation of Activities.

The Cessation of Activities leads to the Cessation of Consciousness;

The Cessation of Consciousness leads to the Cessation of Mind and Matter;

The Cessation of Mind and Matter leads to the Cessation of the six Spheres of Sense;

The Cessation of the six Spheres of sense leads to the Cessation of Contact;

The Cessation of Contact leads to the Cessation of Sensation;

The Cessation of Sensation leads to the Cessation of Craving;

The Cessation of Craving leads to the Cessation of Attachment;

The Cessation of Attachment leads to the Cessation of Actions;

The Cessation of Actions leads to the Cessation of Re-birth;

The Cessation of Re-birth leads to the Cessation of Decay, Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair.

Thus does the cessation of this entire aggregate of suffering result.

This process of cause and effect continues *ad infinitum*. The beginning of this process cannot be determined as it is impossible to say whence this life-flux was encompassed by nescience. But when this nescience is turned into knowledge, and the life-flux is diverted into Nibbānadhātu, then the end of the life process or Samsāra comes about.

## ANATTĀ OR SOUL-LESSNESS

### *Anattā Doctrine*

This Buddhist doctrine of re-birth should be distinguished from the theory of re-incarnation or transmigration, for Buddhism denies the existence of an unchanging or eternal soul.

A soul which is eternal must necessarily remain always the same without any change whatsoever. If the soul, which is supposed to be the essence of man, is eternal, there cannot be either a rise or a fall. Besides one cannot understand why “different souls are so variously constituted at the outset.”

To prove the existence of endless felicity in an eternal heaven and unending torments in an eternal hell, an immortal soul is abso-

lutely necessary. Otherwise, what is it that sinned on earth and is punished in hell ?

“It should be said”, writes Bertrand Russell, “that the old distinction between soul and body has evaporated quite as much because ‘matter’ has lost its solidity as because mind has lost its spirituality. Psychology is just beginning to be scientific. In the present state of psychology belief in immortality can at any rate claim no support from science.”

Buddhists do agree with Russell when he says “there is obviously some reason in which I am the same person as I was yesterday, and, to take an even more obvious example, if I simultaneously see a man and hear him speaking, there is some sense in which the ‘I’ that sees is the same as the ‘I’ that hears.”

Till recently scientists believed in an indivisible and indestructible atom. “For sufficient reasons physicists have reduced this atom to a series of events. For equally good reasons psychologists find that mind has not the identity of a single continuing thing but is a series of occurrences bound together by certain intimate relations. The question of immortality, therefore, has become the question whether these intimate relations exist between occurrences connected with a living body and other occurrences which take place after that body is dead.”

As C. E. M. Joad says in “The Meaning of Life”, Matter has since disintegrated under our very eyes. It is no longer solid ; it is no longer enduring ; it is no longer determined by compulsive causal laws ; and more important than all, it is no longer known”.

The so-called atoms, it seems, are both “divisible and destructible.” The electrons and protons that compose atoms “can meet and annihilate one another while their persistence, such as it is, is rather that of a wave lacking fixed boundaries, and in process of continual change both as regards shape and position than that of a thing.” \*

Bishop Berkeley who showed that this so-called atom is a metaphysical fiction held that there exists a spiritual substance called the soul.

Hume, for instance, looked into consciousness and perceived that there was nothing except fleeting mental states and concluded that the supposed “permanent *ego* is non-existent.”

“There are some philosophers”, he says, “who imagine we are every moment conscious of what we call ‘ourselves’; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence and so we are certain.....both of its perfect identity and simplicity. For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call ‘myself’ I always stumble on some particular perception or other—of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch myself.....and never can observe anything but the perception.....nor do I conceive what is further requisite to make me a perfect non-entity.”

Bergson says, “All consciousness is time existence ; and a conscious state is not a state that endures without changing. It is a change without ceasing ; when change ceases it ceases ; it is itself nothing but change.”

Dealing with this question of soul Prof. James says—“The soul-theory is a complete superfluity, so far as accounting for the actually verified facts of consciousness experience goes. So far no one can be compelled to subscribe to it for definite scientific reasons.” In concluding his interesting chapter on the soul he says :— “And in this book the provisional solution which we have reached must be the final word : *the thoughts themselves are the thinkers.*”

The Buddha anticipated these facts some 2,500 years ago.

Matter is merely the manifestation of forces and qualities. Mind too is nothing but a complex compound of fleeting mental states. Each unit of consciousness consists of three phases—genesis (Uppāda), development (Ṭhiti), and dissolution (Bhanga). One unit of consciousness perishes only to give birth to another. The subsequent thought-moment is neither absolutely the same as its predecessor—since that which goes to make it up is not identical—nor entirely another, being the same continuity of Kamma energy. Here there is an identity in process.

It must not be misunderstood that a consciousness is chopped up in bits and joined together like a train or a chain. But, on the contrary, “it persistently flows on like a river receiving from the tributary streams of sense constant accretions to its flood, and ever dispensing to the world without it the thought-stuff it has gathered

\* C.E.M. Joad, “The Meaning of Life”

by the way. ” \* It has birth for its source and death for its mouth. The rapidity of the flow is such that hardly is there any standard whereby it can be measured even approximately. However it pleases the commentators to say that the time duration of one thought-moment is even less than one-billionth part of the time occupied by a flash of lightning.

Here we find a juxtaposition of such fleeting mental states of consciousness opposed to a super-position of such states as some appear to believe. No state once gone ever recurs nor is identical with what goes before. But we worldlings, veiled by the web of illusion, mistake this apparent continuity to be something eternal and go to the extent of positing an unchanging soul, an Attā, the doer and receptacle of all actions, to this changing consciousness.

“The so-called being is like a flash of lightning that is resolved into a succession of sparks that follow upon one another with such rapidity that the human retina cannot perceive them separately, nor can the uninstructed conceive of such succession of separate sparks.”\*\* As the wheel of a cart rests on the ground on one point, so does the being live only for one thought-moment. It is always in the present, and is ever slipping into the past. What we shall become is determined by this present thought-moment. We are what we were; we shall be what we are.

If there is no soul, what is it that is re-born? one might ask.

Well, there is nothing to be re-born. When life ceases the Kammic energy re-materialises itself in another form. As Bhikkhu Silācāra says: “Unseen it passes whithersoever the conditions appropriate to its visible manifestation are present, here showing itself as a tiny gnat or worm, there making its presence known in the dazzling magnificence of a Deva or an Archangel’s existence. When one mode of its manifestation ceases it merely passes on, and where subtle circumstances offer, reveals itself afresh in another name or form.”

Buddhism does not totally deny the existence of a personality in an empirical sense. It only attempts to show that it does not exist in an ultimate sense. The Buddhist Philosophical term for an individual is

Santāna, *i.e.*, a flux or a continuity. It includes the mental and physical elements as well. The Kammic force of each individual binds these elements together. This uninterrupted flux or continuity of psycho-physical phenomenon which is conditioned by Kamma, and not limited only to the present life, but having its source in the beginningless past and its continuation in the future—is the Buddhist understanding of the permanent ego or the immortal soul of other religions.

## NIBBĀNA

This process of birth and death continues, *ad infinitum* until this flux is transmuted so to say, to Nibbānadhātu, the ultimate goal.

The Pāli word Nibbāna is formed of *Ni* and *Vāna*. *Ni* is a negative particle and *Vāna* means lusting or craving. “It is called Nibbāna, in that it is a departure from that craving which is called *Vāna*, lusting.”

It may also be defined as the extinction of lust, hatred, and ignorance. “The whole world is in flames”, says the Buddha. “By what fire is it kindled? By the fire of lust, hatred, and ignorance, by the fire of birth, old age, death, pain, lamentation, sorrow, grief, and despair it is kindled.”

It should not be understood that Nibbāna is a state of nothingness or annihilation owing to the fact that we cannot conceive it with our worldly knowledge. One cannot say that there exists no light just because the blind man does not see it. In that well known story, too, the fish arguing with his friend the turtle triumphantly concluded that there exists no land.

Nibbāna of the Buddhists is neither a mere nothingness nor a state of annihilation, but what it is no words can adequately express. Nibbāna is a Dhamma which is “unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, and unformed.” Hence it is eternal (*Dhuvā*), desirable (*Subhā*), and happy (*Sukhā*).

In Nibbāna nothing is “eternalised”, nor is anything “annihilated”, besides suffering.

According to the Books references are made to Nibbāna as *Sā-upādisesa* and *Anupādisesa*. These, in fact, are not two kinds of Nibbāna, but the one single Nibbāna, receiving its name according to the way it is experienced before and after death.

Nibbāna is not situated in any place nor is it a sort of heaven where a transcendental

\* See Compendium of Philosophy—Introduction-p. 12.

\*\* Compare the cinematograph film where individual photographs give rise to a notion of movement.

*ego* resides. It is a state which is dependent upon this body itself. It is an attainment (Dhamma) which is within the reach of all. Nibbāna is attainable even in this present life. Buddhism does not state that this ultimate goal could be reached only in a life beyond. Here lies the chief difference between the Buddhist conception of Nibbāna and the non-Buddhist conception of an eternal heaven attainable only after death. When Nibbāna is realised in this life with the body remaining, it is called Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna-dhātu. When an Arahat attains Parinibbāna, after the dissolution of his body, without any remainder of physical existence it is called Anupādisesa Nibbāna-dhātu.

In the words of Sir Edwin Arnold—

*“If any teach Nirvana is to cease  
Say unto such they lie.  
If any teach Nirvana is to live  
Say unto such they err.”*

### THE PATH TO NIBBĀNA

How is Nibbāna to be attained?

It is by following the Noble Eightfold Path which consists of Morality (*Sīla*) Concentration (*Samādhi*), and Wisdom (*Paññā*).\*

The Buddha expresses this in the following beautiful little verse :—

*Sabba pāpassa akaranam  
Kusalassa upasampadā.  
Sacitta pariyodapanam  
Etaṃ Buddhāna Sāsanam*

—*Dhammapada, Verse 183.*

To refrain from all evil,  
To do what is good,  
To cleanse one's mind ;  
This is the advice of all the Buddhas.

*Sīla* or morality is the first stage on this path to Nibbāna.

Without killing or causing injury to any living creature, he should be kind and compassionate towards all, even to the tiniest creature that crawls at his feet. Refraining from stealing “whether in its dissembled or obvious forms”, he should be upright and honest in all his dealings. Abstaining from sexual misconduct which debases the exalted

nature of man, he should be pure and chaste. Shunning false speech, he should be truthful. Avoiding pernicious drinks that promote heedlessness, he should be sober and diligent.

These elementary principles of regulated behaviour are essential to one who treads the path to Nibbāna. Violation of them means the introduction of obstacles on the path which will obstruct his moral progress. Observance of them means steady and smooth progress along the path.

If the spiritual pilgrim finds these five precepts too elementary, he may advance a step further and observe the eight or even the ten precepts.

It will be noticed that as the pilgrim proceeds on this high way, he is expected to live a life of strict celibacy, simplicity, voluntary poverty, self-control and the nourishing of the body sparingly, “lest the vigour and well being might foster indolence, sloth and torpidity,” and worldly bonds might impede his progress.

Whilst he progresses slowly and steadily with regulated word and deed and restrained senses, the Kammic force of this striving aspirant compels him to renounce worldly pleasures and adopt the ascetic life. To him then comes the idea that—

*“A den of strife is household life,  
And filled with toil and need ;  
But free and high as the open sky  
Is the life the homeless lead.”*

In the dress of a Bhikkhu, he leads the life of voluntary poverty and practises the four kinds of Higher *Sīla*—*viz.*, Discipline as prescribed by the Pātimokkha, Sense-restraint, Purity of Conduct connected with livelihood, and Conduct in connection with the necessaries of life.

Securing a firm footing on the ground of *Sīla*, the progressing pilgrim then embarks upon the higher practice of *Samādhi*, the control and culture of the mind—the second stage on this Path.

*Samādhi*—is the “One-pointedness of the mind.” It is the concentration of the mind at will on one object to the entire exclusion of all irrelevant matter.

After giving a careful consideration to the subject for contemplation, he should choose the one most suited to his temperament. This being satisfactorily settled he makes a persistent effort to focus his mind until he

\* Right understanding (*Sammā-Diṭṭhi*), Right Thoughts (*Sammā-Sankappa*), Right speech (*Sammā-Vācā*), Right Actions (*Sammā-Kammanta*), Right livelihood (*Sammā-Ajīva*), Right Effort (*Sammā-Vāyāma*), Right Mindfulness (*Sammā-Sati*) and Right Concentration (*Sammā-Samādhi*) constitute the Noble Eightfold Path.



becomes so wholly absorbed and interested in it that all other thoughts are *ipso facto* excluded from the mind. The five hindrances to progress—namely, sense-desire, hatred, sloth and torpor, restlessness and brooding, and doubts are then temporarily inhibited. Eventually he gains ecstatic concentration and, to his indescribable joy, becomes enwrapt in *Jhāna*, enjoying the calmness and serenity of a one-pointed mind.

When one gains this perfect one-pointedness of the mind it is possible for one to develop the five Supernormal Powers (*Abhiññā*):—Divine Eye (*Dibbacakkhu*), Divine Ear (*Dibbasota*), Reminiscence of past births (*Pubbenivāsānussati Ñāṇa*), Thought Reading (*Paracitta Vijānana*), and different Psychic Powers (*Iddhividha*). It must not be thought that those supernormal powers are essential for Sainthood.

Though the mind is now purified there still lies dormant in him the tendency to give vent to his passions, for, by concentration passions are lulled to sleep temporarily. They may rise to the surface at unexpected moments.

Both Discipline and Concentration are helpful to clear the Path of its obstacles but it is Insight (*Vipassanā Paññā*) alone which enables one to see things as they truly are, and consequently reach the ultimate goal by completely annihilating the passions inhibited by Samādhi. This is the third and the final stage on the path to Nibbāna.

With his one-pointed mind which now resembles a polished mirror he looks at the world to get a correct view of life. Wherever he turns his eyes he sees nought but the Three Characteristics—Anicca (transiency), Dukkha (sorrow) and Anattā (soul-lessness)—standing out in bold relief. He comprehends that life is a fleeting, continuous, undivided movement. Neither in heaven nor on earth does he find any genuine happiness, for every form of pleasure is only a prelude to pain. What is transient is therefore painful, and where change and sorrow prevail, there cannot be a permanent “ego”.

Whereupon he takes one of the above three characteristics which appeals to him most and intently keeps on developing Insight in that particular direction until that glorious day comes to him when he begins to realise Nibbāna for the first time in his life, having destroyed the three Fetters—self-illusion (*Sakkāya diṭṭhi*), doubts (*Vicikicchā*),

attachment to mere rule and ritual (*Sīlabbataparāmāsa*).

At this stage he is called a Sotāpanna—one who has entered the stream that leads to Nibbāna. As he has not eradicated all fetters he is reborn again, but seven times at the most.

Summoning up fresh courage, as a result of this distant glimpse of Nibbāna, the Noble Pilgrim makes further progress and cultivating deeper Insight becomes a *Sakadāgāmi*—Once-Returner—by weakening two more Fetters—namely, Sense-desire (*Kāmarāga*) and ill-will (*Paṭigha*). He is called a *Sakadāgāmi* because he is reborn on earth only once in case he does not attain Arahatsip.

It is in the third stage of Sainthood—*Anāgāmi*, (Never-Returner) that he completely discards the above two fetters. Thereafter he neither returns to this world nor does he seek birth in the celestial realms, since he has no more desire for sensual pleasures. After death he is reborn in the “pure Abodes” (*Suddhāvāsa*).

Now the earnest pilgrim, encouraged by the unprecedented success of his endeavours, makes his final advance and destroying the remaining fetters, namely, lust after life in Realms of Forms (*Rūparāga*) and Formless Realms (*Arūparāga*), conceit (*Māna*), restlessness (*Uddhacca*), and ignorance (*Avijjā*) becomes a perfect saint by attaining Arahatsip.

Instantly he realises that what was to be accomplished has been done, that a heavy burden of sorrow has been relinquished, that all forms of the “Will-to-live” have been totally annihilated, and that the Path to Nibbāna has been trodden. The happy pilgrim now stands on heights more than celestial, far removed from the rebellious passions and defilements of the world, realising the unutterable Bliss of Nibbāna, and like many an Arahats of old, uttering that paean of joy:—

“Good will and wisdom, mind by method trained,  
The highest conduct on good morals based,  
This method mortals pure, not rank or wealth.”

*MAY ALL BEINGS BE WELL  
AND HAPPY!*

## PEOPLE ESTEEM AUSTERITY

*Ohn Ghine*

More than two thousand five hundred years ago the first attempt to turn the Sangha, the Noble Order of monks, into a vegetarian society was made by the evil Devadatta.

He and a fellow-conspirator, Kokālika, decided that 'people esteem austerity'\* and that it would be an easy matter to create a schism in the Noble Order by insisting to the Buddha that, among other things, vegetarianism should be introduced as part of the Buddhist discipline. They well knew that the Buddha ate meat and allowed meat-eating to those in the Sangha on three conditions, 'that it has not been seen, heard or suspected' to be killed especially for one.\*\*

They also knew that the Omniscient Buddha would refuse to make a change that would involve that self-tormenting He had preached against and which He had shown as a hindrance which could lead on to a hell state.\*\*\*

And in the famed Brahmajāla Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, the passage occurs :'. . . . he refuses to accept uncooked flesh . . .' implying clearly enough that cooked flesh is allowable, while in the Vinaya again (I. 218-220) there are the prohibitions against eating the flesh of certain specified animals but not that of all animals.

Elsewhere in this issue is to be found the Āmagandha Sutta which gives the important things to be refrained from. Only one who has cleansed himself of doubt and is free from every one of the long list of 'uncleanesses' given in that Sutta should begin to think of refraining from fish and flesh. There are many other instances of meat-eating in the Scriptures and it is interesting to consider the circumstances under which the Buddha explained the rule regarding meat-eating. \*\*\*\*

The great general, Sīha, came to listen to the Buddha and was converted. He had been the chief disciple of the Nigaṇṭhas (the Jain Sect) and the chief supporter of their great founder, Nātaputta (also known as Mahāvīra) and was, naturally, as one of that sect, a very strict vegetarian.

On conversion he begged the Buddha to accept a meal at his house and to bring the Sangha ; and the Buddha, by His silence, accepted.

Sīha then sent his servant to the bazaars to buy what meat was available. Nothing had been said on the subject as between the Buddha and Sīha, but Sīha knew, of course, that the Buddha would accept meat dishes as this was one of the charges made against the Exalted One by the very jealous Jains. The Jain priests, hearing of this, 'went about through the highways and the byways of the city of Vesālī, from cross-road to cross-road, waving their arms and crying : "Today a huge beast has been slain by Sīha the general, and a meal has been prepared for the recluse Gotama ; and the recluse Gotama is going to eat the meat, knowing that it was meant for him, that the deed was done on his account."

Incidentally this was the first recorded instance of picketing. It was then that the Buddha enunciated the rule binding on the Order as to the eating of meat.

Since much ink and paper has been wasted by the modern Devadattas and by those direct descendants of the hostile people who attacked the Buddha on this score more than 25 centuries ago, in an attempt to prove by procrustean methods that the Buddha's last meal of Sūkara-maddava was not really the 'succulent flesh of the boar' which it translates as, but, instead, 'a dish of truffles', it is perhaps timely to show that that was not the only instance of the acceptance of pork by the Buddha. It is told in the Anguttara Nikāya how Uggā, of Vesālī, made offerings of various kinds to the Buddha saying : 'From the mouth of the Exalted One have I heard this, "The giver of good things gains the good." Lord, good is the flesh of pigs with plenty of jujube fruit ; let the Exalted One accept some from me out of compassion'; and the Exalted One accepted. Here the phrase used is Sūkara maṇsa, which can not be twisted to mean anything else but what it does mean 'pig's-flesh'.

It is clear that Buddhism cannot be equated with vegetarianism, Buddhism can be equated

\* Vinaya Pitaka : Cullavagga VII.

\*\* Vinaya Pitaka 111—172.

\*\*\* Anguttara Nikāya IV. XX. 198.

\*\*\*\* Vinaya Pitaka, I. 233-8: Anguttara Nikāya IV. 188.

only with Buddhism. The Teaching of the Buddha is one of self-discipline to gain freedom from the whirlpool of existence. It begins in morality and in loving-kindness to all animals as well as other sentient beings but it is not maudlin sentimentality nor irrationality but the reverse.

The people who are solicitous about animals are admirable, as long as they refrain from hurting any form of life, refraining from using leather, since as many animals are killed for their skins as are killed to provide food. They should also refrain from eating manufactured cheese, since this is made from rennet procured by killing young calves. They should also refrain from taking medicine to kill germs. But first and foremost they must refrain from all the uncleannesses listed in the *Āmagandha Sutta*.

There are those who will say that vegetarianism can change the mind and is the first thing to commence, since it gives a calm and loving mind. When one considers that apart from Devadatta, who attempted to murder the Buddha, and his friends who did likewise, all of them vegetarians, the late Adolf Hitler was also a strict vegetarian, yet committed the most cruel and brutal murders of this age, and when one considers that the fierce gorilla, savage and bad-tempered and the ugliest brute in the jungle, is a vegetarian, the plea of mildness engendered by a vegetable diet does not bear examination.

The way to attain freedom from lust and anger and delusion is not to commence with diet, that may possibly follow, but to commence with a definite practice. This practice has been given by the Buddha in the *Vitakka-Sañḥāna Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. It consists in taking one's mind from the evil thought to an associated thought which is not evil. The modern psychologists call it 'sublimation'. If that is not successful there is a second step, the consideration of the wretchedness of such evil thoughts. Then,

if the thoughts are not by this means driven away there is a third step, the turning of the mind away to other thoughts that are not associated at all with the evil thoughts, but are thoughts good in themselves. If they still persist, the evil thoughts may be lessened by degrees, by taking thought that they may be made less violent : 'Just as a man running swiftly might say to himself : 'But what am I going so hurriedly for ? How if I were to go more gently....' And thus as a man might slow down from more vigorous postures until he finally stopped, then sat, then lay down, so evil, unsalutary thoughts that arise may be gradually slowed down if the other methods of banishing such thoughts fail altogether.

'But if', said the Omniscient Buddha, 'O disciples, bringing these considerations to subsidence by degrees, evil unsalutary considerations connected with Desire and Hate and Delusion should still persist in arising, then with teeth clenched and tongue pressed against palate, the monk by main force must constrain his mind and coerce it ; and thus with clenched teeth and taut tongue, constraining and coercing his mind, those evil, unsalutary considerations will disappear and go to decay ; and with their disappearing, the mind of the disciple within him will become settled, subdued, unified, concentrated.'

This is the discipline to be followed by a Buddhist. If he can do this and be a vegetarian as well (as is, by preference, the author of this article) so much the better. But it should be apparent from the just-quoted *Vitakka-Sañḥāna Sutta* that, as Shakespeare put it, 'the mind grows by what it feeds on' and that it is the food of the mind and not of the body that is essential for Salvation.

A Buddhist should eat cheerfully what he gets, neither overeating nor under-eating and should not take too much account of what he eats, even though 'people esteem austerity.'

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*See postscript next page.*

## POSTSCRIPT

A very valuable addition to the foregoing article has been suggested by Hon'ble Justice Agga Maha Thray Sithu-Thado Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union of Burma, Vice-President of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council, and Chairman of the English Editorial Board, who points out that a proper understanding of the Buddha-Dhamma necessitates a proper orientation of mind.

The Hon'ble U Thein Maung has suggested that we translate the *Jīvaka Sutta* in which the Buddha states the position more fully, and we hope to be able to present a translation of this Sutta to our readers in a forthcoming issue ; and also that we might mention the following points :—

1. The Ariya-varṃsa or four 'Noble Usages' which are : contentedness of the monk with any robe that he may obtain, contentedness with any alms-food he may obtain, contentedness with any dwelling and rejoicing in meditation and detachment. In the *Dīgha Nikāya*, 33, we hear :

“ Now, the monk is contented with any robe, with any alms-food, with any dwelling, finds pleasure and enjoyment in mental training and detachment ... But not is he haughty on that account, nor does he look down upon others. Now, of a monk who herein is fit and indefatigable, who remains clearly conscious and attentive, of such a monk it is said that he is firmly established in the ancient, noble usages known as the most lofty ones ”.

2. Even a novice has to vow to take his meal with proper care and mindfulness—*Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso piṇḍa-pātaṃ paṭisevāmi*.
3. That the *Visuddhi Magga* describes *Āhāre patikula-saññā*—reflection on

the loathsomeness of food, which is an object of meditation. How that food, itself subject to decay, goes into the body that is also subject to decay and there is transformed into the decaying organic matter of the body and into loathsome excreta.

4. That one of the *Samvega-vatthu*—“ The sources of emotion ”—is the suffering of the present state rooted in the continual searching after food ; and which is the cause of so much suffering and evildoing in this round of rebirth.
5. That the crowning piece of course is *Vipassanā* (Insight). One has to eat because one's *rūpa-khandha* (corporeality group) is *anicca* (impermanent) and therefore *dukkha* (suffering) and *anattā* (without any permanent ego entity or soul).

All this adds up, as pointed out, to an orientation of mind. The Buddha taught compassion to all beings but His Teaching was of a non-attachment to anything whatsoever and He pointed out that while it is quite impossible for a man himself still sunk in the mire to free others, it is possible for a man freed from the mire himself, to free others. This has been rather aptly paraphrased in an old saying : “ The wise men of the world spend most of their time undoing the harm done by the 'good' men ”. There is no substitute for *Vipassanā* (insight) and there is only one way, the Buddha called it “*ekāyano*”—the Only Way—to insight, and that is the way which He gave and which we have still preserved in the *Saṭipatthāna-sutta*.

It is interesting to note the comment of the American translator of the *Dhammapada* Commentary, Eugene Watson Burlingame. He says :—

“ For example, the Jains taught the Doctrine of Non-Injury ; the

doctrine, namely, that it is a wicked thing to injure man, animal or plant. But this doctrine, noble as it is, they carried to what was perhaps a logical, but for all that, quite absurd extreme. The Buddha also taught the Doctrine of Non-Injury, but took pains to confine it within reasonable limits. He condemned the killing of animals even for food, but did not altogether forbid the eating of flesh and fish. But he was not satisfied merely to condemn the injuring and killing of living creatures ; he taught no such merely negative doctrine. Instead

he taught the most sublime doctrine that ever fell from the lips of a human being ; the doctrine, namely, of love for all living creatures without respect of kind or person and for the whole visible creation. A man must love his fellow-man as himself, returning good for evil and love for hatred. But this is not all. He must extend his love to the fishes of the sea and the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, to the plants and the trees, to the rivers and the mountains. A man must not kill his fellow-man even in self-defense. *All war is unholy.*"



‘Thereupon the Brahman who was chaplain said to the king : “The king’s country, Sire, is harassed and harried. There are dacoits abroad who pillage the villages and townships, and who make the roads unsafe. Were the king, so long as that is so, to levy a fresh tax, verily his majesty would be acting wrongly. But perchance his majesty might think : ‘I’ll soon put a stop to these scoundrels’ game by degradation and banishment, and fines and bonds and death ! But their licence cannot be satisfactorily put a stop to so. The remnant left unpunished would still go on harassing the realm. Now there is one method to adopt to put a thorough end to this disorder. Whosoever there be in the king’s realm who devote themselves to keeping cattle and the farm, to them let his majesty the king give food and seed-corn. Whosoever there be in the king’s realm who devote themselves to trade, to them let his majesty the king give capital. Whosoever there be in the king’s realm who devote themselves to government service, to them let his majesty the king give wages and food. Then those men, following each his own business, will no longer harass the realm ; the king’s revenue will go up ; the country will be quiet and at peace ; and the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing their children in their arms, will dwell with open doors.”

*Kutadanta Sutta, Dīgha Nikāya.*

# IMPRESSIONS OF BUDDHA JAYANTI

*By Francis Story*

*(A Radio talk from B.B.S. on 27-6-56)*

On Wednesday last I witnessed a unique event, the Novitiation of 2,668 Sāmaṇeras into the Holy Order of the Yellow Robe. It took place in the Great Rock Cave of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, in the presence of many thousands of pilgrims and prominent people invited by the Government of the Union of Burma.

I have seen many impressive sights in the course of my life, but nothing so inspiring as this. From the historical point of view alone, it is something that cannot be paralleled anywhere in the world outside Buddhist Asia. The continuity through 2,500 years of a religious institution that has preserved the same language, the same formula of initiation, the same rule of life and precisely the same dress, is an achievement that only Buddhism can show.

But far more important than this historical interest is the triumphant affirmation across the centuries of the way of life for which the Buddhist Sangha stands. My thoughts went back to Isipatana, where I have so often sat close to the very spot where the first Ordination was given, so many centuries ago. That was a very simple summons to the holy life : “ Ehi, Bhikkhu ! ” — “ Come, O Bhikkhu ! ” —but it was both Novitiation and Higher Ordination. For the Ascetic Kodaṇṇa, on hearing the first Sermon of the Buddha, had realised the Path and the Fruits, and became the first Mahā Thera.

For some time that simple phrase, uttered by the Buddha Himself, had constituted the whole of the induction into the path of holiness, for it was addressed to those who already knew the Law. “ Come, O Bhikkhu ! ” —come, and see for yourself the truth of the Dhamma ; come, and learn to distinguish between the false and the true, between those things that only temporarily are, and that which eternally is.

Then later, as we read in the Mahāvagga, the Great Section of the Vinaya Piṭaka, the Buddha gave authority to the Bhikkhus to bestow Ordination themselves. “ I permit you, O Bhikkhus, to go forth and ordain in any quarter, in any district. And in this way, O Bhikkhus, should one ordain. First

having instructed him (the postulant) to have his hair and beard shaved off, to assume yellow robes, to arrange the upper robe over one shoulder, to honour the feet of the Bhikkhus ; and having instructed him to sit down on his haunches and salute with joined palms, in this manner should he be told : ‘ Speak thus : I go to the Buddha for refuge, I go to the Dhamma for refuge, I go to the Sangha for refuge ’. And a second and a third time should he say this. I permit, O Bhikkhus, the going forth and the ordaining by these Three Refuges ”.

At that time the Threefold Refuge of all Buddhists, lay and monastic, was the Ordination of the Bhikkhu. It was only later, as the need arose for a more exacting formula, that the Ordination as we know it today was laid down by the Enlightened One, to be performed by a Chapter of Theras, with the applicant for Upasampadā sponsored by his preceptors and closely questioned as to his suitability for the monastic life. In the case of the first initiation of Sāmaṇeras the form remained essentially simple. The postulant approaches, in lay dress and carrying the robes of a Bhikkhu, and asks the presiding Thera to take the robes and grant him Novitiation : “ In compassion for me, lord, give me the yellow robe and let me be ordained, for the destruction of all sorrow and for the attainment of Nibbāna ”. He then repeats after the Mahā Thera the formula of the Refuges, followed by the Precepts of Sāmaṇeras. At the conclusion he says : “ I have received these Precepts. Permit me, O lord : I make obeisance. Forgive me my faults. May the merit I have gained be shared by you, my lord. Give me also to share in your merit, my lord. It is good. I share in it ”.

“ I share in it ” means that he shares the merit freely bestowed in loving-kindness by his spiritual benefactor, even as he shares his own with him. It also means in a wider sense that he shares in the life of holiness that is the supreme purpose of the going forth from the household life into the life of the monk who lives by alms : “ The destruction of all sorrow and the attainment of Nibbāna ”. Not for one moment should he lose sight of

that essential purpose, from the time he exchanges the clothes of a layman for the Yellow Robes of the Sangha. He may be only a temporary Sāmaṇera, yet while he is wearing those robes he should devote himself steadfastly to the purpose for which he is wearing them. Only thus can he “share in it”—in both the merit and the aim of that life—in a real and positive sense.

The Higher Ordination, Upasampadā, is more elaborate. The Postulant, already a Sāmaṇera, goes through the same introductory forms and then, after being exhorted by his sponsors to speak the truth, he is asked certain questions, such as whether he is free from disease, is exempt from military service; whether he is a free man and free from debt; whether he has the permission of his parents, whether he is of full age, twenty years; and whether he is a human being, and a male. It will be seen that the Buddha covered every possible eventuality, even to an error in sex. The question regarding the service of the king, that is, military service, reveals two significant facts. Firstly, that the Buddha did not confuse a citizen's worldly duties to his nation, represented by the ruler, with his spiritual life; secondly, that He did not want the Sangha made a refuge for those who desired merely to shirk such responsibilities. Had it been otherwise, there would have been a very real danger that the Sangha itself would be perverted into a disruptive element in the community. All these possibilities the Buddha, with His supramundane knowledge, foresaw and guarded against. For He saw clearly that if the worldly life was disrupted there could be no hope for the survival of the higher life of man.

The applicant for Higher Ordination, then, must be a free man in every respect; one who has discharged his obligations to others in the fullest measure. So, the enquiring mind may ask: what of those who for some reason are so entangled in commitments that they cannot follow the holy life? Is it therefore denied them?

The answer is emphatically, no. If by reason of their past Kamma—and all obligations are in the last analysis *voluntarily undertaken*, not imposed by a god or by fate—certain persons are unable to become Bhikkhus, they must wait until the obstructive Kamma-result has exhausted itself. Until, in other words, they have settled the debt and are at liberty again to choose their own path. If it cannot be in this life, it must be in some subsequent one, to which end they

should regulate their conduct now, in order that conditions may be favourable for them in time to come. That is the beat motive for accumulating good Kamma: not for specific worldly or heavenly results, but to pave the way to that ultimate and highest objective, the attainment of Nibbāna.

Forty-five years intervened between the first Ordination given by the Buddha, and His last. And then a very striking thing happened. Subhadda, a wandering ascetic, came to the Buddha while He lay dying, and begged for instruction. The Buddha gave it, and the wandering ascetic, like Kondaṇṇa so long ago, accepted the Doctrine at first hearing. Taking refuge in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, he asked for the low and higher Ordination, whereupon the Buddha told the Venerable Ānanda to admit Subhadda into the Order without the customary probationary period. Here is the passage, a very beautiful one, from the Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta:

“Atha kho Bhagavā āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ āmantesi: ‘Tena h’Ānanda Subhaddaṃ pabbājethāti.

‘Evam Bhante’ ti kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavato paccassosi. Atha kho Subhaddo paribbājako āyasmantaṃ Ānandaṃ etaḍ avoca: ‘Lābhā vo āvuso Ānanda, saluddhaṃ vo āvuso Ānanda, ye ettha Satthārā sammukhā antevāsābhisekena abhisittā’ ti.

Alattha kho Subhaddo paribbājako Bhagavato santike pabbajjaṃ, alattha upasampadaṃ. Acirūpasampanno kho pan’ āyasmā Subhaddo eko viharanto. Na cirass’ eva yass ‘atthāya kulaputtā sammad eva āgarasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajanti, tad anuttaram brahmacariya-pariyosānaṃ diṭṭhe’ va dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatva upasampajja vihāsi: ‘Khīṇā jāti, viṭaṅgaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nappamaṃ itthattāyāti’ abbhaññasi.

Aññataro kho pan’ āyasmā Subhaddo arahataṃ ahoṣi.

So ‘Bhagavato pacchimo sakkhi-sāvakaṃ ahoṣi’.

It means, briefly, that on being granted Ordination, Subhadda said to Ānanda that it was greatly to their gain and advantage that Ānanda and the other disciples had received Ordination from the Buddha Himself. And so Subhadda was ordained by the Buddha, and in a very short time he became one of the Arahats.

Buddhaghosa in his commentary takes up the story in more detail. He relates that Ānanda took Subhadda aside, poured water on his head, shaved off his hair and beard, and taught him the formula of meditation on the impermanency of the body. Then he caused him to repeat the Three Refuges, and after that the Buddha gave Subhadda full Ordination.

The Wheel of the Law, set in motion at Isipatana forty-five years before, had made one complete revolution, and the Buddha's last Ordination was an act of supreme compassion. I like to think that he summoned Subhadda to the holy life with the same simple words with which He started His ministry : " Ehi Bhikkhu ! ".

These were some of the thoughts that passed through my mind as I watched the ordination of the 2,668 Sāmaṇeras in the Great Stone Cave of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā. And I thought that no more fitting ceremony could have been chosen to grace the concluding days of the Great Council. As the young, ardent voices rang through the vaulted hall, echoing the Mahā Thera's words, I thought that this must truly be a memorable experience for them, and one that will remain to influence their whole lives. Let us hope that they too, like Subhadda, will strive earnestly and attain Arahatship in a very short time, and that their merit will be shared by all beings. That would indeed be a crowning glory to the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā and the Buddha Jayanti celebrations.

(The Novitiation Ceremony referred to in the broadcast was held on Wednesday May 23rd 1956. It was originally intended that 2,500 Sāmaṇeras should be given novitiation, one for every year of the Buddha Sāsana. So many families, however, desired their sons to take the Robe on this great occasion that the number was increased to 2,668. In addition to these, many thousands of youths became Sāmaṇeras in the districts during the Buddha Jayanti celebrations. No greater proof could be needed of the flourishing state of the Sāsana in Burma, and of the tremendous influence Buddhism has on the lives of the people. While religion is disintegrating in the Western hemisphere, the Theravāda lands of Asia continue to preserve the noble truth of the Dhamma, which is unaffected by time and changing circumstances. The reason for this is not far to seek. So long as Suffering exists, men will search for a means to bring it to an end, and the Teaching of the Supreme Buddha is the only system that completely eradicates Suffering at its root—the instinct of Craving conjoined with the illusion of Self. When dreams and myths have faded away there comes the opportunity for Truth to assert itself. The 2,500th year of the Buddha's Dispensation sees us at such a point, and places before the world a reminder that there is a Way of self-salvation for all, founded on a reasonable world-view, an unimpeachable philosophy, a sublime ethic and a practical rule of life that is good for this world and all conceivable states of existence until the final goal of Nibbāna is reached. F.S.)



“ Though a person recites much of the Sacred Texts, yet, if he, being negligent does not live up to them, he will not share the holy life and is merely a cowherd who counts the kine of others.

Though a person recites but a little of the Sacred Texts, yet, if he lives up to the Teaching, having dispelled his lust, hatred, and delusion, possessing right knowledge, with a mind well-freed and not clinging to this world or the next, he does indeed share the holy life.”

*Dhammapada* verses 19 & 20.



# BUDDHA-DHAMMA AND MODERN SCIENCE

*U Khin Moun,*

*(A Radio Talk from B.B.S.)*

The Buddha Dhamma may be defined in brief as the teaching of Gotama Buddha on the basis of the discoveries He made when He attained Supramundane knowledge by introspective meditation. To be a Buddhist scholar it is essential to study all His discoveries, discourses and commentaries, which are comprehensive, but the learned teachers advise us that the first step for the layman is to thoroughly comprehend the physical and psychical processes and their causal relations. Bearing this in mind let us first of all study the phenomena of physical process.

The Buddha discovered with scientific exactitude the composite nature of wave and matter as the basic phenomenon of physical particles. He taught us that the smallest particles are in a dynamic process of arising and vanishing with a frequency of about fifty thousand million cycles during the period of a finger-snap. He mentioned that about 46,656 atoms are required to form the minutest particle of fine dust raised by the wheel of a chariot in summer. Devout Buddhist scholars have actually seen this process in the course of Vipassanā meditation, but I am not quite sure whether they are able to count and compute the frequency accurately as shown by the Buddha. At any rate we can realise that the static structure, which we find through our sense organs is a delusion and we shall find that this delusion is the main cause of our life-long troubles and miseries. It is a misconception inherent in us since childhood, and it will remain till death, unless we dispel it by developing the faculty of understanding. The Buddha scientifically expounded these phenomena as Four Noble Truths and formulated the Eightfold Noble Path for the solution of all the problems of life.

Let us now find out how far modern science can help us to understand the phenomena of physical process. It can help us to a great extent to understand at least theoretically. Its findings are almost identical with the discovery of the Buddha. The scientists have re-discovered the composite nature of wave and matter by the use of their precision instruments, mathematical equations, and logical thinking in the light of experiments and observations. They describe it

briefly stating that there are two kinds of waves—bottled-up waves, which we call matter and unbottled waves which we call light, heat, electro-magnetic radiations, X-rays, etc. They can resolve the whole material universe into waves—nothing but waves. Their discoveries of natural radio activity, cosmic radiations and the natural formation of discrete quantities or packets of radiated energy as propounded by quantum theory are in total agreement with the discovery of the Buddha. They can tell us precisely that one gram of radium emits  $3.70 \times 10^{10}$  alpha particles with a velocity of  $1.699 \times 10^9$  centimeters per second. They are also able to generate artificial electronic radiations with super-high frequencies ranging beyond ten thousand million cycles per second. When they produce them with the help of electronic devices, they distinctly find the process of arising and vanishing. The process of arising and vanishing means motion. Motion means time. Using time as factor for the theory of relativity, Einstein propounded that the physical phenomenon is a four-dimensional continuum formed by the union of space and time. All these go to show that the scientists have also fully realised the dynamic nature of physical particles. The atom is no more a static structure to them. So far so good. Modern science is the chief witness, that can give reliable evidence in support of the Buddha-Dhamma. I cannot find such strong evidence in the speculative philosophies, some of which, in fact, try to justify the existence of immortal soul and Almighty God, which are conspicuous by their absence in the discoveries of the Buddha.

Let us go ahead and study His other discoveries relating to physical phenomena. He taught us that there are four generating forces, that give rise to the appearance of material existence. They are :

- (1) Resultant mental forces,
- (2) Mental activities,
- (3) Temperature or weather and
- (4) Nutriment.

The mental phenomena and the causal relations between physical and psychical processes as discovered by the Buddha

can never be re-discovered and realised with the help of scientific instruments, mathematical formulae, experiments, observations, analysis and logical thinking. The mental phenomena can be discovered completely only in the light of Supramundane knowledge far transcending the mundane intellect and faculties. It is beyond the realms of physical science and it will be interesting to study the limitations of modern science in contrast to the wide vista presented by the Supramundane knowledge.

If we study the methods used for the development of scientific knowledge, we shall find that all sciences have been built upon two main foundations only. They are :

- (1) the sensations received by the scientists as the subjective and
- (2) the external physical phenomena or stimulus as the objective.

The subjective sensations are formed through five sense organs *i.e.* eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. The objective physical phenomena are the manifestations of material properties in a perpetual state of flux. The scientists receive a series of sensations by observing the results of experiments when they try to understand the phenomena of a particular subject. After the formation of sensations as a result of experiments and analysis, the mind organ begins to function by reasoning and deducing logical inferences from the observed facts. They then formulate scientific laws with the support of mathematical equations. This is the process upon which modern science is founded. But the scientists cannot go beyond approximations since the external world of objects which they find through their sense organs are not absolute or direct or real. The sensations are mere images of the objects. The late Albert Einstein himself admitted that sense perception only gives information of the external world indirectly and we can only grasp the latter by speculative means. This is the dead end of modern science.

Let us now study the immense field of the Supramundane knowledge of the Buddhas and Arahats. We shall find with amazement that Gotama Buddha discovered with mathematical precision the mental phenomena and causal relations, the foundations of the Buddha-Dhamma. But in this short talk I can mention only a few essential facts in brief just to give an idea. The Buddha taught us that the mental process with quanta of thought moments is 17 times faster than the physical frequency. These rapidly fleeting thought moments have 52 types of mental properties, which in combination with passive mind generate 121 classes of consciousness ramifying as 31 planes of existence. The most important discovery is the causal relations between mental and physical phenomena in 24 systems of correlation. Another important system of causation is Dependent Origination of 12 mental and physical factors, that give rise to the appearance of life continuum in cyclic order. He taught us that inherent delusion or ignorance is the main cause that creates the living beings. The predominance of mental process in the phenomenal existence will be realised if we study the nature of those living beings in the higher celestial world. They have no material qualities at all. Their existence is only mental. Their life term is very long but they cannot escape the life process. After death they are liable to be reborn as human or celestial beings with both mental and physical properties.

As a last word, I would like to mention that if we study the scientific expositions of the Buddha-Dhamma rationally, we shall be able to develop our faculty of understanding, leading to our realisation that the so-called life is nothing more than an endless psycho-physical process like a pendulum between likes and dislikes or joy and sorrow with resultant miseries in series. But when we fully realise the miserable nature of life, we can stop the psycho-physical process by a systematic course of Vipassanā meditation. We can then dispel all the delusions and resist

the temptations of worldly sensual desires or cravings. Our feelings of like and dislike are strong when the faculty of understanding is low. Their strength diminishes in the same ratio as the increase in the faculty of understanding. They will go down to zero point as the knowledge reaches the highest stage. It may be formulated that the feelings, of likes and dislikes or joy and sorrow vary inversely as the faculty of understanding. It is the law of diminishing craving. The Buddha dispelled craving completely as soon as He attained the Supra-mundane knowledge. He therefore taught us that the development of the faculty of understanding is the first step in the Eightfold Noble Path,

that leads to perfect peace of mind by attaining complete emancipation from the conditioned life-continuum.

In conclusion, I am not trying to belittle the scientists by showing the limitations of modern science. On the contrary, their highly developed scientific knowledge will help them to understand the Buddha-Dhamma thoroughly and to take up a course of Vipassanā meditation successfully. For these reasons the scientists are requested to study the Buddha-Dhamma and interpret it in their scientific language as and when they are satisfied and convinced that it will be really conducive to the welfare of mankind.



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## “ THE ESSENTIALS OF BUDDHISM ”

### The Optimism of the Four Noble Truths: The Buddha’s Cure for the Canker of Life ”

*U Hla Maung. B. A., B.E.S. (Retd.)*

There are four great truths or affirmations which contain in a nutshell the central teaching of the Enlightened Buddha. They form the crux of Buddhism. The four truths, discovered by our Tathāgata by virtue of His deep insight and wisdom are unlike and distinct from other views and theories. They are :—

1. Life or existence as part of the Becoming process of the world is “ DUKKHA ”—“ SORROW ”—“ ILL ”.
2. The perpetuation of life or sorrow has Originating Causes.
3. Originated life and sorrow can be ended by dissolving the causes of such origin.
4. The Buddha’s path of morality and mental discipline can dissolve these causes.

It is apparent that these four great affirmations run counter

- (a) to the theistic theory that God is the giver and arbiter of life,
- (b) to the pantheistic creed that life is a manifestation of an unknowable mind or spirit,
- (c) to the mechanistic—materialistic dictum that life is a product of chance,
- (d) the claims of determinism or predestination, and
- (e) to the optimistic idea of the thoughtless that life with all its vanities, vulgarities, vicissitudes, and make-beliefs is worth clinging to.

In His investigation of the truth in regard to life the Buddha discovered the convincing fact that life is sorrow, and in consequence He earnestly and untiringly propagated it. Truth may be unpalatable, but that it has to be grimly and courageously faced is the exhortation of the Buddha.

Are these unique truths worthy of unprejudiced study and sincere thought? The main point is that life is painted in its true colours as sorrow, and that again this ever-pursuing sorrow is shown to be an ill that can be ended. Further it is shown that in and

through life, man can, by his own efforts, make the greatest achievement conceivable to the human mind. The Buddha, in effect has said “ Face the truth of rebirth and sorrow. Realise that this sorrow has its causes in the chain of dependent causation. Similarly realise that through right knowledge there is a parallel chain of causation which can dissolve this repeating sorrow. There is a path of self-conviction and faith which will lead you by proper discipline and training to the great goal of purification and emancipation. Here I lay before you the problem in its stark nakedness with all its factors. Also I lay before you the means of solving the problem. Be a hero and wage war against ignorance in yourself and crown yourself with wisdom and its incomparable fruit .”

We have already seen that the Paṭiccasamuppāda chain of twelve nidānas (links), beginning with Avijjā (ignorance), deals with the origin and perpetuation of the sorrow of life. The parallel chain of faith, hope and joy, founded upon self-investigation and confidence, lays down the path of triumph to wisdom. From ignorance and sorrow to wisdom and happiness—such is the bitter and sweet of truth in its opposites. We give below the two formulae :—

#### *A. Chain of Dukkha—Sorrow*

Avijjā Paccayā Sankhārā  
Sankhāra Paccayā Viññāṇam  
Viññāṇa Paccayā Nāma-rūpaṃ  
Nāma-rūpa Paccayā Saḷāyatanam  
Saḷāyatana Paccayā Phasso  
Phassa Paccayā Vedanā  
Vedanā Paccayā Taṇhā  
Taṇhā Paccayā Upādānam  
Upādāna Paccayā Bhavo  
Bhava Paccayā Jāti  
Jāti Paccayā Jarā maraṇam etc.

Through Ignorance Kammaformations are conditioned ;

through Kammaformations Consciousness is conditioned ;

through Consciousness Mental and Physical Phenomena are conditioned ;

through Mental and Physical Phenomena the 6 Bases are conditioned ;  
 through the 6 Bases Contact is conditioned ;  
 through Contact Sensation is conditioned ;  
 through Sensation Craving is conditioned ;  
 through Craving Clinging is conditioned ;  
 through Clinging the Process of Becoming is conditioned ;  
 through the Process of Becoming Rebirth is conditioned ;  
 through Rebirth are conditioned Old Age and Death,  
 Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair.

#### *B. Chain of Self-found Salvation*

Dukkha Upanisā Saddhā (faith in the way out)

Saddhā Upanisā Pāmojjam (pleasant state of mind)

Pāmojja Upanisā Pīti (joy)

Pīti Upanisā Passadhi (serenity and calm)

Passadhi Upanisā Sukham (blest and happy)

Sukha Upanisā Samādhi (calmness and tranquility of mind concentrated on truth)

Samādhi Upanisā Yathābhūta Ñāṇadasanam (seeing things in their true nature)

Yathābhūta Ñāṇadassana Upanisā Nibbidā (weariness of human frailties and vanities)

Nibbidā Upanisā Virāgo (void of desire and passion)

Virāga Upanisā Vimutti (release—emancipation)

Vimutti Upanisā Khaya Nāṇam (knowledge of the end of passion)

Khaye Ñāṇa Upanisā Āsavakkhayam (complete eradication of corruptions and defilements)

By way of a side-light for the need of investigation and thought into the dire malady of the world we quote Dr. Ralston in the quest for an effective cure for Cancer: London Times, June 1, 1952. Dr. Gerald Ralston, MRCS, LRCP is the head of a large practice in the London borough of Holborn.

“ In pursuit of discovering the cause of cancer it cannot be said that organised search has failed ”, he writes. “ In every

civilized country in the world innumerable scientists of all grades, working indefatigably in all manner of institutions and laboratories, are using up uncountable man-hours, irreplaceable materials and millions of pounds—all to agonisingly small human profit.

#### **New Original Approach Needed.**

“ It seems that a new and original approach is needed to the problem. Modern research, in this field certainly, has become too stereotyped.

Many of our greatest discoveries have resulted not from endless experimentation but from the processes of native thought. What experiment did was to confirm, usually by trial and error—always a costly, wasteful business.

“ All of us who practise medicine with sincerity have given thought to the problem, and many of us have evolved ideas of Cancer. It is not impossible that in such a welter of theories the truth may be found.

“ No doubt among the speculations some may prove too bizarre for serious cogitation and some, so at variance with accepted fact and knowledge, as to deserve scant consideration. On the other hand, somebody by thought or observation may have arrived at a theory worth further investigation. ”

Dr. Ralston's words are to say the least, very suggestive and revealing. He speaks of the tremendous efforts being made through thought and experiment to discover the cause of cancer and its cure. The doctor also champions the potency of “ native thought ”. He thinks that some one with the power of profound thinking and intuition would be able to arrive at a true diagnosis and the right cure where continuous and tireless experimentation by scientists has up to now failed to achieve the desired result.

The potency of thought is supported by the late Professor Einstein. In “ Autobiographical Notes ” Einstein remarked in one place : “ I saw that mathematics was split up into numerous specialities, each of which could easily absorb the short life granted to us. Consequently, I saw myself in the position of Buridan's ass which was unable to decide upon any specific bundle of hay. This was due to the fact that my intuition was not strong enough in the field of mathematics to differentiate clearly the fundamentally important, that which is really basic, from the

rest of the more or less dispensable erudition.” In trying to satisfy his hunger for deeper knowledge and in becoming the founder of the Special Theory of Relativity and ten years later of the General Theory of Relativity, Einstein came across paradoxes and climax of thought which, he asserted, he surmounted by turning away from the multitude of things which clutter up the mind and divert it from the essential, and by the help of insight and intuition—two terms which occur more than four times in the short autobiographical notes.

While Dr. Ralston speaks of cancer, the Buddha speaks of the “Canker of Life”. And it was in the deepness of His insight and the clear intuition available to one who became enlightened that the Buddha found the day-light of truth, namely that life is a dire disease. The problem being segregated from others which clouded the issue, the Buddha, through the powerful lens of Samādhi, arrived at the proper solution of the selected basic problem.

The Buddha did not claim to be a “Chosen Person” or to belong to a “Chosen People”. He was neither an incarnation nor a mani-

festation of God. He was no selected mouth-piece for Divine revelation. He wandered on the various planes of life, and the trail of right understanding, right living and right meditation led to His self-won Enlightenment. There is the fullest force and potency in the Paṭiccasamuppāda and its accompanying formula—“From Dukkha to Full Emancipation”. The same applies to the Four Truths, which are verily “Noble and Holy”.

Is not Life a Canker—a dire malady as the Buddha says? Is not Cancer only one of the innumerable ills that afflict mankind? How are we to cure these physical ills as well as the fires of passion, anger and greed that burn us internally? Not by reliance on religions which feed on emotional appeals, faith and revelation nor by reliance on scientific wizardry, which has brought about the Hydrogen Bomb. The Buddha has laid out a way for the cure of the Canker of Life. The way lies through the realisation of the Noble Truths and of the Law of Dependent Origination. These are grim facts. They sound pessimistic, but read again the optimistic formula of glory and release given as a counterpart of the Law of Origination.



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# NANDATHERA-VATTHU

## The Story of the Elder Nanda.

### Dhammapada—aṭṭhakatthā Yamaka-vagga

( Translated by the Pāli Department, University of Rangoon )

“ Yathā agāraṃ ducchannaṃ  
vuṭṭhī samativijjhati,  
evaṃ abhāvitaṃ cittaṃ  
rāgo samativijjhati.

“ Yathā agāraṃ succhannaṃ  
vuṭṭhī na samativijjhati,  
evaṃ subhāvitaṃ cittaṃ  
rāgo na samativijjhaṭṭhi ”.

(Dhammapada, 13-14)

“ Just as rain penetrates an ill-thatched house, even so does lust penetrate an uncultivated mind ”.

“ Just as rain does not penetrate a well-thatched house, even so lust cannot penetrate a well-cultivated mind ”.

The Master while residing at Rājagaha, gave this religious discourse beginning with “ Just as the house ” (yathāgāraṃ) in connection with the Reverend Nanda.

After He had set in motion the Wheel of the *Dhamma*, the Master went to Rājagaha. While He was residing at Veḷuvana, the great king Suddhodana, saying “ Fetch my son and present Him to me ”, sent ten messengers with a thousand followers each. Of these ten who went (to the Master), the *thera* Kāḷudāyī went last of all and attained arahatship. Knowing that it was the proper time to go, the *thera* spoke in glowing terms about the journey and led the Master, accompanied by twenty thousand *arahats*, to the city of Kapilavatthu. And the Master, in the assembly of His relatives, related the Vessantara-jātaka making the meaning of *pokkhara-vassa* \* evident. On the following day when He entered the city for alms, He established his father in the fruition of *sotāpatti* by uttering the stanza beginning with “ Uttiṭṭhe nappanajjeyya ” (one should arise and should not be heedless). Then again, by reciting the stanza beginning with “ Dhammaṃ care ” (one should practise the *Dhamma*) He established Mahāpajāpatī in the fruition of *sotāpatti* and the king in the fruition of *saka-dāgāmi*. And after His meal, with reference to the virtues of Rāhulamātā, He narrated

the Candakinnara-jātaka. On the following day, while the ceremonies of consecration, entry into the house and marriage of the prince Nanda were being solemnised, the Master went there for alms, handed over the bowl to him uttered words of blessing, arose from the seat and departed without taking the bowl back from his hands. Out of respect for the Tathāgata, he also could not say “ Sir, please take back Your bowl ”. However, he thought that the Master would take it at the head of the stairs. But even there the Master did not do so. Then he thought that the Master would take it at the foot of the stairs. There too the Master did not take it back. Again he thought that the Master would take it at the courtyard. But even there, He did not. Intent on returning, the prince followed the Master reluctantly ; but out of respect for Him, he could not say “ Please take back the bowl ”. Thus he followed Him hoping that the Master would take it back at some place or other.

Meanwhile, Janapadakalyāṇī was informed thus : “ Madam, the Bhagavā has gone away taking the prince Nanda with Him. What are you going to do without him ? ” The princess Janapadakalyāṇī, with her hair partially dressed and with drops of water trickling down from her head, rushed forth and cried out, “ Please come back soon, my d ar ”. Those words of hers fell across his heart. The Master, on the other hand, without taking back the bowl from his hand, took him to the monastery and said “ Nanda, will you become a monk ? ” Out of respect for the Buddha, Nanda could not say “ No ”, but instead he said, “ Yes Sir, I shall become a monk ”. The Master said, “ Well then, please ordain Nanda ”.

On the third day after the Master had gone to the city of Kapilavatthu, He ordained Nanda. On the seventh day of His arrival the mother of the prince Rāhula, having adorned him with ornaments sent the prince to the Bhagavā saying “ Dear son, look at the monk, who is accompanied by twenty thou-

\* “ Lotus-leaf rain ”; a portentous shower of rain, serving as a special kind of light test shower in which certain objects are wetted, but those showing a disinclination towards moisture, like the lotus-leaf, are left untouched.

sand monks, having golden and excellent complexion like that of the god Brahmā. He is your father Who had abundant hidden treasure which we have not seen since He left home. Go and ask for your inheritance saying 'Dear father, I am the prince who would become a paramount sovereign after my consecration. I need wealth. Please give it to me. Indeed father, the son is the rightful owner of the father's possession.' No sooner had the prince gone to the Bhagavā than he felt filial affection for his father and with joy at heart he said, "Monk. Pleasant is the shade cast by you" as also many other words befitting him. After His meal the Bhagavā uttered words of blessing, rose up from His seat and departed. The prince also followed Him saying "O monk, give me my inheritance; give me my inheritance, O monk". The Bhagavā did not send the prince back. Even the attendants were not able to make him turn back from following the Bhagavā. Thus, he went straight to the monastery together with Him. Thereupon, the Bhagavā thought: "The paternal property, which this one wishes for, will lead to the rounds of birth and it brings about ruin.\* Now, I will give him the sevenfold noble treasure which I have acquired at the foot of the *Bodhi* tree. I shall make him the owner of the spiritual inheritance". Then He said to the Venerable Sāriputta, "Well then Sāriputta, do please ordain the prince Rāhula".

After the prince had been ordained, the king became extremely unhappy. Unable to bear the sorrow, he made the Bhagavā know his feelings and asked for a favour saying "Lord, it would be well if the Venerable Ones would not in future ordain a boy without the consent of his parents". The Bhagava granted him the favour. Again, one day, after the Bhagavā had finished His breakfast at the royal palace, the king, said: "Venerable Sir, while you were practising austerities, a deity approached me and said, "Your son is dead". Not believing the words, I rejected her, saying, "My son will not die without attaining Enlightenment". Being told thus the Bhagavā said, "How could you do so now? Formerly also, when you were shown the bones and told that your son was dead, you did not believe". And with reference to this incident, the Master related the Mahādhammapāla-jātaka. At

the end of the discourse the king became established in the fruition of *anāgāmi*.

Having thus established His father in the three fruitions, on the following day the Bhagavā went to Rājagaha accompanied by the Order of monks. He had promised Anāthapiṇḍika that He would visit Sāvatti and when the construction of the great Jetavana monastery was completed, the Master went to Jetavana and took up His residence there.

While the Master was residing at Jetavana, the Venerable Nanda became discontented and spoke about it to the monks thus: "Friends, I am practising the holy practice without finding delight in it; I can no longer continue with it. I shall give up the precepts and shall revert to the low life of a layman". The Bhagavā heard of it, summoned the Venerable Nanda and asked, "Is it true as reported that you told many monks that you did not find delight in the practice of the holy life and that you were unable to continue with it and that you intend to give up the precepts and revert to the low life?" He admitted saying "Yes, Your Reverence". "Why is it that you are practising the holy practice without finding delight in it, are unable to continue with it and intend to give up the precepts and revert to the low life?" Venerable Sir, when I left the house, the Sākyan lady Janapadakalyāṇī, with her hair partially dressed and with drops of water trickling down from her head told me "Please come back soon, my dear". And remembering her words, Sir, I find no delight in the holy practice. I am unable to continue with it. I intend to give up the precepts and revert to the low life". Then the Bhagavā, holding the Venerable Nanda by the arm, took him to the Tāvātimsa world of gods, by His supernatural power. On the way, the Master showed him a singed female monkey that had lost her ears, nose and tail, seated on a burnt stump in a scorched field and also showed him five hundred nymphs, with feet red like those of the doves. who had come to serve the Sakka at the Tāvātimsa abode.

And having shown these, He asked: "What do you think, O Nanda, which one is more beautiful, pretty and charming, the Sākyan lady Janapadakalyāṇī or these five hundred nymphs with red feet?" "Lord, she, the

\* Pāli is: Vaṭṭānugatam vighātam. Vaṭṭānugatam means "will lead to 3 kinds of vaṭṭa, namely, (1) kilesa-vaṭṭa (defilements), (2) kamma-vaṭṭa (kamma or actions) and (3) vipāka-vaṭṭa (effects)", Vighātam means "It is subject to ruin and also a cause for ruination".



Sākya lady Janadakalyānī, is just like that singed female monkey whose ears, nose and tail have been cut off. When compared with these five hundred nymphs, she cannot be reckoned with them nor does she come up even to a fraction nor even to a minute fraction of them. In fact, these five hundred nymphs are more beautiful, pretty and charming". 'Nanda, be of good cheer. I guarantee you will be able to get the five hundred nymphs with red feet". "Lord, if the Bhagavā assures me that I could get the five hundred nymphs with red feet, I shall be happy to practise the holy life under the Bhagavā".

Then the Bhagavā, taking the Venerable Nanda with Him, disappeared from there and reappeared at Jetavana, There the monks heard: "It is said that the Venerable Nanda, the brother of the Bhagavā, who is the son of His maternal aunt, is practising the holy life for the sake of the nymphs, and that the Bhagavā has guaranteed to get for him the five hundred nymphs with red feet". Then the monks, who were the friends of Nanda, started addressing him by the terms "hireling" and "mercenary". They also used to say, "People say that the Venerable Nanda is a hireling and a mercenary. He is practising the holy practice for the sake of the nymphs and that the Bhagavā has promised to get for him the five hundred nymphs with red feet". The Venerable Nanda, being thus tormented, put to shame and held in contempt by the terms "hireling" and "mercenary" used by the monks who were his friends, lived in seclusion, became diligent ardent and steadfast, and before long, through super-knowledge he realised and attained even in this very life the supreme goal of noble practice, for the sake of which sons of noble families go forth from household life to the houseless state He realized that rebirth had come to an end, that the holy practice had been practised and all that had to be done had been done and that there was no further existence for him. Thus he became one of the *arahats*.

Then at night, a certain deity, illuminating the entire Jetavana, approached the Bhagavā made obeisance to Him and said, "Lord, the Venerable Nanda, the son of the maternal aunt of the Bhagavā, through the destruction

of the biases\* has himself in this very life realized and acquired by super-knowledge the emancipation of the mind which is freedom attained through wisdom and which is free from biases. The Bhagavā too was aware of it that Nanda, through the destruction of biases, had himself in this very life realized and acquired by super-knowledge the emancipation of the mind which is freedom attained through wisdom and which is free from biases.

At the end of that night, the Venerable Nanda also approached the Bhagavā, paid obeisance to Him and said, "Lord, the Bhagavā had promised to get me five hundred nymphs with red feet. May I, Sir, release the Bhagavā from a promise?" "O Nanda, I myself know in my own mind that you, through the destruction of biases, even in this very life, have yourself realized and acquired by super-knowledge the emancipation of the mind which is freedom attained through wisdom and which is free from biases. And the deity too informed me that the Venerable Nanda, had in this very life realized and acquired by super-knowledge the emancipation of the mind which is freedom attained through wisdom and which is free from biases. "O Nanda, since your mind has been released and is without any attachment, I too am released from the promise". Then the Bhagavā, knowing this fact, made this solemn utterance at that time:

"He who has escaped from the bog of sensual pleasure has crushed the thorn of desire and has attained the destruction of ignorance, is not affected by pleasure or pain".

One day the monks asked the Venerable Nanda: "Friend Nanda, you used to declare that you were dissatisfied. How are you faring now?" "Friend, no more have I any attachment to the lay life". Hearing that the monks, saying "The Venerable Nanda says that which is not true, and says something else; formerly he used to say that he was dissatisfied, but now he says that he has no more attachment to the lay life", went to the Bhagavā and informed Him of that matter. The Bhagavā said, "O monks, formerly the nature of Nanda was like that of an ill-thatched house.

\*ĀSAVA "Influxes", cankers, as Kāmāsava, sensuous bias; bhāvāsava, bias for existence; diṭṭhāsava bias of views; avijjāsava, bias of ignorance.

But now, it has grown to be like that of a well-thatched one. From the time he saw the nymphs, he has been striving to attain the summit of the obligations of monkhood and he has reached it". Thus saying, the Master uttered these verses:

“Yathā agāraṃ ducchannaṃ  
vuṭṭhī samativijjhati,  
evaṃ abhāvitaṃ cittaṃ  
rāgo samativi- jjhati.

“Yathā agāraṃ succhannaṃ  
vuṭṭhī na samativijjhati,  
evaṃ subhāvitaṃ cittaṃ  
rāgo na samativijjhatīti”.

Just as rain penetrates an ill-thatched house, even so does lust penetrate an uncultivated mind”.

“Just as rain does not penetrate a well-thatched house, even so passion cannot penetrate a well-cultivated mind.”

Therein, “agāraṃ” means any kind of house; “ducchannaṃ” means sparsely thatched, full of holes: “samativijjhati” means the rain water leaks through; “abhāvitaṃ” means just as the rain water leaks into that house, so lust penetrates deeply an uncultivated mind which is devoid of mental development; it is not merely lust but all the mental impurities, such as hatred, delusion and pride which penetrate deeply into such a mind. “Subhāvitaṃ” means well-cultivated in the development of quietude and insight; the impurities, such as lust and so on, cannot penetrate deeply into such a mind just as the rain water cannot leak into a well-thatched house.

At the end of the utterance of the stanza many attained to the fruition of *sotāpatti* and so on and the discourse too became beneficial to many.

Thereupon, the monks raised the matter in the preaching hall thus: “Friends, the Buddhas are indeed marvellous. The Master, making the nymphs the object of allurements, subdued the Venerable Nanda who was discontented because of Janapada-kalayāṇī”. The Master came and asked, “Monks, what are you talking about sitting together here?” Being told about the subject, the Master said, “Monks, it is not only now, formerly also I tamed him, tempting him with a female” and related the story of the past.

Long ago, when Brahmadata was ruling in Benaras, there was a merchant by the name of Kappaṭa who was a citizen of Benaras. He had a donkey who used to carry a pot-load of goods. The merchant used to travel seven *yojanas* a day. Once, taking a load on the back of the donkey he went to Taxila and let loose the donkey to graze till the wares were disposed of. Then that donkey of his, while grazing on the bund of a ditch, saw a she-ass and went to her. Greeting him she asked, “Where do you come from?” “From Benaras” he replied. “On what business?” “To carry on trade”. “How big is the load you carry?” “A pot-load” “Carrying this load, how many *yojanas* do you cover?” “Seven *yojanas*”. “Wherever you go, is there anybody to attend to your feet and back?” “No, there is none”. “That being so you must be suffering a great deal”.

Although there can be no one to attend to the feet and so on of the animals, she said this in order to forge the fetter of sensual desire. Because of her words, the donkey became dissatisfied.

After having disposed of the goods, Kappaṭa went to him and said, “Come dear, let us go”. The donkey replied, “May you go I shall not”. Thereupon, the merchant requested him again and again, and thought “I shall scold him and take him along with me although he is unwilling to do so”. Then he uttered this stanza:

“I shall make a thorny goad, measuring  
sixteen finger-breadths and hurt  
your body; beware, O donkey”.

Hearing that the donkey said, “In that case, I too know what is to be done to you” and uttered this verse:

“If you will make for me a thorny goad  
measuring sixteen finger-breadths,  
I shall stand on my fore feet, lift  
up the hind ones and knock out  
your teeth. Beware, O Kappaṭa”.

Hearing that the merchant wondered “What is the reason for this donkey to speak thus?” and looking hither and thither he saw that she-ass and thought, “It is just possible that this donkey has been prompted by her. I will take him along with me having enticed him by a she-ass saying “I will bring such a one for you”, and uttered this stanza:

“Donkey, I wish you to know that I would bring for you a wife, a four-footed female, who has a beautiful face like a conch-shell, and is graceful in all respects”. Hearing that, the donkey was pleased at heart and spoke the following verse:

“Kappaṭa, if you will bring for me a wife, a four-footed female, who has a beautiful face like a conch-shell and is graceful in all respects, I will go fourteen *yojanas* more”.

Then Kappaṭa took the donkey with him saying “Well then, come on” and went back to his own place. After a few days, the donkey said to the merchant: “Didn’t you tell me that you would bring me a wife?” The merchant said: “Yes, I did. I will not

break my word. I will bring a wife for you. But I will give food for you alone. It is your concern whether it would be sufficient for you and your companion. As a result of both of you living together, children will be born to you. It is your concern whether the food would be sufficient for you together with many others”.

Even while he was speaking thus the donkey lost his interest in the female.

The Teacher having referred to this sermon concluded the *jātaka* saying “Monks, at that time, the female-donkey was janapada kalyāṇī, the donkey was Nanda, the merchant was I myself. Thus, formerly too, I could tame him with the allurements of a female”.



“Monks, there will be in the long road of the future monks who long for fine robes; and they, with this longing, will leave the ways of wearing rags, will leave the forest wilderness, the outland bed and seat; will move to village, town or ruler’s capital and make their dwelling there; and because of a robe, they will commit many things unseemly, unfit.

Again, monks will long for rich alms-food,...will leave the ways of the common round, the forest wilderness...and will move to village, town or ruler’s capital...seeking out, as it were with the tip of the tongue, tasty morsels; and because of alms-food, they will commit many things unseemly, unfit.

Again, monks will long for a goodly bed and seat,...will leave the ways of the tree-root abode, the forest wilderness...and will move to village, town or ruler’s capital...; and because of a bed and seat, they will commit things unseemly, unfit.

Again, monks will live in company with nuns and novices in training; and when this shall be, it may be expected that the monks will take no delight in leading the godly life; and either they will commit some foul act or give up the training and return to the lower life.

Moreover, monks, there will be in the long road of the future monks who will live in company with the Park folk and novices; and when this shall be, it may be expected that they will live and feast themselves on the plenty of hoarded stocks and will mark out their lands and crops.

Monks, this is the fifth fear in the way which, though not yet risen, will arise in the future. Be ye fully awake for it; and being awake, strive to get rid of it.”

## BUDDHA GAYA IN THE BUDDHA JAYANTI YEAR

FREDA BEDI, M.A. (OXON)

Buddha Gaya at Jayanti time was a dream come true. We arrived the day before the celebration, very early in the morning, and, in the first hush of dawn, the feet of our rickshaw puller beat lightly and methodically on the road. A simple little road, and a simple countryside, and all the time we were thinking: "It was on this soil that the Buddha walked, to this place he had to come to gain enlightenment. According to tradition, it is this soil too that will be the scene of enlightenment of future Buddhas." It was cool at that early hour, but the fields were parched, but for the well-watered patches of artichoke leaves, heart-shaped and dazzlingly green against the monotone of the landscape. Here and there a few palms were gathered in clusters: the few shops by the wayside had round palm leaf fans, so functional and beautiful in design that the idea occurred to me that this very same must have been in use in the Buddha's day.

The dried-up river bed of the Neranjara river was left behind and we were in the narrow village street, lined with provision shops and tea stalls, and bright with the orange and yellow robes of the Bhikkhus. My school-boy son amused himself with guessing... "This is a *bhikkhu* from Ceylon, and this is a *bhikkhu* from Burma...and where do you think *this* one comes from?" And then we saw the Mahabodhi temple. Exquisite, in the early pale sun, every detail of the magnificent tower was visible. But it was not the carving that was remarkable, rather the sheer balance of the massive building. Square based, it rose a hundred and seventy feet to a cylindrical neck and "hti", and it was surrounded by a garden interspersed with stupas of all sizes, and bushes of flowering *chandni*.

We had to hurry past, to the room in the Community Project Guest House that had been reserved for us. From there we went on to the Mahabodhi Society Rest House, where many pilgrims from Ceylon were staying and where a real welcome was awaiting us from Sri Barua, who was patiently serving many monks and pilgrims on behalf of the Society.

But we were impatient to get away and to see the centre of this drama of the pilgrimage. The tree. There it was, thick with green shade. It seemed as if it was itself in medita-

tion, conscious and yet oblivious of the pilgrims who had come in their millions through the centuries. It had defied time. Now a hundred feet high, and rich in foliage, it has arisen time and again from the original roots, as if to prove that the Dhamma would continue to grow and spread in this world of suffering.

We stood beside it, hushed. To one side, in the exact spot where the Tathāgata sat, was a stone slab with a carved base, traditionally known as the Vajārāsana. It had a few lights on it, and some simple food offerings. So this was the spot, dappled with the shade of the shining leaves, where the Enlightened One found the answer to the sorrows of the world, and the Path to Nibbāna! The very air breathed peace.

During the day and most of the night we watched it. In the evening the pilgrims began arriving in groups. Some Ceylon pilgrims in the white "Sil" dress came in a procession with music and many cries, bearing long strings of flags and bunting. Some were embroidered on silk with pictures of the Buddha, with texts in Pāli. Many were very beautiful. They were attached to the tree branches, the long silken banners hanging from the high branches. And so it continued.

Many kept vigil that night and with the first streaks of the dawn of the anniversary a Burmese procession reached the foot of the tree. Led by Upāsakās carrying rich gifts, and about thirty learned Sayadaws and Bhikkhus, it was mainly composed of women, from village, township, or town. Dressed in bright longyi skirts and white blouses, they carried earthen water pitchers on their heads, for a long distance, to pour them at the foot of the precious Tree. Small girls danced in traditional style, and young men beat the drums and sang. It was happy, carefree; Burmese in spirit and form. The small group made the sacred circle round the shrine, past the stupas and the Cankamana with its embossed lotuses. They came back to join the larger procession that formed at about six in front of the Mahabodhi Society offices.

Here was what, in India, is called "ronuk". Cheerful noise and good spirits. Leading

the procession came the Lamas from Tibet, Sikkim, Leh and Darjeeling in their maroon robes and helmet-like headdresses. Banners, gongs and carved horns were an integral part of the display. Following them Ceylon monks and lay groups and the Burmese processionists, student monks, from Nalanda, representing Thailand, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos. Indian Buddhists, mainly from the old established groups in Chittagong, East Bengal, were also there.. some of them Pakistan citizens.

If I were asked what struck me when looking at the pilgrims, I should say it was their great devotion. Strikingly, most of them from all countries, looked as if they came from unsophisticated families. Some were even poor, in creased and cheap clothes, but radiant with the joy of being able to visit the shrine on this day of days. Later, I thought, the great dignitaries of the Sangha and the Governments may come ; there are the rich who will wait for the cool pleasant weather of the Indian winter. But nothing could move me more than these simple people, who have spent all they had in sacrifice and devotion. I looked at the plates they carried, full of pieces of cucumber and watermelon. Plain offerings ; plain people. But what an aura of *Mettā* irradiated them, and the villagers of Gaya, already gathering in their hundreds to be the spectators of this historic scene.

The procession made its way to the foot of the Bodhi Tree and formed itself into groups where the Five Precepts and the Eight Precepts were taken. Robes and parasols and even the sandals of the monks were hung on the tree, until it gave the impression of being a mass of offerings. Learned monks showed their skill of climbing, and placed the gifts higher and higher in the branches.

Many had planned to become novice monks (*Sāmaneras*) under the tree but plans are difficult to mature, and the only man whose good Kamma was enough to ensure the fruition of that wish was a Bengali Buddhist *brahmachari* who took the robes with the classic request to the Mahā Theras to be taken as pupil. A week later he was followed by the ten-year-old son of the Ambassador

of the Union of Burma in India, Sithu U Aung Soe, and the junior member of the Embassy Staff.

All the parties came, with flags and drums, and offerings. By the night when the *Vihāra* was flooded with golden light, ten thousand people thronged the streets, big meetings were addressed by the Governor of Bihar, and the Ministers of the Government, Sri Abraham, and members of the Temple Committee. At the foot of the shrine, Mrs. Nalini Moonesinghe of Ceylon and many willing volunteers filled and lighted the first of the 84,000 oil lamps that she is offering ; side by side the junior *lamas* filled and lighted *ghee* lamps in brass receptacles.

The newspaper men made their last notes ; the All India Radio folded up the tape-recording equipment. Comments were made ; opinions exchanged. There were many good words for the new Committee of the Temple, and those local officers who had cleared the surrounding land of huts, and housed their occupants in the neat little homes on the Community Project. By the end of the rains, a new part will have been laid out.

The golden tower rose like a dream in the cool air of the late night. All were resting, on the grass, in the open, under the trees. A great peace descended, as the last pilgrims slept and the last visitors made their way homeward.

The holy year had begun. From then on the stream of visitors has been mounting. It will reach flood tide in October and November, and the Bihar Government is already planning how to meet that challenge to its hospitality, with housing, tents, food, understanding advice.

Buddha Gaya .. Rajgir .. Nalanda .. Sarnath .. Lumbini .. Kasia. It is a refrain that is echoing in a million hearts wherever the Dhamma of the Buddha is preached. Its music will draw them inevitably to his Indian homeland before the Full Moon of Vaisakh, 1957, swings slowly over temple and rooftop and gilds what to Buddhist hearts are the most precious leaves in the world.

## MORAL CAUSATION

*Bhadanta Piyadassi Mahā Thera*

Religion is something to be approached by reasoning and reflection. If, after a thorough study, a teaching appeals to one's heart and mind, let one adopt its principles in the conduct of life. It is foolish to try to follow a creed when one is dissatisfied with it on reasonable grounds. One must be upright. One must be true to oneself and others. Self-deception leads to mental conflict and unhappiness. None has the right to tamper with the freedom of another in the choice of a religion. Freedom of thought is the birthright of every individual. It is wrong to force one out of the way of life which accords with one's outlook and character, spiritual inclinations and tendencies. Compulsion in every form is bad. It is unpardonable when it affects a man's inner life. It is coercion of the blackest kind to make a man gulp down beliefs for which he has no relish. Such forced feeding cannot be good for anybody, anywhere.

A man must be allowed to grow in that way which will bring out his best. Any regimentation of thought is direct interference with that unfolding of the spirit. A Buddhist considers such interference as intolerance of the worst kind.

Purification comes not from an external agency and self-purification can only come to one who is free to think out his own problems without let or hindrance. Others may help if one is ready to receive such help or seeks it. The highest happiness is attained only through self-knowledge, self-realization, self-awakening to the truth. One must put forth the appropriate effort and break the shackles that have kept one long in bondage and get at freedom from sorrow by unremitting self-exertion, and not through the mediation of another. Buddhist monks are not priests who perform rites of sacrifice. They do not administer sacraments and pronounce absolution. A Bhikkhu cannot and does not stand as an intermediary between men and supernatural powers ; for Buddhism teaches that each individual, whether layman or monk, is solely responsible for his own liberation. Hence, there is no need to win the favour of a mediating priest.

“ By ourselves we cease to do evil  
By ourselves we become pure,  
No one saves us, but ourselves,  
No one can, and no one may ;  
We ourselves must walk the Path,  
Buddhas only teach the way.”

It was the Buddha, who for the first time in the world's history, taught that salvation could be attained without a saviour. “ By precept and example, he was an exponent of the strenuous life.” ‘Strive on with diligence’ (Appamādena sampādeṭha !) are the last words of the Master.

Each living being is his own creator ; no other creator do we see in the world beyond our own action. By our action we make our character, personality, individuality. We are all self-made. Therefore does the Buddha say that we are heirs of our own deeds, bearers of our own deeds and that our deeds are the womb out of which we spring and that through our deeds alone we must change for the better, remake ourselves and win liberation from ill. How can it be otherwise ? If we through our ignorance and our passions, in the long night of *samsāric* wandering, had not shaped ourselves, how could there be such difference and dissimilarity between living beings as we see in the world to-day ?

Can we conceive of a mind, a single mind, vast enough to plan out such a varied sentient world as we see around us ? And, if someone else by a creative act made us out of nothing, who created that mighty brain ? For nothing can escape the law of condition and cause which is patent in the world to all but those who will not see. Only a terrible blindness to the actuality of life can postulate any cause other than actions born of craving and ignorance for the existence of sentient beings. Nevertheless, we do not go out of our way to condemn or belittle the conceptual doctrinal systems of the non-Buddhists.

The teaching of moral causation (*Kamma*), which is the one and only reasonable explanation for the mass of suffering called the world, cannot be overthrown. All explanations of sentient existence, except moral causation, are fully unsatisfactory ; for they do not take into account the real function of the intangible, but nevertheless, deciding factor of consciousness (*Nāma*) in the process of becoming (*Bhava*). But when one sees sentient life as the working, principally, of causality in its

aspect of conscious process, then one comes to know and grasp the fount of life as *ignorance* ; and the countless forms of sentience as expressions of the drive of many coloured passion which urges all from life to life, arising and bursting asunder as bubbles in the vast sea of Samsāra. Then one comes to cognize the meaning of moral causation through the phenomenon of rebirth :

“ Who toiled a slave may come anew a  
Prince  
For gentle worthiness and merit won ;  
Who ruled a King may wander earth in  
rags  
For things done and undone.”  
(*Light of Asia*)

We are reaping what we have sown in the past ; some of our reapings, we know, we have even sown in this life. In the self-same way, our actions here mould our hereafter and thus we begin to understand our position in this mysterious universe.

We, therefore, do not hasten to blame or praise a Deva or a specially graced person for the ills we suffer and the good we experience. No, not even the Buddha could redeem us from *samsāra's* bond. Each individual should make the exertion necessary for his emancipation. In our own human hands lies the power to mould our lives. Others may lend us a helping hand indirectly, but deliverance from suffering must be wrought

out and fashioned by each one for himself upon the anvil of his own actions.

We believe that :

“ Whatever a man does, the same he in  
himself will find ;  
The good man good ; and evil he that  
evil has designed ;  
And so our deeds are all like seeds, and  
bring forth fruit in kind.”

We see a reign of natural law, unending cause and effect and naught else ruling the universe. The whole world is subject to the Law of Cause and Effect. The entire world is governed and controlled by this unending cause and effect, in other words, action and reaction.

We cannot think of anything in this world of sentient things that is causeless and unconditioned. Although the Buddhists believe in the Law of Cause and Effect, they emphatically deny a “*First Cause*” and, that is the reason, that is the cause, why Buddhists do not attribute anything to a “*First Cause*” with a capital “*F*” and a capital “*C*”. If any posit a “*First Cause*”, one is justified in asking for the source of that “*First Cause*”.

As Bertrand Russell says in “*Why I am not a Christian*,” “There is no reason to suppose that the world had a beginning at all. The idea that things must have a beginning is really due to the poverty of our imagination.”

Just as, brethren, of all starry bodies whatsoever the radiance does not equal one-sixteenth part of the moon's radiance; just as the moon is reckoned chief of them, even so is it with the perceiving of impermanence.....

Just as, brethren, in the autumn season, when the sky is opened up and cleared of clouds, the sun, leaping up into the firmament, drives away all darkness from the heavens, and shines and burns and flashes forth; even so, brethren, the perceiving of impermanence, if practised and enlarged, wears out all sensual lust, wears out all lust for body, all desire for rebirth, all ignorance, wears out, tears out all conceit of “I am.”

And in what way, brethren, does it so wear them out?

It is by seeing: “Such is body: such is the arising of body: such is the ceasing of body. Such is feeling, perception, the activities, such is consciousness, its arising and its ceasing.”

Even thus practised and enlarged, brethren, does the perceiving of impermanence wear out all sensual lust, all lust for body, all desire for rebirth, all ignorance, wears out, tears out all conceit of “I am.”

*Samyutta Nikāya, XXII-102.*

“NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA SAMBUDDHASSA.”

## CULTURE OF MIND

*Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya (Allan Bennett)*

THE Religion of the Buddha is in the most eminent sense of the word, a Practical Philosophy. It is not a collection of dogmas which are to be accepted and believed with an unquestioning and unintelligent faith, but a series of statements and propositions which, in the first place, are to be intellectually grasped and comprehended; in the second, to be applied to every action of our daily lives, to be practised and lived, up to the fullest extent of our powers. This fact of the essentially practical nature of our Religion is again and again insisted upon in the Holy Books.

Sahassamapi ce gāthā anatta-pada-  
sāmpitā  
Ekam gāthā-padam seyyo yam sutvā  
upasammati.

*Dhammapada viii. 2.*

Though one man should know by heart a thousand stanzas of the Law, and not practise it, he has not understood the Dhamma. That man who knows and practises one stanza of the Law, he has understood the Dhamma, he is the true follower of the Buddha. It is the practice of the Dhamma that constitutes the true Buddhist, not the mere knowledge of its tenets; it is the carrying out of the Five Precepts, and not their repetition in the Pāli tongue; it is the bringing home into our daily lives of the Great Laws of Love and Righteousness that marks a man as *sammāditṭhi*, and not the mere appreciation of the truth of that Dhamma as a beautiful and poetic statement of Laws which are too hard to follow. The Dhamma has to be lived, to be acted up to, to be felt as the supreme ideal in our hearts, as the supreme motive of our lives; and he who does this to the best of his ability is the right follower of the Master;—not he who calls himself “Buddhist” but whose life is empty of the love the Buddha taught.

And because betimes our lives are very painful, because to do right, to follow the Good Law in all our ways is very difficult, therefore we should not despair of ever being able to walk in the way we have learned, and resign ourselves to living a life full only of worldly desire and ways. For has not the Master said :—

Mappamaññetha puññassa na mantam  
āgamissati  
Udabindu-nipātena udakumbhopi purati  
Purati dhiro puññassa thoka thokampi  
ācinam.

*Dhammapada ix. 7*

“Let no man think lightly of good, saying, ‘it will not come nigh me’ — for even by the falling of drops, the water-jar is filled. The wise man becomes full of Good, even if he gather it little by little ?” He who does his best, he who strives, albeit failingly, to follow what is good, to eschew what is evil, that man will grow daily the more powerful for his striving ; and every wrong desire overcome, each loving and good impulse acted up to, will mightily increase our power to resist evil, will ever magnify our power of living the life that is right.

Now, the whole of this practice of Buddhism, the whole of the Good Law which we who call ourselves “Buddhists” should strive to follow, has been summed up by the Tathāgata in one single stanza :—

Sabba-pāpassa akaraṇam kusalassa  
upasampadā  
Sa-citta-pariyodapanam etam Bud-  
dhānasāsanam.

*Dhammapada xiv. 5*

“To avoid the performance of evil actions, to gain merit by the performance of good acts : and the purification of all our thoughts ;—this is the Teaching of all the Buddhas.”

And so we that call ourselves Buddhists have so to live that we may carry out the three rules here laid down. We all know what it is to avoid doing evil :— we detail the acts that are ill each time we take *Pañca Sīla*. The taking of life, the taking of what does not rightly belong to us, unlawful sexual intercourse, speaking what is not true, or is cruel and unkind, and indulging in drugs and drinks that undermine the mental and moral faculties—these are the evil actions that we must avoid. Living in peace and love, returning good for evil, having reverence and patience and humility—these are some part of what we know for good. And so we can all understand, can all try to live up to the first two clauses of this stanza, can all endeavour to put them



into practice in our daily lives. But the way to purify the mind, the way to cultivate the thoughts that are good, to suppress and overcome the thoughts that are evil ; the practices by which the mind is to be trained and cultivated; of these things less is known, they are less practised, and less understood.

The object of this essay is to set forth what is written in the books of these methods of cultivating and purifying the mind; — to set forth how this third rule can be followed and lived up to ; for in one way it is the most important of all, it really includes the other two rules, and is their crown and fruition. The avoidance of evil, the performance of good : these things will but increase the merit of our destinies, will lead but to new lives, happier, and so more full of temptation, than that we now enjoy. And after that merit, thus gained, is spent and gone, the whirling of the great Wheel of Life will bring us again to evil and unhappy lives ;— for not by the mere storing of merit can freedom be attained, it is not by mere merit that we can come to the Great Peace. This merit-gaining is secondary in importance to the purification and culture of our thought; but it is essential, because only by the practice of *Sīla* comes the power of Mental Concentration that makes us free.

In order that we may understand how this final and principal aim of our Buddhist Faith is to be attained, before we can see why particular practices should thus purify the mind, it is necessary that we should first comprehend the nature of this mind itself— this thought that we seek to purify and to liberate.

In the marvellous system of psychology which has been declared to us by our Teacher, the *Citta* or thought-stuff is shewn to consist of innumerable elements which are called *Dhamma* or *Saṅkhāra*. If we translate *Dhamma* or *Saṅkhāra* as used in this context as “Tendencies”, we will probably come nearest to the English meaning of the word. When a given act has been performed a number of times ;—when a given thought has arisen in our minds a number of times, there is a definite tendency to the repetition of that act, a definite tendency to the recurrence of that thought. Thus each mental *Dhamma*, each *Saṅkhāra*, tends to constantly produce its like, and be in turn reproduced ; and so, at first sight it would seem as though there were no possibility of altering the total composition of one’s *Saṅkhāras*, no possibility of suppressing the evil *Dhammas*, no

possibility of augmenting the states that are good. But, whilst our Master has taught us of this tendency to reproduce that is so characteristic of all mental states, he has also shewn us how this reproductive energy of the *Saṅkhāras* may itself be employed to the suppression of evil states, and to the culture of the states that are good. For if a man has many and powerful *Saṅkhāras* in his nature, which tend to make him angry or cruel, we are taught that he can definitely overcome those evil *Saṅkhāras* by the practice of mental concentration on *Saṅkhāras* of an opposite nature ;—in practice by devoting a definite time each day to meditating on thoughts of pity and of love. Thus he increases the *Saṅkhāras* in his mind that tend to make men loving and pitiful.

Na hi verena verāni weani sammantidha  
kudācanam  
Averena ca sammanti esadhammo  
sanantano.

*Dhammapada* i. 5.

“Hatred ceaseth not by hatred at any time,  
hatred ceaseth by Love alone.”

Then do those evil *Saṅkhāras* of his nature, those tendencies to anger and to cruelty, disappear before the rise of new good tendencies of love and of pity, even as the darkness of the night fades in the glory of the dawn. Thus we see that one way—and the best way—of overcoming bad *Saṅkhāras*, is the systematic cultivation, by dint of meditation, of such qualities as are opposed to the evil tendencies we desire to eliminate ; and in the central and practical feature of the instance adduced, the practice of definite meditation or mental concentration upon the good *Saṅkhāras*, we have the key to the entire system of the Purification and Culture of the mind, which constitutes the practical working basis of the Buddhist Religion.

If we consider the action of a great and complex engine—such a machine as drives a steamship through the water—we will see that there is, first and foremost, one central and all operating source of energy : in this case the steam which is generated in the boilers. This energy in itself is neither good nor bad—it is simply *Power* ; and whether that power does the useful work of moving the ship, or the bad work of breaking loose and destroying and spoiling the ship, and scalding men to death, and so on, all depends upon the correct and co-ordinated operation of all the various parts of that complex machinery.

If the slide-valves of the great cylinders open a little too soon and so admit the steam before the proper time, much power will be lost in overcoming the resistance of the steam itself. If they remain open too long, the expansive force of the steam will be wasted, and so again power will be lost ; and if they open too late, much of the momentum of the engine will be used up in moving uselessly the great mass of machinery. And so it is with every part of the engine. In every part the prime mover is that concentrated expansive energy of the steam ; but that energy must be applied in each diverse piece of mechanism in exactly the right way, at exactly the right time : or either the machine will not work at all, or much of the energy of the steam will be wasted in overcoming its own opposing force.

So it is with this subtle machinery of the mind ;—a mechanism infinitely more complex, capable of far more power for good or for evil, than the most marvellous of man's mechanical achievements, than the most powerful engine ever made by human hands. One great engine, at its worst, exploding, may destroy a few hundred lives, at its best may carry a few thousand men, may promote trade, and the comfort of some few hundred lives ; but who can estimate the power of one human mind, whether for good or for evil ? One such mind, the mind of a man like Napoleon, may bring about the tortured death of three million men, may wreck States and religions and dynasties, and cause untold misery and suffering ; another mind, employing the same manner of energy, but rightly using that energy for the benefit of others, may, like the Buddha, bring hope into the hopeless lives of millions upon millions of human beings, may increase by a thousandfold the pity and love of a third of humanity, may aid innumerable lakhs of beings to come to that peace for which we all crave—that Peace the way to which is so difficult to find.

But the energy which these two minds employed is one and the same. That energy lies hidden in every human brain, it is generated with every pulsation of every human heart, it is the prerogative of every being, and the sole mover in the world of men. There is no idea or thought, there is no deed, whether good or bad in this world accomplished, but that supreme energy, that steam-power of our mental mechanism is the mover and the cause. It is by use of this energy that the child learns how to speak ; it is by its

power that Napoleon could bring sorrow into thousands of lives ; it is by this power that the Buddha conquered one-third of the hearts of men ; it is by that force that so many have followed Him on the way which He declared;—the Nibbāna Magga, the way to the Unutterable Peace. The name of that power is Mental Concentration, and there is nothing in this world, whether for good or for evil, but is wrought by its application. It weaves upon the Loom of Time the fabric of men's characters and destinies. Name and form twin-threads, with which it blends the quick-flying shuttles of that Loom, men's good and evil thoughts and deeds ; and the pattern of that fabric is the outcome of innumerable lives.

It is by the power of this Samādhi that the baby learns to walk, it is by its power that Newton weighed these suns and worlds. It is the steam-power of this human organism, and what it does to make us great or little, good or bad, is the result of the way the mechanism of the mind, all these complex Saṅkhāras, apply and use that energy . If the Saṅkhāras act well together, if their varying functions are well co-ordinated, then that man has great power, either for good or for evil ; and when you see one of weak mind and will, you may be sure that the action of his Saṅkhāras are working one against another ; and so the central power, this power of Samādhi, is wasted in one part of the mind in overcoming its own energy in another.

If a skilful engineer, knowing well the functions of each separate part of an engine, were to have to deal with a machine whose parts did not work in unison, and which thus frittered away the energy supplied to it, he would take his engine part by part, adjusting here a valve and there an eccentric ; he would observe the effect of his alterations with every subsequent movement of the whole engine, and so, little by little, would set all that machinery to work together, till the engine was using to the full the energy supplied to it. And this is what we have to do with this mechanism of our minds—each one for himself. First, to earnestly investigate our component Saṅkhāras, to see wherein we are lacking, to see wherein our mental energy is well used and where it runs to waste ; and then to keep adjusting, little by little all these working parts of our mind-engine, till each is brought to work in the way that is desired till the whole vast complex machinery of our being is all working to one end—the end for

which we are working, the goal which now lies so far away ; yet not so far, but that we may yet work for and attain it.

But how are we thus to adjust and to alter the Saṅkhāras of our natures ? If a part of our mental machinery *will* use up our energy wrongly, *will* let our energy leak into wrong channels, how are we to cure it ? Let us take another example from the world of mechanics. There is a certain part of a locomotive which is called the slide-valve. It is a most important part, because its duty is to admit the steam to the working parts of the engine : and upon its accurate performance of this work the whole efficiency of the locomotive depends. The great difficulty with this slide-valve consists in the fact that its face must be perfectly, almost mathematically, smooth ; and no machine has yet been devised that can cut this valve-face smooth enough. So, what they do is this : they make use of the very force of the steam itself, the very violent action of steam, to plane down that valve-face to the necessary smoothness. The valve, made as smooth as machinery can make it, is put in its place, and steam is admitted ; so that the valve is made to work under very great pressure and very quickly for a time. As it races backwards and forwards, under this unusually heavy pressure of steam, the mere friction against the port-face of the cylinder upon which it moves suffices to wear down the little unevennesses that would otherwise have proved so fertile a source of leakage. So we must do with our minds. We must take our good and useful Saṅkhāras one by one ; must put them under extra and unusual pressure by special mental concentration. And by this means those good Saṅkhāras will be made ten times as efficient ; there will be no more leakage of energy ; and our mental mechanism will daily work more and more harmoniously and powerfully. From the moment that Mental Reflex\* is attained, the hindrances (*i.e.*, the action of opposing Saṅkhāras) are checked, the leakages (Āsavas, a word commonly translated “corruptions”, means, literally, “leakages” :— *i.e.*, leakages through wrong channels of the energy of the being) are assuaged, and the mind concentrates itself by the concentration of the neighbourhood degree. \*\*

Now let us see how these Saṅkhāras, these working parts of our mental mechanism, first come into being. Look at a child learning how to talk. The child hears a sound, and this sound the child learns to connect by association with a definite idea. By the power of its mental concentration the child seizes on that sound by its imitative group of Saṅkhāras, it repeats that sound, and by another effort of concentration it impresses the idea of that sound on some cortical cell of its brain, where it remains as a faint Saṅkhāra, ready to be called up when required. Then, an occasion arises which recalls the idea that sound represents —it has need to make that sound in order to get some desired object. The child concentrates its mind with all its power on the memorising cortex of its brain, until that faint Saṅkhāra, that manner of mind-echo of the sound that lurks in the little brain-cell is discovered, and, like a stretched string played upon by the wind, the cell yields up to the mind a faint repetition of the sound idea which caused it. By another effort of concentration, now removed from the memorising area and shifted to the speaking centre in the brain, the child’s vocal chords tighten in the particular way requisite to the production of that sound ; the muscles of lips and throat and tongue perform the necessary movements ; the breathing apparatus is controlled, so that just the right quantity of air passes over the vocal chords ; and the child speaks : it repeats the word it had formerly learnt to associate with the object of its present desire. Such is the process of the formation of a Saṅkhāra. The more frequently that idea recurs to the child, the more often does it have to go through the processes involved—the more often, in a word, has the mind of the child to perform mental concentration, or Sāmādhī, upon that particular series of mental and muscular movements, the more powerful does the set of Saṅkhāras involved become, till the child will recall the necessary sound-idea, will go through all those complex movements of the organs of speech, without any appreciable new effort of mental concentration ; — in effect, that chain of associations, that particular co-ordinated functioning of memory and speech, will have established itself by virtue of the past mental concentrations, as a powerful Saṅkhāra in the being of the child

\* The Mental Reflex, or Nimitta, is the result of the practice of certain forms of Samādhī. For a detailed account see Visuddhi Magga.

\*\* Visuddhi Magga iv. There are two degrees of mental concentration,—“Neighbourhood-concentration” and “Attainment-concentration” respectively.

and that Saṅkhāra will tend to recur whenever the needs which led to the original Samādhi are present, so that the words will be reproduced automatically, and without fresh special effort.

Thus we see that Saṅkhāras arise from any act of mental concentration. The more powerful, or the more often repeated, is the act of Samādhi, the more powerful the Saṅkhāras produced ; thus a word in a new language, for instance, may become a Saṅkhāra, may be perfectly remembered without further effort, either by one very considerable effort of mental concentration, or by many repetitions of the word, with slight mental concentration.

The practical methods, then for the culture and purification of the mind, according to the method indicated for us by our Master, are two :— first, *Sammāsati*, which is the accurate reflection upon things in order to ascertain their nature—an investigation or analysis of the Dhammas of our own nature in this case ; and, secondly, *Sammāsamādhi*, or the bringing to bear upon the mind of the powers of concentration, to the end that the good states, the good Dhammas may become powerful Saṅkhāras in our being. As to the bad states, they are to be regarded as mere leakages of the central power ; and the remedy for them, as for the leaky locomotive slide-valve, is the powerful practice upon the good states which are of an opposite nature. So we have first to very accurately analyse and observe the states that are present in us by the power of *Sammāsati*, and then practise concentration upon the good states, especially those that tend to overcome our particular failings. By mental concentration is meant an intentness of the thoughts, the thinking for a definite time of only one thought at a time. This will be found at first to be very difficult. You sit down to meditate on love, for instance ; and in half a minute or so you find you are thinking about what some one said the day before yesterday. So it always is at first. The Buddha likened the mind of the man who was beginning this practice of *Samādhi* to a calf, which had been used to running hither and thither in the fields, without any let or hindrance, which has now been tied with a rope to a post. The rope is the practice of meditation ; the post is the particular subject selected for meditation. At first the calf tries to break loose, he runs hither and thither in every direction ; but is always brought up sharp at a certain distance from the post, by the rope to which he is tied.

For a long time, if he is a restless calf, this process goes on ; but at last the calf becomes more calm, he sees the futility of struggling, and lies down by the side of the post. So it is with the mind. At first, subjected to this discipline of concentration, the mind tries to break away, it runs in this or that direction ; and if it is a usually restless mind, it takes a long time to realise the uselessness of trying to break away. But always, having gone a certain distance from the post, having got a certain distance from the object selected for meditation, the fact that you have sat down with the definite object of meditating acts as the rope, and the mind realises that the post was its object, and so comes back to it. When the mind, becoming concentrated and steady, at last lies down by the post, and no longer tries to break away from the object of meditation, then concentration is obtained. But this takes a long time to attain, and very hard practice ; and in order that we may make this, the most trying part of the practice, easier, various methods are suggested. One is, that we can avail ourselves of the action of certain Saṅkhāras themselves. You know how we get into *habits* of doing things, particularly habits of doing things at a definite time of day. Thus we get into the habit of waking up at a definite time of the morning, and we always tend to wake up at the same hour of the day. We get into a habit of eating our dinner at seven o' clock, and we do not feel hungry till about that time ; and if we change the times of our meals, at first we always feel hungry at seven, then, when we get no dinner, a little after seven that hunger vanishes, and we presently get used to the new state of things. In effect the practice of any act, the persistence of any given set of ideas, regularly occurring at a set time of the day, forms within us a very powerful tendency to the recurrence of those ideas, or to the practice of that act, at the same time every day.

Now we can make use of this time-habit of the mind to assist us in our practice of meditation. Choose a given time of day ; always practise in that same time, even if it is only for ten minutes, but always at exactly the same time of day. In a little while the mind will have established a habit in this respect, and you will find it much easier to concentrate the mind at your usual time than at any other. We should also consider the effect of our bodily actions on the mind. When we have just eaten a meal the major

part of the spare energy in us goes to assist in the work of digestion ; so at those times the mind is sleepy and sluggish, and under these circumstances we cannot use all our energies to concentrate with. So choose a time when the stomach is empty—of course the best time from this point of view is when we wake up in the morning. Another thing that you will find very upsetting to your concentration at first is sound—any sudden, unexpected sound particularly. So it is best to choose your time when people are not moving about—when there is as little noise as possible. Here again the early morning is indicated, or else late at night, and, generally speaking, you will find it easiest to concentrate either just after rising, or else at night, just before going to sleep.

Another thing very much affects these Saṅkhāras, and that is *place*. If you think a little you will see how tremendously place affects the mind. The merchant's mind may be full of trouble ; but no sooner does he get to his office or place of business, than his trouble goes, and he is all alert—a keen, capable business man. The doctor may be utterly tired out and half asleep when he is called up at night to attend an urgent case; but no sooner is he come to his place, the place where he is wont to exercise his profession, the bed-side of his patient, than the powerful associations of the place overcome his weariness and mental torpor, and he is very wide awake—all his faculties on the alert, his mind working to the full limits demanded by his very difficult profession. So it is in all things: the merchant at his desk, the captain on the bridge of his ship, the engineer in his engine-room, the chemist in his laboratory—the effect of *place* upon the mind is always to awaken a particular set of Saṅkhāras, the Saṅkhāras associated in the mind with place. Also there is perhaps a certain intangible yet operative atmosphere of thought which clings to places in which definite acts have been done, definite thoughts constantly repeated. It is for this reason that we have a great sense of quiet and peace when we go to a monastery. The monastery is a place where life is protected, where men think deeply of the great mysteries of Life and Death ; it is the home of those who are devoted to the practice of this meditation, it is the centre of the religious life of the people. When the people want to make merry, they have *pwes* and things, in their own houses, in the village; but when they feel religiously inclined, then they go to their monastery. So the great

bulk of the thoughts which arise in a monastery are peaceful, and calm, and holy ; and this atmosphere of peace and calm and holiness seems to penetrate and suffuse the whole place, till the walls and roof and flooring—more the very ground of the sacred enclosure—seem soaked with this atmosphere of holiness, like some faint distant perfume that can hardly be scented, and yet that one can feel. It may be that some impalpable yet grosser portion of the thought-stuff thus clings to the very walls of a place : we cannot tell, but certain it is that if you blindfold a sensitive man and take him to a temple, he will tell you it is a peaceful and holy place ; whilst if you take him to the shambles, he will feel uncomfortable or fearful.

And so we should choose for our practice of meditation a place which is suited to the work we have to do. It is a great aid, of course, owing to the very specialised set of place Saṅkhāras so obtained, if we can have a special place in which nothing but these practices are done, and where no one but oneself goes ; but, for a layman especially, this is very difficult to secure. Instructions are given on this point in *Visuddhi Magga* how the bhikkhu who is practising *Kammaṭṭhāna* is to select some place a little away from the monastery, where people do not come and walk about—either a cave, or else he is to make or get made a little hut, which he alone uses. But as this perfect retirement is not easy to a layman, he must choose whatever place is most suitable—some place where, at the time of his practice, he will be as little disturbed as possible ; and, if he is able, this place should not be the place where he sleeps, as the Saṅkhāras of such a place would tend, so soon as he tried to reduce the number of his thoughts down to one, to make him go to sleep, which is one of the chief things to be guarded against.

Time and place being once chosen, it is important, until the faculty of concentration is strongly established, not to alter them. Then bodily posture is to be considered. If we stand up to meditate, then a good deal of energy goes to maintain the standing posture. Lying down is also not good, because it is associated in our minds with going to sleep. Therefore the sitting posture is best. If you can sit cross-legged, as Buddha-rūpas sit, that is best ; because this position has many good Saṅkhāras associated with it in the minds of Buddhist people.

Now comes the all-important question of what we are to meditate upon. The subjects of meditation are classified in the books under forty heads; and in the old days a man wishing to practise *Kammāṭṭhāna* would go to some great man who had practised long, and had so attained to great spiritual knowledge, and by virtue of his spiritual knowledge that Arahāt could tell which of the forty categories would best suit the aspirant. Now-a-days this is hardly possible, as so few practise this *Kammāṭṭhāna*; and so it is next to impossible to find anyone with this spiritual insight. So the best thing to do will be to practise those forms of meditation which will most certainly increase the highest qualities in us, the qualities of Love, and Pity, and Sympathy, and Indifference to worldly life and cares; those forms of *Sammāsati* which will give us an accurate perception of our own nature, and the Sorrow, Transitoriness, and Soullessness of all things in the Samsāra Cakka; and those forms which will best calm our minds by making us think of holy and beautiful things, such as the Life of the Buddha, the liberating nature of the Dhamma He taught, and the pure life which is followed by His Bhikkhus.\*

We have seen how a powerful Saṅkhāra is to be formed in one of two ways: either by one tremendous effort of concentration, or by many slight ones. As it is difficult for a beginner to make a tremendous effort, it will be found simplest to take one idea which can be expressed in a few words, and repeat those words silently over and over again. The reason for the use of a formula of words is that, owing to the complexity of the brain actions involved in the production of words, very powerful Saṅkhāras are formed by this habit of silent repetition; the words serve as a very powerful mechanical aid in constantly evoking the idea they represent. In order to keep count of the number of times the formula has been repeated Buddhist people use a rosary of a hundred and eight beads, and this will be found a very convenient aid. Thus one formulates to oneself the ideal of the Great Teacher; one reflects upon His love and Compassion, on all that great life of His devoted to the spiritual assistance of all beings; one formulates in the mind the image of the Master, trying to imagine Him as He taught the Dhamma which has brought liberation to so many; and every time the mental image fades, one murmurs "Buddhānussati" — "reflection upon the Buddha" — each time of repetition passing over one of the beads of the rosary.

And so with the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha; —whichever one prefers to reflect upon.

But perhaps the best of all the various meditations upon the ideal, are what is known as the Four Sublime States-- *Cattaro Brahmavihārā*. These meditations calm and concentrate the Citta in a powerful and effective way; and besides this they tend to increase in us those very qualities of the mind which are the best. One sits down facing East, preferably; and after reflecting on the virtues of the *Tiratana*, as set forth in the formulas "Iti pi so Bhagavā," etc., one concentrates one's thought upon ideas of Love: one imagines a ray of Love going out from one's heart, and embracing all beings in the Eastern Quarter of the World, and one repeats this formula: "And he lets his mind pervade the Eastern Quarter of the World with thoughts of Love—with Heart of Love grown great, and mighty, and beyond all measure--till there is not one being in all the Eastern Quarter of the World whom he has passed over, whom he has not suffused with thoughts of Love, with Heart of Love grown great, and mighty, and far-reaching beyond all measure." And as you say these words you imagine your Love going forth to the East, like a great spreading ray of light; and first you think of all your friends, those whom you love, and suffuse them with your thoughts of love; and then you reflect upon all those innumerable beings in that Eastern Quarter whom you know not, to whom you are indifferent, but whom you should love, and suffuse them also with the ray of your love; and lastly you reflect upon all those who are opposed to you, who are your enemies, who have done you wrong; and these too, by an effort of will, you suffuse with your Love "till there is not one being in all that Eastern Quarter of the Earth whom you have passed over, whom you have not suffused with thoughts of Love with Heart of Love grown great, and mighty and beyond all measure". And then you imagine a similar ray of Love issuing from your heart in the direction of your right hand; and you mentally repeat the same formula, substituting the word "Southern" for "Eastern," and you go through the same series of reflections in that direction. And so to the West, and so to the North, till all around you, in the four directions, you have penetrated all beings with these thoughts of Love. And then you imagine your thought as striking downwards, and

\* See page 61

embracing and including all beings beneath you, repeating the same formula, and lastly as going upwards, and suffusing with the warmth of your Love all beings in the worlds above. Thus you will have meditated upon all beings with thoughts of Love, in all the six directions of space; and you have finished the Meditation on Love.

In the same way, using the same formula, do you proceed with the other three Sublime States. Thinking of all beings who are involved in the Samsāra Cakka, involved in the endless sorrow of existence—thinking especially of those in whom at this moment sorrow is especially manifested, thinking of the weak, the unhappy, the sick, and those who are fallen; you send out a ray of Pity and Compassion towards them in all six directions of Space. And so suffusing all beings with thoughts of Compassion, you pass on to the meditation on Happiness. You meditate on all beings who are happy, from the lowest happiness of earthly love to the highest, the Happiness of those who are freed from all sin, the unutterable Happiness of those who have attained the Nibbāna Dhamma. You seek to feel with all those happy ones in their happiness, to enter into the bliss of their hearts and lives, and to augment this feeling of sympathy with all that is happy, and fair, and good.

Then finally, reflecting on all that is evil and cruel and bad in the world, reflecting on the things which tempt men away from the holy life, you assume to all evil beings thoughts of indifference—understanding that all the evil in those beings arises from ignorance; from the Āsavas, the leakages of mental power into wrong channels; you understand concerning them that it is not your duty to condemn, or revile, but only to be indifferent to them and when you have finished this meditation on Indifference, you have completed the meditation on the four Sublime States—on Love, and Pity, and Happiness, and Indifference. The meditation on Love will overcome in you all hatred and wrath; the meditation on Pity will overcome your Saṅkhāras of cruelty and unkindness; the meditation on Happiness will do away with all feelings of envy and malice; and the meditation on Indifference will take from you all sympathy with evil ways and thoughts. And if you diligently practise these four Sublime States, you will find yourself becoming daily more and more loving and pitiful, and happy with the highest

happiness, and indifferent to personal misfortune and to evil. So very powerful is this method of meditation, that a very short practice will give results—results that you will find working in your life and thoughts, bringing peace and happiness to you, and to all around you.

Then there is the very important work of *Sammāsati*, the analysis of the nature of things that leads men to realise how all in the Samsāra Cakka is characterised by the three characteristics of Sorrow, and Transitoriness, and Soullessness, how there is nought that is free from these three characteristics; and how only right reflection and right meditation can free you from them, and can open for you the way to peace. And because men are very much involved in the affairs of the world, because so much of our lives is made up of our little hates and loves and fears; because we think so much of our wealth, and of those we love with earthly love, and of our enemies, and of all the little concerns of our daily life, therefore is this right perception very difficult to come by, very difficult to realise as absolute truth in the depth of our hearts. We think we have but one life and one body; so these we guard with very great attention and care, wasting useful mental energy upon these ephemeral things. We think we have but one state in life; and so we think very much of how to better our positions, how to increase our fortune.

Puttā m'atthi, dhanam m'atthi,  
Iti bālo vihaññati;  
Attā hi attano natthi  
Kuto puttā, kuto, dhanam ? ”

*Dhammapada* v. 3.

“I have these sons, mine is this wealth”—thus the foolish man is thinking: “he himself hath not a self, how sons, how wealth?” But if we could look back over the vast stairway of our innumerable lives, if we could see how formerly we had held all various positions, had had countless fortunes, countless children, innumerable loves and wives; if we could so look back, and see the constant and inevitable misery of all those lives, could understand our everchanging minds and wills, and the whole mighty phantasmagoria of the illusion that we deem so real; if we could do this, then indeed we might realise the utter misery and futility of all this earthly life, might understand and grasp those three characteristics of all existent things; then

indeed would our desire to escape from this perpetual round of sorrow be augmented, augmented so that we would work with all our power unto liberation.

To the gaining of this knowledge of past births there is a way, a practice of meditation by which that knowledge may be obtained. This at first may seem startling ; but there is nothing really unnatural or miraculous about it : it is simply a method of most perfectly cultivating the memory. Now, memory is primarily a function of the material brain ; we remember things because they are stored up like little mind-pictures, in the minute nerve-cells of the grey cortex of the brain, principally on the left frontal lobe. So it may naturally be asked : "If memory, as is certainly the case, be stored up in the material brain, how is it possible that we should remember, without some miraculous faculty, things that happened before that brain existed ?" The answer is this : our brains, it is true, have not existed before this birth, and so all our normal memories are memories of things that have happened in this life. But what is the *cause* of the particular brain-structure that now characterises us ? Past Saṅkhāras. The particular and specific nature of a given brain ; that, namely, which differentiates one brain from another, which makes one child capable of learning one thing and another child another ; the great differences of aptitude ; and so on which gives to each one of us a different set of desires, capacities, and thoughts. What force has caused this great difference between brain and brain ? We say the action of our past Saṅkhāras, the whole source of Saṅkhāras of our past lives, determined, ere our birth in this life, whilst yet the brain was in process of formation, these specific and characteristic features. And if the higher, thinking levels of our brains have thus been specialised by the acquired tendencies of all our line of lives, then every thought that we have had, every idea and wish that has gone to help to specialise that thinking stuff, must have left its record stamped ineffaceably, though faintly, on the structure of this present brain, till that marvellous structure is like some ancient palimpsest—a piece of paper on which, as old writing faded out, another and yet another written screen has been superimposed. By our little seeing eyes only the last record can be read ; but there are ways by which all those ancient faded writings can be made to appear ; and this is how it is done. To read those faded writings we use an eye whose

sensitivity to minute shades of colour and texture is far greater than our own ; a photograph is taken of the paper, on plates prepared so as to be specially sensitive to minute shades of colour, and, according to the exposure given, the time the eye of the camera gazed upon that sheet of paper, another and another writing is impressed upon the sensitive plate used, and the sheet of paper, which to the untrained eye of man bears but one script, yields up to successive plates those lost, ancient, faded writings, till all are made clear and legible.

So it must be, if we think, with this memory of man ; with all the multiple attributes of that infinitely complex brain-structure.

All that the normal mental vision of man can read there is the last plain writing, the record of this present life. But every record of each thought and act of all our *kammic* ancestry, the records upon whose model this later life, this specialised brain-structure has been built, must lie there, visible to the trained vision, so that, had we but this more sensitive mental vision, that wondrous palimpsest, the tale of the innumerable ages that have gone to the composing of that marvellous document, the record of a brain, would stand forth clear and separate, like the various pictures on the colour-sensitive plates. Often, indeed, it happens that one, perchance the last of all those ancient records, is given now so clear and legible that a child can read some part of what was written ; and so we have those strange instances of sporadic, uninherited genius that are the puzzle and the despair of Western Psychologists. A little child, before he can hardly walk, before he can clearly talk, will see a piano, and crawl to it, and, untaught his baby fingers will begin to play ; and in a few years' time, with a very little teaching and practice, that child will be able to execute the most difficult pieces—pieces of music which baffle any but the most expert players. There have been many such children whose powers have been exhibited over the length and breadth of Europe. There was Smeaton, again, one of our greatest engineers. When a child (he was the son of uneducated peasant people) he would build baby bridges over the streams in his country,—untaught—and his bridges would bear men and cattle. There was a child, some ten years ago, in Japan, who a baby, saw one day the ink and brush with which the Chinese and Japanese write, and, crawling with pleasure, reached out his chubby hand for them, and began to write.



By the time he was five years old that baby, scarce able to speak correctly, could write in the Chinese character perfectly—that wonderful and complex script that takes an ordinary man ten to fifteen years to master—and this baby of five wrote it perfectly. This child's power was exhibited all over the country, and before the Emperor of Japan ; and the question that arises is, how did all these children get their powers ? Surely, because for them the last writing on the book of their minds was yet clear and legible ; because in their last birth that one particular set of Saṅkhāras was so powerful that its record could still be read.

And thus we all have, here in our present brains, the faded records of all our interminable series of lives; a thousand, tens of thousands, millions upon millions of records, one superimposed over another, waiting only for the eye that can see, the eye of the trained and perfected memory to read them, to distinguish one from another as the photographic plate distinguished, and the way so to train that mental vision is as follows:-

You sit down in your place of meditation and you think of yourself seated there. Then you begin to *think backwards*. You think the act of coming into the room. You think the act of walking towards the room, and so you go on, thinking backwards on all the acts that you have done that day. You then come to yourself, waking up in the morning, and perhaps you remember a few dreams, and then there is a blank, and you remember your last thoughts as you went to sleep the night before, what you did before retiring, and so on, back to the time of your last meditation.

This is a very difficult practice; and so at first you must not attempt to go beyond one day: else you will not do it well, and will omit remembering a lot of important things. When you have practised for a little, you will find your memory of events becoming rapidly more and more perfect; and this practice will help you in worldly life as well, for it vastly increases the power of memory in general. When doing a day becomes easy, then slowly increase the time meditated upon. Get into the way of doing a week at a sitting—here taking only the more important events—then a month, then a year, and so on. You will find yourself remembering all sorts of things about your past life that you had quite forgotten; you will find yourself penetrating

further and further into the period of deep sleep; you will find that you remember your dreams even far more accurately than you ever did before. And so you go on, going again and again over long periods of your life, and each time you will remember more and more of things you had forgotten. You will remember little incidents of your child-life, remember the tears you shed over the difficult tasks of learning how to walk and speak; and at last, after long and hard practice, you will remember a little, right back to the time of your birth.

It you never get any further than this, you will have done yourself an enormous deal of good by this practice. You will have marvellously increased your memory in every respect; and you will have gained a very clear perception of the changing nature of your desires and mind and will, even in the few years of this life. But to get beyond this point of birth is very difficult, because, you see, you are no longer reading the relatively clear record of this life, but are trying to read one of those fainter, under-written records the Saṅkhāras have left on your brain. All this practice has been with the purpose of making clear your mental vision; and, as I have said, this will without doubt be clearer far than before; but the question is, whether it is clear enough. Time after time retracing in their order the more important events of this life, at last, one day, you will bridge over that dark space between death and birth, when all the Saṅkhāras are, like the seed in the earth, breaking up to build a new life; and one day you will suddenly find yourself remembering your *Death in your last life*. This will be very painful, but it is important to get to that stage several times, because at the moment when a man comes very near to death the mind automatically goes through the very process of remembering backwards you have been practising so long, and so you can then gather clues to the events of that last life.

Once this difficult point of passing from birth to death is got over, the rest is said in the books to be easy. You can then, daily with more and more facility, remember the deeds and thoughts of your past lives, one after another will open before your mental vision. You will see yourself living a thousand lives, you will feel yourself dying a thousand deaths, you will suffer with the suffering of a myriad, existences, you will see how fleeting were their little joys, what

price you had again and again to pay for a little happiness;—how real and terrible were the sufferings you had to endure. You will watch how for years you toiled to amass a little fortune, and how bitter death was that time, because you could not take your treasure with you; you will see the innumerable women you have thought of as the only being you could ever love, and lakh upon lakh of beings caught like yourself in the whirling Wheel of Life and Death; some now your father, mother, children, some again your friends, and now your bitter enemies. You will see the good deed, the loving thought and act, bearing rich harvest life after life; and the sad gathering of ill weeds, the harvest of ancient wrongs. You will see the beginningless

fabric of your lives, with its ever-changing pattern stretching back, back, back into interminable vistas of past time, and then at last you will know, and will understand. You will understand how this happy life for which we crave is never to be gained; you will realise, as no books or monks could teach you, the sorrow and impermanence and soullessness of all lives; and you will then be very much stirred up to make a mighty effort, now that human birth and this knowledge is yours:—a supreme effort to wake up out of all this ill dream of life as a man awakes himself out of a fearful nightmare. And this intense aspiration will, say the Holy Books, go very far towards effecting your liberation.

### Note from Page 57

\* It should be mentioned that the highest practice of meditation is Vipassanā Bhāvanā and that this has always been available in Burma to the earnest seeker. During the days when Burma was not a free country the necessary physical conditions were not available to make it possible to teach the practice to people from abroad. However, after the attainment of Independence 9 years ago the Government of the Union of Burma paid due attention to spiritual things as well as to cultural and the more material matters. As part of this fostering of our great spiritual heritage the Government of the Union of Burma through the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council has subsidised meditation monasteries where the full teaching of Vipassanā Bhāvanā is given. There now exist facilities for peoples from all the world to come to Burma and to practise this great discipline and mental culture. Something of this method, which is that given by the Buddha in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta of the Majjhīma Nikāya and the Mahā-satipaṭṭhāna Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya and mentioned in hundreds of other places in the Tipiṭaka besides, is told about in a very valuable book “Satipaṭṭhāna—The Heart of Buddhist Meditation” by Bhaddanta Nyanaponika Thera. We intend serialising this book and we have copies on order from the publishers—“The Word of the Buddha” Publishing Committee, 10 Layard’s Road, Colombo 5—and shall be able to supply these at a low cost very shortly. We make no apology for quoting here from the Introduction:—

“This book is issued in the deep conviction that the systematic cultivation of Right Mindfulness, as taught by the Buddha in his Discourse on Satipaṭṭhāna, still provides the most simple and direct, the most thorough and effective method for training and developing the mind for its daily tasks and problems as well as for its highest aim: mind’s own unshakeable deliverance from Greed, Hatred and Delusion.

The teachings of the Buddha offer a great variety of methods of mental training and subjects of meditation, suited to the various individual needs, temperaments and capacities. Yet all these methods ultimately converge in the ‘Way of Mindfulness’ (satipaṭṭhāna-magga), called by the Master himself ‘the Only Way’ (ekāyano maggo). The Way of Mindfulness may therefore rightly be called ‘the heart of Buddhist meditation’ or even ‘the heart of the entire doctrine’ (dhamma-hadaya). This great Heart is in fact the centre of all the blood streams pulsating through the entire body of the doctrine (dhammakāya).

This ancient Way of Mindfulness is as practicable to-day as it was 2,500 years ago. It is as applicable in the lands of the West as in the East; in the midst of life’s turmoil as well as in the peace of the monk’s cell.”

Quite a few visitors from the West are taking advantage of this training in Burma.

## A QUARTER MILLION NEW BUDDHISTS

*Dr. Ambedkar leads the "untouchables" to Buddhism*

The Buddha accepted as lay-followers and as bhikkhus, members of the Noble Order of Monks, worthy people from every class and from every caste including the so-called "untouchables" or outcastes.

It may seem strange, then, that after 2,500 years, in an educated age and in a country so spiritual as India there should still be those who are down trodden and oppressed not only economically and socially but spiritually as well. Those who do not know India and the conditions that have prevailed there might well ask how this could be possible, how people could accept a religion that relegated them to the fifth rate for now and for eternity. But to the man who knows the history of social and "religious" propaganda in most countries both East and West, there is here no mystery. It is not so many years ago that people in England from the back pews of the churches gazed in awe and reverence at the squires and their families who graced the front pews while they all chanted in unison "The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate, God made them high or lowly; and order'd their estate". It is only very recently that people the world over have begun to realise the truth of the Buddha's teaching in the Sutta Nipāta :

"Not by birth is one an outcaste,  
Not by birth is one a Brahmin.  
But by deeds is one an outcaste,  
And by deeds is one a Brahmin."  
and: "This two-footed dirty body  
Which carries about a bad odour  
And which is full of impurities,  
Which pour out from different places ;  
With a body of this sort  
If one thinks highly of oneself  
And looks down upon others  
Due to what can it be, except ignorance?"

When the "depressed classed" in India began to try to fight their way up they met with seemingly insuperable barriers.

But now (on Oct. 14th) some 200,000 scheduled-caste men and women, led by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and his wife, have formally

accepted Buddhism at a mass ceremony in India and this has been followed by similar ceremonies at other places.

This is no sudden "mass conversion" for Dr. Ambedkar has for more than a decade been studying comparative religion and Buddhism and in latter years explaining it to the rank and file of the "depressed classes" of which he is the illustrious member.

One of the barriers that they had had to face was that under the Indian Constitution there were special "privileges" for people regarded as untouchables. Asked whether they would not regret ceasing to be untouchables since they would lose these "privileges" of securing scholarships and government jobs set aside for people of their class, Dr. Ambedkar asked whether brahmins would want to be untouchables to get these "privileges". Dr. Ambedkar said at the ceremony : "I will discard the caste system and spread equality among human beings. I will strictly follow the Eightfold Path of the Buddha. I will lead my life guided by the three principles of knowledge, right path and compassion." This was repeated by the multitude of the people. The main ceremony was conducted in Pāli by Ven'ble Chandramuni Mahāthera of Kusinara, a Burmese monk.

In a speech on the occasion the Ven'ble H. Siddhātissa Thera, Sarnath, Banaras, said:

"As far as I remember it was somewhere in 1936 that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar announced his desire to give up the Hindu faith. When he did so he voiced the feelings of several millions of people who had suffered great injustice in the name of religion. But then he did not take a hasty step to find solace in a faith or ideology foreign to his country. As a great leader of his position would do, he started investigating the rich cultural heritage of India. As a result he came to know that light can be found here at home and he need not turn to foreign sources. He made a thorough study of the

noble teachings of the Buddha and came to the wise decision that this is the right path for him and millions of his down-trodden people to follow.

Some people have called this function a conversion ceremony. Conversion is not a very happy term, because force and temptation are associated with it. This is a self-conversion in the true sense of the term. Then again, in modern times conversion has come to mean, giving up one's own faith and embracing something foreign. But this does not apply to the present case.

The Buddha was born in this country. He lived and worked among the people of this country and it was on this soil that he entered into Mahāparinibbāna. It was the great missionaries of this country who propagated His sublime message of love and peace throughout the world. So when the sons and daughters of this country speak of accepting Buddhism it cannot be interpreted as a kind of conversion in the modern sense of the term. It is something more significant, it is but reclaiming one's own heritage."

#### **2500 Tamils of Rangoon Take Refuge in the Buddha-Dhamma**

A ceremony for the formal acceptance of Buddhism by 2,500 Tamils of Rangoon and its environs was held in the Great Sacred Cave, near the World Peace Pagoda, Rangoon, on Sunday the 28th October 1956 at 9 a.m.

Present at the ceremony were Ven'ble Mahātheras and Theras of Rangoon, Hon'ble U Kyaw Nyein, Deputy Prime Minister; Hon'ble U Chit Maung, Minister for Information; Thado Thiri Thudhamma Sir U Thwin, President of the Buddha Sāsana Council; Hon'ble Justice Agga Maha Thray Sithu—Thado Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union and Vice-President of the Buddha Sāsana Council; Hon'ble Justice Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon, Judge of the Supreme Court and Hon. Secretary-General (1) of the Buddha Sāsana Council, and many other dignitaries of Rangoon.

Bhadanta Pandita Mahāthera, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, Principal of the Dhammadūta College, administered the "Three Refuges" to the new Buddhists and the audience; and the most senior Mahāthera among the bhikkhus (the Ven'ble Weluwun Sayadaw) gave a few words of admonition to the Tamil Buddhists.

Messages from His Holiness the Most Venerable Abhidhaja Mahāraṭṭhaguru Bhadanta Suriyābhivamsa, President of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā Supreme Sangha Council; H.E. Dr. Ba. U, President of the Union of Burma; Hon'ble U Ba Swe, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma; and Hon'ble U Nu, President of the A.F.P.F.L. were also read.

In his address of veneration the Hon'ble Justice U Chan Htoon mentioned that at the suggestion of Dr. Ambedkar who attended the 3rd Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists held in Rangoon in 1954, he and some Tamil Buddhist leaders were able to establish a Buddhist school at Dalla and educate about 500 Tamils to Buddhism. When 2,500 youths were given Sāmaṇera ordination during the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations 50 Tamils were included. Very recently it was possible to establish a "Tamil Young Buddhist League" consisting of about 3,500 from 4,000 Tamil labourers of Rangoon. He also pointed out that Buddhism was introduced into Burma about 1,600 years ago from South India, the original place of Tamils. On the 14th of October about 200,000 Indians under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar formally accepted Buddhism at Nagpur in North India. These were auspicious signs that Buddhism would again flourish in India, its original land.

It is noteworthy that many of the Tamils, particularly the younger members of the community, have been coming for religious instruction to learned Burmese bhikkhus. The Tamils are bright and intelligent people and much may be looked for from them in the future now that they are bursting the bonds of illiteracy and superstition enforced on them during the centuries.

## BIOGRAPHY OF BHIKKHU ĀNANDA METTEYYA

The late Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya (Allan Bennett) was born in London in 1872 (B.E. 2425). Young Bennett, even as a school boy, showed a precocious love of science and the age of seventeen found him with a profounder and wider scientific knowledge than that possessed by any youth in England. He decided on the profession of chemical research which gave full scope to his inventive ability. His mother reared him in a Roman Catholic atmosphere intending to convert him to that faith but Allan Bennett had too agnostic a temperament even in his 'teens to allow his genius to be hampered by the narrow confines of sectarianism.

It was during the years of experimentation that Bennett came across Sir Edwin Arnold's LIGHT OF ASIA, which at once turned his attention to the study and practice of Buddhism. His interest grew to such an extent that in his twenty-eighth year he went to Ceylon and, at Kamburugamuwa, made an intensive study of Pāli and Theravāda Buddhism. In such a religious atmosphere he began to feel the utter purposelessness of

worldly life and decided to join the Sangha. After two years' stay in Ceylon he left for Burma and, at the famous monastery of Akyab, was ordained a bhikkhu under the name of Ānanda Metteyya.

The Western bhikkhu became very popular not only in Burma and Ceylon but even in England and America. In 1903 (B.E. 2446) he founded the International Buddhist Society and in U.S.A. did a great deal of work in connection with this Society and spent most of his time in the propagation of Buddhism. In 1914 (B.E. 2457) he returned to England on his way to the East again but the Great War made him change his plan and he settled down in his native land. There he spent the remaining years of his life as a layman but it must be mentioned that till his death in 1922 (B.E. 2465) he lived a real bhikkhu's life, practising meditation and engaged in all the Buddhist activities in England at that time.

Ānanda Metteyya is best known as the writer of THE WISDOM OF THE ARYAS and THE RELIGION OF BURMA.

“ We, brother, know not where God Almighty is, nor whence. But, brother, when the signs of his coming, appear, when the light ariseth, and the glory shineth, then will He be manifest. For that is the portent of the manifestation of God Almighty when the light ariseth, and the glory shineth.”

‘ And it was not long, Kevaddha, before that Great God Almighty became manifest. And that brother drew near to him, and said: “ Where, my friend, do the four great elements—earth, water, fire, and air—cease, leaving no trace behind? ” ’

And When he had thus spoken that Great God Almighty said to him: “ I, brother, am the Great God Almighty, the Supreme, the Mighty, the All-seeing, the Ruler, the Lord of all, the Controller, the Creator, the Chief of all, appointing to each his place, the Ancient of days, the Father of all that are and are to be ! ”

‘ Then that brother answered God Almighty, and said: “ I did not ask you, friend, as to whether you were indeed all that you now say. But I ask you where the four great elements—earth, water, fire, and air—cease, leaving no trace behind? ”

‘ Then again, Kevaddha, God Almighty gave the same reply. And that brother, yet a third time, put to God Almighty his question as before.

‘ Then, Kevaddha, the Great God Almighty took that brother by the arm and led him aside, and said :

“ These gods, the retinue of God Almighty, hold me, brother, to be such that there is nothing I cannot see, nothing I have not understood, nothing I have not realised. Therefore I gave no answer in their presence. I do not know, brother, where those four great elements—earth, water, fire, and air—cease, leaving no trace behind.”

The brother then went to the Buddha who explained : “ Instead of asking where the great elements cease, leaving no trace behind, you should have asked :—

‘ Where do earth, water, fire, and air, And long and short, and fine and coarse, Pure and impure, no footing find ?

Where is it that both name and form Die out, leaving no trace behind? ”

‘ On that the answer is : ‘ The intellect of Arahatsip, the invisible, the endless, accessible from every side—

*Kevaddha Sutta, Dīgha Nikāya.*

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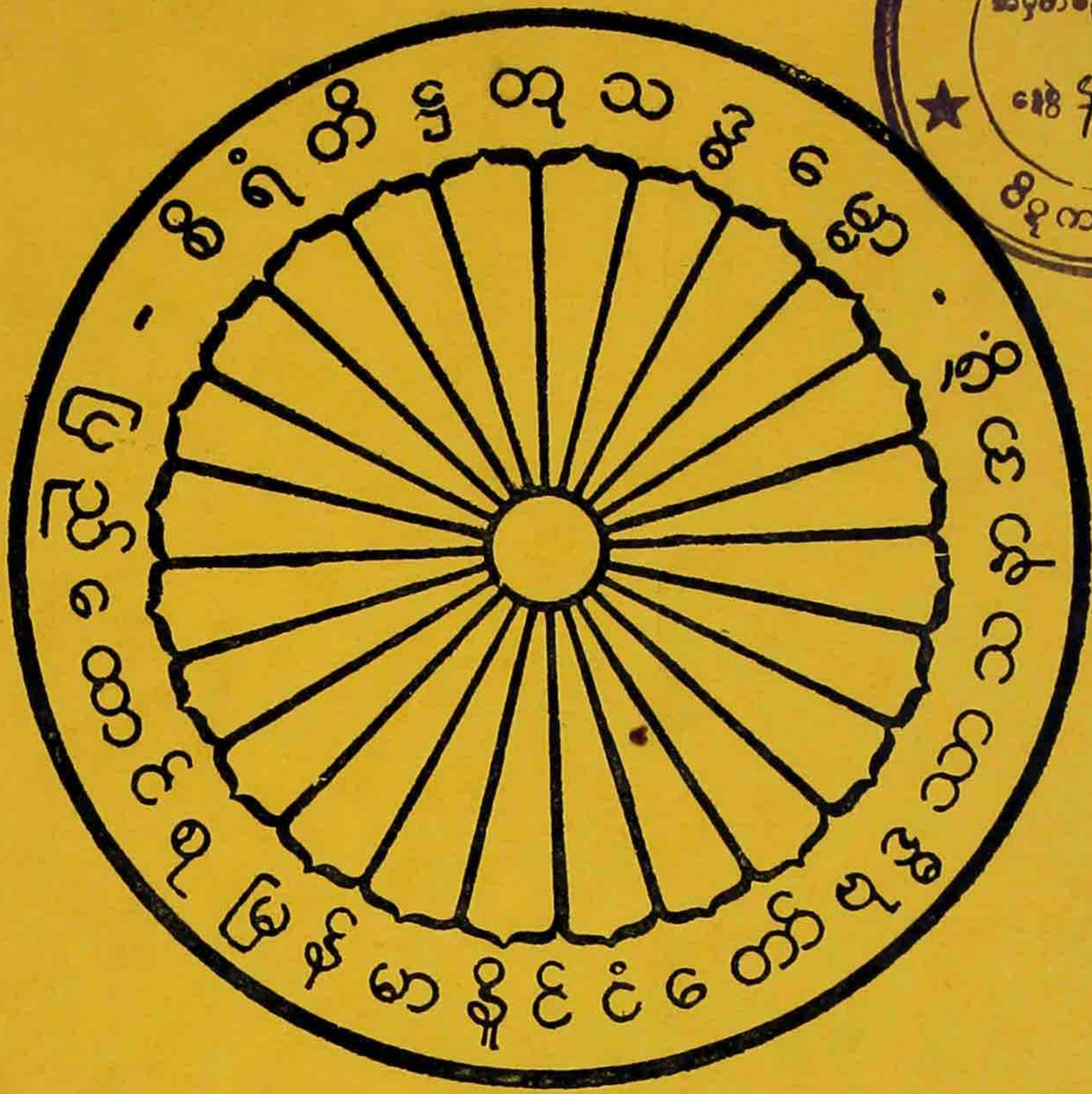
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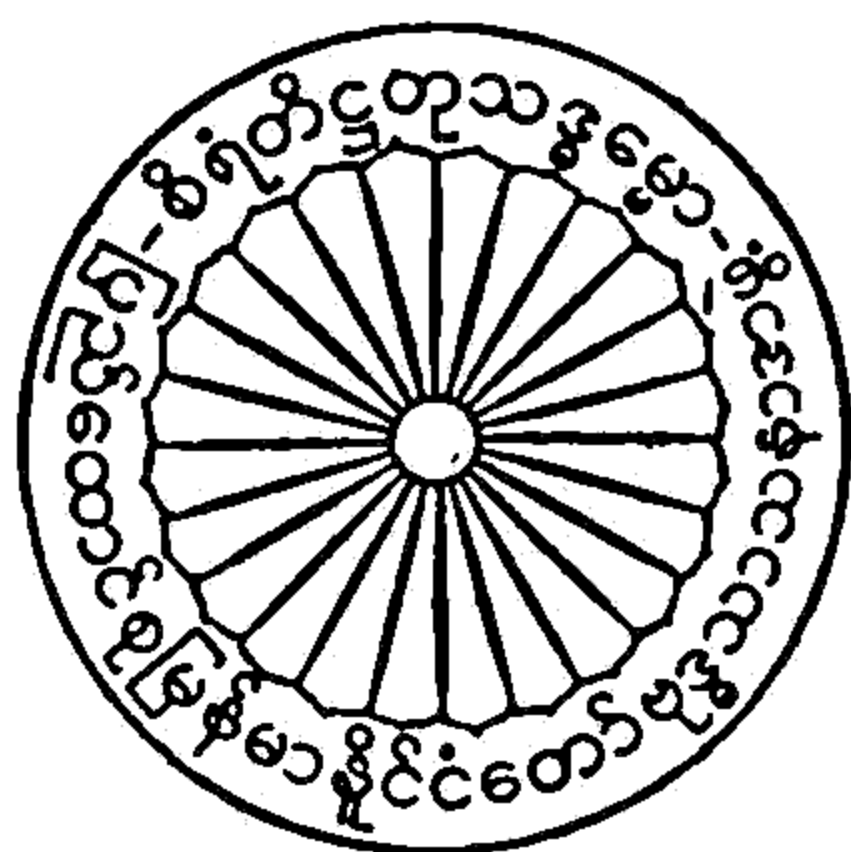


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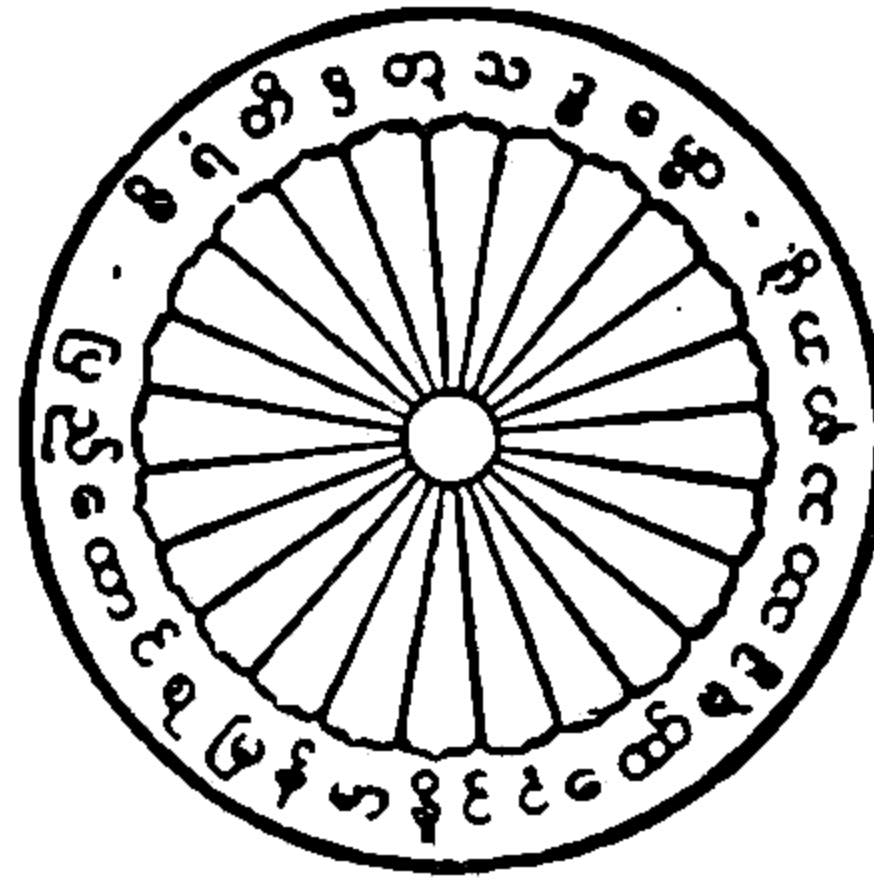
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1. Please regard this not just as a quarterly magazine but as a continuing service for Buddhism.

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**THE EDITOR,**  
**“THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA”**  
Union Buddha Sāsana Council,  
Kabā Aye P.O.,  
Rangoon, Union of Burma.

# NIYĀMA-DĪPANĪ OR MANUAL OF COSMIC ORDER

By Mahāthera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt.

(Translated from the Pāli by Beni M. Barua, D. Litt., M.A., and revised and edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A. with the Residuum translated by Ven. U Nyāna, Patamagyaw.)

(Continued from previous issue)

## EXPOSITIONS

### III

#### Of Great Periods of Time

We shall now expound our system of the five time-periods called *kappas*. They are distinguished as (1) a great *kappa*, a cycle or aeon ; (2) an incalculable *kappa*, four going to each great *kappa* ; (3) an included *kappa*, falling within one of the preceding ; (4) a life-*kappa*, or one life-span of any given being ; and (5) a cataclysm-*kappa*, or age of doom.

(1) A "great *kappa*". — This is a notion of a given time historically cut off, so to speak, and divided into some periods in which many events happen (in a certain order, and which repeat themselves). It would follow from this that a "great *kappa*" is but a notion of time itself. To a *kappa* as such is given the name "great" on the ground of its having been conceived as the greatest in duration. How long, then, is the duration of a great *kappa*?

In order to form an idea of its duration, let us imagine a mountain, which is a single cube of rock, one league \* in length, in breadth, and in height. If a person were to flick it with a piece of cloth once at the lapse of every hundred years, the time that such a mountain would require to be completely worn away would not be so long in duration as is a great *kappa*.\*\*

How long in duration has been the succession of great *kappas* in the past ?

It is said in the text : "Undetermined, Bhikkhus, is the beginning of this world: the past extremity (*pubbakoti*) as to the running on of beings in rebirths under the hindrance of ignorance and bonds of craving is not manifest." \*\*\*

Here the Pāli word for "undetermined" is *anamata*, which is the same as *a-mata*, the syllable *an* being euphonic, *Amata* means that which is unknown, unascertained. So it was said : "the past extremity" (or beginning) is not ascertainable by calculation. Or, it may perhaps mean that which, like the "celwriggling" of the Sophists, \*\*\*\* sets itself no limit.

In turning back to the proposition "the past extremity...is not manifest," it is indeed suggested that here the words, "is not manifest" mean "does not exist" in the same way as, in the passage, "If there be, Ānanda, no birth, are old age and death manifested ? Verily they are not, venerable sir"; \*\*\*\*\* the word "manifest" means "exist", and "not manifest" means "does not exist".

Whether the one or the other be meant, we may conclude that the proposition "the past extremity...is not manifest," means that the past extremity as to the succession of great *kappas* in general does not exist, while taking a *kappa* in particular, this may be said to have its beginning, its middle, and its end.

Those who fancy that there was actually a past extremity to the succession of all great *kappas* in general have certainly no other reason for it than their own fanciful thinking. Those who reject the Ariyan mode of interpretation called "The Theory of Causation," commit themselves to the error of the assumption of the uncaused, or to that of Theism.

So much as to the nature and extent of a great *kappa*.

(2) *Incalculable Epochs*.— Such is the name of a *kappa* that is not capable of being definitively enumerated, enumerated even by taking hundreds of thousands of years as a unit. These are four kinds :—

- (i.) The Enveloping Epoch ;
- (ii.) The Enveloped Epoch ;

\* A *yojana*, a classical division of length, a distance of about seven miles.

\*\* 'Just as if, brother, there were a mighty mountain crag, four leagues in length, breadth, and height, without a crack or cranny, not hollowed out, one solid mass of rock, and a man should come at the end of every century, and with a fine cloth of Banaras should once on each occasion stroke that rock : sooner, brother, would that mighty mountain crag be worn away by this method, sooner be used up, than the aeon.

Thus long, brother, is the aeon : of aeons thus long many an aeon has passed away, many a hundred aeons, many a thousand aeons, many a hundred thousand aeons.'

\*\*\* Samyutta-Nikāya, ii, 178.

\*\*\*\* Dialogues of the Buddha, i, 39 f.

\*\*\*\*\* Op. cit., ii., 52.

- (iii.) The Developing Epoch;  
 (iv.) The Developed Epoch.

It is written in the *Anguttara-Nikāya* (iv., 156; or vol. ii., 142) : "These are the four incalculable epochs. . . . (*They are enumerated as above.*) The epoch, Bhikkhus, when there is a cosmic envelopment, is not easy to reckon as so many years, centuries, tens or hundreds of centuries." Here "the Enveloped" is that which relapses, is destroyed. The world-system having once relapsed, while the world-stuff remains in a state of dissolution, it is said to remain enveloped. "The Developing Epoch" is a period of restoration, of evolution. Having once been reinstated, while the world-system continues to be in that state, it is said to be Developed.\*

Of these epochs, again, the first is distinguished as of three kinds :—

- That which is brought to pass by heat,  
*i.e.*, by the action of fire ;  
 That which is brought to pass by water,  
*i.e.*, by the action of a deluge ; and  
 That which is brought to pass by wind,  
*i.e.*, by raging storms that hurl away  
 a world-system.

In the event of the first type of Envelopment fire consumes the realm of matter, both in the lower material heavens and everything that is below. In the event of the second type of Envelopment, water submerges the realm of matter in the next higher material heavens, together with all that is below : and in the event of the third type of Envelopment, wind unhinges the realm of matter in the highest material heavens, together with all that is below.

It should be noted now that four incalculable epochs are together equal to a great *kappa*. Hence when we speak of an incalculable period, we should understand thereby just one-fourth of a great *kappa*.

It is not for us to speculate whence come those three great destructive agencies. Suffice it for us that we live in a universe of a certain configuration, and that everywhere we discern the agency of fire, water and wind. When, for instance, fire burns one house, its flame strikes on to another, and burns that

too. While the flame is yet in the second house, it causes the element of heat to grow up in yet another house and burn it. Evidently in the last case the flame of the second house does not directly burn the third one. This remark holds true of all. Thus it would follow from this that this broad earth and universe are ever filled with those elements which are ever finding opportunity of transforming and disturbing them. And whenever they obtain adequate opportunity, they destroy the earth, just as fire can destroy this or that mountain, in which it resides. There is no question of agencies passing over into the universe, but only of series of internecine concussions and counteractions.

(3) *An Included Era*.— This denotes a *kappa* which appears to fall within one of the incalculable epochs, called the Developed. In the beginning of an incalculable epoch men live to an exceedingly great age. This state of things exists until subsequently, as the conditions of immorality develop, their life-term decreases by degrees through a succession of many hundreds of thousands of such periods, till it reaches the minimum of ten years. From this again with the conditions of morality developing among them, their life-term goes on increasing and increasing till at last it regains the maximum of exceeding longevity. This is what is termed an included era. Of such eras sixty-four are together equal in duration to one incalculable period :— so it is said in the Commentaries.

If that be so, the length of an included era can only be decided by a knowledge of the duration of an incalculable epoch. And we may add that, if a man were to count the numbers of years by grains of sand, picked up one by one from one league of the Ganges, the sands would be exhausted sooner than the years of one included era were all counted.

(4) *life-spans*.— When we say, "Through a succession of many hundreds of thousands of life-spans," we mean the life-span of men. There is no definite term of life as regards brutes, "Petas," demons, infernal beings, and earthly gods. Among the higher grades of celestial beings, the life-span of the twenty Brahma-worlds is different in each case.

\* The translator had selected "Re-absorbed", "Re-evolved", and "Persisting as such". The Pāli is literally "rolling together" and "unrolling":—*Sam-vatta, vi-vatta*, the Indo-Aryan root being war, wart. Cf. our "-vert" ad-, in-vert &c.). I have substituted Leibnitz's "envelopments, developments" as being an interesting approximate coincidence in Eastern or Western terminology. The "rolling together" is a lurid idea that has also shaped itself in the Christian poetic fancy, namely, in the verse of the *Dies ira*

When shrivelling like a parched scroll,  
 The flaming heavens together roll. . . . .

(5) *Ages of Doom or Cataclysm.*— In the world of men, events happen at times that affect human life and are termed disasters. These are of three kinds : war, famine, and pestilence. We read in our texts : “A Brahman said to the Blessed One : ‘I have heard it said, venerable Gotama, of the Brahmans of old, of teachers, and the teachers of teachers, that in former days this world was....pervaded by men : within ‘the flight of a cock’ were situated the villages, the inhabited districts, and the royal capitals. Now what is the cause, what is the reason that, at the present time, the numbers of men have dwindled, so that their paucity in numbers is apparent, and that villages appear to be no villages, towns appear to be no towns, and inhabited countries appear to be uninhabited ?’

“The Blessed One said : ‘Now Brahman, because men are attached to immoral passions, overpowered by lawless greed, and victims to false ideals, they with sharp weapons kill one another. This verily is the cause, this is the reason why the numbers of men have now dwindled, so that their paucity in numbers is apparent. And furthermore, Brahman, for them who are grown morally debauched, the sky does not pour down sufficient rain, the result of which is the outbreak of famine, on account of which many people die.

“And yet again, Brahman, for men who are grown morally debauched the Yakkhas let loose ferocious non-human pests, in consequence of which many people die.’”\*

Here the expression “within the flight of a cock” signified that villages and towns were so closely connected that cocks might leap from the boundary of one and alight near that of another.... “Victims to false ideals” means that they have given themselves up to false ideals and ceremonies, by which are meant covetousness, ill-will, as well as various sacrifices accompanied with the slaughter of animals.

“Many people die” implied that, at times, in consequence of some matter of administration, or from atrocities perpetrated by thieves, etc., a commotion arises in the country, many people lose their lives, many properties and means of sustenance are destroyed, and many villages, districts, towns and royal capitals are on that account burnt by fire. And this sort of fear arises sometimes every

three years, sometimes every five or six years, sometimes every ten or twelve years. Then comes a time when war breaks out between one country and another, between one kingdom and another, and many people die in consequence. This is called a “doom-era” of anarchy and war.

“The Yakkhas” meant the commanding beings, placed by the four great rulers of the four cardinal points as commanders of such beings. “The ferocious” meant wicked, savage, non-human beings, devils and goblins of terrestrial, aquatic and ethereal origins.

“In consequence of which many people die” means that the non-human pests, having got the opportunity came upon the walks of man in many hundreds and thousands, from seas or forests. They having caused many diseases to prevail and to seize upon the living bodies, devoured fat and blood. Hence they are designated as “blood-sucking” and “blood-thirsty”. If they failed to seize upon men, they were said to devour fat and blood of cows and buffaloes, goats and sheep. When this kind of pestilence prevailed once in a country, it prevailed there even for six or seven years, causing enormous mortality among the young in men and beasts. The remedies used for such a pestilence were the potent formulas of spells and incantations, or offerings to the Yakkhas. In this connection might be cited the story of Sakabodhiraja of Ceylon, in the book of the Great Chronicle.\*\*

This is called the doomful period of pestilence. Many other types of eras of doom also appear in this world. We have been taught, for instance, that in former days, through demoniac agency, the kingdoms of Dandaka, Majjha, Kalinga and Mūtanga ceased to be kingdoms. Even in these days, in countries, towns and villages, where destruction of life goes on on a large scale, many creatures meet with death from great earthquakes or from great tidal waves, or from hurricanes, from floods of rain, from volcanic eruptions, from shipwrecks.

When do these three eras of disaster mainly come to pass ? From the time when the life-span of men is five hundred years. We read in the Cakkavatti Sutta:\*\*\*“Upon men who live to an age of five hundred years, Bhikkhus, three things come to full florescence : unrighteous passions, lawless greed and false ideals.”

\* Anguttara-Nikāya, iii, 56, or vol. i., 159 f.

\*\* The Mahāvamsa P.T.S. translation, p. 260 f.

\*\*\* Dīgha-Nikāya, iii., 70

**Speech by Hon'ble Justice Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Mahā Thray Sithu U Thein Maung, M.A., LL.B. (Cantab.) Barrister-at-Law, Chief Justice of the Union of Burma and Vice-President of the Buddha Sāsana Council of Burma, Introducing his paper on "The Message of the Buddha."**

Some discourses of the Buddha (which are known as Anupubba Kathā) contain the following parts in serial order :—

1. Dāna kathā (discourse on charity) ;
2. Sīla kathā (discourse on observation of moral precepts) ;
3. Sagga kathā (discourse on the way to Devaloka and Brahmaloaka) ;
4. Maggakathā (discourse on the way to Nibbāna).

However, the Buddha discussed Dāna, Sīla and Sagga only to lead the audience step by step to Maggakathā since the Four Noble Truths are His special subjects (Sāmuikkasika-desanā) and His primary object is to show the way to Nibbāna.

So in my paper on the Message of the Buddha I have not discussed at any length Dāna, Sīla and other kāmāvacara kusala or virtues, which can only lead to further existence in the Kāmaloka e.g. as men or Devas, or Samādhi which can only lead to further existence in Brahmaloaka.

Besides, I have discussed the Eightfold Noble Path from the point of view of one who aspires to attain Nibbāna as a Suddhāvāsī by means of Vipassanā Bhāvanā i.e. with special emphasis on Paññakkhandha.

Even then I have been able to give only a bare outline of the nature of special knowledge which can be acquired by means of such Bhāvanā—and of the stages which are on the way to Nibbāna—without setting out the various methods of practising Vipassanā at all.

The way to Magga, Phala and Nibbāna is there. However, those who have no confidence in Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha (asaddhā) or have no desire to get out of Samsāra (acchandikā) will not make any attempt to proceed along that way ; and those who are prevented by their own kammā, kilesas and vipākas cannot attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna in this life, however strenuously they may exert themselves.

Kammā or evil deeds which prevent their attainment in this life are matricide, patricide, killing an Arahant, drawing the blood of the Buddha and causing a schism in the Saṅgha.

Kilesas which prevent their attainment in this life are (1) holding the view that good deeds and evil deeds can have no effect on the doer, (2) holding the view that all beings come into existence and experience happiness or suffering without any cause whatsoever, and (3) holding the view that there is no good deed to be done nor evil deed to be abstained from (Natthika, Ahetuka and Akiriya diṭṭhis which are the worst forms of micchā-diṭṭhi).

Vipāka, which prevents their attainment in this life, is having been born with little or no intelligence.

Those who are not so prevented can attain Magga, Phala or Nibbāna ; but whether they will attain them in this life depends on many factors e.g. on whether they have meditated on nāma and rūpa in their previous existence, whether they have fulfilled pāramīs or accumulated merit sufficiently, whether they will exert themselves strenuously enough etc.

However, all those who cannot attain Magga, Phala or Nibbāna in this life for any reason whatsoever, will, by proceeding along the Eightfold Noble Path, have acquired mahā-kusala (great merit) which will help them to attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna in a future existence.

“ Yuñjatha Buddhasāsane ! ”

Dedicate yourselves to the teachings of the Omniscient Buddha !

# THE MESSAGE OF THE OMNISCIENT BUDDHA

By

*Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Mahā Thray Sithu U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union and Vice-President, Union Buddha Sāsana Council*

Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ,  
Kusalassa upasampadā,  
Sacittapariyodāpanaṃ,  
Etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ.

—Dhammapada-Buddhavagga-  
Ānandatthera-uposatha-  
pañhā-vatthu-gāthā.

Not to do any evil,  
To cultivate good,  
To purify one's mind—  
This is the advice of the Buddhas.

The Omniscient Buddha fulfilled the ten Pāramīs, ten Upapāramīs and ten Paramattha-pāramīs and practised other Bodhi pācariya dhammas, *i.e.*, virtues which would lead to Enlightenment, so long, so persistently and at such personal suffering and sacrifice in order that he might be able to show the way out of Saṃsāra to Nibbāna to all others, for whom he had great compassion.

His motto throughout was “Buddho bodheyyum, Mutto moceyyum, Tiṇṇo Tāreyyum”. “When I have attained Enlightenment, I must enlighten others. When I have worked out my own salvation I must help others in working out their salvation. When I have crossed over from Saṃsāra to Nibbāna, I must help others to cross over.”

So he is well known as “Mahākāruṇiko Nātho”, the Highly Compassionate Master ; and his message relates to the way out of Saṃsāra to Nibbāna—out of suffering to eternal peace and happiness.

He had so much compassion because He saw (1) that all ordinary beings (puthujjanas) and their eyes, ears, noses, tongues, bodies and minds were ablaze with the fires of rāga, dosa and moha (craving, anger and ignorance,) (2) that all of them are in constant danger of apāya dukkha (suffering in hell or as animals, petas or asuras) and (3) that even existence in the higher abodes as men, devas and brahmas is, in ultimate analysis, suffering, as they also are subject

to birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, physical suffering, mental suffering and despair and as they also are in constant danger of apāya dukkha.

All ordinary beings are in constant danger of apāya dukkha not only on account of such evil deeds as they may have done in the past but also because they may do evil deeds in the future, their capability or propensity to commit evil deeds which will lead to apāya dukkha, being eradicated only on their attainment of the first stage on the way to Nibbāna *i.e.*, on their becoming Sotāpannas.

So it should be the aim and object of all beings to attain Nibbāna as soon as possible. All beings should set forth earnestly on the way of Nibbāna ; and even those who cannot exert themselves so strenuously as to attain it in their present existence should try and get to the first stage on that way. They must remember (1) that they will not be free from the constant danger of apāya dukkha till they get there, (2) that if they fall into apāya dukkha, it will be very difficult to get out of it, and (3) that if they miss the path to Nibbāna now, they might miss it indefinitely as Buddhas appear in the world after extremely long intervals, and when Buddhas do appear, they themselves may be in such form of existence or in such circumstances that they cannot hear their message or benefit by it.

They should not be content with dāna (giving charity), sīla (observing moral precepts) and other forms of kāmāvacara kusala (doing other meritorious acts which can only lead to further existence as men or devas). They should regard these meritorious acts as mere aids to attainment of Nibbāna and use Sīla especially as an indispensable stepping-stone to Samādhi.

They should not be content with Samādhi (mental concentration), which is mere Rūpāvacara or Arūpāvacara Kusala and which can therefore lead only to further existence in the

NOTE.—This paper was contributed to the 7th session of the Symposium on “Buddhism's Contribution to Art, Letters and Philosophy” arranged from November 26th to 29th, 1956, in New Delhi, by the Working Committee for the 2500th Buddha Jayanti. Government of India, in collaboration with the UNESCO, to commemorate the 2500th anniversary of the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.



Brahma-lokas. They should regard Samādhi only as a convenient stepping-stone to Paññā and an aid to attainment of Nibbāna.

In short they should see that all their Kusalas (meritorious acts) are vivaṭṭa kusalas (acts done for the purpose of getting out of suffering) and pāramī kusalas (acts which will enable them to go over from Saṃsāra to Nibbāna); and they should regard the intermediate consequences of those kusalas in the form, e.g., of position, power and prosperity, only as things for use on the way to Nibbāna and for the attainment thereof.

### Magga-Saccā

The way to Nibbāna is the Fourth Noble Truth—the Nibbāna - gāminī - paṭipadam-ariya-saccam which is also called Magga-saccā.

It is popularly known as the Eightfold Noble Path as it contains eight factors or elements which fall into three groups, viz. Sīlakkhandha (Sīla group), Samādhikkhandha (Samādhi group) and Paññakkhandha (Paññā group); and each of these groups is the antidote for kilesas (impurities which vitiate the mind) in a particular stage.

Kilesas are in three different stages. kilesas in the first stage are known as Anusaya kilesas as they remain absolutely dormant waiting for opportunity to develop and pass into the second and third stages; kilesas in the second stage are known as Pariyuṭṭhāna kilesas as they have become active in the mind; kilesas in the third stage are known as Vitikkama kilesas as they have actually caused physical or verbal transgression; and one can attain Nibbāna only by extermination of all these kilesas.

Sīlakkhandha (sīla group), which consists of Sammā Vācā, Sammā Kammanta and Sammā Ājīva (Right speech, right action and right livelihood), is prescribed for suppression and control of kilesas which might reach the third stage and cause transgression. This group, which by itself can only lead to further existence in the kāmaloka as men or devas, forms the necessary basis for Samādhikkhandha.

Samādhikkhandha (samādhi group) which consists of Sammā Vāyāma, Sammā Sati and Sammā Samādhi (Right effort, right mindfulness and right mental concentration), is prescribed for suppression and control of kilesas which might reach the second stage and become active in the mind. This group, which must, as stated above, be based on

Sīlakkhandha, can only lead to further existence in the Rūpa and Arūpa brahma lokas. However, it also serves as a useful stepping stone to Paññakkhandha as only those who have concentration of mind can perceive the truth. (Samāhito yathā bhūtaṃ pajānāti).

Paññakkhandha (paññā group), which consists of Sammādiṭṭhi and Sammāsaṅkappa (Right View and Right Thought), is prescribed for eradication and extermination—not mere suppression and control—of kilesas in the first stage with all their potentiality to pass on to the second and third stages.

Lokiya-sīla and Lokiya-samādhi (worldly sīla and samādhi) have always been there, whether Buddhas appear in the world or not; and that is the reason why the Devalokas and Brahmaloas (except the Suddhāvāsas, which are exclusively for Anāgāmi and Arahatta Ariyas) have never been empty. However, there never was any semblance of Paññakkhandha before the Buddhas appeared and delivered their message; and one can eradicate all the kilesas and attain Nibbāna by Paññakkhandha only. So it is not only the crowning piece of the Eightfold Noble Path but also the most important and characteristic part of the Buddha's message.

### Vipassanā-Bhāvanā

Kilesas can exist in one's mind only so long as one, being unable to see things as they really are (yathābhūta), believes, thinks or perceives (through diṭṭhi-vipallāsa, citta-vipallāsa and saññā-vipallāsa) (1) what is anicca (impermanent) to be nicca (permanent), (2) what is dukkha (suffering) to be sukha (pleasure), (3) what is anattā (not self) to be attā (self), and (4) what is asubha (reprehensible) to be subha (pleasant); and one can see things as they really are only with Vipassanā Paññā, Magga-Paññā and Phalapaññā i.e., special knowledge acquired by meditation, wisdom which arises on arrival at a particular stage on the way to Nibbāna and wisdom which results from "fruition" in that stage.

Vipassanā Paññā is special knowledge, which alone can lead to Magga Paññā; and that is the reason why those who begin with Samatha-Bhāvanā i.e. continuous practice of Samādhi or mental concentration, have to practise meditation also at a later stage.

Vipassanā Paññā itself cannot eradicate kilesas. It can only pave the way for their eradication by Magga Paññā; and it will be

seen later that even Magga Paññā has to eradicate them in four instalments.

Phalapaññā does not eradicate any kilesa as it arises only in the peaceful condition (passaddhi) prevailing after the respective Magga Paññā has eradicated certain kilesas. It merely appreciates and confirms their eradication.

The object of acquiring Vipassanā Paññā is to get rid of diṭṭhi-vipallāsa, citta-vipallāsa and saññā-vipallāsa (erroneous belief, erroneous thought and erroneous perception) in order that one may be able to see what are anicca, dukkha, anattā and asubha as they really are—and in order that one may cease to crave for or to cling to them.

#### Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇam

The vipallāsas or errors arise primarily in connection with what one regards as oneself. So one must begin by meditating on what are the constituents of what one regards as oneself and what is the nature of each constituent thereof till one attains special knowledge (1) that the constituents are nāma and rūpa only, (2) that there is nothing other than nāma and rūpa among them, (3) that what one regards as oneself is only a dhammapuñja, a conglomeration of physical and mental elements, and (4) that the respective nature of nāma and rūpa is such and such. This special knowledge is known as nāma-rūpa-paricchedañāṇam or diṭṭhi-visuddhi.

#### Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇam

Then one must proceed to consider, with the aid *e.g.*, of Paṭiccasamuppāda and other suttas in the Nidāna Vagga of the Saṃyutta Nikāya, how nāma and rūpa come into existence till one realises (1) that the elements of nāma and rūpa arise as suddha-dhamma or mere results of their respective causes (hetu-sambhāra-paccaya) such for instance as vatthu and ārammaṇa (re nāma) and kamma, citta, utu and āhāra (re rūpa), (2) that they do not, on ultimate analysis, constitute any person or individual and (3) that there really is no person or individual who does any act or takes its consequences.

Kamassa kāraṇo n'atthi  
Vipākassa ca vedako  
Suddhadhammā pavattanti  
Evaṃ etaṃ sammadassanaṃ.

—Visuddhimagga.

(No doer of the deeds is found,  
No being that may reap their fruits;  
Empty phenomena roll on;  
This view alone is right and true.)

This special knowledge is known as Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇam or Kaṅkhāvitaraṇa Visuddhi; and one who has acquired it has found a footing and got some relief in the Omniscient Buddha's Sāsana—he has become a cūla or embryo Sotāpanna whose future is ensured in the sense that his next existence will not be in an apāya bhūmi.

#### Sammasana-ñāṇam

Up to this stage the primary object of meditation has been acquisition of ñāta pariññā (basic or essential knowledge). Having acquired that knowledge, one is now qualified to investigate—and must proceed to investigate—the real characteristics and values of nāma and rūpa, with the aid *e.g.*, of Anattā-sutta and similar Suttas, till one realises that they are really anicca, dukkha, anattā and asubha.

They are anicca because they vanish after coming into existence (Aniccaṃ khayatthena or Hutvā abhāvatthena aniccā).

They are dukkha because they themselves are constantly harassed or oppressed by the process of arising and vanishing (uppāda-vayapaṭipīlanatthena dukkhā) and because they also are the seats of suffering (dukkhavatthuto).

They are anattā because they are absolutely devoid of what is popularly regarded as attā (soul), nivāsi (occupier), kāraṇo (doer) vedako (enjoyer or sufferer), sayamvasā (ruler or authority) and also because they are not subject to one's control, they do not comply with one's wishes (anissariyato, akāmakariyato, alabbhaniyato, avasavattanato) and they behave like complete strangers to oneself (parato).

They are asubha not only on account of the physical and mental impurities but also for the reason that they are anicca, dukkha and anattā.

#### Udayabbaya-ñāṇam

Having acquired the said knowledge, which is known as Sammasana-ñāṇam, one should proceed to meditate in such a way as to be able to visualize the constant arising and passing away of the physical and mental elements—to see (1) that they arise and pass

away so quickly that they always appear to be new (Niccanavā) (2) that they are short-lived like bubbles, lines drawn on water and lightning and (3) that they are as devoid of substance as a mirage or a dream.

One who can visualize the above has acquired Udayabbaya-ñāṇaṃ, which is also known as Taruṇavipassana-ñāṇaṃ and he can rightly claim to be an Āraddhavipassaka *i.e.*, one who has really practised meditation.

Meditation from this stage onward is for pahāna-pariññā *i.e.*, for knowledge which will lead to absolute detachment.

### Bhaṅga-ñāṇaṃ

So one meditates further on the anicca, dukkha and anattā aspects of nāma and rūpa with special emphasis on their coming to an end (khaya), vanishing (vaya), breaking up (bheda) and extinction (nirodha) so that one may be able (1) to visualize mental and physical elements vanishing like bubbles on the surface of a lake or a river during a heavy rain, and (2) to get rid of bhava-diṭṭhi or sassata-diṭṭhi *i.e.*, the view that life is everlasting.

### Bhaya-ñāṇaṃ

Visualization as stated above is known as Bhaṅga-ñāṇa ; and one who practises such visualization will eventually realize that all abodes or planes of existence are dangerous places, that everybody therein is bound to perish and that there is nothing which can save him.

### Ādīnava-ñāṇaṃ

This realization is known as Bhaya-ñāṇaṃ which will, after repeated exercise, develop first into Ādīnava-ñāṇaṃ *i.e.*, visualization (1) of all abodes as ablaze with eleven fires, *viz.*, the fires of rāga, dosa, moha, birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, physical suffering, mental suffering and despair and (2) of all saṅkhāras *i.e.*, things which arise from their respective causes, as so many diseases, sores or heaps of reprehensible articles (Roga, Gaṇṭha, Mahā-ādīnava-rāsi).

### Nibbidā-ñāṇaṃ

It will then develop into Nibbidā-ñāṇaṃ which will make one dissatisfied with all abodes and all saṅkhāras.

### Muñcitukamyata-ñāṇaṃ

Nibbidāñāṇaṃ will lead to Muñcitukamyata-ñāṇaṃ which will make him want to

get out of all abodes and to get rid of all saṅkhāras just as fish caught in a net would like to be free and a man who is surrounded by enemies would like to get away from them.

### Paṭisaṅkhānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ

He will then proceed to meditate again on all saṅkhāras being anicca, dukka and anattā in greater detail and from more points of view to make sure that they are really not worth having and that they must necessarily be discarded. Knowledge which is gained by such further meditation and which gives him the required assurance is Paṭisaṅkhānupassanā-ñāṇaṃ.

### Saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇaṃ

Having gained this knowledge, he will proceed to meditate on all Saṅkhāras being devoid of Attā and Attaniya of what can be taken as "I" or "Mine" ; acquire saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇaṃ, *i.e.*, knowledge which will make him give up fear and pleasure in connection with all Saṅkhāras and render him absolutely indifferent about them.

### Anuloma-ñāṇaṃ

Repeated use and cultivation of that knowledge will lead to Anuloma-ñāṇaṃ *i.e.*, knowledge which is not only in consonance with the previous ñāṇas but also with all Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammas (dhammas which lead to realization of the Four Noble Truths).

### Gotrabhū-ñāṇaṃ

Up to this stage one has meditated only on saṅkhāras (which form the subject-matter of Dukkha-saccā and Dukkha-samudaya-saccā) and knowledge which has been acquired by such meditation is confined to them. However, when Anuloma-ñāṇaṃ has become mature on account of constant practice and further cultivation, Gotrabhū-ñāṇaṃ, which turns away from saṅkhāras and contemplates Nibbāna (Nirodha-saccā), will arise and elevate one to the Ariya Bhūmi (status of an Ariya).

This ñāṇaṃ which cannot eradicate any kilesa, although it can and does contemplate Nibbāna, will be followed immediately by Magga-ñāṇaṃ *i.e.*, knowledge which arises on arriving at one of the four stages on the way to Nibbāna.

## Maggañāṇāni

### Sotāpatti-maggañāṇam

The first state is known as Sotāpatti (entering upon the stream which will lead to Nibbāna) ; and one who has arrived at this stage is known as a Sotāpanna.

Magga-ñāṇam arises at this stage because one has got rid of eight out of twelve vipallāsas, namely :—

- (1), (2) and (3) Wrong view (or conviction), thought and perception that what are really anicca are nicca ;
- (4), (5) and (6) Wrong view, thought and perception that what are really anattā are attā ;
- (7) Wrong view that what are really dukkha are sukha ; and
- (8) Wrong view that what are really asubha are subha.

This Magga-ñāṇam eradicates two anusaya kilesas viz. (1) diṭṭhānusaya kilesa and (2) vicikicchānusaya kilesa (the latent or dormant kilesas of wrong view and doubt).

So a Sotāpanna becomes absolutely incapable of doing any evil deed (akusala) which will lead to rebirth in an Apāya Bhūmi ; he will never be reborn there as his magga-kusala has overpowered all his past evil deeds and rendered them incapable of causing rebirth therein ; and he is bound to attain Nibbāna after seven more existences at the most.

### Sakadāgāmi maggañāṇam

The second stage is known as Sakadāgāmi (returning once) because one who has arrived at this stage will return to the kāmaloka i.e., be reborn in the abodes of men and devas, only once. The Magga-ñāṇam, which arises at this stage, attenuates two anusaya kilesas, namely, (3) kāmarāgānusaya and (4) paṭighānusaya (latent craving for sensual pleasure and latent anger), although it cannot eradicate them ; and the possessor of this ñāṇam will be reborn in the kāmaloka only once especially because his kāmarāgānusaya has been attenuated by it.

### Anāgāmi maggañāṇam

The third stage is known as Anāgāmi (non-returning) because one who has attained this stage will not be reborn in the kāmaloka again.

Anāgāmi maggañāṇam which eradicates the two Anusaya kilesas attenuated by Sakadāgāmi-magga-ñāṇam, arises at this

stage because one has got rid of two more vipallāsas, viz. :—

(9) and (10) Wrong thought and perception that what are really Asubha are Subha.

An Anāgāmi will not be reborn in the Kāmaloka again especially because his Magga-ñāṇam has eradicated kāmarāgānusaya ; but he will be reborn in the Brahma-loka as he still entertains wrong thought and perception that what are really dukkha are sukha and therefore has Mānānusaya, Bhavarāgānusaya and Avijjānusaya (latent pride, latent craving for existence in the Brahmaloika and latent ignorance).

### Arahatta maggañāṇam

The fourth and last stage is known as Arahatta. Maggañāṇam at this stage arises because one has got rid of the remaining two vipallāsas viz. :—

- (11) and (12) Wrong thought and perception that what are really dukkha are sukha.

This Maggañāṇam eradicates all the remaining antīsayas-kilesas viz :—

- (5) Mānānusaya (latent pride).
- (6) Bhavarāgānusaya (latent craving for existence in the Brahmaloika), and

(7) Avijjānusaya (latent ignorance) ; and one who has acquired it, has become an Arathat—a Mahākhīṇāsava (a great man whose kilesas are all gone—an Antimadehadhārī) one who is bearing the last and ultimate body—an Ohitabhāra (one who has laid down the burden)—an Anuppattasadattho (one who has achieved his own welfare)—a Parikkhīṇa-bhavasāmyojano (one who is no longer fettered by any tie to any form of existence)—a Sammadaññā-vimutto (one who has been liberated by his own wisdom).

In short he has fully carried out the instructions contained in the Message of the Buddha and has therefore attained Nibbāna in this very life.

## Nibbāna

Nibbāna is divided into two parts, namely, (1) Sa-upādisesa-nibbāna (Nibbāna in which there still are the Upādis—khandhas or factors of existence) Kilesa-parinibbāna (extinction of all kilesas) and (2) Anupādisesa-nibbāna in which there is no Upādi whatsoever.

Kilesa-parinibbāna is also described as rāgakkhayo, dosakkhayo and mohakkhayo (cessation, extinction or extermination of rāga, dosa and moha) as anusaya kilesas and all other kilesas fall under these main heads; and it is attained and enjoyed in this very life and before their death by those who have eradicated all kilesas.

As a matter of fact, Sotāpannas, Sakadāgāmis and Anāgāmis can also be said to have attained Kilesa-parinibbāna, by way of pariyāya *i.e.*, in a certain sense, since they have eradicated certain kilesas as stated above and can enjoy the peaceful and happy consequences thereof; and all of them as well as the Arahats are the best witnesses of the truth of the Buddha's declaration that His Dhamma is Sandiṭṭhiko, Akāliko and Ehipassiko—that the Dhamma is such that anyone can *personally* enjoy the benefits thereof—in *this very life*—and everyone is invited to come and see for himself.

Anupādisesa-nibbāna is attained by all Buddhas, Pacceka-buddhas and Arahats on their demise. It is Asankhata Dhātu (unconditioned); and Puthujjanas *i.e.*, ordinary persons, as distinct from Ariyas, know only of saṅkhāras—of what are conditioned. So they can only guess what Anupādisesa-nibbāna is. They can only think of it in negative terms and comprehend that there is no rāga, dosa nor moha and therefore no birth, no old-age, no death, no sorrow, no lamentation, no physical suffering, no mental suffering, no despair etc. in Nibbāna.

Santisukha (peaceful happiness) in Anupādisesa Nibbāna is Avedayasukha and not Vedayita-sukha like the happiness of puthujjanas.

Vedayita-sukha arises only occasionally as a result of certain causes; but it is transient, dependent, changeable and perishable like all other saṅkhāras and it has to be sought after and worked for—over and over again. So it really is dukkha (misery or cause of misery) on ultimate analysis.

Avedayasukha is the reverse of all this. In fact, the absolute absence of Vedayita-sukha is of the essence of happiness in Nibbāna. (“Etad’eva khvettha, Āvuso, sukhaṃ

yad-ettha n’atthi vedayitam”.—Anguttara Nikāya-Navakanipāta - Mahāvagga-Third Sutta).

Nibbāna is so different from all that they know that puthujjanas cannot visualize it like Ariyas. They can only guess how happy and peaceful Nibbāna, which is the result of complete eradication of rāga, dosa and moha, must be.

However, a puthujjana, who starts on the Eightfold Noble Path and practises Vipassanā-Bhāvanā, will realize that even Vedayita-sukha falls into two classes *viz.* Gehassita-sukha and Nekkhammassita-sukha happiness connected with home and happiness arising out of detachment) or Āmisa-sukha and Nirāmisa-sukha happiness connected with kilesas, sensual pleasure and the world—kilesāmisa, kāmāmisa and lokāmisa—and happiness which is not so connected).

He will also realize progressively (1) that nekkhammasita-sukha is far superior to gehassita-sukha, (2) that gehassita-sukha, like kāma-sukha, is a harm or hindrance (ābādha) to nekkhama-sukha like jhāna-sukha, (3) that the level of nekkhammasita-sukha rises with the level of jhānas (stages of mental concentration), and (4) that what is conducive to nekkhammasita-sukha at a lower jhāna is really a harm or hindrance to nekkhammasita-sukha at a higher level. He will then be able to appreciate why there is no vedayita-sukha in Nibbāna and to make a more intelligent guess as to the nature of Nibbāna-sukha.

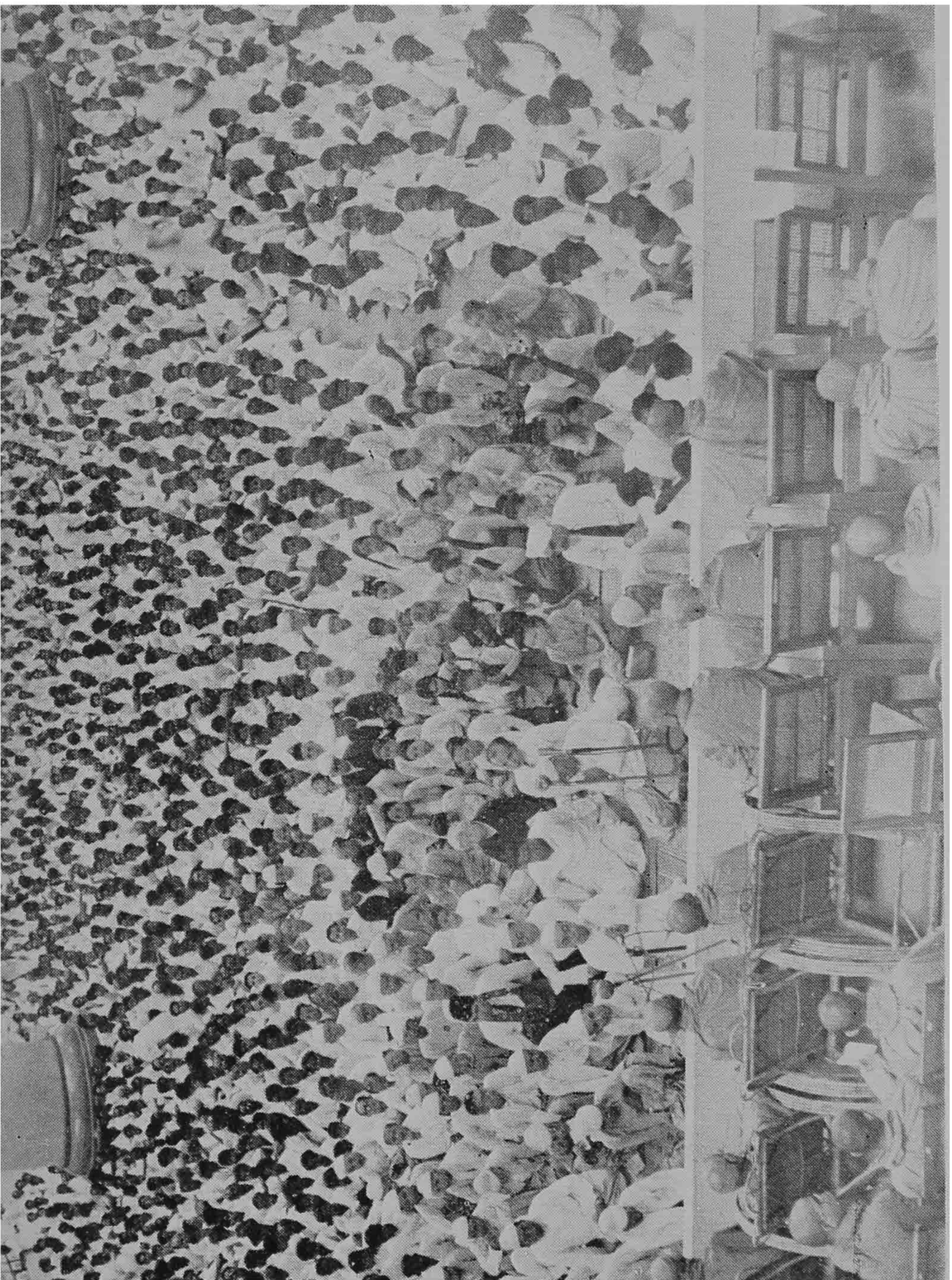
Besides, he will actually see Nibbāna and enjoy a foretaste of Nibbāna-sukha as soon as he reaches the first stage on the way thereto *i.e.*, as soon as he becomes a Sotāpanna.

So the last words of the Omniscient Buddha, as recorded in the Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta in the Dīghanikāya are :—

“ VAYADHAMMĀ SANKHĀRĀ  
APPAMĀDENA SAMPĀDETHA ! ”

Saṅkhāras are perishable.

Work out your own salvation with diligence !



At a ceremony held in the Mahā Pāsāṇa Guhā ( the Great Sacred Cave ) in May 1956, over 5000 Tamilian residents of Rangoon took refuge in the Triple Gem and become Theravāda Buddhists.

# THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

## AN INQUIRY INTO THE SCOPE OF BARE ATTENTION AND THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF ITS STRENGTH

By *Nyanaponika Thera*

### Part III

#### 3. *Stopping and Slowing Down*

Mind, for a full and unobstructed unfolding of its capacities, needs the influence of two complementary forces, of *activating* and *restraining*. That twofold need was recognized by the Buddha, the great knower of mind. He advised that the Faculties of Energy (*viriy' indriya*) and of tranquil Concentration (*samādh' indriya*) should be kept equally strong and well balanced<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, He recommended three of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*) as suitable for rousing the mind<sup>2</sup>, and another three for calming it<sup>3</sup>. In both cases, among the Spiritual Faculties and the Enlightenment Factors, it is Mindfulness (*sati*) that not only watches over their equilibrium, but actively stimulates the growth of both their activating and their restraining power.

Mindfulness, though seemingly of a passive character, is in fact also a directly activating force. It makes the mind alert, and alertness is indispensable for all purposeful activity. In the present inquiry, however, we shall be mainly concerned with the *restraining* power of mindfulness. We shall examine how it makes for disentanglement and detachment, and how it positively helps in the development of the mental qualities required for the work of Deliverance.

In practising Bare Attention, we *keep still* at the mental and spatial place of observation, amidst the loud demands of the inner and outer world. There is in it the strength of tranquillity, the capacity of deferring action and applying the brake, of *stopping* rash interference, of suspending judgment while *pausing* for observation of facts and wise reflection on them. There is also a wholesome *slowing down* in the impetuosity of thought, speech and action. Keeping still and stopping, pausing and slowing down—these will be our key words when speaking

now of the restraining effect of Bare Attention.

An ancient Chinese book says :—

“ In making things end, and in making things start, there is nothing more glorious than *keeping still*.”

In the light of the Buddha's teaching, the true “end of things” is Nibbāna which is called the “*stilling* of formations” (*saṅkhārānaṃ vūpasamo*), that is their final end or cessation. It is also called “the Stopping” (*nirodha*). The “things” or “formations” meant here, are the conditioned and impersonal phenomena rooted in their twofold cause, craving and ignorance. The end of the formations comes to be by the end of “forming”, *i.e.* by the end of world-creating kammic activities. It is the “end of the world” and of suffering, which, as proclaimed by the Buddha, cannot be reached by walking, by migrating or transmigrating, but is to be found only within ourselves. That “end of the world” is heralded by each deliberate act of *keeping still, stopping or pausing*. “Keeping still”, in that highest sense, means : stopping the accumulation of Kamma. It means: refraining from perpetually adding to our entanglements in Samsāra, from our unceasing concern with evanescent things. By following the Way of Mindfulness, and training ourselves to keep still, or pause, in the attitude of Bare Attention, we refuse to take up the world's persistent challenge to our dispositions for greed or hatred. We protect ourselves against rash and delusive judgments ; we refrain from blindly plunging into the labyrinths of interfering action with all its inherent dangers.

“ He who abstains from interfering, is everywhere in security.”

(*Sutta-nipāta*, verse 953)

1. For the teaching on the Balance of the Spiritual Faculties see Anguttara-Nik. VI, 55 ; Visuddhi-Magga Ch. IV—Comy. to Satipaṭṭhana Sutta (in “Way of Mindfulness”, by Bhikkhu Soma p. 137).

2. These three are : the Enlightenment Factors of Truth-investigation, Energy and Rapture. See Samy-Nik. 46, No. 53, quoted in Vis. Magga Ch. IV.

3. These three are : the Enlightenment Factors of Tranquillity, Concentration and Equanimity. See Samy.-Nik. 46, No. 51.

“He who keeps still (or : knows where to stop) will not meet danger.”

(*Tao Te King*, Chapter 44)

The Chinese saying quoted earlier, says in its second part that there is nothing more glorious in *making things start* than keeping still. Explained in the Buddhist sense, these things effectively started by keeping still, are “the things (or qualities) making for a decrease of kammic accumulation” (*apacayagāmino dhammā*), and, in dealing with them, we may follow the traditional division of mental training into Morality (or Conduct), Concentration (or Tranquillity) and Wisdom (or Insight). All three are decisively helped by the attitude of *keeping still*, as cultivated by Bare Attention.

1. *Conduct* How can we improve our conduct, its moral quality and its skill in taking right decisions? If we earnestly desire such an improvement, it will generally be the wisest to choose the line of least resistance. We might suffer discouraging defeat if we turn too early against those shortcomings which have deep roots in old habits or in powerful impulses. We shall be better advised to pay attention first to those blemishes of our action or speech and to those errors of judgment which are caused by thoughtlessness and rashness, and there are many of them. There are numerous instances in the lives of most of us where one short moment of reflection may have prevented a false step, and thereby warded off a long chain of misery or moral guilt that started with a single moment of thoughtlessness. But how can we curb our rash reactions and replace them by moments of mindfulness and reflection? This will depend on our capacity to *stop* and *pause*, to apply the brakes at the right time, and that we can learn well by practising Bare Attention. In that practice we shall train ourselves “to look and wait”, to suspend, or slow down, reactions. We shall learn it “in the easy way”, in situations of our own choice, within the limited field of experiences met with during the periods of meditative practice. When facing again and again the incidental sense-impressions, feelings or stray thoughts which interrupt our concentration; when curbing again and again our desire to respond to them in some way or other; when succeeding again and again in keeping still in face of them,—then we shall be well prepared for preserving that inner stillness also in the wider and unprotected field of everyday life.

We shall have acquired a presence of mind that will enable us to pause and stop, even if we are taken by surprise, or are suddenly provoked or tempted.

Our present remarks refer to those blemishes of conduct which are liable to arise through thoughtlessness and rashness, but might more or less easily be checked through mindfulness. Dexterity in dealing with them will, however, also affect those more obstinate deviations from moral conduct which are rooted in strong passionate impulses or in deeply ingrained bad habits. The greater calm of mind achieved in keeping still for Bare Attention, will restrain the impetuosity of passions, and the acquired habit of “pausing and stopping” will act as a brake to the unquestioned repetition of bad habits.

By being able to keep still for Bare Attention, or to pause for wise reflection, very often the first temptation to lust, the first wave of anger, the first mist of delusion will disappear without causing serious entanglement. At which stage the sequence of unwholesome thought-processes is stopped, will depend on the quality of mindfulness. If mindfulness is keen, it will succeed in calling a stop at a very early point of a series of defiled thoughts or actions, before we are carried along by them too far. Consequently, the respective defilements will not grow beyond their initial strength, less effort will be required to check them, and less kammic entanglements, or none, will follow.

Let us take the example of a pleasant visual object which has aroused our liking. At first that liking might not be very active and insistent. If already here the mind is able to keep still for detached observation or reflection, it will be easily possible to divest the visual perception of its still very slight admixture of lust, and to register it as “just something seen that has caused a pleasant feeling”; or the effect of the attraction felt is sublimated into quiet aesthetic pleasure. If that earliest chance has been missed, the liking will grow into attachment and into desire to possess. If now a stop is called, the thought of desire may gradually lose its strength; it will not easily turn into an insistent craving, and no actual attempts to get possession of the object of desire will follow. But if the current of lust is still unchecked, the thought of desire (= *akusala-mano-kamma*, “unwholesome mental kamma”) may express itself by speech (= *akusala-vacī-kamma*, “unwholesome verbal kamma”): one asks for the



desired object, or even demands it with impetuous words. A refusal will cause the original current of lust to branch out into additional streams of mental defilements, either of sadness or of anger. But if even at that late stage one can stop for quiet reflection or Bare Attention and, accepting the refusal, renounce wish-fulfilment, further complications will be avoided. But if clamouring words are followed by action (= *akusala-kāya-kamma*, "unwholesome bodily kamma"): if, driven by craving, one tries to get possession of the object of one's desire, by stealth or force, then the kammic entanglement is complete, and the full impact of its consequences will be experienced by the doer. Still, if even after the completion of the evil act, the doer stops for reflection, *i.e.* if mindfulness takes the form of remorseful retrospection, it will not be in vain: it will preclude a hardening of character and may prevent a repetition of the same course of action.

The Exalted One said once to His son Rāhula:

"Whatever action you *intend* to perform, by body, speech or mind, you should consider that action. . . If, in considering it, you realize: 'This action which I intend to perform will be harmful to myself, or harmful to others, or harmful to both; it will be an unwholesome action, producing suffering, resulting in suffering'—then you should certainly not perform that action.

"Also *while* you are performing an action, by body, speech or mind, you should consider that action. . . If, in considering it, you realize 'This action which I am performing, is harmful to myself, or harmful to others, or harmful to both; it is an unwholesome action, producing suffering, resulting in suffering'—then you should desist from such an action.

"Also *after* you have performed an action, by body, speech or mind, you should consider that action. . . If, in considering it, you realize: 'This action which I have performed, has been harmful to myself, or harmful to others, or harmful to both; it was an unwholesome action, producing suffering, resulting in suffering'—then you should in future refrain from it." (Majjh. 61)

2. *Tranquillity*— We shall now consider how the stopping for Bare Attention is also a helper in attaining or strengthening Tran-

quillity (*samatha*) in its double sense: of peace of mind in general, and of meditative concentration and calm.

By growing a habit of pausing and stopping for Bare Attention, it will become increasingly easier to withdraw into one's own stillness when unable to escape bodily from the loud and insistent noises of the outer world; it will be easier to forego useless reaction to foolish speech or deed of others. Also when the blows of fate are particularly hard and incessant, a mind trained in Bare Attention will find it easier to take refuge in the haven of apparent passivity, or watchful non-action, and to wait patiently until the storms have passed. There are situations in life when it is best to allow things to come to their natural end. He who is able to keep still and wait will often succeed where aggressiveness or busy activity is vanquished. Not only in critical situations, but also in the normal course of life, the experience won by observant Keeping Still will convince us that it is not at all necessary to make an active response to any impression received, or to regard every encounter with people or things as a challenge to our interfering activity.

By refraining from busying ourselves unnecessarily, external frictions and, thereby, internal tensions will be reduced. Greater harmony and peace will pervade the life of every day, and the sometimes considerable contrast of normal life to the tranquillity of meditation will be reduced. Then there will be less of those disturbing inner reverberations of everyday restlessness which, in a coarse or subtle form, invade the hours of meditation and produce bodily and mental unrest. Consequently, the Hindrance of Agitation (*uddhacca-nivāraṇa*), which is a chief obstacle of concentration, will be less often evident, or it will be easier to overcome it.

By cultivating the attitude of Bare Attention as often as opportunity offers; the centrifugal forces of mind, making for mental distraction, will be reduced, and the centripetal tendency, turning the mind inward and making for concentration, will be strengthened. The craving for a variety of changing objects of thought, or objects of desire, will be effectively checked.

Furthermore, regular practice of sustained attention to a continuous series of events will prepare for sustained concentration on a *single* object or a limited number of objects in the strict practice of meditation. Firmness, or steadiness, of mind, being another

important factor in concentration, will likewise be cultivated in that way.

Thus, by keeping still, pausing and stopping for Bare Attention, several salient components of meditative tranquillity are fostered: calmness, concentration, firmness, reduction of the multiplicity of objects. The average level of normal consciousness is raised and brought closer to the level of the meditative mind. This is an important point, because it happens often that too wide a gap between these two levels of mind will frustrate again and again attempts of mental concentration or the achieving of smooth continuity in meditative practice.

In the sequence of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment we find that the enlightenment-factor Tranquillity (*passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*) precedes that of Concentration (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*); and, expressing the same fact, it was said ; “ If tranquillized within, mind will become concentrated.” Now, in the light of our previous remarks, we shall better understand these statements.

3. *Insight*.—It has been said by the Exalted One : “ He whose mind is concentrated sees things as they really are.” Therefore all those ways by which Bare Attention strengthens concentration of mind, will also be a supporting condition of the development of Insight. But there is also a more direct and specific help which Insight receives from “ Keeping still at Bare Attention”.

Apart from (supposedly) disinterested scholarly or scientific research, man is generally more concerned with “ handling” and utilizing things, or defining their relations to himself, than with knowing them in their true nature. He is therefore mostly satisfied with registering the very first signal conveyed to him by an outer or inner perception. Through deeply ingrained habit, that first signal will evoke standard responses by way of judgments like good—bad, pleasant—unpleasant, useful—harmful, right—wrong; which again will lead to further reactions by word or deed in accordance with these judgments. It is very rare that attention will dwell any longer upon an object of a common, or habitual type, than for receiving that very first signal, or the first few. Thus, mostly only one single aspect of the object, or a selected few, will be perceived (and sometimes misconceived), and only the very first phase (or little more) of the object’s life-span will come into the focus of attention. One may not even be consciously aware that

the respective process has an extension in time (origination and end); that it has many aspects and relations beyond those referring to the casual observer or the limited situation; that, in brief, it has a kind of evanescent individuality of its own. A world that has been perceived in that superficial way, will, to that extent, consist of rather shapeless little lumps of experience marked by a few subjectively selected (and sometimes misapplied) signs or symbols which have significance mainly for the individual’s self-interest. Parts of that rather shadow-like world are not only things and persons of one’s environment, but even a good part of one’s own bodily and mental processes which are often conceived in a similar superficial way. When thus the seal of self-reference is stamped again and again upon the world of every-day experience, the basic misconception ‘ This belongs to me’ (*attaniya*) will steadily continue to grow subtle, but firm and wide-spread roots (comparable to the hair-roots of plants), which will scarcely be shaken by mere intellectual convictions about the non-existence of a self (*anattā*).

These grave consequences issue from that fundamental perceptual situation we have mentioned : on receiving a first signal from his perceptions, man rushes into hasty or habitual reactions which so often commit him to the four misapprehensions of reality : taking the impure for pure, the impermanent for lasting, the painful and pain-bringing for pleasant, and the impersonal for a self or something belonging to the self.

But if one musters the restraining forces of one’s mind and pauses for Bare Attention, the material and mental processes that form the objects of mind at the given moment will reveal themselves more fully and more truly. If they are no longer dragged at once into the whirlpool of self-reference, but allowed to unfold themselves before the watchful eye of mindfulness, the diversity of their aspects and the wide net of their correlations and interconnections will appear ; the narrow and often falsifying connection with self-interest will recede into the background and will be dwarfed by the wider view now gained. Birth and death, rise and fall of many of the observed processes will be clearly discerned, in their serial occurrence or in their component parts. Thereby the facts of Change and Impermanence will impress themselves on the mind with growing intensity. By the same discernment of rise

and fall, many false conceptions of unity in the processes which had been created under the influence of the egocentric attitude will be dissolved. Self-reference uncritically overrides diversity, and lumps things together under the naive aspect *being* a self (*attā*) or *belonging* to a self (*attaniya*). But Bare Attention reveals these sham unities as impersonal and conditioned phenomena. Facing thus again and again the evanescent, dependent and impersonal nature of life

processes within and without, their monotony and unsatisfactory nature will become marked ; in other words, the Truth of Suffering inherent in them will appear. In that way, all three Characteristics, or signata, of Existence will open themselves to penetrative Insight (*Vipassanā*), by the simple device of slowing down, pausing and keeping still for Bare Attention.

(Part III to be continued in next issue).



## THE LIGHT OF THE BUDDHA

Here are some of the opinions concerning our magazine as expressed by different individuals residing overseas.

### AUSTRALIA.

- (1) The articles are, indeed, interesting and instructive.
- (2) It is indeed a splendid magazine and has much valuable information for serious-minded Buddhists.
- (3) I offer sincere congratulation to the Editorial Board on the excellent results of their work.

### AMERICA.

- (1) It has been a great pleasure to read all of the interesting articles, and a sum of information which is almost impossible to find outside of our university libraries.
- (2) It is truly the best magazine on Buddhism that I have as yet received from Burma.
- (3) The magazines are filled with interesting and instructive material contributed by leading Buddhist Teachers.

### ENGLAND.

- (1) I would certainly like to subscribe to this journal.
- (2) "The Light of the Buddha" presents the Buddha's message in a way that is understandable to the West.
- (3) "The Light of the Buddha" is found to be well readable.

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# SAMYUTTA-NIKĀYA, DUKKHA-VAGGA, NIDĀNA-SUTTA

## Discourse On “Dependent Origination”

( *Translated by the Editors of the ‘Light of the Dhamma’* )

On one occasion the Bhagavā was staying among the Kurus\* at Kammāsaddhamma, a township of the Kurus. And the Venerable Ānanda approached Him, paid homage to Him, and sat down at one side. So seated he addressed the Exalted One thus :

“Wonderful Bhante, marvellous Bhante, is the depth of this *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (Dependent Origination) and how deep it appears. And yet do I regard it as quite plain to understand.”

*The Buddha :*

“Do not say so , Ānanda, do not say so ! Deep indeed is this Dependent Origination and deep it appears to be. It is through not knowing, not understanding, not penetrating that Dhamma, that this world of men has become entangled like a ball of string, and covered with blight, resembles muñja\*\* grass and rushes, and unable to escape the doom of *Apāya* (the 4 Lower worlds), *Duggatim* (the 4 Woeful Courses of Existence), *Vinipātam* (the World of Perdition) and *Samsāra* (the Round of Rebirths).

“In him, Ānanda, who contemplates the enjoyment of all things that make for Clinging, Craving arises; through Craving, Clinging is conditioned ; through Clinging, the Process of Becoming is conditioned; through the Process of Becoming, Rebirth is conditioned ; through Rebirth are conditioned Old Age and Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair. Thus arises the whole mass of suffering again in the future.

“Just as if there were a great tree whose roots go down and across and draw up the nutritive essence. Verily, Ānanda, so great a tree thus nourished, thus supplied with nutriment would stand for a long time.

“Just so, Ānanda, in one who contemplates the enjoyment of all things that make for Clinging, Craving arises; through Craving, Clinging is conditioned; through Clinging,

the Process of Becoming is conditioned; through the Process of Becoming, Rebirth is conditioned ; through Rebirth are conditioned Old Age and Death Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair. Thus arises the whole mass of suffering again in the future.

“But in him, Ānanda, who dwells contemplating the misery of all things that make for Clinging, Craving ceases ; when Craving ceases, Clinging ceases ; when Clinging ceases, the Process of Becoming ceases ; when the Process of Becoming ceases, Rebirth ceases; when Rebirth ceases, Old Age and Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair cease. Thus the entire mass of Suffering ceases.

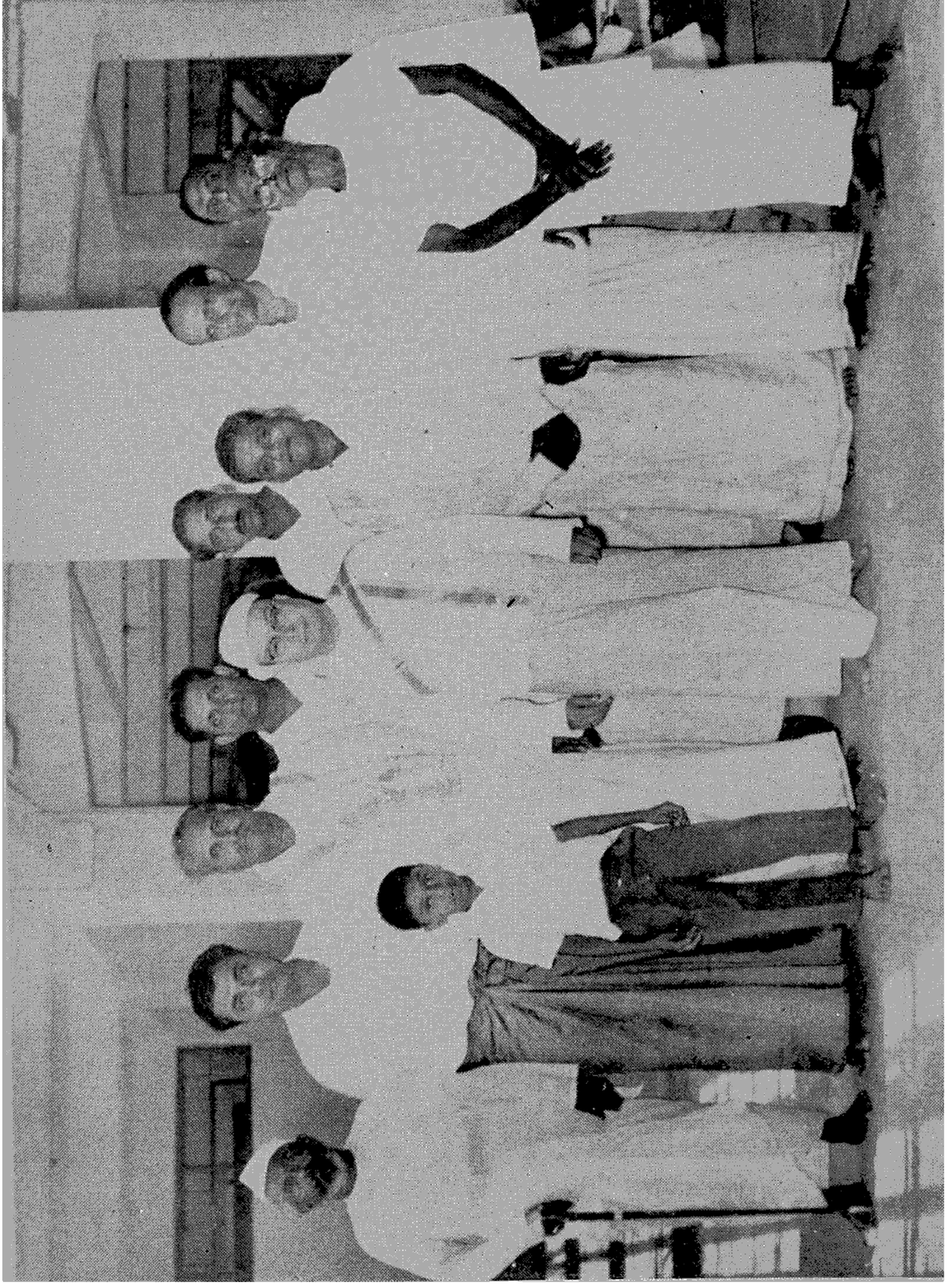
“Suppose, Ānanda, there were a great tree and a man were to come with an axe and basket, and were to cut down that tree at the root. After cutting it by the root he were to dig a trench and were to pull out the roots even to the rootlets and fibres of them. Then he were to cut the tree into logs, and were then to split the logs, and were then to make the logs into chips. Then he were to dry the chips in wind and sun, then burn them with fire, collect them into a heap of ash, then winnow the ashes in a strong wind, or let them be carried away by the swift stream of a river.

“Surely that great tree thus cut down at the roots, would be made as a palmtree stumps become unproductive, become unable to sprout again in the future.

“Just so, Ānanda, in him who dwells contemplating the misery of all things that make for Clinging, Craving ceases; when Craving ceases, Clinging ceases; when Clinging ceases, the Process of Becoming ceases; when the Process of Becoming ceases, Rebirth ceases; when Rebirth ceases, Old Age and Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair cease. Thus the entire mass of suffering ceases.”

\* Kurus were the inhabitants of the country now identified with the neighbourhood of Delhi in India.

\*\* Muñja is a kind of grass ( *Saccharum munja* Roxb )



Some of the Tamilian Buddhists with the Hon'ble Justice *Thado Mahā Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon* in the centre.

## PATHWAYS TO BUDDHISM

Mangalasutta : Buddhist Beatitudes.

*U Hla Maung, B.A., B.E.S. (Retd.)*

When the Omniscient Buddha was dwelling at the monastery of Jetavana in the city of Sāvatti, He gave the discourse on the ' Highest Felicities of Life ' or ' Beatitudes '.

When we remember that the burden of the Buddha's discourses generally covered the three-fold thread of " Ignorance—Kamma—Wisdom " we shall appreciate better the force and meaning of these ' Beatitudes ' :—

" Oh ! Glorious One ! Many gods and men wishing and longing for the good and welfare of the world, have pondered over the Blessings. Preach to us the Noblest Blessing.

" Not to associate with fools,  
But to associate with the wise,  
To honour those who are worthy of honour,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Dwelling in a suitable region,  
having done past and present meritorious deeds,

Resolving one's own mind perfectly in the right way,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Gaining vast knowledge,  
Gaining various kinds of arts and sciences,  
Gaining in well-trained disciplines, etiquettes,  
Speaking well-spoken words,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

The ministering to parents,  
The cherishing of wife and children,  
Having unconfused occupation,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Giving or offering alms,  
Living a life of righteousness,  
Giving help to relatives,  
Performing blameless deeds,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Avoiding sin in mind and abstaining from it especially in body and in word,  
Refraining from intoxicating drinks,  
Keeping vigilant in righteous acts,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Reverence, Humility,  
Contentment, Gratitude,  
And hearing the preaching at a proper time,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Patience and obedience,  
going to see holy persons,  
And discussing the doctrine at proper time,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Self-restraint against luxuries,  
Living a holy and pure life,  
Discerning the Four Noble Truths,  
Experiencing Nibbāna for oneself,  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

He whose heart remains unshaken when touched by the worldly conditions,  
who is sorrowless, passionless and secure ;  
This is the Noblest Blessing.

Those who perform such auspicious deeds are  
undefeated by all enemies and gain happiness safely everywhere ;  
These are their Noblest Blessings."

Since there is a theory that Morals and Values should change with PROGRESS, it is up to us to raise a challenge and query whether these Beatitudes are not for all time and whether they are not the sure and certain way to bring " Peace to All Men " ? As the individual is, so will society be.

The following commentary made by the Christian Bishop Bigandet about forty years ago will be found very enlightening as well as heartening to those who believe that there are values which are unassailable by the changes of time and circumstances.

He paid Reverence to the Omniscient Buddha, saying :

" Within a narrow compass, the Buddha has condensed an abridgement of almost all moral virtues. The first portion of these precepts contains injunctions to shun all that may prove an impediment to the practice of good works.

The second part inculcates the necessity of regulating one's mind and intention for a regular discharge of the duties incumbent on each man in his separate station.

Then follows a recommendation to bestow assistance on parents, relatives and all men in general.

Next to this we find recommended the virtues of humility, resignation, gratitude and patience.

After this the Teacher insists on the necessity of studying the Law, visiting the religious and conversing on religious matters.

When this is done, the hearer is commended to study with great attention the Four Great Truths, and keep his mind's eye ever fixed on the happy state of Nibbāna, which, though as yet distant, ought never to be lost sight of.

Thus prepared, the hearer must be bent upon acquiring the qualifications befitting the true sage—like the one mentioned by the Latin poet, who would ever remain calm, composed and unshaken among all the vicissitudes of life.

There is again clearly pointed out the final end to be arrived at, namely, *that of perfect mentality*. This state is the foreshadowing of that of Nibbāna”.

I hope to say something about perfect mentality later. The question for the present moment is whether the individual as well as the community should maintain and practise the Beatitudes of the Buddha, especially as we are in danger, in this so-called Progressive age, of one-sidedness, of the deterioration pointed out by T. S. Eliot in his resounding lines : which I paraphrase :

“ Where is the Wisdom we have lost in Knowledge ?

Where is the Knowledge we have lost in Information ?

The cycles of heaven in twenty centuries  
Bring us farther from “ Wisdom ” to  
the Dust.”

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**SUTTANTA-PIṬAKA, MAJJHIMA-NIKĀYA,  
MAJJHIMA-PANŪASA, GAHAPATI-VAGGA.....JĪVAKA-SUTTA  
( DISCOURSE ON JĪVAKA THE DOCTOR )**

*Translated by the Editors of the Light of the Dhamma.*

Thus I have heard. At one time the Bhagavā was staying at Rājagaha in the Mango Grove of Jīvaka Komārabhacca, the adopted son of Abhaya, the king's son. Then Jīvaka Komārabhacca approached the Blessed One. Having approached and made obeisance to Him, he sat down at one side and having sat down Jīvaka Komārabhacca asked the Blessed One :

‘ Lord, I have heard that animals are slaughtered on purpose for the recluse Gotama, and that the recluse Gotama knowingly eats the meat killed on purpose for him. Lord, do those who say animals are slaughtered on purpose for the recluse Gotama, and the recluse Gotama knowingly eats the meat killed on purpose for him speak the Word of the Buddha, or do they falsely accuse the Buddha ? Do they speak the truth according to the truth ? Are your declarations and supplementary declarations not thus subject to be ridiculed by others in any manner ? ’

‘ Jīvaka, those who say “ Animals are slaughtered on purpose for the recluse Gotama, and the recluse Gotama knowingly eats the meat killed on purpose for him ” do not say according to what I have declared, and they falsely accuse me. Jīvaka, I have declared that one should not make use of meat if it is seen, heard or suspected to have been killed on purpose for a monk. I allow the monks meat that is quite pure in three respects: if it is not seen, heard or suspected to have been killed on purpose for a monk. ’

‘ Jīvaka, in this Sāsana a monk resides in a certain village or suburb with a mind full of Loving-kindness pervading first one direction, then a second one, then a third one, then the fourth one, just so above, below and all around ; and everywhere identifying himself with all, he pervades the whole world with mind full of Loving-kindness, with mind wide, developed, unbounded, free from hate and ill-will.

‘ A certain householder or his son approaches that monk and invites him to the morning meal in his house the next day. Jīvaka, the monk willingly accepts the invitation. Having passed that night, early

the next morning that monk puts on his inner robe, dresses himself and having taken a bowl goes to the householder or his son's house. Having reached the house of the householder he sits down at a place specially meant for him. Then the householder or his son offers him a delicious meal. To that monk no such thought arises : “ How good it would be if this householder or his son were to offer me a delicious meal ”, or “ How good it would be were this householder to offer me such a delicious meal in future. ” That monk has no craving for that meal, does not brood over the matter, and has no attachment for it; on the contrary, he contemplates the miseries in connection with material food, and having possessed himself of Wisdom pertaining to the finding of a way to Freedom, he eats the meal. ’

‘ Jīvaka, what do you think about him in the matter ? Has he caused ill-will towards himself or another or both ? ’

‘ No ; Venerable Sir. ’

‘ Jīvaka, did not that monk eat a meal that was free from blemishes at that time ? ’

‘ Yes ; Venerable Sir. ’

‘ Lord, I have heard that the Brahmā lives with Loving-kindness. Lord, I have now seen with my own eyes that the Bhagavā is that very Brahmā because He lives with Loving-kindness. ’

‘ Jīvaka, ill-will is caused by rāga (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion); but the Bhagavā has already eradicated rāga, dosa and moha, and as they have been cut at the roots, they will never arise in future. Jīvaka, if you really speak in that light, I shall accept your words. ’

‘ Lord, I really spoke in that light. ’

‘ Again, Jīvaka, in this Sāsana a monk resides in a certain village or suburb with a mind full of Compassion, of Altruistic Joy and of Equanimity directed first in one direction, then a second one, then a third one, then the fourth, just so above, below and all around ; and everywhere identifying himself with all, he pervades the whole world



with mind full of Equanimity, with mind wide, developed, unbounded, free from hate and ill-will.'

'A certain householder or his son approaches that monk and invites him to the morning meal in his house the next day. Jivaka, that monk willingly accepts the invitation. Having passed that night, early the next morning that monk puts on his inner robe, dresses himself, and having taken a bowl goes to the householder's house. Having reached the house he sits down at a place specially prepared for him. Then the householder or his son offers him a delicious meal. To that monk no such thought arises: "How good it would be were this householder to offer me a delicious meal", or "How good it would be were this householder to offer me such a delicious meal in future". That monk has no craving for that meal, does not brood over the matter, and has no attachment for it; on the contrary, he contemplates the miseries in connection with material food, and having possessed himself of Wisdom pertaining to the finding of a way to Freedom, he eats the meal.'

'Jivaka, what do you think about him in the matter? Has he caused ill-will against himself or another or both?'

'No; Venerable Sir.'

'Jivaka, did not that monk eat a meal that was free from blemishes at that time?'

'Yes; Venerable Sir.'

'Lord, I have heard that the Brahmā lives with Equanimity. Lord, I have now seen with my own eyes that the Bhagavā is that very Brahmā because He lives with Equanimity.'

'Jivaka, ill-will is caused by rāga (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion); but the Bhagavā has already eradicated rāga, dosa and moha, and as they have been cut at the roots, they will never arise again in future. Jivaka, if you really speak in that light, I shall accept your words.'

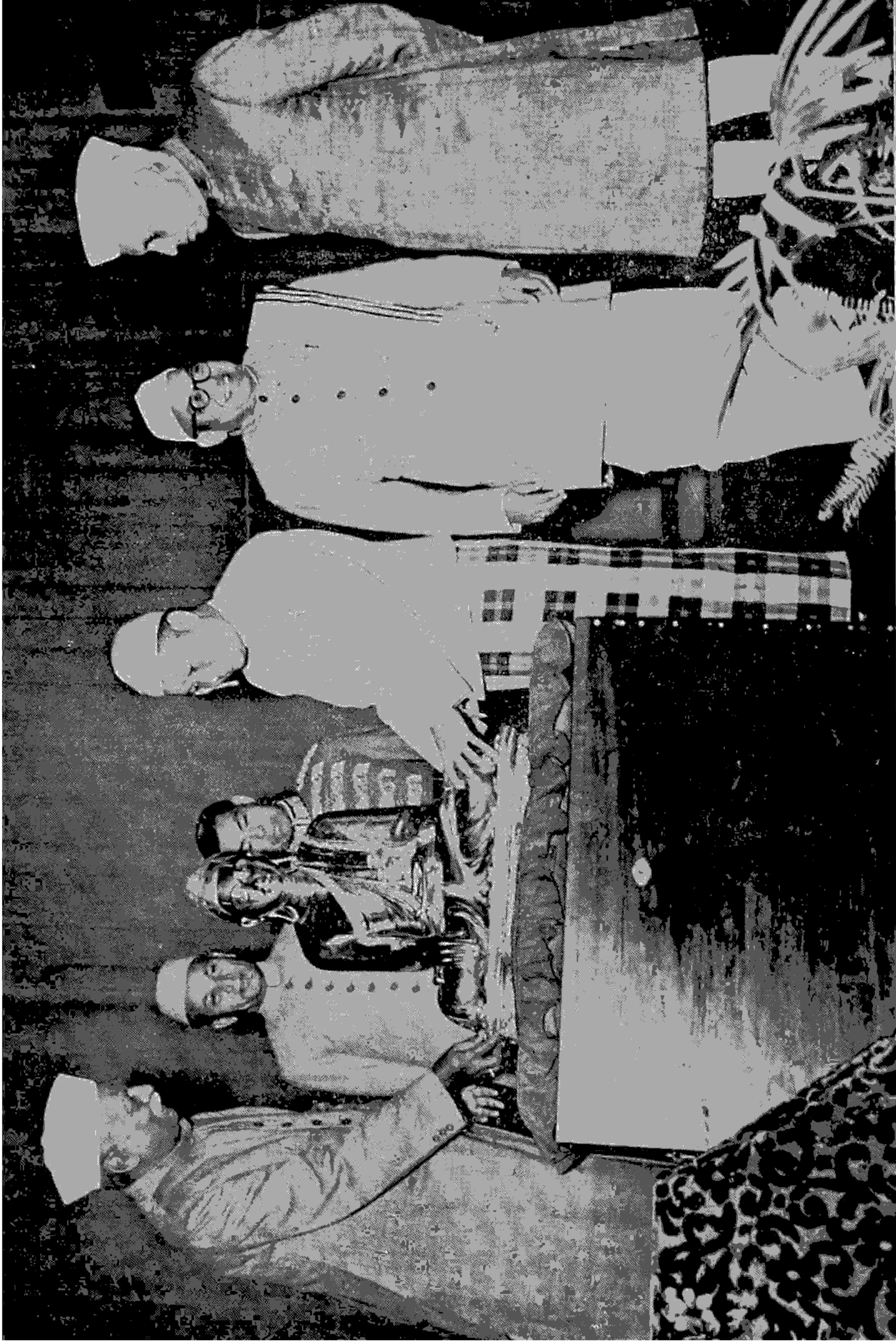
'Lord, I really spoke in that light.'

'Indeed, Jivaka, if the householder slaughters an animal on purpose for the Tathāgata

or His disciples, he performs the following five kinds of unwholesome volitional actions:—

- (1) "Go and bring such and such an animal here", orders the householder. Thus he has firstly committed an unwholesome volitional action.
- (2) Secondly, this householder has committed an unwholesome volitional action by causing the animal to be dragged by the neck thus making the animal suffer disagreeable mental sensations.
- (3) Thirdly, he has committed an unwholesome volitional action by ordering his men to kill the animal.
- (4) Fourthly, he has committed an unwholesome volitional action by having the animal killed, thus causing it disagreeable mental sensations.
- (5) Fifthly, he has committed an unwholesome volitional action by offering the Tathāgata and His disciples meat slaughtered on purpose for a monk.'

This being said, Jivaka Komārabhacca, the adopted son of Abhaya, the king's son, said to the Bhagavā: 'It is wonderful; O Gotama, it is wonderful; Just as, O Gotama, one should set upright that which is upside down or lay bare that which is concealed, or tell the way to a man who has lost his way, or hold a lamp in the dark so that those who have eyes might see things; even so, the Dhamma has been revealed to me in many ways by the Venerable Gotama. I take refuge in the Venerable Gotama, in the Dhamma and the Order of monks; may the Venerable Gotama accept me as a lay disciple who has taken refuge from today onward as long as my life lasts.'



The Hon'ble U Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma, presenting a golden Image of the Buddha on behalf of the President of the Union of Burma, to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Republic of India, at a ceremony held at New Delhi on November 25, 1956.

# THE GREATEST ADVENTURE

## A Presentation of the Buddha-Dhamma to the Youth of the World

*Ohn Ghine*

### CHAPTER I. ADVENTURE

Men have always sought adventure and some look for it in very curious ways. Sometimes adventure comes to men when they are not seeking it and most of us have had thrilling adventures of this kind that have been pleasant or very much the reverse.

In the early days before history, men lived together in large families, each family related to the other and forming a small tribe and it was man who was the hunter and therefore the adventurer and woman's place was to guard the camp and to make secure what the men had won. That was also an adventurous life for women in those days, but while men went out after adventure and so made adventure part of their lives, women for the most part feared adventure as something likely to destroy the security necessary for building a home and rearing a family.

In those early days of civilisation, men ventured from the small patches of forest-land which they lived in, to explore wider areas of the country. They met with hostile tribes and animals and with fire and flood and famine, and overcame these enemies or were overcome by them. They learned which fruits were edible and which were poisonous and they learned better ways of tilling the soil to produce more food, and better ways of building houses, villages, towns and, finally, cities.

They conquered the land and in time they began to conquer the rivers, using logs of wood which they later learned to hollow out, and finally they found out how to build ships. Then they began to conquer the sea and to sail to far-off places on great adventure. Later they began to conquer the air and now we find men attempting to conquer space, to fly to other worlds that are millions of miles away.

Now notice that word 'conquer'. It means to vanquish or to overcome and is used in warfare between nations. The word is associated with adventure and unfortunately many adventures have been attempts to overcome other people in warfare. Sometimes that has seemed very necessary to the fighters, they have thought that they could live better if they took more land and more

cattle from others. On the other hand this has not always been the case. Some wars have been fought by adventurous men just for the thrill of the adventure itself.

There is something exciting in adventure that appeals to men and that quite often brings out the best in men and incites them to do great deeds. Courage and determination, selflessness and fortitude are virtues that are part of the spirit of adventure, but they are virtues only when they are combined with the greatest of virtues, with loving-kindness.

In the modern world much of the adventure has gone out of life and only a few people can set out to climb high mountains or to explore deep caves or to fit themselves to travel in space-ships. There are cinemas and story-books and the football-field to give some sense of adventure to the others.

There is a greater adventure than any we have mentioned and that is also a conquest, the adventure found in the pursuit of science. There is as much a thrill in finding a new breed of plant, especially if a man has created that plant, as there is in finding a new country. There is a wonderful thrill in conquering disease and bringing health to one's country and to the world.

In fighting death and disease there is all the thrill of battle and all the excitement of war and some of the risks as well. In the development of X-rays, for instance, many a scientist has lost a limb and some have lost their lives due to these rays. When the flesh is exposed repeatedly for a long period to X-rays the exposed part is destroyed and affects neighbouring parts and the only remedy is to amputate the limb. When the case is such that the part cannot be amputated, the man dies. Knowing this, many brave men and women have taken great risks to make ray treatment possible, and the work of making it more safe still goes on.

In other fields of medicine and science similar risks are taken daily. They are taken not in order to kill but in order to cure. In this is greater adventure and higher service to the world.

## CHAPTER II

### The Supreme Scientist

We have just read of the realms of adventure where there is still room for adventurers who can give great service to the world. It is very interesting to note the word 'adventurer' because that is a good example of how words can change their meaning. The word is still used in praise of a man and we may say of Tensing and Hillary, who conquered Mt. Everest, 'They were great adventurers'.

Four hundred years ago the peoples of Europe began to explore the world and to travel to far countries and they greatly praised the brave men who endured many perils in such adventures. Then they began looking for countries which they could conquer and from which they could get gold and raw materials for manufacture as they began to invent machines. Using superior weapons they took many countries and then in their greed they began to fight among themselves and to rob each other's ships. The successful men who fought against other countries and against the pirates who lay in wait for their ships carrying the wealth of Asia and America back to Europe, were called great adventurers. But since many of these men were no better than pirates themselves and used force and fraud to gain their fortunes the word began to acquire a bad meaning. Today the word may be used either in praise or blame. In business when a man does not follow the rules but takes great risks, sometimes with the money of other people, he may be called 'just an adventurer'.

But if we take the word in its best and highest sense, meaning one who has courage, determination, fortitude and selflessness, we can see that some of the medical workers and scientists have been high adventurers.

Of all such scientists, he who renounced the whole world and gave up everything to undertake the greatest adventure of all was the supreme scientist.

He was born in India nearly two thousand six hundred years ago, the son of Suddhodana, head of the Sakya clan and ruler of Kapilavatthu and his queen Mahā Māyā, and was named, Siddhattha Gotama. Twenty-nine years later he gave up all his sheltered life, and all the luxuries which his father had surrounded him with, to enter on the most difficult search that man has undertaken. That might seem to the unthinking man just the beginning of the adventure that was to last six years until he attained

Buddhahood, Supreme Enlightenment. Actually this greatest of adventures had begun many millions of years before, with the vow of a determined man to find a way out of all Suffering.

That you may read about elsewhere. This is not so much to tell you of the beginning of the adventure, but of the last stages and of the end of it, and of the result that opens the way for you to undertake the greatest of all adventures. But where Siddhatta Gotama had to find a way for himself with no one to guide him, you may start off with a well-marked map and a way that has been well pointed out. Even so it is still the greatest adventure that you can undertake.

Before his birth his mother had a strange dream; she dreamt that a small white elephant had entered into her body. Since the white elephant has always been the symbol of power and leadership, this dream was interpreted, by those men who were skilled in such things, as a favourable omen. The child, they said, would be a great man of outstanding ability. When he was born he had also all the signs of health and vigour and intelligence above the ordinary. The wise men predicted that he would be a conqueror and that there were two courses open to him : either he would conquer the world in battle or he would conquer the world in an entirely different way, the peaceful way of giving up the material world in order to find that which is beyond the world.

His mother died when he was a few days old and his aunt Pajāpati cared for him and brought him up.

The Sākyas were brave warriors, and their clan was of the Khattiya caste. In those days there were four castes in India. The Khattiyas were the leading class, the rulers and great warriors ; the Brahmins or noble class were the teachers and religious men ; the Vessas were the trading class and the Sudda caste provided the workmen. People were proud of their caste, especially those who could claim to be Khattiyas, the highest caste, so King Suddhodana determined that his son should not become a mere religious man but should be a great warrior, leader of the clan, conqueror of other clans and finally ruler of the world.

He taught his son archery and all the war-like sports and the young Siddhattha excelled in all of these. His father surrounded him with luxury and comfort and tried to shield him from even the sight of sorrow and suffering. Already, however, there were signs in

the young prince of loving-kindness and compassion and freedom from the things of the world. At an early age, we are told, while watching his father perform the ceremonial ploughing of the fields, a custom of that time requiring the king to do the first ploughing so that the fields would be fertile, Siddhattha went apart and meditated. He had a glimpse of another world and of higher things and never really forgot this.

Siddhattha was married at an early age to his beautiful and charming cousin Yasodharā and although for some years they had no children they were very happy together. Finally a son was born to them. He loved his wife very dearly and in those days every man looked forward eagerly to having a son to love also, and in the eyes of the world a woman was counted as nothing unless she had borne a son. A woman with no children was never completely happy.

Siddhattha now realised that he could not easily leave the life of a household man and he did not wish to live the luxurious life of a household man. Neither did he wish to make himself a great man by killing others as a conqueror in battle. Later, after he had become the Buddha, when he was asked why the Sākyans were called warriors, though so many were His followers, the Buddha answered: 'Warriors are we called, and wherefore warriors? For lofty endeavour.' And He also said: 'Though he should conquer a thousand times a thousand men in the field of battle, yet he who conquers himself is the noblest victor'.

His preparation during previous lives had given him extraordinary powers of intelligence and made him a deep thinker. Although he had led a protected life and had never seen sickness, old age and death, yet he felt behind all the gay court life an unsatisfactoriness. His father had planned for him a sheltered, luxurious life with the thought that only pleasant things should meet the eye of the young prince; no sign of sickness, suffering or death should be visible. He had three palaces, one for each season of the Indian year, and the king had ordered that when the young prince went out, the roads should be cleared and that nothing unpleasant was to be allowed to disturb Siddhattha.

However, the prince went out one day accompanied only by his faithful charioteer and saw a sick man, weak and pale. It was the first time he had seen such sickness and he was shocked to realise that this was the common lot of all men. After that he saw an

old man, shaking and withered and with eyes dim and teeth missing. He then understood that this, too, was to be his fate and that of all his friends. Then he saw a dead man, something also that was new to him. This was something else that was a misfortune all men must meet. Finally he saw a calm person in the robes of a monk, an ascetic who had given up the pleasures of the world. His charioteer explained that there were such men who sought the way out of suffering that none had yet found.

He felt that death was not the end of everything but that there was continual rebirth, life after life. That was the general belief and there were those who knew it for certain, just as there are today some who know it for certain. What nobody knew was the way to prove it; and nobody knew for certain the way out of this continual circle of rebirth. Most people believed either that there was no way out or that by 'uniting with God' as they thought of it, they would end their long struggle. Siddhattha Gotama wanted to discover if there were really a way out and, if so, how to show that way to others, so that all who wished could win freedom from suffering. He and his loved wife and son and his father, his aunt and his close friends could not stay together for ever, that he knew well. One by one they would be snatched away by death. Maybe they would be reborn in states of greater suffering.

Siddhattha pondered all this and now that a son was born he saw that to seek this ending of sorrow and to find the remedy was the greatest gift he could give to his wife, to his child and to the world. His mind was made up and he renounced all the years of comfort and happiness with wife and child and friends, to set out to find the deathless.

With one last, lingering look at his sleeping wife and child he left the palace and mounted his great horse Kanthaka and with his charioteer Channa went outside the city gates. There he cut off his hair and changed from his rich dress to the robes of an ascetic and, sending back his faithful friend and follower, left on his great quest.

In those days the world was very different from the world you are used to. There was no steam or electricity and the only machinery was the primitive spinning wheel turned by hand or the wood-working tools operated by hand. The only way of travelling on land was by ox-cart or chariot or on horseback, although there were sailing ships which went to far countries. There were no books, only stone slabs with writing sculp-

tured on them or clay plates on which people wrote with sticks and then baked in a kiln or oven. That made it difficult to write and difficult to read, so writing was used for the sake of keeping records and there was no reading for pleasure, and no education by books. Most of the teaching was by word of mouth and most of the learning was learning by heart. There were two great and famous teachers who claimed to have a method of teaching which would lead a man to union with God. That, they said, was the final end which men should seek. To these in turn the Bodhisatta (the Buddha-to-be) went for study and he quickly mastered their systems. Each in turn begged him to stay as a teacher but he saw that these systems did not lead to the deathless.

He set out anew with five companions who acknowledged him as their leader. In those days there were people who believed that there was a way out of the constant round of rebirth. They believed that the way was to conquer the body by inflicting suffering on it and so they tortured themselves. They lived on as little food as they possibly could and endured great hardships. Siddhattha and his companions tried this way for some years and he starved himself until he almost died. Eventually he realised that to follow his present course was to die with the goal not yet won. Then he remembered the experience of his early boyhood when he had had a glimpse of higher things. At that time, he remembered, his body was comfortable and his mind free. He decided to try this way and sat under a tree, now known as the Bodhi tree or tree of enlightenment, determined not to rise until he had attained full enlightenment. He succeeded and when He did rise up from His seat next morning it was as an Omniscient Buddha.

## CHAPTER III

### The Teaching

In attaining full enlightenment the Buddha attained omniscience. The word means 'knowledge of everything'. He knew all the past and all the present and had only to turn His mind towards a thing to see and understand it. He had become a different being, a Buddha, greater than any man and greater than the highest god, with powers far surpassing those of any other being, man or god, whatsoever. Looking round with this superior power, He saw men lost in greed and craving (Lobha), in hate and dislike (Dosa) and in dullness and delusion (Moha).

These, He saw, are the roots of all action. Although they have their opposites : disinterestedness (Alobha), amity (Adosa) and wisdom (Amoha or Paññā), the latter three were, and still are, very rare in the world. He hesitated to give so deep a Teaching to the ordinary men of the world who were bent only on pleasure, but on looking over the world with His superior understanding He realised that there were some men 'whose eyes were only lightly covered with dust' who would awaken and understand. Such men, with more intelligence and more kindness than their fellow human beings, would accept the Teaching and follow it.

It is interesting to note that it was not always the learned men who understood the Teaching quickly. Learning is, at times, a great help to understanding, but it is simplicity and earnestness and clearness of mind that are required above all for understanding. The Buddha then set out to teach those in the world who would listen to His teaching, and could understand it. He knew that His former teachers, under whom He had studied, would be most likely to understand the teaching. Then He saw by His superior powers that they had already died. So He decided to teach first His former companions who had practised with Him a life of asceticism.

In gaining enlightenment He had gained an appearance of great calmness and majesty and appeared as truly splendid as only a Buddha can appear. On the way to these former companions He met a wandering ascetic who was surprised at the wonderful appearance of the Buddha and asked : 'Friend, who is your Teacher ?' The Buddha replied that He was a Buddha, a fully enlightened one, conqueror of the world and teacher of gods and men, and that there was no-one among men or gods whom He could regard as a teacher. There was at that time in India a sect of ascetics who had the strange belief that by owning nothing at all, not even clothes, they would be nearer to some supposed god. Therefore they went about quite naked and dirty. There are still a very few of such people in India even today. This ascetic was one of that sect and he was not able to grasp such a teaching as that of the Buddha. He said : 'Maybe ! Maybe !' and nodded his head and went on his way.

When the Buddha arrived at the place where His former companions were, they saw Him coming and determined not to accept Him as a friend and teacher. They thought that He had betrayed all their ideas by giving

up the strict ascetic life of self-torture and living what was, to them, a comparatively luxurious life. As He approached nearer they were struck by His majestic and calm presence just as had been the naked ascetic, and their resolution to treat Him coldly could not be kept up. They could not at first accept His Teaching but when He had spoken for some time they saw part of the truth and then, one by one, they perceived the full truth and became Arahats.

What is the difference between an Arahata and a Buddha? In one way there is none, since both on the death of the body attain full Nibbāna, never to be reborn in any of the worlds again. However, a Sammāsambuddha (a Fully Enlightened Buddha) has, by His long preparation through many lives, superior powers; and while still living in the world is able to find out the Truth as no-one else can and is able to teach this Truth as no-one else can.

You may read elsewhere the story of the forty-five years of life of the Buddha, how all sorts of men became His followers. Many of these became Arahats, some from rich families of high caste and some from the families of the poorest people and the lowest caste, some mere children and others old men. Here we shall read of the Teaching of the Buddha.

Today men of science are beginning to make wonderful discoveries. They are now beginning to understand much of the truth taught by the Buddha so many centuries ago. The Buddha was omniscient and knew everything that ordinary men were able to do. He knew all the natural laws, those known to ordinary men and those unknown to the ordinary man. In His teachings you will find that He knew all about atoms, for instance. But He did not teach how to use atomic power. He said that the truths He had taught His followers were like a handful of leaves in number while the truths that could be known were like the leaves in a great forest. 'Why' He asked, 'have I not taught you the other truths? Because they would not be helpful to you. Only those truths which will help you to attain calm and happiness and freedom from this round of rebirth have I taught you.'

He taught the six roots of action of which we read in the last chapter and He taught also the Three Signs of Being. That means the three conditions which govern everything that exists in the world. To put it more simply, everything is subject to Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā. These three Pāli

words may be translated into English as follows: Anicca is Impermanence, that is, everything is continually changing and is in what we call a state of flux. From moment to moment nothing is the same. Things may appear to be the same, just as a river flowing towards the sea may seem to keep the same form. The river, however, is not composed of the same drops of water at one moment as it was the moment before or will be next moment. In addition the river is slowly eating out its banks at some places and building them up at other places. Similarly your body and your mind are changing all the time, every part of your body and every part of your mind. Even such seemingly solid things as chairs and tables and houses and stones are all the time in motion. This was shown by the Buddha more than 2500 years ago and in the last fifty years western science has at last found this to be true.

Dukkha is sorrow and suffering. Whether it is deep sorrow and great suffering or just an uneasy feeling or a feeling of unsatisfactoriness, it is all comprised in the word Dukkha. If you think deeply you will see that even in what we think are happy moments, the shadow of sorrow is always present. Since we cannot stay with our happy friends always and since we are always changing and always having to leave happiness behind, nothing is permanently happy and so happiness itself changes to sorrow. The third fact of being is Anattā, absence of any permanent unchanging self or soul. When you say 'I' you are speaking of something that has already changed and is still changing. It is impossible that such an unsatisfactory compound or mixture, a bundle of feelings, changing from moment to moment, can be thought of as a 'Soul' which doesn't change. Take away from yourself all thoughts and all feelings and what is left? Nothing is left at all that is able to be recognised as yourself or part of yourself or anything to do with yourself.

So having in mind these facts that can be proved, the Buddha gave the further Teaching, of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Four Noble Truths and the Precepts

All of the Buddha's Teaching is true and one part follows another very clearly. Following on the teaching of the Three Signs of Being, are the Four Noble Truths. These

are: 1. That all in the world is, in its inner essence, suffering. 2. That there is a cause of suffering and that cause is desire or craving. 3. That if we can get rid of our craving and ignorance we can get rid of suffering. 4. That there is a way to get rid of this ignorance and craving and that way is the Noble Eightfold Path.

It is put in the Scriptures in a longer way. 'This is the Noble Truth of Suffering. Birth is suffering. Growth and decay is suffering. Death is suffering. To be bound to what we do not love is suffering. To be parted from what we love is suffering. Not to obtain that for which we long is suffering. All the Elements of Being are suffering.

'This is the Noble Truth of the Arising of Suffering. It is that craving which leads from birth to birth, joined with lusts and longings which, now here, now there, continually seek satisfaction. It is the desire for the gratification of passion; it is craving for eternal life; it is longing for enjoyment here in this present life.

'This is the Noble Truth of the Ceasing of Suffering. It is the utter and complete annihilation of this craving (Tanhā); separation from it, freedom from it, deliverance from it.

'This is the Noble Truth of the Way that leads to the Ceasing of Suffering. It is that Noble Eightfold Path which consists of 1. Right Understanding. 2. Right Mindedness. 3. Right Speech. 4. Right Bodily Action. 5. Right Livelihood. 6. Right Effort. 7. Right Attentiveness. 8. Right Concentration.'

We call it an 'Eightfold' path because each part is not separate. The whole eight parts of the path have to be followed at the one time and not one after the other. It can be seen that, as we follow this path, the path itself will become clearer to us the farther we go. Thus the first step 'Right Understanding' is, at the beginning, the right understanding of all we have learnt about the Four Noble Truths. Later on we get right understanding of these Noble Truths in a fuller and deeper sense. Right Mindedness means a mind free from selfish desire, from ill-will and from cruelty. At the beginning we can only commence to make our minds clean and good. Later we can make them ever cleaner and clearer.

Right Speech is speaking only what is good and useful and kind. It is refraining from saying harsh and rough things and from telling lies, tale-bearing and from speaking foolishly. Right Bodily Action is abstaining

from taking life, from killing and from stealing and from dirty and immoral sexual acts. Right Livelihood is to make a living in ways that do not harm others. Right Effort is putting forth energy to make evil and nasty thoughts leave the mind and to put forth energy to keep the mind on good and wholesome things. It is right effort to follow the good and right effort to stay away from the bad. It takes a good deal of effort to be attentive and to concentrate and this is right effort.

Right Attentiveness is being aware of the body, the feelings, the mind and of mental objects; and Right Concentration is keeping the mind firmly fixed on an object. This we shall mention fully in chapter 6.

The Teaching of the Buddha is something to be and something to do. The something to do is our great adventure and we shall deal with it in chapter 6 also. The something to be is just to be good and decent. It is to follow at least the Five Precepts and, when and where possible, the Eight or the Ten.

Most Buddhists take the Five Precepts in Pāli and so we give them here in Pāli with the English translation.

Pāṇatipātā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking life.

Adinnadānā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking that which is not given.

Kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from sexual immorality.

Musāvādā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from telling lies.

Surāmeraya-majja-pamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from all intoxicants.

There are three further rules to make the eight precepts. They are :—

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from eating after midday.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from attending dancing, singing, music and shows and from the use of garlands, scents, cosmetics and adornments.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from using luxurious beds.



For the Ten Precepts, the first five rules are used and the next five are very like the last three of the Eight. They are :—

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from eating after midday.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from attending dancing, singing, music and shows.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from the use of garlands, scents, cosmetics and adornments.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from the use of luxurious beds.

I undertake the rule of training to refrain from accepting gold and silver.

Only monks can follow the Ten Precepts all the time but laymen can follow them on special days when they have no work or classes. Monks must follow all the above rules very strictly and further rules as well. Monks have in all 227 rules to follow and that is why we should respect monks, since a true monk follows all the rules very strictly.

Now there is a question that an intelligent man may ask. That is : 'Why should I keep all these rules ?' He may think that there should be a reason, and there is indeed a reason. The Buddha gave a very good reason for His Teaching.

The first Five Precepts are plain to everyone. They are just the basic morality that all should follow. It requires very little common sense to understand that by keeping these simple rules you will earn a good name in this world as well as building a character that will be to your benefit after death. But the question may occur to you, 'Why should a layman, especially a young man, keep the other five rules of training even for a time?' You might also ask: 'What harm am I doing to others if I never keep them?' You are not doing harm if you do not keep them, but you can gain a lot of good for yourself if you do keep them sometimes. The Buddha said that it is better for a layman to keep them on special Fast-days as it will help him to think of the Arahats who keep them always, and it will improve his mind. By undertaking this voluntary discipline, your mind will be clean and clear and united. Many people have divided minds. A man wants to do a thing with part of his mind and wants to do something else, maybe the opposite, with another part of his mind. His mind is not steady and in a way is fighting itself. Just as in a country if the citizens are fighting among themselves that country becomes poor and weak, so a man's mind if it is not united, becomes poor and weak. You do not have

to believe that without thinking about it, but if you think about it, then you will see for yourself that it is true. The Buddha taught that men should think for themselves. They should consider what they see or hear or are taught and neither believe it blindly nor disbelieve it blindly. Only after thinking over it deeply should they believe or disbelieve. When they see that a thing is not good and not reasonable they should reject it. When they see that a thing is good and in accord with reason, then they should accept it.

The Teaching of the Buddha has been preserved and enshrined in the Pāli language. In the days of the Buddha there were monks who knew His Teachings by heart and could recite them. After the Buddha died and thus attained Mahāparinibbāna (complete Nibbāna without any remainder) a Great Council was called and Reciting Monks were appointed who, in groups, recited the Teachings to each other daily. As new members came into the Sangha, which is the name for the Noble Order of Monks, they took 'the Yoke of Learning or the Yoke of Meditation', that is, they decided to specialise on Meditation or on learning the Teachings so that the Teachings could be handed down exactly as the Buddha gave them.

Those who learnt the Teachings joined one of the groups of Reciting Monks and so though individuals have died, the groups remain as living bodies right through the centuries to the present day. That is why we can rely on the Pāli Canon, or Collection of Teachings as being true. They are divided into three sections, called Piṭakas, and the whole is called the Tipiṭaka.

There is the Vinaya Piṭaka, or Collection of Rules for monks with the stories of how those rules came to be promulgated ; there is the Sutta Piṭaka or Sermons to monks and laymen, and there is the Abhidhamma Piṭaka or philosophical collection.

The Buddha did not teach a dogma, that is something that must be believed merely because some person in authority has said it. In the Kālāma Sutta or Sermon to the people of the town of Kālāma, He said: 'Do not accept views merely from hearsay or from what you have been told. Do not accept them merely because they are mentioned in scriptures, or merely because of argument or because the reasoning seems to be plausible. Do not believe because the speculations about a thing appear possible, and do not believe merely because your teacher is venerable'.

When you realise by yourself that views are unwholesome, faulty, censured by the wise and that they lead to harm and misery, when practised, you should reject them. When you realise by yourselves that these views are good, faultless, praised by the wise and when carried out and practised lead to good and happiness, then after acquiring them you should abide in them.' The Buddha then questioned the Kālāmas : 'What do you think, Kālāmas ? When generosity (alobha) arises in a man, does it arise for his good or his harm?' 'For his good, Lord.' 'This person free from greed, O Kālāmas, not being overcome by covetousness, with his mind totally uninfluenced by it, does not take life, does not commit theft and adultery, does not tell lies, and does not urge others to do so, and this leads him to good and happiness for a long time.' 'Quite so Lord.'

'What do you think, Kālāmas ? When goodwill arises in a person, does it arise for his good or harm ?' 'For his good, Lord.'

'O Kālāmas, a man who is free from ill-will, not being overcome by it, and his mind not being under its influence does not take life does not commit theft and adultery, does not tell lies, and does not urge others to do so, and this leads him to good and happiness for a long time.' 'Quite so, Lord.'

'What do you think, O Kālāmas ? When knowledge arises in a man, does it arise for his good or for his harm ?' 'For his good, Lord.' 'O, Kālāmas, this person who is free from delusion not being overcome by it, and his mind not being under its influence, does not take life, does not commit theft and adultery, does not tell lies, and does not urge others to do so, and this leads him to good and happiness for a long time.' 'Quite so, Lord'.

The Buddha thus showed the people of Kālāma what is true virtue and that nothing is to be believed unless it is investigated and seen by reason to be good and true.

### Buddhism and other Teachings

The Buddha taught that we should rely on ourselves and that we should live a life of virtue and that by our own efforts we can and should attain Nibbāna. He also said, however, in the Aṅguttara Nikāya, that if a teacher of another sect speaks that which is Dhamma (truth and purity) we should salute him with joined hands. A Buddhist respects all truth and all good and realises that many great Teachers have taught this. Therefore a good Buddhist respects other Teachings while holding fast to the truth and respects

all who live a life of purity and loving-kindness. There is no competition between Buddhism and other sects.

## CHAPTER V

### Mind and Body and the Roots of Action

The Buddha taught Loving-kindness and Compassion and Reason. That we have seen in the previous chapters. He did not teach something to be believed in without reason.' He taught that we should be good and He gave good reasons for being good. That is not His greatest teaching, however. As well as teaching something to be, He taught something to do 'Who sees the Dhamma (the good law)' He said : 'sees me'. He was not a God to be worshipped merely, but a Man who became greater than any God, a Being to be followed.

The evil caste system was beginning to rise in India and He taught :

'Not by birth is one an outcaste,  
Not by birth is one a noble ;  
But by deeds is one an outcaste,  
And by deeds is one a noble.'

He also said on another occasion :  
'This two-footed dirty body  
Which carries about a bad odour  
And which is full of impurities  
Which pour out from different places ;  
With a body of this sort  
If one thinks highly of oneself  
And looks down upon others  
Due to what can it be except ignorance ?'

This was to show that what we call the 'self' is not important and we cannot think of ourselves as being great and wonderful.

Do you ever look at yourself in a mirror ? You will not see there exactly what other people see when they look at you. You will see an image of your body but it will be changed by your mind at the very moment the image reaches your mind. You cannot see anything at all exactly as it is and, as the Buddha said : 'Self is dear to Self', your idea of yourself will be made grander than it is by your wishes for yourself, so you do not see yourself clearly and truly. This self that is changing like a flowing river, this mind that is jumping about like a fish that has just been pulled out of the water, cannot be clearly perceived, cannot be fully understood. Only when the mind becomes completely clear and calm can it see itself. Only then can you really see yourself.

The Buddha, shortly after attaining Full Enlightenment, met a party of thirty young men who were in a very disturbed state.

They had gone out on a picnic with their wives, and one young man, having no wife, had taken along a girl he had met by chance. This young woman was a cheat and a swindler and she had pretended to be very tired and had suggested that the young people should keep their valuable jewels and ornaments with her, where she sat at the foot of a tree, while they enjoyed themselves by running races. When they agreed, she had taken charge of all the valuables, but stole away with them when the friends were busy with their games.

Now the young men were running here and there looking for the thief, and they told the Buddha that they were looking for a woman who had stolen their property. 'Is it more important to find this woman or to find yourselves?' asked the Buddha.

The intelligent young men realised the deep truth behind the Buddha's question and agreed that the most important thing in life is to seek for one's self, for unless and until one begins to search for and to find and to understand this changing 'Self', one cannot gain that freedom, the only freedom worth having, which we call Nibbāna.

What is the thing that is closest to you? The 'Self' is closest to you, since, in a sense, it is 'you', and yet you are not a single indivisible whole. Sometimes you laugh at yourself and sometimes you blame yourself. Do you ever try to think what it is that blames 'itself'; or what the 'self' blames? If you do that for one minute you will realise that what you call the 'Self' is a changing bundle of feelings, never for one moment quite the same.

To find your 'Self' and to know your 'Self' is the most important thing in the world for you and it is certainly the greatest adventure you can undertake.

How are we to set about this search for that which is so near and yet so far? Men have been trying and failing since the beginning of civilisation, since the very earliest times. No god or spirit can help one and yet alone and unaided the task is almost an impossible one, though it may seem simple at first glance.

Alone and unaided the Buddha solved this great problem of existence, of life and death and of what lies beyond both life and death. Luckily for us He left a way which we can follow clearly. He called it 'Ekāyano', 'the only way'. This way is open to all men and the chart is clearly drawn, but it is not a way to be followed by fools or by sots or by cowards; it is a way for the brave, the resolute and the good.

It is a way that can be followed by the learned and by the uneducated and although the educated man has something of an advantage in all things, if learning causes pride that can be a handicap.

The story is told of the very learned monk, Poṭhila who was the teacher of other monks but had never found the way himself because he was too proud of his learning to follow the path. When the Buddha called him 'Poṭhila the Empty-head', he realised that it was because he had not practised Meditation and had not really understood the changing self.

He went to a company of monks who had reached the end of the Path and had become Arahats and asked for instruction. They, in order to humble his pride, sent him successively to younger and younger members of their community until he reached the youngest, a mere child. This youngster told Poṭhila: 'You, Sir, are a great teacher of the Three Piṭakas, all of the Buddha's teachings. I have something to learn from you.' Poṭhila was now humble and promised to do anything the young boy commanded if he would only show him the way. Finally the lad said to him: 'Venerable Sir, if there are six holes in a certain ant-hill and a lizard enters the ant-hill by one of these holes, if you wish to catch the lizard you must stop up five of the six holes, leaving the sixth hole open, and catch the lizard in the hole by which he entered. Just so you must deal with the six doors of the senses; close five of the six doors, and devote your attention to the door of the mind.' There, and there only can you seize and understand the 'Self'. The method will be explained in the next chapter.

When you perform any action you are moved by one or more of the six roots or springs of action. These are Lobha, Dosa, Moha, and Alobha, Adosa and Amoha which we mentioned in Chapter 3. It is important for you to know and understand when and how these six roots of action play in your mind. When you are lustful or greedy or desirous, you should be truthful with yourself and aware that you are lustful, greedy and desirous. When you are angry or irritable or feel even a slight aversion to anything, you should be fully aware of the feeling. When your mind is 'dark' and perplexed and ignorant, you should be fully aware of that. Similarly when your mind is free from lust and desire, when your mind is full of loving-kindness and well-wishing to all, when your mind is keen and alert but peaceful and poised, you should be fully aware of these states.

## CHAPTER VI

### Something To Do

Now, then, we come to the greatest adventure, which you are ready to set out on. It is a discipline, but a discipline that you impose on yourself, not one imposed on you by others. It is a training, and you are the trainer. If you can find a teacher to help you, you are more sure of success and success will come the more quickly.

You may take some preliminary exercises, just as a man who intends to climb mountains, first practises by walking long distances, and by climbing hills, or just as a man who intends to conquer some disease that endangers humanity, first fits himself by study and laboratory work. Something of this preliminary training has been mentioned earlier. You must take a few exercises in knowing your mind, in practising awareness. You watch for the arising of feelings of anger or of kindness or joy or sorrow and are aware that they are rising, that they are there and that they are dying away. Then you think to yourself: 'These feelings change my mind and they are not permanent it seems, nor is my mind always the same. These feelings arise without my will and against my will. How would it be if I could become complete master of my feelings and make them arise when I will and vanish when I will ?'

A thought of lust or hate or just black dullness comes to your mind. You think: 'I did not call you, get out.' But sometimes the thought stays and grows even as you think this and if you have not practised being aware of your thoughts and feelings, you will be overwhelmed like a weak swimmer in a stormy sea. Struggling is sure to end in disaster. You remain calm and cool. You do not struggle negatively. You are positive. You have a plan and you put that plan into operation. Just as a general in battle makes his plans beforehand, as an inventor or scientist makes his plans beforehand, so do you. Here is your plan, one given by the Buddha :

This practice has been given by the Buddha in the Vitakka-Sañhāna Sutta of the Majjhīma Nikāya. It consists in taking one's mind from the evil thought to an associated thought which is not evil. The modern psychologists call it 'sublimation'. If that is not successful there is a second step, the consideration of the wretchedness of such evil thoughts. Then, if the thoughts are not by this means driven away there is a third step, the turning of the mind away to other thoughts that are not associated at all with

the evil thoughts, but are thoughts good in themselves. If they still persist, the evil thoughts may be lessened by degrees, by taking thought that they may be made less violent : 'Just as a man running swiftly might say to himself : "But what am I going so hurriedly for? How if I were to go more gently . . ."' and thus as a man might slow down from more vigorous postures until he finally stopped, then sat, then lay down, so evil, unsalutary thoughts that arise may be gradually slowed down if the other methods of banishing such thoughts fail altogether.'

'But if', said the Omniscient Buddha, 'O disciples, bringing these considerations to subsidence by degrees, evil unsalutary considerations connected with Desire and Hate and Delusion should still persist in arising, then with teeth clenched and tongue pressed against palate, the monk by main force must constrain his mind and coerce it; and thus with clenched teeth and taut tongue, constraining and coercing his mind, those evil, unsalutary considerations will disappear and go to decay ; and with their disappearing, the mind of the disciple within him will become settled, subdued, unified, concentrated.'

Then there is the positive practice of Mettā Bhāvanā. This is an actual, intense, creative force which is a protecting tenderness that vibrates long after it is sent forth. It is a sort of mental electrical impulse.

This is a Buddhist practice laid down by the Buddha in very many of His sermons as something that can be done by both laymen and *bhikkhus* alike.

While its practice, which can be undertaken for a few minutes each night and morning by anyone at all, has the effect of 'loosening the heart', improving the health, guarding against the worries and ulcers of modern men, improving the concentration and mental ability generally, the practice is not laid down for those reasons of self.

The force released, depending on its increasing purity and intensity, is able to build a new world, to change oneself and to change others for the better and to bring peace and tranquillity and calm happiness to a distracted universe. The practice is a positive radiation of loving-kindness to every being, whether insect or reptile or bird or animal or man or ghost or demon ; to those who are unfriendly to us and attack us as well as to those who are friendly to us and help us.

The practice is as follows :—

The practiser prepares himself by putting away, taking out of the mind, all thoughts of temper, enmity, envy,

grudging, cunning and other evil thoughts. He takes up a suitable sitting position, comfortable but not too relaxed, keeping the body erect and the intelligence alert and intent. Then putting away the canker of ill-will, he abides with heart free from enmity, benevolent and compassionate towards every living thing, and purifies his mind of malevolence. Putting away sloth and torpor, he abides clear of both ; conscious of light, mindful and self-possessed, he purifies his mind of sloth and torpor. Putting away flurry and worry, he abides free from excitement; with heart serene within, he purifies his mind of flurry and worry. Putting away doubt, he abides as one who has passed beyond perplexity ; no longer in suspense as to what is good, he purifies his mind of doubt.

He, having put away these Five Hindrances, and to weaken by insight the strength of the things that defile the heart, abides letting his mind, fraught with loving-kindness, pervade one quarter of the world, that in front of him, and so too, the second quarter, to his right, and so the third, behind him, and so the fourth, to his left. Then he so pervades all below him and lastly all above him. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around and everywhere, and altogether does he continue to pervade with love-burdened thought, abounding, sublime, and beyond measure, free from hatred and ill-will. Then he lets his mind, fraught with compassion, pervade the world, and he lets his mind, fraught with sympathetic joy in the achievements of others, pervade the world. And he lets his mind, fraught with equanimity, pervade one quarter of the world, and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world—above, below, around, and everywhere, and altogether does he continue to pervade with heart fraught with equanimity, abounding, sublime, and beyond measure, free from hatred and ill-will.

This practice will help to change the world and it will certainly help to change you and help you to know yourself, but it is only the beginning ; just as in climbing a high mountain, the more easy ascent of the foothills takes you part of the way and fits you better for the steep climb before you.

The real ascent now begins. Just as in climbing a high mountain, difficulties and dangers may be met and only a brave and

resolute man can complete his task, so also in this practice. One may meet obstacles and seem at times to be losing ground, but the determined man is not defeated, he begins again and again with confidence that as the way has been followed by others, he, too, can follow it if he summons up all his energies and turns temporary defeat into future victory. Even his defeats, since they have been preceded by struggles, have firmed his muscles and his mind for the next assault, if he realises it.

In mountaineering, a capable and experienced guide is necessary, so is it necessary in following this Path to have a capable and experienced guide who has himself trodden the path, who knows the surest trails and how to avoid the dangers.

If you have practised all that has been mentioned above, you are better in morals and more poised and intelligent already. You are like a man who has climbed above the malarial swamps and jungle to higher and more healthy ground. You have accomplished a great thing and you are all the better for it in every way, but still you have not found the 'Self', and still you are not entirely out of danger. You are more ready for the great adventure, but it is at this point that many stop. They have gained something with no very great effort and what lies ahead is to be gained only by the expenditure of a great deal of effort.

The ascent to the heights, to complete freedom, to complete liberation, to the position where one can help others is by that Right Meditation taught in the Noble Eightfold Path.

The method sounds very simple, and you may think it is easier than it is in reality. Later, when you find it difficult you may think it is harder than it is in reality. We have to try to avoid both feelings of elation and feelings of depression and go ahead with the practice.

Here only an indication can be given of the practice and if you wish to read more about it you should get 'The Heart of Buddhist Meditation' by the Venerable Nyanaponika Thera and 'The Way of Mindfulness' by Venerable Bhikkhu Soma.

Try this exercise first. Think of some one thing, maybe a book in front of you. Think just of the idea of the book, not all about its size and colour, just of the idea 'book'. Keep your mind on this idea and do not let any other idea enter your mind. After a minute you will find that you are no longer thinking of the book, you have probably thought of twenty or even a hundred other

things meantime. The mind is not under your control very well, is it? The reason is that although you have had some practice in concentration, more than the ordinary individual if you are a real student, your mind is far from being a fully concentrated mind.

In the special practice you have to take a subject for Meditation and practise holding it in the mind with just bare attention. That means that you are to keep your mind on that particular subject and not let the mind wander. You do not think *about* the subject but actually *of* the subject. Naturally your mind will wander. The Buddha said that it was like a wild calf that was caught in the jungle and tied to a post. The calf struggles to get free and wanders as far as it can. But if it is tied firmly to the post it will be brought back every time and finally will lie down quietly. The calf is like the mind, the rope is attention or mindfulness and the post is the subject of meditation you have chosen. If without flurry and worry you bring your mind back every time to the subject of meditation, gradually you will discipline the mind and you will be your own master.

The Omniscient Buddha gave forty different subjects of Meditation, some suitable for certain types of men and others suitable for others, while some are suitable for any kind of man, for the dull as well as for the bright, for the irritable as well as for the calm.

Now we have used the word 'Meditation' and in our thinking and speaking and writing, we must always remember that a word may mean different things to different people. 'Meditation' means to some people, 'reflecting upon, thinking about and pondering *i.e.* weighing in the mind'. To others it means 'observing with alertness'. In our use of the word here we take the latter meaning, and it is something more than this, it is exactly the opposite of 'pondering'; it is keeping the attention strictly on the subject and holding the attention there so that the mind does not wander.

Here we shall not discuss the forty subjects of meditation but shall mention only one that is suitable to all persons. That is concentration on in-breathing and out-breathing. This calms the body and the mind, by regular breathing, and focusses the mind-power just as a magnifying-glass can focus the rays of the sun so that they are gathered into one point where they are then strong enough to set fire to paper or leaves.

The state of mind is then exactly the oppsite of hypnosis. In hypnotism, part

of the mind is lulled to sleep, leaving another part free to work. Sometimes, especially in the case of a mind that is fighting against itself, this makes the free part of the mind stronger and, in the absence of opposition, better able to do its work. Indeed the part of the mind, since it is not fighting against itself, can do exceedingly more than the whole mind if that whole mind is disunited. Nevertheless, there is still only a portion of the mind at work when a person is hypnotised. On the other hand, in the practice of Buddhist Meditation, the whole mind is awake, aware, alert and alive and working in unity, once it has gained the mastery that is given by this practice.

The practice can be very dangerous if one attempts it with an impure mind. Virtue is the necessary beginning of the practice. The highest virtue is not just the repeating of precepts nor even the keeping of precepts. It is the mental attitude of an absence of greed, of a mind full of loving-kindness and of alertness and knowledge.

Meditation to the point of clear insight is the peak of Buddhist endeavour and sets Buddhism apart from all other Teachings. If you learn more about Buddhist Meditation and practise it, you will really know yourself.

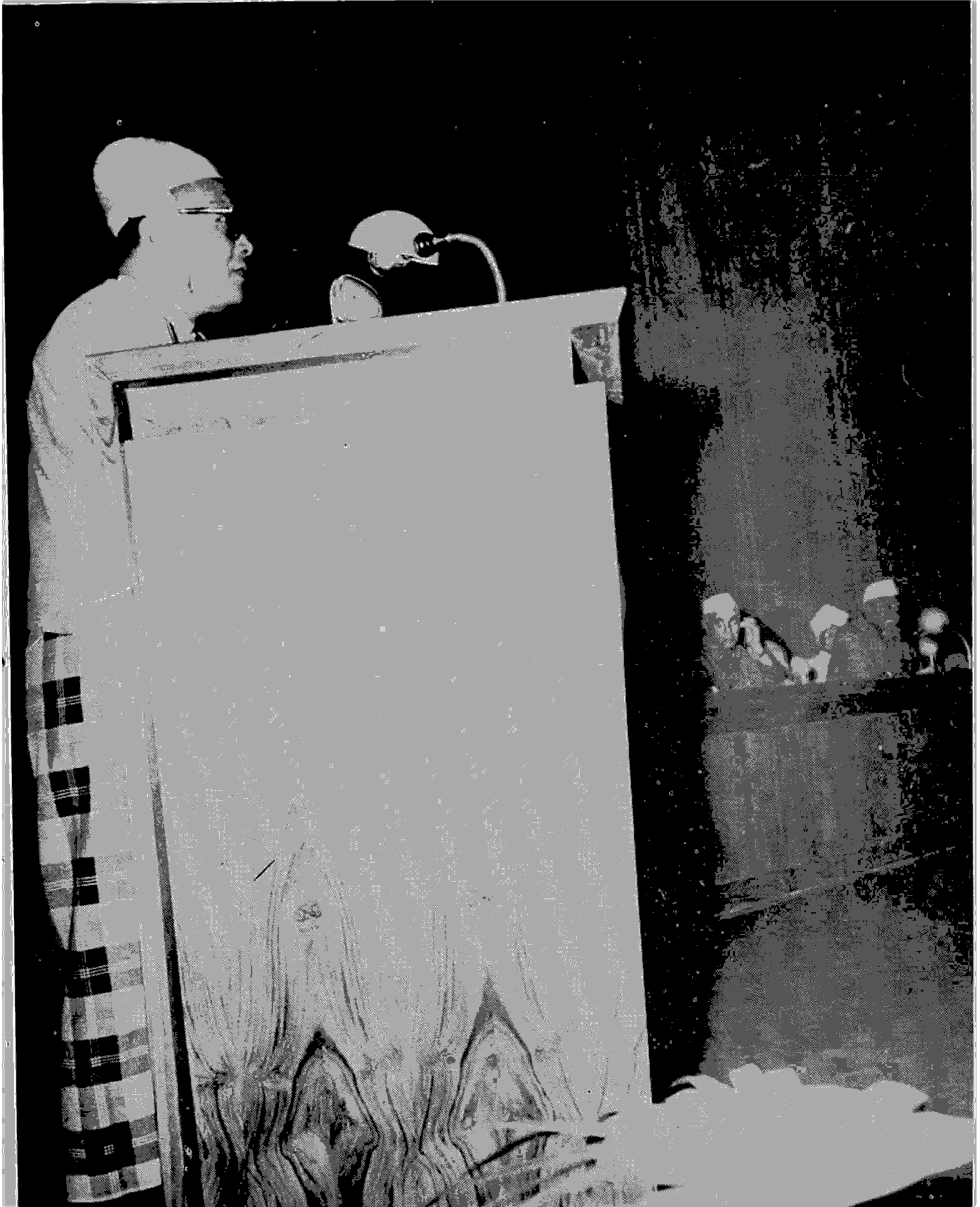
You will know yourself and you will master yourself, if you persist and if you have a wise guide.

This is the greatest adventure that you can imagine. It is also the most interesting adventure that you can think of. You are, to yourself, the most important being in the whole universe. Yet you do not know who or what you are in reality. In finding out the fact you will find out the truth about the world and the beginning of the world and the end of the world. You will win to serene and unshakable happiness if you succeed.

No-one can carry you on the adventure, 'you yourself must make the effort, even Buddhas only point out the way.'

As the Buddha said with His last breath: 'Decay is inherent in all component things! Work out your own salvation with diligence'.

It is possible that you may live to a great age or die in middle age or die tonight, but die, some day, you must. If you die while on the great adventure, the supreme quest, it is certain that the new being which will arise because of you, will be happier and stronger. If you win to the end of your adventure before you die, then you will have attained to 'the deathless' and there will be no more death for you.



The Hon'ble U Nu delivering an address at the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations held at New Delhi in November last.

# THE CONTRIBUTION OF BUDDHISM TO PHILOSOPHY

*U Thittila, Aggamahāpaṇḍita*

There have been systems of philosophy in India, Greece, Babylonia and Europe ever since man began to think, and every one of them is an attempted explanation or interpretation of life. Some deal with the beginnings of life, others with its end and after effects, and in almost all of them the divine origin of man is the principal theme. He is accordingly asked to lead a good life in order that he may live a life of happiness in a place called Heaven after his death. This was the state of thought in India when Gotama the Buddha began His teaching of the meaning of existence.

We read in the Vinaya Piṭaka of the Buddhist canon, of the predominant mental attitude of the people of India of that age—extreme asceticism on the one side and extreme luxury on the other. Prince Gotama, before he became the Buddha, saw these two attitudes clearly and also the suffering to which man was continually subject. From his early youth he had a great desire to find a solution to this problem: Suffering, its cause and its removal. With this object in view he renounced his worldly life and wandered amidst the northern parts of India and approached all the teachers of the different schools of philosophy of his time, but nobody was competent to give him what he earnestly sought. He strenuously practised all forms of severe austerities and made a superhuman effort for six long years. Eventually his delicate body was reduced to almost a skeleton. The more he tormented his body the further he was away from his goal. Having realized the utter futility of self-mortification, he finally decided to follow a different course, avoiding the two extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence.

The new path which he discovered was the Middle Way, the Eightfold Path, which subsequently became the salient characteristic of his Teaching. By following this path his wisdom grew into its fullest power and he discovered the Four Great Truths, understood things as they truly were, and finally attained full Enlightenment. As a man, Gotama, by his own will, effort, wisdom and love, attained Buddhahood—that highest possible state of perfection—and he revealed to mankind the only path that leads thereto.

All the teachings of the Buddha can be summed up in one word : Dhamma, in the Pāli language which the Buddha spoke and in which all the Buddhist scriptures were written. It means truth, that which really is. It also means law, the law that exists in a man's own heart and mind. It is the principle of righteousness. Therefore the Buddha appeals to man to be noble, pure and charitable, not in order to please any God, but in order to be true to the highest in himself.

Dhamma, this law of righteousness, exists not only in a man's heart and mind but it exists in the universe also. All the universe is an embodiment or revelation of Dhamma. The laws of nature which modern science has discovered are revelations of Dhamma. If the moon rises and sets, it is because of Dhamma, for Dhamma is that law residing in the universe that makes matter act in the ways studied in Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany and Astronomy. Dhamma exists in the universe just as Dhamma exists in the heart and mind of man. If a man will live by Dhamma, he will escape misery and come to Nibbāna, the final release from suffering.

The word of the Buddha is originally called Dhamma because it enables one to realise truth. It has three aspects the doctrinal (Pariyatti) the practical (Paṭipatti) and the realizable (Paṭivedha). The doctrinal aspect is preserved in the Scriptures called Tipiṭaka or Three Baskets of the Canon. It has been estimated by English translators of the Piṭakas to be eleven times the size of the Christian Bible.

This Piṭaka which contains the words of the Buddha consists of three baskets ; the Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka), the Basket of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka) and the Basket of Ultimate things (Abhidhamma Piṭaka).

Buddhism is distinguished from all other religions and philosophies by its unique character. The technique of salvation which is characteristic of Buddhism is very different from that of all other religions. They say "Turn to God ; pray to Him ; give yourself utterly to Him ; become one with Him." Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Judaism base their teachings on the idea of God.



These religions say that until a man believes in God, he cannot begin to live a truly righteous or useful life. We know that thousands in these religions do live lives of charity, purity and holiness. But the fact is that lives of charity, purity and holiness are also lived by thousands who follow the Buddha, who never asked men to worship any God as the first step towards their salvation.

One of the doctrines on which Buddhism differs from all other religions is Anattā, Non-Ego, Not-Self. According to Jewish philosophy there was an entity that remained inside the body and governed the doings of man. It was held to be unchanging and constant, and at death it remains somewhere until at the Day of Judgement it is sent to heaven or hell. The Vedanta formula is "etam mama, eso hamasmi, eso me attā." (This is mine; I am this; this is my soul.)

The view that the attā or ātman, self, is eternal, and is a separate entity living inside the body was generally accepted by all schools of Indian thought. It is only recently modern European philosophers and scientists have come to recognise that everything is in a state of flux or change, that nothing is permanent; yet this Doctrine was taught by the Buddha in its application, not only to the body but also to the mind.

At the time of the Buddha in India, there were two schools of thought about Attā, the self or Soul which is the immaterial and immortal part of man. One was Nihilism which was known as the Ucheda system of philosophy and taught that a being comes to a complete end with its death, for at death life ends like the flame of a candle that has burnt out and there is nothing more beyond that.

The other was Eternalism which was known as the Sassata System of Philosophy and laid great stress on the belief in Attā. It taught that the disbelief in existence of Attā does not tend towards religion and that without the belief in it there could not be any way of salvation. According to this teaching, the Soul, if freed from its material limitations, would attain perfect release just as the wild bird would do when liberated from its trap. When the Self discerned its immaterial nature, it would attain true deliverance.

There are many people in the world today who hold the latter view. They say that the self, Attā, is indefinable, beyond all apprehension, that it is neither body nor sensation nor perception nor the mental

activities nor the consciousness and that it is something which lies behind all these. If one were to assume the existence of such a "something behind", then there is no reason why there may not be another "something behind", behind that "something behind", And so one would fall into an endless series of such.

### BUDDHIST EXPLANATION OF MAN

That which we call "man" is composed of Mind and Matter. Apart from mind and matter, Nāma and Rūpa, which constitute the so-called man, there is no such thing as an immortal Soul, Attā, which lies behind them. Matter, Rūpa, is the visible form of invisible qualities and forces which are known in Pāli as Mahā-Bhūtas, essential elements. They are fourfold:—

- (1) The element of extension which is the fundamental principle of Matter. It is this element which enables objects to occupy space. The qualities of hardness and softness of all material objects are two phases of this element. It can be found in earth, water, fire and air, but it preponderates in earth and therefore it is called the element of earth.
- (2) The element of cohesion which is known as the element of water because of its preponderance in water though it is present in earth, water, fire and air. It is this element which binds the scattered atoms of matter and forms into mass or bulk or lump.
- (3) The element of heat which matures all objects of matter. Although it preponderates in fire and therefore is called the element of fire it includes cold, for heat and cold are two phases of this element. Preservation and decay of all material objects are due to this element.
- (4) The element of motion which is the power of supporting or resisting. Movement and vibration are due to this element.

These four elements are inseparable and inter-related. All forms of matter are primarily composed of these elements, every material object being a combination of them in one proportion or another. But as soon as the same matter is changed into different

forms, the composite things are held to be mere conceptions presented to the mind by the particular appearance, shape or form.

A piece of clay, for example, may be called cup, plate, pot, jar and so on, according to the several shapes it assumes but these objects can be analysed and reduced into fundamental elements which alone exist in an ultimate sense. The terms "cup", "plate" and so on are mere conceptions which have no separate essential substance other than the elements. The Abhidhamma Philosophy explains that there are twenty-eight types of material qualities which constitute the physical body of an animate being, but just to show the primary elements on which the other twenty-four material qualities are based, only the four Mahā-Bhūtas are mentioned here.

### MIND, NĀMA

Mind which is the most important part in a being, is essentially a stream of consciousness and it can be expressed by the word "Thought". Thought, however, is not simply a physiological function but a kind of energy, something like electricity. Thoughts and radiations of currents of thought are mental elements of the mental world which correspond to the four material elements of the physical world. A being is essentially the manifestation of its thought forces which are in a state of flux.

If the forces of the thoughts are developed, they become by their degree of perfection finer and higher energies of thought, and if they are further developed they become sufficiently strong to overcome the gravitational sphere of the earth. The currents of thoughts which are not capable of overcoming the gravitational sphere of the earth, remain within that sphere of the earth, within the circulation of all things. But they will form a new type of life, so a current of thought, though subject to change, is not lost : it will continue its life and manifest itself in a new being of some kind according to its tendencies. In this way this circulation of life and death goes on forever until and unless it is checked by the development of the mind.

The Buddha's analysis of the mind shows that the mind consists of the four mental aggregates, (1) the sensations or feelings of whatever kind (Vedanā), (2) the perceptions of sense objects or the reaction to the senses (Saññā), (3) The fifty types of mental formations including tendencies and faculties (Saṅkhāras) and (4) consciousness (Viññāṇa)

which is the fundamental factor of all the other three.

Thus, the so-called being, Attā, is a composition of the five aggregates or of the material and mental forces which are changing all the time and not remaining for two consecutive moments the same.

Is any of the five aggregates Attā, the Self or Soul ? The Buddha's answer is "No". Then what remains to be called Attā, the self or Soul ? As it has been said above, apart from the five aggregates there remains nothing to be called Attā. Here then we have one of the three fundamental characteristics of all existence, namely the characteristic of Anattā, the absence of a permanent unchanging self or soul. It is this doctrine of Anattā, no-soul, for which Buddhism stands and on which Buddhism differs from other religions. If the wheels and axles, the floorboards and sides, the shafts and all other parts are removed from a cart what remains ? The answer is "nothing", and the combination of these parts is called a cart. In exactly the same way the combination of the five aggregates is called a "being" which may assume as many names as its types, shapes, forms and so on may vary according to the mode of physical and mental changes.

If there is no Attā, the self or Soul, what is it that moves from life to life, all the time unless and until it gives place to Nibbāna which is the only unchanging Reality ?

The answer is, the uninterrupted process of psycho-physical phenomena or the composition of the five aggregates which is called a being. The process of this psycho-physical phenomenon called a being is constantly moving and changing like the current of a river (Nadī soto viya). This state of constant change, Anicca, is also one of the three fundamental characteristics of phenomenal existence. What is constantly changing cannot be peaceful or satisfactory. The unsatisfactory nature, a state of unrest or non-peace, Dukkha, is the other fundamental characteristic of all phenomenal existence.

The main cause of all this restlessness, suffering, is Taṇhā, craving or desire for existence which is one of the fifty mental formations (Saṅkhāras). It is this Taṇhā which sets the life-force in motion. Taṇhā stimulates the mind which, as a result, manifests itself in action. This action, Kamma, is in reality cetanā, volition or will-power, which is responsible for the creation of a being, *i.e.* binding the five aggregates together.

Without Taṇhā, however, the whole process would not be possible, therefore Taṇhā is the real "Creator" of a being or the chief builder of the house of the five aggregates which is called "I", "man", "woman" and so on. It is only when this fact is realized and the main root-cause, Taṇhā, is annihilated that a being which is the composition of the five aggregates or the process of psycho-physical phenomena, can give place to the everlasting peace of Nibbāna.

The Vinaya Piṭaka deals mainly with the rules and regulations of the Order of monks (Bhikkhus). It also gives a detailed account of the life and period of Teaching of the Buddha and the development of the Buddhist Order. It is subdivided into five books. The Sutta Piṭaka contains the Discourses delivered by the Buddha to individuals or assemblies of different types at different places on different occasions. It is divided into twenty-six books. The Abhidhamma Piṭaka, subdivided into seven books, treats of the four ultimate things : Consciousness (Citta), Psychic-factors (Cetasikas), Matter (Rūpa) and Nibbāna. It is the most important and at the same time most interesting to a deep thinker.

The Pāli term Abhidhamma is from *Abhi*, subtle or ultimate, and *Dhamma*, truth or doctrine.

The main difference between the Sutta and the Abhidhamma Piṭakas is that in the Sutta the doctrines are explained in the words of conventional, simple language, but in the Abhidhamma everything is analysed and explained in purely philosophical terms true in the absolute sense. Thus, in the Sutta, stones are called "stones", trees "trees", animals "animals" and men "men", but in the Abhidhamma, realities of psychical and physical phenomena are described and elucidated.

Abhidhamma is a philosophy inasmuch as it deals with the most general causes and principles of things. It is also an ethical system because it enables one to realise the ultimate goal, Nibbāna. As it deals with the working of the mind, thoughts, thought-processes and psychic-factors, it is also a system of psychology. Abhidhamma is therefore generally translated as The Psycho-Ethical Philosophy of Buddhism.

The discourses in the Sutta Piṭaka were expounded to suit the temperaments of different people and so they are like prescriptions. In the Abhidhamma Piṭaka all these doctrines are systematically elucidated from the philosophical, psychological and physio-

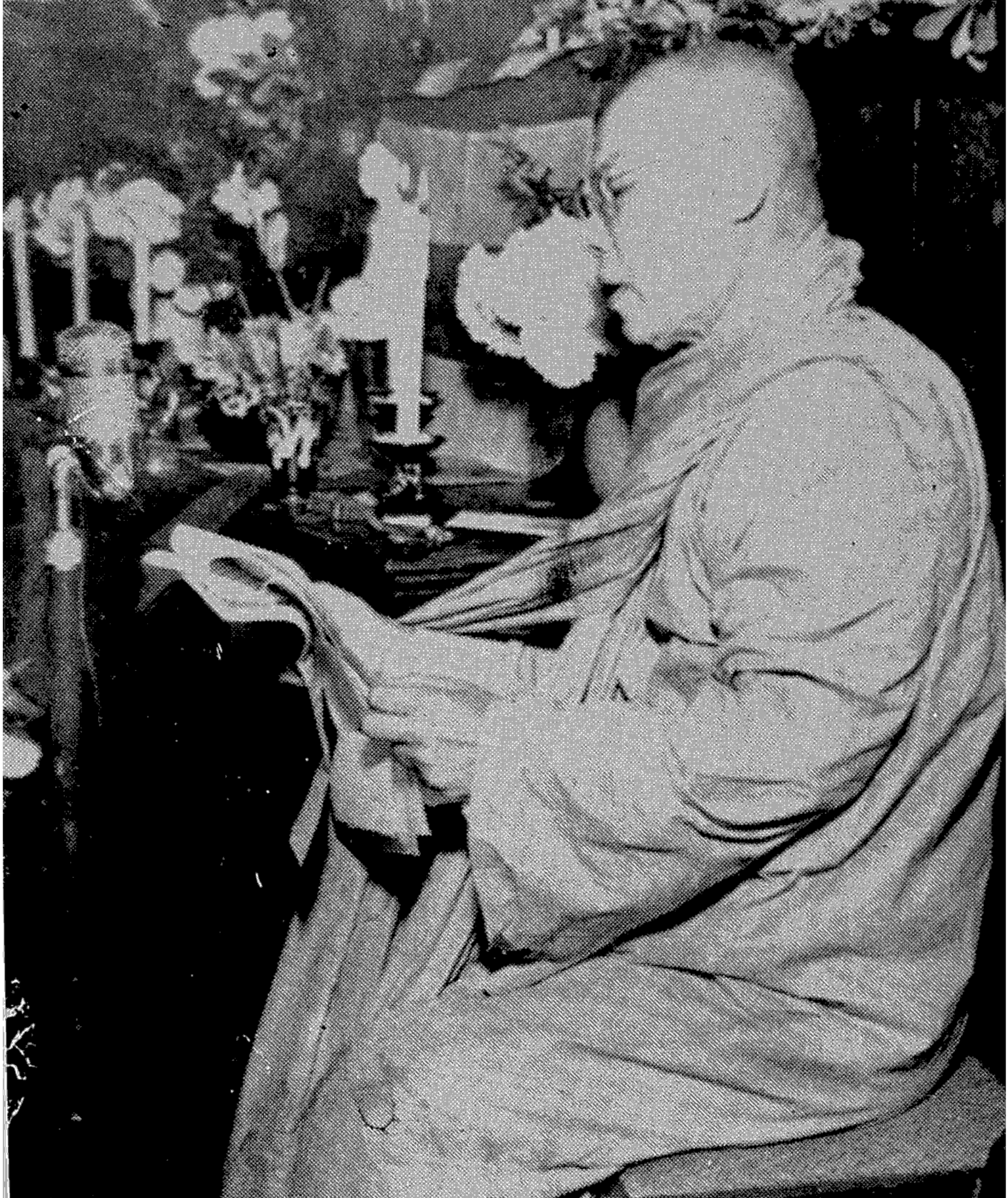
logical standpoint. As such, Abhidhamma underlies all the Teachings of the Buddha, and knowledge of it is therefore essential to understand clearly the Buddhist Doctrine.

Abhidhamma though highly prized by deep-thinking students of Buddhist philosophy, to the average student seems to be dull and meaningless. Since it is so extremely subtle in analysis and technical in treatment it is very difficult to understand without the guidance of an able teacher. Perhaps for the same reason the Abhidhamma is not so popular as the other two Piṭakas among Western Buddhists.

In the history of thought of Europe there have been many able thinkers who by their untiring researches have gained a deep insight into the problems of nature and of human existence. There have been eminent theologians, philosophers, physical scientists, sociologists and psychologists who, by experiment and deduction, have added to the sum total of human knowledge. With all this vast accumulation of new knowledge, however, we cannot contemplate Western civilization without feeling the need there is to blend all these results into something like a system, a philosophy having vital connection with life as a whole.

In Buddhism we have religion, philosophy, ethics and psychology, all combined into one comprehensive system of thought, with the direct and practical purpose of meeting the deepest needs and aspirations of human nature—a philosophy applicable to every aspect of our complicated individual and social life. Indeed, as Saint-Hilaire says, "the practical tendency" of Buddhism is its most notable feature.

If we have regard to the scope of its philosophy, we find it to embrace systems of thought seemingly the most diverse. Professor Rhys Davids in his "American Lectures" quotes the saying of Schopenhauer that if he were to take the results of his own philosophy as a standard of truth and compare it with all other existing systems, he would be obliged to concede to Buddhism the pre-eminence over the others. When we remember that Schopenhauer despised psychology, because there was no psyche or soul, his remark has all the more force. Prof. Rhys Davids also quotes the remark of Professor Huxley in reference to the transcendental idealism of Bishop Berkeley, that it is an indication of the subtlety of Indian speculation that Gotama was able to see more deeply than any of our modern idealists.



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## SKETCH FOR A PROOF OF REBIRTH

*Ñānavīra Bhikkhu*

'Beginningless, monks, is this course; a starting point of creatures who are running and coursing on constrained by nescience and attached by craving, is not evident.'

(*Anamataggasamyutta i, 1*)

CAN rebirth be *proved*? That last word we always emphasize. And it is certain that we should willingly trade all the circumstantial evidence in the world, all the cases, however well attested, of the Societies for Psychical Research, all the personal testimony of those who claim to have knowledge of their former lives, against one good satisfying proof of rebirth that would convince us, personally, at any hour of the day or night, beyond all possible manner of doubt.

Clearly, if this proof (supposing one is possible) is to be absolutely convincing at any moment at all that we care to consult it, then it must not be based on the evidence of our memory (what somebody said, what we read in a book, what happened to us last week, what we remember of what appears to be a past life), for the good reason that even if we do remember such evidence we cannot trust our memory with that complete certainty we are looking for. This proof, to be absolutely convincing at all times, must be based on what is at all times, to hand, namely our immediate experience. So the question narrows itself down to this: Given the actual facts of experience as we may at any time observe them, do we find any characteristics that entail rebirth?

'What are our natural principles,' asks Pascal 'if not our habitual principles? A different habit will give other natural principles. This is seen by experience. Fathers fear that their children's natural love will get effaced. What, then, is this nature that is liable to be effaced? Habit is a second nature that destroys the first. Why is habit not natural? I am very much afraid that this nature is itself only a first habit, as habit is a second nature.' *Our nature is nothing else than our habit. A nature or habit destroys a preceding nature or habit.* On these two observations we hope to build an absolutely certain proof of rebirth.

[It will be evident that in the small compass of this essay, matters are presented with

extreme simplification and generality, and expansions and qualifications are omitted that would be indispensable in a longer account. In certain passages, however, there is slightly more detail: these passages, which are not necessary for following the main argument, are enclosed in square brackets.]

What, first, is our *nature*? It is easy to reply that it is what governs our behaviour in any given circumstances. But we must avoid a trap. My behaviour as it appears to other people is by no means the same thing as what it appears to myself; for there is no certainty at all that my bodily activities and their repercussions in the world will in fact accord with my intention. I am given a cup of tea; there is a glass jar on the table containing a white substance; I open it and put some in my cup; an onlooker who believes that the substance is arsenic says to me 'Why are you poisoning yourself?'; 'I don't understand you,' I reply 'I am putting sugar in my tea'. Who is right? Certainly, the consequences of my putting the white substance in my tea will depend on whether it is sugar or arsenic—time will tell. But if I am to investigate my nature there is no doubt at all that my behaviour must be regarded as my intention; for even if the stuff really is arsenic and I do in fact poison myself, yet my nature is clearly 'to drink tea with sugar' and not 'to be finding life intolerable' whatever outside appearances may say. The distinction between my behaviour as it is for other people—externally observed modifications in my body and in the world (of which my body is a part)—and my behaviour as it is for myself—my intention—is of the utmost importance, and if we confound the two we shall condemn ourselves to understand nothing of the matter. [Examine, for example, the curious but widespread assumption, based on this confusion, that pain is a physical object. It is assumed that my toothache as I now endure it is absolutely identical with the decayed tooth as the dentist unfeelingly prods it, or rather with the associated neurological modifications, which are also observable, at least in theory. The dentist, who has a practical outlook, says that he sees my *tooth* (and perhaps my *nerve* if it is exposed); but a neurologist who

imagines that he is investigating my behaviour will say that by means of his various instruments he sees my *pain*. He is maintaining, in other words, that body-consciousness is the *object* of eye-consciousness. It is far less absurd to say, as we normally do, that the objects of eye-consciousness and of body-consciousness are the same—that we see what we touch, that it is the decayed tooth that is aching. But, even so, the fact is that the only link between objects of sight and objects of touch is mental association; and although association is the glue that holds our world together—sensual association gives us five worlds, mental association makes those five one—it is nevertheless entirely empirical and gratuitous (witness the fact that I might quite easily poison myself by the essentially unjustifiable mental association of whiteness and sweetness). This confusion is also responsible for the assumption that the phenomena of psychokinesis and clairvoyance (and clairaudience and so on) are sporadic and anomalous manifestations of ‘action at a distance’. (At a distance from what, pray? From my *intention*?) But once the ambiguity is understood and it is seen that they involve two radically discrete levels of experience without possible means of communication, they cease to be sporadic anomalies and, though they will continue to disconcert the materialist, they are found to be a regular and perpetual feature (namely feedback) of our equally ambiguous ‘existence in the world’.] Since, therefore, we are concerned with my experience as I myself observe it, my behaviour or *action* must be understood as my *intention*, and the external point of view of the physiologist is to be excluded at all times with the utmost rigour. ‘Intention, monks, I say is action: in intending one does action by body, speech, or mind.’ (*Anguttara-Nikāya* VI, vi, 8).

My nature, then, is what governs my behaviour, that is to say my *intention*, in any given circumstances. And it follows from this definition that so long as I have a certain nature my behaviour under similar circumstances must always be the same. Thus, whenever I am given a cup of tea, if I always put sugar in it that is ‘because it is my nature to put sugar in my tea’; and obviously, so long as this is my nature I shall continue to put sugar in my tea. But what is this nature if not my *habit* of putting sugar in my tea? It comes to exactly the same thing whether I say that it is my habit to put sugar in my tea, or that I put sugar in my tea because it is

my nature to do so. My habit is my nature and my nature is my habit, and we have only to choose which word we prefer. If my behaviour was not always the same under similar circumstances, if in other words it was not *habitual*, how could I speak of having a nature? (And even if I say that it is my nature to be inconsistent, that can only be because I am inconsistent by habit.)

This all sounds very well, but is it correct? While we have been examining the credentials of the word *behaviour* we have allowed the word *circumstances* to pass unchallenged. What, exactly, do we mean by circumstances? What were the circumstances when I was putting arsenic in my tea under the impression that it was sugar? To the onlooker it was arsenic that I was putting in my tea, but to me, immediately, it was sugar. In other words, if circumstances are seen from the *external* point of view they are unsatisfactory as a guide to my intention, and if they are seen from my own point of view *at the time of the intention* they are an integral part of that intention—or rather, from *my* point of view, there are no *circumstances* to be seen. So long as my intention remains the same I cannot possibly say that circumstances have altered, because I see nothing independent of my intention (if my intention is to put sugar in my tea, then what I am putting in my tea is necessarily sugar); and this is true even though, from the external point of view (which I myself can adopt *at a later time*, when my intention is ‘to examine the circumstances’ and not ‘to put sugar in my tea’), the circumstances are observed to be quite different—the ‘sugar’ is arsenic and the ‘tea’ is soup. The use of the word *circumstances*, as we now see, is either misleading or redundant, and if we are to keep clear of the physiological trap we must abandon it as an explanation of my behaviour. My nature is now no longer what *governs* my behaviour or intention ‘in any given circumstances’: in some way as yet to be determined it *is* my behaviour or intention. And my behaviour is *habitual*, not when ‘it is always the same under similar circumstances’, but simply when my intention does not change. If my intention to put sugar in my tea is observed by me as to some extent stable then my behaviour is habitual. But the important thing is that I *do* observe this; my behaviour *is* habitual; it is a perpetually observable feature of our experience that our intention always does persist unchanged for some period of time, long or short. Our

*nature*, then, is the name we give to a certain element of stability in our experience : a habit, as anybody who has ever tried to give one up can testify, has a tendency to stick ; and some (such as eating and breathing) are so stable that they normally stay with us, once we have acquired them, for the rest of our life.\* This stability, it will be noticed, is stability in *time*; time passes but our nature remains unchanged. But this is not to say that our nature does not in time change ; it does, as Pascal observed ; but it does not change simply because a certain amount of time has passed : we do not expect our long-established habits to change sooner than our later ones just because we have had them longer, but rather the contrary—the age of our habits is an indication of their stability.\*\*

When does our nature change ? In Pascal's experience it changes when a fresh nature destroys it. And when is this ? Evidently when it ceases to be satisfactory. It is my nature (or habit) to take sugar in my tea. But suppose (for any reason that a physiologist may care to assume) I begin to find that each time I sugar my tea I am afflicted with nausea, though if I take it unsweetened nothing unpleasant happens. Before long the idea (or *image*) of sweet tea will be associated with the idea of nausea, though the idea of unsweetened tea will not (our use here of the expression 'association of ideas' is strictly provisional); and this is because the former association of the idea of sweet tea and the idea of bodily well-being is no longer satisfactory—it results in nausea. In other words my nature becomes *not* to take sugar in my tea and to drink it without. [Satisfaction is certainly satisfaction of *craving*. But satisfaction of craving is not the *appeasement* of craving ; just the contrary; it is the *continuation* of craving—whose *continued* satisfaction clearly depends on the fact of *feeling*. Satisfaction, it should seem, is the *mode of existence* of craving, and implies that this mode of existence is *satisfactory*. But feeling may be unpleasant or neutral, as well as pleasant, and how can unpleasant or neutral feeling be satisfactory ?

It is clear that by *satisfactory* we must understand *least unsatisfactory* ; and to say that the mode of existence of craving is satisfaction is then to say that craving always exists in the least unsatisfactory or *least unpleasant* mode that is *available*. (We are *always* living in the best of all possible worlds.) But though this mode of craving, or *attitude*, is the least unpleasant that is available, it may still be very unpleasant (or merely neutral) in the absolute sense. Our nature (or attitude, or mode of craving) changes, therefore, when it is no longer the least unpleasant available (note that the *total* feeling is involved here). And this implies the continual presence of what we may call *tacit cognizance*, with a perpetual discrimination of different levels of feeling ; for without such cognizance there would be no possible way of having alternative attitudes constantly available (that is to say, of having their *image* constantly perceived). Notice, incidentally, that this change, which is impossible without tacit cognizance, does not necessarily involve explicit deliberation and reasoning ; and when it does, they are not involved in the same way as tacit cognizance. We are quite likely to say 'I used to enjoy sweet tea, but somehow it does not seem to agree with me any more'; and in fact we commonly find that our habits have changed unawares (it is fashionable, but mistaken, to say *unconsciously* : the psychologist, in his own way, is as big a nuisance as the physiologist)]. My nature, then, has changed ; a fresh nature has replaced the old. But the old nature has not merely been replaced (as one might replace a broken cup with a new one after throwing away the pieces); it has been utterly destroyed. How is this ? By the simple fact that the new nature is exactly contrary to the old : formerly it was my nature to sugar my tea, now my nature is *not* to sugar my tea. But—it may be objected—you still drink *tea*; there is no change at all in that. And this is true : although I have given up drinking sweet tea (which now nauseates me because of its sweetness), I still find tea refreshing when I am tired and

\* Eating and breathing are more than mere 'habit' unless, on another plane of thought, we aver that body itself is a habit : we can change our normal *ways* of eating and breathing, our habits, but we cannot, short of giving up life, stop the functions of eating and breathing for a period of more than seven days. *Ed.*

\*\* While it is true in the broader sense that our 'nature' changes slowly and there is an apparent persistence, it is also true that that 'nature' is like the 'nature' of a candle flame, keeping the same form, more or less, and the same appearance, more or less, while momentarily changing in every particle, as indeed, is every atom of matter in its incredibly fast atomic changes. With millions of thought-moments arising and changing every millionth of a second to make our seemingly persistent natures, we are, in one sense, 'reborn' many times in the period taken for a flash of lightning to 'persist'. In another sense, as the author shows so clearly, the fact of a seeming persistence or thread or pattern running through and being inherited by each change, shows a stability that proves 'rebirth'. *Ed.*

I drink as much as before, but unsweetened. There has undeniably been a complete reversal of my nature, *but only a certain level of generality*; and that this is always the case in our normal life we may observe for ourselves—we never change all our habits at once. It may be seen, furthermore, that the whole of our experience is nothing else but a continual reversing of our nature on one level or another, that is to say, of our intention, which is simply our nature at any one given level (though it will be obvious that these reversals are normally very particular: breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out, to choose the simplest example). Every change of my nature is a denial of that nature, but carried out against the background, or in the light, of a more general nature, which at that time remains constant. Note, however, that this is the necessary structure of any change; for so long as it is possible to compare the earlier nature with the later nature (which is the direct opposite of the earlier)—so long, in other words, as we can say ‘something has changed’ or ‘I have changed’—the two natures will have *something* in common; and this, precisely, is the more general nature of character that remains unchanged on that occasion.

[This *something* is what I call my *self*, which on every occasion is what remains unchanged; but since on each occasion it is a different character that remains unchanged, my *self* is changing perpetually. At any given level my *self* is permanent for an indefinite but not infinite period (in other words, it changes spasmodically or as a step-function); but there is no time when it is not changing at some level or other.\* It will be seen that consciousness at all levels is *self*-consciousness, and that this tacit cognizance is a structural characteristic of all experience without exception. In general, my nature at any given level, my *self*, can be regarded as a kind of *field* (in the scientific sense of the word), and in particular as the field of all possible field-changes of the next lower order. But a field-change is a change from one field to another, and this can only happen at the *intersection* of two fields (which two fields define the field of next higher order, rather as any two intersecting *planes* define a *space*). Thus my nature, at any level, is a field of intersecting fields (which are themselves fields of

intersecting fields of still lower order, and so on downwards, approaching but not reaching a limit). And, conversely, the intersection of any two fields of the same order defines my nature at a certain level. If these fields are in the province of the same sense they (at some level) reveal that sense (which is the *organization* of the relevant sensual world); if they are in the provinces of different senses they similarly reveal my *mind*. ‘There are, friend, these five faculties with various provinces and various pastures, which do not enjoy one another’s pasture and province; that is to say, eye-faculty, ear-faculty, nose-faculty, tongue-faculty, body-faculty. The meeting-place of these five faculties with various provinces and various pastures, which do not enjoy one another’s pasture and province, is mind; and mind enjoys their pasture and province.’ (‘Majjhīma-nikāya’ v, 3). *Association*, sensual or mental, is nothing else than the intersection of two fields (or, *images*; for a field exists as an image)]. If I change from ‘enjoying sugar in my tea’ to ‘not enjoying sugar in my tea’, there is the general character ‘finding tea refreshing’ that remains constant; but I might instead change from ‘finding tea more refreshing than coffee’ to ‘finding coffee more refreshing than tea’, and here it is the still more general character ‘taking a hot drink when tired’ that is constant. Is there an upper limit to the possible level of generality? Ultimately we must choose between the attitude or view that existence (or being) is desirable and the opposite attitude or view that it is hateful. ‘There are, monks, these two views: the view of being and the view of non-being. Whatever ascetics and recluses there are, monks, who adhere to the view of being, who resort to the view of being, who embrace the view of being, they all oppose the view of non-being. Whatever ascetics and recluses there are, monks who adhere to the view of non-being, who resort to the view of non-being, who embrace the view of non-being, they all oppose the view of being.’ (‘Majjhīma-nikāya’ ii, 1.) The world, for the most part, is divided between these two attitudes in the face of existence, to welcome it and to repulse it. And what is the still more general nature that must remain constant as we pass from the one to the other and back again? It is simply ‘having-to-do with existence’. And is it possible ‘not to have-to-do with

\* ‘Self’ regarded as a fast-moving and fast-changing flux does exhibit this change-within-a-change as a step function so that what is changing as a flux also changes in another sense in ‘steps’ or stages. *Ed.*



existence' ? It is : but that is a one-way change ; for it is the change from the nature 'having a nature at all' to the nature 'not having a nature at all', and when there is no nature at all there is no longer anything to change. Note that the description 'the nature of *not* having a nature at all' is self-destructive : that is because words are part of existence and can only describe existence, and where existence has ceased there is nothing to be said. 'With the removal of all natures, all modes of saying, too, are removed.' (*Sutta-nipāta* V, vii, 8).

Let us see where we have got to. Our nature, at any given level, remains constant for just so long as it remains satisfactory ; and that is to say that the structure of our experience is autonomous : experience does not vary as a function of time but determines its own changes from one stable attitude (at any level) to another ; in a word it is self-adaptive ; and there is no *a priori* limit to the length of time its attitude, at any given level, will remain unchanged. In particular, when our nature does change it changes *completely*: it is replaced by a nature that is the exact contrary—but only at a certain level of generality ; which fact automatically entails that our nature, at a higher level of generality, remains unchanged (though without prejudice to its changing on some other occasion). But our nature only appears in this hierarchical form if we carefully observe it while it changes; and when we do not make this effort it hides its secret.

Our present nature, then, at any given level, remains constant until such time as it ceases to be satisfactory, when it gives place to an exactly contrary nature. But what is my present nature, at any given level, but the reversal of a previous nature ? My nature, at any level on which I care to consider it, is built on the ruins of a past nature. The fact that I now have a nature at all requires that I *must* have had a past nature ; for my present nature, in one sense, *is* my past nature. If, at one level, my nature changes to the exact opposite of my preceding nature, then at a more general level it necessarily remains the same ; that is to say that at some level or other of generality my nature *is* what it *was*, and this is always true ; and, in fact, whenever we reflect we shall invariably find that at one level or another we are *in the middle* of doing (or being) something. Thus the necessity of past experience is to be seen, if we

look, in every second of our present experience. If, therefore, at any time (at conception, at birth, last year, yesterday) I was created out of nothing or came into being spontaneously, then I was created with (or *as*) a nature (for otherwise I should not have a nature at present); and if I was created with a nature, I was created *with past experience*. Thus, *if* I was created, then it was done in such a way that it is not just *practically* but *absolutely* and *inherently* impossible for me to discover the fact. It is, of course, equally impossible for me to refute the suggestion that I was created (say) five minutes ago in the middle of writing this essay together with half of it already written in what appears to be my handwriting ; but if I see that everything happens *as if* I always had a past then it will never really occur to me to try. And if I notice in particular that I *must* have a past even to be able to consider the suggestion that I might not, then I shall remain quite untouched.

And future existence ? By observing our present experience we see that it has the structure of an autonomous system determining its own changes from one stable attitude to another. Whenever it changes its attitude (or adapts itself) at any given level it only does so by taking up the contrary attitude ; and every attitude without exception persists until such a change takes place. In other words, our experience has a structure such that it *must* continue indefinitely—time cannot stop it. The only way in which experience could possibly come to an end is if it changed from having-an-attitude to not-having-an-attitude ; but this change, like all other changes, must come from within experience itself, even though, unlike all other changes, it would be a change to end all changes. The fact of experience, then, is independent of time (indeed, there is appearance of time only because of the fact of experience), and experience itself must necessarily continue to exist until such time as it determines itself to stop 'having-to-do with existence', and when I see this necessity, that I *must* have a future, the suggestion that I might arbitrarily be annihilated (at death or at any other time) will fare no better than its brothers a few minutes ago.

We promised ourselves 'an absolutely certain proof of rebirth'. Have we got it? Our proof is based on direct observation of present experience at any time ; and we have shown that that experience appears to the

observer as a system with certain structural features. In particular, the system is seen to involve past experience as an integral part of its structure and to be autonomous in time. Since this is direct observation of experience, it shares the same degree of certainty as the actual existence of that experience, neither more nor less. [It would be a mistake to suppose that we can observe our experience of an object—a form, a sound, a smell, a taste, a touchable, an idea—while being at the same time completely disengaged or detached from that experience: the experience-of-an-object that we observe and the experience observing that experience-of-an-object are both dependent parts of the single but complex experience that (henceforth avoiding the doubtful word *observation* with its implication of absolute detachment) we shall call *sheer reflexion*. This is a mode of intimately reduplicated *self-consciousness*, which can be developed by practice. What is revealed in sheer reflexion is *self-structure*; and this structure is only mal-observed when it is *observed* at all, that is to say, with attempted detachment. In that case reflexion is no longer *sheer* but *compromised*. The certainty of sheer reflexion is the same as the certainty of tacit cognizance (which is *always* involved as a structural necessity), and the certainty of tacit cognizance is the certainty that I exist.] But how certain is the existence of our present experience? It is absolutely certain; for it is impossible to doubt. It can be stated with the greatest confidence in the world that anyone who genuinely, honestly, and in good faith, doubts the existence of his present experience is deceiving himself; and whoever chooses to take offence at this impugning of his sincerity will at once betray the fact that he is not doubting the existence of his present experience, which is, precisely, his feeling aggrieved. But does certainty about the structure of experience make rebirth equally certain? If we see with absolute certainty that all experience without exception must involve previous experience, we shall be absolutely unable to entertain the idea of any first beginning to experience; and if we see

with absolute certainty that it is autonomous, we shall be absolutely unable to entertain the idea of any ending to experience not brought about from within experience itself. But can we be absolutely certain that all experience without exception, and not just present experience, has these characteristics? Might not the *structure* of experience change? It is absolutely impossible to conceive that the structure of experience could be other than it is, for the reason that our conception of the structure of experience is itself experience and has therefore the structure of experience; if the structure of experience changed there would no longer be any *conception* of the structure of experience (or indeed of anything else), and it is absolutely impossible to conceive of a state of affairs devoid of conception, because where there was no conception there would be no state of affairs. More simply: the structure of experience is the structure of existence or being, and if that structure changed I should cease to be—and it is impossible to imagine that situation, because there would not then *be* any situation to imagine.

This proof of rebirth is absolutely certain; it is as certain as our own existence. By sheer reflexion at any time it is possible for us to see in the structure of our present experience that our existence is necessarily without a beginning and that it necessarily continues until it puts an end to itself from within. And to the extent that we see these necessities at all we see them with certainty: but the trouble is that to see them is by no means easy—that needs hard work.

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#### MODERN SOURCES

This essay, which is an attempt to elucidate a certain aspect of the Buddha's teaching, owes much, in different ways, to the following works:

- W. Ross Ashby. DESIGN FOR A BRAIN Chapman and Hall, London, 1952.
- J. - P. Sartre. L'ETRE ET LE NEANT N.R.F., Paris, 1943.

# THE PURITY AND SUBLIMITY OF THE MIDDLE WAY

*U Ba Htu, B. J. S. (Retd)*

Gotama Buddha appeared at a time when the Indian mind round about the Ganges Valley was greatly disturbed over the deeper questions of life. It evinced a thirst for knowledge—a search for truth. It appears that people enjoyed a wide range of liberty of conscience and tolerance to an extent that the existing popular faiths and religions were freely criticised without apparent repercussion.

In that atmosphere there naturally arose philosophical schools of all shades of opinion and with them, of course, appeared the so-called sages, sophists, sceptics, and a host of disputants. Each school had its own followers and adhered to its particular views.

## THE BUDDHA'S DOCTRINE

It was abundantly clear, when the Buddha proclaimed his doctrine for the first time to the five ascetics at Banaras, he was fully aware of the different schools of thought prevailing at the time. However, he was quite confident of his attainments and declared to the five ascetics who were his companions formerly that he had found the Way to Eternal Peace and had thus become the All-Enlightened Buddha. It is the Middle Way between the two extremes—the Way that is free from pain and torture, free from groaning and suffering; it is the perfect Way which leads to insight, to enlightenment, to peace, to Nibbāna. He points out the one extreme of indulgence in sensual pleasures as vulgar, degrading and worthless, and the other extreme of self-mortification as painful, vain and unprofitable. The Middle Way known as the Eightfold Noble Path breathes an air of noble freedom, for it teaches man to be independent of an outside agency and that he, alone of all others, can shape his future by his own actions.

## AIM AND PURPOSE OF RELIGION

At this point it may be interesting to enquire what is the aim and purpose of religion. To my mind the aim and purpose of religion firstly is to point out the good and evil forces of the world (in Pāli known as Kusala Dhamma and Akusala Dhamma), secondly to show how to remove the evil and promote the good, and thirdly the benefits to be derived therefrom.

## SĪLA

It will be necessary to examine the Middle Way or the Eightfold Noble Path to see if it satisfies the standards as mentioned above. The Middle Way formulated by Gotama the Buddha is so practical and so fittingly relates to life that it is often called a way of life. This way of life has worked for 2500 years now, and has been a guide—a mainstay for millions of the peoples of the World. The Eightfold Noble Path may be divided under three different headings. (1) Morality (Sīla), (2) Concentration of the mind (Samādhi), and (3) Wisdom (Paññā). Under the first heading Morality or Sīla, three steps are involved. (1) Right Speech, (2) Right Action, (3) Right Livelihood. A lay-disciple will have to restrain his speech in such a way that he does not lie, slander nor indulge in harsh language and vain talks. Killing, stealing, and adultery must be avoided under bodily actions, while for right livelihood he must not use any of the above seven restrictions as a means for his living. It is clear by enumerating the above seven factors as evils to be avoided, their observance automatically develops the seven corresponding meritorious courses of action known in Pāli as Kusala Kammāpathā. These seven evil actions of the body and speech constitute the grosser manifestations of corruptions or Kilesā. They are described in Pāli as Vitikkamma Kilesa. It may be noted that lack of morality on the part of worldlings is the main cause for their killing, stealing, adultery, lying, etc. In other words strict observance of Sīla will remove the above seven evils of the body and speech. It should be amply clear to anyone who wants to walk the Way for spiritual growth and perfection that it is an essential step to possess Sīla or Morality in the first place. If a disciple is steadfast in Sīla and is adorned with it as he is adorned with the garment around his person, he can be said to be fully equipped for the journey, for the Way he intends to walk on is one for the gradual purification of the mind until it becomes sublime on attaining arahatship.

## SAMĀDHI

Equipped as an earnest devotee is with Sīla, the next step on the way is Samādhi. It is often asked why in Buddhism, concentration of the mind is so emphasised. It is true that

strict observance of *Sīla* cuts off the devotee from committing the above evil acts of body and speech but those evil actions of body and speech originally emanated from the impure mind. The source of all evil is in the mind. The World we live in is a sensuous World and therefore the human mind is always after the sense objects, which it considers as the good things of the World. Naturally the rich are intoxicated by them, the middle men are working for them with clenched teeth while the poor are hankering after them restlessly. From morn till sleep the whole world is astir hunting for the good things of life, for happiness, for what is called "enjoyment of fuller life", and nobody appears to be able to resist the temptation. Ah! who can? except the Arahāt and Anāgāmi on the top ladder. All throughout his life the worldling is after the sense objects of good form, good sound, good taste, good smell and good touch, but he is not all too lucky at that for he often comes across unpleasant sense objects or is repelled by unpleasant ones thus giving rise alternately to greed and hate, most of his life.

The All-Enlightened Buddha sees that the sensual scheming life of the World is sick and ailing, that sound, form, taste, smell and touch the motley crowd is after, are not conducive to spiritual knowledge, mental peace and quiet, and that the rapture born of the concentration of the mind is alone the true and healthy state of the higher untrammelled life. The defilements that arise from the impure mind are known in Pāli as *Pariyuṭṭhāna Kilesa*. In order to remove them the Buddha has prescribed Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration as the 6th, 7th and 8th steps on the Way. Under the heading of Right Effort great endeavours are necessary (a) to avoid the arising of evil, (b) to overcome evil that has already arisen, (c) to strive to arouse wholesome thoughts that have not yet arisen, and (d) to maintain the wholesome thoughts that have already arisen. It will be apparent that this disciplinary training for the culture of the mind admits of no unwholesome thoughts to arise in the disciple. The question is how to bring about this healthy state of mind. The answer is found in the 7th step, Right Mindfulness. There are four types of Mindfulness the gist of which is to focus one's attention on the body, feeling, mind, and mental objects so as to allow no opportunity for mental corruptions to get in. The next step is

Right Concentration. For a yogī who is inclined to undertake *Vipassanā* meditation it is not necessary for him to enter into any of the four *jhānic* stages in order to attain insight or become an Ariyā. The moment he has reached the stage of one-pointedness of mind and thus is able to fix his mind on an object for a considerable length of time, he can switch to *Vipassanā* Meditation. The corruptions of the body and speech (*Vitikkamma Kilesa*) and those of the mind (*Pariyuṭṭhāna Kilesa*) are removed by the practice of *Sīla* and *Samādhi* but those that are inborn in us still remain to be removed. Such corruptions in Pāli are called *Anusaya Kilesa*.

A magnificent simile that one often comes across in Buddhist treatises may be mentioned at this point. The pruning of undesirable leaves and branches is like removing *Vitikkamma Kilesa* (corruptions of the body and speech), while the cutting of the trunk of the tree is like removing *Pariyuṭṭhāna Kilesa* (corruptions of the mind); but the roots of the tree that bear thorny leaves and poisonous fruits still remain embedded in the ground. The digging-up of the roots of the tree is like removing *Anusaya Kilesa* and the means for their eradication prescribed is *Paññā*.

### PAÑÑĀ

The purpose of the Buddha's appearance in the World is to teach the doctrine of Soullessness, Selflessness, or Egolessness by means of Wisdom (*Paññā*). *Sīla* and *Samādhi* are ever present in the World and they are taught and practised by the people but the doctrine of *Anattā* or soullessness is known and can be taught by an Omniscient Buddha alone. The first and second steps on the Way, Right View and Right Thought, constitute Wisdom or *Paññā*.

For a Yogī who possesses *Sīla* and *Samādhi* as mentioned, the next step on the Way is *Vipassanā* Meditation with a view to gain insight. Inasmuch as a modern scientist uses powerful lens and telescopes to delve into the secrets of nature, so too a Yogī uses the powers of *Sīla* and *Samādhi* which he has developed, for penetrating into the secrets of mind and matter. As he perseveres in his meditation he soon realises that both the body and mind are undergoing processes of change at alarming speeds; neither his physical body nor his mind nor anything in the whole Universe is static; everything including himself is moving and changing, nor is there to be found from the ever-changing mind and

matter anything that can be called entity, Attā, self, or ego; and the whole Universe is made up of mind and matter only. In this mental process and analysis the Yogī becomes aware with increasing conviction that everything is restless and impermanent and hence it is Suffering, and there is nothing that can be called Attā and therefore all is Anattā.

And as he continues the meditation he soon passes the ten stages of mental development and there dawns in him Insight—and he becomes an Ariya, a Noble One, a Sotapanna (the first of the four Ariyas).

### SOTAPANNA

On entering into the state of a Sotapanna, the Yogī has cut off once and for all the first three fetters that bind him to the wheel of existence; Self-delusion (Sakkāyadiṭṭhi), Scepticism (Vicikicchā), and Attachment to rites and ritual (Sīlabbata-Parāmāsa). He possesses unshakeable Saddhā (Inclination and belief in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha), and is incapable of breaking the five moral precepts. He can be reborn seven times at the utmost in the Kamma Loka, that is, in a state not lower than the human World. In Catusaccadīpanī a book which should be read by every student of Buddhism, the Late Venerable Ledī Sayadaw has extolled the qualities of a Sotapanna in glowing terms. The moment a Yogī becomes a Sotapanna he enters into the select realm of Ariyās (the Noble Ones), a state which assures freedom

from the four lower abodes of suffering. His future rebirths lie only in the human world and in the abodes of Devas and Brahmās. Being a Stream-winner heading for Nibbāna there is no possibility of retrogression from this upward march nor is he capable of committing any act that could take him to an abode of suffering\* as he has not only removed but eradicated those defilements. Yet a Sotapanna while in this World can be a householder enjoying the comforts and luxuries of life. It may be millions of years, many rebirths (in the upper regions only) and many kappas (World-cycles) enjoying worldly happiness before he finally enters Nibbāna. In fact while in this World he enjoys part of the bliss of Nibbāna.\*\* Now this is the Buddha-Dhamma proclaimed by the Omniscient Buddha—the Knower of the Worlds. The Eightfold Noble Path is a practical formula as it gradually purifies the mind as one walks on until it becomes sublime on reaching the fourth stage of Perfection. There is no wonder that a Western scholar declared Buddhism as the grandest manifestation of freedom ever proclaimed. Yet there is another writer from the West too who says Buddhism is the cream of ancient wisdom of India. It is amply clear that Buddhism fulfils the requirements of an ideal religion.

May Buddhists all over the World and those who are contemplating to become Buddhist soon, attain to the bliss of Sotapanna here and in the quickest time possible.

\* By "abode of suffering" is meant the 4 'Lower Worlds'—the animal world, ghost-world, demon-world, hell.  
\*\* As a Sotāpanna he is only freed from the three fetters—Sakkāya-diṭṭhi (Personality-belief), Vicikicchā (Sceptical doubt) and Sīlabbata-parāmāsa (Clinging to mere rules and ritual.)

' Monk, these four persons are found existing in the world.

Herein, monks, a certain person is one who gains mental calm of the self, but does not gain the higher wisdom of insight into things.

Herein again, monks, a certain person is one who gains the higher wisdom of insight into things, but does not gain mental calm of the self.

Herein again, monks, a certain person is one who gains neither of these things. Yet again a certain person is one who gains both.

Then, monks, he who has gained mental calm in himself, but not the higher wisdom of insight into things, should make an effort to establish the one and attain the other. Then at some future time he is one who has gained both of these things.

Then, monks, he who has gained the higher wisdom of insight into things, but not mental calm in himself, should make an effort to establish the one and attain the other. Then at some future time he is one who has gained both.

Then, monks, he who has gained neither mental calm in himself nor the higher wisdom of insight into things should put forth intense desire, effort, exertion, impulse, unobstruction, mindfulness and attention for the attainment of those profitable states.'

*Anguttara-Nikāya.*

## SUMANGALA - GĀTHĀ

*By Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao (Sumaṅgala) Assistant Professor of Psychology, All-India Institute of Mental Health, Bangalore, India.*

1. Asārabhūtesu ca'sārabhūtam  
Samsāramajjhe ca visuddhidassim  
Vandāmi dukkhassa ca antakaram  
Taṃ Gotamam siri-Saddhammasāmiriṃ.
2. Manussabhūto pi sa bodhisatto  
Suddhodanassa idha attajo pi,  
Tathāgato so atisuddhasatto-  
Amhākaṃ uppajji sumangalāya.
3. Udapādi Buddha yada pubbakāle  
Māyāya kucchimi manussaloke  
Tadā narānaṃ ahu sabbaso pi  
Sumangalaṃ bhūripuññaṃ bijaṃ.
4. Sabbatthasiddho'ti sa bodhisatto  
Idh'eva hutvā as ca sakyaputto  
Satto Kapilavatthumhi jāto  
Sumangalaṃ dassayi Buddhabhūto.
5. Bhavassa disvā idha rājaputto  
Tilakkhaṇaṃ hi ahu dukkhito so ;  
Gharā ca nikkhamma Sumangalaṃ no  
Pabbaji kiṃkusalaṃ gavesayanto.
6. Gantvā tato so Uruvelabhūmiriṃ,  
Vivitta-okāsa-padhānayoggaṃ  
Amhākaṃ yevāya sumangalatthi-  
Tatth'eva parakkami so mahesi.
7. Silāni rakkhitva ca nibbatetvā  
Samāpattiyo atidighakālaṃ  
Kiccāni katvā atidukkarāni  
Samaṇo vāyami sumangalatthaṃ.
8. Tato pi disvā sa sudūravattim  
Sumangalaṃ taṃ muni patthayanto,  
Bodhāya maggaṃ pariyesamāno-  
Gayāmukham so upagacchi satthā.
9. Tatth'eva t̥hitvā sa sumangalatthi  
Assattharukkhassa tale nisinno,  
Idha'eva phuṭṭhum paramābhobodhiṃ  
Viriyena so paṇidhiṃ akāsi.
10. Kamena tatth'eva aho suladdho,  
Sambodhidhammo Sugatena tena,  
Tasmā ahosi idha jātaloke  
Sumangalam appaṭivattiyam hi.
11. Paṭicca hetum upajjanti dhammā  
Tatth'eva dukkho na ca aññathā ti  
Samudayaṃ dukkhass' idha dassayi  
Sumangalo dipadānaṃ uttamo.
12. Itthañ ca hetuppabhavassa tassa  
Nirodham' ti dukkhassa hoti ti vuttaṃ,  
Kathañ ca hoti ti tameva maggaṃ  
Sumangalam tena Tathāgatena.

13. Imāni saccāni sumangalāni  
 Vatvā sa seṭṭho puna desayī no:  
 Vihāya ante cariyā tu majjhe  
 Paṭipadā' va kuaslassa hoti.
14. Jaṭāya majjhe vinipātito so  
 upeti dukkhaṃ kilesappabhūtaṃ,  
 Adassayanto avijjāvasena  
 Attano c'āpi sumanglaṃ naro.
15. Na jānanti puthujjanā pamattā  
 Dhammasamudayanirodhasaccaṃ,  
 Samsāracakke hi bhamanti tasmā  
 Sumangaliṃ te na gavesayanti.
16. Yadā naro passati dhamma jālaṃ  
 Uppattibhange hi dolāyamānaṃ  
 Sandhāya so tattha ca saccadiṭṭhiṃ  
 Tadā virajjati sumangalatthī.
17. Virāgaṃ ca patvā ariyo sa satto  
 Saddhāya viriyena ca vāyamanto  
 Puññaṃ ca bhāve ti sudantacitto  
 Sumangalaṃ muttisukhaṃ ca laddhuṃ.
18. Sīlehi rāgāni atikkamitvā  
 Hitvā hi dosam tatha bhāvanāhi  
 Mohaṃ ca paññāya vināsayitvā  
 Sumangalaṃ phussati Buddhaputto.
19. Diṭṭheva dhamme samathaṃ ca katvā  
 Sabbassa saṅkhārajaṭassa yogī  
 Tañhakkhayā ca nirupādhibhūto,  
 Sumangalaṃ labbhati so viratto.
20. Visuddhibhūto ca sa ñāṇasatto  
 Vihāya dukkham hi visārado so,  
 Hutvā javā pāpimato vimutto  
 Nibbuto hoti Sumangale ṭhito.
21. Ittham hi lokassa sumangalatthaṃ  
 Abhāsi Buddho vinayaṃ ca dhammaṃ  
 Akāsi nāvaṃ ca anuttamaṃ so,  
 Sudullabhaṃ taṃ bhavapāragāmiṃ.
22. Tato hi loke arahantavaggo  
 Uppajji Sanghe idha sāvakānaṃ  
 Ahoṣi Dhammo tada suppatiṭṭho-  
 Sumanglāyeva lokattayassa.
23. Suṇontu tasmā idha suddhikāmā  
 Subhāsitaṃ taṃ Sugatassa vācaṃ :  
 Ten' eva hotī' dha puthujjanānaṃ  
 Sumangalaṃ pāragasaccadiṭṭhi.
24. Ayam pasamsā hi saddhāya yuttā  
 Vuttā mayā pi avisārādena ;  
 Sāsanakovidā khamantu disvā  
 ' Sumangalaṃ mamaṃ upāsakaṃ ti.

## SUMANGALA - GĀTHĀ

(TRANSLATION REVISED BY THE AUTHOR)

1. To Gotama Buddha Who, among beings who have not realised the essential, realised the essential ; the discoverer of the sublime Dhamma and of purity in this round of Samsāra ; Who brought to an end the entire chain of Suffering—to Him, Lord of the true Dhamma, I make reverent salutation.

2. Here in this world the Bodhisatta was born of King Suddhodana, and was possessed of all the qualities of a Tathāgata. He, the purest being, was born in the world for our welfare.

3. Thus was the Bodhisatta conceived in the womb of Queen Mahā Māyā, and the seed that was to bring great blessings to many beings germinated in the world of men.

4. The Bodhisatta was born here as a Sākyan Prince in Kapilavatthu, and was the cause of welfare in the world of beings when the auspicious signs developed and He became an Omniscient Buddha.

5. The King's Son, having perceived the Three Signs of Becoming, was convinced of life's Suffering, and renounced the world to become an ascetic, striving to attain the Highest Good for our welfare.

6. Having thus gone forth He practised exertion, living solitary in Uruvela Forest, for the sake of all beings, who needed this Blessing from Him.

7. Having become an ascetic He perfected Himself in morality and realised the Attainments after striving for a long period ; He did the most difficult things in the hope of obtaining the Blessing.

8. Then, having seen still far away the Blessing He had been seeking, that Sage, searching after the way to wisdom, went to Gayā head.

9. Seated there at the foot of the Asattha Tree He made with energy the earnest resolve to attain there and then the Supreme Enlightenment.

10. In due course there alone He well obtained the Enlightenment, He the well gone One. From that indeed emerged for mankind the Irreversible Good.

11. Depending on causes, mental and physical phenomena arise, and Suffering is

conditioned by this chain of causes and effects, and by no other cause. The Best of men thus declared the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering.

12. There is Suffering, originated from causes, and there is also the Extinction of Suffering. How is Suffering extinguished ? The Tathāgata declared the Noble Eightfold Path to be the Way leading to the extinction of Suffering.

13. After revealing the blessed Doctrine of the Four Noble Truths the Teacher declared: " To avoid the two extremes and to follow the Middle Path is the true performance of wholesome volitional actions ".

14. One who is entangled in Craving, being blinded by Ignorance cannot perceive his own good, and so remains in the state of Suffering conditioned by Craving.

15. Worldly-minded persons who are bound by sensual pleasures cannot comprehend the Noble Truths of the Origin of Suffering and the Extinction of Suffering ; hence they wander unceasingly in the round of rebirths, and do not seek the Blessing.

16. When a being really comprehends the net of the Dhammas, and the round of rebirths which is like a swing, he becomes disgusted with the process of arising and passing away, and realises the blessing of the Noble Truths.

17. A Holy One, having destroyed passions and reached the state of Detachment, by dint of diligence and effort develops Insight and so attains the bliss of Liberation.

18. The disciple of the Buddha, having overcome the passions by the practice of Morality, having dispelled Hatred by concentration and mental culture, and having destroyed Delusion by Insight-Wisdom, realises the Highest Blessing.

19. A Yogi (Yogāvacara), even in this very life, by developing Samathā (tranquillity of mind) and understanding the compounded nature of all things, has no more craving for sensual pleasures and so attains the blessing of Dispassion.

20. The wise person who has purified himself and with confidence has vanquished



the Evil One, is free from his clutches. He has attained Nibbāna and abides in its blessing.

21. Thus the Supreme Buddha expounded Dhamma and Vinaya for the welfare of all beings. He constructed the Incomparable Boat by means of which beings are able to reach the further shore of the Ocean of Becoming.

22. It is for this reason that there came to exist in this Sāsana the Bhikkhu Sangha,

including the Arahats. Thus the Dhamma became founded well for the benefit of all beings in the Three Worlds.

23. Therefore, hearken, ye the worldlings who long for Purity! Follow the blessed gospel of the Happy One, for that alone will help you to cross to the other shore (Nibbāna.)

24. With faith and devotion I the ignorant one, utter these praises. May the masters of the Doctrine pardon me, "Sumangala", Considering me but a humble devotee.



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# THE DHAMMAPADA COMMENTARY

The Story of Cunda, the Pork-butcher

( CUNDASUKARIKA-VATTU )

*Translated by the Department of Pāli, University of Rangoon.*

Idha socati pecca socati  
pāpakārī ubhayattha socati,  
so socati so vihaññati  
disvā kammakiliṭṭham attano ti.

*Dhammapada, v. 15.*

“An evil-doer grieves in this world as well as in the next; he grieves in both places. He grieves and laments observing the impurity of his own deeds”.

The Master, while residing at Veḷuvana gave this religious discourse beginning with “He grieves in this world” (*idha socati*) with reference to a pork-butcher by the name of Cunda.

It is said that for fifty-five years he killed pigs, ate some of the pork and earned his living by selling the rest. At times of famine he used to go to the country-side taking paddy in carts and would load the carts with young village-pigs for which he would barter one or two measures of paddy, and return. Then, having fenced off a plot at the back of his house like a cow-pen, he used to grow their fodder there. As they became fattened by taking various kinds of plants and excrement, he tied whichever pig he wished to kill to a post tightly and used to beat it with a square mallet for the purpose of making the flesh of the body appear thick through swelling. And when he knew that it had become swollen, he would open its mouth, place a stick across it and pour into the mouth boiling water from a copper bowl. The boiling water would flow into the stomach and go out of the rectum carrying with it softened excreta. If there was left even a little portion of excreta the water would come out turbid. When the stomach was cleansed, clear and unturbid water would flow out. Over the back he would then pour the remaining hot water which would peel off the dark outer skin; thereafter, he would singe the hair by burning grass and cut off the head with a sharp sword. Receiving in a vessel the blood that flowed out, he would knead the pork with blood, cook it, sit down with his wife and children, partake of some and sell the rest of it.

In this way he earned his livelihood for over fifty-five years. Although the Tathāgata was residing at a monastery near-by, not even for a single day would he offer so much as a handful of flowers or a ladleful of alms-food nor would he perform any other kind of meritorious deed. Then he became afflicted with a disease and even while he was alive, he was tormented by the heat of the great hell Avīci.

The heat of the Avīci-hell is so intense that it is capable of blinding the eyes of a person who stands looking at it even from a distance of a hundred *yojanas*. Thus has it been said: “The heat of Avīci spreads over a circumference of one hundred *yojanas* at all times”. This analogy was given by the *thera* Nāgasena in order to illustrate the greater intensity of it over that of an ordinary fire. Said he, “O King, a piece of rock, as huge as a peak-roofed house, melts in a moment when thrown into hell-fire; as for the hell-born beings in such a case they resemble those who have taken conception in the mother’s womb and are not destroyed through the influence of *kamma*”.

As the heat developed, Cunda’s plight corresponded to his deeds. Inside the house he started grunting like a pig and moving about on his knees from the front of the house to the back. Then, the people of his house held him firmly and closed his mouth. Indeed, no one is able to ward off the reaction of *kamma*. He was moving about making so much noise that the people of as many as seven houses all around could not get their sleep. He was frightened with the fear of death, and all the people of the household became unable to prevent him from coming outside. They caught hold of him and closed the doors of the house so that he might remain inside and not move outside. They then surrounded the house and stood guarding it from outside. He continued to cry and move about inside the house being tormented by the heat of hell. In this way he moved about for seven days and on the seventh day he died and was reborn in the great hell Avīci.

The great hell Avīci is to be described according to the Devadūta suttanta.\*

While passing by the door of his house, the monks heard the noise and taking it to be the grunting of pigs, returned to the monastery, sat near the Master and told Him : “Lord, today is the seventh day since Cunda, the pork-butcher, has been killing pigs behind closed doors. It seems that there is some auspicious ceremony going on in the house. Lord, while killing so many pigs he doesn’t have even a single kindly thought or any compassion for them. Indeed, Lord, such a cruel and hard-hearted man has never been seen before”. “Monks, he has not been killing pigs during these seven days but retribution of his own deeds has overtaken him ; even while alive, he had to undergo suffering from the heat of the great hell Avīci, tormented by that heat he moved about inside the house grunting like a pig for seven days. Today he has passed away and is reborn in the Avīci-hell”. “Lord, having suffered thus in this world, is he reborn again in a place of suffering ?” This being said, the Master, saying “Yes, monks, be he a householder or a monk, a negligent person indeed grieves both in this world and in the next”, uttered this verse :

Idha socati pecca socati  
pāpakārī ubhayattha socati,  
so socati so vihaññati  
disvā kammakiliṭṭham attano ti.

*Dhammapada*, v. 15.

“ An evil-doer grieves in this world as well as in the next ; he grieves in both places. He grieves and laments observing the impurity of his own deeds ”.

Therein, *pāpakārī* means a person who has done various kinds of evil deeds. Thinking “Alas, I have not done any good deed, but have done evil” he invariably “grieves at the time of his death” (*idha socati*). He also “experiences the resultant grief of his deeds in the next world” (*pecca socati*). Thus, indeed, he “grieves in both the places” (*ubhayattha socati*). For that very reason, even while alive, the pork-butcher Cunda had to grieve observing the impurity of his own deeds (*disvā kammakiliṭṭham attano*). In various ways he laments (*vihaññati*).

After the stanza was recited, many became *sotāpanna* and so on. The religious discourse became beneficial to the multitude.

The story of Cunda the pork-butcher, the tenth.

\* Dīgha-nikāya-Uparipannāsa, Devadūta-vagga, Devadūta-sutta.

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# WHAT IS BUDDHA-DHAMMA?

By

*U Khin Mounng.*

This short essay is an attempt to arouse an interest in the critical study of the English version of Buddha-Dhamma and also to render some assistance for unifying the different schools of thought particularly Theravāda and Mahāyāna. There are many books in English on the teaching of Gotama Buddha. Yet despite these numerous publications the readers of these books especially in the West still have several misconceptions regarding Buddha-Dhamma, which they think is a teaching of pessimism, nihilism, fatalism, determinism, mysticism, brahmanism, atmanism, idealism, etc. If we find out the reasons for these misunderstandings, we shall realise that they are mainly due to a partial conversance with the true teachings of the Buddha on the part of the authors of those books as pointed out by Miss I.B. Horner, Secretary of the Pāli Text Society, London, who said 'It seems to me that, in the West at least, too many people come forward nowadays with a set of ideas of their own devising and label it Buddhism.' We should also take notice of the latest warning given by U Pe Maung Tin, Emeritus Professor of Pāli, University of Rangoon. He said 'In an article of 15 pages entitled "Interpretation of the Anattā doctrine of Buddhism : a new approach," in the Indian Historical Quarterly, March 1955, Mr. R.P. Chowdhury, Lecturer in Pāli at the University of Rangoon has made an important contribution to the study of this much debated doctrine, important because, if his interpretations were correct and carried out, there would be no Buddhism as a religion distinct from Brahmanism.'

All these go to show that it is incumbent on the Buddhist scholars who are now writing about the Buddha-Dhamma in English to try and dispel all these misconceptions by giving rational explanations in terms and expressions that can be understood by intelligent students who study them critically before acceptance. The interpretations should be clear, correct and made complete by giving concrete illustrations and analogies based on actual and known facts that can be appreciated by discerning minds. We know that once the wrong concepts are formed they will be fossilised in no time. Such fossils become harder and harder as the study

advances stage by stage, culminating in the founding of various schools of thought. This is the reason for the emergence of schism even among Buddhists, some of whom are still dogmatically adhering to their traditional beliefs and ceremonial rites.

We are very unhappy to find the existence of different schools and sects particularly the two main schools, *i.e.* Southern and Northern, and we feel that it is now the time to make a start for their unification. There are many ways and means for this unification movement and one of the urgent tasks that should be undertaken by the Buddhist scholars collectively and individually is to select the important basic teachings of the Buddha and interpret them correctly, completely and rationally to be acceptable to all seekers of truth. At the same time steps should be taken to define Buddha-Dhamma as a subject of study and practice in the light of the present stage of human knowledge and power of understanding. As is well known, there are two main branches of study and learning, *i.e.* science and philosophy, that have developed the human power of understanding to the highest possible extent, and the basic teachings of the Buddha should be studied, analysed and interpreted through the medium of these two branches of learning, which lie within the range of human possibility. We know that as ordinary human beings we cannot go beyond this limit in our endeavour to explain and express publicly the true meaning of the Buddha-Dhamma.

## “PRIVATE” AND “PUBLIC” KNOWLEDGE

At this juncture I would like to mention in brief the differences between what may be called a “private” knowledge and a “public” knowledge, and if this distinction can be established as a basis for defining Buddha-Dhamma, we are likely to find a common starting point for the unification of different schools of Buddhists. When we say that 2 plus 2 is equal to 4, and that fire is hot, we are making statement of facts which are of the nature of “public” knowledge. These facts are provable and verifiable. But when a person says that he was created by an almighty god, he is

making a statement of his own theory that has emerged from his personal reasoning, thinking, imagination and logical deduction. His theory is of the nature of "private" knowledge which is known to himself only. It is his "private" knowledge with which we have no concern. Such "private" knowledge cannot be verified and validated like a "public" knowledge. If we stretch our imagination beyond the reach of our power of understanding, surely it will not be possible for us to expound or formulate our theory as a "public" knowledge. No doubt everybody has the right and liberty to think, reason and imagine as high as he likes without limitation, and he can satisfy this thirst for knowledge with his imagination as his own "private" knowledge. But his theory will not become true "public" knowledge until it can be verified, tested, proven and validated. These simple illustrations can help us to understand the meaning of "public" and "private" knowledge, at least for purposes of general discussion.

When Gotama Buddha discovered the profound truths, He, no doubt, realised that it would be highly difficult to teach these truths as "public" knowledge. At the same time He realised that these truths are of "public" nature that concerns all living beings. So He taught His discoveries publicly for public use through the medium of spoken language that could be understood by the people during His lifetime. All His discoveries are observable, verifiable and testable by actual practical experiments. Consequently many living beings fully understood His profound teachings and completely solved the problems of life to their entire satisfaction by attaining perfect peace and tranquillity of mind. The Buddha has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher, who keeps something back. He did not withhold anything that is conducive to higher knowledge. He taught us all that we should know for our emancipation from the whirlpool of miserable life. He taught us completely the facts of phenomena, which He had actually discovered, seen, experienced and understood from all aspects in the same way as a science teacher teaches the facts and the phenomena of a particular subject which he has systematically studied, experienced by practical work and mastered thoroughly. we shall find that modern science and philosophy can help us to a great extent to understand His teachings. It is up to us

to try and study His teachings till we thoroughly understand, comprehend and realise just their true meaning and nothing more. If we cannot grasp the facts as they really are, we are liable to stretch our imagination beyond the rational limit hoping to find solutions to the problems of life. This is the bewilderment of our speculative philosophers. The Buddha therefore, emphasised the importance of a thorough understanding of the phenomena of life as the first step for acquiring higher knowledge step by step. He also gave us a complete course of clear cut methods for our practical work to fully realise and experience the nature of existence and to eventually overcome all the hindrances, that create the problems of life. If we do not understand His teachings thoroughly, it is not due to any esoteric or "private" nature of His teachings. It is certainly due to our inability to understand the truth taught by Him. From this analytical study we can come to a definite conclusion that the Buddha-Dhamma is not of the nature of "private" knowledge. It is not a mysticism nor an esoteric doctrine. Gotama Buddha would not have proclaimed His discoveries publicly if he had found them to be of "private" or esoteric nature. "Public" knowledge is thus quite justified in assuming certain standards of verifiability and any one can uphold a discussion on such a basis easily, freely and openly. Therefore, the Buddhist scholars from different schools should come to a definite conclusion whether the Buddha-Dhamma is of the nature of "private" knowledge or of "public" knowledge. As a matter of fact, the knowledge of Gotama Buddha is completely "public" knowledge of the highest order. It is the supramundane knowledge attained by Gotama Buddha for public use. This disclosure of bare facts is not a platitude like a deliberate overstatement by some debating society extremist. It is a question for serious consideration and intelligent discussion with open minds.

We also keenly feel the absence of a standard universally accepted English name for the Buddha-Dhamma. The present synonyms now used for this purpose are many and varied and at the same time, they do not convey completely and satisfactorily the correct meaning of the basic discoveries of the Buddha. It is one of the urgent tasks for the Buddhist scholars to choose a suitable modern English terminology to be used as the standardised universal nomenclature for

the Buddha-Dhamma. It is definitely a necessity especially now when the ardent Buddhists are trying their best for the extensive and intensive propagation of the teachings of Gotama Buddha as a complete and practical science that can solve all the problems of life. As a sort of a start to give an impetus to the unification movement, this work can be carried out as a common task without much controversy by the representative Buddhist scholars from all schools of thought, and it is hoped that with the help of the unanimously approved English terminology to be used as a standard universal nomenclature in the near future, the writers on the Buddha-Dhamma in particular will be greatly relieved of the burden of using unsatisfactory and ambiguous words and terms. Some people call the Buddha-Dhamma a philosophy, others called it a psychology and it is universally known as a religion under the name of Buddhism.

### PHILOSOPHY

By a close study of the basic discoveries of the Buddha we shall find that it is a mistake to call it a philosophy as understood in the West in terms of their speculative philosophies because of the fact that supramundane knowledge or insight or enlightenment attained by Buddhas and Arahats cannot by any means be realised by pure reason, imagination and logical thinking. It far transcends the realm of the mundane intellect and faculties. For not fully realising the wide scope of the supramundane knowledge the speculative philosophers think that Gotama Buddha was only a thinker of unexcelled philosophic power. They cannot go beyond this limit in assessing the supramundane knowledge of the Buddha. They are confined in their conceptual thinking and logical reasoning and they are now finding themselves confronted with more problems, contradictions and absurdities instead of finding solutions to the problems they can conceive of. They have to some extent realised that the main cause of this dilemma, into which their speculations have led them, is the incurable nature of inherent ignorance that limits the range of mundane intellect and faculties. Yet some of them have resigned themselves and left all these unsolved problems to the wisdom of an almighty god by giving their own explanations, which are not accepted by the deep thinkers who want to know the facts as they really are. Furthermore,

the speculative philosophers of different schools of thought have not come to a definite conclusion regarding the meaning of "knowledge". They say that all knowledge however defined must start from assumptions and there can be no certainty in "knowledge" if the "real world" assumption is made. After all, knowledge is only a convention and certainly is only a truth which is true by definition or by general acceptance. Strictly speaking, we have only probabilities. They tell us that our notions of knowledge merge gradually into beliefs, which may be true or false. They do not become knowledge until they are proven. They consider that "seeing is believing" is the nearest answer to this question. On the other hand "seeing" is not always reliable and sufficient. Psychologists have found that different persons who have seen a particular accident usually give varying comments and divergent views. "Seeing" cannot help us to make probabilities into certainties. It shows that we are entangled in our logic and we are in such a predicament that we are not quite sure whether there is a real and true knowledge or not. We are enmeshed in our conceptual thinking based on unreal sense perception. It should be realised now that the Buddha-Dhamma is not a code of philosophy as understood in terms of speculative philosophies.

We know that the original teachings of Gotama Buddha are compiled in the Pāli Canon known as the Tipiṭaka. It is divided into (1) Vinaya, (2) Sutta, and (3) Abhidhamma. The Abhidhamma, which deals exhaustively with physical and psychical phenomena and their causal relations will be found to be the real superscience and the master-piece of Gotama Buddha. The phenomena which are marvellously expounded with mathematical precision and expressed scientifically in unequivocal terms were discovered by the Buddha not with the help of logical thinking and pure reason, although they will be found to be very logical and reasonable. It is essential to realise that they were discovered in the light of His supramundane knowledge and not as inferences deduced from logical thinking and reasoning. Buddha-Dhamma is certainly a science of the highest order—a super-science. The following example will help us to realise the importance and necessity of drawing a sharp boundary line between philosophy and science. Psychology, a new study, was a department of philosophy until about 1910,

when in England it was divorced from philosophy and defined as the positive science of mental process. Psychology, defined as a positive study, has come to the forefront and is now regarded as the essential study that deals with all human activities and behaviours. Yet most of the present day writers on Buddha-Dhamma in English continue to call it philosophy just because it was called so by their predecessors. This traditional idea should be discarded if we desire to propagate Buddha-Dhamma in its true nature.

### PSYCHOLOGY

Neither is Buddha-Dhamma just an ordinary system of psychology as understood by the modern psychologists, who are more or less dealing with the kinetic mental energy only, *i.e.* the mental process at work in the day-to-day affairs. Like physical force, the mental process has two types of energy, *i.e.* potential and kinetic. But the potential mental force cannot be harnessed and developed by the methods used by modern psychology. It can be developed fully by a systematic course of Buddhist meditation. There are some philosophies that also show their own methods of meditation. With the help of these it is possible to realise the lower psychic powers. But the superscience of Gotama Buddha contains a complete course showing the methods for acquiring the lower as well as the higher psychic powers leading to the attainment of supramundane knowledge that can solve all problems of life.

### RELIGION

In my opinion it is a misnomer to call the Buddha's teaching a religion. The idea conveying the word "religion" is diametrically opposite to the true meaning of His teaching. Religion is based on the concept of an immortal soul and a creator god while the Buddha-Dhamma totally denies their existence. Such entities cannot be found in the discoveries of the Buddha. In fact, due to this misunderstanding the philosophers who believe in materialism have included Buddhism in the list of religions to be discarded by them, as they are convinced that all forms of religious belief are retarding the progress of man. But we cannot blame them because of the fact that if a sincere and keen non-Buddhist student with inherent social consciousness tries to take a bird's eye view of the world and its

inhabitants, he will surely find the chaotic order of things in every nook and corner of the earth and he will at once decide to champion the cause of order by revolutionising the ideas of men according to his concept of good or bad or right or wrong. Such students are numerous everywhere and for this reason the modern materialism that has been developed on the basis of such aspiration has made a tremendous headway in a very short time to get millions of adherents to its tenets. It is really very attractive to the socially minded persons, particularly the young, who often have the courage to sacrifice their future for the good of the many. For this matter I would like to inform the materialists that, contrary to their popular opinion, the super-science of Gotama Buddha will not only help them to develop their intellectual faculties to the fullest possible extent, without any let or hindrance, but it will also help them to find practical ways and means for solving the prevailing social and economic problems satisfactorily without resorting to any inhumane and anti-social methods. If they will only try and understand this super-science thoroughly, they will be able to serve humanity in a much better way to get more beneficial results than they would as ordinary materialistic thinkers and ardent social workers. I would like to go to the extent of telling them that with the help of Buddhist science they will be able to build a really peaceful and democratic utopia with a new type of people really loving each other as brothers and sisters. It is now more than obvious that the term "religion" is not only unsuitable but it is certainly harmful to the Buddha-Dhamma. The immortal soul, the creator god, the worship, the prayers, the atonement, the judgment seat and other concepts associated with religious belief cannot be forgotten and given up easily by the aspirants owing to this false and misleading terminology used in the books on Buddhism in English. Therefore, the immediate work to be done by all the interested Buddhist scholars is to organise a world-wide campaign of intensive and extensive propaganda to let the world know without any loss of time that the Buddha-Dhamma is not a retrogressive and dogmatic religion based on blind faith as hitherto understood by non-Buddhists. At the same time serious consideration should be given to the question of finding a suitable substitute for this word "religion" or to discourage its use in the

books on Buddha-Dhamma. The people in the West usually understand the teaching of the Buddha as Buddhism—a religion founded by the Buddha. We shall thus find that the term “Buddhism” is inextricably bound up with the term “religion” and the Buddhist scholars should also consider the question of discouraging the use of this term “Buddhism”.

Buddha-Dhamma will be found to be quite different from the blind faith of other religions or the uncertainties of speculative philosophies. It is the deepest science that should be studied in the light of the facts of life with open minds, applying to it the highest attainable intellectual faculties. Analysis, tests, experiments, observations, logical thinking, reasoning and other methods used for all branches of study will be of great help to understand and appreciate the Buddha-Dhamma, which will give entire intellectual satisfaction to all thinking persons who are seeking for truth honestly and sincerely. It is really astonishing to realise that the Buddha’s discoveries were made with scientific exactitude long before the advent of modern science, which can help us to a great extent to appreciate His teaching. The latest discoveries of science are in total agreement with His principles of physical phenomena. Furthermore modern science has dispelled to some extent the deepest traditional beliefs,

superstitions, mythological concepts and divine dogmas, which have very strong deterrent effect on the realisation of the truths discovered by the Buddha. It is the most opportune moment for the propagation of Buddha-Dhamma in the non-Buddhist countries if only the Buddhist scholars would make it a point to arouse by a proper approach the interest of scientifically trained persons in the critical study of this super-science of Gotama Buddha.

In conclusion, I would particularly like to request the scientists to find out for themselves the real meaning of Buddha-Dhamma, and I am sure that they will find to their entire satisfaction that it is a stupendous scientific discovery of the phenomena of life including rational methods for solving all its problems. Scientists believe that no scientific theory is of any use unless it can be tested experimentally either directly or indirectly. Here is the super-science of life for them to test experimentally and so discern for themselves the truths discovered by Gotama Buddha. They will certainly be rendering invaluable service to mankind if they will reveal their discoveries by interpreting them in scientific terms and explanations after they have successfully completed a course of Buddhist meditation known as Vipassanā Kammaṭṭhāna.

ဗုဒ္ဓ ဓမ္မ လောက

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# NOTES AND NEWS

## BUDDHA STUDY ASSOCIATION

### *1956 Annual General Meeting*

The Honorary Secretary's report :—

- (1) "The last Annual General Meeting was held December 18, 1955.
- (2) "As the Buddhist Vihara Society in England we did what very few societies in this world have done: we saw accomplished the primary object of our existence, namely; the establishment in London of a Buddhist vihāra.
- (3) "Our main task fulfilled, we resolved to re-organize and carry on. We altered our name to BUDDHA STUDY ASSOCIATION, and adopted as our guiding object the study and application of the original, philosophical teaching of the Buddha. As an independent, non-sectarian Buddhist group, our renaissance has become a reality which proves the need for a purist society in London such as ours. This is reflected by the remarkable increase in membership during the period under review. Our total number of Members has increased by over one hundred per-cent of whom *more than a quarter are Members for life*. A welcome development has been the large increase in associate Members residing on the continent of Europe. We have received encouragement from all quarters.
- (4) "Our change of Presidents at last year's elections has proved a great satisfaction to us, and we look forward to welcoming our much beloved Sayadaw U Thittila back among us in 1957. During 1956 our venerable President has been in Rangoon during that phase of the Sixth Council; has made a Dhammadūta tour in Japan; and has completed his second Dhammadūta tour of Australia (details of which are being circulated among the Members).
- (5) "The Association's outstanding achievement during the past year

has been its first venture into print, with the production of a Souvenir magazine in conjunction with the Buddha Jayanti celebrations being held throughout the Buddhist world. The contents of this publication, which are strictly non-sectarian, include articles by authoritative writers of Britain, Burma, Ceylon, France, Germany, India, Italy and Japan, presented behind a striking outer cover depicting the Wheel symbol in representative colouring, which could be used for meditation by purchasers of the booklet. "Buddhist Wisdom for the West" is not a production which will become out-of-date. The nominal price of 1/6d (= one rupee or 25 cents American) has, admittedly, caused some depletion in our always slender funds, but our aim has been, from the start, not to make money out of it but rather to make known the Dhamma of the Buddha. We have been urged to produce our magazine periodically.

- (6) "In spite of our weakened financial condition, it has been considered expedient to terminate the old agreement by which we received royalties from Messrs. John Murray (publishers) Ltd. accruing from Ven. Bhikkhu Nārada's third translation of *Dhammapada*, on the grounds that the Association should not participate in the financial undertakings of individual *bhikkhus*. This means that these sums, hitherto held in the Association's bank account, have now been turned over to the translator, while no further sums will be accepted by us from this source unless they be presented as donations to our general funds.
- (7) "The subjects of special study at the Members' meetings during 1956 have been: (1) *Aṭṭhaka*, (2) *Pārāyana*, and (3) the first *suttas* of the *Dīgha Nikāva*.

- (8) "Thanks are due from all of us to— Ven. Mirisse Gunasiri Mahā Thero for his valued instruction and unselfish co-operation, and to the lay lecturers who have spoken under the auspices of the Association during 1956; to Colonel Payne, for his meticulous efficiency and unfailing patience in administering the Association's financial accounts; to Mrs. E. E. Grant, for looking after our ever-increasing mailing list and for dispatching many hundreds of notices and announcements over the last 12 months; to Mr. A. D. Webb, for managing the Association's advertising; and to Mr. J. McLeod, Mr. A. W. Jayawardene, and Mr. J. Conder for their valued committee work.
- (9) "In pursuance of Object No. 2 letters have been sent in connexion with statements which Members have found in print which were erroneous and/or derogatory to Buddhism. Enquiries are being made of Metro-Goldwyn Mayer of America regarding their proposed film of the Buddha, "The Wayfarer".
- (10) "In accordance with Object No. 3, a large number of enquiries of all kinds, coming to us from all parts of the world, have been dealt with. Requests received from two Central European countries for particulars of the principal events in the development of Buddhism in Britain together with reports on the present situation of Buddhism in this country have been met.
- (11) "Members will be interested to learn that two or three of our Life Members in Singapore are launching a group there upon the lines of our own Association. We have furnished them with the nucleus

of a library, and we wish them the success that we ourselves have experienced. Further parcels of Buddhist literature have been sent by us to young societies in Australia, Tasmania, and India.

- (12) "The success of the *Buddha Study Association* may be expected to continue, and to increase, so long as its Members maintain that the 2 1/2 thousand year old truths of the Buddha's Dhamma can be applied to modern life, in any country of this world, providing that the spirit of the Teaching is not sacrificed to the letter—which produces such fetters as rigid rules and obsolete conventions."

At the Annual General Meeting of the Buddha Study Association held in London on December 9th, 1956, the following Officers were elected:—

*President:* Ven. Sayadaw U Thittila;

*Deputy-President:* Lt.-Col. E. F. J. Payne;

*Vice-President:* Miss I. B. Horner, Secretary of the Pali Text Society, London;

Miss G. C. Lounsbery, President of Les Amis du Bouddhisme, Paris;

*Hon. Secretary:* Mr. G. F. Allen;

*Hon. Treasurer:* Lt.-Col. E. F. J. Payne;

*Members of the Executive Committee:*—

Mr. J. Conder, Mr. G. G. Cruikshank

Mr. J. Golumsli, Mr. A. W.

Jayawardene, Mr. J. McLeod,

Mr. A. D. Webb.

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Sd: G. F. ALLEN  
*Hon. Secretary.*  
December 9, 1956.



A few of the Japanese students who attended the inter-University Seminar on Theravāda (Pristine) Buddhism  
at Ryokoku University.

## Theravāda to Japan

To Japan in the ancient days went 'Buddhism' that was somewhat different from the Word of the Buddha as enshrined in the Pāli Canon, having suffered a sea-change on its voyage. Due to the various vicissitudes of time and place, this Teaching suffered still further changes away from the pristine Buddhism that Pāli has so well preserved.

During the last war the Japanese came in contact with the pure form of the Buddha's Teaching and after the war there began a great revival that sought for the purest form of the Great Teaching. This was followed by the arrival in Burma of more than a dozen 'priests' who studied the Theravāda (pristine) Teaching of the Buddha and joined the Noble Order of Bhikkhus. After two years they returned to Japan and now there

is a great revival there of pristine Buddhism.

One of the Buddhist monks has sent us accounts of the formation of the JAPAN BUDDHA SĀSANA SOCIETY established in 1955 and his latest account is of preparations for Buddhist buildings in various places in Japan.

He also tells of a great seminar on Theravāda held at Ryukoku University in Japan last November attended by over 1,000 drawn from various Japanese Universities with many others from the general public. He reports that as a result of this seminar, the Japan Buddhist Society feels that Theravāda will be firmly established in Japan. This is borne out by the many who have joined Theravāda in Japan during these recent months and this movement is still continuing; is, indeed, snowballing.



“(1) Those monks who are arahats, who have destroyed the āsavas, who have lived the life, who have done what was to be done, who have laid down the burden, who have attained their purpose, in whom the fetter of desire for existence is destroyed, and who are released with complete knowledge, their course is not to be pointed out.

(2) Those monks who have cast off the five lower fetters will all receive apparitional birth (in a higher world), and attaining Nibbāna they are not liable to return from that world.

(3) Those monks who have cast off the three fetters, and who have reduced passion, hatred, and delusion, will all return once to this world, and having come back once to this world will make an end of pain.

(4) Those monks who have cast off the three fetters have all entered the stream, they are not liable to rebirth in an unhappy state, their course is certain, and they are destined to enlightenment.

(5) Those monks who follow the Doctrine, who follow with faith, are all destined to enlightenment.

(6) They who merely have faith and love towards me are all destined to a (temporary) heaven-state.”

*Alagadūpama-Sutta, Majjhīma Nikāya.*

# BOOK REVIEWS

**A MANUAL OF ABHIDHAMMA—ABHIDHAMMATTHA SANGAHA**  
(*Vol. 1—Chapters 1—V*) by *Venerable Nārada Thera, Vajīrarāma Publication Series, Colombo, Rs. 3/-*.

This book, as its name implies, is Abhidhamma (Higher Doctrine) made easy. It is vital, interesting, learned, authoritative and in its sphere exhaustive. The book is to be published in two volumes, and volume one only is now out. It contains 276 pages with card cover.

Venerable Nārada Thera covers all the necessary points in the first five chapters of the Abhidhammattha-Sangaha, originally written in Pāli by Bhikkhu Anuruddha. The author first gives the text in Pāli and then the actual English translation followed by explanations and illustrations. Also he discusses some knotty points on grammar thus rendering a great help to Buddhist scholars.

U Shwe Zan Aung has published his Compendium of Philosophy and Bhikkhu J Kashyap has also written the Abhidhamma Philosophy in two volumes. Both these books deal with Abhidhammattha-Sangaha, but Ven. Nārada's book has a different approach. In the Compendium of Philo-

sophy the text of the Abhidhammattha-Sangaha and its translation has not been given. In Bhikkhu Kashyap's book too, Pāli is shown as foot-notes. Venerable Nārada's book is similar to 'Bāgayā-thingyo' ('Abhidhamma made easy' by Bāgayā Sayadaw) and 'Myobyngyi-Akauk' (Enumerations of phenomena and explanations of Higher Doctrine by Ven. Myobyngyi Sayadaw), both in Burmese.

This book will be of great use to the students preparing for the Abhidhamma Examinations both in Burma and Ceylon and also to those who desire to learn Abhidhamma in the simplest way. To the Western scholar it offers a handy volume of reference to the text and its translation, and because of its easy, flowing style and comparatively simple language it makes this difficult and somewhat abstruse subject understandable reading for the man of ordinary intellect and education. Venerable Nārada has rendered yet another great service to the Western students of Buddhism.

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## THE MIXTURE AS BEFORE

*'The Path of the Buddha' Buddhism interpreted by Buddhists and edited by Kenneth W. Morgan (S.T.B. Harvard Divinity School), The Ronald Press Company, New York, \$5.00.*

*Lord Buddha and Amitabha, by Shirin Fozdar, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Post Box 19, New Delhi, India. No price mentioned.*

The early Christian missionaries, shocked and surprised to find in Asia a religion of reason held by people very capable of reasoning, where they had expected to take a dogma, sincerely enough believed in, which would, they had hoped and expected, supersede 'a heathen and childish faith', reacted in various ways.

Some, a very few, 'whose eyes were but lightly covered with dust', the dust of dogma and blind belief, were converted and

became Buddhist. Others, the almost converted, shaken mentally and emotionally, reacted with anger as is the case when one's cherished views are threatened in their very citadel. Still others called into play various 'defense mechanisms' and wrote books, which they sincerely enough believed to be fair and impartial and showed 'the good and bad points' of Buddhism, which they had studied as carefully as they were able and translated as well as they were able.

There were the Rev. Gogerly, the Rev. Samuel Beal, the Rev. Spence Hardy and others, all in the last century, with some lesser Christian Buddhist writers of this century. Few of them were as frank in their intentions and expressions as was Spence Hardy, who wrote :

"By the messengers of the cross, who may succeed me in the field in which

it was once my privilege to labour, this Manual will be received, I doubt not, as a boon : as it will enable them more readily to understand the system they are endeavouring to supersede, by the establishment of the Truth. I see before me, looming in the distance, a glorious vision, in which the lands of the east are presented in majesty ; happy, holy, and free. I may not ; I dare not, attempt to describe it ; but it is the joy of my existence to have been an instrument, in a degree however feeble, to bring about this grand consummation. And now, book, we part ; but it shall not be without a fervent prayer that God may speed thee."

The world is, happily, in the possession of 'a more excellent way.' The life of the angels in heaven, and of men redeemed upon earth, is to be one continued act of consecration to God ; and in all the movements of their existence they are to seek, with a sacred intensity, the promotion of the divine glory. They are brought to the fulfilment of this duty by motives that are overpowering in their grandeur, and mighty in the potency of their influence. The Buddhist can discover no permanent rest, no eternity of peace, in any world ; and he therefore concludes that there can be no deliverance from change and sorrow but by the cessation of existence. The book of revelation, however, offers to us now, 'a peace that passeth all understanding' . . . All systems that have not arisen from the inspiration of God will then have passed away : the now myriad-worshipped Buddha will not have a single votary ; and Jesus of Nazareth, 'who is over all, God blessed for ever,' will be the life, and the blessedness, and the glory of universal man." A MANUAL OF BUDDHISM by R. Spence Hardy.

Most of the Christian writers on Buddhism have had the same ideas, either consciously or not and even the translators of Buddhist Texts and editors of 'Buddhist' books, where they have been non-Buddhists have not had the 'feel' of Buddhism and have had contrary

influences working deep down, much as they have, some of them, tried to be objective.

Especially is this so in latter years with, now, the not-always-acknowledged feeling among Western intellectuals that somehow their self-created 'Creator' has let them down and has had to be pushed further and further back from the concept of an occasionally benevolent but always erratic old-gentleman-with-power to a shadowy first-cause-behind-cause-with-no-cause. This has spurred on a great interest in Buddhism among the general intellectual groups of the West, and this has in turn spurred on many non-Buddhist intellectuals to write and 'edit' Buddhist books. Their books are consciously or unconsciously 'slanted'. A Buddhist writing or editing a book on Christianity would inevitably slant it. He couldn't help it. Actually in the rapidly-changing Christian ethos of today, a book on the subject by a Buddhist would do much to place things in their proper perspective and might be exceedingly interesting and informative. The Buddhist, being a Buddhist, would not attempt to turn the tables and quote what Elijah, prophet of God, said to the priests of Baal before calling down fire from Heaven to consume an unfortunate bullock he had sacrificed after the Baal priests' God had shown his unwillingness or inability in those 'modern' days to manifest for the people :

'Elijah mocked them and said : "Cry aloud, for He is a God ; either He is talking or He is hunting, or He is on a journey, or peradventure He sleepeth, and must be awaked."\*' But the Buddhist writer of a Christian book might help to explain many 'Divine Mysteries'.

And the latest book ABOUT Buddhism is, not without value. 'The Path of the Buddha' is of value in pointing-up the outlook of an unbiased Christian editor and also in showing that there are various 'views' (Ditthis) calling themselves 'Buddhism', though it is manifest that if by 'Buddhism' we mean just 'The Word of the Buddha' with some proof as to the origin and preservation of that Word, a good deal of the book under review is about something entirely different, about poems and epics (great, some of them, and good, some of them) that are later additions (seven hundred years after the Buddha by their own admission in some cases) masquerading as 'Buddhism'.

It is as if the offshoots or 'sects' of the great Theist Religion were to call themselves Jews

\* 1 Kings 18,27.

and not, sensibly as we think, have given themselves entirely different names such as 'Catholics', 'Protestants', 'Muslims' and 'Seventh Day Adventists' etc. while adhering to *some* of the original tenets of their Great Teaching. Indeed there would be more justification for these 'sects' to adhere to the original name of Judaism than for some 'sects' to call themselves 'Buddhist'.

For clearly and unmistakably the Word of the Buddha is enshrined and kept alive in the Pāli Canon by the groups of '*Bhāṇakas*' or 'Reciting Monks' who have carried down the Teaching as a vital, dynamic, living Truth to this very day.

That the 'Path of the Buddha' has some value is ensured by the able historical sketch of the Venerable Bhikkhu Kashyap and the lucid exposition of the principles of pristine Buddhism by Venerable U Thitthila. Agga-mahāpaṇḍita.

But there are in the book certain things that are very different from the lucid Teaching of the Buddha who taught as 'The Teacher with the open hand, keeping nothing back!'

In all of the Buddha's Teachings, so carefully preserved in the Pāli Canon, and amounting to something like eleven times the volume of the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Bible, we find nothing like the following, which we cull from 'The Path of the Buddha':

" Dharmakaya, or the Body of the Law, is the very wisdom of the void and absolute reality ; it is the formless reality beyond our words and thoughts. Sambhogakaya, or the Body of Enjoyment, means that the void and absolute reality has taken a merciful vow to live amid the empirical world, to enjoy it, and to save it by leading it into the wisdom which penetrates the void. Therefore, the Body of the Law, which is the void and absolute reality, implies the significance of the Body of Enjoyment, and there is no distinction between these two Bodies. In status, however, there is a difference, for the Body of Enjoyment is characterized by the vow, and this Body consists of the Original Vow and is at the same time the result of its vow. The Body of Enjoyment is not visible to sentient beings....' This sort of obscurantism has nothing to do with the Teachings of the Omniscient Buddha. We are reminded of a parable, which would form an excellent *Koan* for those addicted to mental gymnastics. This is 'The King's New Clothes'. You will

remember that in the old story a couple of weavers of words pretended to re-clothe the king in a vesture which could be perceived only by the pure and honest. No-one dared say that they could not see the non-existent vesture and the king sallied forth naked, until a small child piped up : ' But he has nothing on ! ' and the king then wore a blush if nothing else and fled up the steps before the discomfited courtiers.

Two pages later in the book we read : '....later Buddhism created an atmosphere considerably different from the Buddhism of the earlier days.' Indeed and indeed. And indeed we can say that the 'Buddhism of the earlier days' is the Buddhism of the Buddha.

A few pages later we read : 'By reciting these dharanis and bija mantras or using the various recommended specific gestures (mudras) the followers of esoteric Buddhism aim at elevating themselves to the world of inspiration where they can realise the reality of the identity of actualities and truth, which is the ultimate and real existence.' 'Dharanis' and 'bhija-mantras' are short meaningless verses supposed to represent Suttas or Sermons and used in exactly the same way as African witch-doctors (and some modern hypnotists) use similar chants. It is anti-Buddhism as is, indeed, the term 'Esoteric Buddhism'.

One of the apologists for divergent-Buddhism says that the 'different systems' 'trace their origin back to the same Founder and have a great deal in common.'

Water, which has come from a pure spring, and the closer to the source the purer the water, but has since flowed through a tanyard and a cess-pool, has much in common with its original source. It certainly is still a liquid. It has also much that is not in common. As certainly it is not potable.

By this we do not mean that all variations from the pure source are polluted. Some have flowed through beautiful meadows and have changed a little but have not been greatly polluted and are still potable. Still, if one wishes to discuss Buddhism one should go to the source.

'The Path of the Buddha' is another book that because of its similarity to the many books about Buddhism which gather together many diverse elements, we can label : 'The Mixture as Before'.

**THE BUDDHA, THE BAB, AND BAHĀ'U'LLĀH.**

Of a somewhat different type are the books by authors who, with an even slighter knowledge of Buddhism, blandly 'prove' that the Buddha taught the exact opposite of what He did teach, in their attempt to use Buddhism to justify their Theist ideas. Of such sort is the small booklet 'LORD BUDDHA AND AMITABHA.'

In 1850 a prophet known as 'The Bab' was put to death in Persia. His followers were then led by a man known as Baha 'u' llah, who was heralded as the 'Messenger of God' foretold by 'the Bab'.

This booklet is by one of the fervent followers of this very latest of the sects of Judaism, now fairly widespread and known as 'Bahai'. We cannot blame the authors of such books so much, since they at least do not profess 'Buddhism' and are not like those who do pretend to follow the Buddha Dhamma and yet hanker after their old ideas of 'God' and 'Soul', reminding us of the pungent phrase of one of the greatest of Christians, St. Peter, who said, in a vain attempt to prevent Christianity being 'changed' by such types, 'The dog is turned to his own vomit' (11 Peter, 11, 22).

But if people who follow other teachings were to teach according to the words of their own teachers, they would do far better than has the author of this book.

She has read, somewhere, something of the tortuous concept of 'Amitabha Buddha' (a sort of 'Holy Ghost' not at all mentioned in

the Buddhist Texts) and has tried to fuse and confuse him with Metteyya Buddha, mentioned as the next Buddha to arise in the world. She then 'proves' that, error piled on error, Baha'u'llah the founder of her sect is no other than the Buddha mentioned by Gotama Buddha, as the next to arise, Metteyya Buddha.

If she would read the Cakkavatti Sihanāda Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya (D111. 75) it might be plain to her after a little thought that Metteyya Buddha will not arise on this planet until after some millions of years.

She ends her book : '2500 years ago Lord Buddha guided His followers to this wonderful day of Amitabha and expected every Buddhist, out of loyalty to Him to recognise Amitabha (Baha'u'llah) of this age.'

This is not only non-Buddhist, it is anti-Buddhist, and though the booklet has, we think, no wide circle of readers, we note it in case others of the type should arise. We have not the space to refute all the misconceptions and errors about the Buddha and His Teaching and our silence must not be taken for assent.

We believe the author is sincere and we believe she is endeavouring to follow a teaching that, from the moral standpoint, is good enough. But in sending our Mettā to the lady we would beg of her either to study Buddhism carefully (in which case she might become a good Buddhist) or to study her own leader's teaching and propagate that only without reference to any other teaching, certainly without reference to Buddhism.

**The Duties of a Buddhist Monk**

'Monks, these ten conditions must again and again be contemplated by one who has gone forth (from the home). What ten ?

He must again and again contemplate this fact : I am now come to a state of being an outcast. And this: My very life is dependent on others. And this: I must now behave myself differently. And this : Does the self upbraid me for (lapse from) virtue, or does it not ? And this : Do my discerning fellows in the Brahma-life, after testing me, upbraid me for (lapse from) virtue, or do they not ? And this : In all things dear and delightful to me there is change and separation. And this : I myself am responsible for my deed, I am the heir to my deed, the womb of my deed, the kinsman of my deed, I am he to whom my deed comes home. Whatever deed I shall do, be it good or bad, of that shall I be the heir. The nights and days flit by for me—who have grown to what ? and this : In my solitude do I take delight or not ? And this : Have I come by any superhuman experience, any excellence of truly Ariyan knowledge and insight, whereon when questioned in my latter days by my fellows in the Brahma-life I shall not be confounded ?

These, monks, are the ten conditions to be again and again contemplated by one who has gone forth (from the home).'



# GLOSSARY

FOR VOL. IV—No. 2.

## A

- Akāliko** : Without a deferment of time; in this very life.
- Apāya-bhūmi** : The stage where all beings of the Four Lower Worlds find their footing, generate and grow.
- Anusaya-kilesa** : Latent defilement.
- Āramaṇa** : Object of mind; that which is held or hung upon, by mind and mental elements.
- Arūpāvacara-kusala** : Merits leading to Formless Sphere.
- Asubha** : Loathsomeness; impurity.

## B

- Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammas** : The 37 'Things pertaining to Enlightenment'.

## C

- Catusacca-dīpanī** : Manual of the Four Noble Truths. Title of a Manual by Venerable Ledi Sayadaw.
- Citta-vipallāsa** : Hallucination of thought.

## D

- Diṭṭhi-vipallāsa** : Hallucination of views.
- Diṭṭhi-visuddhi** : The purity of understanding.

## K

- Kankhāvitarāṇa-visuddhi** : The purity of escape from all doubt.

## M

- Magga-kusala** : One who knows the Holy Path well.

## P

- Paramattha-pāramis** : Perfections leading to Omniscience.

- Pariyuṭṭhāna-kilesa** : The Defilements that come into existence from the latent state as mental properties at the mind-door when any object which has power to wake them up produces perturbation at one of the six doors.

## S

- Sandiṭṭhiko** : To be practised by oneself and to be realized fully.
- Saññā-vipallāsa** : Hallucination of perception.
- Suddhāvāsa** : The 'Pure Abodes'—a group of 5 heavens belonging to the Fine-material World, where only the Never-Returners are reborn, and in which they attain Arahathship and Nibbāna.

## T

- Taruṇa-vipassanā-ñāṇa** : Knowledge pertaining to the earlier stages of vipassanā.

## U

- Upapāramis** : Minor perfections.

## V

- Vitakkama-kilesa** : The Defilements that become so fierce and ungovernable that they produce sinful actions in deed and word.

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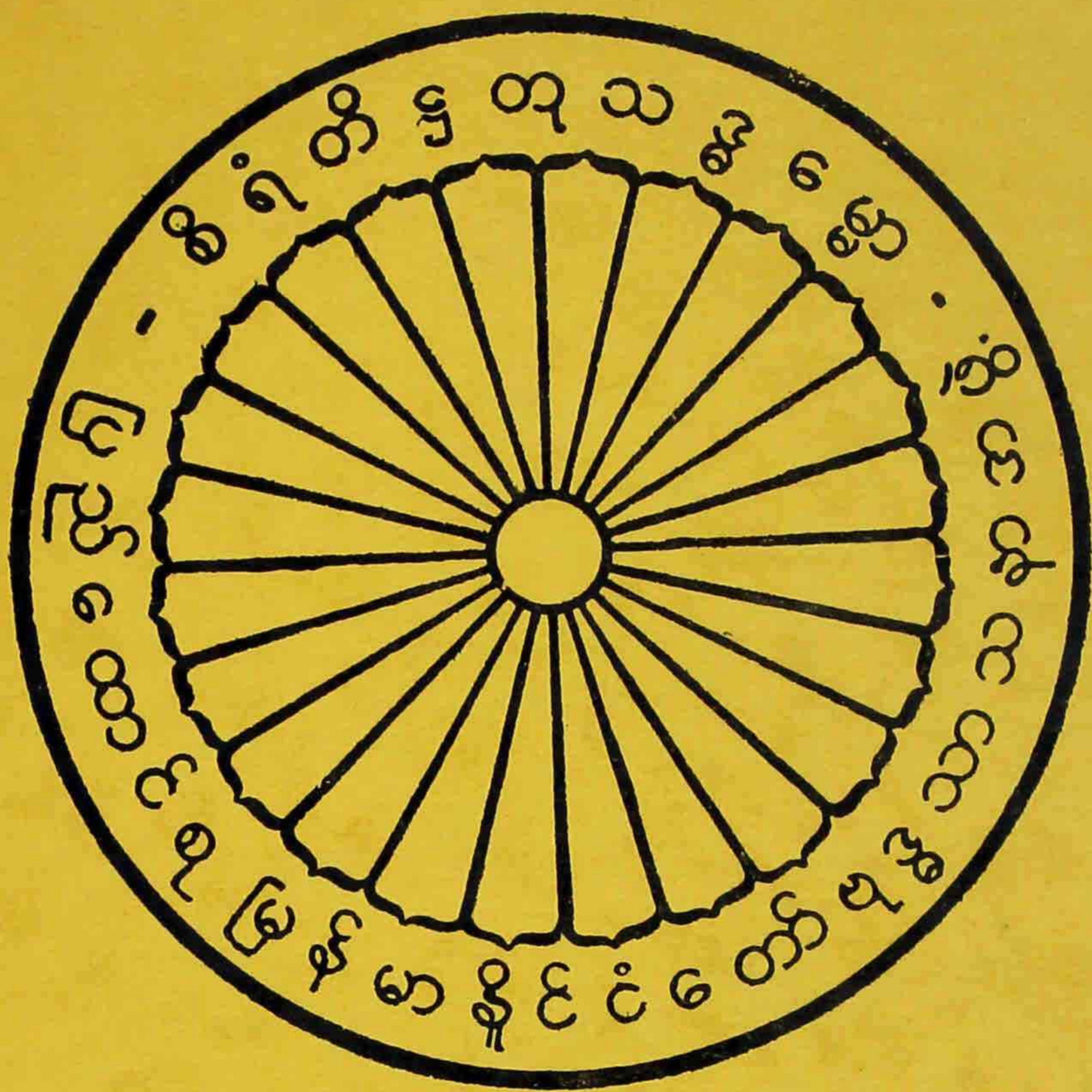
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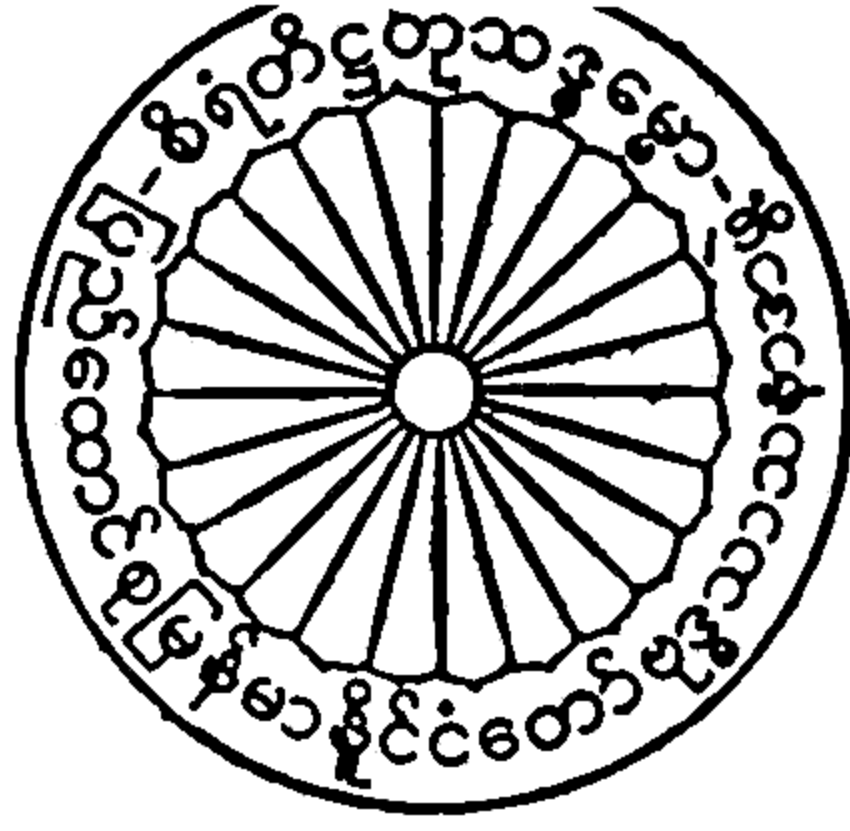
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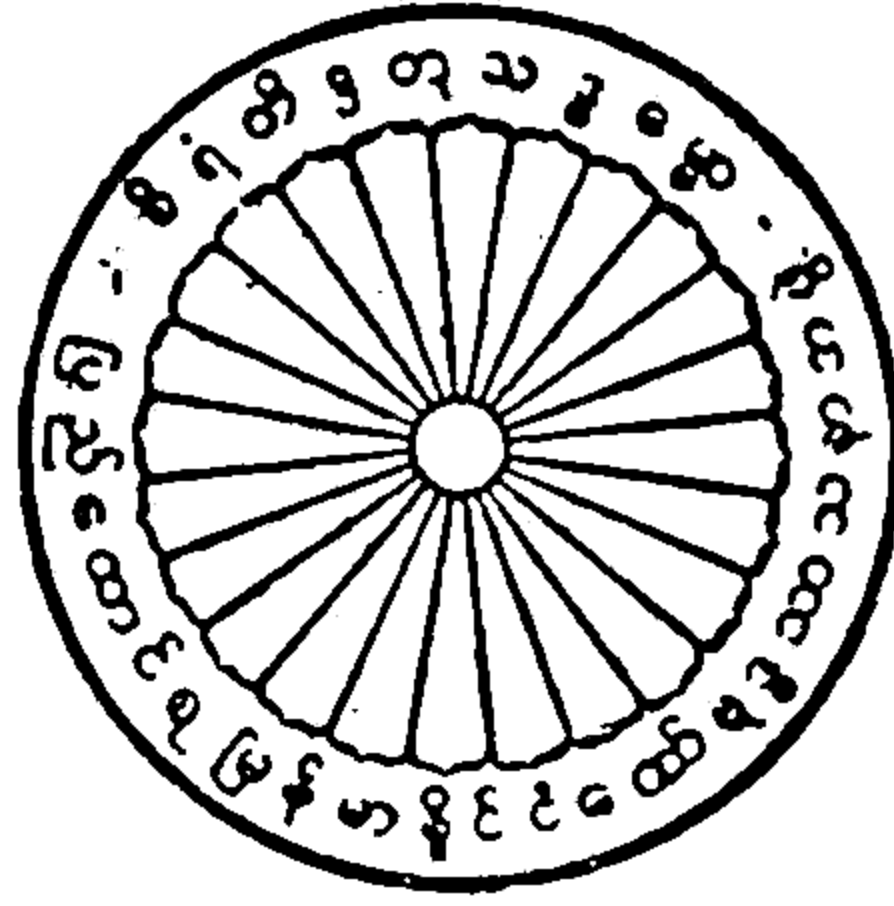
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## THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA

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"THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA"  
Union Buddha Sāsana Council,  
Kabā Aye P.O.,  
Rangoon, Union of Burma.

# NIYĀMA-DĪPANĪ OR MANUAL OF COSMIC ORDER

By Mahāthera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt.

[ Translated from the Pāli by Beni M. Barua, D. Litt., M.A., and revised and edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A. and re-edited by the English Editorial Department, Union Buddha Sāsana Council, who have incorporated in the body of the text (in this instalment) the Residuum translated by Ven. U Nyāna, Patamagyaw. ]

## IV

### OF THINGS NOT WITHIN THE RANGE OF THOUGHT (*Acinteyyāni*)

These we hold to be four in number, the range of a Buddha, the range of *iddhi*, or supernormal power, the nature of the result of action (*kamma*), the origin and reality of the world.

As it is said in the texts : ‘ There are four things which are not within the range of thought, which should not be thought about, thinking upon which tends to unhinge the mind and injure the system, namely, the range of a Buddha, the Jhāna-range of one in Jhāna for mystic rapture, the result of *kamma* and thinking of the world.’ \*

Here ‘ things not within the range of thought ’ means ‘ which cannot be thought about by average folk ; things that lie beyond their intellectual ability, and with which it is therefore not meet they should occupy their thoughts.’ By ‘ thinking upon which ’ we mean endeavouring strenuously to grasp, with the determination : ‘ Whether I am far removed from, or stand near to the matters belonging to Ariyans, to saintly persons, I will realise these for and by myself, solely by my own intellectual insight.’ ‘ To unhinge the mind ’—to bring about loss of mental balance. ‘ Injure ’—to cause mental misery. ‘ Jhāna-range ’ we have called ‘ range of *iddhi*.’

#### *The range of a Buddha*

These are the fourfold assurance, the six modes of super-intellect and the ten powers. The only adequate criterion of these attainments is the insight of a Buddha himself, not that of eminent followers, or of other beings human or celestial fit to rank beside them. As to the nature of those powers they should be studied in the testimony of the Buddhas. In so doing a disciple can fulfil his duty; otherwise his efforts are but misdirected,

and would tend to his ruin; or, as it is said, ‘ unhinge the mind and injure the system.’

This would hold true for other inquirers, intelligent yet not adherents.

If this criterion be admitted, the further question arises : ‘ How can one who is a Buddha, *i.e.*, “Awakened”, Enlightened, Omniscient—be known to be such ? ’ The reply is : ‘ By the vastness of His intellect : in other words, by omniscience.’ But how can omniscience be known ? By the contents of His teaching. And by His teaching (in the case of the Buddha Gotama) we mean the eighty-four thousand *dhammas* constituting the body of His doctrine.\*\* It is by the possession of this intellectual superiority (*buddhi-mahatta*) that a person becomes “Buddha”; it is not only by possessing supernormal gifts as such that he can attain to a state of perfection. A Buddha of a truth becomes a true saviour of multitudes in virtue of His greatness in merit, in morals, in power of concentration, in supernormal power, in intellectual endowment—in all of these qualities.

If it be insisted on the contrary that it is by virtue of mere supernormal faculties that a Buddha becomes a true saviour, our contention is that should a man, himself blinded by the supernormal faculty in matters which can only be illumined by intellect, right understanding, try to save many, it would do many foolish people great harm. Indeed, in the absence of genuine intellect, the supernormal faculty, whether small or great, serves as an instrument by which to practise the art of cunning, crafty talk and deception. Those who attach weight to supernormal faculty as such are as children, while those who attach weight to intellect are wise indeed. This truth is brought out in the section called “Sīla”, of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, in the *Kevaṭṭa-sutta*\*\*\*

Here one might object by saying that, for that matter, superiority of intellect should

\* *Āṅguttara-Nikāya*, iv., “*Apaṇṇakavagga*” (vol. ii., p. 80)

\*\* See *Psalm of the Brethren*, Ānanda’s verses, verse 1024.

\*\*\* *Dialogues of the Buddha*, i., 276 f.



be the same as superiority as to supernormal faculty. If so, our reply to him would be that should a being be capable of doing all possible good to the world by virtue of his superiority as to supernormal faculty, it would follow from this that, in his case, there is no duty to carry out in the moral kingdom, by virtue of his capacity for teaching. If so, it would further follow that in his case there is also no duty to perform by virtue of his superior intellect. If this is so, it should further be inferred that, in his religion, the functions of teaching and of intellect are far to seek.

Concerning this statement, that by virtue of his superiority in supernormal faculty a man is capable of doing all possible good to the world—‘is capable’ means of course a public, well-attested capacity, visible at any time no less than moon or sun in the sky. Otherwise the foolish person who draws conclusions from the loud-voiced professions of impostors gaining their living by such cunning and crafty talk, will in the end find himself sprawling in empty space under the delusion that he is on broad earth. But superiority of intellect can be absolutely relied upon, and he who, in great and profound matters, does not seek it is foolish both by nature and in the eyes of the world.

#### *The range of iddhi*

By *iddhi* we understand supernormal faculties developed by special exercises. In ancient days, when life was long, recluses and brahmans outside the pale of Buddhism reckoned five kinds :— (i.) supernormal will-power (*iddhividhābhīṅṅā*); (ii.) hyperaesthesia of sight; (iii.) hyperaesthesia of hearing; (iv.) discerning the thought of another (thought-reading, telepathy); (v.) hypermnesia, or reminiscence of one’s own past history. These five, together with the insight known as the conviction of one’s self being free from the four “intoxicants” (*āsava-kkhaṃbhīṅṅā*), are recognised among the disciples of the Buddha as six kinds of supernormal faculties as such.

By supernormal powers of will, recluses and brahmans claimed to go to the worlds of gods and Brahmās above, to the infernal regions below, and even beyond the limit of the farthest zone of the world-systems.

By supernormal powers of sight and hearing they, standing here, could see objects and hear sounds there, at distant places.

By supernormal powers of thought they could read thoughts, and by supernormal powers of hypermnesia they could recollect events that happened in the past, many hundreds of births ago, even many periods of envelopment and development of the world system.

While going above, below or about, they thus began to observe : ‘In travelling in this manner, in a single moment we have measured so many leagues.’ In so doing various configurations and many leagues in the systems of the world, in the course of a cosmic epoch would become visible. Having realised through this the perniciousness of sensual desires, they renounced the world, became dwellers in the woods, practised meanwhile such things as meditation on the nature of material things and cultivation of the divine Brahma-life—of good-will, compassion, appreciation and equanimity—by which a man can attain to the Brahma-world, and mastered five supernormal powers. From that time on they had nothing further to do for themselves. At this stage they, while living in this world, sought for many hundreds, many thousands, many hundreds of thousands of years to do good to the world. In so doing there would be revealed to them very many kinds of various arts and sciences.

As to these recluses and Brahmans we are told in the Brahmajāla-sutta \* : ‘There are some recluses and Brahmans who theorise with regard to what was before the aeons of time, and who speculate on what will be after the aeons of time, etc.’ \*\* From this we can see that their speculations did not come into the range of their fivefold *iddhi*. Hence as to a matter within the range of their *iddhi* their knowledge, and not that of average men was to be regarded as the true measure. And it was the business of the latter to learn to comprehend those points as they were given by those recluses and Brahmans. As it is said in the Dasavatthuka-sammādiṭṭhi : \*\*\* ‘There are in the world recluses and Brahmans who, being in the right path, having made progress by right methods, have discerned and realised the nature of this

\* Dialogues of the Buddha, i., No. 1

\*\* Ibid., p. 52

\*\*\* A tenfold exposition of Sammādiṭṭhi “right view”, in the “Mahā-cattārisaka Sutta,” Majjhīma-Nikāya, No. 117.

world as well as of the world beyond, and declare what they know.'

Here one might say: 'I do not believe that there are recluses and Brahmans who have possessed such great supernormal powers. Why? Because now for certain no such men are ever to be seen or heard of in the world.'

You are right in saying, 'now for certain no such men are ever to be seen.' The reason is that now you are born too late, and in the closing part of a period of decadence. This is also true that you say: 'no such men are to be heard of.' The reason is that you are born rather too late in a non-Noble land, far removed from religions and texts coming down in unbroken succession from the beginning of an aeon. But you should investigate the matter thus: In former days this world was exceedingly rich in all respects; men lived to a very great age, even past reckoning was one span of life. What then might not this world of men have been like in those days? To what can we of today liken the saints and recluses of those times?\*

#### The nature of the result of action (kamma)

This is of two kinds: that which takes effect in the life-experience of an individual, and that which comes about afterwards in a life beyond. Here "result" is that which matures, that is to say, bears fruit, secures a distinct end. For instance when a man, having earned a *kaḥāpaṇa* (old Indian coin) by some job he has done, enjoys thereby things that he desires, it is then, and then only that his work secures a distinct end, that is, reaches the object sought by the labourer. In the same way is the point in question to be viewed. Carried once into effect an action\*\* runs its course as such, and as long as it does not mature, so long it cannot be said to have reached its distinct end. Its sequence may run through hundreds of thousands of periods. Thus does a powerful *kamma* of immoral nature secure its distinct end in states of woe, and thus does a powerful *kamma* of moral nature become effective in lives of bliss.

Again, the result of *kamma* is taken to be twofold: as *drifting*, affecting the individual, and as *overflowing*, affecting others. Of these the former implies prosperity, or adversity experienced by a man in this or that existence as an individual being, in consequence of his meritorious or demeritorious deeds. Under this aspect the result of *kamma* affects the doer of the deed only. But in his existence as an individual being, owing to the heat and power of his *kamma* promoting his happiness, or causing him misery, there arise conditions of prosperity, or adversity, with respect to persons other than himself. This is called the overflow of the result of *kamma*. Under this aspect the result of his *kamma* is shared by others.

The drifting course of the result of *kamma* may be illustrated by the prosperity of King Mahāsudassana's life in the Mahāsudassana-sutta\*\*\*. Moreover, owing to the power of the meritorious deeds of the king, various conditions of prosperity in the lives of other persons arose, some together with his own condition, some coming from this or that source. This may be taken as an illustration of the overflowing course of the result of *kamma*. It may even promote the happiness of the inhabitants of other continents.\*\*\*\*

As regards evil deeds, the story in which the whole kingdom was ruined in consequence of the overflowing course of King Nālikera's act, persecuting five hundred sages,\*\*\*\*\* and such other stories may be related.

Again, it is written: 'A person, Bhikkhus, may be so born as to promote the well-being of many men, the happiness of many men, the interests of many men, the well-being and happiness of many gods and men. A person, Bhikkhus, may be so born as to increase the ill of many men, the misery of many men, the ruin of many men, the ill and misery of many gods and men.'\*\*\*\*\*

It not only affects beings, animals as well as men, but it also permeates the realm of space, and the whole organic world. Thus we read in our texts:—

\* This is not to say that such men do not exist in the world today. They can and do exist. Not only that, the possibility exists for *you*, to reach the Spheres of Attainment; and realisation for yourself is, after all, the only valid thing.

\*\* Readers should note that *kamma* means literally action, act, deed. Thus "job" is literally *hattha kamma*, hand-action, manual-labour.

\*\*\* Dialogues of the Buddha, ii. No. xvii., Buddhist Suttas (Sacred Books of the East).

\*\*\*\* *Dīpa*. This may conceivably mean "worlds".

\*\*\*\*\* *Jātaka* (transl.) v., pp. 72, 76.

\*\*\*\*\* *Aṅguttara*, i., p. 33

‘It is the rule, Bhikkhus, that when the Bodhisatta having fallen from the Tusita-heaven enters his mother’s womb, then there appears throughout this world including the celestial worlds, an infinitely splendid radiance surpassing in splendour the divine radiance of gods, and then the ten thousand world-systems tremble, shake and quake.’\* Such is the overflowing result of a Bodhisat’s acts of fulfilling many perfections.

When men become exceedingly sinful in thought and deed, all the overflowing course of their *kamma* rushes from this extensive earth up to the orbits of moon, sun and stars, agonising even the whole realm of space, and the whole organic world of trees, etc; undermining by degrees the cause of prosperity and strengthening that of adversity. It is then that the life-span, beauty and health of men, inhabiting and living in both of these worlds, undergo diminution.

Nowadays men and trees appear exceedingly small. But we are told, in the *Buddhavamsa*, that, in the days of longevity, the body of a Buddha was eighty cubits in length, while according to the Sixth Book of the *Āṅguttara* the height was ninety cubits. The *Dhammikavagga*\*\* tells us that in ancient times the King Korabya of the Kingdom of the Kurus had a banyan tree, named Suppa-tiṭṭha, twelve leagues in circumference, its fruits of the size of big rice-jars. . . .

When men become virtuous in thought and deed, it has been similarly declared how the life-span of men goes on increasing. The whole of the *Aggañña* and *Cakkavatti-suttas* should be referred to in this connection.\*\*\* Again, in the *Pattakammavagga*, of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*,\*\*\*\* we are told: ‘At the time, Bhikkhus, when kings and their sons become unrighteous, unrighteous become also the Brahmans and house-holders, and the people who live in suburbs and countries. Then the moon, sun, stars and planets move irregularly. At the time, Bhikkhus, when kings and their sons become righteous,

righteous become also the Brahmans and householders, etc. Then do moon, sun, stars and planets move regularly.’ This is the overflowing consequence of the collective *kamma* of men. Such a consequence affects even the whole realm of space and the whole organic world.

It must be borne in mind that here by ‘result of *kamma*’ is meant something ‘born of the result of *kamma*’—for instance, the supernormal faculties, included under the category of things not within the range of thought, became possible through the *kamma* of past lives.

The faculties as such are of many kinds; each realm of beings having its own supernormal powers.

As regards the supernormal powers of the Brahma-gods we are informed, in the *San-khārupapatti-sutta*,\*\*\*\*\* of the presence of one thousand to ten thousand Brahmās : that of these, one thousand Brahmās permeate one thousand world-systems with their radiance, two thousand Brahmās permeate two thousand world-systems, and so on. These are the Mahābrahmās living on the plane of the first stage of Jhāna-rapture. Now the gods and men who live beneath this plane imagine and recognise this or that Mahābrahmā to be the maker of the whole world, the lord of the whole world, omnipresent, immutable, eternal saviour of the world. It is said in the *Mūla-paṇṇāsa*,\*\*\*\*\* the first sutta of the *Majjhīma-nikāya*: ‘He (*i.e.*, an ordinary thinker who is not familiar with the Ariyan mode of thinking) apprehends Brahmā\*\*\*\*\* as Brahmā. Having apprehended Brahmā as Brahmā, he fancies him to be the Brahmā, conceives attributes in the Brahmā, fancies that the world is from the Brahmā, imagines that the Brahmā, is his, and extols the Brahmā as such. What is the cause of it?, I say, it is because this matter is not truly understood by him.’

Here the meaning of ‘apprehends Brahmā as Brahmā’ is: he apprehends the god just as people commonly do in ordinary speech. And the phrase ‘he fancies him to be the Brahmā’ implies that he imagines him (*a*)

\* Dialogues, ii., 9.

\*\* *Āṅguttara*. iii., 369.

\*\*\* *Dīgha-Nikāya*, iii., Nos. xxvi., xxvii.

\*\*\*\* Vol. ii, p. 74. f.

\*\*\*\*\* *Majjhīma-Nikāya*, vol. iii., No. 120.

\*\*\*\*\* *Majjhīma-Nikāya*, first Sutta, called “*Mūla-pariyāya*”, in the first fifty suttas called collectively *Mūlapaṇṇāsa*, or “*Root-fifty*”.

\*\*\*\*\* That long-lived being worshipped under many names as “The Creator” “Lord God Almighty” etc.

according to his unregenerate desires, thinking : ' Lo ! this Great Brahmā in all his beauty ! ' (b) according to his fancies as to values (*māna*), thinking : ' He is the supreme, the most high in the world ; ' (c) according to his speculative opinions, thinking : ' He is the unchangeable, immutable eternal, stable and enduring, for ever. '

The expression ' he conceives attributes in the Brahmā ' implies that he conceives such and such light, such and such splendour, such and such supernatural powers in him. The expression ' he fancies that the world is from the Brahmā ' signifies that he thinks that this world is born of, *i.e.*, emanates from, this Brahmā, comes into existence only in relation to him. The expression ' imagines that the Brahmā is his ' implies that he considers the Brahmā to be our master, lord, and refuge. ' Extols the Brahmā as such ' means that he praises him by saying, ' Ah ! how majestic is he ! Ah ! how powerful is he ! ' The expression ' Because this matter is not truly understood by him ' means that it is not discerned by the threefold mode of discerning : In the first place he does not investigate it in the light of such an axiom of knowledge as the Brahmā as such does not exist, the only existing things are the psychical and physical facts and conditions classed as ' name-and-form '. In the second place he does not investigate the matter by the light of higher reason, which judges the psychical and physical facts and conditions as such are by nature impermanent, involve ills, and are accordingly not of the nature of soul or deity.

And in the third place he does not investigate the matter by the light of a felt necessity of abandoning, once for all, craving, imagined values, and false speculation which are rooted in erroneous apperception. These were indicated above in connection with our explanation of the expressions ' He apprehends, ' ' He fancies, ' ' He extols. ' This lack of knowledge, indeed, is the cause of his apprehending and imagining and praising after this sort.

As regards the remaining faculties, such as those which are peculiar to the gods, etc. they are made manifest in the Deva, Sakka, Brahmā, Yakkha, Nāga, Supaṇṇa, and Lakkhaṇa Samyuttas (in the *Samyutta-nikāya*), as well as in the *Peta-vatthu* and other texts.

These faculties are not seldom found among men. But common people do not know and see them, although they are lodged in their own bodies. The recluses and Brahmans of great supernormal power in the past, or those who cultivate occult lore, alone know and see them. Those supernormal faculties, born of the result of *kamma*, are outside the mental range of average folks and should not be studied.

Nevertheless these faculties are really common, speaking generally, to all beings. For all beings, during their continual journey in this endless series of lives, may travel from the nethermost purgatories to the topmost scale of existence, through all those that are intermediate. They may attain then to the state of gods, to that of Sakka, Brahmās, Mahābrahmās, and so on. Again from this highest scale they may be reborn into the states of woe. He who is today the King of Gods, or a Brahmā, \* endowed with majestic powers, may become tomorrow a dog or a hog, and so on in rotation.

Other results of *kamma* not within the range of thought are such as come into effect among infra-human beings. Besides, in the bodies of men and of the brute creation there are physical conditions of the sense-faculties, resulting from past *kammās*. These, too, are of a nature not within the range of thought. For when in the case of a dead body, or a dead organ of sense, a man thinks ' I will bring it to life again ! ' he only runs the risk of losing his reason, or of ruining his health by his thoughts and efforts. And why ? Because he is striving against the inexorable working of another's past deeds.

In the Mahāvagga-Samyutta, in the section dealing with the Four Truths, the ten speculative views, maintaining that the world is eternal, that it is not eternal, and so forth, are called technically "world-thought" (*lokacintā*). But here we are using the term in a more comprehensive sense for all world-lore to be found in ancient texts under various names, for cosmologies conceived by the recluses and Brahmans of supernormal powers, by their pupils and pupils of pupils, or by Atthaka, Vāmaka, and such other recluses and Brahmans. The Vedāngas, for instance, are said to be derived from, and dependent upon, the contents of the three Vedas of the Tri-Veda Brahmans. The sciences mean medical science. The mantras

\* " God Almighty ".

denote spells for conquering the earth, winning wealth etc., "World-thought" is also applied to the Manikā and Gandhārī-cults, mentioned in the Kevaṭṭasutta. The Manikā-cult is like the 'supernormal thought called discerning the thought of another,' a telepathic device. And the Gandhārī-cult is like the 'supernormal powers of will,' a device for executing various feats of supernormal character, such as floating through the air, etc. The latter is manifold, viz., root-cult, incantatory, numerical, and metallic. The root-cult is that which is rendered effective through medicinal roots; the incantatory cult is that which is brought into play through formulas of spells; the numerical cult is that which is brought into play through eight and nine series of numbers; and the metallic cult is that which is brought into play by means of metals like iron and mercury. And in the *Patisambhidāmagga* we read: 'What are the feats of magic? A magician having recited his spells exhibits an elephant, a horse, a chariot, infantry, and various arrays of the army in the sky, in the firmament.' In the Upāli-sutta of the Majjhīma-paṇṇāsa we read; 'What do you think, householder? Is a recluse or a Brahman, who is endowed with supernormal faculty and has obtained mastery over will, able to reduce Nālandā to ashes by a single curse? He is able, venerable sir.'\*

Here the clause 'who is endowed with supernormal faculty' means one who is said to be gifted with synergic *iddhi* applied to thought about the external world.

Among the four matters not within the range of thought, the powers of a Buddha stand highest in rank, *iddhi* proper comes next, and the supernormal faculties born of the result of *kamma* come last. This being the case, those who are in the higher worlds gifted with supernormal faculties born of the result of *kamma*, whether they are kings of gods or Mahābrahmās recognised as the supreme rulers of the world, become in the world of men attendants to Buddhas or their disciples, possessing majestic powers of intellect and will. And the same is the case with those recluses and Brahmans who are outside our religion, but have reached the climax of the supernormal faculties of gods in the higher world. Why? Because those faculties which result from *kamma* obtain among the beings of lower order. And

secondly because they are equipped with the moral, reflective, and intellectual qualities that are extant amongst us.

Among witchcrafts concerned with mundane thoughts, those who attained to success were called Vijjandharas. The gods of lower orders and all demons and goblins served as messengers to the Vijjandharas. There were formulas of incantation and spells which were very powerful. They served to crush those gods, demons, goblins, etc.

Men who have supernormal gifts are seen sometimes in our own country (Burma). They repair to a forest, and having handled regularly the occult formulas and prepared themselves for days and nights, and achieved success, many begin to tour in villages and districts. Wherever they go, they provide instantaneous relief to those who are ill and come to them for help. They also exhibit many other feats of wonderful magic, and account for this or that fateful event in the life of men. But the rulers prohibit these occult practices, fearing lest they might give rise to violent commotions in the country.

## EXPOSITIONS

### V.

#### OF THE THREE WORLDS.

Here we expound our system of the world under three headings.

- (1) Physical Universe,
- (2) Things, and
- (3) Being (*i.e.*, Person).

(1) By Physical Universe is meant the world conceived in spatial relation (*okāsa-loka*),—as something in which things and beings have their existence. Thus heaven is the physical universe as regards celestial beings, earth is the physical universe as regards men, brutes, and things in general; and purgatory is the physical universe as regards infernal beings. It comprises the great earth, the great ocean, the circumjacent mountains,\*\* Mount Sineru in the centre, round which seven successive ranges of mountains intervened by the seven successive oceans of intense cold, the four great islands, many other smaller ones, and the six abodes of Devas, and the twenty abodes of Brahmās in vertical positions. Such is termed one Spatial Universe or a Circular

\* Majjhīma-Nikāya, i., 377

\*\* Cakkavāḷa pabbata which forms the boundary of this world-system, is situated circumlittorally in the extreme part of this universe, and it is said that the height is 82000 leagues.

World-System (*Cakkavāla*). There are many other smaller world-systems innumerable in number in all the eight directions of the present one.

We also find in the *Tika-Aṅguttara* at the *Ānanda-vagga*, the three kinds of World-System, namely : (1) Small-thousand-world-system (*Cūlasahassi*) which comprises one thousand *Cakkavālas*, (2) Medium-thousand-world-system (*Majjhīmasahassi*) which comprises one million *Cakkavālas*, (3) Great-thousand-world-system (*Mahāsahassi*) which comprises one billion *Cakkavālas*.

There are also three other kinds of world-system, (1) Ten-thousand-world system which is called the Realm of Existence (*jātikhetta*) and it means the Realm in which the Buddhas appear and all the Devas and Brahmās therein form the audience of the Buddhas, (2) Great-thousand-world-system which is called the Realm of Influence (*Ānākhetta*) and it means the Realm where the influence of the *Parittas*\* and the Buddhas pervade, and all the Devas and Brahmās therein accept it, (3) Infinite-world-system which is called the Realm of Object (*Visayakhetta*) and it means the one which serves as the object of the Knowledge of the Buddhas.

There are three others also, (1) Sensual Plane (*Kāmadhātu*), (2) Material Plane (*Rūpadhātu*), (3) Immaterial Plane (*Arūpadhātu*). The first comprises eleven Realms of *Kāma*, the second sixteen of *Rūpa*, and the third four of *Arūpa*.

Four Stages are also expounded, (1) Sensual stage (*Kāma-bhūmi*), (2) Material-stage (*Rūpa-bhūmi*), (3) Immaterial-stage (*Arūpa-bhūmi*), (4) Transcendental-stage (*Lokuttara-bhūmi*). The first three respectively comprise the Realms of *Kāma*, *Rūpa*, and *Arūpa*; and the last comprises the four Noble Paths, the four Noble Fruits and Nibbāna, the Unconditioned.

(2) The term 'Thing' is used in the sense of conditioned things in general (*sankhāraloka*). Things in this sense include plants: trees, creepers, bushes, shrubs, etc; metals, such as gold, silver, etc.; in short, all the natural sources we draw from and enjoy; the objects fashioned therefrom by men, such as houses, chariots, carriages, etc.; and lastly, the things of intellectual creation, e.g.,

categories such as aggregates, senses, objects, etc.

(3) By beings (*satta*) or persons (*puggala*) we understand creatures generally:—infernal beings, animals, spirits, demons, men, gods and Brahmās, There are beings terrestrial, aquatic, and aerial, oviparous, viviparous, moisture-sprung, and beings reborn without earthly parentage; beings without feet, bipeds, quadrupeds, and beings with many feet, beings with form and beings without form, beings having perception and beings having no perception and beings having neither-perception-nor-non-perception. The world of Space and the world of Creatures are both included among the world of Things. But the things when classified distinctly and separately under the names of Realm and Creature have special names assigned to them, such as the 'World of Space', and the 'World of Creatures'.

We shall now explain the mode of existence (*saṅghiti*) in the physical universe. According to our theory, earth rests on water beneath it, water rests on air, and air rests on open space (*ajātakāsa*). This open space is infinite below and on all sides. It is filled with air without motion, which supports the great volume of air (atmosphere) above it; this supports in its turn the great volume of water; and that supports this great earth. It is said in the text: 'This great earth, Ānanda, is established on water, water is established on air, air on space. A time comes, Ānanda, when a mighty wind blows. This blowing causes commotion in the waters, and the waters being in commotion cause the earth to quake' (*Dīgha-Nikāya ii.*, 107; *Dialogues ii.*, 114).

Next we deal with the coming into being and the ceasing to be of the physical universe. The co-inherent quality of heat is the cause of birth, decay, and death of the physical universe, the cause of its origination and cessation. As it is said in the Pāli: 'What is the element of heat? It is that which heats, that which causes things to decay, that which consumes, and that through which things reach an entire change.' (*Majjhīma-Nikāya i.*, 188, 422). Accordingly it is the co-inherent heat which is ever causing co-existent things to burn, to decay, consuming them, changing them, and making them pass from one condition into another. The cold-

\* *Parittas* are the verses especially compiled for the promotion of protection and general prosperity, such as *Ratana-Sutta-Paritta*, *Mettā-Sutta-Paritta*, etc.

therm (*sīta-tejo*) also determines the same effects in these matters. And it is now not necessary to say anything of the hot-therm (*uṇha-tejo*). It is quite clear.

As it is said in the *Dhammasaṅgani* in the chapter of Matter: 'That which is the growth of sense spheres is the development of matter, and that which is the development of matter is the continuum of the same.' Birth may be classified into four divisions, birth, growth, development and continuum. Of these, birth means the first appearance of the conditioned things. Growth means the first start of development of appearing things. Development means the gradual extension of the developing things. Continuum \* means the continuance of the developed and accumulated things. That is to say things continue in such quantity as they have developed and they neither increase nor decrease. After that, these matters, together with the element of fermenting heat (*jīraṇa-tejo*) which causes the coexistent things to decay, gradually diminish at the stage of decay and disappear away at the final stage of death.

The world is considered by us as a system or order in which everything happens according to the laws of causality \*\*. Because the great earth is being all the time heated, burnt, decayed, and matured by the twofold coexistent heat [ I have elsewhere rendered it as cold-therm (*sīta-tejo*) and hot-therm (*uṇha-tejo*), ] it cannot overcome the six stages, *i.e.*, birth, growth, development, continuum, decay, and death. So with the Mount Sineru, the circumjacent mountains, etc. Therefore in the Developed Epoch, all the earth, mountains etc. that come into being and appearance pass gradually from the beginning through the four stages, *i.e.* birth, growth, development and continuum. That is to say, they rise, grow, develop and continue for a long time till at last they arrive at the stage of decay in which the influence of all the heat will overrule all others. From that time onwards all the unessential things among them will at first be destroyed and the essential ones alone will remain. Then even the essentials will be consumed in the long run of process and only the more essential will remain. Thus continuing for an indefinite time, everything will at last arrive at the most extreme point of degree at which combustion may

easily take place like gun powder, the munition of the king's army, which is apt to combust at the sudden contact with a spark of fire. Then this Developed Epoch will be destroyed by the action of fire in the manner said in the Satta Sūriya Suttanta. There it is said: 'Just as, bhikkhus, there is no trace of ash nor of carbon perceptible, after the butter or the oil is burnt up, so also there, bhikkhus, will no trace of ash nor of carbon be discernible after the earth and Sineru, the king of mountains, have been burnt up. Thus, bhikkhus, all the conditioned things are inconsistent and unstable. It is advisable, bhikkhus, to be disgusted with all the conditioned things, it is expedient to detach them, and it is suitable to break free of them. Here, who would know, who would believe that this great earth and Sineru, the king of mountains will be burnt up, will be destroyed, will relapse into void, except those who have realised *Nibbāna* ?'

It is said that the flames of the burning fire reach as far as the realms of Brahmā. This world-destructive fire burns up everything that exists between the mass of water below and the first realm of *Jhāna* above, without leaving a single atom of things behind. When the rock-earth (*sela-pathavī*) is burnt up there in its place only remain the caloric energies (*utu-dhātuyo*) which will again become the germinal status of the rock-earth. Similarly when the dust-earth (*pamsu-pathavī*) is burnt up there also remain the caloric energies which will again become the germinal status of the dust-earth. So the caloric energies which are the remaining dynamics of fire fill up the whole sphere. And the fire itself is entirely extinguished away. It is the Enveloping Epoch. And the one that continues in an enveloping state as has been just explained, is called the Enveloped Epoch. The duration of each of these Epochs is equal to that of sixty four Included Eras (*antara-kappa*). What has been now said is the exposition of the twofold Enveloping Epochs.

In the second epoch, these caloric energies are carried about by the excessively cold atmosphere and they remain in such condition as they have been. But when they arrive at the matured, proficient, and adaptable state for re-action, that is to say become hot, then they transform into rolling clouds laying in great heaps and volumes. After

\* It is better known as "inertia" in Physics.

\*\* Dhammatā, *i.e.*, dhamma-niyāmo. The Manoratha-pūraṇi (Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Aṅguttara-Nikāya) explains the latter term.

that they transform again into great epoch-reinstating rains and pour down all over the places where fire had burnt up in the Enveloping Epoch. The rain-drops coming into contact with very cool air, generally form into masses. And the water thus conglomerrated slides into the infinite space as long as the air which is going to support the universe is not strong enough to do so. But as soon as the air below is capable to do so, it at once checks the fall of water and supports it. All the rain-water becomes implemental in the establishment of the new epoch. That is to say they form into constituents of the universe such as rock, dust, water, etc. All these things occur according to the laws of caloric process (*utu-niyāma*) and are not created by any World-Lord. During the establishment of the constituents of the universe, the natural phenomenal process (*dhamma-niyāma*) plays an important part. By natural phenomenal process we mean the proportionate and disproportionate procedures (*sama-dhāraṇa*) and (*visama-dhāraṇa*) of the elements of extension, etc. And again proportionate procedure should be understood as the natural process and disproportionate procedure as the unnatural process. Hence when the natural process goes on, the proportionate procedure takes place, and if the unnatural cause happens, the procedure becomes disproportional. Among the forms also, roundness is the natural form. Therefore through the proportionate procedure of elements, all the constituents of the universe establish in the round-about shape as if they were manufactured from machines. The great earth, the great ocean, the circumjacent mountains, Sineru, the central mountain, the glacial oceans (*sīta-samuddā*) and *sītantarika* (glaciers in the hollows of mountains) and the circular ranges (*paribhanda-pabbata*) all establish in the round-about shapes. It is the contribution of natural phenomenal process.

Here indeed something should be said of the proportionate and disproportionate procedures of elements. Of the forms, the height of a person is said to be proportional when it is equal to his own span just as a proportionate banyan tree whose height is equal to the diameter of its circumference, otherwise it is said to be disproportional. In short, the repletion of 32 marks of an eminent person (*mahā-purisa-lakkhaṇa*) is proportional and their deficiency is disproportional. Good-mindedness is propor-

tional while evil-mindedness is disproportional. Of the forms other than those of living beings as trees, etc., the symmetry of some of the banyan trees is proportional and the reverse should be understood in the other way. It is also the same way with all the trees, stems, branches, small branches, sprouts, leaves and fruits. In fact, all the infinite varieties of forms, etc. which appear in the world owe their causes entirely to the variation of elements. To have a full understanding of these procedures is within the province of the knowledge of infinite and various elements, of the Omniscient Ones. Those who do not know the various functions of elements look for the World-Lords. In fact there are no other World-Lords but elements and the word 'World-Lord' is merely the outcome of their fancy.

Now to return to our subject, among the caloric germs, some densely accumulated ones become rolls of cloud, other finely accumulated ones become volumes of water in their respective places. And through the influence of kamma of all creatures, there at the inception of the universe appear uninhabited abodes and celestial mansions for both men and devas, and also lunar mansions, such as the mansions of the Moon and Sun. In the higher abodes of devas and in the first Jhāna planes there also appear uninhabited abodes and mansions for devas and Brahmās.

Here, the word "*Suññāni*" means having no owners, and the owners only come down from the higher planes of Brahmās after they have spent their life-terms there, and they occupy abodes earned by their past deeds. It is said in the Text : 'In such period, bhikkhus, and for such immeasurable length of time, the world develops. And while it is developing, uninhabited mansions for Brahmās are established'.

Here also one should not display wonder how all these abodes and mansions come into existence from the caloric germs through the influence of kamma of the creatures. Among the three worlds, the world of beings is predominant and superior to the other two which are merely subservient to the former. This great earth forms itself for the sake of the creatures, so also Mount Sineru, etc. and therefore it is not necessary to expound why and how those mansions are established. Mind and its



qualities (*citta-cetasika*) known as norm which belongs only to the world of beings, are termed mental elements. They are very powerful, 'luminous and thrilling' and the fourfold unknowable springs out from them.

And at the time when men's life-span falls to a decad the influences of the good deeds done by the people who are frightened at the outbreak of the world-destroying wars, pervade the whole world and raise the life-span again to the innumerable age.

In the passage "Through the influence of kamma of all the creatures," by "kamma" it includes all the good deeds performed during the whole enveloping Epoch in order to reach the higher planes by all the creatures who are frightened at the destruction of the world, and also all those good deeds performed during the two innumerable kappas by those who are reborn in the Brahmā planes. Therefore one should not think as to how the formation and establishment of those abodes and mansions are brought about.\*

These celestial mansions are made of, and decorated with, all kinds of gems but they are as light as the bodies of the celestial beings (*opapātika-satta*) and situated on the motionless air like the heaps of cloud in the sky. The mansions of the Moon and Sun and some other lunar mansions, however, move about. How? There are two currents of wind in the sky. The one from Mount Sineru and its surrounding mountains blows out and the other from the circumjacent mountains blows in. These two currents of wind, coming into contact, form a great whirlwind and turn incessantly round Mount Sineru very swiftly, keeping it on the right. The lunar mansions are seen moving about as they are carried away by these encircling winds.\*\* Some of them are light and some are lighter. Therefore slowness and swiftness of their movements are observed. The force of the two currents are proportional at one time

and disproportional at another, and so we observe the different courses in which the mansions are carried away backward and forward by the encircling winds. Some of the planets and mansions of the celestial devas situated below the course of the wind do not move. What has been spoken of is the developing epoch.

From the appearance of the sun and moon to the beginning of the enveloping epoch is the fourth incalculable developed epoch and its duration may be calculated as equal to that of the sixty-four included eras. So much for the exposition on the two constructive epochs.

In this fourth developed epoch of the four incalculable ones, the greater is the vastness of the world-stuffs, the more will be the violence of the world-destructive-fire in the first enveloping epoch. And the greater is the violence of the world-destructive-fire, the more will be the immensity of caloric-stuffs in the second enveloped epoch. And the more is the immensity of the caloric-stuffs, the greater will be the voluminousness of rain-water in the third developing epoch. Again the more is the voluminousness of rain-water, the greater will be the vastness of the world-stuffs in the fourth developed epoch. Indeed it goes on for ever in the same manner.

Without a known beginning, and without end, the world or physical universe continues the same whether World-Lords appear or not. Not made, not created by any such, not even a hundred, not even a thousand, not even a hundred thousand World-Lords would be able to remove it. By the law of heat, by the law of natural causation, the order of the physical universe is maintained.

The Organic World of Things. By this are implied trees, etc. The vegetable life is broadly distinguished into seedlings and growing plants. Here "*bījagoma*" is the collective term of all the trees which are in the stage of seedlings, and "*bhūtagāma*" is the collective term of all the trees which have passed the stage of seedlings and arrived at the fully grown stage. Just as we have said

\* Ledi Sayadaw here intends to indicate the reinstatement of the developing Epoch or the reorganization of the new world with abodes of men and marvellous mansions for devas, by two causes, i.e., material cause and efficient cause. By the former he means the material or stuff out of which the world or the world of things organised. That is the primitive matter known as caloric germs or utu. And by the latter he means the force or agent through which the material phenomena are put together in various and marvellous shapes, forms, and sizes. That is the mental force known as action or will or kamma. For instance, in the case of a house, the wood, iron and bricks of which it is built up are the material cause; and the carpenter who designs and builds it, is the efficient cause. Now the wood, etc. are comparable to utu the material cause of which the world is constituted; and the carpenter is comparable to the mental force, the efficient cause by which it is designed. *Tr.*

\*\* The expanding Universe.

in the exposition of Psychological Order that, on account of the diversity of thoughts of the creatures, perception is diverse ; on account of the diversity of perception, kamma is diverse ; on account of the diversity of kamma, the genus of the animal kingdom is diverse ; and so it may also be maintained here that, on account of the diversities of thoughts perceptions and kammās of the creatures, the species of the seedlings are diverse ; and on account of the diversity of the species of the seedlings, the species of all the plants and trees are diverse. In the case of animals, the actual result (*mukhya-phala*) is predominant, but here in the case of seedlings and plants the complementary result (*nisanda-phala*) is predominant.

The term seed or germ (*bīja*), in its ordinary popular sense, implies various seeds—roots, and the rest—as described before. In the higher sense, however, seed or germ is to be regarded as a form of heat—caloric energy (*utu*). If this is so, a mango-stone, which, in the former sense, is called a seed-proper, cannot, in the latter sense, constitute the whole seed. For in that one mango-stone there are these eight component elements (qualities primary and secondary): extension, cohesion, heat, motion, colour, odour, taste, and nutrition. Of these, heat carries out the germinating function. Hence it alone is radically entitled to the name of seed or germ. The remaining seven elements are complementary to heat ; they do not directly perform the germinating function.

Moreover, the form of heat (or caloric energy—*utu*) which is specified above as seed or germ, is the same heat or energy in kind as that which is considered to be the germinating factor of the universe of a given period of time—an aeon. The germinal energy of seed could not bring its germinating function into play at the enveloping and enveloped epoch as it does not get any stimulus, but at the developed epoch it gets stimulus from earth and water and brings forth its germinating function. Therefore, just as there are only asexual people of apparitional rebirth so long as there is no sex distinction among the world of men, so also there are no species of seedlings and plants so long as the five kinds of seeds do not appear, but they remain latent in the state of mere germs in the earth and water. And afterwards jambu-trees

germinate from jambu-germs, mango-trees from mango-germs, and so on. But first of all there appears flavorsome earth (*rasa-pathavī*) spreading all over the surface of water. At that time the volumes of rain which fall down from the realm of Brahmā, first of all form themselves into rock-earth, Mount Sineru, surrounding mountains, circumjacent Mountains, and Himalayan Mountains, the other places are covered with water. And then, after a lapse of very long time, the flavorsome earth becomes hard, coarse and in-esculent. Then over this there forms a layer of earth (*bhūmi-papaṭika*). So it is said, ‘when the flavorsome earth disappears, a layer of earth deposits itself’. This is the inception of earth. Ere long this layer of earth becomes hard and coarse and unsuitable for eating. Then from among the germs of seedlings and plants, sweet creepers (*padālatā*), rice, and paddy plants germinate. After that many different species of grass, trees, creepers, and shrubs are propagated from the germs. Later, when time passes on and evil thoughts and bad behaviour increase, the essence, the sap, the taste and the nutritive properties in the trees dry up and vanish one after another. At that time the elements of germs conglomerate in their respective species. Thus the root-germs conglomerate in roots, and so on. From that time onwards, those trees which germinate from roots, grow only from roots and so with the rest. The functioning of the Caloric Order, Germinal Order, and Natural Phenomenal Order by way of proportional and disproportional, upon the trees, etc., have been already mentioned in the foregoing pages. Here ends the exposition on the world of things.

The World of Beings (*satta-loka*). To understand the nature of life \* of a *satta*—a being, person, individual—is an exceedingly deep and difficult task. It lies at the basis, at the bottom of all philosophical speculations. We shall approach it from the two standards of truth : the conventional (*sammuti*) and the philosophic (*paramattha*). \*\*

By “a being” conventional usage understands a *nāma-rūpa*—a compound organism—mental (*nāma*) and physical (*rūpa*). By this it means a certain appearance (*saṅghāna*) and a certain continuum (*santāna*), which it

\* “Nature and life” : in the author’s original Pāli ‘pavatti’ ; a staple term in the dynamic philosophy of Buddhism, meaning on-rolling, or procedure.

\*\* See Section II., “Of the Two Standards of Truth” p. 6 of vol. IV, No. 1.

terms a being or person or individual.\* Philosophic usage sees in "a being" a mental and material phenomenon or datum (*nāma-rūpa-dhamma*). For it the appearance and continuum are just a mental construction and its verbal expression. \*\* But the phenomena of mind and matter, out of which beings are constructed, are the data or subject-matter (*dhamma*) of philosophy. As if man having dug out clay should reduce it to powder, and by kneading that with water should make a jar. Jar, in that case, is the name given to the physical structure of the thing in question, while the powder or clay is the material or substance. This physical structure called jar appears only at the time when the potter shapes it in this particular fashion. When the jar is smashed to pieces, the structure to which the name "jar," was given disappears, while the powder or clay as material remains. Here the physical structure of the jar is comparable to the organic form of a being, the name "jar" to the name "being", or "person", the powdered clay, to the phenomena of mind, matter.

By "continuum", or continuity in time, is generally understood the continued life of a being passing from one form of existence into another. But since this being is a mere concept of our mind, we cannot ascribe to the mental fiction the modes of physical origination and cessation. On the other hand, mind and matter, as real facts, can be conceived as springing into existence, and undergoing dissolution.

A being is said, from the conventional standpoint, to be born, to decay, to die, to fall from one state of existence and to be reborn into another. Taken in this sense, a being is born, during his whole life-term, just once at the time of birth and dies once for all at the time of death. Mind and matter, on the contrary, come to birth, undergo decay, die and break down many hundreds of thousands of times, even in one day. Thus it should be explained. And it should also be clearly explained in the same manner according to the intellect and observation of others with regard to their own birth, decay and fall.

And just as conventional usage affirms that there is infinite space in the universe,

so does philosophy maintain that space has no real existence. But this "exists" of the one standard, "does not exist" of the other, present no genuine mutual antagonism. How is this? Because each statement is from a different standpoint.

Similarly by "a being" is implied some sort of individual consciousness and intelligence. That this exists and persists in transmigrating:- this is admitted as a truth from the conventional point of view. In Abhidhamma-knowledge, or philosophical truth, however, such a being is not recognized, does not exist. Only mental and material phenomena exist. And they do not persist in a series of transmigrations. They are perpetually dissolving, now here, now there. Yet here again between the "exist" and the "does not exist" there is no real antagonism. How is this? Because of the distinction drawn between a being (conventional view) and a phenomenal compound of mind and matter (philosophical view).

If by adhering to the belief that a being persists in transmigration, we hold that mind and matter do the same, then this is eternalist error (*sassatadiṭṭhi*). And if by adhering to the belief that mind and matter do not persist in transmigration, but break up and dissolve, now here, now there, we come to hold that a being does the same, this is the annihilationist error (*ucchedadiṭṭhi*\*\*\*). To maintain the eternalist view is to shut the gate of Nibbāna. How so? Because if mind and matter transmigrate, then it is to be inferred that transmigration itself is eternal. And to maintain the annihilationist view is to shut the gate of heaven. How so? Because the working out of Kamma is thereby suspended. Moreover both of those views maintain that the living personality is a soul. And since the soul-theory is at the root of all false opinions, we shall find ourselves lodged at that root. Wherefore, avoiding those two extreme views, and adopting the distinction in standpoints described above, let us stand holding open every gateway to heaven and to the final Release.

Of these two Truths, the coming into being of all beings should be spoken of by way of conventional truth. While the universe is developing, and after the empty mansions

\* Satta, etymologically, is "being". When animals are included, the more usual term is pāna or bhūta.

\*\* paññatti means both concept and term. See U Shwe Zan Aung in Compendium of Philosophy.

\*\*\* See "Brahmajāla-Sutta" translated by the English Editorial Department, vol. III, No. 2 of The Light of the Dhamma.

in the world of Brahmā (i.e. the first realm of Brahmā) and in the six abodes of Devas are established, beings generally from the realm of *Ābhassara* come down to be reborn in these places. Here some one would say, 'Why are they generally reborn in the lower stages? As they have been there in the *Ābhassara* Brahma-Loka for so long is it not convenient to them to cultivate higher *Jhānas* and ascend generally the higher realms of Brahmā?' Thus it should be replied:

In the *Samacitta-Sutta, Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, vol. II, it is said that there are two kinds of beings, namely, a being with internal fetters, and a being with external fetters. Here the internal fetters are five in number: delusion of self (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), adhesion to the efficacy of rites and ceremonies (*silabbataparāmāsa*), sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*), and ill feeling (*vyāpāda*). They are also called downward-tending-fetters (*oram-bhāgiya*). The external fetters are also five in number: desire to be reborn in the *Rūpaloka* (*rūparāga*), desire to be reborn in the *Arūpaloka* (*arūparāga*), pride (*māna*), quivering of thought (*uddhacca*), and nescience (*avijjā*). These are also called upward-tending-fetters (*uddhambhāgiya*). Here "internal" means the *Kāmaloka*, and "external" means the *Brahmaloka*. Why are they so called? It is because nearly all the beings are reborn in the *Kāmaloka* and very seldom do beings take rebirth in the *Brahmaloka*. And where there rebirth is most there lust for various objects is in great swarms. Therefore *Kāmaloka* is called "internal" of

all the ordinary folks. *Brahmaloka* should be understood in the opposite way. In fact, all these beings are pleased with, gratified upon, and delighted in, the pleasurable things which are full to the brim in the *Kāmaloka*, while there are none at all in the *Brahmaloka*. Why do they all get to the *Brahmaloka*? Because there is no abode at all below that when the world is destroyed. However, through the agitation of the downward-tending-fetters which have not yet been shattered, the beings in the *Brahmaloka* are always inclining to be back to *Kāmaloka*. For instance, when a town is disturbed and attacked, the people of the town take refuge in a big forest and stay there till peace is restored. Now the big forest is a very pleasant place, without any danger, and full of shade and water. But the people are always inclining to return to their town and they are not one moment happy however pleasant be the forest. Thus should be understood here also. Therefore the beings in the *Brahmaloka* descend generally to the *Kāmaloka* when the world re-establishes. When they are reborn as men in the *Kāmaloka* their rebirth is at first apparitional. They are like the Brahmās. Everything is fulfilled at the instance of their wishes. They live at first upon jhānic interest (*jhānapīti*). Their bodies are luminous and brilliant. They live and walk in the sky. Their life-span is an incalculable one. And the rest, such as the decreasing and increasing of their life-span etc. should be understood as is said in the *Aggañña* and *Cakkavatti* suttas.

( To be continued )



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# THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

## AN ENQUIRY INTO THE SCOPE OF BARE ATTENTION AND THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF ITS STRENGTH

By *Nyanaponika Thera*

### Part III

#### Stopping and Slowing Down

(Continued from previous issue)

#### *Spontaneity*

An acquired or strengthened habit of pausing mindfully before acting will not exclude or paralyze spontaneity of response where it is beneficial. On the contrary, the pausing, the stopping and the keeping still for Bare Attention will, through training, become quite spontaneous themselves. They will grow into a "selective mechanism" of the mind that, with an increasing reliability and swiftness of response, will prevent the upsurge of evil or unwise impulses which may have been intellectually realised by us as unwholesome, but, by their own powerful spontaneity, still continue to defeat our better knowledge and nobler intention. The practice of mindful pausing serves, therefore, to replace unwholesome spontaneity or habits, by wholesome ones.

Just as certain reflex movements are an automatically operating protection of the body, similarly a spontaneously working spiritual and moral self-protection will be a vital function of the mind. A person of average moral standard will instinctively shrink from theft or murder, without any long reflection. With the help of the method of Bare Attention, the range of such spontaneously functioning moral brakes can be greatly extended and ethical sensitivity heightened. Also false thought-habits can be broken in the same way and replaced by correct ones.

In an untrained mind, noble tendencies or right thoughts often succumb to the spontaneous outbreak of passions or prejudices, or they can assert themselves only with difficulty, after a struggle of motives. But if the spontaneity of the Unwholesome is checked or greatly reduced, as described above, our good impulses and wise reflections will have greater scope and they will be able to express themselves freely and spontaneously.

Their spontaneous flow will give greater confidence in the power of good within us and will carry more conviction for others. That spontaneity of the good will not be of an erratic nature, but will have deep and firm roots in previous methodical training. Here appears a way by which the "premeditated good" (*sasañkhārika-kusala*) may be transformed into "spontaneously arising good thought" (*asañkhārika-kusala-citta*) which, if combined with knowledge, takes the first place in the scale of ethical values, according to the psychology of the Abhidhamma. Hereby we shall get practical understanding of a saying in *The Secret of the Golden Flower* : \* 'If one attains intentionally to an unintentional state, one has comprehension'. This saying just invites a paraphrase in Pāli terms: *Sasañkhārena asañkhārikam pattabban*, 'By premeditated intentional effort spontaneity can be won.'

If the numerous aids to mental growth and liberation, found in the Buddha's teachings, are wisely utilized, there is actually nothing that can finally withstand the non-coercive power of the Satipaṭṭhāna Method ; and this method starts with the simple but in its effects far-reaching practice of learning to pause and stop for Bare Attention.

#### *Slowing-down*

Against the impetuosity, rashness and heedlessness of the untrained mind, practice of Pausing and Stopping sets a deliberate slowing-down. The demands of modern life, however, make it impracticable to introduce such a slowing-down of functions into the routine of the average working-day. But as an antidote against the harmful consequences of the hectic speed of modern life, it is all the more important to cultivate that practice in one's leisure hours and especially in periods of strict Satipaṭṭhāna practice. It will give

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\* A treatise of Chinese Mahāyana, strongly influenced by Taoism.

also the worldly benefits of greater calm, efficiency and skill in one's daily round of work.

For the purposes of meditative development, Slowing-down will be an effective training in heedfulness, sense-control and concentration. But apart from that, it has also more specific significance for meditative practice. In the commentary to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, for instance, it is told how the slowing-down of movements may help in *regaining lost concentration* on a chosen object. A monk, so we read, had bent his arm quickly without remembering his subject of meditation, as his rule of practice demanded. On becoming aware of that omission, he took his arm back to its previous position, and repeated the movement mindfully. The subject of meditation referred to was probably 'clearly comprehending action' (*sampajāna-kāra*), and especially the one mentioned in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta as follows: 'In bending and stretching he acts with clear comprehension' (*Sammiñjite pasārite sampa jānakāri hoti*).

The slowing-down of certain bodily movements during strict meditative training is also of great help in gaining *Insight-knowledge* (*Vipassanā-ñāna*) by one's own experience, and especially the direct awareness of change (*anicca*) and impersonality (*anattā*). It is, to a great extent, the rapidity of movement that strengthens the illusion of unity, identity and substantiality of what is actually a complex and evanescent process. Therefore, in the strict practice of Satipaṭṭhāna, the slowing-down of walking or bending and stretching and thereby discerning the several phases of each movement, is an exercise very helpful for direct insight into the three characteristics of all phenomena. It will become an impression of increasing force and significance for the meditator, to notice clearly how each partial phase of the process observed arises and ceases by itself, and nothing of it "goes over" or "transmigrates" to the next phase.

Also the average rhythm of our every-day actions, speech and thoughts will become more quiet and peaceful under the influence of that practice. Slowing-down the hurried rhythm of life means that thoughts, feelings and perceptions will be able to complete the entire length of their natural life-time. Full awareness will extend up to their end-phase: to their last gentle vibrations and reverberations. Too often that end-phase is cut off

by an impatient grasping at new impressions, or by hurrying on to the next stage of a line of thought before the earlier one has been clearly comprehended. This is one of the main reasons for the disorderly state of average consciousness which is burdened by a vast amount of indistinct or fragmentary perceptions, of stunned emotions and unfinished or undigested ideas. Slowing-down will prove an effective device for recovering the fulness and clarity of consciousness. A fitting simile, and at the same time an actual example of it, is the procedure in the practice of Mindfulness on Breathing (*ānāpānasati*) where mindfulness has likewise to cover the whole extent of the breath, its beginning, middle and end. This is what is meant by the passage of the Discourse, saying "Experiencing the *whole* (breath-) body, I shall breathe in and out". Similarly, the entire "breath", or rhythm of our life will become deeper and fuller, if, through slowing-down, we get used to sustained attention.

The habit of prematurely cutting off processes of thought, or slurring over them, has assumed serious proportions in the man of modern city civilization. His restlessness clamours for ever new stimuli, in an ever increasing speed of succession, having its counterpart in the increasing speed of our means of locomotion. This rapid bombardment of impressions will gradually blunt man's sensitivity, and consequently the new stimuli will have to be still more loud, coarse and variegated—a process which, if not checked, can only end in disaster. This state of affairs also explains the decrease of finer aesthetic susceptibility and the growing incapacity of genuine natural joy. The place of both is taken by a hectic, short-breathed excitement which does not leave any true aesthetic or emotional satisfaction. "Shallow mental breath" is to a great extent responsible for the growing superficiality and coarseness of "civilised man" and for the frightening spread of nervous disorders in the West. It may well become the start of a general deterioration of human consciousness in its qualitative level, its range and its strength. This danger threatens all those, in the East as well as in the West, whom impact of technical civilization finds without an adequate spiritual protection. Satipaṭṭhāna can make an important contribution to remedying that situation, in the way we have indicated here briefly. Thus, also from the worldly point of view, the method will prove beneficial.

Here, however, we are chiefly concerned with the psychological aspects and with their significance for meditative development. Sustained attention, being helped by Slowing-down, will affect the quality of consciousness mainly in three ways : (a) the intensity of consciousness, (b) the clarity of the object's characteristic features, and (c) it will reveal the object's "relatedness".

(a) An object of *sustained* attention will exert a particularly strong and long-lasting impact on the mind, not only throughout the thought-series immediately following the respective perception, but its influence may also extend far into the future. It is that causal efficacy which is the measure of the *intensity of consciousness*.

(b) The first impression conveyed by any new sense-object or idea will be what is most striking in it, subjectively or objectively, and it will dominate the mind up to the culminating point of the impact. But there are sure to be other aspects, characteristics or functions of the respective object which may not be obvious or are less interesting to the cognizing subject, but which are no less, or even more, important. There will also be cases where the first impression is entirely deceptive. Only if attention is sustained beyond that first impact, will the respective object reveal itself more fully. It is only at the downward course of the first perceptual wave (its end-phase), when the prejudicing force of the first impact lessens, that the object will yield a wider selection of detail, an all-round picture of itself. It is, therefore, only by sustained attention that a greater *clarity of an object's characteristic features* can be obtained.

(c) Among the characteristic features of a physical or mental object there is one class which is often overlooked by hasty or superficial attention, and therefore we list it here separately: it is the *relatedness* of the object, extending to its past (origin, causes, reasons, logical precedents, etc.), its present manifestation (environment, "background", presently active influences, etc.). An event cannot be said to be fully characterized, if it is viewed in artificial isolation. It must be seen as a part of a wider pattern, in its conditioned and conditioning nature ; and this can be done only with the help of sustained attention.

### *The influence of slowing-down and sustained attention on subconsciousness, memory and intuition*

It need hardly be pointed out how important all these three aforementioned points are for "seeing things according to reality", in other words, for the development of Insight (*vipassanā*). Their *direct* influence is obvious, but there is also an *indirect one* which is no less powerful and important. Those three results of sustained attention, achieved with the help of Slowing-down, are also instrumental in influencing the quality and nature of *subconsciousness, memory and intuition* which, on their part, will again be aiding, nourishing and consolidating the progress of liberating Insight. Insight aided by them will be like the mountain lake (of the canonical simile) that is fed not only from without, by the rains, but also by springs welling up within its own depth. Similarly, Insight will be nourished not only through external experience, but also from the "subterraneous", *i.e.* subliminal resources of the mind: by memories, other subconscious material, and by the strengthened faculty of intuition. Meditative results of an Insight that has such deep roots will not be lost easily, even with unliberated worldlings (*puthujjana*) who are subject to relapse.

1. If perceptions or thoughts which have been objects of sustained attention, sink into *subconsciousness*, they will occupy there a special position by reason of their stronger impact on the mind and the greater distinctness of their characteristic features. As to the first reason : it will certainly not remain without any effect upon the constitution of subconsciousness, if the end-phase of a moment of consciousness or of a cognitive series, being immediately followed by subconsciousness, is not weak but of a strength equal to that of the preceding phases. As for the second reason: if an impression or idea, marked by numerous and distinct characteristics, sinks into subconsciousness, it will not so easily be absorbed into the vagueness of other subconscious contents or dragged into false subconscious associations with superficial similarities or passionate biases. And also the last of the aforementioned three facts—the correct comprehension of the object's "relatedness"—will have similar effects: there will be a greater resistance against a merging with inadequate subconscious material. If perceptions or thoughts of that level of intensity and clarity

sink into subconsciousness, they will be more “articulate” and more “accessible” than contents of subconsciousness originating from hazy or “stunned” impressions; they will be more easily “convertible” into full consciousness, and less unaccountable in their hidden effects upon it. If, through a generally higher level of mindfulness, the number of such “matured” impressions increases in the mind, it seems quite possible that a subtle change in the structure of subconsciousness can be achieved in that way.

2. It will be evident from our earlier remarks that those impressions which we have called “matured” or “more easily accessible and convertible”, will lend themselves more easily and more correctly to recollection. More easily: because of their greater intensity; more correctly: because of their clearly marked features which will give them a fair degree of protection against being distorted by false associative images or ideas. If, in addition, they are remembered in their “context” and “relatedness”, it will work both ways, for easier and more correct recollection. In that way, *Sati* in its meaning and function of Mindfulness, will help to strengthen *Sati* in its meaning and function of *Memory*.

3. From that very influence on subconsciousness and memory also a deepening and strengthening of the faculty of intuition will naturally follow, and particularly of intuitive insight which concerns us here chiefly. Intuition is not “a gift from the unknown”, but, as any other mental faculty, it arises out of specific conditions which, in this case, are primarily the latent memories of perceptions and thoughts “stored” in the subconscious. It is obvious that memories which have the aforementioned qualities of greater intensity, clarity and richness of distinctive marks, and thereby of greater accessibility, will provide the most fertile soil for the growth of intuition. Here too the preserved “relatedness” of the respective impressions will contribute much. Recollections of that type will have a more organic character than memories of bare or vague, isolated facts, and they will the easier fall into new patterns of meanings and significance. These more “articulate” memory-images will be a strong stimulation and aid for the intuitive faculty. Silently and in the hidden depths of the subliminal mental processes, the work of collecting and organizing the subconscious material of experience and knowledge goes

on until it is ripe to emerge as, what we call an *intuition*. The breaking-through of that intuition is sometimes occasioned by quite ordinary happenings which, however, may have a strong evocative power, if, in previous occurrence, they had been made objects of sustained attention. Slowing-down and pausing for Bare Attention will discover the depth-dimension of the simple things of every day, and will thus provide potential stimuli for the intuitive faculty. This applies also to the intuitive penetration (*paṭivedha*) of the four Noble Truths that culminates in Holiness (*arahatta*). Many instances are recorded of monks where the flash of intuitive penetration did not strike them when they were engaged in the meditative practice of insight proper, but on quite different occasions: when stumbling, when seeing a forest fire, a fatamorgana, a lump of froth in a river, etc.

We have met here another confirmation of that seemingly paradoxical saying that ‘intentionally, an unintentional state may be won’. Spontaneity of intuitive insight may be won, or at least aided, by deliberately turning the full light of mindfulness even on the smallest events and actions of every-day life.

Sustained attention not only provides the nourishing soil of the *growth* of intuition, it also makes possible the fuller utilization and even repetition of the intuitive moment. Men of inspiration in various fields of creative activity have often related and deplored their common experience that the flash of intuition strikes so suddenly and vanishes so quickly that frequently the slow response of the mind scarcely catches the last glimpse of it. But if the mind has been trained in observant Pausing, in Slowing-down and sustained attention, and if—as indicated above—also the subconsciousness has been influenced by it, then the intuitive moment, too, might gain that fuller, slower and stronger rhythm. This being the case, its impact will be strong and clear enough for making full use of that flash of intuitive insight. It might even be possible to lead its fading vibrations upward again to a new culmination, similar to the rhythmic repetition of a melody rising again, in harmonious development, out of the last notes of its first appearance.

The full utilization of a single moment of intuitive insight might be of decisive importance for one’s progress toward full realiza-



tion. If one's mental grip is too weak and those elusive moments of intuitive insight are allowed to slip away without being utilized fully for the work of liberation, then it might well happen that they will not recur before many years have passed, or perhaps not at all during the present life. Skill in sustained attention, however, will allow the full use of opportunities, and slowing-down and pausing during meditative practice, is an important aid in acquiring that skill.

Through our now concluded treatment of Pausing, Stopping and Slowing-down, one of the traditional definitions of Mindfulness

found in the Pāli Scriptures will have become more intelligible in its far-reaching implications: that is its function of *anapilāpanatā*, meaning literally, 'not floating (or slipping) away', 'like pumpkin-pots on the surface of water', add the commentators; and they continue: 'Mindfulness enters deeply into its object', instead of hurrying over its surface only. Therefore "non-superficiality" will be an appropriate rendering of the above Pāli term, and a befitting characterization of Mindfulness.

End of Part III.



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# MAJJHIMA-NIKĀYA, UPARIPANṆĀSA, ANUPADA VAGGA, ĀNĀPĀNASSATI SUTTA

( *Translated by the Editors of 'The Light of the Dhamma'* )

Thus I have heard. On one occasion the Bhagavā was staying with many of His distinguished disciples : Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Mahā Kassapa, Mahā Kaccāyana, Mahā Koṭṭhila, Mahā Kappina, Mahā Cunda, Anuruddha, Revata, Ānanda and many other distinguished monks in Pubbārāma, the monastery offered by Visākhā.

At that time the senior monks gave instructions on the Dhamma to the junior monks ; some gave instructions to ten, some to twenty, some to thirty and some to forty junior monks. When the junior monks heard the instructions given to them by the senior monks, they understood the knowledge pertaining to Tranquillity and Insight, which arose in their minds after they had established themselves in morality.

Then, on the night of the termination of the Vassa, the full moon day, the fifteenth day of the month, the Bhagavā surrounded by many monks sat in the open air. Then the Bhagavā looked round at the monks, who kept silent, and said : 'O monks, you are bent on this practice to the Dhamma, you have resolved to perform this practice. You should strive more energetically, so that you may reach the Fruition of Holiness which you have not yet attained, and realise the Fruition of Holiness which you have not yet realised. I shall remain at Sāvatti till the full moon day of the month of Kattika, the end of the four months in which the water-lily blossoms.'

The monks living in the neighbouring rural areas heard that the Bhagavā would remain at Sāvatti till the full moon day of Kattika and came to Sāvatti to pay their respects to the Bhagavā. The senior monks gave intensive training to the junior monks. Some gave training to ten, some to twenty, some to thirty, and some to forty junior monks. When the junior monks received training from their teachers, they understood the knowledge pertaining to Tranquillity and Insight which arose in their minds after they had established themselves in morality.

On the night of the full moon day of the month of Kattika, the end of the four months

in which the white water-lily blossoms, the Bhagavā surrounded by the monks sat in the open air. Then, looking round at the monks, who kept silent, the Bhagavā said : 'O monks, this assembly is devoid of pithless stuff; this assembly being devoid of pithless stuff is purified and is full of essence. O monks, all these monks here are of such nature. Such monks are worthy of offerings, worthy of receiving hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of being honoured with raised hands, are unsurpassed fields for gaining merit. Presenting small gifts to such an assembly is advantageous; presenting greater gifts to such an assembly is more advantageous. O monks, it is very difficult for people to pay homage adequately to such an assembly.

'O monks, among those present here there are Arahats who have eradicated all defilements ; who have reached perfection ; who have laid down their burdens; who are no longer fettered by any tie to any form of existence ; and who have been liberated by their wisdom.

'O monks, among those present here there are Anāgāmins who, having overcome the five lower fetters reappear as spontaneously manifesting beings in the Suddhāvāsa Brahma-plane (Abode of Purity) and without returning from that plane will reach Nibbāna.

'O monks, among those present here there are Sakadāgāmins who, having destroyed the three lower fetters, have overcome the fetters of Sensuous Craving and Ill-will in their grosser form, and will return only once to this sensuous world.

'O monks, among those present here there are Sotāpannas who, after overcoming the three fetters of Personality-belief, Sceptical Doubt and Attachment to rites and ritual, have entered the stream to Nibbāna, are firmly established and destined to full enlightenment.

'O monks, among those present here there are those who practise the four Applications of Mindfulness \*; those who practise the four Right Efforts\*\*; those who practise

\* Contemplation of Body, of Feeling, of Mind and of Mental Objects.

\*\* The efforts to avoid unwholesome states, as yet unarisen as evil thoughts, etc ; to overcome unwholesome states that have arisen ; to develop wholesome states, as yet unarisen such as the seven Factors of Enlightenment ; and to maintain the wholesome states that have arisen.

the four Roads to Power\*; those who practise the five Spiritual Faculties\*\*; those who practise the five Mental Powers\*\*\*; those who practise the seven Links of Enlightenment\*\*\*\*; and those who practise the Eightfold Noble Path. \*\*\*\*\*

‘O monks, among those present here there are those who practise *mettābhāvanā* (development of all-embracing loving-kindness); those who practise *karuṇā-bhāvanā* (development of compassion); those who practise *muditābhāvanā* (development of altruistic joy); those who practise *upekkhābhāvanā* (development of equanimity); those who practise *asubhakammaṭṭhāna* (reflections on the loathsomeness of the body); and those who practise *anicca-saññā* (contemplation of impermanence).

‘O monks, among those present here there are those who practise *ānāpānassati* (watching over in-and-out-breathing).

‘Contemplation of in-and-out-breathing, O monks, developed and frequently practised, brings high reward and advantages. And how so ?

‘There the monk retires to a forest, to the foot of a tree, or to a solitary place, seats himself crosslegged, body erect, attentiveness fixed before him. Attentively he breathes in, attentively he breathes out.

‘While breathing in a long inhalation he knows : “I breathe in a long inhalation” ; while breathing out a long exhalation he knows : “ I breathe out a long exhalation. ”

‘While breathing in a short inhalation he knows: “I breathe in a short inhalation”; while breathing out a short exhalation he knows : “I breathe out a short exhalation”.

“Being clearly sensible of the whole body\*\*\*\*\* I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Being clearly sensible of the whole body I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Calming the bodily activities I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Calming the bodily activities I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Sensible of rapture I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Sensible of rapture I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Sensible of joy I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Sensible of joy I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Sensible of the mental activities I breathe in”: thus he trains himself, “Sensible of the mental activities I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Calming the mental activities I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Calming the mental activities I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Being clearly sensible of the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Being clearly sensible of the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Composing the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Composing the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Concentrating the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Concentrating the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Freeing the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Freeing the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Reflecting on Impermanence I breathe in”: thus he trains himself, “Reflecting on Impermanence I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Reflecting on Detachment I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Reflecting on Detachment I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

\* Concentration of Determination, of Energy, of Consciousness and of Investigation.

\*\* Faith (Confidence in the Buddha and His Teaching), Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom.

\*\*\* Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom.

\*\*\*\* Mindfulness, Investigation of the Dhamma, Energy, Rapture, Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity.

\*\*\*\*\* Right Understanding, Right Thoughts, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

These 37 things are the “ Bodhipakkhiya-dhammā ” (Things pertaining to Enlightenment.) It may be noted that Mindfulness considered in its different aspects, can be a spiritual faculty, a mental power and a link of Enlightenment, and others have both aspects of “ Roads to Power ” and “ Spiritual Faculties ”.

\*\*\*\*\* Sabbakāya ( according to Buddhaghosa’s Commentary ‘ the whole body of the breath ’).

“Reflecting on the Extinction of Biases\* I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Reflecting on the extinction of biases I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Reflecting on Renunciation I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Reflecting on renunciation I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

‘Thus, O monks, developed and frequently practised, contemplation of in-and-out-breathing brings high reward and great advantage.

‘But how, O monks, does the contemplation of in-and-out-breathing, developed and frequently practised, bring the four Applications of Mindfulness to full perfection ?

‘Whenever the monk is mindful in taking a long breath or in taking a short breath, or is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst being sensible of the body, or is calming down the bodily activities—, at such a time the monk is dwelling in “Contemplation of the Body”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, subduing worldly greed and grief. Inhalation and exhalation, indeed, I declare as a phenomenon amongst the phenomena of the body.

Whenever the monk is training himself to inhale and exhale whilst being sensible of rapture, or joy, or the mental activities, or whilst calming down the mental activities—at such a time he is dwelling in “Contemplation of Sensation”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief. The sensation experienced in respiration, indeed, I declare as one of the sensations (feelings) amongst the other \*\*sensations (feelings) of the mind.

Whenever the monk is training himself to inhale and exhale whilst being sensible of the mind, or whilst composing the mind, or whilst concentrating the mind, or whilst setting the mind free—at such a time he is dwelling in “Contemplation of the Mind”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief. Without mindfulness and clear comprehension, indeed, there is no attention to in-and-out-breathing, I say.

Whenever the monk is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst contemplating Imper-

manence, or Detachment, or Extinction, or Renunciation—at such a time he is dwelling in “Contemplation of the Mental Objects”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief.

Contemplation of in-and-out-breathing, thus developed and frequently practised, brings the four Applications of Mindfulness to full perfection.

But how do the four Applications of Mindfulness, developed and frequently practised, bring the seven Links of Enlightenment to full perfection ?

Whenever the monk is dwelling in contemplation of Body, Sensation, Mind and Mental Objects, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief—, at such a time his mindfulness is undisturbed; and whenever his mindfulness is present and undisturbed, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Mindfulness”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst dwelling with attentive mind, he wisely investigates, examines and considers the dhamma, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment ‘Investigation of the Dhamma’, and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst investigating, examining and considering the dhamma, his energy is firm and unshaken—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Energy”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, in him, whilst firm in energy, arises rapture free from sensuous desires—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Rapture”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst enraptured in mind, his mind and body become tranquil—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Tranquillity”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst tranquillised in mind and body and happy, his mind becomes concen-

\* The four kinds of Biases are:—Sensuous Bias, Bias for Existence, Bias of Wrong Views and Bias of Ignorance.

\*\* Vedanā.

trated—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Concentration”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever he looks on his mind with complete indifference, thus concentrated—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Equanimity”, and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

The four Applications of Mindfulness thus developed and frequently practised, bring the seven Links of Enlightenment to full perfection.

But how do the seven Links of Enlightenment, developed and frequently practised, bring wisdom and deliverance to full perfection ?

There the monk develops the links of enlightenment, bent on seclusion, detachment, and extinction of biases, and leading to renunciation.

The seven Links of Enlightenment, thus developed and frequently practised, bring wisdom and deliverance to full perfection.

Thus spoke the Bhagavā: being glad those brethren rejoiced at the words of the Bhagavā.



“Just as, brethren, in the autumn season, when the sky is opened up and cleared of clouds, the sun, leaping up into the firmament, drives away all darkness from the heavens, and shines and burns and flashes forth; even so, brethren, the perceiving of impermanence, if practised and enlarged, wears out all sensual lust, wears out all lust for body, all desire for rebirth, all ignorance, wears out, tears out all conceit of ‘I am’.

And in what way, brethren, does it wear them out ?

It is by seeing: ‘Such is body: such is the arising of body: such is the ceasing of body. Such is feeling, perception, the activities, such is consciousness, its arising and its ceasing.’

Even thus practised and enlarged, brethren, does the perceiving of impermanence wear out all sensual lust, all lust for body, all desire for rebirth, all ignorance, wears out, tears out all conceit of ‘I am’.”

—Samyutta-Nikāya, XXii, Sec. 102.

# BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF MIND OR CONSCIOUSNESS ( CITTA )

*Bhadanta Nārada Mahāthera*

Mind or consciousness, the essence of the so-called being, plays the most important part in the complex machinery of man. It is mind that either defiles or purifies one. Mind in fact is both the bitterest enemy and the greatest friend of "oneself".

In the Dhammapada we learn :

'What harm a foe may do to a foe, or a hater to a hater,— an ill-directed mind can do one still greater harm.' (S.42)

'What good neither mother nor father, nor any other relative can do,— a well-directed mind does, and thereby elevates one.' (S.43)

'Mind foreruns deeds, — mind is chief, and mind-made are they. If, therefore, one speaks or acts with a wicked mind, — pain pursues one, even as the wheel follows the draught ox.' (S.1)

'Mind foreruns deeds, — mind is chief, and mind-made are they. If, therefore, one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness follows one, even as one's shadow.' (S.2)

And in the Saṃyutta Nikāya :

*'By mind the world is led, by mind is drawn :*

*And all men own the sovereignty of mind.'*

'This mind, monks, is luminous, but it is defiled by taints that come from without. But this the uneducated manyfolk understands not as it really is. Wherefore for the uneducated manyfolk there is no cultivation of the mind, I declare.

That mind, monks, is luminous, but it is cleansed of taints that come from without. This the educated noble disciple understands as it really is. Wherefore for the educated noble disciple there is cultivation of the mind, I declare.'

The complete purification of the mind is the ultimate aim of Buddhism. "*Cittam vimucci me*" — my mind is delivered — was the paean of joy uttered by all Arahats.

It is from this ethical point of view that Buddhists interest themselves in the study of mind or consciousness, and not from a psy-

chological point of view. Buddhism, it may be mentioned, teaches a psychology without a psyche.

The Pāli terms applied to mind or consciousness are *Citta*, *Ceta*, *Mana Mānasa*, *Nāma*, *Viññāṇa*, and so forth. They are used as synonymous terms.

*Citta* is derived from *Citi*, to think. The traditional interpretation of the term is that which is aware of an object (*cinteti* or *vijānāti*).\* Actually it is not that which thinks of an object as the term implies. If it could be said 'it thinks' as one says in English 'it rains', it would be more in consonance with the Buddha's teaching. From an ultimate point of view *Citta* may be defined as the awareness of an object, since Buddhism denies a subjective agent like a soul. No distinction is made between mind and consciousness which are used as equivalents for Pāli "Citta".

The term *Citta* is usually employed in Buddhist philosophy to denote different classes of consciousness. In isolated cases, in the ordinary sense of mind, both *Citta* and *Mana* (derived from *man*, to think) are frequently used without any distinction.

*Nāma* means that which turns towards an object. This term is used in connection with two constituent parts of the so-called being—mind and matter (*Nāma-Rūpa*).

*Viññāṇa*, derived from *vi* : + *ñā*, to know, frequently occurs both in the Abhidhamma and Sutta Piṭakas, and it should be understood in accordance with the context.

Whilst referring to the five 'Groups' (*pañcakkhandha*), the five aspects in which the Buddha has summed up all the physical and mental phenomena of existence, and which appear to the ignorant man as his Ego, or personality, *Nāma* is substituted by *Viññāṇa* to denote consciousness. Here the prefix 'vi' has no special meaning. It does not connote superiority of *Ñāṇa*. In the *Paṭicca Sammupāda*, *Viññāṇa*, which is conditioned by moral and immoral activities (*saṅkhāra paccayā viññāṇam*), is to be understood as the rebirth-consciousness one experiences at the moment of conception (*paṭisandhi viññāṇa*).

\* *Cinteti* : be aware (of feelings) ; *vijānāti* : becomes aware of.

In the Abhidhamma, *Viññāṇa* is also used in connection with the five kinds of sense-door\* consciousness (*dvipaṇca viññāṇa*), and in one isolated case, *Mano-viññāṇa* is applied to denote a particular class of consciousness. In some places in the Sutta Piṭaka it is stated 'whatever suffering that arises is conditioned by *viññāṇa*; with its cessation suffering ceases.'

In the Abhidhamma there are mentioned 89 types of consciousness. Of them 81 are mundane (*lokiya*) and 8 are supra-mundane (*lokuttara*). The mental object of the latter is Nibbāna.

Consciousness is divided into four classes with respect to its nature.

They are as follows :—

1. Immoral types of consciousness which are associated with attachment (*lobha*), aversion or illwill (*paṭigha*) and ignorance (*moha*).
2. Moral types of consciousness which are associated with non-attachment (*alobha*), goodwill (*adosa*), and wisdom (*amoha*).  
The immoral are regarded as unwholesome as they produce undesirable effects (*aniṭṭha vipāka*), the moral as wholesome since they produce desirable effects (*iṭṭha vipāka*). Both immoral and moral types of consciousness constitute what, in Pāli, are known as Kamma.
3. Those types of consciousness that arise as the inevitable results of these moral and immoral types of consciousness are called resultant types of consciousness (*Vipāka*).

As a seed sown on fertile soil germinates and fructifies sooner or later, according to its own intrinsic nature, even so moral and immoral types of consciousness produce their desirable and undesirable effects here or hereafter.

4. The fourth type of consciousness is called *Kiriya* which, for want of a better term, is rendered 'inoperative' or 'ineffective.' As the actions of Buddhas and Arahats lack reproductive power, it is such types of consciousness they experience when any moral deed is done by them. This last type is called *Kiriya*, literally deed or action, because it is causally ineffective.

Here *Kiriya* is used in the sense of resultless action *i.e.* producing no result to the doer.

Each consciousness a person experiences performs a definite function. Certain types of consciousness perform several functions, under different circumstances, in various capacities. There are fourteen specific functions performed by them all.

*Paṭisandhi Citta.*

Every living being at the very moment of conception experiences a consciousness which in combination with the sperm and ovum cells provided by the parents, tends to form the foetus. This potential initial consciousness is conditioned by the past Kammic force of that particular person. It also inherits the accumulated impressions, characteristics and so forth of that particular life-flux just as the infinitesimally small cell, about 1/120th part of an inch across, inherits more or less the physical characteristics of its parents and its ancestors. This consciousness which links the past with the present is regarded as the source of the present life stream. In the course of one particular life there is only one relinking consciousness. It is also called rebirth consciousness (*paṭisandhi citta*).

Buddhism does not state that mind is evolved from matter or that matter is evolved from mind. Nor does Buddhism make any dogmatic statement with regard to the ultimate origin of mind or matter. With the present as the basis Buddhism argues the past and future mainly with the object of discovering the cause or causes that condition this ever-recurring cycle of birth and death.

There are two other types of consciousness similar to this relinking consciousness, though functionally they differ. They are so treated because the mental contents and the objects of these three are identical.

One of them is called *Bhavaṅga* and the other *Cuti*.

*Bhavaṅga* (*Bhava—aṅga*) means factor of life, or indispensable cause or condition of existence.

When a person is fast asleep and is in a dreamless state, he experiences a kind of consciousness which is more passive than active. It is similar to the consciousness one experiences at the moment of conception and at the final moment of death. The Buddhist philosophical term for this type of consciousness is *Bhavaṅga*. Arising and perishing

\* Five kinds of sense-doors are :— the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the body.

every moment, it flows on like a stream, not remaining for two consecutive moments the same.

We experience this class of consciousness not only in a dreamless state but also in our waking state. In the course of our life we experience *Bhavaṅga* thought-moments more than any other types of consciousness. Hence *Bhavaṅga* is an indispensable condition of life.

Some scholars identify *Bhavaṅga* with sub-consciousness. According to the Dictionary of Philosophy sub-consciousness is 'a compartment of the mind alleged by certain psychologists and philosophers to exist below the threshold of consciousness.' In the opinion of Western philosophers sub-consciousness and consciousness co-exist. But Buddhist philosophy says no two types of consciousness co-exist. Nor is *Bhavaṅga* a sub-plane. It does not correspond to F.W. Myer's 'subliminal consciousness' either. There does not seem to be any place for *Bhavaṅga* in Western Philosophy. Perhaps we may be using these philosophical terms with different meanings.

*Bhavaṅga* is so called because it is an essential condition for continued subjective existence.

Radhakrishnan writes : 'Bhavaṅga is sub-conscious existence, or more accurately existence free from waking consciousness. *Bhavaṅga* is subconscious existence when subjectively viewed, though objectively it is sometimes taken to mean *Nibbāna*.'

This certainly is not Buddhist. *Bhavaṅga* occurs in the waking consciousness, too, immediately after a thought process, and is never identified with *Nibbāna*. Life continuum has been suggested as the closest English equivalent for *Bhavaṅga*.

*Cuti* or Decease Consciousness.

As *Paṭisandhi* or rebirth consciousness is the initial thought-moment of life, so is *Cuti* the final thought-moment. They are the entrance and exit of one particular life stream. *Cuti* functions as a mere passing away from life.

Death occurs immediately on the *Cuti* consciousness. Though with death the physical body disintegrates and consciousness temporarily ceases, yet the life stream is not annihilated as the *Kammic* force that propels it remains. Death is only a prelude to birth. *Javana*.

Another type of consciousness that should be clearly understood is the *Javana* conscious-

ness. Ordinarily the term *Javana* is employed in the sense of swift. *Javana hamsa*, for example, means swift swan ; *Javana paññā* means swift wisdom. In Buddhist philosophy it is used in a purely technical sense.

Here *Javana* means running. It is so called because in the course of a thought-process it runs consecutively for seven thought moments, or five with an identical object. The mental states occurring in all these thought moments are similar, but the potential force differs.

This *Javana* stage is the most important from an ethical point of view. It is at this psychological stage that good or evil is actually done. Irrespective of the desirability or the undesirability of the object presented to the mind it is possible for one to make the *Javana* process moral or immoral. If for, instance, one meets an enemy, a thought of hatred will arise automatically. An understanding person, might, on the contrary, harbour a thought of love towards him. This is the reason why the Buddha states in the *Dhammapada* :—

' By self is evil done,  
By self is one defiled,  
By self is evil not done,  
By self is one purified.  
Both defilement and purity depend on  
oneself,  
No one is purified by another.'

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It is an admitted fact that environment, circumstances, habitual tendencies and so forth condition our thoughts. On such occasions freewill is subordinated to the mechanistic course of events. There is also the possibility to overcome those external forces and produce moral and immoral thoughts exercising our own freewill.

A foreign element may be instrumental, but we ourselves are directly responsible for our actions. We create our own heavens. We create our own hells.

It is extremely difficult to suggest a suitable rendering for *Javana*.

Apperception is suggested by some. Impulse is suggested as an alternate rendering, which seems to be less satisfactory than apperception. It is best to retain the Pāli term.

Buddhist philosophy shows that there is no moment when we do not ordinarily ex-



perience a particular kind of consciousness, hanging on to some object — whether physical or mental. The time limit of such a consciousness is termed one thought-moment. Each thought-moment is followed by another. Time is thus the *sine qua non* of the succession of mental states. The rapidity of the succession of such thought-moments is hardly conceivable to human knowledge.

Each unit of consciousness consists of three minor instants (*khaṇas*). They are arising or genesis (*uppāda*), static or development (*ṭhīti*) and cessation or dissolution (*bhaṅga*).

Immediately after the cessation stage of a thought-moment there occurs the genesis stage of the subsequent thought-moment. Each momentary consciousness of this ever-changing life-process, on passing away, transmits its whole energy, all the indelibly recorded impressions to the successor. Each fresh consciousness thus consists of the potentialities of its predecessors and something more.

There is therefore a continuous flow of consciousness like a stream without any interruption. The subsequent thought-moment is neither absolutely the same as its predecessor — since its composition is not identical — nor entirely different — being the same stream of life. There is no identical being, but there is a continuity in process.

It must not be understood that consciousness is chopped up in bits and joined together like a train or a chain. But on the contrary, 'it constantly flows on like a river receiving, from the tributary streams of sense, constant accretions to its flood and ever dispensing to the world around it the thought stuff it has gathered up by the way. It has birth for its source and death for its mouth.'

Here we find a juxtaposition of fleeting states of consciousness but not a superposition of such states as some appear to believe. No state once gone ever recurs; none is absolutely identical with what goes before. These states constantly change, not remaining for two consecutive moments the same. Worldlings, veiled by the web of illusion, mistake this apparent continuity to be something eternal and go to the extent of introducing an unchanging soul (the supposed doer and observer of all actions) to this ever changing consciousness.

Though consciousness is a unit in itself it consists of fleeting mental states. There are

52 such mental concomitants that arise in different types of consciousness in varying degrees.

One of them is feeling (*vedanā*); another is perception (*saññā*). The remaining 50 are collectively called volitional activities (*saṅkhārā*), a rendering which does not exactly convey the meaning of the Pāli term. Of them volition or *cetanā* is the most important mental factor.

Feeling is a more appropriate rendering for *vedanā* than sensation. It is an essential property of every consciousness and it may be pleasurable, painful or neutral.

Feeling is like a master who enjoys a dish prepared by a cook. It is feeling that experiences the desirable or undesirable fruits of an action done in this or a previous birth. Apart from this mental state there is no permanent soul or any other agent to experience the result of the action.

*'Kammaṣṣa kāraṇaṃ natthi vipākaṣṣa ca vedako  
Suddhadhammā pavattanti evetaṃ samma  
dassanaṃ.'*

'No doer is there who does the deed,  
Nor is there one who eats the fruit;  
Constituent parts alone exist;  
This verily is the right view.'

*Visuddhi Magga.*

Strictly speaking, there is no actor apart from action, no perceiver apart from perception, or, in other words, no conscious subject behind consciousness.

Professor James is quite Buddhistic when he says — 'Thoughts themselves are the thinkers.'

It should be understood that the bliss of Nibbāna is not associated with any kind of feeling. In conventional terms the Buddha says — *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ* — Nibbāna is the highest bliss. It is bliss supreme because it is not a kind of happiness that is experienced by the senses. It is a positive blissful state of relief. It is not the enjoyment of any pleasurable object.

In the Majjhīma Nikāya the Buddha says: 'The Exalted One does not recognize bliss because of a pleasurable sensation; but where-soever bliss is attained, there and there only does the Accomplished One recognize bliss.'

*Saññā*, the second factor, means simply sense-perception. It is *Saññā* that enables one to recognize an object that has once been

perceived by the mind. It should be understood that perception is not used here in the sense employed by early modern philosophers such as Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz.

Memory is due to this perception.

*Cetanā* or volition is the most important of all *saṅkhāras* or volitional activities.

Both *cetanā* and *citta* are derived from the same root *citi*, to think. In the case of *citta*, mind or consciousness, the root assumes the meaning of discernment (*vijānana*), whilst in *cetanā* it is used in the sense of co-ordination (*abhisandhāna*) and accumulation (*āyūhana*).

*Cetanā* is that which co-ordinates the mental states associated with itself on the object of consciousness. Like a chief disciple, or like a foreman carpenter who fulfils his duties and regulates the work of others as well, so does *cetanā* fulfil its own function and regulate the function of other concomitants associated with itself.

*Cetanā* plays a prominent part in all moral and immoral actions. The most significant mental state in the mundane (*lokiya*) consciousness is this *cetanā*, whilst that in the supramundane (*lokuttara*) is *paññā*, wisdom or insight. Mundane thoughts tend to accumulate *kamma*. Supramundane thoughts, on the contrary, tend to eradicate *kamma*. Hence *cetanā* in the supramundane consciousness does not constitute *kamma*.

It is this *cetanā* that is alluded to as *saṅkhāra* and *kammabhava* in the *paṭicca samuppāda*. Whilst dealing with the Five 'Groups', *saṅkharakkhandha* (mental formations) is used to denote the fifty mental states excluding feeling, and perception, with volition as the foremost.

From a psychological point of view, volition determines the activities of the mental states associated with it. From an ethical point of view, it determines their inevitable consequences. Hence where there is no volition there is no *kamma*.

Of the fifty-two mental states, seven are common to all types of consciousness. The first in order is *phassa* or contact.

For any sense-impression to occur, three factors are essential, namely — consciousness, receptive sense, and the object. For instance, one perceives an object with the consciousness through the eye as its instrument. It is still more correct to say that perception is a combination of these three factors.

When an object presents itself to the consciousness through one of the six senses there arises the mental state—contact. It should not be understood that mere collision is contact (*na sangatimatto eva phasso*).

Like a pillar which acts as a strong support to the rest of the structure, even so is contact to the co-existent mental states.

Feeling is the second, perception, the third, and volition, the fourth.

*Ekaggatā* or one-pointedness is the fifth mental state. It is concentration on one object or focusing the mind on one object. It is compared to a steady lamp-flame in a windless place ; to a firmly fixed pillar that cannot be shaken by the wind ; to water that binds together several substances to form one compound. That mental state tends to prevent its co-adjuncts from dissipation.

This one-pointedness is one of the five Jhāna factors. When it is developed and cultivated it is designated '*samādhi*'. 'It is the germ of all attentive, selected, focused, or concentrated consciousness.'

*Jīvitindriya* or psychic life is the sixth mental state. *Jīvita* means life and *indriya*, controlling faculty or principle. It is called *jīvita* because it sustains its co-associates. Although volition determines the activities of mental states it is *jīvitindriya* that vitalizes volition and other concomitants. As lotuses are sustained by water, an infant is sustained by a nurse, so are mental states sustained by *jīvitindriya*.

Death is regarded as the destruction of this psychic life. Immediately after, due to the power of *Kamma*, another psychic life arises in the subsequent life at the moment of conception.

The seventh universal mental state is *manasikāra* or attention. The literal meaning of the term is 'making in the mind.' Turning the mind towards the object is the chief characteristic of *manasikāra*. It is like the rudder of a ship, which is indispensable to take her directly to her destination. Mind without *manasikāra* is like a rudderless ship. *Manasikāra* is also compared to a charioteer with close attention on two well-trained horses (mind and object) as regards their rhythmical movements.

Attention is the closest equivalent to *manasikāra*, although the Pāli term does not

fully connote the meaning attached to the English word from a strictly philosophical point of view. As a mental state it is mere spontaneous attention. In *manasikāra*, as in attention, there is no peculiar vividness or clarity. To perception may be attributed this vividness to some extent.

*Manasikāra* is an aid to memory as it is common to all types of consciousness.

This stream of consciousness flows *ad infinitum* as long as it is fed by the muddy waters of ignorance and craving. When these two are completely cut off, then only does the stream of consciousness cease to flow. An ultimate beginning of this stream of consciousness cannot be determined, as a stage cannot be perceived when this life-force was not fraught with ignorance and craving.

This uninterrupted flux or continuity of or consciousness, conditioned by *Kamma* has no perceptible source in the beginningless past nor an end to its continuation in the future, except by the Noble Eightfold Path. There is no permanent ego or eternal soul as postulated in some religious systems.

## THE SEAT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

It is clear that the Buddha has not definitely assigned a specific basis for consciousness as He has done with the other senses. It was the cardiac theory that prevailed in His time, and this was evidently supported by the Upanishads. The Buddha could have adopted this popular theory, but He did not commit Himself. In the Paṭṭhāna, the Book of Relations, the Buddha refers to the basis of consciousness in such indirect terms as “*yam rūpam nissāya*,” depending on that material thing. What that material thing was, the Buddha did not positively assert. But according to the views of eminent commentators like venerable Buddhaghosa and Anuruddha the seat of consciousness is the heart (*hadaya-vatthu*). One wonders whether one is justified in presenting the cardiac theory as Buddhist when the Buddha Himself neither rejected nor accepted this popular theory.

### NOTE :

The purely mechanical side is, of course, the brain, but that is merely a tool, the most complex machine-tool imaginable. It is this tool that “mind” uses and one should not with “blind disbelief” reject the cardiac theory on purely material evidence, since none really exists.

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## THE EARNEST WISH

*Ohn Ghine*

Much confusion is caused in the minds of some Westerners when in their Buddhist reading or in conversation with Buddhists of Asia they come across terms which express, for them, concepts they cling to as part of their theist outlook or, on the other hand, have recently discarded as 'mere superstition'. There is much talking at cross purposes in this. The Asian whose mother tongue is not English means something slightly different to the concept he evokes when he speaks of 'priests' and 'prayer' and 'religion' for instance. There is no excuse really for using the word 'priest' since a priest is an intermediary between a supposed God or Angel and man, and there can be nothing in Buddhism even approximating that spiritual brokerage whereby a man buys or barter his way to 'Heaven'.

But in the use of 'prayer' there is often a misunderstanding on the part of the Westerner who is blinded by his concept of 'prayer' as a theist instrument and is not always aware of the subtle nuances of meaning of the word. To a theist or an ex-theist, 'prayer' is associated with an earnest request or petition to a supposed supernatural Being, able and, given the right mood and the right supplication and, sometimes, the right sacrifice, willing to grant a boon or avert a threatened danger.

When a non-Buddhist is told that there is no 'God' in Buddhism, or anywhere else, in the sense of an all-powerful Creator, and that all the responsibility for one's actions can not be bartered for submissiveness, he says: 'But Buddhists do pray, I've heard them say they pray and I've read of them praying: to whom, then, do they pray?', he is somewhat puzzled if he receives the reply that if Buddhists pray (as some, it must be admitted, sometimes do) they pray to themselves as the theists do; but the Buddhists usually know that their prayers are really addressed to themselves and not to a postulated 'God' projected forth from their personalities as something separate and distinct, and changeless. They know that anything they can contact is in continual change and subject to the same disadvantages thereby as they themselves are.

So the meaning of 'prayer' is important. For prayer is merely an earnest wish that is usually but not necessarily addressed to one

who has, it is supposed, the ability to make that wish come true. The word is from the Latin 'precarius', 'obtained by prayer' and the Romans were realist enough to use the same word (our modern 'precarious') for 'doubtful', and they derived the word from 'precor' meaning both 'to entreat' and 'to wish for', just as our Pāli word *pattheti* has both these meanings.

And in Buddhism it is as an 'Earnest Wish' that we most often use the word 'Prayer'. Even then we could perhaps be a little more positive and term it, as it often has been termed, 'An Act of Truth'.

One often finds in the old Scriptures the 'Act of Truth' and this Act of Truth is remarkably potent. It has died out in the world to a great extent with the dying out of the resolute courage that is necessary for the telling of truth and for making a vow that one must keep at all costs; and with the partial dying out of the courage necessary for shouldering one's own burdens and responsibilities, the Act of Truth has degenerated into slavish prayers or petitions to supposed Divine Beings for 'ever-present help in time of trouble'.

A very beautiful instance of the Act of Truth is given in the Majjhīma Nikāya where the former bandit-murderer, Angulimāla, desires to help a devout woman lay-disciple in difficult and dangerous childbirth. The Buddha tells him to recite *parittas* (help-giving stanzas) after making the Act of Truth: 'Earnestly wishing by the virtue of the fact that I have not in my whole life harmed anybody by word, thought or deed, that the devout laywoman may come safely through her ordeal.' Taken aback, Angulimāla pointed out the murders he had committed in the past. Then the Buddha told him to make an Act of Truth that never since he had been reborn by entering the Noble Order and changing himself by gaining the stages of the Path, had he harmed any being. This joyfully done, Angulimāla's efforts were successful.

To the old-fashioned 'materialist' this and other Acts of Truth, earnest wishes based on and made the more earnest by an appeal to Truth itself, may sound fanciful and superstitious; yet that will only prove him really vulnerable to the epithet 'old-fashioned', since the painstaking team of scientists in the

Parapsychology Department of Duke University in U.S.A. (to mention only one band of workers in this field) has had results that at least go a very long way towards proving the truth of psychokinesis, the action of 'mind' on 'matter' at a distance.

But even apart from psychokinesis there are normal psychological values that come into play and a rather amusing instance in real life and on a somewhat mundane plane is worth relating if only to show the interaction of these several factors.

The story was told me by one of the younger actors in the comedy and as he has since died at a ripe age the telling can harm no-one.

In the latter half of the last century there lived in Rangoon a poor and uneducated Chinese who earned a meagre living by plying a sampan on the swift-flowing Rangoon river, struggling with goods or passengers to manipulate his sweep and steer his frail craft for the few small coins that served but to keep him alive.

He had ambition, courage, initiative, a strong will and a good physique but could not make enough, though he worked long hours at his arduous occupation, to raise himself above subsistence level and gain even a small capital to carry on trade on his own account though he felt certain he could make his fortune at it.

He had often noticed a fine brick building not far from the foreshore which, though not large by some standards, was, to his vision, a palace, and he was one day inspired to walk round the building, to gaze longingly at it and take it all in with his eye and to make the earnest wish: 'May I, as I am sincere and hard-working, some day be the sole owner of this building and may my fortune grow as long as I own it.' He confided this to some of his few friends who were inclined to jeer at 'the future millionaire'. One day, taking a brief rest against some bales of goods piled on the jetty, he pondered his fate and his position and came closer than he had ever been to complete discouragement and defeat. He was following an occupation that killed men young, and he was nearing middle age.

He made the earnest wish: 'By my sincerity and hard work, if my future is ever to change may it change now, before it is too late.' In that moment of exaltation, his sharpened hearing and attention took in what had been just the drone of voices coming from the other side of the bales of goods. An itinerant fortune-teller was consoling a customer, a com-

fortably-off Burmese widow: 'You need not despair, madam, although your daughter is not as beautiful or as young as some, she is sure to obtain a good husband who will be kind to her and who will make your small fortune into a great one, though he may be poor to start with.' The poor boatman immediately walked round the pile of goods and exclaimed to the astonished trio: 'Indeed the fortune-teller is a wise man and speaks truth. I am the man who will marry your daughter as he foresaw and I can make your small fortune into a very great one'. All eventually agreed that it must be so and he married the girl to whom he was a very good husband. One of the first things he did was to buy the building he had vowed to buy and he became one of the richest men in Burma. The building in later years seemed small and mean to his son, but never could he be persuaded to part with it.

The Chinese friend who told me the story related how, when he was an impecunious youngster of ten, he, with others who had heard the story in popular gossip, used to choose a time when the owner was outside the building and walk ceremoniously round it, if they could dodge the caretaker who was paid to drive them away, and say earnestly: 'May I some day be the owner of this building'. The now wealthy Chinese owner, who had come up the hard way, would never spend a copper coin that he could avoid spending, let alone give anything away, yet he would at once offer money to the young blackmailers to take back their words.

Now to put the whole case down to 'chance plus psychology' does not explain everything as the old man knew when he paid blackmail to the youngsters. He was as hard-headed a realist as any that has traded in the world, and he had proved the efficacy of the 'Earnest Wish'.

In just the same manner any man can prove its efficacy, especially if he makes it an Act of Truth. But in making the Act of Truth and the Earnest Wish one should be very careful that there is a moral motive behind it. Otherwise there can be the danger of obtaining one's desire at a time when one no longer desires it, and that has proved, at times, calamitous. This is shown very well in the folk-lore of most peoples where the man who gets his wish finds that it brings disaster.

And many a man who has said 'I'll be damned if I do it' and then does it, damns

himself for a period in actuality. Indeed, benediction, the speaking of good wishes, and malediction, the speaking of bad wishes or cursing, has been used by almost every man who has ever lived. The ancients had a sure instinct which has been practically lost in the mad whirl of the modern world, of the potency of these, which are both earnest wishes. Although an earnest wish can

change outside circumstances, it the more quickly and the more surely changes the one who wishes.

There is really only one Earnest Wish that is at all worth the making, since all things change and all times are dangerous times. That is the Earnest wish : 'May I, by virtue of my past good deeds and my earnest striving, attain Nibbāna'.



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# THE BUDDHIST VIEW ON RACE RELATIONS

*By Venerable Aggamahāpāṇḍita U Thittila*

The problem of race, of the idea of superiority of race, of race prejudice, of "colour bar" and consequently of the implementation, in the fullest and broadest sense of the word, of the Charter of Human Rights, is one which, apart from some of its terms of reference, is not new. Neither does it appear from its latest forms of expression to be nearer to solution than on any previous date. That the problem as such may be settled on paper by making use of the data (or lack of it) available from the many scientific bodies concerned with such matters, is proved beyond all possible doubt. That the problem still remains, however, regardless of its apparent theoretical solution, is a matter of grave concern. It indicates that an aspect of the problem has either not been appreciated, or if appreciated has not been approached with anything other than prejudice or a complete lack of understanding of the fundamentals of the psychology of beings in general and of human beings in particular. Before enlarging on these fundamentals, however, let us examine briefly what would, in the more usual sense of the word, be considered the scientific approach to the subject. Let us satisfy ourselves again that by means of this approach we have clearly proved to ourselves without a shadow of doubt the groundlessness of race prejudice. Let us show by means of our scientific knowledge that there is no basis whatever on which we can say, on any pretext, that, given suitable environment, there is the slightest evidence of a difference of ability between racial groups.

Besides the scientific method, and before it in matter of time, is the literary approach, dealing as it does with considerations of historical background and the authoritative opinion of the ancients. Then there is the religious attitude shown, in principle, as the statement or command of a humanly-created "Almighty God" or, in extenso, as the "Law of the Prophets" and the commentarial elucidations of the scholar—teachers. Morally, as an aspect of the literary approach, the problem has been treated from almost every quarter. It is here, however, that we so often find how far man is from appreciating the utterly uncompromising dicta of an absolute morality, how, in obedience to his desire, man will construct an opinion, a

relative morality, quite inconsistent with the principles of his outwardly accepted canons of moral teaching. Here, of course, our duty is to deal with the distinct problem of race, but it is clearly to be observed that such matters arise fundamentally from an attitude of mind which is intolerant of the smallest difference between individuals. Differences in habit, appearance, gesture, speech, outlook or opinion of another individual as genetically and anatomically related to one as one's own brother can cause this intolerance to arise. Extend this and we witness, within the confines of what is called a race, the religious persecutions of the earlier centuries based on a relative morality prescribed by political necessity founded on a desire for power and position. Extend this and we witness the true race prejudice, born of a relative morality urged in the name of true religion, which spread over areas of the South American continent. See, though, how this arose from a deceptive state of mind which cloaked its desire to explore, to become rich and powerful, with the majesty of the "Word of God" carried to "the benighted—the heathen, the pagan, the inferior—the coloured man." A man fit only to be killed if he stood in the way of—what?—The Word of God, or Desire.

To return to the scientific aspect of this very important problem. Here is an occasion to observe with what care and with what objectivity the individual scientist has pursued his task. Whether his task was originally framed to prove an absolute and fundamental race difference, or whether to indicate conclusively, once and for all, that all men are brothers, he has pursued it. Regardless of this task, however, data has been collected; data which, according to the bias of the statistician, has been formulated in such a manner that political necessity has been able to elevate one group to the level of master race and condemn another to extermination on the grounds of racial inferiority.

Only the completely unprejudiced mind can examine statistics and discover in that data the knowledge it seeks. There have been many such who have laboured honestly and tirelessly at the very detailed and complicated tasks of collecting and editing anthropological, genetical, psychological, historical,

sociological, political and cultural material with the true aim of discovering why one group of individuals should show prejudice against another.

Let us then review, summarize and try to draw a conclusion from some of the aspects analysed by researchers in their various fields. Psychology is perhaps a good aspect on which to begin, since it is a subject of growing importance in the examination of human behaviour. A subject which has been approached by Western workers in a manner quite different from that traditional to the Eastern hemisphere. The Western method seeks to analyse individuals in terms of the results arising from their behaviour and reaction to set problems and stimuli associated, to a greater or lesser degree, with the environment of the subject, that of the researcher, or in terms of an artificial set of conditions by which neither side is unduly affected. The Eastern method, and particularly the Buddhist approach, seeks to interpret the very thought of the individual in terms of a root structure bearing in its very nature the tendency and bias which will warp the absolute clarity of experience. A warping which renders us all, to a greater or lesser degree, what one might in Western terminology call "psychopathic". Psychopathic when equated with the universal yard-stick of ethical purity, unbiased perception and equanimity. (The Buddha it was who said: "Putthujjano ummattako": All ordinary men are mad.) The approaches to this subject are clearly quite different, and the results may at first sight appear sometimes to be at variance with each other. Nevertheless, where one system may by persistent and detailed examination of experimental data fail to perceive differences which could be interpreted as sufficient grounds for racial prejudice, the other will show and prove beyond all doubt that the individual is the only unit. This latter system will show that root structure is invariably comparable, and that behaviour and performance are matters of environment coupled with personal, not parental or racial, tendency.

Professor Otto Klineberg in his excellent little pamphlet "Race and Psychology", deals with the problem of possible racial differences in a helpful and systematic manner. He groups the various aspects of the experimental approach to the question in an all-embracing and logical fashion. He shows that tests imposed on individuals

intended to illustrate difference of ability are almost always inconclusive, since by far the greater part of an individual's reaction to any test is dominated by the effect of his environmental background. Moreover, tests however cleverly devised can never quite be freed from such deficiencies owing to their having been framed initially on the basis of another environmental background. He does show, however, and this is important, that when members of different ethnic groups are subject to the same environmental conditions their I. Q's. (intelligence quotients) show only the expected individual difference, never superiority or inferiority of ethnic group. Now it is clear that people exhibit considerable physical difference, differences which give to the popular mind the idea of race. He shows, however, that variations such as white skin, black skin, yellow skin, straight hair, woolly hair, blue eyes, black eyes, long heads, broad heads, etc., in their many combinations and permutations exhibit no greater tendency to variation than is demonstrated between the individuals showing dominance of one particular characteristic. That is, they never show a mental capability or deficiency associated with a physical characteristic. He indicates that tests designed to demonstrate the upper limit of ability among the various ethnic groups show that every such group possesses roughly the same percentage of high I.Qs. Moreover, he says, it is quite evident that race mixture as such never of itself brings about inferiority. It is the environmental conditions built largely on the prejudices of others which cause these groups so often to become degraded and to be of apparently lower mental standard. It would appear also that in matters such as rate of mental growth, of specific ability, of temperament and differences of personality, the factor showing controlling influence is again environment. If this factor is not taken into account the resulting tests have only the effect of showing how "white" a particular ethnic group may be. It can readily be appreciated how misleading, and dangerous, data of this kind may become if used by the unscrupulous to satisfy personal, political and nationalistic ends. One may go much further than this and say how misleading data of this kind has been in the past and still is at this very moment, and how it continues to be used for these same personal, political and nationalistic ends. On paper, however, this short psychological analysis shows that no differ-



ence in expected performance between ethnic groups may be found, provided the environmental basis is a constant in the experiment. Remove this constant and we can prove how black, white, or yellow a man is in just the same way as in the well known school algebraic problem the student is asked to express "b" and "c" in terms of "a", or "a" and "c" in terms of "b". Several times the term "ethnic group" has been used in the foregoing, perhaps in the sense of its having some specific meaning. It may seem as though one were speaking of a pure race with decided characteristics and in which the individuals could be said to be comparable in their major and minor details. Such, however, is by no means the case, for although the main and usually quoted feature of skin colour may be a fairly constant aspect of human grouping, inter-breeding between the various groups may be and is practised without any degrading effect whatever, either mentally or physically. The only effects are those produced purely artificially by the prejudices of others and resulting in inferior environmental conditions.

When the subject of race and individual capability is dealt with in accordance with the methods of genetical study, it would appear that the case for non-discrimination becomes greater even than is shown by Western psychological studies. According to the theories of geneticists which have grown and been expanded from the original experimental work of Gregor Mendel, it would appear that the hereditary characteristics of an individual are the result of the combinations and permutations of innumerable discrete particles called genes. Each of these genes transmits without change, except in the specific case of mutation, a characteristic and deterministic quality in the overall growth and structure of a new individual from the moment of conception onward throughout his life. It also enables him in turn to propagate a gene structure which will again determine the detailed form of a further being in accordance with these individually unchanged but variously combined ultra-microscopic bodies. To what extent the gene theory can be observed in the mental structure and behaviour of related beings is, however, another matter. One will appreciate that it is often easy to perceive a physical similarity between parents and their children, nevertheless it is usually readily realizable, by honest self examination, that one's own mental characteristics are

quite different from those of one's parents, similarities being the result of education and environment. The basic, underlying and governing bias of one's character is clearly a feature quite peculiar to the individual. This, however, departs from the point somewhat. It was intended to show, on the findings of geneticists, that dominant physical characteristics may be perceived locally, due to the perpetuation of certain gene combinations by environmentally selective mating, that these same genes may be present in any individual on the globe and may be transmitted freely and in accordance with regular laws between individuals of any other gene structure whatsoever. This would prove again that the so-called racial characteristics are, as such, only the result of a few of the many thousands of genes which according to modern theory determine the detailed physical and operative structure of the individual.

On paper, therefore, it can, as previously stated, readily be proved that there is no physical or mental foundation whatsoever for these very prevalent racial prejudices. Yet, despite all this, the fact remains that they are still strong and show too little sign of abating. Consequently we must turn our attention in other directions to see what aspect has been left unexamined which might give a clue to the problem. It may be that this problem is one which from its very nature cannot be solved in anything other than an individual manner. However, the possibility of general solution must not be abandoned at this stage for lack of examination.

Two things remain to be spoken of, they are environment and mental nature. The first of these two has been mentioned frequently in connection with every kind of examination of the point at issue, whether it be psychological, genetical, anthropological, historical or literary. It is, admittedly, an aspect of the greatest importance, for it points the way to what could—if it were so desired—be a general solution to the question. It would appear from all the tests made, however efficient or inefficient they may have been, that provided a being is subject to a particular kind of environment from a very early age he will react to that environment and develop a mental outlook influenced by it. Moreover, he will be comparable with any other individual of whatever group one may choose who has been subject to the same environment. If, therefore, the tests are formulated by a member

of one particular set of dominant environmental conditions, beings who are examined in accordance with that series of tests will show a greater or lesser aptitude and could be awarded a higher or lower quotient of intelligence accordingly as their own environmental background approximated to, or deviated from, that dominating the test. As it is clearly observable that there are many varying environmental backgrounds to which individuals may be subjected, either singly or in groups, it becomes very clear that unless these backgrounds were swept away in every detail, however small, and replaced by one in which every detail were identical—even geographically and climatically—there would always arise what would eventually be called different “cultures”. This is not to say that if such an impossible thing could be achieved we would have “one universal culture”. Far from it, but we shall deal with this when we speak of Kamma. Since the stabilizing of environment on a common basis is fundamentally an impossibility, and a contradiction of the very order of things, the environmental solution on a general basis would in any case be useless.

Now we speak of culture in broad terms such as Eastern culture, Western culture, European culture, Chinese culture, Asian culture and so on, thereby signifying basic differences of what we personally either approve or disapprove, to a degree depending on our own knowledge, education and perception. Does not this very point then give the clue to the whole problem of race prejudice, a clue not to be found in any of the physical studies made, or in what one might call psycho-physical examinations of representative subjects. Does not the explanation, and the elucidation, of this great question lie in the individual’s own attitude to the way of life, habits and customs of other individuals or groups. His attitude to their culture and to their environment in terms of his own experience and in accordance with the underlying structure of his own mental process. His mental process, that personal bias or habitual form of mind, which, quite irrespective of the theoretical proof of a problem in physical terms, will strike an attitude depending upon whether he likes or dislikes the local characteristics and habits of other beings. The great teaching of Dependent Origination of the Buddha is :

.... “Phassa paccayā vedanā  
Vedanā paccayā taṇhā  
Taṇhā paccayā upādānaṃ  
Upādāna paccayā bhavo” ....

Freely translated this says that from the contact we make with various objects there arise in us feelings, which are either painful, pleasant or neutral. From these feelings there arise cravings either to possess the object or to have it removed. From these cravings there arise positive graspings which make one wish not only to possess but to retain, not only to remove the undesirable but to keep it away at all times. In this manner existence proceeds based on an ignorance of the real nature of things, and, by this latent bias of ignorance, expressing itself in the type of feeling arising after contact with an object and proceeding to craving and grasping, the cycle of laying down the bias for future life (and opinion) proceeds.

If we are to solve the race problem at all there is but one way in which it can be done. What is that way ? It is by the examination of one’s own biases and characteristics. It is by the gradual extirpation of those biases and characteristics with the consequent disappearance of the conceit which says, “I am the better man”. To be subject to an environment is in the very nature of things, but, by persistent analysis and understanding, to free oneself mentally from the bonds of that or any other environment is the solution to the problem. It is not a mass solution, but it answers the question, “Can the race problem be solved ?” by the simple answer, “Yes, if you wish it to be solved, now, here, and for yourself”.

The very small saying given above regarding contact, feeling, craving and grasping, is but a tiny fraction of the Buddhist attitude to the questions of race, individual and existence, so it would be profitable in the following pages to examine this attitude in greater detail. It is an attitude which shows that the problem can be solved, not by legislation, not by research into the characteristics of others, but by gaining understanding of oneself and thereby of the true underlying cause of the trouble. What is the cause ? The three roots which dominate the existences of us all : Greed, Hatred and Ignorance.

These three roots are roots in full reality. They go deep down in the very fibres of our being, they are thus part of what we call

“Us”, “I”, “Personality”, for animals as well as for humans and Devas.

Even in the “colour bar” we are considering, we find that this goes deeper than thought, down to the depths of our emotionality, our instinct. Put a Black Orpington hen in with some White Leghorns or *vice versa* and you will see an instant mass attack against the intruder of another colour. In the animal world the instinct to attack, to destroy that which shows a difference, even if it is one of the herd in other respects, can be noticed. For “difference” spells “danger” to the herd instinct.

A truly civilised man is one who has succeeded to some extent in controlling his instincts. Full control of the instincts and of the mind is prerequisite to Arahathship or Supreme Buddhahood, one of which is the goal of every Buddhist.

The worm, the God, the man, none is free from instinct, and none is free from the roots of Craving, Aversion and Ignorance.

That it is that hinders the acceptance of logical, scientific proofs that colour or shape of the head make no final difference, in the mass (though it is still true that individual differences can make great differences in the world: as Pascal said: “If Cleopatra’s nose had been shorter, the whole face of the earth would have been changed”.) In every ethnic group there are, on the one hand, outstanding individuals and, on the other, individuals repressed economically and culturally. There are Negro Prime Ministers who dine and dance with white royalty and “poor whites” who could never get that opportunity, which shows that political and economic considerations leap the “colour bar”.

Why this should be so is a “Divine mystery” to the believers in “Divine Providence” but quite understandable to those who have a knowledge of Kamma and Rebirth. Indeed even if one accepts the idea of Kamma and Rebirth as a theory merely, it still remains the only theory that will fit the facts and give any sort of logical reason and “raison d’etre” to the world.

Before entering on a further consideration of this, let us consider some other aspects of the Buddhist view on race and colour prejudice generally.

This is not the place to moralise on the modern manifestations in various countries of colour prejudice nor to prophesy as to the ultimate fate of those “systems” based on this and of the countries that cling tenaciously to them, but to quote what the Buddha said so long ago :—

“Not by birth is one an outcaste,  
Not by birth is one a noble ;  
But by deeds is one an outcaste,  
And by deeds is one a noble.”

—Khuddaka-Nikāya, Suttanipāta,  
Vasala-Sutta, Verse 142.

And in the Visuddhimagga it is put very plainly : “ This is the body’s nature : it is a collection of bones plastered over with pieces of flesh, enveloped in moist inner skin, enclosed in the outer cuticle, with orifices here and there, constantly dribbling and trickling like a grease pot, inhabited by a community of worms, the home of disease, the basis of painful states, perpetually oozing from the nine orifices like a chronic open carbuncle, from both of whose eyes eye-filth trickles, from whose ears ear-filth, from whose nostrils snot, from whose mouth food and bile and phlegm and blood, from whose lower outlets excrement and urine, and from whose pores the broth of stale sweat seeps, with blue-bottles and their like buzzing round it, which when untended with tooth sticks and mouth-washing and head-anointing and bathing and underclothing and dressing would, judged by the universal repulsiveness of the body, make even a king, if he wandered from village to village with his hair in its natural wild disorder, no different from a flower-scavenger or an outcaste or what you will. So there is no distinction between a king’s body and an outcaste’s in so far as its impure stinking nauseating repulsiveness is concerned.”

Also, in the Agañña Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, the Buddha showed that some people of the ‘highest caste’ performed good actions and thereby after the death of their present bodies, manifested in better realms, while there were those of the same caste who performed evil actions which caused their manifestation in worlds of greater suffering. Similarly there were those of the despised castes or ‘outcastes’ whose deeds took them to higher or lower existences ; while in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, He showed that even in this world the king himself would pay

reverence to a man of low caste if that man became a monk. This, by the way, shows that there was not the rigidity of the caste system which grew up later.

In the Majjhīma Nikāya we find that the Buddha treated of caste pretensions in two separate Sermons. In the Assālāyana Sutta He pointed out that the fire produced by a person pretending to kingly rank and high caste and using for the purpose of making fire, the costliest of sandal wood, would differ in no respect from the fire produced by a poor man of 'low caste' using the common castor-plant stubble from pigsties, as regards the production of heat and light. In the Madhura Sutta, He drove this idea home by showing that spiritual advancement of both rich and poor, those claiming high caste and those despised as of low caste, differed in no respect whatsoever. The 'spiritual fire' is the same. And both types will pass away according to their deeds, since both types produce evildoers and the doers of good.

### KAMMA AND REBIRTH.

'Men are heirs of their Kamma': said the Buddha. Kamma means deeds and therefore men are the heirs of their deeds, the deeds done in the remote past as well as in the present 'life'.

A definite knowledge of this or, in those cases where there is no definite knowledge, a belief in this, is natural to Buddhists since it was stated so unequivocally and so often by the Buddha.

Here we must digress a little to show how 'beliefs' are held by Buddhists, since otherwise we may be accused of 'blind belief' and 'dogma' both of which are foreign to Buddhism.

Naturally one doesn't call oneself 'a Buddhist' unless one accepts the Teaching of the Buddha, which has been so well preserved in the Pāli Canon, that never contradicts itself and that is susceptible of proof in every particular.

This is where 'belief' must come in and where there is 'dogma' in the sense of the word that means 'strongly-held opinions'. But these beliefs are to be taken, until there is full knowledge and realisation, as working hypotheses, and not as 'dogmas' in the sense

that they must be blindly believed in and must not be disputed. Knowledge and full realisation are attained only by fitting oneself to perceive Truth.

So in the case of Kamma and Rebirth, one can attain to unshakable realisation of this truth, but even if one accepts it merely as a hypothesis, it is the only hypothesis that fits all the known facts and has been such for twenty-five centuries. And if it is still 'unproven' for some, it has also, in all that time, never been disproved.

Acceptance, then, in whichever way one does accept it, of the facts of Kamma and Rebirth, naturally precludes the type of thought that would allow the opinion, 'I am superior because of my colour; or the shape of my head.' It is so clear that one has been in so many families and so many castes, even in the lower spheres of animals etc., and will probably be so again in no long time unless one has gained at least the first stage on the Path of Enlightenment. This essential part of the teaching of the Buddha thus deals a death-blow to all pretensions of superiority.

This is all against the background of eternity, pictured by the Buddha in His famous parable of the mountain, seven leagues high and seven leagues through each way, of pure ironstone, with no crack or cranny, and with nothing to weather it away. At the end of a hundred years a man comes with a fine handkerchief of Benares cloth, and strokes that rock, and so at the end of another hundred years, and another hundred years. At the end of each hundred years this happens and there is nothing else to wear away the mountain. Sooner would this mountain be worn away thus, said the Buddha, than would an aeon pass, and of such aeons, there have been many hundreds, many thousands, since this world system began and there will be many hundreds, many thousands before this world system is destroyed to give place to another. Against such a background the pretensions of superiority of an individual or a class seem as childish as they really are.

Then there is the Buddha's dynamic teaching of *Mettā Bhāvanā*. This has been translated best as 'Meditation of Loving-kindness' and that seems to be the best translation that one can give in English. But these words express the merest fraction of the full meaning. It is a dynamic, intense radiation of a positive force that even the

words 'loving-kindness', 'benevolence' and 'goodwill' only faintly express. This Mettā is radiated with a concentrated mind to the front, to the right, to the rear, to the left, above and below, through the whole universe with no sense of 'I' am radiating Mettā but one IS Mettā. There can be, then no mental reservation to exclude a supposed 'enemy' or 'inferior' and this at-oneness with all gives ineffable peace and well-being and there is neither 'higher' nor 'lower' nor 'equal', neither 'individual' nor 'race'. Yet it is not, as the Buddha pointed out, annihilation except the annihilation of 'Self' and of 'Craving'.

All this lays the foundation for the Buddhist outlook on caste and colour : there is no difference and should be no distinction. The great teaching of Mettā, of loving-kindness to everything that lives and breathes, to humans with different customs and different ideologies as well as to those of the same herd, precludes in a Buddhist any compromise with the ignorant error of a significant difference because of colour or cranial configuration. In this respect the Buddhist is at one with the English mystic and poet William Blake : 'Everything that lives is holy'..



### NEITHER CASTE NOR COLOUR

'This two-footed dirty body  
Which carries about a bad odour  
And which is full of impurities  
Which pour out from different places;  
With a body of this sort  
If one thinks highly of oneself  
And looks down upon others,  
Due to what can it be except ignorance ?'

—Sutta Nipāta—No.11 Sutta, Vijaya Sutta,  
Verses 207,208.

## A REMEDY FOR WORLD SUFFERING

*By U Sobhana of Myingyan*

The Exalted One, the great spiritual physician saw that the world was sick with Suffering and prescribed the only possible remedy: His remedy is the method of Meditation—the development of systematic thinking to take one to the farthest limits of thought and beyond thought. The journey of religious life, as described in the Piṭakas, is at once a progress of increasing peace and of increasing intellectual power and activity, which is induced by meditation. It is real intellection, not the “turning round and about” that sometimes passes for thought.

Bhāvanā is the term used in the Pāli Canon, and it means the developing or the cultivation of the mind. Meditation is taught in a methodical and scientific way in the Buddhist texts. Sīla or moral conduct is the starting point in the progress of mental enlightenment. It is the right control of mental, physical and vocal actions. Anyone who has secured a firm footing on the ground of morality becomes a fit person to embark upon the higher practice of Bhāvanā the control and culture of the mind.

There are two kinds of Bhāvanā—Samādhi Bhāvanā and Vipassanā Bhāvanā. In the former the meditator acquires mental fixity in the sense of perfect poise free from wavering and enjoys inward peace. In the Cūlavedalla Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya, we get a good discussion of Samādhi Bhāvanā. Here the lay disciple Visākha questions the Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā in this wise: “What, sister, is rapt concentration? What cultivates it?”

“Rapt concentration is the focussing of the mind; its phenomena are the fourfold mustering of mindfulness, its requisites are the four right exertions; the practice, the cultivation and increase of these states of consciousness develop rapt concentration”, replies the Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā. This passage emphasises the importance of mental power and activity to reach this state of one-pointedness of mind. Certain “philosophies” speak of “the head and the heart”, “emotion and the will” and often in terms of conflict. In Bhāvanā these are fused into one mighty dynamic force. Various methods are used to attain this state of mental equipoise.

The Pāli texts speak of Kammātthanas and Kasinas, used to attain this state of mental tranquillization. Kammātthānas are topics on which attention should be focussed and

Kasinas are external objects which engross the attention. The Suttas also recommend the practice; in the Mahārāhulovāda Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya, the Buddha says: “Cultivate, Rāhula, the meditation of mindfulness on inhaling and exhaling. This, Rāhula, when constantly cultivated brings about manifold advantages.” These breathing exercises are used to calm and concentrate the mind and provide a point of focus. At the beginning of the discussion on Adhi-citta, in the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa enumerates forty subjects for meditation. The ten impurities (Asubha-bhāvanā), the four sublime states (Brahma-vihara), namely, Lovingkindness (Mettā), Compassion (Karuṇā), Sympathetic joy (Muditā) and Equanimity (Upekkhā), and the four formless states (Arupajjhāna) are some of the subjects recommended. Taking one of these topics, the disciple, mindful and self-possessed should concentrate his attention on it, and be *fully absorbed in it*, till he finally reaches one-pointedness of mind.

From this complete absorption, the ‘Jhānas,’ are sometimes translated as ‘absorptions’. As a result of successful Samādhi-bhāvanā, on one of these subjects, the disciple experiences four blissful states of consciousness, called the Jhānas. Successful Samādhi-bhāvanā leads the disciple to experience the Ecstatic (Jhāna) states in succession.

In the first blissful state the mind will be impregnated with joy and a sense of physical and mental well-being—rapture—is experienced. Present in the First Jhāna are the qualities of analysis, investigation, joy, happiness and concentration. In each Jhāna, the mind becomes progressively more concentrated and consciousness becomes more and more subtle.

The second blissful state is described in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta—Dīgha-Nikāya thus: “By allaying analysis and investigation, with inner faith, the mind concentrated and one-pointed, he enters on and abides in this stage, which is without analysis, without investigation, is born of contemplation (Samādhijam), and is rapture and happiness.

The third Ecstatic state is characterised by equanimity, mindfulness and ease.

In the fourth blissful state of meditation, this feeling of ease is allayed and there is only a sense of equanimity, a state of mind which, rising above hedonistic views, is yet positiver

and not merely the negation of interest and desire. When the meditator reaches this state, his mental development is such that he experiences neither suffering nor happiness and his condition is described as the utter purity of mindfulness, which is indifference. In this state the meditator experiences transcendental, blissful and complete tranquillization of body and mind. The Buddha describes the mental state of such a person, in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* as “with his mind thus serene, made pure, translucent, cultured, void of evils, supple, ready to act, firm and impenetrable”, and proceeds to give us an idea of the serenity of mind left after the fourth Ecstatic state is reached.

In these blissful states there is no suggestion of trance, but of enhanced vitality. By wrongly translating “*Jhāna*” as “trance” much misunderstanding has been caused by some scholars who had not themselves experienced the *Jhānas*. To imagine that experiencing them is equal to Arahatsip is condemned as a deadly heresy in the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, *Dīgha Nikāya*. The *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, *Majjhima Nikāya* shows that the Buddha rejected the doctrines of *Ālāra Kālāma* and *Uddaka Rāma-putta*, because they made this the aim of their teaching. As such, these Ecstatic states are only the means to an end, but not the end in itself. After the fourth *Jhāna*, even higher mental states can be attained, for instance, the *Pañca-abhiñña*, which are five profound intellectual attainments. They are classified as supernormal vision, supernormal hearing, ability to remember past births, insight into the mental processes or thoughts of others, and various psychic powers. These supernormal powers are described in great detail in the *Pāli* texts, but the Master expressly states that they are not essential to attain *Nibbāna*, which is the true Goal of all Buddhist meditation.

Reaching the fourth Ecstatic state, the pilgrim, on his path of progress, should turn his mind towards *Vipassanā-bhāvanā*. *Samādhi-bhāvanā* merely inhibits the passions, which can be completely annihilated only by *Vipassanā-bhāvanā* through which the meditator experiences an intuitive vision of Reality. He begins to see life as it really is, and also acquires Right Knowledge. Thereby he comes to understand the three characteristics of phenomenal life, as transiency, suffering and non-self. Everywhere he sees these three characteristics standing out in bold relief. He comprehends that life is merely a flux, a continuous undivided movement. To him, every form of pleasure is only a prelude to pain. He is detached from all conditioned things and has neither attachment nor aversion for anything in the world. He has a clear vision of the true nature of the world. As he is deeply absorbed in meditation, he perceives an aura emanating from his body and he experiences a serenity, hitherto unknown. As he develops insight, he becomes even-minded and strenuous, his attention is perfected, and his intellect becomes extraordinarily keen.

Reaching this state of mental culture, he meditates on one of the three characteristics and continues intently to reflect on it till to his great joy a flash of Insight dawns upon him, which gives him the first glimpse of *Nibbāna*.

The possibility of light is within us, it can be kindled and made to shine forth by meditation. The highest state of bliss, which is *Nibbāna*, the Peace Eternal, can be achieved only by *Vipassanā* meditation as shown by the Enlightened One.

Thus the Buddha gives the only permanent cure—Supreme *Nibbāna* where one never ails again and where all diseases cease for evermore.

“ The burden is indeed the fivefold mass :  
The seizer of the burden, man :  
Taking it up is sorrow in this world :  
The laying of it down is bliss.

If a man lay this heavy burden down,  
And take not any other burden up :  
If he draw out that craving, root and all,  
No more an-hungered, he is free.”

—*Samyutta-Nikāya xxii, Sec. 22.*

# THE ESSENTIALS OF BUDDHISM

## The Eightfold Noble Path:—The Middle Way

*U Hla Maung, B.A., B.E.S. (Retd.)*

**T**HE Eightfold Noble Path enshrines the eight desiderata or factors for a successful and effective treading of the Middle Way. The farer on the Middle Way is to be lighted along by eight beacons. What is this Middle Way? It is a way which lies mid-way between one which is not at all productive of any positive good and another which is fruitful of much positive evil. It is thus a way which is not characterised by barrenness and sterility or by the stink of a charnel-house. It is clean, wholesome, fragrant and fruitful of blessings.

Is it a hard way? That depends upon the rate of speed with which one wishes to reach the goal. Some may slip or dally by the way, but others may and can push on and on. The Middle Way is more than "Plain living and high thinking". There is a definite ultimate. For those who wish to develop into the highest disciples of the Buddha it demands nothing less than the highest stage or standard of *Sīla* (morality), *Samādhi* (mental purity and development) and *Paññā* (wisdom). This ultimate was attained to by thousands of Arahats during the lifetime of the Enlightened One. Who knows how many have silently climbed the pinnacle since the Master's passing away to *Nibbāna*? The Dhamma is still vigorous and fresh. The path remains clear, precise and inviting. Arahats are still attainable. If the West has produced Newtons, Rutherfords and Einsteins of Science, why can she not produce her own *Sāriputtas* and *Moggallanas*? The glory of this path is the grand adventure that now beckons to the West.

So much for the ultimate. Below this ideal there is ample room and range for treading the way according to one's *Kamma* and one's moral equipment and development. Those readers, who will please turn their attention back to the way of life indicated in the *Mangalasutta* or the *Sutta of Thirty-eight Great Blessings*, will find the range of the Middle way in those blessings. Remember that the *Tathāgata* preached the *Mangalasutta* way of life for all *Devas* and men whereas the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path were addressed, in the first, instance, to *bhikkhus*. This, of course does not mean that the Noble Path is shut out

to ordinary people. For these latter, there is the preparatory Middle Way for wholesome social living in town and village. Living the home-life and tasting as many of the *Mangalas* as possible, the earnest and sincere will naturally progress to the fuller and fuller practice of the Middle Way in its highest key. So the Eightfold way of life is for every one, *Bhikkhu* or layman, who shuns a life characterised by ignorance, sensuality and worldliness on the one hand and a life characterised by frenzied and misdirected asceticism of the old type and the equally misdirected ideologies and 'isms' of the present.

Here is the Good Life, the heroic and the grand, laid down by the Enlightened One, who had trodden it through thousands of lives and had discovered the solution to the problem of Becoming, the only solution possible. He exhorts us to lift ourselves out of our besetting ignorance, to cleanse ourselves entirely of the delusion "Self" and "Soul". The pristine Dhamma will then unfold itself to our hearts and minds. Accepting the law of *Kamma* and the fact of re-birth, we can rest assured that way-faring in accord with the *Mangalasutta* or the Noble Eightfold Path will make our future lives more and more blessed and auspicious until Arahatship is eventually reached, by those who are ripe and can develop or arrive at a constant mindfulness of *Anicca* (impermanence), *Dukkha* (sorrow) and *Anattā* (absence of a Soul).

Whether we consider the Noble Eightfold Path in the context of the Four Noble Truths or the latter in terms of the former, we should learn or habituate ourselves to do so against the background of *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, *Anattā*, that is, "All is Impermanence"—"All is Sorrow"—"All is without Soul". The background is the sad and solemn truth of the universe because we have made it such through our ignorance, cravings and attachments. To the degree that this sad, solemn truth permeates our constitution to that degree we are nearing perfection and deliverance.

So we now see the implications of the Noble Eightfold Path and how the truth of *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, and *Anattā*



together with the Four Noble Truths make up the solemn theme of the Buddha-Dhamma, incomparable in its starkness, profound, unique and overriding the fetters and the flatteries of "I", the child of delusion and ignorance.

And what are the assurances given by the Master in respect of the Noble Eightfold Path? We have already read how the Tathāgata spoke of the Four Noble Truths in terms of His Enlightenment: "Then there arose in me the eye to see, vision, knowledge and understanding, insight, wisdom and light. We have to note that the realisation of the great truths involves very much more than mere intellection and mundane thinking. The Noble Path is an avenue to the higher and purer mind, buttressed by mindfulness and tranquillity and concentrated on perfection.

In propounding the Grand Path the Buddha said, "The Middle Way which has been fathomed by me in conjunction with the Four Noble Truths is verily pregnant with deliverance; for it gives wisdom, it brings clarified knowledge, it is productive of peace, develops higher wisdom, it brings enlightenment and the attainment of Nibbāna." Such are the grand words of assurance the distinctive qualities of the Middle Way.

The Middle Way, in the words of the Buddha is this :

"There are two extremes which should not be followed and acted upon by one who is not enamoured of the worldly life and has taken up the supramundane (Lokuttarā) way."

"What are these two extremes?" They are:—(i) the extreme of a worldly life steeped in sensual indulgence, a life of low worth, vulgar, ignoble, harmful and deserving of censure by the wise and (ii) the extreme of senseless asceticism, of self-torture and penances, which is painful, devoid of nobleness and hence unprofitable.

"Between these two extremes is the truly noble, Middle Way which induces vision, which gives knowledge, which is conducive of peace, which promotes higher wisdom and ensures enlightenment and Nibbāna." Such are the sweet words of assurance of the Master.

"Between these two extremes is the truly noble and peace-giving Middle Way leading

straight to enlightenment and Nibbāna. It is the way of the Eightfold Noble Path comprising Right Views, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Efforts, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration."

These eight ingredients are usually divided into three interlinked groups, namely (i) factors of morality (ii) of mindfulness and concentration, and (iii) of wisdom. Right Understanding and Right Aspiration, the two wisdom factors, are placed foremost in the list as one cannot arrive at full wisdom unless one begins initially with some degree of Right Understanding and Right Aspiration. These two should govern the practice of morality if it is to be sincere and deep and not merely an eye-wash and a sign of respectability. To attain Mindfulness and Samādhi, our attitude must be sound and the understanding must be sure and properly directed so that we can get true light, which is the main objective of Samādhi. Thus understanding and aspiration pave the way and accompany our efforts.

Morality is conjoined with Right Speech, Right Actions and Right Livelihood and these are summed up in Pañca Sīla or the Five Precepts. Looking at these precepts in their full import and intent, we see that we are taught to cease from all sins, to practise virtue and to make our hearts pure.

Not to kill; not to steal; not to indulge in unchastity; not to indulge in falsehood; and not to excite or stupefy our minds with intoxicants and drugs. These are abstinences from interfering with the rights and freedoms of others. They are equally abstinences from all that which degrades us. They require us to be free from anger, hatred, ill-will, greed, passion, and incontinence. They, if followed understandingly, bring about the aspiration to be kind, loving and respectful to all. The crowning position of these abstinences is comprised in truth, purity and compassion.

The remaining three ingredients are Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration. Mindfulness is, we may say, a moment to moment business sustained by steadfast endeavour. Only strenuous endeavour can lead to Samādhi or single-minded intentness. The understanding must be tuned up to fruitful discrimination, thus:— This is Matter. This is Mind. Both are

fluxes; both are impermanent. This is Subject and this is Object. Both are fluxes and impermanent. There is no 'I' in or behind the Subject or the Object. Gradually the awareness of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no Self will ripen in degree till our insight-knowledge (Nāṇadassana) of these aspects of the phenomenal world is strongly entrenched.

Thus the Noble Path reaches down to the dynamic processes of life. It helps us to get the right vantage ground from which to view the life scene in its proper perspective. It is a guided path, but for that reason it is no less exploratory. Prayers, rites, ceremonies and sacrifices are the shibboleths of other ways and creeds but not of the Buddha's Truth of Suffering: "This is the Noble Truth of Suffering. It ceases with the complete cessation of Taṇhā or Thirst—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion with the abandoning of this Thirst, with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it and with its destruction.

It is a remarkable fact that the Buddha did not begin His mission as the Enlightened One by putting forth some doctrine which was not at variance with the popular and optimistic belief, and which, appealing more to the emotions than to the head, was more palatable. On the contrary, His very first discourse, was on the Four Noble Truths and His congregation consisted of the Pañcavaggiya or five ascetics, His erstwhile companions who had broken away from Him for giving up extreme asceticism.

It is recorded that immediately after the attainment of Buddhahood, the Buddha hesitated to propound the doctrine of Sorrow and its cessation—a doctrine which He knew to be difficult and profound for shallow and worldly minds. He, however, remembered the Pañcavaggiya and to them, in the Deer Park at Sarnath, He preached His first sermon, the Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta or the Turning of the Wheel of the Law.

With wonderful solemnity and impressiveness the Buddha affirmed the Four Great Truths and He, in the same manner, made clear His eminent qualification for speaking so assuredly. He assured His listeners, firstly, in these words:

'Now, O Bhikkhus, as long as my knowledge and insight of each of the Four Noble Truths under their three aspects and twelve

modes, was not clear to me in their essential nature—so long, O Bhikkhus, I refrained from professing that I had gained the incomparable and Supreme Enlightenment. Only when I had attained to the full insight of that wisdom, which is unsurpassed in the heavens or on earth, I felt fully qualified to proclaim my Enlightenment together with the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Path—the Middle Way.'

Secondly, the Buddha also made the solemn declaration as to how the Four Truths arose in Him, each under their three aspects and, therefore, in twelve modes. He prefaced this declaration by emphasising that the Four Truths were not among those doctrines that were handed down through revelation or otherwise. They were among those never heard before.

This was how the Buddha expounded the truths elaborately showing that at each step He rose to Enlightenment.

#### *A. The Noble Truth of Sorrow and Suffering.*

1. This is the Noble Truth concerning Suffering: Birth is painful; decay and disease are painful; death and its attendant griefs are painful. Union with the unpleasant, the disharmonious, the undesirable and the unloved is painful. Separation from the pleasant, the loved and the desirable is painful. In brief, the five aggregates of body and mind which spring from attachment and from belief in individuality, and their causes are painful.

By virtue of this veritable truth there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge and understanding; further there arose in me wisdom, insight, and there arose in me light concerning things unknown before.

2. Then there came the thought that the Truth of Suffering has to be understood. Thereof there arose in me again the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

3. Then there came the thought that the Truth of Suffering has been understood by me. Thereof there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

#### *B. The Noble Truth concerning the Origin of Suffering.*

1. I saw the Noble Truth that Suffering has its origin and source. Verily the Origin of Suffering is that Thirst or Craving for existence and the renewal of existence;

craving for sensual delight; seeking of satisfaction now here and now there, that is to say, craving for the gratifications of sensuality and passions, craving for success and craving for everlasting life or annihilation.

By virtue of this veritable truth there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

2. Then there arose in me the thought that this origin of Suffering has to be eliminated or eradicated. Thereon there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

3. Then there arose in me the satisfying thought that this origin of Suffering has indeed been eradicated. Thereof, there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

*C. The Noble Truth concerning the Destruction of the Causes of Suffering and thereby its Cessation.*

1. Then there arose in me the Noble Truth of the cessation of Suffering. Verily it lies in the destruction of this very Thirst till no passions remain; the laying aside of, the getting rid of, the being free from and the harbouring no longer of this Thirst. Then there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

2. Thereof, there arose in me the thought that cessation of Suffering was nobly to be realised. Then thereon arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

3. Thereof, there arose in me the thought that the cessation of Suffering has been nobly and worthily achieved. Thereon there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

*D. The Noble Truth of the Eightfold Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering.*

1. Then there arose in me the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of Suffering. Verily the cessation of Suffering is provided for by the Eightfold Noble Path—the path of Right Views, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Actions, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

Then there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

2. Thereof there arose in me the thought that this Noble Path has been nobly cultivated. Thereon there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

At the end of the exposition of the Four Noble Truths in their respective aspects and modes, the Buddha made the supreme declaration that by virtue of the wisdom, insight and light gained by Him, He became supremely confident: 'Sure and unshakable is the deliverance of my heart and mind. This is my last birth. There is no more Becoming for me'.

Thus spoke the Buddha and the five Bhikkhus, glad and serene at heart, joyfully approved of the Blessed One's words. And Kondañña was the first of the five to attain the pure and stainless eye of Truth, namely the truth that everything that has the nature of arising has also the nature of cessation. And the Buddha made this utterance: 'Kondañña has indeed understood! Kondañña has indeed understood!'

The reader will have seen that the Buddha-Dhamma is not a creed of despondency and despair. It recognises and maintains that all existence is Sorrow. But if with Thomas Hardy we can see: '.... the Dreaming, Dark Dumb Thing, that turns the handle of this Idle Show', we may with absolute reliance on the Noble Path say:

*There is a Grand Way out of the Dark Abyss of Life and we can emerge into glorious light and supreme peace.*

# NIBBĀNA IN THE LIGHT OF THE MIDDLE DOCTRINE

By Nyanaponika Thera

“ This world, Kaccāna, usually leans upon a duality : upon (the belief in) existence or non-existence. . . . Avoiding these two extremes, the Perfect One shows the doctrine in the middle : Dependent on Ignorance are the Kamma-formations. . . . By the cessation of Ignorance, Kamma-formations cease.”

(*Saṃyutta-Nikāya* 12, 15)

The saying of the Buddha quoted here, speaks of the duality (*dvayatā*) of existence (*atthitā*) and non-existence (*natthitā*). These two terms refer to the theories of eternalism (*sassata-ditṭhi*) and annihilationism (*uccheda-ditṭhi*) which are the basic misconceptions of actuality that occur again and again, and in many variations, in the history of human thought. *Eternalism* is the belief in a permanent substance or entity, be it conceived as a multitude of individual souls or selves (created or not), as a monistic world-soul, a deity of any description, or as a combination of any of these notions. *Annihilationism*, on the other hand, believes in the temporary existence of separate selves or personalities, which are entirely destroyed or dissolved after death. Accordingly, the two key words of the text quoted above, refer (1) to the absolute, *i.e.* eternal, existence of any assumed substance or entity, and (2) to the ultimate, absolute annihilation of separate entities conceived as impermanent, *i.e.* their non-existence after the end of their life-span. These two extreme views stand and fall with the assumption of something static of either permanent or impermanent nature. They will lose their basis entirely if life is seen in its true nature, as a continuous flux of material and mental processes arising from their appropriate conditions—a process which will cease only when these conditions are removed. This will explain why our text introduces here the formula of Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), and its reversal, Dependent Cessation.

Dependent *Origination*, being an unbroken process, excludes the assumption of an absolute Non-existence, or Naught, that is supposed to terminate, by necessity, individual existence ; while the qualifying word *dependent* indicates that there is also no absolute *i.e.* independent existence, no static Being *per se*, but only an evanescent arising of phenomena, dependent on likewise evanescent conditions.

Dependent *Cessation* excludes the belief in absolute and permanent Existence, and shows, on the other hand, that there is no

automatic lapse into Non-existence, but that the cessation of relative existence is likewise a conditioned occurrence.

Thus these teachings of Dependent Origination and Dependent Cessation are a true Doctrine in the Middle, transcending the extremes of Existence and Non-existence.

Thinking by way of such conceptual contrasts as Existence and Non-existence, has, however, a powerful hold on man because that way of thinking is perpetually nourished by several strong roots, deeply embedded in the human mind. The strongest of them is the practical and theoretical assumption of an Ego or self, the existence of which as a separate entity is taken for granted. It is the powerful wish for a preservation and perpetuation of the personality (or a refined version of it), which is at the background of all the numerous varieties of eternalistic belief. But even with people who have discarded eternalistic creeds or theories, the instinctive belief in the uniqueness and importance of their particular personalities is still so strong that for them the end of the personality, *i.e.* death, is tantamount to complete annihilation or non-existence. Thus the belief in a self is responsible not only for eternalism, but also for the annihilationist view (*uccheda-ditṭhi*) which may express itself either in the popular unphilosophical materialism (“death is the end of it”), or in elaborate materialist theories.

There are also other contributory roots of these notions of existence and non-existence which, however, are closely connected with the main root of Ego-belief. There is, for instance, a *linguistic* root, consisting in the basic structure of language (subject and predicate, noun and adjective) and its tendency to simplify affirmative and negative statements for the sake of easy communication and orientation. The structural features of language and linguistic habits of simplified statements have exercised a subtle, but strong influence on our way of thinking, making us inclined to assume that “there must be a thing, if there is a word for it.”

For holding these one-sided views, there may be also *emotional* reasons, expressive of

basic attitudes to life. They may reflect the moods of optimism and pessimism, hope and despair, the wish to feel secure through metaphysical support, or the desire to live without inhibitions in a materialistically conceived universe. The theoretical views of eternalism and annihilationism may well change during life-time, together with the corresponding moods or emotional needs.

There is also an *intellectual* root : the speculative and theorizing preoccupation of certain minds\* creating various and elaborate philosophical systems in which these and other conceptual opposites are played off against each other with an ingenuity that provides great satisfaction to those engaged in these thought-constructions.

From these brief remarks, one will be able to appreciate the strength and variety of the forces which induce man to think, feel and speak in the way of these opposites, the belief in either absolute existence or absolute non-existence. It was, therefore, with good reason that the Buddha said, in our introductory passage, that men *usually* lean upon that duality. Hence we need not be surprised that even Nibbāna, the Buddhist's goal of deliverance, has been wrongly interpreted in the sense of either of these extremes : existence or non-existence. But these rigid conceptual terms cannot do justice to the dynamic nature of actuality, and still less to Nibbāna which has been declared to be supramundane (*lokuttara*) and beyond conceptual thinking (*atakkāvacara*).

In the early days, when knowledge of Buddhist teachings had just reached the West, most of the writers and scholars took Nibbāna as *non-existence*, pure and simple, with a few exceptions like Schopenhauer and Max Mueller. Consequently, Western writers all too lightly condemned Buddhism as a nihilistic doctrine, teaching annihilation as its highest goal, which these writers described as philosophically absurd and ethically reprehensible. Similar statements can be read also nowadays in prejudiced non-Buddhist literature. The pendular reaction to that view was the conception of Nibbāna as *existence*, in the sense of Pure Being, Pure Consciousness, Pure Self, or any other metaphysical concept, seeing it in the light of religious and metaphysical notions familiar in the West and in the East alike.

But even Buddhist thought could not always keep clear of a lop-sided interpretation of Nibbāna. This happened even in early times : the sect of the Sautrantikas had a rather negativistic view of Nibbāna, while the Mahayanistic conceptions of Buddha-fields (*Buddha-ksetra*), Primordial (*Ādi*-) Buddha, Tathāgatagarbha, etc., favoured a positive-metaphysical interpretation.

It is therefore not surprising that both these extremes are also advocated by modern Buddhist authors. In Buddhist countries of the East, however, there is, as far as is known to the writer, not a single Buddhist school or sect that favours now a nihilistic interpretation of Nibbāna. Contrary to erroneous opinions, voiced mainly by uninformed or prejudiced Western authors, Theravāda, *i.e.* the tradition prevalent in Burma, Ceylon, Thailand, etc., is definitely averse to a view that regards Nibbāna as mere extinction. The first main section of this essay will substantiate this statement.

For reasons mentioned earlier, it is not easy, indeed, to steer always clear of those two opposite views of existence and non-existence, and to keep closely to the Middle Path shown by the Buddha, that is, the teaching of Dependent Origination and Dependent Cessation. Until that way of thinking has been fully absorbed in the texture of one's mind, constant watchfulness will be required against the mind slipping unawares into either of the two extreme views of eternalism and annihilationism, or coming too close to them. When discussing these questions, there is the danger of being carried away by one's arguments and countering one extreme by its opposite. Therefore, in the treatment of that problem, great caution and self-criticism is required lest one may lose sight of the Middle Path.

It is therefore the primary purpose of this treatise to offer material for a clear demarcation of the Buddha's doctrine of Nibbāna from both misinterpretations of it. It is not the intention of these pages to encourage any speculations on the nature of Nibbāna, which are bound to be futile and may even prove to be detrimental to the endeavours for an actual attainment of it. Nibbāna is to be realized (*sacchikātabbāṃ*), not to be understood (as the first Truth), nor to be developed (as the fourth Truth). It will also be improper if the material presented here is used

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\* They correspond to the *ditthi-carita*, the theorizing type of character, in Buddhist Psychology.

in a onesided manner as arguments in favour of one of the extremes against the other one. Each of the two main sections of this treatise requires the other for its qualification and completion. It is hoped that the material from canonical and commentarial sources collected in these pages, will at least reduce the point of conflict between the opposing interpretations, by clarifying the position of Theravāda.

### 1. *The nihilistic-negative extreme*

#### § 1

We shall first consider the basic work of post-canonical Theravāda literature, "The Path of Purification" (*Visuddhi-magga*), compiled in the 5th Century C.E. by the great commentator, Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa. This monumental work furnishes a comprehensive and systematic exposition of the principal Buddhist doctrines, derived from the Pāli Canon and ancient commentarial literature which partly incorporates material that may well go back to the earliest times of the teaching.

In that work, in the chapter on the Faculties and Truths, in the section dealing with the 3rd Noble Truth, we find a lengthy disquisition on Nibbāna. It is striking that the polemical part of it is exclusively directed against what we have called the "nihilistic-negative extreme" in the interpretation of Nibbāna. We cannot be sure about the reason for that limitation, since there is no explicit statement on it. It is, however possible that the Venerable Buddhaghosa (or perhaps already the traditional material he used) was keen that the Theravāda teachings on that subject should be well distinguished from those of a prominent contemporary sect, the Sautrantikas, which, in other respects, was close to the general standpoint of Theravāda. It belonged to that group of schools which we suggest should be called *Sāvaka-yāna* (following the *early* Mahayanist nomenclature), instead of the derogatory Hīnayāna. The Theravādins obviously did not want to be included in the accusation of nihilism, raised by the Mahayanists against the Sautrantikas. This might have been the external reason for the *Visuddhi-magga's* emphasis on the rejection of the nihilistic conception of Nibbāna. As to the positive-metaphysical view, the

Venerable Buddhaghosa thought it, perhaps, sufficiently covered by the numerous passages in the *Visuddhi-magga* dealing with the rejection of the eternity-view and of a transcendental Self. However that may be, also nowadays Buddhism, and Theravāda in particular, is quite often wrongly accused of nihilism. It is therefore apposite to reproduce here extracts from the respective arguments found in the *Visuddhi-magga*, followed (in 2) by additions from the commentary to that work.\* Many of the passages from the Suttanta which are relevant to a rejection of nihilism, are quoted in both these extracts, making it unnecessary to deal with them separately.

In the aforementioned chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*, the argument proper is preceded by a definition of Nibbāna, by way of three categories usually employed in commentarial literature for the purpose of definition :

" Nibbāna has peace as its characteristic. Its function is not to die ; or its function is to comfort. It is manifested as the signless [*i.e.* without the "signs", or marks, of greed, hatred and delusion] ; or it is manifested as non-diversification. "

[The first assertion about Nibbāna as non-existence, which follows now, is not a view about the nature of Nibbāna, but a simple denial of it, on account of the alleged illogical nature of the conception itself :]

"(Question 1.) [Is it not true that] Nibbāna is non-existent because it is unapprehensible like the hare's horn ?

" (Answer.) That is not so, because it is apprehensible by the (right) means. For it is apprehensible by some, (namely the Noble Ones) by the right means, in other words, by the way that is appropriate to it, (the way of virtue, concentration, and understanding) . . . . Therefore it should not be said that it is non-existent because unapprehensible ; for it should not be said that what the foolish ordinary man does not apprehend is unapprehensible. "

[And for those who are followers of the Dhamma, it is added :]

" Again it should not be said that Nibbāna does not exist. Why not? Because

\* The rendering in the extracts from both works has mainly been taken, with a few alterations, from the excellent new translation of the *VisM*, by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ("The Path of Purification"; XLIX, 886 pp; publ. by R. Semage, 1956; available at Lake House Bookshop, Colombo, Ceylon). Explanatory additions by the writer are in [square brackets]: while those by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli are in (curved brackets).

it then follows that the way would be futile. For if Nibbāna were non-existent, then it would follow that the right way, which includes the three Aggregates beginning with Virtue and is headed by right understanding, would be futile. And it is not futile because it reaches Nibbāna.

“(Q.2) But futility of the way does not follow because what is reached is absence [which has been aspired for] (that is, absence of the five aggregates, consequent upon the cutting off of the defilements) ?

“(A.) That is not so. Because, though there is [always] absence of past and future (aggregates), there is nevertheless no reaching of Nibbāna (simply because of that).

“(Q.3.) Then is the absence of present (aggregates) as well Nibbāna ?.....

“(A.) That is not so. Because their absence is an impossibility (being self-contradictory), since their absence means that they are *not* present. (Besides if Nibbāna were absence of present aggregates too,) that would entail the fault of excluding the arising of the Nibbāna element with result of past clinging left [*sopadisesanibbāna* ; *i.e.* Nibbāna during lifetime], at the path moment which has present aggregates as its support.

“(Q.4.) Then will there be no fault if it is non-presence of defilements (that is Nibbāna) ?

“(A.) That is not so. Because it would then follow that the noble path was meaningless. For if it were so, then, since defilements (can be) non-existent also before the moment of the noble path [of arahantship, *e.g.*, temporarily, in every profitable (*kusala*) state of mind], it follows that the noble path would be meaningless.....

“(Q.5) But is not Nibbāna destruction (*khaya*), because of the passage beginning ‘That, friend, which is the destruction of greed .... (of hate .. of delusion .. is Nibbāna)’ (S.IV, 251) ?

“(A.) That is not so, because it would follow that arahantship, also, was mere destruction. For that, too is described in the (same) way beginning ‘That, friend, which is the destruction of greed .. (of hate .. of delusion .... is arahantship)’ (S. IV, 252) \*

“And what is more, the fallacy then follows that Nibbāna would be temporary,

etc.; for if it were so, it would follow that Nibbāna would be temporary [being limited to the moment of the destruction of greed, etc.], formed [conditioned (*saṅkhata*); because the destruction of greed, etc., is a conditioned phenomenon, but not Nibbāna] .....

“ .. Because [Nibbāna] serves figuratively speaking as decisive-support (*upanissaya*) for the kind of destruction called ‘cessation consisting in non-arising’ (*anuppattinirodha*), that (Nibbāna) is called ‘destruction’ (*khaya*) as a metaphor for it.

\* \* \* \* \*

“(Q.7.) Why is Nibbāna not described in its own nature [but only circumlocutions and negations] ?

“(A.) Because of its extreme subtlety. And its extreme subtlety is established because it inclined the Blessed One to inaction (that is, to not teaching the Dhamma ; see M.I, 186) and because a Noble One’s eye is needed to see it (M.I, 510). It is not shared by all because it can only be reached by one who is possessed of the path. And it is uncreated because it has no first beginning.

“(Q.8.) Since it *is*, when the path is, then it is not uncreated ?

“(A.) That is not so, because it is not arousable by the path; it is only reachable, not arousable, by the path; that is why it is uncreated. It is because it is uncreated that it is free from ageing and death. It is because of the absence of its creation and of its ageing and death it is permanent.

“ .. The Buddhas’ goal is one and has no plurality. But this (single goal, Nibbāna,) is firstly called ‘with result of past clinging left’ (*sa-upādisesa*) since it is made known together with the (aggregates resulting from past) clinging still remaining (during the Arahant’s life), being thus made known in terms of the stilling of defilement and the remaining (result of past) clinging that are present in one who has reached it by means of development. But (secondly, it is called ‘without result of past clinging left’ [*anupādisesa*]) since after the last consciousness of the Arahant, who has abandoned arousing (future aggregates) and so prevented kamma from giving result in a future (existence), there is no further arising of aggregates of existence, and those already arisen have disappeared. So the (result of past) clinging that remained is non-existent ; and it is in

\* “But,” says the commentary, “Arahantship is certainly not mere destruction, since it consists in the four mental aggregates having the highest fruition (of arahantship) as their foremost.”

terms of this non-existence, in the sense that 'there is no (result of past) clinging here' that that (same goal) is called 'without result of past clinging left' (see It. 38).

" Because it can be arrived at by distinction of knowledge that succeeds through untiring perseverance,\* and because it is the word of the Omniscient One\*\*, Nibbāna is not non-existent as regards its nature in the ultimate sense (*paramatthena nāvijjamānaṃ sabhāvato nibbānaṃ*); for this is said : 'Bhikkhus, there is an unborn, an unbecome, an unmade, an unformed' (It. 37; Ud.80). "

## § 2.

Taking up the last quotation, the Commentary to the Visuddhi-magga (Paramatthamañjusā)\*\*\* says :

+ " By these words the Master proclaimed the actual existence of Nibbāna in the ultimate sense. But he did not proclaim it as a mere injunction of his [*i.e.* as a creedal dogma], saying: 'I am the Lord and Master of the Dhamma'; but, in his compassion for those to whom intellectual understanding is the highest (attainable; *padaparama*), he also stated it as a reasoned conclusion (*yuttito*), in the continuation of the passage quoted above (Ud.80): " If, bhikkhus, there were not the unborn, etc., an escape from what is born, etc., could not be perceived (*na paññāyetha*). But because, bhikkhus, there is an unborn, etc., an escape from what is born, etc., can be perceived." This is the meaning: if the Unformed Element (*asañkhata-dhātu*=Nibbāna), having the nature of being unborn, etc. did not exist, no escape from the formed (or conditioned; *sañkhata*,) *i.e.* the five aggregates, could be perceived in this world; their final coming-to-rest (*i.e.* cessation) could not be perceived (*na paññāyeyya*), could not be found (or apprehended; *na upalabheyya*). But if Right Understanding and the other path factors, each performing its own function, take Nibbāna as object, then they will completely destroy the defilements.

Therefor one can perceive here a getting-away, an escape from the suffering of existence in its entirety.

" Now in the ultimate sense the existingness of the Nibbāna-element has been demonstrated by the Fully Enlightened One, compassionate for the whole world, by many Sutta passages such as "Dhammas without condition," "Unformed dhammas" (see *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*) "Bhikkhus, there is that sphere (*āyatana*) where neither earth" ..... (Ud.80), "This state is very hard to see, that is to say, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of all substance of becoming" (D.II, 36; M.I, 167), "Bhikkhus, I shall teach you the unformed and the way leading to the unformed" (S.IV, 362), and so on, and in this Sutta "Bhikkhus, there is an unborn..." (It.87; Ud.80) .....

" .... the words "Bhikkhus, there is an unborn, an unbecome, an unmade, an unformed" and so on, which demonstrate the existingness of Nibbāna in the ultimate sense, are not misleading [or: have not an ambiguous meaning; *aviparītatha*] because they are spoken by the Omniscient One, like the words "All formations are impermanent, all formations are painful, all *dhammas* (states) are not-self" (Dh. 277-9; A.I, 286; etc.).

+ "If Nibbāna were mere non-existence (or absence; *abhavamattam eva*), it could not be described by terms as "profound [deep, hard to see, hard to comprehend, peaceful, lofty, inaccessible to ratiocination, subtle, to be known by the wise]" etc.; or as 'the unformed, [the cankerless, the true, the other shore],' etc.\*\*\*\*; or as 'kammically neutral, (without condition, unincorporated [within the three realms of existence],' etc.'\*\*\*\*\*

## I, § 3

The references to Sutta-texts, quoted in the extracts from the Visuddhi-magga and its commentary, make it quite clear that the Buddha declared Nibbāna to be an attainable entity (see § I, Q.1, §8) and did not conceive it

\* Comy.: " This is to show that, for Arahants, Nibbāna is established by their own experience (*paccakkhasiddhatam*). "

\*\* Comy. : " For others it is established by inference [based on the words of the Master: *anumānasiddhatam*. ]

\*\*\* The paragraphs beginning with a plus sign (+) are translated by the author; those without, by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (taken from the notes to his translation of the Visuddhi-magga).

\*\*\*\* These are some of the altogether 33 designations of Nibbāna, in *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 43, 12-44.

\*\*\*\*\* This refers to Abhidhammic classifications in which Nibbāna is included, occurring, for instance, in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.



as the mere fact of extinction or cessation (see § 1, Q.5). All negatively formulated statements on Nibbāna should be understood in the light of the Sutta passages quoted here, and do not admit an interpretation contradictory to these texts. Any forced or far-fetched interpretation of them will be contrary to the whole straightforward way of the Buddha's exposition.

If we have spoken above of Nibbāna as an "entity", it should be taken just as a word-label meant to exclude "non-existence". It is used in the same restricted sense of a linguistic convention as the emphatic words in the Udāna: "There is an unborn . . .", "There is that sphere where neither earth . . .". It is not meant to convey the meaning of "existence" in the strict sense, which should be kept restricted to "the five aggregates or any of them". Nibbāna is indescribable in the strictest sense (*avacaniya, avyākata*).

Our extracts from such an authoritative work as the Visuddhi-magga will have shown how emphatically the Theravāda tradition has rejected a nihilistic conception of its highest ideal, Nibbāna. This fact may perhaps help to remove one of the points of controversy among modern writers and Buddhist schools: the prejudice that Theravāda, or even the Pāli Canon, advocates a form of annihilation as its highest goal.

There is, however, another principal point of difference in the interpretation of Buddhism, and of the Pāli Canon in particular which is likewise closely connected with the conception of Nibbāna. It is the question of the range of validity, or application, of the Anattā doctrine, *i.e.* the doctrine of impersonality. It applies not only to the world of conditioned phenomena, but also to Nibbāna. The denial of its application to the latter falls under the heading of the "positive-metaphysical extreme" which will be treated in the following section.

## II. The positive-metaphysical extreme

### § 1

In India, a country so deeply religious and philosophically so creative, the far greater danger to the preservation of the Dhamma's character as a "Middle Way", consisted, in identifying, or connecting, the concept of Nibbāna with any of the numerous theistic, pantheistic or other speculative ideas of a positive-metaphysical type and, chiefly, with various conceptions of an abiding self.

According to the penetrative analysis in the Brahmajāla Sutta (Dīgha Nik.1), all these various notions of a self (and this applies also to other metaphysical or theological statements) arise from either of two sources: (1) from a limited and misinterpreted meditative experience (where we may also include supposed revelations, prophetic inspirations, etc.), (2) from bare reasoning (speculative philosophy, and theology without personal experiential basis). But as the driving force behind all these metaphysical and theological productions of the human mind looms the powerful urge in man to preserve, in some way or other, his belief in an abiding individuality, or in any mental projection of that urge which he can invest, by proxy, with all his longings for permanency, security, eternal happiness, etc. It is therefore not surprising that, yielding to that powerful, instinctive urge for "self"-preservation, and under the influence of long-cherished and widely held views, there are also nowadays advocates of the positive-metaphysical interpretation of Nibbāna and Anattā, who sincerely believe themselves to be true Buddhists; and among them are many who have a genuine devotion towards the Buddha and a fair appreciation of other aspects of his teachings. With these views we shall now be concerned.

In the spirit of the Middle Way, the following refutation of the positive-metaphysical extreme is also meant to guard against any metaphysical conclusions which may be wrongly derived from our rejection of nihilism, in the first section of this essay. In the reverse, that first section may serve to counter an excessive "defence-reaction" against the metaphysical views to be treated now.

The positive-metaphysical extreme in the interpretation of the Buddhist conception of Nibbāna consists in the identification, or metaphysical association, of a refined or purified self (*attā*) with what, in the context of the respective view, is held to be Nibbāna. Two main types of the metaphysical view can be distinguished which are already implied in the preceding sentence.

(1) The assumption of a universal and unitary (non-dual and non-pluralistic) principle with which a purified self, *i.e.* one thought to be liberated from the aggregates (*khandhā*), either merges, or is assumed to be basically one. These views might differ in

details, according to their being influenced either by Theosophy, Vedānta or Mahāyāna (the latter, with varying degrees of justification). \*

(2) The assumption that the transcendental “selves” of the Arahants, freed from the aggregates, enter Nibbāna which is regarded as their “eternal home” and as “the only state adequate to them”. Nibbāna itself is admitted to be not-self (*anattā*), which the Holy Ones (Arahants) are supposed to retain “in Nibbāna” some kind of individuality, in a way unexplained and unexplainable. This view is, to our knowledge, advocated in such a way only by Dr. Georg Grimm and his followers. \*\*

## II, § 2

(a) Common to both views is the assumption of an eternal self supposed to exist beyond the five aggregates (*khandhā*) that make up personality and existence in its entirety. The supposition that the Buddha should have taught anything like that, is clearly and sufficiently refuted alone by the following saying :

“ Any ascetics or brāhmins who conceive manifold (things or ideas) as the self, all of them conceive the five aggregates (as the self) or any among them. ”

*Ye hi keci bhikkhave samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā anekavihitam attānam samanupassamānā samanupassanti, sabbe te pañcupādānak-khandhe samanupassanti etesaṃ va aññataram.* (Saṃyutta-Nikāya 22, 47)

This textual passage also excludes any misinterpretation of the standard formulation of the Anattā doctrine : “This does not belong to me, this I am not, this is not my self.” Some writers believe that this statement permits the conclusion that the Buddha supposed a self to exist outside, or beyond, the five aggregates to which the above formula usually refers. This wrong deduction is finally disposed of by the words of the Buddha quoted above, which clearly say that all

the manifold conceptions of a self can have reference only to the five aggregates or to any one, or several, of them. How else could any idea of a self or a personality be formed, if not from the material of the five aggregates and from a misconception of them ? On what else could notions about a self be based alternatively ? This fact about the only possible way how ideas of a self can be formed was expressed by the Buddha Himself, in the continuation of the text quoted above :

“There is, bhikkhus, an uninstructed worldling . . . He regards corporeality as self, or the self as possessing corporeality, or the corporeality as being within the self, or the self within corporeality [similarly with the four mental aggregates].\*\* In this way he arrives at that very conception ‘I am’ (*iti ayañ-c’eva samanupassanā asmi’tī c’assa adhigatam hoti*)” (Saṃy. 22, 47).

Further it was said : “If there are corporeality, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness, on account of them and dependent on them arises the belief in individuality . . . and speculations about a self”. (Saṃy. 22, 154. 155).

(b) If the words “I”, “ego”, “personality”, “self”, etc., should have meaning at all, any form of an ego-conception, even the most abstract and diluted one, must necessarily be connected with the idea of particularity or separateness, i.e. with a differentiation from what is regarded as *not* “ego”. But from what could that particularity or differentiation be derived if not from the only available data of experience, i.e. the physical and mental phenomena which have been comprised by the Buddha under the classification of the five aggregates ?

In the Discourse called “The Simile of the Serpent” (Majjh.22), it is said: “If bhikkhus, there is a self, will there also be something belonging to a self ?” — “Certainly, Lord.” — “If there is something belonging to a self, will there also be (the view) ‘My self’ ?” — “Certainly, Lord.” — “But since,

\* The *theosophical* variant is, e.g., represented by neo-buddhistic groups in Britain, which otherwise have done good work in introducing Westerners to Buddhism or to their conception of it.—The *vedantic* influence is conspicuous, e.g., in utterances of well-meaning Indians, among them men of eminence, maintaining the basic identity, or similarity, of the vedantic and buddhistic position concerning Ātman. This is, by the way, quite in contrast to the opinion on that subject, expressed by the great classical exponents of Vedānta.—*Mahāyānistic* influence may be noticeable in some representatives of the former two variants. But also in Mahāyāna literature itself, the positive-metaphysical extreme is met with, in varying degrees: ranging from the Mādhyamika scriptures where it is comparatively negligible, up to the Yogāvacara school where Asaṅga uses even the terms *mahātma* and *paramātma* in an approving sense (see *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra-sāstra* and Asaṅga’s own commentary).

\*\* These are the twenty kinds of individuality-belief (*visati sakkāya-diṭṭhi*).

bhikkhus, a self and anything belonging to a self cannot truly and really be found, is it not a perfectly foolish doctrine to hold the point of view 'This is the world. This is the self. Impermanent, abiding, eternal and immutable shall I be after death, in eternal identity shall I persist' ?"—“What else should it be, O Lord, than a perfectly foolish doctrine.”

The first sentence of that text expresses, in a manner as simple as emphatic, the fact pointed out before: that the assumption of a self requires also something 'belonging to a self' (*attaniya*), i.e. properties by which that self receives its distinguishing characteristics. To speak of a self devoid of such differentiating attributes, having therefore nothing to characterize it and to give meaningful contents to the word, will be entirely senseless and in contradiction to the accepted usage of these terms "self", "ego", etc. But this very thing is done by those who advocate the first of the two main-types of the "positive-metaphysical extreme": that is, the assumption of a "great, universal, or over-self" (*Mahātman*) supposed to merge, or be basically identical with, a universal and undifferentiated (*nirguṇa*) metaphysical principle which is sometimes equated with Nibbāna. Those who hold these views are sometimes found to make the bold claim that the Buddha wanted to deny only a "separate self", and that, in none of His utterances, He rejected the existence of a "transcendental self". What has been said before in this section, may serve as an answer to these beliefs.

Those views, however, which we have assigned to the second category, insist on the separate existence of liberated, transcendental "selves" within the Nibbāna-element. They leave quite a number of issues unexplained: how they arrive at any idea of separateness without reference to the world of experience; in what that "separateness" actually consists and how it can be said to persist in the Nibbāna-element, which, by definition, is undifferentiated (*nippapañca*), that is, the very reverse of separateness.

Both varieties of individuality-belief wish to combine various conceptions of self with the Buddhist teaching of Nibbāna. They are, at the very outset, refuted by the philosophically very significant statement in the Discourse on the "Simile of the Serpent", implying that I and Mine, owner and property, substance and attribute, subject and

predication are inseparable correlative terms, which, however, lack reality in the ultimate sense.

## II, § 3

The two main-types of a positive-metaphysical interpretation of Nibbāna can be easily included in a considerable number of false views, mentioned, classified and rejected by the Buddha. A selection of applicable classifications will be presented in what follows. This material, additional to the fundamental remarks in the preceding sections, will furnish an abundance of documentation for the fact that not a single eternalistic conception of self and Nibbāna, of any conceivable variety, is reconcilable with the teachings of the Buddha as found in their oldest available presentation, in the Pāli Canon.

(a) In the Saṃyutta Nikāya (22,86; 44,2) we read: "Do you think, Anurādha, that the Perfect One is apart from corporeality (*aññatra rūpā*) .. apart from consciousness ?" \* — "Certainly not, O Lord." — "Do you think that the Perfect One is someone without corporeality (*arūpī*) .... someone without consciousness?" \*\* — "Certainly not, O Lord." — "Since the Perfect One, Anurādha, cannot, truly and really, be found by you even during lifetime, is it befitting to declare: 'He who is the Perfect One, the highest being .., that the Perfect One can be made known outside of these four possibilities: The Perfect One exists after death .. does not exist .. exists in some way and in another way not .. neither can be said to exist nor not to exist ?' " - "Certainly not, O Lord."

This applies to both main-types which assume a self beyond the aggregates. It deserves to be mentioned here that the Commentary paraphrases the words "the Perfect One" (*tathāgato*) by "living being" (*satto*). That is probably meant to convey that the statements in the text are valid not only for the conventional term "the Perfect One", but that they hold true also for any other terms designating an individuality.

(b) Since the concept of a self is necessarily linked with that of an ownership of qualities and possessions (see II, § 2 b), both main-types come under the following headings of the 20 kinds of individuality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*; see II, § 2 a):

\* That is, outside the aggregates taken singly.

\*\* That is, outside the aggregates as a whole.

“He regards the self as possessing corporeality .. as possessing feeling .. perception ... formations .. consciousness.”

This applies, in particular, to the second main-type advocated by Dr. Georg Grimm who expressly speaks of the five aggregates as “attributions” (“Beliegungen”) of the self. It does not make here any difference that these “attributions” are regarded by Grimm as “incommensurate” to the self and as capable of being discarded. What matters, here, is the fact that such a relationship between the self and the aggregates is assumed, and this justifies the inclusion of that view in the aforementioned type of individuality-belief.

(c) From the “Discourse on the Root Cause” (*Mūlapariyāya Sutta*; Majjh. 1), the following categories apply to both types: “He thinks (himself) different from (or: beyond) the four material elements, the heavenly worlds, the uncorporeal spheres; from anything seen, heard, (differently) sensed and cognized; from the whole (universe; *sabbato*), to the second type: “He thinks (himself) in Nibbāna (*nibbānasmim*) or as different from Nibbāna (*nibbānato maññati*); that is, he believes the liberated self supposed to enter the Nibbāna element, as different from it).”

(d) In the Sutta “All Cankers” (*Sabb’āsava Sutta*; Majjh. 2), the following instances of unwise and superficial thinking (*ayoniso manasikāra*) are mentioned and rejected:

Six theories about the self, from which the following are applicable here: “I have a self”, “By the self I know the self” \*.

Sixteen kinds of doubt about the existence and nature of the self, with reference to the past, present and future, e.g.: “Am I or am I not?”, “What am I?”, “Shall I be or not?”, “What shall I be?”

Hereby any speculation about an alleged self is rejected.

(e) In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* (Dīgh.1), the theories about a self are specified as to their details. Those, however, who advocate the two main-types of the positive-metaphysical extreme, with which we are here concerned, generally avoid or reject detailed statements on the nature of Nibbāna and the self. But if, by them, an eternal and transcendental self is assumed, it must be thought as being

of a passive nature (Pāli: *vañjho*, barren, unproductive) and motionless, i.e. immutable. For, any creative or other relationship to the world would involve an abandonment of the transcendental state assumed. Therefore both main-types fall under the eternalist view, characterized in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* as follows :

“Eternal are self and world; barren (*vañjho*), motionless like a mountain peak, steadfast like a pillar.”

(f) The rejection of any belief in a self (as abiding or temporarily identical) and of the extremes of existence and non-existence cannot be better concluded than by quoting the continuation of the saying that forms the motto of this treatise :

“For him, Kaccāna, who considers, according to reality and with true wisdom, the origination of [and in] the world, there is not what in the world [is called] ‘non-existence’ (*natthitā*). For him, Kaccāna, who considers, according to reality and with true wisdom, the cessation of [and in] the world, there is not what in the world [is called] ‘existence’ (*atthitā*). This world, in general, Kaccāna, is fettered by propensities, clingings and biases. But he [the man of right understanding, *sammā-diṭṭhi*], concerning these propensities, clingings, fixed mental attitudes, biases and deep-rooted inclinations, he does not come near, does not cling, does not have the mental attitude ‘I have a self’ (*n’adhiṭṭhāti attā me’ti*). He has no doubt or uncertainty that it is suffering, indeed, that arises, and suffering that ceases. Herein his knowledge does not rely on others. In so far, Kaccāna, is one a man of right understanding”. (Saṃy 12, 15).

### III. Transcending the extremes

If we examine the utterances on Nibbāna, in the Pāli Canon, we find that it is described (or better: paraphrased) in positive and negative terms. Statements of a positive nature are, e.g., designations like “the profound, the true, the pure, the permanent, the marvellous,” etc. (Saṃy. 43; see I, §2); further texts such as those quoted above I, §2): “There is that sphere ..”, “There is an unborn ..”, etc. Statements of a negative character are, e.g., definitions of Nibbāna as “the destruction of greed, hatred and delu-

\* Pāli: *attanā’va attānaṃ sañjanāmi*. This refers to vedantic conceptions. Quite similar formulations are found already in the *Saṃhita*, the pre-Buddhist Upanisads, and, later in the *Bhagavadgīta*.

sion", as "cessation of existence" (*bhava-nirodha*; Saṃy. 12, 68). If the Buddhist doctrine of Nibbāna is to be understood correctly, one will have to give full weight to the significance of both types of utterance. If one were to quote only one group of them, as a vindication of one's own one-sided opinion, it would result in a lop-sided view.

To the utterances of positive character we may ascribe the following purposes: (1) to exclude the nihilistic extreme, (2) to allay the fears of those who are still without an adequate grasp of the truths of Suffering and Anattā, and consequently shrink back from the final cessation of suffering, *i.e.*, of rebirth, as if recoiling from threatening fall into a bottomless abyss, (3) for showing Nibbāna as a goal capable of attainment and really worthwhile.

The emphatic "There is" that opens the two well-known texts on Nibbāna, in the Udāna, leaves no doubt that Nibbāna is not conceived as bare extinction or as a camouflage for an absolute Zero. But, on the other hand, as a precaution against a metaphysical misinterpretation of that solemn enunciation "*There is . . . . (atthi)*", we have that likewise emphatic rejection of the extremes of existence (*atthitā*) and non-existence (*natthitā*).

But even those utterances on Nibbāna which are phrased positively, include mostly also negative terms:

"There is that sphere where there is neither earth . . neither this world nor the next, neither coming nor going . . .",

"There is an *unborn*, an *unbecome* . . ."

"I shall teach you the Unformed . . the Profound . . , and the way to it. What now is the Unformed . . the Profound . . ? It is the destruction of greed, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion . . ."

These texts, combining positive and negative statements, illustrate our earlier remark that both the positive and the negative utterances on Nibbāna require mutual qualification, as a precaution against sliding into an extremist position.

Negative utterances are meant to emphasize the supramundane and undepictable nature of Nibbāna that eludes any adequate description in positive terms. Our language is basically unsuited for it, since it is necessarily related to our world of experience, and its structure and terms are derived from it. Therefore the positive

statements in the Suttas cannot be more than allusions or metaphors (*pariyāyadesanā*), making use of emotional values intelligible to us, and of experiences and reactions known to those who have trodden the path to the Pathless. In brief, they are evocative, and not truly descriptive, but they have nevertheless great practical value for the reasons mentioned above. Negative statements, however, are quite sound and legitimate in themselves. They relate Nibbāna to the world of experience only by negations. The negating method of approach consists in a process of eliminating what is inapplicable to Nibbāna and incommensurate with it. It enables us to make much more definite and useful statements about the supramundane state of Nibbāna than abstract terms, the positive character of which can be only metaphorical. Negative statements are also the most appropriate and reverential form to speak of that which has been called the Marvellous (*acchariya*) and the Extraordinary (*abhūta*).

Negative ways of expressions have also another important advantage. Statements like those defining Nibbāna as "the destruction of greed, hatred and delusion", at the same time, indicate the direction to be taken, and the work to be done, for actually *reaching* Nibbāna. And it is this which matters most. These words on the overcoming of greed, hatred and delusion set a clear and convincing task which can be taken up here and now. Further they do not only point to a way that is practicable and is worthwhile for its own sake, but they also speak of the lofty goal itself which likewise can be experienced here and now, and not only in an unknown Beyond. For it has been said:

"If greed, hatred and delusion have been completely destroyed, insofar is Nibbāna visible here and now, not delayed, inviting of inspection, and directly experiencible by the wise" (Aṅguttara Nik. III, No.55).

That visible Nibbāna has been lauded by those who attained to it, as an unalloyed and unalienable happiness, as the highest solace, as the unspeakable relief of being freed from burden and bondage. A faint foretaste of it may be experienced in each act of joyful renunciation and in moments of serene detachment. To know oneself; if but temporarily and partially, free from the slavery of passions and the blindness of self-deception; to be master of oneself and to live and think in the light of knowledge, if but for a

time and to a limited extent—these are truly not “mere negative facts”, but are the most positive and elevating experiences for those who know more than the fleeting and deceptive happiness of the senses. “There are two kinds of happiness, O monks : the happiness of the sense-pleasures, and the happiness of renunciation. But the greater of them is the happiness of renunciation”. (Aṅguttara-Nikāya, Duka-nipāta).

Thus, these seemingly negative words of the destruction of greed, hatred and delusion, will convey to the thoughtful and energetic a stirring positive message: of a way that can here be trodden, of a goal that can here be reached, of a happiness that can here be experienced.

That aspect of a lofty happiness attainable here and now should, however, not be allowed to cover for us the fact that the attainment of Nibbāna is the end of rebirth, the cessation of becoming. This end or cessation is, however, in no way the destruction or annihila-

tion of anything. What actually takes place is the ending of new origination owing to the stopping of its root-causes: ignorance and craving.

He who sees the Truth of Suffering deeply and thoroughly, is “no longer carried away by the unreal, and does no longer shrink back from the real”. He knows, “It is suffering indeed, that arises, it is suffering that ceases”. With a mind unswerving, he strives after the deathless state, the final cessation of suffering—Nibbāna.

“The Holy Ones know it as bliss; the personality’s cessation;  
Repugnant to the worldly folk, but not to those who clearly see.  
What others count as highest bliss, as pain regard it Holy Ones;  
What those as painful do regard, is for the Holy Ones sheer bliss.”

(Sutta-nipāta, Verses 761/2)



‘As to those recluses and brāhmins who hold and teach : — Whatsoever weal or woe or neutral feeling is experienced, all that is due to the creation of a Supreme Deity, I question them: “Is it true, as they say, that you worthy sirs teach that all this is due to the creation of a Supreme Deity?”’

Thus questioned by me they reply :— “Yes, we do.”

Then I say to them:— ‘So then, owing to the creation of a Supreme Deity, men will become murderers, thieves, unchaste, liars, slanderers, abusive, babblers, covetous, and perverse in view. Thus for those who fall back on the creation of a Supreme Deity as the essential reason there is neither desire to do, nor effort to do, nor necessity to do this deed or abstain from that deed. So then, the necessity for action or inaction not being found to exist in truth and verity, the term “recluse” cannot reasonably be applied to yourselves, since you live in a state of bewilderment with faculties unwarded.’

Such, monks, is my reasonable rebuke to those recluses and brāhmins who thus teach, who hold such views.’

*Aṅguttara-Nikāya*

# THE DHAMMAPADA COMMENTARY

## The Story of the Virtuous Lay-disciple (DHAMMIKA-UPĀSAKASSA VATTHU)

Translated by the Department of Pāli, University of Rangoon.

Idha modati pecca modati  
Katapuñño ubhayattha modati,  
so modati so pamodati  
disvā kammavisuddhim attano ti.

*Dhammapada*, v. 16.

‘A person who has done meritorious deeds rejoices here in this world as well as in the next. He rejoices in both places. He rejoices, and rejoices all the more observing the purity of his own deeds.’

The Master, while residing at Jetavana delivered this religious discourse beginning with ‘Here, in this world, he rejoices’ (*Idha modati*) in connection with a righteous lay-disciple.

It is said that at Sāvattihī there were five hundred virtuous lay-disciples, each of whom had a following of five hundred lay-disciples. The leader of the lay-disciples had seven sons and daughters. Each of them used to offer rice-gruel and food by tickets,\* fortnightly-food, food by invitation, food on the fast day, food for visiting monks and offerings for monks who observed the lenten period. All the children followed the example of their father in the performance of good deeds. Thus, the virtuous lay-disciple with his wife and fourteen children habitually offered sixteen units of rice-gruel by tickets and so on. In this way, the lay-disciple with his wife and children became virtuous, good in conduct and devoted to charity.

Later he fell ill and his forces of vitality were on the decline. Intent on listening to a religious discourse, he sent a request to the Master to depute eight or sixteen monks. The Master did so. The monks came and sat round his bed on the specified seats. He told them: ‘Reverend Sirs, as I am weak in strength it is difficult for me to go and see you. Would you please recite a *sutta* to me?’ Thereupon the monks asked, ‘Well disciple, which *sutta* would you like to listen to?’ He mentioned the Satipaṭṭhāna which he said was the *sutta* which had never been neglected by any of the Buddhas. The monks recited it beginning with ‘O monks, this is the one and the only path for the purification of beings’.

At that instant, from six celestial worlds there descended six chariots, each measuring

one hundred and fifty *yojanas*, and each yoked with one thousand horses like those of Sindh and adorned with all kinds of decoration. Said each of the deities from those chariots, ‘We will take you to our celestial abode’, and added, ‘O man, just as one takes a gold vessel after the clay pot is broken, take this rebirth so that you may enjoy yourself in our celestial world’. Not liking to be interrupted in the hearing of the religious discourse, the lay-disciple said: ‘Please wait awhile, please wait awhile’. The monks thought that he was speaking to them and kept silent. Thereupon, his sons and daughters cried aloud and said: ‘Formerly our father was never satiated with listening to a religious discourse, but now after sending for the monks and requesting them to recite, he himself is stopping them. After all, there is no one who is not afraid of death’. Saying ‘This is not the proper time’, the monks rose up and left the place.

After a short while the lay-disciple regained consciousness and asked his sons why they were weeping. They replied: ‘Father, you sent for the monks and while listening to a religious discourse, you yourself stopped them. We cried as we thought that there was no one who was not afraid of death’. He enquired, ‘But where are the reverend monks?’ They answered: ‘The monks said, “It is not the proper time”, rose up and left’. He told them: ‘My children, I was not talking to the reverend ones’. They asked, ‘Then, with whom were you speaking, father?’ ‘From six heavenly worlds the deities brought six decorated chariots, and while remaining in the air they called out to me saying “Come and enjoy yourself in our celestial world, come and enjoy yourself in our celestial world”, and with them I was speaking’. Then, being asked, ‘Father, where are the chariots? We do not see them,’ he replied: ‘Will you get me a garland of flowers?’ ‘Yes, Father’, ‘Which celestial world is delightful?’ ‘Father, the Tusita celestial world, the abode of all the Bodhisattas and the parents of the Buddhas, is delightful’. ‘Well then, throw the garland saying “Let this hang on the chariot that has come from the Tusita heaven”.’ They did so.

\* Rationing was known in those days, and this presumably was based on this practice, a giving of “tickets” which could be exchanged for food.

It stuck on to the pole of the chariot, and remained hanging in the air. That only the people saw, but not the chariot. The lay-disciple asked 'Do you see the garland?' and being answered in the affirmative said: 'This garland is hanging on the chariot which has come from the Tusita heaven; I am going to the Tusita heaven. Be not worried. If you wish to be reborn in the same place with me, do meritorious deeds in the same way as I have done'. So saying, he passed away and was seated in the chariot. Immediately he was reborn as a deity with a body three *gāvutas* in extent and adorned with sixty cart-loads of ornaments. A thousand celestial maidens waited upon him, and a golden mansion, twenty-five *yojanas* in size, appeared for him.

When the monks reached the monastery, the Teacher asked them, 'Monks, did the lay-disciple listen to the religious discourse?' They replied: 'Yes, Lord, but he interrupted us in the middle of the discourse saying "Please wait". Then his children cried aloud and we, saying "This is not the proper time", got up from our seats and left the place.' 'Monks, he was not talking to you; but from six celestial worlds came the deities bringing six decorated chariots and called the lay-disciple to them; not wishing to interrupt the discourse, he was speaking to them'. 'Is it so, Lord?' 'Yes, monks'. Being questioned by the monks as to where he was born, the Master replied, 'In the Tusita heaven, O monks'. Said the monks, 'Lord, having enjoyed himself here in this world amidst

his kinsmen, now again immediately after passing away is he reborn in the world of joy?' 'True, monks, earnest people, be they householders or recluses, rejoice everywhere'. So saying, the Master uttered this stanza:

Idha modati pecca modati  
katapuñño ubhayattha modati,  
so modati so pamodati  
disvā kammavisuddhim attano ti.

*Dhammapada*, v. 16.

'A person who has done meritorious deeds rejoices here in this world as well as in the next. He rejoices in both places. He rejoices, and rejoices all the more observing the purity of his own deeds.'

Therein, *katapuñño* means a person who performs various kinds of meritorious deeds. Reflecting 'Verily, I have not done any evil, on the other hand I have done good' he enjoys himself in this life on account of his good deeds and after death he rejoices as a result of the good deeds he has done. Thus, indeed, he enjoys in both worlds. Observing the purity of his own deeds (*kammavisuddhim*) — the accomplishment of his meritorious action—the lay-disciple rejoices here in this life before his death, and after passing away also he rejoices all the more indeed in the next life.

After the verse was spoken, many persons became *Sotāpannas* and so on. The religious discourse became beneficial to the multitude.

The story of the Virtuous Lay-disciple, the eleventh.

"A brother may say thus:— 'From the mouth of the Exalted One himself have I heard, from his own mouth have I received it. This is the truth, this is the law, this is the teaching of the Master.' The word spoken, brethren, by that brother should neither be received with praise nor treated with scorn. Without praise and without scorn every word and syllable should be carefully understood and then put beside the Suttas and compared with the Vinaya. If when so compared they do not harmonize with the Suttas, and do not fit in with the rules of the Order, then you may come to the conclusion:— 'Verily, this is not the word of the Exalted One, and has been wrongly grasped by the brother.' Therefore, brethren, you should reject it. But if they harmonize with the Suttas and fit in with the rules of the Order, then you may come to the conclusion:— 'Verily, this is the word of the Exalted One, and has been well grasped by that brother.'

This, brethren, you should receive as the first Great Authority."

*Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta.*



# NOTES AND NEWS

## WESAK IN PARIS

The "Friends of Buddhism" held Wesak celebrations in Paris on Sunday, May 12th and Monday, May 13th.

Like last year, the Meditation Room was open during seven hours to all those wishing to offer to the Buddha the homage of their meditation, and many more people than last year came to meditate before the statue of the Buddha, surrounded with flowers and light. It was a homage of pure and noble dignity.

Venerable Amritananda Thera of Nepal gave the Precepts twice during the afternoon and also a lesson to the constant flow of people who came to meditate in the Meditation Room. At 9 p.m. Venerable Dr. Rahula came and gave the Precepts again and addressed a few words to those present. Some of our members remained all afternoon and evening meditating or reading in our library. It was, for many, a day of profound and sincere homage to the Buddha.

On the evening of Monday, May 13th, at 9 p.m., we held a public meeting in the big lecture hall of the Musee Guimet under the auspices of His Excellency Major General Chai Prathipasen, Ambassador of Thailand in Paris. The 2500th anniversary of the Buddha was celebrated this year by Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. The three diplomatic representatives of these countries were asked to speak.

On the platform a beautiful bronze statue of the Buddha, kindly lent for the occasion by the Directors of the Museum, Mr. P. Stern and Miss J. Auboyer, was surrounded by yellow roses and in front of Him, as on an altar in Thailand, were placed candlesticks and a bowl of rice containing tapers of incense, and a tray of flowers among the garlands of white and orange flowers. To the right of the statue were Venerable Amritananda Thera of Nepal, Venerable Shin Kelasa and Venerable Dr. W. Rahula. To the left of the statue, near His Excellency the Ambassador of Thailand, who presided, were His Excellency the Ambassador of Laos and Mr. Poc Thieun, Charge d'Affaires of the Cambodian Embassy.

The flower offering was presented by a charming young Thai girl, Miss Nuanchan Watanakun, and received by the three Venerable Bhikkhus. Then the three Ambassadors pronounced their speeches,

uniting us in thought with the magnificent celebrations taking place at the same time in their far-away lands. Professor P. Mus, of the Collège de France, gave a short speech which was followed by a religious Buddhist chant recorded in India. Four of our members, Mr. Goury, Mr. Barbarin, Mr. Coulon and Mr. Marc, then read passages from the Suttas on the Birth, the Enlightenment and the Parinibbāna of the Buddha, along with messages sent by Mahāthera Nārada and Professor J. Filliozat who, as the guest of the Royal Government of Cambodia was taking part in the celebrations in Phnom Penh. Then followed a beautiful Song for Wesak sung by a group of Thai students. After the recitation of the three Homages by the Venerable Bhikkhus our President, Miss G. Constant Lounsbery B. Sc. expressed her heartfelt thanks for the collaboration given us by the Embassy of Thailand in organizing the meeting and for the help extended to Madame La Fuente by Mr. P. Maolanon and Mr. Watanakun and for the songs and recitations by the young Thai students. Our President also gratefully thanked the Government of Thailand which, on the request of His Excellency the Ambassador, sent us for this beautiful Fete of Wesak a generous gift to enable us to publish the second volume of the French translation of the Suttas of Majjhima Nikaya, the first volume having been already published through the generosity of the Royal Government of Thailand.

The evening closed by the recitation of the Mettā Sutta in Pāli by a choir of young Thai students, young boys and girls whose sweet voices filled the hall singing the noble words of the Sutta.

Among the many distinguished guests of the evening were the Minister of Burma and the First Secretary U Ba Yi, the Charge d'Affaires of Ceylon, Mr. W. L. B. Mendis and Mrs. Mendis, Mr. R. Jeudy from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Henry Holland of the Australian Embassy, the First Secretary of the Indian Embassy, Mr. and Mrs. A. Bureau, Mr. Ph. Stern, Director of the Musee Guimet, together with our members and our many friends. We are very happy that Wesak has once again been celebrated in France in deep sincerity and beauty.



His Holiness Somdet Phra Vajirayaṅṅāvongs, Sangharāja  
of Thailand

## BUDDHA JAYANTI MESSAGES

### Message of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council to the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Thailand.

We the members of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council most respectfully send this Message of cordial Greetings on the occasion of the Celebrations held in Thailand to mark the 2500th Buddha Jayanti.

Our two countries are akin in all ways : of the same race and religion, of culture and manners, and in geographical situation next-door neighbours.

In helping to establish Buddhism firmly for another 2500 years we acted together as one, thereby inseparably joining our fate and our fortunes for great good and in great goodwill. Together we have established the Pariyatti Sāsana, the foundation of the whole Sāsana, by holding the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, a joint effort of the five Buddhist countries in which Thailand's participation made possible the production of an authentic edition of the Tipiṭaka.

His Holiness the Sangharājā of Thailand presented to the Ovādācariya Sanghanāyaka Organisation of the Union of Burma the Chulalongkorn edition of Pāli Texts printed and published by H. M. the King of Thailand after it was edited and re-edited by Thai Piṭakattayaseka Piṭakakovida Mahātheras, proficient and well versed in the Scriptures.

There was the heartiest co-operation from the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand, both in the preparations for the holding of the Sixth Great Synod and the actual holding of it.

A Buddhist Goodwill Mission from Burma comprising Venerable Aggamahāpaṇḍita Anisakhan Sayadaw, a member of the Sangha Supreme Council, Venerable Aggamahāpaṇḍita U Visuddha, Honorary Secretary of the Sangha Supreme Council, Hon'ble Justice Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Mahā Thray Sīthu U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union and Vice-President, Union of Burma

Buddha Sāsana Council, and Hon'ble Justice Thado Mahā Thray Sīthu U Chan Htoon, Honorary General Secretary of the Buddha Sāsana Council, was sent to Thailand on the 3rd. May 1954 to request the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand to depute Bhikkhu and lay Delegations to the proceedings of the Sixth Great Buddhist Synod and this Mission was received and treated in brotherly fashion.

After the despatch of that Buddhist Goodwill Mission to Thailand, Burma achieved advantages not only in respect of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā but basing on this pure and sublime Sāsana mentality, the diplomatic relations between the two countries have been much improved.

Apart from Thailand and Burma's sending their Goodwill Missions to each other's country, the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council has been subsidising the Thai Bhikkhus and nuns who are prosecuting their studies in Buddhist literature in Burma for the promotion of the Pariyatti and Paṭipatti Sāsanas. In addition, branch Meditation Centres of the Venerable Mahāsī Sayadaw have been successfully opened in Thailand.

We firmly believe that the Aṭṭhakathā Sangāyanā now being held in Burma will be brought to a successful conclusion, just as was the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, owing to the wholehearted support of the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand.

In conclusion, we earnestly wish that not only may the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations now held in Thailand be brought to a successful conclusion, but also that, henceforth, we may see enduring perfection in,

- (a) Thai-Burma cordial relations based on the Sāsana,
- (b) The cordial relations between all Buddhist countries basing on the Sāsana, and
- (c) Peace of the world as the result of the endeavours of the Bhikkhus, the Government and the peoples of all Buddhist countries.

**An Address of Veneration at the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Thailand by Hon'ble Justice Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Mahā Thray Sithu U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union and Vice-President of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council.**

The Presiding Mahāthera of the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations, Thailand, and Venerable Bhikkhus.

Most Respectfully, Bhante,

By the nature of the Teaching of the Omniscient Buddha, it is evident that, of the three parts of the Good left by the Buddha 2500 years ago, comprising Pariyatti (Learning), Paṭipatti (Practice) and Paṭivedha (Realisation), Pariyatti is the pivot around which the other two revolve.

For the purpose of preserving the Pariyatti Sāsana in its pristine purity, the First Great Buddhist Council was held at Rājagaha, the Second at Vesālī, the Third at Pāṭaliputta, the Fourth at Ceylon, and the Fifth at Mandalay Burma.

Five years ago, the Bhikkhu and lay leaders of the various Buddhist Organisations in the Buddhist countries decided to convene the Sixth Great Buddhist Council, before the completion of the 2500th Sāsana year.

The Preparations for the holding of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā which lasted for about two years and the actual holding of the Council which lasted for two years, were eminently successful due in large measure to the ardent and whole-hearted support of the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand.

For the purpose of editing and re-editing the Pāli Texts which task was the most essential in the proceedings of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, His Holiness the Sangharājā of Thailand presented to the Ovādācariya Sanghanāyaka Organisation of the Union of Burma, a set of Tipiṭaka (Chulalongkorn Edition) printed and published under the authority of His Majesty the King of Thailand.

Also, seven learned Thai Mahātheras acted as the members of Boards of Revisors (Paṭivisodhaka); two scholarly Mahātheras acted as the members of the Board of Final Proof Readers (Osāna Sodheyypatta Pāthaka); three eminent Mahātheras from Thailand acted as the Chaṭṭha Sangīti Mahānāyakas (Chairmen) of the Proceedings during the Sixth Great Synod; while seventy-nine Sangīti-kāraka Bhikkhus from Thailand participated in the proceedings of the Sixth Great Synod which was held in five sessions.

Of the five sessions of this Great Synod, the Fourth Session (Siyāma Sannipāta) which lasted for 54 days commencing on 16-12-55 and terminating on 16-2-56, was enabled to be successfully held owing to the leadership of the Sangha and the Government of Thailand.

As a mark of respect and veneration and in recognition of the valuable part played by Thailand in the deliberations of the Sixth Great Synod, 32 sets of Tipiṭaka in Burmese characters are being presented one to each of 32 monasteries in Thailand from which Sangīti-kāraka Bhikkhus attended the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā. A set each has already been presented to six such other monasteries.

Similarly, as a mark of respect and veneration and in recognition of the valuable part played by the Paṭivisodhaka (Text Re-editors), Osānasodheyypatta Pāthaka (Final Proof Readers) and Sangīti-kāraka Bhikkhus from Thailand, Testimonials acknowledging their valuable help are offered to these 91 Mahātheras.

Bhante, we ardently hope that Thailand will be able to participate with Burma throughout all the remaining sessions of the Aṭṭhakathā Sangāyanā, just as the Thai Bhikkhus headed by Venerable Bhadanta Sudassanamuni participated in the First Session of the Great Recital of the Commentaries.

In conclusion, I earnestly wish that all the peoples of the world may be able to follow the Teaching of the Buddha, practise the Dhamma and enjoy the fruits of Realisation derived therefrom.



**His Holiness Somdej Phra Vanarat Kittisobhana, the Sanghanāyaka  
(Ecclesiastical Premier) of Thailand**

**An Address of Veneration delivered by the Hon'ble U Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma at the Ceremony for the Burma Government's presentation of titles and certificates, held in Thailand in 1957 C.E.**

Venerable Mahātheras of Thailand who possess the inherent quality of the Sangha, Suppaṭipanna (practising well the Buddha-Dhamma) and honourable friends.

Two thousand five hundred years ago, after the Mahāparinibbāna of the Omniscient Buddha, His great disciples such as Arahat Mahā Kassapa, Arahat Ānanda and Arahat Upāli convened the First Great Buddhist Council in order that the Buddha Sāsana might endure for a great length of time, and they taught the Buddha-Dhamma to their disciples.

After that, Venerable Arahat Mahā Yasa and Venerable Arahat Mahā Moggalliputtatissa convened the Second and the Third Buddhist Councils with the support of King Kālāsoka and Emperor Āsoka respectively, for the purpose of enabling the Buddha Sāsana to last for a great length of time, and they, after teaching the Buddha-Dhamma to their disciples deputed Buddhist Missions to nine different places.

As the result of those Missions, the Buddha Sāsana began to shine brilliantly in Thailand, Ceylon, Burma, Cambodia and Laos almost at the same period.

Later, in the Island of Laṅkā (Ceylon), during the reign of King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, the Fourth Great Buddhist Council was held under the leadership of Arahat Dhammarakkhita and the Teaching of the Buddha was first committed to writing. Again, during the reign of King Mindon in Burma, the Fifth Buddhist Council was held, and the Buddha-Dhamma was inscribed on marble slabs. Thus the disciples of the ancient Mahātheras taught the Buddha-Dhamma to their disciples so that the Buddha Sāsana might endure for a long time.

Bhante, in accordance with the Declaration made by the Mahātheras at the Third Great Buddhist Council—"Paccantimesu janapadesu, sāsanaṃ, suppaṭiṭhitam bhavisati" (In future, the Buddha Sāsana will be well established in the neighbouring countries)—, the Sixth Great Buddhist Council was able to be convened in Burma in 2500 B.E., under the sponsorship of the A.F.P.F.L. Government as hosts, and with

the co-operation and collaboration of all the five Theravādin countries—Thailand, Burma, Ceylon, Cambodia and Laos, for the purpose of the recension of the Pāli Texts—the five Nikāyas. The Aṭṭhakathā Sangāyanā is now being held in Burma.

Bhante, of all the eminent personages who strove their best to discharge the Sāsana duties such as the holding of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, His Holiness Somdet Phra Vajīrayaṅṅāvongs, Supreme Patriarch of Thailand is one of those of whom it has been said "Puggala viseso jānitabbo" "Distinguished persons should be known," and therefore, the highest Sāsana title in the Union of Burma, of Abhi Dhaja Mahā Raṭṭha Guru is offered to His Holiness.

Again, the title of Agga Mahā Paṇḍita the second highest ecclesiastical title in Burma is offered to His Holiness Somdej Phra Vanarat Kittisobhana, the Sanghanāyaka (Ecclesiastical Premier) of Thailand for his outstanding work in bringing the proceedings of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā to its successful conclusion. Also the Government of the Union of Burma as a token of cordial friendship with the Thai Government is presenting to the Thai Government a specially bound set of Tipiṭaka as "Asadisa paṇṇākāra" (the highest Dhamma gift).

The Venerable Mahātheras of Thailand who are preserving the Teaching of the Buddha have participated in the holding of the Sixth Great Buddhist Council, thus making it possible to hold the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā in the 2500th Sāsana year, have made it possible for their disciples to learn the Tipiṭaka by heart, and have taught the definitions, expositions and etymology of the Pāli Texts. In accordance with the phrase "Purisa viseso nāma ṇātabbo" "A man endowed with special talents should be understood as such", these exalted ecclesiastical titles are offered them.

In conclusion, Bhante, I most respectfully and earnestly wish that for the purpose of making the Buddha Sāsana to endure for a great length of time the Bhikkhus and Upāsakā and Upāsikāyo may practise the Threefold Sikkhā (Training), and that the Buddha Sāsana may remain free from all blemishes and last for another 2500 years.

*Jina sāsanaṃ nimmalaṃ, ciraṃ loke tiṭṭhatu.*

May the Sāsana of the Conqueror remain free from all blemishes and last in the world for a great length of time.

**Speech delivered by the Hon'ble U Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma, at the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations held in Thailand.**

I am very happy indeed to have this opportunity to greet my friends at the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Thailand and also to say a few words on the Buddha-Dhamma.

The people of Thailand and the people of the Union of Burma, both Buddhist and both striving for the common spiritual goal—Nibbāna, are indeed, friends and brothers who are co-travellers on this way of Saṃsāra and are co-partners in fulfilling the Perfections and performing meritorious deeds.

Buddhists perform wholesome actions to attain Nibbāna, which is devoid of all the unsatisfactoriness of life. There are briefly three kinds of such wholesome actions, (1) Dāna (giving), (2) Sīla (observing moral precepts) and (3) Bhāvanā (mental development). One will not be able to attain Nibbāna by practising Dāna, Sīla or Bhāvanā alone, but will have to practise all the three, of which Dāna is the simplest, Sīla is somewhat higher and Bhāvanā is the highest. A person with meagre saddhā (confidence of heart and faith in the teachings of the Buddha) will not be able to perform all of them ; only a person with good saddhā will be able to perform all these wholesome actions. Some also are not able to attain Nibbāna although they strive earnestly, because there are two methods. They are (1) Sammā-paṭipadā (Right Way) and (2) Micchā-paṭipadā (Wrong Way). In giving bountifully, in observing moral precepts and in practising Vipassanā-bhāvanā, one should aim at Nibbāna only. This is Sammā-paṭipadā and by this Right Way only will one be able to attain Nibbāna.

On the other hand, if one aims at becoming in future existences a rich man, king, emperor or universal monarch, a Deva or Brahmā, he is on the Wrong Way. He will not be able to attain Nibbāna, but will have to wander in

the Round of Rebirths, experiencing various kinds of suffering.

Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā practised by many people nowadays are mostly on the Wrong Way because they see themselves as powerful beings moving in higher circles and not as renouncing all worldly things and attaining Nibbāna.

One thing we should remind ourselves of is that while we are in contact with the Buddha-Sāsana, we should endeavour our utmost to attain Nibbāna in this very life failing which we should aim at attainment in one of our future existences during the remaining 2500 Sāsana years and if we feel that we may fail in this, should so orient our thoughts and practise that we may be certain to attain Nibbāna during the period when the next Buddha, Buddha Mettoyya arises.

The holding of the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Buddhist countries and in particular this Ceremony in the great Buddhist country, Thailand, reminds us all that of the 5000 Sāsana years half has already gone and we have not yet attained the Real Freedom we aim at, and that we should strive our best to attain that Freedom during the remaining 2500 Sāsana years.

In conclusion, my ardent and earnest wishes are :

- (1) May all beings be able to practise Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā according to the Right Way !
- (2) May every Buddhist be able to attain the spiritual goal he aims at !
- (3) May the tie of friendship between Thailand and the Union of Burma remain firm and unshakably cemented till this world-system comes to an end !
- (4) May the Buddha-Sāsana shine brilliantly as the sun and the moon!
- (5) May the whole world enjoy Peace and Happiness by the Grace of the Buddha-Sāsana !



His Holiness Samdach Prah Mahasumedhahhipati C.N. Jotannano,  
Agga Mahā Paṇḍita, Sangharājā of Cambodia



## IN CAMBODIA

The English translation of the speech given by the Hon'ble U Ba Saw, Minister for Religious Affairs & Social Welfare on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma at the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations, Cambodia.

VENERABLE THERAS, YOUR MAJESTY, HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER AND PEOPLE OF CAMBODIA.

I feel it a great privilege to address, on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma, this august gathering of monks and laymen on such an auspicious occasion as the Buddha Jayanti Celebration, commemorating the 2500th year of the Buddha Sāsana.

This celebration is a most remarkable one in connection with the Sāsana and is well attended by great personalities, such as the Sangharājā, leading the monks, and His Majesty the King, leading the people and guests from Theravādin countries.

At this celebration, the Government of the Union of Burma has the honour to present the precious gift of a special set of the Chaṭṭhasangāyanā Tipiṭaka.

Though our two countries are geographically divided, yet our friendship tie has been quite firm and strong since time immemorial because of the similarity in religion, race and culture.

When the 6th Great Synod was held in Burma, the Venerable Sangharājā and great Theras of Cambodia, and also His Majesty the King, the Hon'ble Prime Minister and people of Cambodia attended the Celebration. It shows that our two countries are co-workers in the fulfilment of the Pāramīs and in the propagation of the Sāsana for the attainment of Nibbāna.

Such meritorious deeds can only be carried out because we are living during the period of the Sāsana. It is believed that any meritorious deed done during such a period of Sāsana will bear abundant fruit, as seeds sown in a fertile soil.

In conclusion, may I request all Buddhists to follow the maxim of "Make hay while the sun shines" and while we are living in the Sāsana period practise the Teachings of the Buddha for the attainment of Magga, Phala and Nibbāna.

May the friendship tie between Cambodia and the Union of Burma be strong and firm for ever. May both countries be prosperous and may the Buddha Sāsana be long lasting and illumine the whole World.

The speech given by the Hon'ble U Ba Saw, Minister for Religious Affairs & Social Welfare, on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma, at the ceremony of the conferring of titles, in Cambodia.

YOUR HOLINESS AND VENERABLE THERAS, May the Sāsana shine supreme for ever.

May I on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma, be permitted to deliver an address at this great ceremony.

It is a great honour for me to pay my homage to His Holiness the Sangharājā and the Theras of Cambodia.

This is a Celebration specially held for conferring titles by the Government of the Union of Burma. This tradition of conferring titles has existed since the time of the Buddha. Such titles are conferred on those of outstanding virtues and learning. The Buddha Himself conferred *etadagga*-ship on Sāriputta for wisdom, on Moggallāna for supernormal powers and on Rāhula for discipline.

Following this long-standing tradition of the Buddha and the Buddhist Kings, the Government of the Union of Burma also confers titles.

His Holiness the Ven'ble Sangharājā Jotañ-ñāno, who is very virtuous, well-disciplined and greatly learned, took part in the Sixth Great Synod in Burma, which is the most remarkable event in the history of Buddhism. Because of his great service for the promotion of Buddhism in the world, the Government of the Union of Burma is pleased to confer on His Holiness the highest title of Abhidhaja Mahā Raṭṭhaguru; the conferring of other titles and the presentation of 8 sets of Tipiṭaka are also made to other Theras of Cambodia for their active participation in the Sixth Great Synod.

In conclusion, may I earnestly wish that these meritorious deeds be the strong support for the attainment of Nibbāna.

**Message of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council to the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Cambodia.**

The Presiding Mahāthera of the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations, Cambodia, and Venerable Bhikkhus.

Most Respectfully, Bhante,

We the members of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council most respectfully send this Message of cordial Greetings on the occasion of the Celebrations held in Cambodia to mark the 2500th Buddha Jayanti.

Bhante, we have noticed that only after a long duration is a Sangāyanā for the purpose of the recension of the Piṭaka Texts able to be held, and during a period of 2500 years, only six Sangāyanās have been possible.

We have been inseparably joined in friendship, love and truth by having the great good fortune to be able to hold, together, the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā. This great synod and recension of the Scriptures would have been impossible for one country to bring to a

successful conclusion and it was performed only by the joint efforts of all the five Buddhist countries. The part played by Cambodia, famous for its learned and virtuous Bhikkhus, was no mean one.

Bhante, the presentation to Burma by His Holiness the Sangharājā of Cambodia of a set of Tipiṭaka which was edited by himself and about to be published, testifies to the fact that Cambodia co-operated with the other Buddhist countries in discharging a very effective work relating to the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, and this is only one instance.

Bhante, we ever remember the fact that during the five Sessions of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā which lasted for two years, Cambodia participated in the proceedings from the beginning to the end, and also that the Third Session of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā was convened under the patronage of Cambodia and Laos and was known as the Cambodia-Laos Session of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā.

May Cambodia and Burma which are akin in racial stock, geographical situation, culture and religion, be able to discharge all mundane and supramundane affairs with similar loving-kindness and co-operation from this day onwards.

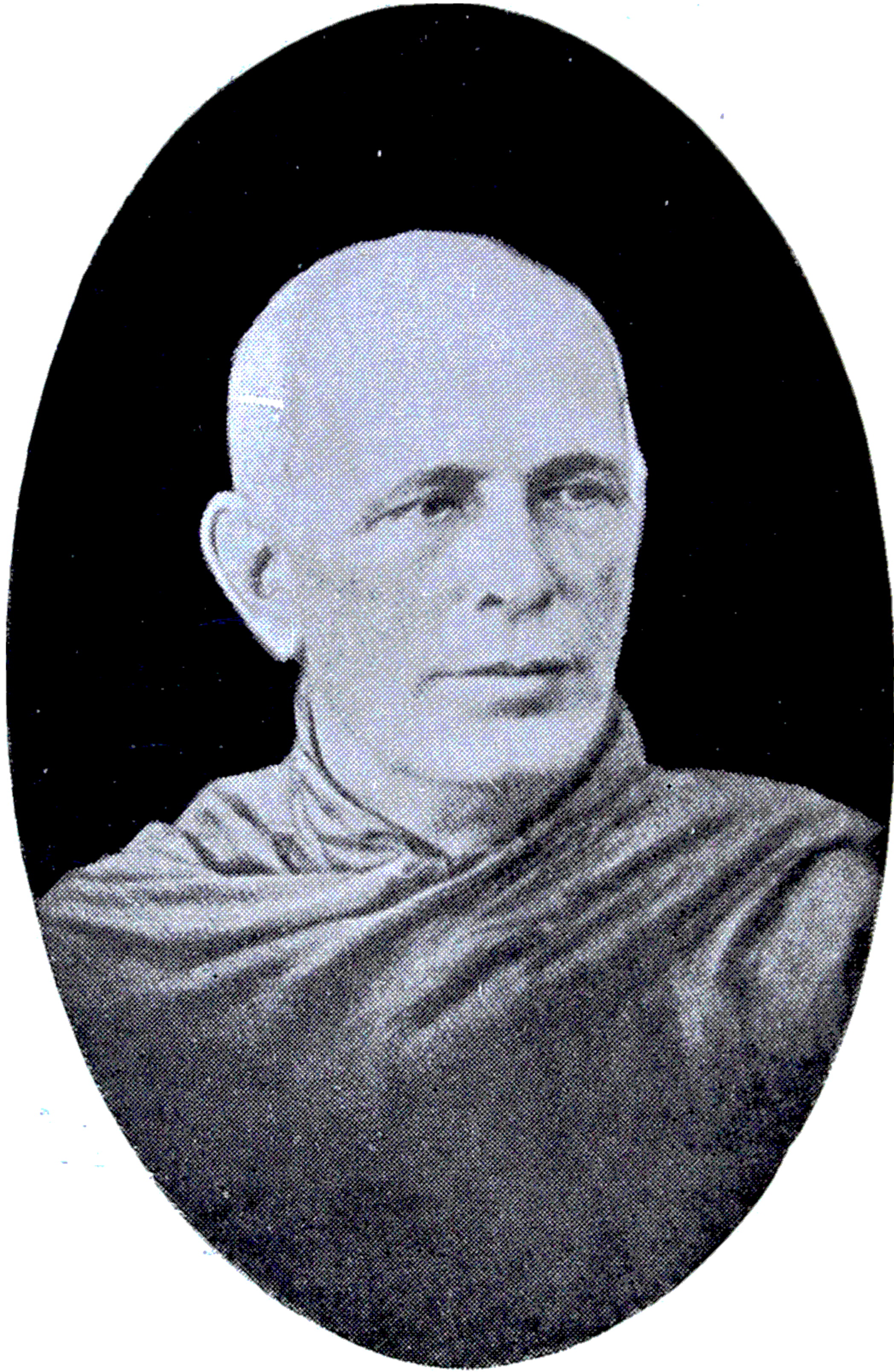


‘Monks, eleven advantages are to be looked for from the release of heart by the practice of amity, by making amity to grow, by making much of it, by making amity a vehicle and basis, by persisting in it, by becoming familiar with it, by well establishing it. What are the eleven ?

One sleeps happy and wakes happy ; he sees no evil dream ; he is dear to human beings and non-human beings alike ; the devas guard him ; fire ; poison ; or sword affect him not ; quickly he concentrates his mind ; his complexion is serene ; he makes an end without bewilderment ; and if he has penetrated no further (to Arahathship) he reaches (at death) the Brahma-world.

These eleven advantages are to be looked for from the release of the heart by the practice of amity . . . . . by well establishing amity.’

*Aṅguttara-Nikāya*



The late Venerable Nyanatiloka Mahāthera

# OBITUARY

## *Venerable Bhadantācariya Nyanatiloka Mahāthera*

We have to record with deep sorrow the passing of one of the most venerated figures of this age, a Westerner by birth who as a Buddhist Bhikkhu has given more than fifty years of service to the world in making known the Teachings of the Exalted One.

Only in the last hundred years has there been any attempt at real Buddhist studies by the West and this has produced a few outstanding Buddhist monks of Western origin and a few outstanding Buddhist scholars.

Absolutely pre-eminent among these was the late Mahāthera Nyanatiloka. He was born on the 19th. February 1878 at Wiesbaden in Germany and at an early age his keen intellect and direct, logical mind was attracted by Buddhist philosophy. In 1903 he went to Ceylon and later that year came to Burma where he received the lower ordination in the same year and the higher ordination in 1904. He remained in the Noble Order, keeping the Vinaya Rules as they should be kept.

Quite a few 'Buddhist scholars' have been scholars but not Buddhists. Naturally they have not had that 'feeling' for the Teaching nor the opportunity to test their ideas, nor the Insight that comes from practice and from living the life. In the Venerable Nyanatiloka we had a scholar in the fullest sense of the word who was also a Buddhist in the fullest

sense of the word; a simple, unassuming, kind-hearted Buddhist leader of keen intellect and logical brain.

He was a top-ranking Pāli scholar and his translations in his mother-tongue, German, and in English are authoritative.

He visited Burma from time to time and was a great link between Burma and Lañkā (Ceylon) especially, as well as between Asia generally and the West.

His 'Guide through the Abhidhamma Piṭaka' is perhaps the most scholarly work of its kind that has ever appeared, while his 'Buddhist Dictionary' of which a new, revised and enlarged edition has just appeared, is a real necessity to every Buddhist scholar.

His best-known book is 'The Word of the Buddha' which appeared first in German in 1906 and in English a year later, in Rangoon, and has run into 12 editions. This is so much a classic among the many not very informed books on Buddhism by lesser men that we reproduce below a review which appeared in these pages some time ago.

*Sabbe Saṅkhārā aniccā*. . . . All compounded things are subject to decay. The great Mahāthera has passed but we can take some consolation in that his great works are living and will be of continuing benefit to the world while this civilisation lasts.

—:o:—

### “THE WORD OF THE BUDDHA”

By

VENERABLE NYANATILOKA MAHĀTHERA

Vital and interesting as well as learned and authoritative, this book is valuable to one beginning a study of Buddhism and as valuable to the Buddhist scholar.

The Author covers the whole ground in less than 100 pages of a clear and simple exposition, clearly and simply and readably printed.

This is the Buddhism of the Buddha presented by one of the Buddhist scholars, himself for many years now a Mahāthera (leading Buddhist Bhikkhu) who has brought his great attainments of mind and learning to the task and has produced a finished work of great interest and value.

The book was published originally in German and the first English version was published in 1917. This is the 11th edition which has been revised throughout with additions to the introduction and to the explanatory notes and with some addition of Texts.

Our copy is from the “WORD OF THE BUDDHA” Publishing Committee, “Asoka” 139 High Level Road, Nugegoda, Ceylon, and the price is only Re. 1. (paper cover) or, bound in cloth, Rs. 3. We understand that special rates are applicable for orders above 25 copies.

# BOOK REVIEW

## THE CAT IS OUT OF THE BAG.

*'The Goose is out' by W. J. Gabb, The Buddhist Society, London, 9/6d.*

This curious and revealing book has a lesson to teach. That lesson is that without some standard of judgment, some criterion, some touchstone, the mind can work in devious ways its wonders to perform, and those wonders, insofar as they have no secure base of Teaching, usually are of doubtful value to the owner of the mind and to the world at large.

This is where one has to reiterate the distinction, which seems somewhat too subtle for some few undeveloped minds, between 'dogmatic authority' and 'an accepted standard of values'.

If we are to call ourselves 'Buddhists' we must have some confidence in the Buddha and His Teaching, and some confidence that what we believe the Buddha taught really is, as close as man can possibly evaluate, really what the Buddha did teach. We must not accept in blind faith and we must not expect others to accept in blind faith. We must scan the proofs and we must be ready to furnish our proofs and our reasons; and we must be ready to examine evidence offered by others for a contrary view and to accept any proofs or reasons as long as they are proofs and based on reason. That is surely neither dogmatic nor authoritarian. And just as surely is it poles removed from any idea of a 'Mother Church'.

There is ample proof of the veracity of the Pāli Canon, of its continued veracity through the ages. It has enshrined the Word of the Buddha from the beginning as a definite act of will and discipline. Groups of Bhāṇakas or Reciting Monks, Groups that still exist, have learned and recited their portions daily for more than 25 centuries. That, to some, seems incredible: as it seems incredible that any human could learn whole passages by rote without error. Yet here in Burma there is a monk who knows the whole Canon (estimated at eleven times in volume the Old and New Testaments of the Christians combined) and who can recite any or all of it, understanding it and being able to explain it. There is also other evidence whose place is not here. Now for some of the epic poems composed, as is admitted even by their devout followers, some seven hundred years after

the passing away of the Buddha, there is no such proof that they enshrine the Word of the Buddha.

The source, then, is Pāli, and only by ever returning to the source can we be sure of the veracity of the Teaching, of the Word of the Buddha.

Professor Rhys Davids had occasion to show how in one instance especially, a whole verse lost its meaning completely when translated into Chinese, so that the verse, in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, by a mistranslation in one clause and a grammatical blunder in another, was changed as follows:—

From the Pāli :—

'They're transient all, each being's parts and powers,

Growth is their very nature, and decay.

They are produced, they are dissolved again :

To bring them all into subjection—that is bliss.'

This became in the Chinese :—

'Whatever exists is without endurance,

And hence the terms 'flourishing' and 'decaying'.

A man is born and then he dies.

Oh, the happiness of escaping from this condition.'

It may be noted that the word 'Dhamma' as Rhys Davids points out, is an extremely difficult word to translate, but it can never be 'term'.

When, added to certain mistranslations and misconceptions, there are the epic poems composed at so much later a date, with the quite unverified assertion, and, indeed, unverifiable assertion, that a 'secret transmission' was handed down, privately whispered from one to another, this mixture can in nowise be accepted as 'Buddhist' except it be subjected to the 'Great Authority' mentioned by the Buddha Himself:—'(Anything that is represented as the teaching of the

Master) should be put beside the Suttas and compared with the Vinaya. If, when so compared, they do not harmonize with the Suttas and do not fit in with the Vinaya, then you may come to the conclusion:— 'Verily this is not the Word of the Exalted One.'

Here, in this book under review, is a case, an extreme case admittedly, of the mind wandering in underground realms with no real guide. When the Buddha gave His famous sermon to the Kalamas, He told them what not to believe in. He also told them what to believe in, and gave a touchstone. He certainly did not tell them: 'Whatever comes into your mind, that believe' but exactly the opposite. That too needs re-stressing. He told them to realise things for themselves and gave the basic moral teaching. 'Above mere logic' is the understanding of the sages but the Way thereto is 'With reasoning and investigation going on the while'. That too needs re-stressing.

Hitler, Mussolini and scores of others before them and some since, have attained to a sort of 'power' as has, if he is to be believed, the author of this book, though by his own evidence a much lesser degree of 'power'; and this 'power' bears about the same relation to real power as does low cunning to real intellect.

The book shows, again taking for granted the veracity of the author, what the mind, tapping the same subconscious source, can do without the guide of a full morality and reason, which has been stressed as so necessary by the Buddha.

For real power, and this is stressed in the Buddhist Teaching, one must have complete Truth, the unflinching facing of truth and telling of truth. No lie, even for the sake of a joke, can be even considered. The standard is, admittedly, rather high for moderns.

The author of the book, in which is incorporated some previous fragments he wrote for a 'Buddhist' magazine, tells how these, published as 'Tales of Tokuzan' and in the style of the Japanese fables, had deceived two well-known men, whom he mentions, and how he felt a 'puckish glee' thereat. Well, this is not a serious matter in ordinary journalism. It is certainly serious when put up against the high standard of Truth demanded by that Discipline which is Buddhism.

Mr. Gabb then tells of how he performs minor miracles by 'affirmations' ('though',

he says: 'in point of fact I do nothing but act as go-between') to, presumably some sort of Theosophical 'Oversoul'.

If we can believe his accounts of modern 'miracles' he has performed by these 'affirmations', he has merely used a subconscious force which is not at all miraculous and which, since it is always allied with Craving, really, always kicks back. And it IS allied with craving even when the user thinks he is performing 'miracles' 'just to help friends'.

Mr. Gabb's first 'affirmation' was when he was practically penniless and he asked for a job of a particular sort. He got the job, made possible by the advent of a war in which very many thousands of little children died horribly by bombing. A 'loving God' or, if you will 'Oversoul', in other words, rescued Mr. Gabb from poverty at his urgent plea by murdering millions. That is not actually what did happen. There is an old story of an Egyptian priest who used to go and bathe his feet in the Nile every year, just before the Nile flooded. Finally he got to believe that the Nile flooded because he bathed his feet there. But when "miracles" happen as the result of what for want of a better phrase we must still call 'subconscious force'; something rather amoral when not immoral (and the immorality is always there since it stems from Craving in the user's mind), it lasts for a time only. Take the case of the man who was saved by Mr. Gabb. The man was worried sick because he was about to go bankrupt and then, according to Mr. Gabb, by the manipulation of Mr. Gabb's 'affirmations' he discovered that he really had made a mistake in his accounts and had £3500 that he had presumably, failed to notice in adding up his 'Profit and Loss.' That man must die and lose his money and no God and no Mr. Gabb can save him permanently. Mr. Gabb tells how his 'Tales of Tokuzan' deceived a well-known psychiatrist. It is quite certain that the present book would deceive no-one with the slightest knowledge of psychology.

The 'Zen Tales' (the imitations) have the genuine flavour of Sadism. Whether the kicks and slaps are really administered and the legs broken and the fingers cut off by the Abbots or whether these are mere 'figures of speech', the flavour of Sadism yet remains, and Sadism is the very opposite of the kind and firm teaching of the Buddha.

The 'back to front' method of writing (analogous to the 'mirror-writing' of certain

psychotics, is also not Buddhist. The Buddha had said to a certain Brahman 'There are those, Brahmin, who say that day is night and night is day. I say to you that day is day and night is night.' \*

On page 69 of 'The Goose is Out' is a saying of an old master of 'Zen' Yoka-Daishi, (unless Mr. Gabb is pulling our leg again) as follows :—

'Who has gone beyond learning and is not exerting himself in anything.

He neither endeavours to avoid idle thoughts nor seeks after the truth.

For he knows that ignorance in reality is the Buddha-nature,

And that this empty visionary body is no less than the Dhamma-body.'

We use the Buddha's 'Great Authority' and put this against the Suttas and the Vinaya and pronounce it non-Buddhist and anti-Buddhist.

Tokuzan, who is now revealed as a figment of Mr. Gabb's imagination, says :

'Life can be pleasurable.

Union with the pleasant is pleasurable.

Separation from the unpleasant is pleasurable.

And craving that is satisfied, that also is pleasurable.

Pleasure is caused by craving.

Pleasure more abundant is caused by cultivating the art of craving.

The way to cultivate this art is the Eight-fold Path.

I call the path, "Right Play".

We use the Buddha's 'Great Authority' and put this against the Suttas and the Vinaya and pronounce it non-Buddhist and anti-Buddhist.

In showing what the mind can do when unguarded by a standard, a Norm, and undisciplined ; and in showing how the petty magicks and makings of myths originated and were fobbed off as 'Buddhism', 'The Goose is Out' lets the cat out of the bag with a vengeance.

We have a Norm, we have a touchstone, for which there is plenty of proof. Let the great Asian philosophers of the last eighteen centuries and their modern imitators flourish and flourish exceedingly. Some of their work is better than some of their other work. But let them not pass it off as 'Buddhism' unless it agrees with the Suttas and the Vinaya as the Buddha Himself said it should.

---

\* Bhaya-Bherava-Sutta, Majjhima-Nikāya.



" I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine ; for in respect of the truths, Ānanda, the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who keeps something back. "

*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta.*

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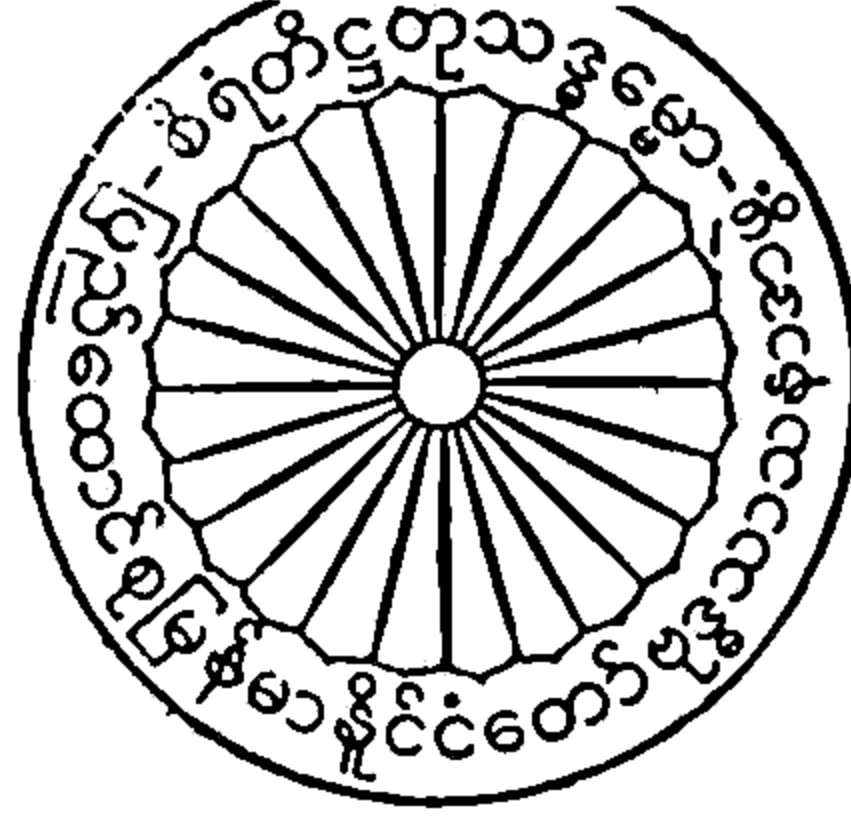
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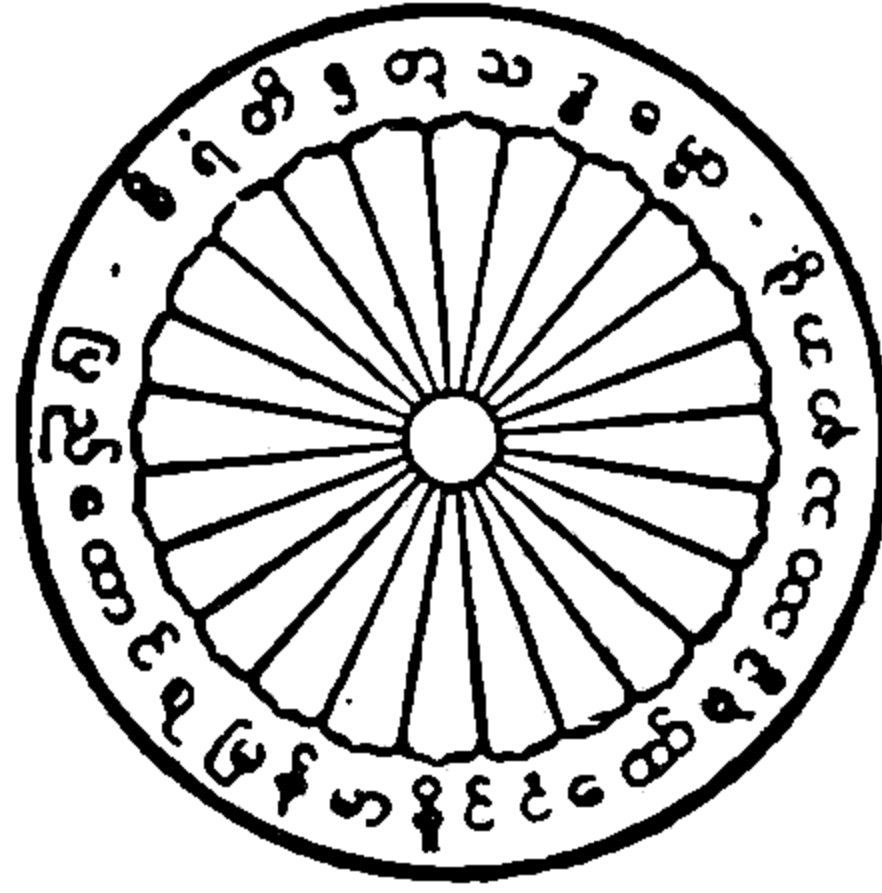
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"THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA"  
Union Buddha Sāsana Council,  
Kabā Aye P.O.,  
Rangoon, Union of Burma.

# NIYĀMA-DĪPANĪ OR MANUAL OF COSMIC ORDER

By Mahāthera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt.

[Translated from the Pāli by Beni M. Barua, D. Litt., M.A., and revised and edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A. and re-edited by the English Editorial Department, Union Buddha Sāsana Council. Final instalment, to which is added the correspondence between Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids and Ven. U Nyana and also the "Note on Dhamma-Niyāma" by Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, translated by U Nyāna, Patamagyaw.]

## EXPOSITIONS

### VI.

#### OF CAUSAL GENESIS.

From the standpoint of ultimate, or philosophic truth the order (or procedure, *pavatti*) in the world of rational individuals (*satta*) is by way of causal genesis. Hence we state the law of that order in terms of the formula called Causal Genesis (literally "happening-because-of" : *paṭicca-samup-pāda*):—Because of ignorance, actions ; because of actions, consciousness; because of consciousness, mind-and-body; because of mind-and-body, the six sense-spheres, (senses and objects); because of the six sense-spheres, contact; because of contact, feeling; because of feeling, craving; because of craving, clinging; because of clinging, becoming; because of becoming, birth; because of birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, misery, and despair. This is the genetic process of the entire body of ill.

(1) Ignorance, nescience (*a-vijjā*). Let us here take the positive form, knowledge, first. Knowledge is cognising, knowing. Knowing what? The knowable. What is the knowable? Facts (called truth). What is truth, or fact? That which holds good at all times, and is a fact (*lit.*, has come to be), which is "thus" which is not "not-thus," is not otherwise and not self-contradictory, is called Truth. How many aspects (*vidha*) of truth are there? There are four :—the Fact itself, its Cause, its Cessation, the Means to its Cessation. For example, in the Four Noble Truths concerning Suffering or Ill :—The Noble Fact of Ill, the Noble Fact of the Cause (or Genesis) of Ill, of the Cessation of Ill, of the Means (or Path) leading to the Cessation of Ill. "Noble" truth here is equivalent to immoveable (*achālā*) truth. \*

Now, what is the fact of Ill? In the Pāli we are told that the five aggregates, or the six organs of sense are synonymous with the fact of Ill.\*\* But why should the matter-group be comprised under the Noble Fact of Ill? Well, are not the factors of the body, even though the body be an angel's or a god's, subject eventually to birth, decay, death, sorrow, mourning, pain, misery, and despair? Now this quality "subject to birth" includes liability to (re-) birth in purgatory, or as a beast, or in such evil planes of life as those of *Petas* or *Asuras*. It includes the being involved again and again in passions, in wrong-doing, in diseases and infirmities. Hence rebirth in any material shape is a state of perpetual peril and liability to suffering.

The second Noble Truth is described as the Cause, or Origin of Ill. Here by the word origin (*samudaya*) is implied, that which gives rise to, or develops Ill. What is that? Craving (*taṇhā*, or unregenerate desire). Whoso does not put away such desires begets and fosters all the ills characterising the life of a mental and bodily organism.

The fact of the cessation of Ill is known as the third Noble Truth. We conceive cessation as two-fold, namely, the cessation of what has already arisen, and the cessation of what has not yet arisen. When we include under cessation the cessation of cravings not yet actual, we are really referring to ills that are not yet felt, since cravings are their cause or root. Hence the task of making to cease is immediately concerned with cravings, not with suffering. And by cessation we mean not temporary removal, but final non-reappearance. Of two men who each cut down a poisonous tree, only he who cuts away the root ensures the impossibility of regrowth.

In the fourth Noble Truth, again, the means or course referred to is in reality the Path

\* No etymology is here intended. It is simply a method of ancient edifying exegesis.—Ed.

\*\* E.g. *Samyutta*, iii., p. 23 f.; iv., 2, etc., etc.

(NOTE : Editorial footnotes are, unless otherwise stated, those of the original editor.)

leading to the cessation of Craving, and thus of Ill ; of those ills, namely, associated, as we saw, with mental and bodily organic life. Doctrinally, the Path generally denotes the Noble Eight-fold Path which consists of Right View, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Contemplation, and Right Concentration.

These fall into three groups : insight, concentrative practice, and moral conduct. Under insight come Right View and Right Resolve; in the moral group are Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood; and in the concentration-group are Right Effort, Right Contemplation and Right Concentration.

It is worthy of note that by the Path we understand, from another point of view, the carrying out of the act of comprehension (*pariññā*). The work of comprehension is three-fold, namely, penetrating insight into the nature of reality and laws of things ; investigating comprehension of the three characteristic marks of phenomena; and the comprehension which abandons hallucinations attaching to things of temporal sequence thus inquired into. More strictly, the term Path is taken to signify the fullest exercise of the last-named work of comprehension. For it is through work of comprehension that we get rid, first, of belief in a soul; secondly, of inherent craving for sensuous pleasures; and thirdly, of inherent craving for rebirth.

Here it should be noted that, instead of a negative name, such as Cessation of Ill, we might give a positive name, such as Attainment of Happiness, to the third Noble Truth. Happiness is of two kinds; pleasure as experienced by the gods and average men, and the blissful tranquillity reached only by those who follow the Noble Path. Pleasure is the experience of those who are victims to craving while the experience of blissful tranquillity is only for those who are masters of knowledge. This realm of bliss we call Nibbāna, where the nutriment for craving is wanting.

To sum up : Knowledge is the act of knowing, the knowing what ought to be known,

*i.e.*, the four Noble Truths. If this be so, and if Ignorance be rightly understood as the opposite of knowledge, then it necessarily follows that Ignorance is the act of not knowing what ought to be known, *i.e.*, the four immutable Noble Truths.

(2) Actions (*sankhārā*). These are the plannings, the activities, "puttings-together," in virtue of which living beings accomplish something ; that of which the moral consequence is either good or evil, meritorious or the contrary, attaches to this life or has bearing upon the life that is to follow upon the present one. In our phraseology, we take *sankhārā* to signify all those actions by way of deed, speech, and thought, which determine the modes of our existence now or in time to come or both at present and in future. Actions so conceived fall into three grades (or kinds) — the demeritorious, the meritorious, and those of an unoscillating nature (*āneñja*). Of these, demeritorious actions are bad deeds, words and thoughts; meritorious actions are good deeds, words and thoughts belonging to the *kāma* planes of life; \* the third kind are acts of the mind, involving merit, done in the *rūpa* planes of life\*\* and good acts of the mind done in the *arūpa* planes of life.\*\*\* But how is it that because of ignorance, actions come to pass ? They who do not understand, do not know the four Noble Truths; for them the three types of hallucinations as to their mind and body, thus conditioned by ignorance, come into existence. The hallucinations in their development form what we call craving-materials, and these materials in their development form the modes of our existence now or in time to come. It is thus that because of ignorance, actions come to pass.\*\*\*\*

(3) Consciousness (*viññāṇa*). This is our term for knowing (*i.e.* coming to know) in a variety of ways. It includes awareness of cognition through sense and cognition through work of mind. For example, we cognise objects by way of sight ; sounds by way of hearing ; odours by way of smell ; sapids by way of taste ; the tangibles by way of touch, and the cognisables by way of thought. Accordingly we distinguish cogni-

\* *i.e.* Life from purgatory up to the lower heavens.

\*\* Life in the higher material heavens (Brahmā-world, etc.).

\*\*\* Life in purely mental heavens. See *Compendium of Philosophy*, Ed.

\*\*\*\* "Come to pass" is not in the text here or above. The reader will have noted that the formula of Causal Genesis at the head of this section is a series not of propositions but of correlated terms; "because of ignorance actions," etc.—Ed.

tion into six modes — visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and mind cognition.

Visual cognition is the mode in which the process of consciousness takes place in (connection with) the eye, etc. By mind-cognition we understand the mode in which the process of consciousness takes place in connection with thoughts (as distinguished from sense-perception).

Again, cognition is distinguished into two kinds, according as it leads to moral or immoral results.

Our main question is, How is it that because of actions consciousness comes to be? It is worth noting that in this case, actions are but a name for the element of volition (*cetanā-dhātu*) given in a process of consciousness. The term consciousness, too, is used in a limited sense for what is called resultant rebirth-consciousness (*i.e.*, consciousness in a newly-conceived embryo). Hence the expression “Because of actions, consciousness” signifies that the rebirth-consciousness results, or emerges from the volitional effort in the previous birth.

It may be asked, How is it possible that, the action done in the previous birth ceasing to be, the rebirth-consciousness should now emerge from it? Here we ought to clear up the ambiguity that attaches to the expression “ceasing to be.” In accordance with our conception, cessation implies the completion of an act. There are three stages — the will to act (*kamma-cetanā*), the impulse and vim of the act (*kamma-vega, kammānubhāva*), and the resultant state (*vipāka-bhāva*). Let us take an illustration.

Suppose a man were to sow a mango-seed. He does so with a view to obtain mango-fruits. Obviously, then, his action is purposive. The seed thus sown engenders a mango-tree. But nobody can say until the tree bears fruits whether the seed was sound or not. In the course of time the tree bears fruits. It is then, and only then we judge, that what was so far merely potential in the seed, is now actualised in the fruits. Between the potential and the actual or resultant there is the intermediate process, the stimulation and development of the potential into a living force, represented in this illustration by the growth of the mango-tree. On this we are

entitled to say that the seed contained in some mysterious way both the end to be realised and the active process that is essential to it. Thus if we say that the seed ceases to be in engendering the tree, we mean thereby only that it has developed into a living force, so as to reach its end.

Now we conceive volition to be the germ of rebirth, a motive force in our conscious activity which brings rebirth-consciousness into play. Our underlying postulate is that fruition marks the cessation or completion of an act of volition. The Omniscient One, too, declared to the effect: “I declare, bhikkhus, that no voluntary actions reach a termination without making the accumulated fruits and results to be felt”. (*Aṅguttara-Nik.*, v., 292).

#### (4) Name-and-Form (*nāma-rūpa*).

Name is that which bends towards (*namati*) objects and Form is that which undergoes change (*ruppanti*), is transformed as conditions vary. Under name are grouped sensations, perceptions and mental properties. Form includes matter and material qualities.\* “Because of consciousness, name and form” :—by this we mean that rebirth-consciousness is the seed or principle of change as to name and form. In the series of causal genesis, name and form denote no more than mind and body in a developing man. We must note that *rūpa* (rendered here loosely as form) denotes also a living body, an organism capable of development from a seed or germ into a living, thinking individual.

#### (5) The six sense-spheres (*saḷāyatanāni*).

The term *āyatana* (“going to”) is applied to the six organs of sense, because they serve as places (*ṭhānāni*) in a living body, where six external objects, coming from this or that source, strike (produce stimulus), and thereby set up or occasion (*i.e.*, bring into play), presentative functions (*ārammaṇa-kiccāni*), and where the mind and mental properties, with their six inward-turning doors, coming from this or that seat or basis, set up receptive, or “object-seizing” functions (*ārammaṇa-gahaṇa-kiccāni*). The six sense-spheres are the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind. Here the sphere of the eye denotes the sensitive material quality of the organ of sight; ear denotes the sensitive material quality of the organ of hearing; nose that of the organ of smell; tongue that of the organ of taste; body that of the organ

\* Hence mind-and-body is the better rendering for most purposes—*Ed.*



of touch; and mind denotes the organic consciousness (*bhavanga-cittam*).

The six sense-spheres are termed also the six sense-doors, or gates, because they serve as so many sensitive media, through which the six external sense-objects and the six internal thought-processes (*vīthi-cittāni*), entering and leaving the six doors, mix as objects and subjects (*visaya-visayi-bhāvena*), "door" meaning sensitive medium, and not physical aperture.

Of these, the organic consciousness, being radiant as a pure diamond, is not merely a sensitive medium. As it was said: "Radiant, indeed, is consciousness (*cittam*), O bhikkhus."\*

In the case of moisture-sprung and congenital beings, the sense-spheres are rather dull, but in the case of beings of "apparitional birth," they are of a divine nature, — shining and burning . . . . .

But how is it that "because of name and form the six sense-spheres" come to be? The answer is to be found in the laws of embryological growth. In viviparous beings the senses and sense-organs develop, as the embryo develops in the womb. The specific senses and sense-organs develop at various stages though which the embryo passes.\*\*

#### (6) Contact (*phassa*).

Contact is the act of touching. Consciousness cognises each several object. But contact must be distinguished from such a sense-cognition. For contact implies that "concussion" which alone brings the functional activity of the senses into play. As commonly understood, contact may be a mere physical collision or juxtaposition of two things. But in *abhidhamma* (or philosophy) touching denotes only stimulus (*sanghattana*). Otherwise all material things would be called tangible objects. But the force of the term "stimulus" is that there must be union, meeting, acting together of all things connected with the stimulation. It is by reason of this acting together that various sense-operations take place . . . . In the Pāli we are told: "Due to contact, and conditioned by contact, feeling, perception, and active complexes are manifested. (*Samyutta-Nikāya, iii, 101 f.*)

Contact is regarded also as one among the four kinds of nutrition. Taken in this sense, contact is of six kinds: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile and mental.

But how is it that because of the six sense-spheres contact comes to be?

In the Pāli we read: "Because of the eye (organ of vision) visual cognition arises with regard to visual objects. The conjuncture of these three is contact. The same holds true of the other special senses." This means that based upon the sense-organ, and depending on the sense-impression (*nimittam*), sense-apprehension comes to pass. This being so, the intensity of impression, in the case of each special sense, varies with the stimulus.

(7) Sensation, Feeling (*vedanā*). *Vedanā* means experiencing the enjoying of the essential property (*lit: taste, rasa*) manifested in the object by the contact-stimulus. That essential property is either pleasant and agreeable, or unpleasant and disagreeable. Further, regarded in this aspect, *vedanā* is distinguished into six kinds, corresponding to the six-fold contact, namely, sensation born of visual contact, that born of auditory contact, etc.

*Vedanā* is also applied to feeling, distinguished into three types: joy, grief and hedonic indifference. According to yet another classification, *vedanā* is five-fold: pleasure, pain, joy, depression, and indifference. We hear also of these three kinds of experience: infernal (or infra-human), human and celestial or divine (super-human). The lowest form of infra-human experience (such as that of hellish beings) is one of unmitigated misery. Average human experience is of a mixed character, while the highest form of divine experience is one of absolute bliss. But the difference is that of degree. . . . We have now seen that the phrase: "because of contact, feeling", means contact or stimulus is the necessary antecedent of feeling.

(8) Craving (*taṇhā*) This implies hankering, thirsting always after things one does not possess. Craving, so regarded, involves naturally worrying and pondering over things. For instance, a man thus broods over the past: "The things I had before I now, alas!

\* Pāli: "Bhikkhave cittam pabhāsara midam"—*Anguttara-Nikāya, i, p 10. Accharāsaṅghāta-Vagga. (Eds.—The Light of the Dhamma)*

\*\* The translator has cut this section short, for the reasons given previously. The author enlarges on the account of embryological growth given in the Comy. on *Kathāvatthu, xiv, 2 (See Points of Controversy, 283 f.)—Ed.*

have not"! He calculates thus about the future: "Should this happen in time to come, it would be for my welfare!" He may worry as well over the present: "The things I have now, I shall not afterwards obtain!"

Craving is six-fold — for sight, for sound, for smell, for taste, for touch, and for things cognisable or intellectual (*dhammas*) . . . . In the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta we read: "Sight is (looked upon) in this world as pleasant and agreeable. If Craving arises it arises in seeing and settles there. And so, too, with regard to sound, smell, taste, touch, and cognisable objects".\*

Because of feeling, craving comes to be. This means that feeling (or, sense-experience) is the necessary antecedent of craving.

(9) Grasping (*upādāna*). This means adopting, laying a firm hold on. Negatively, it implies the inability to shake off a thing, even after experiencing great pain due to it, and perceiving its many evil consequences. Grasping, so conceived, is said to be four-fold: sensuality (*kāma*), dogmatism (or, orthodoxy, *ditṭhi*), belief in works and rites (*sīlabbata*), and the belief in soul (*attavāda*). Of these, sensuality denotes an intensified form of craving for all pleasant, agreeable, and sensuous things.

By dogmatism is to be understood that orthodoxy which leads a person to think: "This alone is true, and everything else is false."

By belief in works and rites is meant the fixed view, that the man is able to purify himself, to free himself from pain by means of external, outward rules, or by means of self-mortification, self-torture, instead of religious meditation and philosophic contemplation.

The belief in soul is described as the theory of animism, as the doctrine of a permanent ego, or the postulate of Being (*sakkāyaditṭhi*). He who is in the grip of this view, considers this ever-changing world in the light of a permanent substratum or unchangeable essence (*sāra*).

Now "because of craving, grasping comes to be" means that in our system craving is regarded as the necessary antecedent of sensuality, dogmatism, belief in works and rites, and belief in soul.

(10) Existence (*bhava*). By this we understand becoming, or the attainment of individuality (*lit.*: self-ness *attābhāva*). Existence is conceived by us under two aspects — (a) action, (b) result. (a) The active side of existence is for us the life of action (*kammabhava*), the present life in which a man performs various actions by way of thought, speech and deed, moral and immoral, pious, spiritual and intellectual, determining thereby his character (*saṅkhāra*), or shaping the nature of his future existence (*upapattibhava*). Thus the term action (*kamma*) includes, first ten immoral actions:— the killing of living beings, the taking of what is not given (*i.e.*, not one's own), unchastity, falsehood, slander, harsh language, idle talk, greed, hate, and erroneous views. Secondly, the ten moral actions:—abstinence from killing, from thieving, from unchastity, lying, calumny, harsh language, and idle talk, absence of greed, absence of hate, and right views. And thirdly, the points of pious duty (*puñṇakiriya vatthūni*):—liberality (*dāna*), conduct (*sīla*), contemplation (*bhāvanā*), civility, hospitality, the giving of what has been won (distribution of merit), appreciation (*anumodana*), and correction of erroneous views of others.

In judging each immoral action, we consider these four "fields of Kamma":— (1) as one's own act, (2) as instigating another, (3) as consenting to another's instigation, and (4) as commending the act.

In like manner, we judge each moral action, according as (1) it is one's own act, or as (2) one inspires another to do it, or as (3) one consents to another's instigation, or (4) one commends the act.

Again, moral actions are distinguished as (1) worldly (*vaṭṭanissita*)\*\*, and (2) unworldly (*vivaṭṭanissita*). Worldly moral actions are those which are done with the object of bringing fame and reputation in this life, and of securing high rank and fortune in the life beyond.

And those which are unworldly denote these moral actions which are done with the desire that they may lead to the extinction of craving in future, and not with the object of bringing fame and reputation in this life, or of securing high rank and fortune in the life beyond. This last mentioned type of moral actions is further distinguished as (1) those

\* Dīgha-Nikāya, ii. 308 (cf. Dialogues, ii., 340.)

\*\* *Lit.*: dependent on the Round (i. e. of rebirth, of lives)—*Ed.*

which are preliminary (*pāramīpakkiyo*), and (2) those which are perfective (*bodhipakkiyo*).

(b) Existence as (resultant) rebirths (*upapatti-bhava*). These are said to be nine-fold (including two\* systems of classification). According to the first system of classification the lowest in the scale are rebirths in the worlds of sentience (*kāma-bhavo*); the next higher are rebirths in the heavens of form (*rūpabhava*); those higher still are rebirths in the formless heavens (*arūpabhava*); yet above these are placed the heavens called conscious (*saññī*), the unconscious (*asaññī*), and the neither-consciousness-nor-unconsciousness (*nevasaññī-nāsaññī*). According to the second system of classification, these six grades of existence are divided into three :- those endowed with one "mode" (*ekavokāra*), those endowed with four modes (*catuvokāra*), and those with five (*pañca-vokāra*). Here those with five modes include the sentient and corporeal beings, endowed with five aggregates; those with four denote those unconscious beings who are endowed with four aggregates; and those with one denote the unconscious beings who are endowed with one aggregate . . . . .

But how does existence (rebirth) come to be "because of grasping" ?

Those average or worldly persons, who have not put away the four forms of grasping or clinging, by the right means or Path, indulge in each of the four forms in their deeds, words and thoughts. All their activities are in one way or another prompted by their clinging to sensuous desires, to opinions, to the efficacy of habits and rites, to their belief in a soul. Activities thus accompanied by clinging inevitably bring about, at death, some form of rebirth, some re-instatement of *khandhas*, or constituent aggregates.

(11) Birth (*jāti*). This expression is applied to the generation of beings, to the manifestation of *saṅkhārās*, that is to say, the appearance as individuals of what the nine above-named modes of existence are potentially. Sentient existence is divided into these four types of beings:—(a) the oviparous; (b) the viviparous; (c) the moisture-sprung; and (d) *opapātika* birth (apparitional, without

physical generation). All the gods of the six *kāma-planes*, and all the infernal beings are said to be of the last kind. In the Developing period\*\*, men were thus born, and so, too, were animals, spirits, and earthly gods. Subsequently men appear to have been\*\*\* viviparous, and even oviparous and moisture-sprung. The same holds true of animals in general. All corporeal and incorporeal Brahmās are of apparitional birth.

But how does birth come to be "because of Becoming" ? In this way :— the life of action determines the type of future existence, and that type of existence becomes manifest by way of birth.

(12) Decay and Death (*jarā-marāṇa*). (a) Decay. Corresponding to the nine grades of existence, referred to above, decay is said to be nine-fold. But it is considered also under these two heads—mental (*nāma-jarā*) and physical (*rūpa-jarā*). Each of these two kinds of decay is further distinguished into that which is momentary (*khaṇika*) and latent (*apākata*), and that which is prolonged (*santati*) and patent (*pākata*). The latent is to be known (inferred) from the patent. For were there no momentary change, there would be, *a fortiori*, no change of a more prolonged duration.

But how does the fact of prolonged mental decay (*i.e.*, change), (*parivattana*) become evident (or intelligible) ? It becomes evident through the occasion of sensations in the body, pleasing or painful; through feelings of joy or grief in the mind; through the perception of sight, sound etc.; through such higher functions of the mind as reflection, discursive judgment, etc.; or through such functions of the understanding as (cognitive or intuitive) insight, hearing, etc. Here the meaning of the expression *sankamati*, "pass on" is that the old stream (of consciousness) disappears, and a new stream makes its appearance. But without *a priori* admitting decay (*parihāni*), it is impossible to conceive such a disappearance. Besides, one must admit, the mind changes very quickly. The Master said : " I do not see, bhikkus, a single thing so quickly changeable as mind. And it is not easy to find an analogue for this quickly changing mind"\*\*\*\* Obviously, by

\* The nine-fold existence is classified under three systems and not under two as remarked by the translator. The first three are classified according to planes, the second three according to perception or consciousness, and the last three according to constituent aggregates. *U Nyana*.

\*\* See *Exposition*, II

\*\*\* That is, passed through the evolutionary stage of.

\*\*\*\* *Sāmyutta Nikāya*, ii, 95

the expression “quickly changeable,” in the quoted passage is meant the passing on of the flow of consciousness. Thus the quick change of the mind being realised, we are the better able to conceive its decay and death.

But how does the fact of continuous physical change become intelligible? It becomes intelligible through bodily movements. For instance, in the time of walking, when the first step has been taken, then we can take the second step. And it becomes evident from all natural changes, such as the seasons of the year, the months, the fortnights, the nights and days, and the great periods.

(b) Death. Corresponding to the nine grades of existence, this is also said to be nine-fold. Death is distinguished again into these four kinds: that which is due to expiration of the term of life; that which results from the extinction of kamma; that which results from both of these two causes; and premature death. Premature death may be due either to the action of past life, or to that of present life; either to the drifting result of action, or to the overflowing result of action.\*

It may be asked, why these three—birth, decay and death—are included among the factors of the causal genesis? They are no other than the three characteristics of compound things. Are they not, therefore, of slight importance, of slight consequence? No, we must not speak thus. For of all phenomena of life, these three are of the greatest importance, of the greatest consequence. For these supply the necessity for the advent of Buddhas. In the words of our Master: “If these three factors did not exist in the world, no Buddha would have been born. But because these exist, Buddhas are born”. That is to say it is in understanding, penetrating into the root-causes of birth, decay and death that the knowledge and mission of the Buddha consist.

The Master himself declared: “Those recluses and Brahmans who do not know the causal genesis of decay and death, do not know what the cessation of decay and death is. It is impossible that they, overcoming decay and death, will remain (for ever the same).”\*\*

Thus it is evident that our whole conception of the causal genesis (*paṭiccasamuppāda*),

or the causal order (*dhammaniyāmo*)\*\* has this end in view; to understand, to penetrate the cause of birth, decay and death. The knowledge of a learned, Noble Disciple (Who has gained an insight into the law of causal genesis) is self-evident (*apara-paccaya*); “There being ignorance, there is kamma; there being kamma, there is rebirth-consciousness; . . . there being birth, there are decay and death. Where ignorance is not, there kamma is not; where kamma is not, there rebirth-consciousness is not, . . . where birth is not, there decay and death are not.”

In conclusion, this causal genesis, this causal order, is the basis, the fundamental conception of our system, the penetrating wisdom of the Noble ones. It is the Norm which serves as the door of Nibbāna, the gate of “the Ambrosial.” That is to say, it is the path which leads to the abandonment of all views of individuality, all theories of soul, all forms of dogmatism and kinds of craving.

THE END

—o—

#### DHAMMA-NIYĀMA). A DISCUSSION.

(The following extracts from letters of U NYANA, Patamagyaw, and Mrs. C.A.F. RHYS DAVIDS, M.A. are here inserted as they introduce some comments on the Dhamma-Niyāma and are worth while to be recorded for the benefit of the interested readers)

From Mrs. Rhys Davids to U Nyana.

“ . . . . . I especially wish to raise the question as to the Exposition of the term Dhamma-niyāma, both as to the translation of that section and indeed as to the Exposition itself—but this with all reverence.

Cordially yours,

C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS.”

From U Nyana to Mrs. Rhys Davids.

“ . . . . Now, dear *Upāsaka*, I wish to say a few words on the exposition of the term Dhamma Niyāma. First of all if I were to render into English the terms of the fivefold Niyāma, I would do so as follows :—

\* See Expositions, II.

\*\* *Samyutta-Nikāya*, ii, 46

\*\*\* On Dhamma as meaning “effect,” cf. *Points of Controversy*, p. 387.

- (1) *Utu-niyāma*: the order of things in relation to climatic conditions.
- (2) *Bīja-niyāma*: the order of things in relation to germinal condition.
- (3) *Kamma-niyāma*: the order of things in relation to moral conditions.
- (4) *Citta-niyāma*: the order of psychogenesis.
- (5) *Dhamma-niyāma*: The natural order of things (other than the above mentioned.)

Mr. S. Z. Aung's rendering as "Natural Phenomenal Sequence" is a good one but it does not, I think, cover the wide meaning of the term, dhamma. Here dhamma is used to mean the whole cosmos or universe (the 31 stages or bhūmiyo, from the Buddhist point of view) with its inhabitants both animate and inanimate. Hence the Dhamma-niyāma is the whole ordered system of the cosmos. And the first four niyāmas are only the specific orders specialised from it, as each of them is universally predominant among many other orders. So whatever order remains unspecified or unspecialised, it comes under the heading of the Dhamma-niyāma. The Dhamma-niyāma may be expounded in many aspects. The revelations of all the branches of science may be cited for the treatment of the cosmic order if one is capable of doing so. But Ledi Sayadaw as a philosopher is obliged to expound it from the philosophical point. There are also, as you know, two methods in our Buddhist philosophy in expounding the dhamma in the light of their causes and effects, namely, *Suttanta-nayo*\* and *Abhidhamma-nayo*.\*\* The former is more adaptable to all classes of mind than the latter which is only suitable to those who have preliminary knowledge of *Abhidhamma*. So the Mahāthera chooses the *Suttanta-nayo* to expound with. And he, after treating the cosmic order pretty well, takes the *Paṭicca-samuppāda* for his context. The whole of the Expositions is meant to reveal the following facts.

"There is no World-lord, no Creator who makes or creates the universe; but the fivefold order of law. All is the sum total of causes and effects which are rising and ceasing

every moment. Nothing is abiding in this world of transience, wherefore no eternal peace can be found but on the other hand, it can only be found beyond this world of changes where no *jāti* or becoming is found through lack of cause. And to reach that place where eternal peace abides we must walk along the eightfold Noble Path which, though it pertains to this world, leads to the way out, and when we get to the end close to the Outer-world, (let me say so.) or to *Nibbāna* and as soon as we draw away the last foot, set on this world, we at once ascend the *Lokuttara-Bhūmi*, the *Nibbāna* peace. So much for the Expositions . . . . .

With best wishes,

I remain,

Yours in the Order,

U NYANA.

From Mrs. Rhys Davids to U Nyāna.

"..... Thank you for your note on the *Niyāma*. Personally I find either of the definitions of Dhamma-niyāma unsatisfactory. Any division must seem so to our Western minds which is co-ordinated with other divisions and yet claims to *include* them. It shocks our sense of proper classification. It would pass muster with us if it was a *Sesaniyāma only*, for any orders not included in 1—4. But then it should be so called, and not *Dhamma-niyāma*. According to the Burmese traditional interpretation the whole 5 ought to be called the *Pañcaka-dhammaniyāma* and the 5th the *Sesa-(or Pakiṇṇaka ?)* niyāma. Or there should be a Sixth, the *Buddha-niyāma*.

"Not knowing this traditional interpretation, I, when I introduced the subject to Western readers, in my *Buddhism* (1912) p. 117 foll., judged that the 5th *niyāma* was not *Dhammā*, but *Dhamma-niyāma*. I noted Buddhaghosa's illustration of it on *dhammatā* in the rebirth and appearance of a *Sambuddha* on earth—, and it seemed to me a wonderful concept, and one necessary to the Buddhist idea of the Cosmos that among the laws of that Cosmos should be the *uppatti* (-*upapatti* you say-) from time to time of a *Sabbaññu* Buddha. You Buddhists *must* call this a law. How otherwise do you explain the recurrence of Buddhas ?

\* *Suttanta-nayo* : According to the methods shown in the Suttas.

\*\* *Abhidhamma-nayo* : According to the methods shown in the *Abhidhamma*.

“And to place this wonderful law at the end with just any other *niyāmas* that have not been specified in 1—4 seems most unsatisfactory. How I wish I could discuss this in Burmese with the Mahāthera, Western fashion.....

Believe me,  
Sincerely yours,  
C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS”

(This letter was translated into Burmese and sent to Ledi Sayadaw who in return wrote a long note on Dhamma-niyāma which is also printed in this book at the end.)

From U Nyāna to Mrs. Rhys Davids.

“.....With regard to our classification and definition of *Niyāma*, I agree with you in your modification of the word “*Dhamma*” as “*Sesa*” or “*Pakiṇṇaka*” for the fifth order only in sense but not in word-expression. For we should not only look into the import of the word but we should respect the moral importance of the word-expression as well. If we use the word “*Sesa*” for the last order there should probably be a more definite number of *Niyāma*'s for it to refer and it should not have been stated as that there are only five kinds of *Niyāma*'s. The orders which the *Dhamma-niyāma* comprises are so numerous in quantity and so variant in quality that even an analyst of intellect and extraordinary gift like Buddhaghosa is sure to fail in his bold attempt to get all into detail. And the Buddha even warns his disciples not to too much contemplate upon the laws and forces of the natural constitution of the universe and of life reigning therein in these words: “*Lokacintā, Bhikkhave, acinteyyā na cintetabbā. Yam cintento ummālassa vighātassa bhāgi assa,*” as they give rise to insanity and fatigue to the vigorous pursuer after research and as he can never reach, I dare say, the triumphant goal of his profound research, however far advanced his observation, experiment, analysis and classification of phenomena may be. It is the *Buddha-visayo*,\* and the entire revelation can only be safely entrusted to one who is possessed of *Sabbāññutañāṇa*\*\* When aspiration for research after phenomenal occurrence eventually arises in His disciples' minds the

Buddha usually calms it with these words: “*Dhammatā esā, bhikkhave*”\*\*\* or “*Dhammatā*” *yam, bhikkhave, etc.*,\*\*\*\* lest they should waste away their valuable time in unfruitful research. From such passages and from such data, Buddhaghosa after careful observation and speculation infers that there are five *Niyāma*'s. Now to turn to our discussion of *Sesa*, it is only used, I presume, when it is required for reference or summing up, but not in formal classification. I have never come across, as far as my reading is concerned, the word “*Sesa*,” “the rest” used even by the Western Analyst in enumerating his formal classification. As regards to the other word “*Pakiṇṇaka*,” it is preferable to the word “*Sesa*” as it may mean miscellaneous order, or order of heterogeneous types, or order of things not arranged under any distinct class. But it is doubtful whether it has a wide and comprehensive sense as the word “*Dhamma*”. Its proper use is only in particular case as we find in the “Compendium of Philosophy” as “*Pakiṇṇakacetasika*,” which is used quite differently from what Buddhaghosa wishes to explain in his classification. In Pāli language no suitable word can be found other than the word “*Dhamma*” which is a philosophic expression applied to things in general. It is neither an introduction of new expression nor his own invention that Buddhaghosa has used the term “*Dhamma*” for the last division of *Niyāma* so as to include all that has not been said in the previous ones. It is but an adoption. Let me invite your reference to the classification of *Āyatana*s and *Dhātus*. Of the twelve kinds of *Āyatana* and eighteen kinds of *dhātu*, the last of each is called *Dhammāyatana* and *Dhammadhātu*, and each claims to include anything included in the previous ones. According to the definition “*Sabhāvaṃ-dhāretī ti dhammo,*” every kind of *Āyatana* and *dhātu* is a *dhamma* and yet each kind stands in co-ordinate rank with the last one. And the *Dhammāyatana*\*\*\*\*\* cannot include them as they have got their special name (*laddha-nāma-visesa*). Here the connotation of the *Dhamma* is limited and in Pāli such term is known as “*Pasiddha-ruḥī*” and it has no right to extend its sphere of nomenclature over other terms

\* The power of the Buddha.

\*\* Omniscience.

\*\*\* “That is the Law of Cosmic Order, O Monks.”

\*\*\*\* “This is the Law of Cosmic Order, O Monks.”

\*\*\*\*\* Mental object as Base.

of *laddhanāma-visesa*. . You may as well see that in classification of six *Viññānāni* (see *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*, ch. IV.) the last division is called *manoviññānam*, and *mano*, though it is a common term for all classes of consciousness or thought (*citta*), cannot claim to include the five kinds of consciousness previously enumerated, such as *Cakkhuviññānam*, etc, for each of which has its special name; but it is applicable only to any other *cittas* not included in the previous classes. So also is the same in our case. The *Dhamma-niyāma* cannot claim to include the above four *Niyāmas* though each is really a *dhamma* or a thing within the legitimate sphere of its definition, but it is limited to include only what are not included in 1—4. And the first four have a right to stand co-ordinately in rank with the last, and hence you need not also call them the *Pañcaka-dhamma-niyāmo*. Allow me to give you an instance of Western classification. The English grammarians classify an adverb into the following distinct classes : as Adverb of time, place, number, quantity and quality. As each class is co-ordinate with the other divisions, the adverb of quality, though it may legitimately claim to include all the other classes in the sense of its being a qualifying word must be maintained without any prejudice and contention as the proper classification. Hence the adverb of quality may mean any adverb not included in the previous classes. Now we see that it is on all fours with our method. With regard to your suggestion to include a sixth, *i.e.*, *Buddha-niyāma* I think it is not necessary. It may come under the head of *Dhamma-niyāma*. It is not a universal order applicable to many others but itself. It should be borne in mind that the appearance of a Buddha is not a regular recurrent one. Some universe has one or more and others have none at all, and even in the former case it is not synchronous. Therefore it seems to Buddhaghosa that the *Buddha-niyāma* does not deserve a special treatment in his elucidation of the general laws. It is the *dhammatā* that a Buddha appears only when a *Bodhisatta* has fully reached the perfection of the *Pāramita*'s and *Buddha-dhamma*'s. . . . .

I remain,  
Cordially yours,  
U NYANA."

## NOTE ON DHAMMA-NIYĀMA

BY

LEDI SAYADAW.

(TRANSLATED BY U NYANA).

The aim of the scholiasts in expounding the fivefold cosmic order should at first be noted. There are both in this world of men and of gods two kinds of conception, namely, (i) *Issara-kutta*, and (ii) *Brahma-kutta*. The conception by which some people believe that there is a Supreme Ruler of the three worlds who ever lives in heaven and by whom everything is created, is the *Issara\* kutta*. It is also called *Issara-nimmāna* (created by *Issara* or *Isvara* or Supreme Ruler or God). And the conception by which some people believe that there is a *Brahmā* who ever lives in heaven, who is the great Father and Great-grand-father of all beings, who creates everything and supremely rules over the three worlds, is the *Brahmā-kutta* (created by *Brahmā*). Here *Issara* and *Brahmā* differ only in expressions but each is the designation of the same Deity, the World Lord, the creating God. Of the two, *Brahmā* is the name assigned to the supposed, supreme Being by the *Brahmins* and *Hindus* and it has become a general notion in the three worlds of men, gods and *Brahmās* since the world begins. As to the name *Issara* it is not a universal notion but a later imaginative adoption by those who fail to acquire the knowledge of origin of the world and primary causes of things in existence. In order to cast away these two immanent conceptions the scholiasts have expounded the fivefold cosmic order.

The fivefold cosmic order is as follows:—

(1) *Utu-Niyāma*, (2) *Bija-Niyāma*, (3) *Kamma-Niyāma*, (4) *Citta-Niyāma*, and (5) *Dhamma-Niyāma*. Of these five, the meaning of "Dhamma" in the last order should be first shown. We will quote a few lines from the *Nidānavagga-Samyutta*, *Ahāra-vagga*, X Sutta, page 162, which run : "*Jātipaccayā, bhikkhave, jarāmarañam. Uppāda vā Tathāgatānam anuppāda vā Tathāgatānam, thita 'vā sa dhātu, dhammaṭṭhitatā, dhamma-niyāmatā, ida-paccayatā. Bhavapaccayā, bhikkhave, jāti. Uppāda vā Tathāgatānam. . . . . pe . . . ida-paccayatā . . . . . pe Avijjāpaccayā, phikkhave, Saṅkhārā. Uppāda vā Tathāgatānam . . . . . pe . . . ida-paccayatā. Ayam*

\* Jahweh or Jehovah.

*vuccati paṭiccasamuppādo.*" \* In this text the natural things or phenomena (*Sabhavedhamma*) are first shown with the words "*Avijjā*, etc." and then the meaning of the word "*Niyāma*" is expressed in the following sentence "*Uppada va Tathāgatānam, etc.*" Therefore the word "*dhamma*" denotes both the things which mutually stand in relation to one another as cause and effect, for a *dhamma* always depends for its appearance upon some other *dhamma* which again in its turn requires some other antecedent for its arising. Hence any *dhamma* may be both cause and effect. And the word "*Niyāma*" expresses the fixity of sequence of cause and effect. Here is our interpretation of the sentence "*Thitā va sādātū, dhammatthitā, dhammaniyāmatā, idapaccayatā.*" There, indeed, ever exist in this universe, the natural order of elements, that establishment of sequence of causes and effects, that fixity of mutual relation of causes and effects, and that causal nexus of individual things or phenomena, such as *avijjā*, etc. In this text, the word "*dhammatthitā*" is synonymous with "*dhammatā*," and the word "*dhamma-niyāmatā*" with "*dhamma-niyāmo*". The renderings made by Maung Shwe Zan Aung and U Nyāna on the word "*dhamma-niyāma*" seem to be in conformity with the above quoted text.

Just as the method of word-description (*padasodhananayo*) is expounded at the very outset in the Expositions of the Ten Books of *Yamaka*, so also here we should apply that method first in the classification of the five-fold *Niyāma*. In the expression "*dhamma-niyāma*," the word "*dhamma*" denotes all

mental and material things. Therefore, *bīja*, *kamma* and *citta* are all *dhammā*, and it comprises all of them. Hence "*utu*" gets two names, (1) "*dhamma*," a general or common name, (2) and "*utu*" an individual or distinct name. In like manner, *bīja*, *kamma*, and *citta* get two names each. But in the classification of *Niyāma*, the individual names are used for the first four so as to particularize and make distinction from the rest of things, mentals and materials, which are conveniently treated under one common name of "*dhamma*". For this reason the term "*dhamma-niyāma*" should not be taken in its full application, but must be restricted within bounded limits to denote only the things which are not included in the first four. When it is required to treat "*utu*" as *Niyāma*, one should not call it a "*dhamma-niyāma*" though it (*utu*) is really a *dhamma*, but must use the appropriate and individual name and call it an *utu-niyāma*. The same rule holds good with *bīja*, *kamma*, and *cittaniyāma*.

For instance, we presume that there are five classes of workers on board a ship, the Captain, the Engineer, the Pilot, the Officer, and the sailors. Now the owner of the ship, being very much pleased with the works of the crew, and wishing to give them a bonus, sends a man with some money to distribute among them according to his instruction that so much should be paid to so and so. When distribution is made, the Captain and the other three are not entitled to receive shares from those of the sailors though they are working on board the ship under one common name as sailors, for they have already

\* English translation : "What, O monks, is Dependent Origination ? " Through Rebirth are conditioned Old Age and Death " :—whether, O monks, there be an arising of Tathāgatas, whether there be no such arising, this natural order of elements exists, this establishment of sequence of causes and effects, this fixity of mutual relation of causes and effects. Concerning that, the Tathāgata is fully enlightened, that he fully understands. Fully enlightened, fully understanding, he declares it, teaches it, reveals it, sets it forth, manifests, explains, makes it plain, saying "Behold. Through Rebirth are conditioned Old Age and Death.

- " Through the Process of Becoming, Rebirth is conditioned ;
- " Through Clinging, the Process of Becoming is conditioned ;
- " Through Craving, Clinging is conditioned ;
- " Through Sensation (feeling), Craving is conditioned ;
- " Through Contact (impression), Sensation is conditioned ;
- " Through the 6 Bases, Contact is conditioned ;
- " Through Mental and Physical Phenomena, the 6 Bases are conditioned ;
- " Through Consciousness, Mental and Physical Phenomena are conditioned ;
- " Through Kammaformations (rebirth-producing volitions), Consciousness is conditioned ;
- " Through Ignorance, Kammaformations are conditioned.

Whether, O monks, there be an arising of Tathāgatas, whether there be no such arising, this natural order of elements exists, this establishment of sequence of causes and effects, this fixity of mutual relation of causes and effects. Concerning that, the Tathāgata is fully enlightened, that he fully understands. Fully enlightened, fully understanding he declares it, teaches it, reveals it, sets it forth, manifests, explains, makes it plain, saying "Behold. Through Rebirth are conditioned Old Age and Death. This, O monks, is called Dependent Origination."

(NOTE.—The 6 Bases: The five physical Sense-organs with mind as the sixth.)

(Eds.—The Light of the Dhamma.)



received special gratuity under the individual names of Captain, Engineer, Pilot, and Officer. Thus it should be understood here also. So much for the word-description.

Moreover, among the six kinds of objects, the *dhammā-rammaṇa* stands last. So also *dhammāyatana* and *dhammadhātu* stand last in the categories of 12 *Āyatanas* and 18 *dhātus* respectively. Here also the denotation of each should be understood according to the method of word-description just as in the fivefold *Niyāma*. We will reproduce here a few lines from the Books of *Vamaka* which will serve as a means to obtain a clear knowledge of the method of word-description.

“*Dhammo dhammāyatanaṃ? ti. Dhammāyatanaṃ thapetvā, avaseso dhammo dhammo, na dhammāyatanaṃ; dhammāyatanaṃ dhammo- c’ eva dhammā-yatana ca. Dhammā-yatanaṃ hammo? ti. Amanta.*” *Ayatana-Yamaka.* “*Dhammo dhamma-dhātu? ti. Dhamma-dhātum thapetvā, avaseso dhammo dhammo, an dhamma-dhātu; dhammadhātu dhammo ‘c’ eva dhamma-dhātu ca. Dhamma-dhātu dhammo? ti. Āmantā.*” *Dhātu-Yamaka.*

“Is *dhammo* a *dhammāyatana*” Excluding the *dhammāyatana*, the remaining *dhammo* is *dhammo*, and not *dhammāyatanaṃ*; but *dhammāyatanaṃ* is both *dhammo* and *dhammāyatanaṃ*. Is *dhammāyatanaṃ* a *dhammo*? Ay.” “Is *dhammo* a *dhamma-dhātu*? Excluding the *dhamma-dhātu*, the remaining *dhammo* is *dhammo*, and not *dhamma-dhātu*; but *dhamma-dhātu* is both *dhammo* and *dhammadhātu*. Is *dhammadhātu* a *dhammo*? Ay.”

“Now I have dealt enough with, to respond to the critical observation :—“Any division must seem to our Western minds which is co-ordinated with other divisions and yet claims to include them. It shocks our sense of proper classification.”— made by Mrs. Rhys Davids, in her letter to U Nyana.

With regard to her sound suggestion,— “It would pass muster with us if it was a *Sesa-Niyāma* only, for any orders not included in 1-4. But then it should be so called, and not *Dhamma-Niyāma* . . . . . And the fifth the *Sesa* — or *pakiṇṇaka-niyāma*,” —we would say thus :

If the fifth order is called the *Sesa-niyāma*, it would only mean that the above four orders did not involve in it. But if it is called the *Pakiṇṇaka-Niyāma*, it would not only mean that it did not mix up with the above four orders but it would also allow various kinds

of order, such as the *Buddha-Niyāma*, etc., to be included. However in our Buddhist Philosophy, the word “*dhamma*” and its scope of meaning are very important and extensive. How? it is an ample work for the word “*Dhamma*” to uproot and destroy all the false notions, such as *Issara-kutta-diṭṭhi*, *Brahma-kutta-diṭṭhi*, *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*, etc. The whole of the seven Books of *Abhidhamma* is composed with the expressed purpose of disclosing the meaning of “*Dhamma*”. Particularly, the exposition of the five-fold *Niyāma* by the Scholiast is the attempt to eliminate the unfounded notions of *Issara-kutta* and *Brahma-kutta*. It will be clearly shown later how it eliminates. Here the difference between the power of the Great Brahmā or the so-called Supreme Ruler and the influence of the Cosmic Laws should be shown. The Great Brahmā can shed lustre over many thousands of world systems with his radiant beauty. He can see everything in those worlds, can hear sounds, get to any place and return to his own at the instance of his will, and read the minds of men and gods. As to his supernatural power (*iddhi*) concerning creation and transformation, he can create or transform either his own body or any external object into many and another forms. But these are only shadow-like shows and exhibitions which when he withdraws his power are sure to disappear away. In fact he cannot create a real creature or thing, in the least louse or its egg, which will not disappear away when the creative power is discontinued. In exhibiting gardens and trees through his creative power, he can create and exhibit only temporal, unsubstantial, unreal, and counterfeit shapes of, and resemblances to, the desired things, A tree, a real, substantial tree, even a blade of grass, he can never create. Because the appearance of a phenomenon, the coming into being of a creature, or the growing of a plant, is not within the range of supernatural or creative power, but it is within the domain of the Cosmic Orders, such as *Dhamma-Niyāma*, *Kamma-Niyāma* and *Bīja-Niyāma*. The things created only last while the *Iddhi* is acting behind them, and they are liable to disappear as soon as the *Iddhi* is withdrawn. The occurrence of hot, rainy and cold seasons are the natural process of climatic order and not the operation of *Iddhi*. As regards *Dhamma-Niyāma*, the Great Brahmā can transport thousands of men in their present life to Heaven if he wishes, but there

he cannot make them neither to become old nor to die, and even when they die he cannot debar and save them from falling into or being reborn in the abodes of torture. For the mental and material aggregates constituting the persons of men are under the sway of natural laws (*Dhamma-niyāma*) of birth, old-age and death. He cannot also make men or any creatures to be born in Heaven after they die because the inception of new life in new abodes after death is not within the sphere of the operation of *Iddhi* but it is within the domain of *Kamma-niyāma*. In this world, any one who kills and eats daily fowls, etc., and always drinks intoxicating liquor, must fall, in spite of his daily prayers and attendance to church, into the planes of misery after death. The Great Brahmā or the Supreme God cannot save him in any way. Because it is within the domain of *Kamma-niyāma* and not within that of *Iddhi*. On the other hand, any one who disbelieves in the notions of *Issara-kutta* and *Brahma-kutta*, who is a strong believer in the laws of *Kamma*, and who shuns evil actions and always cultivates good deeds, is sure to ascend the higher abodes of gods and Brahmās after death. And the Great Brahmā cannot prohibit him from coming up to Heaven. Because the influence of *Iddhi* can never overrule that of Moral Laws. The Great Brahmā, were he to encounter the Cosmic Laws, cannot defend and save even himself from falling into their clutches, let alone others. So much for the differentiation of *Iddhi* and *Niyāma* in respect of their influences.

Now to show how the notions of *Issara* and *Brahma-kutta* are refuted. There are some people who think that there is only one world, and who do not believe that there have been many cycles of worlds in the past and that an unlimited number of worlds will follow this present one in future. But they do believe that this present world has both its beginning and its end. And in looking for the primary cause of its beginning they utterly fail. However, reflecting upon the houses and buildings and their designers and builders, they come to the conclusion that this world must have its originator and he must be the Creator or the Supreme Ruler, or the Great Brahmā, or the God. On the other hand, Buddhism teaches that many cycles of worlds have been formed in the past and many others will follow the present one in succession. It also teaches that the world has its beginning and its end, and there are causes, called natural laws,

for the formation and destruction of every world; and these natural laws exist for ever and go rolling on in the infinite space of time. Therefore the followers of Buddhism have no notion whatever of *Issara* and *Brahmakutta*. So much for the refutation of the two notions. It has also been sufficiently dealt with in my Expositions.

Among the fivefold *Niyāma*, the *dhamma-niyāma* is most important. *Cakkavatti* and *Aggañña Suttas* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* are the fields for *Dhamma-Niyāma*. In those *Suttas* we find the order of life-span, or, under the common name, the *dhamma-niyāma*, which reveals the facts that the incessant rise and fall of human life-span from a decade to a myriad (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and vice versa are due to *Kusala* and *Akusala dhamma*. Besides those *Suttas*, such kinds of order may be found in many places in the Text. In the *Dhamma-hadaya-vibhaṅga* of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and in the *Uposatha Sutta* of the Eighth Book of *Anguttara Nikāya*, the six abodes of *Devas* and twenty abodes of *Brahmās* and their life-span are definitely expounded. It is also a kind of *Dhamma-niyāma* which in other religions is never heard of. It may be called the Order of life-span (*Āyukappanīyāma*) if one would like to particularize. Or it would not be wrong to enter it under the heading *kamma-niyāma*.

“Or there should be a sixth, the *Buddha-niyāma*”—with this suggestion, we are quite in concordance. Because in specifying it separately, the great wonders of the Buddha would be more conspicuous. I have also written in my Exposition that there should be a sixth, the order of birth (*jāti-niyāma*) which we find in *Vāseṭṭha Sutta* (*Sutta Nipāta, Mahā-vagga*). Because it seems to be a distinct class of order from *bija* and *kamma*. With regard to the *Buddha-Niyāma*, we cannot say that the appearance of a Buddha occurs in every world. Very few are the worlds in which a Buddha or Buddhas appear. We must then assign the *Buddha-niyāma* to the occasional occurrences of certain wonderful and mysterious presages such as the quaking of ten thousand worlds etc, during the infinite space of time while a *Bodhisat* is fulfilling the *Buddha-dhammas*, that is, from the time a *Bodhisat* receives the ultimate prediction from a Buddha that he would certainly become a Saviour like himself, till he attains to Buddhahood and enters into the final goal, the *Nibbāna-dhātu*. The marvellous occurrences of such wonderful and mysterious presages are recorded in

*Buddavaṃsa*, in the chapter, known as “*Sumedhā’s* reception of *Dipaṅkārā’s* prediction.” They occur also when the Bodhisat in his last life enters the mother’s womb, when he issues from it, when he renounces the world, when he becomes the Buddha, when he sets rolling the Wheel of Law, when he appoints the time of his death, and lastly when he enters into Nibbāna. Such occurrences are called “*dhammatā*” by the Commentators. There is also a kind of *dhamma-niyāma* which comes under the name of *dhammatā* in the *Mahāpadāna Sutta*, in the *Dīghanikāya*. In the *Majjhima-nikāya*, it comes under the name of *Acchhariya Abbhuta Dhamma*. See *Upari-paṇṇāsa*, third chapter, third *Sutta*. In the Commentaries, these wonderful and mysterious things are classed under *dhamma-niyāma*.

If the *Buddha-niyāma* be specialized, the *Sāvaka-niyāma* should not be overlooked. It should also be treated distinctly. And what then is *Sāvaka-niyāma*? It is the order of precept, etc., of the the disciples, comprising the laymen, devas and Brahmās who have received deliverance from any one of the many Buddhas, surpassing in number the sands of the River Ganges, who have appeared in the cycles of aeons that have no knowable beginning. Before we proceed any further, we should here first show the *puthujjanabhūmi* and *puthujjana-gati*. Of the two, *puthujjana-bhūmi* or the stage of worldlings means the potentiality of *kilesās* the immensity of evil deeds, and the open door of the four planes of misery, on account of the strong hold of soul theory. The potentiality of *kilesas* means the capability of committing the five great sins, *i.e.*, matricide, parricide, etc., and the possibility of holding strongly the three fixed views (*Niyata-diṭṭhi*), *i.e.*, *natthika-diṭṭhi*: nihilism, *ahetuka-diṭṭhi*: anticausationism, and *akriya-diṭṭhi*: anti-moralism. The immensity of evil deeds means that the innumerable evil deeds committed in the past are always following the personality of the worldling wherever he goes, and that the immense number of new evil deeds are also surrounding him to fall in at every moment. How? Bearing in mind the difficulty of attaining a manhood life (*manussattabhāvo*), we are to understand that a worldling has spent many myriads of existences in the abodes of misery before he had a chance of being reborn in the world of men. Similarly millions of miserable lives precede the fortunate life of a deva, and many ten-millions (*koṭis*) of life in miserable abodes are followed by a life of Brahmā only if

circumstance favours. So the more are the evil existences, the greater is the immensity of evil deeds. There are evil deeds which have given effects and which are to give effects if they get favourable circumstances in one’s own personality. There are also many evil deeds which will arise in the worldling as long as he clings to self. However he has also good deeds but they are as few as the handful of sand while the evil deeds are as much as the sands of the River Ganges. Such is the immensity of evil deeds in an individual who clings to self. What is meant by “the open door of the four planes of misery”? A *puthujjana*, though he be fortunate enough to become a human being, is always inclining to the miserable existences on account of the immensity of evil deeds and clinging to self. Generally speaking many are those who are reborn in the four miserable abodes after their death. It is also the same with the Devas and Brahmās. When they die they gradually fall into the tortured states. These facts are expounded in the *Nakhasikha Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, in the fifth Chapter, *Āmakadhaṇṇa-peyyāla* of *Mahāvagga Saṃyutta*. If one once falls into the abodes of miserable ones, it is very difficult for him to be reborn again in the abodes of men. This fact is also expounded in *Bāla-paṇḍita Sutta*, in the *Suññata vagga* of *Upari-paṇṇāsaka, Majjhimanikāya*. So much for the *Puthujjana-gati*.

“Rev: U Nyana,

Dear Sir,

I have been deeply touched by the goodness and great kindness of the Mahā Thera in condescending to answer himself, and to answer so fully the points I raise in my letter to you concerning your traditional teaching of the fivefold Niyāma. He has certainly made it very clear that, under “*Dhamma-niyāma*,” we have to understand a cosmic law relating to causally-ordered *dhammā* or phenomena; and not a cosmic law of the *Saddhamma*, the second of the *Ratanattaya-dhammā* which are in Buddhaghosa’s list, “*hetu*” rather than “*pariyatti*.” Will you be so good as to convey my respects to him and my sincere thanks for this kind message, my great satisfaction at hearing that his health is restored and my best wishes for the recovery of his sight and for his continuance in good health.....

Yours Sincerely,

C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS.”



# THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

## AN ENQUIRY INTO THE SCOPE OF BARE ATTENTION AND THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF ITS STRENGTH

By *Bhadanta Nyanaponika Mahāthera*

(PART IV)

### 4. Directness of Vision

“I wish I could disaccustom myself from everything, so that I might see anew, hear anew, feel anew. Habit spoils our philosophy.”

*G. Chr. Lichtenberg (1742-1799)*

In an earlier section, we spoke about the impulsive spontaneity of the Unwholesome (*akusala*). We have seen how the stopping for bare and sustained attention is able to counter, or reduce, the occurrence of rash impulsive reactions, thus allowing us to face any situation with a fresh mind, *a directness of vision*, unprejudiced by those first spontaneous responses.

By *directness of vision* we understand a direct view of reality, without any colouring or distorting lenses, without the intrusion of emotional or habitual prejudications and intellectual biases. It means: coming face to face with the bare facts of actuality, seeing them as vivid and fresh as if they had occurred for the first time.

#### *The Force of Habit*

Spontaneous reactions which so often stand in the way of direct vision, do not derive only from passionate impulses, but are very frequently the product of *habit*; and, in that form, they generally have an even stronger and more tenacious hold on man, which may work out either for the good and useful or for the bad and harmful. The influence for the *good*, exercised by habit, is seen in the “power of repeated practice” by which man’s achievements and skills, of a manual or mental worldly or spiritual kind, are protected against loss or forgetfulness, and are converted from a casual short-lived and imperfect acquisition into the more secure possession of a quality thoroughly mastered. The *detrimental* effect of habitual, spontaneous reactions is manifest in what is called, in a derogative sense, the “force of habit”: its deadening, stultifying and narrowing influence, productive of compulsive behaviour of various kinds. In our present context, we shall be concerned only with that negative

aspect of habit as impeding and obscuring the directness of vision.

As remarked earlier, the influence of habitual reactions is generally stronger than that of impulsive ones. Passionate impulses may disappear as suddenly as they have arisen. Though their consequences may well be very grave and extend far into the future, it is mostly the influence of habit which is longer lasting and deeper reaching. Habit spreads its vast and closely meshed net over wide areas of our life and thought, trying to drag in more and more of it. Passionate impulses too, might be caught into that net of habit and thus be transformed from passing outbursts into traits of character. A momentary impulse, an occasional indulgence, a passing whim may by repetition become a habit difficult to uproot, a desire hard to control, and finally an automatic function that is no longer questioned. By repeated satisfaction of a desire, habit is formed, and habit grows into a compulsion.

It may well be the case that a certain activity, behaviour or mental attitude to which one has become accustomed is, considered by itself, quite unimportant to the individual concerned, and also morally quite indifferent or inconsequential. At the start it might have been quite easy to abandon it or even to exchange it for its very opposite, since neither one’s emotions nor reason had any strong bias towards either side of a possible choice. But by repetition, the continuance of the chosen way of acting, behaving or thinking will gradually become equivalent with “pleasant”, “desirable”, “correct” or even “righteous”; and it will be finally identified, more or less consciously, with one’s so-called character or personality. Consequently, any change in it—a break in that routine—will be felt as “unpleasant” or as “wrong”, and any interference with it from outside will be greatly resented and even regarded as hostile towards “one’s vital interests and principles”. In fact, primitive minds, at all times, be they “civilised” or not, have looked at a stranger with his

“strange customs” as an enemy, and have felt his mere unaggressive existence as a challenge or threat to themselves.

In the cases aforementioned, when the specific habit was originally not of great importance to the individual, the attachment which is gradually formed, is not so much to the object proper, as to the pleasantness of undisturbed routine. The strength of that attachment to routine derives partly from the force of physical and mental inertia which is so powerful in man. About another cause of it we shall speak presently. By force of habit, the respective concern (an object, activity, behaviour or way of thinking) is invested with such an increase of emotional emphasis that the attachment to quite unimportant or banal things may become as tenacious as that to the fundamental passions in man. Thus, even the smallest habits, if, by lack of conscious control, they become uncontested masters of their respective realms, may dangerously contribute to the rigidity and self-limitation of character, narrowing its “freedom of movement” (environmental, intellectual and spiritual). Thus, often quite unnecessarily, new fetters are forged for the individual, and nourishing soil is provided for the growth of new attachments and aversions, prejudices and predilections, that is to say, for new suffering. Therefore, when considering the following words of the Satipaṭṭhāna-Sutta, we should also think of the important part played by habit in the formation of fetters :

“...and what fetter arises dependent on both (*i.e.* the sense-organs and sense-objects), that he knows well. In what manner the arising of the not arisen fetter comes to be, that he knows well.”

-Samyutta Nikāya, XLV, 179f.

In Buddhist parlance, it is pre-eminently the Hindrance of Sloth and Torpor (*thīna-middha-nīvaraṇa*) which is strengthened by the “force of habit”, and mental faculties like agility and pliancy of mind (*kāya- and citta-lahutā, mudutā*, etc.)\* are weakened.

The danger for spiritual development, involved in the dominating influence of habit,

is all the more serious since its tendency towards expansion is particularly noticeable in our present age of increasing specialisation and standardization in various spheres of life and thought.

The roots of that tendency of habits towards an expansion of its range, are anchored in the very nature of consciousness. Certain active types of consciousness, if possessing a fair degree of intensity, tend to repeat themselves, though that tendency is never quite undisputed, *e.g.*, by new cognitions claiming main-attention. This tendency towards repetition stems not only from the aforementioned passive force of inertia, but in many cases from an active “will to dominate and to conquer” Even in quite peripheral or subordinate types of consciousness, there seems to exist an urge to gain ascendancy, to become by themselves ever so small centres around which other, weaker mental and physical states revolve, adapting themselves to that centre and becoming subservient to it. This is a striking parallel to the self-assertion and the domineering tendency of an egocentric individual in his contact with society. Among biological analogies, we may mention the tendency towards expansion by cancer and other pathological growths; and for the tendency towards repetition, we may think of the freak-mutations which loom as a grave danger at the horizon of our atomic age.

Out of that “will to dominate”, inherent in many types of consciousness, a passing whim may grow into a relatively constant trait of character, and, if still not satisfied with its position, it may tend to break away entirely from the present combination of life forces till, finally, in the process of rebirths, it becomes the very centre of a new so-called personality. There are within us countless seeds for new lives, for innumerable potential “beings”, all of which we should vow to liberate from the wheel of Saṃsāra, as the Sixth Zen Patriarch expressed it. \*\*

Detrimental physical or mental habits may grow strong, not only if fostered deliberately, but also if left unnoticed or unopposed. From minute seeds planted in a long-forgotten past, has grown much of what has now

\* About these important ‘qualitative constituents’ of good, wholesome (*Kusala*) consciousness, see the author’s “Abhidhamma Studies”, p. 51f.

\*\* This may well be a somewhat ironical reference by that great sage to the fact that the well-known Mahāyānic Bodhisattva Vow of liberating all beings of the universe, is often taken much too light-heartedly by many of his fellow Mahāyānists.

strong roots in our nature (see the Simile of the creeper in Majjhima-Nik. 45). This growth of morally bad or otherwise detrimental habits can be effectively checked by gradually developing another habit that will counter them: that of attending to them mindfully. Doing deliberately what had become a mechanical performance, and, perhaps, previous to it, pausing for a while for bare attention and reflection—this will give a chance for scrutinizing the habit in the light of Clear Comprehension of Purpose, and of Suitability (*sāttaka-*, and *sappāya-sampajañña*). It will allow a fresh assessment of the situation, a *direct vision* of it, unobscured by the mental haze surrounding a habitual activity, which conveys the feeling: “It is right, because it was done before.” Even if a detrimental habit cannot be broken at once, or soon, in that way, it will then lose a good deal of its unquestioned spontaneity of occurrence; it will carry the stamp of repeated scrutiny and resistance, and at its reoccurrence it will be weaker and prove more amenable to our attempts to change or abolish it. \*

It needs hardly to be mentioned: habit (which was rightly called “the wet-nurse of man”) cannot and should not disappear from our life. Let us only remember what a relief it is particularly in the crowded day and complex life of a city-dweller, that he can do a great number of things fairly mechanically, with, as it were, only “half-powered attention”. It means a considerable simplification of his life. It would be an unbearable strain, if all that had to be done with deliberate effort and close attention. In fact, many products of manual labour, much of the *technique* in art, and even standard procedure in complex intellectual work, will generally bring better and more even results through skilled routine performance. Yet, also that evenness of habitual performance will reach its dead point where it declines. It will show symptoms of fatigue, if it is not enlivened by the creation of new interest in it.

There is, of course, no question of our advocating here the abolishment of all our little habits as far as they are innocuous or even useful. But we should regularly convince ourselves whether we have still control over them, that is, whether we can give them up, or alter them, whenever wanted. We can make sure of it, firstly, by attending to them

mindfully for a certain period of time, and secondly, by actually giving them up temporarily in cases where this will not have any harmful or disturbing effects upon ourselves or others. If we turn on them the light of *direct vision*, looking at them or performing them, as if seen or done for the first time, these little routine activities, and the habitual sights around us, will assume a new glow of interest and stimulation. This holds good also for our professional occupation and its environment, and for our close human relationships if they should have become stale by habit. The relations to one’s marriage partner, to friends, colleagues, etc., may thus receive a great rejuvenation. A fresh and direct vision will also discover that one can react to people, or do things, in a different and more beneficial way, than done before habitually.

An acquired capacity to give up *little* habits will prove its worth in the fight against more dangerous proclivities, and also at times when we are faced with serious changes in our life which by force deprive us of very fundamental habits. Loosening the hardened soil of our routine behaviour and thoughts, will have an enlivening effect on our vital energy, our mental vigour, our power of imagination, and, what is most important, into that loosened soil we shall be able to plant the seeds of vigorous spiritual progress.

#### *Associative Thought*

Mental habituation to standard reactions, to sequences of activity, to judgments of people or things, etc., proceeds by way of associative thinking. From things or ideas, situations or people that we encounter, we select certain of their distinctive characteristics or marks, and associate, *i.e.* connect, these marks with our own response to them. If these encounters recur, they are associated first with those marks selected earlier, and then with our original, or strongest, response. So these marks become a signal for releasing a standard reaction which may consist of quite a long sequence of connected acts or thoughts, well mastered or known through repeated practice of experience. That way of functioning relieves man of the necessity for applying ever-renewed effort and painstaking scrutiny to each single step of such sequences of thought and action. This certainly means a great simplification of life and a release of energy for other tasks.

\* See Part I (“The Light of the Dhamma”, Vol. III. No. 4, page 47).

In fact, in the evolution of the human mind, associative thinking has been a progressive step of decisive importance. It was indispensable for acquiring the capacity to learn from experience, and led up to the discovery and application of causal laws.

Yet, it is easy to see that, close to these benefits of associative thinking, there lurk as many and grave dangers in that, now basic, procedure of mental activity, if it is faultily applied or not carefully watched. Let us draw up a list of these danger points (though not an exhaustive one):

1. Initial faulty or incomplete observations, errors of judgment, emotional prejudices (love, hate, pride), etc., may be easily perpetuated and strengthened by the mechanism of associative thinking, through being carried over to re-occurrences of similar situations.

2. Incomplete observations and restricted view-points in judgments, etc., which may have been practically sufficient for meeting a given situation, may, if mechanically applied to changed circumstances, prove quite inadequate and may entail grave consequences.

3. Not infrequent are cases where, by misdirected associative thinking, a strong instinctive dislike is felt for things, places or persons which, in some way, are merely reminiscent of unpleasant experiences.

These but briefly stated instances show how vital it is to scrutinize from time to time those mental grooves of our associative thoughts, and the various habits and stereotype reactions deriving from them. In other words, we must step out of the ruts for a while, regain a direct vision of things and make a fresh appraisal of them in the light of that vision.

If we look once again over the list of potential dangers deriving from uncontrolled associative thinking, we shall better understand the Buddha's insistence of getting to the bedrock of experience. For instance, in those profound and terse stanzas called "The Cave", included in the Sutta Nipāta, He says that the "full penetration of sense-impression (*phassa*) will make one free from greed", and that, "by understanding perception (*saññā*) one will be able to cross the flood

of Saṃsāra" (Stanza 778f). \* By placing mindfulness, as a guard, at the very first gate through which experience enters, we shall be able to control the incomers much more easily, and shut out unwanted intruders. Thus the purity of "luminous consciousness" can be maintained against "adventitious defilements" (see *Anguttara-Nik.*, I).

The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta provides a systematic training for inducing direct, fresh and undistorted vision, covering the entire personality in its physical and mental aspects, and including the entire world of experience. The methodical application of the several exercises to oneself (*ajjhatta*), to others (*bahiddhā*) and alternatingly to both, will be very helpful in discovering false conceptions due to misdirected associative thinking or missapplied analogies.

The principal types of false associative thinking are covered, in the terminology of the Dhamma, by the four kinds of *misapprehensions* or *perverted views* (*vipallāsa*) which wrongly take (1) what is impermanent, for permanent, (2) what is painful, or conducive to it, for happiness, (3) what is not-self and unsubstantial, for a self or an abiding substance, (4) what is impure, for beautiful. These perverted views of reality arise through a one-sided and incomplete selection, or entirely false apprehension, of the characteristic marks of things or ideas, and through "associating" them closely with one's passions and false theories. By gradually "dissociating" our perceptions and impressions from these misapprehensions, with the help of Bare Attention, we shall make steady progress in the *direct vision* of "bare processes" (*suddha-dhammā*).

#### *The Sense of Urgency (saṃvega)*

He who is being stirred (*saṃvijja*) to a sense of urgency (*saṃvega*) by things which are deeply moving to one of clear and direct vision, will experience a release of energy and courage that is able to break through his timid hesitations and his rigid routine of life and thought. If that sense of urgency is kept alive, it will bestow the earnestness and persistence (*appamāda*) required for the work of liberation.

\* Compare also the passages on the significance of sense impression (or contact; *phassa*) in the concluding sections of the Brahmajāla Sutta (*Dīgha-Nikāya*, Sutta 1); see the translation in *THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA*, Vol. III, No. 2, and separate print (available from Union Buddha Sāsana Council. Shillings Stg. . . . . 2/6 including postage.)

Thus said the teachers of old :

“This very world here is our field of action.

It harbours the unfoldment of the Holy Path,

And many things to break complacency.

Be stirred by things which may well move the heart,

And, being stirred, strive wisely and fight on !”

*Ayaṃ kammabhūmi, idha maggabhāvanā,  
ṭhānāni saṃvejaniyā bahu idha,*

*Saṃvega saṃvejaniyesu vatthūsu,*

*saṃvagajāto'va payuñja yonisa. \**

Our nearest neighbourhood is full of stirring things, but generally we do not perceive them as such, because habit has made our vision dull and our heart insensitive. Even the Buddha's teaching which, when we first encountered it consciously, was a powerful intellectual and emotional stimulation, will gradually lose for us its original freshness and impelling force, unless we constantly renew it by turning to the fullness of life around us which illustrates the Four Noble Truths in ever new variations. A direct vision will impart new life-blood even to the commonest experiences of every day, so that their true nature appears through the dim haze of habit, and speaks to us with a fresh voice. It may well be only the long-accustomed sight of the beggar at the street-corner, a weeping child or a case of illness, which startles us afresh, makes us think, and stirs our sense of urgency in treading resolutely the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering.

We know the beautiful old account of Prince Siddhattha's coming face to face with old-age, illness and death, when he drove in his chariot through the paternal city, after a long time of isolation in a make-believe world. This ancient story may well be historical fact, because we know that in the lives of many great ones often events occur

which gain a symbolic significance or have great consequences far beyond their ordinary appearance. Great ones find significance in the seemingly common, and invest with a far-reaching efficacy the fleeting moment. But, without conflicting with the inner truth of that old story, it may well have happened that the young prince had actually seen before, with his fleshly eye, old and sick people and those who had succumbed to death. But, on all these earlier occasions, it may not have touched him very deeply—as it is the case with most of us, most of the time. That earlier lack of sensitivity may have been due to the carefully protected, artificial seclusion of his petty (though princely) happiness into which his father—the hereditary routine of his life—had placed him. Only when he broke through that golden cage of easy-going habits, the facts of suffering struck him as forcibly as if he had seen them for the first time. Then only was he stirred by them to a sense of urgency that led him out of the home life and set his feet firmly on the road to Enlightenment.

The more *clearly* and *deeply* our minds and hearts respond to the Truth of Suffering as appearing in the very common facts of our existence, the less often we shall need a repetition of the lesson learned, the shorter will be our migration through Saṃsāra. \*\* The *clarity* of perception evoking our response, will come from an undeflected directness of vision, bestowed by Bare Attention (*sati*); and the *depth* of experience will come from wise reflection or Clear Comprehension (*sampajañña*).

#### *The Road to Insight*

Directness of Vision is also a chief characteristic of the methodical practice of insight-meditation (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*). There it is equal to the direct or experiential knowledge (*paccakkha-ñāṇa*) bestowed by meditation, as distinguished from the inferential knowledge (*anumāna-ñāṇa*) obtained by study and reflection. In the meditative development of insight, one's own physical and mental processes are directly viewed, without the

\* Quoted in the *Commentary* to the Saṃyutta Nikāya, Saḷāyatana-Saṃyutta, Devadaha-vaggo catuttho Sutta No. 2.

\*\* Saṃsāra : 'Round of Rebirth' lit. 'perpetual wandering', is a name by which is designated the sea of life ever restlessly heaving up and down, the symbol of this continuous process of ever again and again being born, growing old, suffering and dying. More precisely put : Saṃsāra is the unbroken chain of the five-fold Khandha-combinations, which, constantly changing from moment to moment, follow continuously one upon the other through inconceivable periods of time. Of this Saṃsāra, a single lifetime constitutes only a vanishingly tiny fraction; hence to be able to comprehend the first Noble Truth of universal suffering, one must let one's gaze rest upon the Saṃsāra, upon this frightful chain of rebirths, and not merely upon one single lifetime, which, of course, may be sometimes less painful. " *Buddhist Dictionary* " Nyanatiloka.



interference of abstract concepts or the filtering screens of emotional evaluation, which, in this context, will only obscure, or camouflage, the naked facts, and detract from the immediate strong impact of reality. Conceptual generalisations from experience (though very useful elsewhere), if they interrupt the meditative practice of Bare Attention, tend to “shove aside”, or dispose of, the respective particular fact, by saying, as it were: “It is nothing else but...”. Generalizing thought inclines to become impatient which a recurrent type, and finds it soon boring after having it classified. Bare Attention, however, being the key instrument of methodical insight, keeps to the particular. It follows keenly the rise and fall of successive physical and mental processes, and, though all phenomena of a given series may be “true to type” (e.g. inhalations and exhalations), Bare Attention regards each of them as a distinct “individual”, and conscientiously registers, as it were, its separate birth and death. If mindfulness remains alert, these repetitions of type will, by their multiplication exert not a reduced but an intensified impact on the mind. The three signata or characteristics (change, misery and voidness), \* inherent in the processes observed, will stand out more and more clearly, appearing in the

light shed by the phenomena themselves, and not in a *borrowed* light (borrowed not even from the Buddha, though He is the peerless and indispensable guide to these experiences). These physical and mental phenomena, in their “self-luminosity”, will then convey a growing sense of urgency to the meditator: revulsion, dissatisfaction, awareness of danger will arise concerning them, followed by detachment—though, certainly, joy, happiness and calm, too, will not be absent throughout the practice. Then, if all other conditions of inner maturity are fulfilled, the first direct vision of final liberation will dawn, with the Stream-winner’s (*sotāpanna*) indubitable knowledge: ‘Whatever has the nature of arising, has the nature of vanishing.’

Thus, in the unfoldment of the four-fold power of mindfulness, Satipaṭṭhāna will prove itself as the true embodiment of the Dhamma of which it was said :

“Well proclaimed is the Dhamma by the Blessed One, visible here and now, not delayed, inviting of inspection, onward-leading, and directly experientable by the wise.” \*\*

END.

\* Anicca, Dukkha, Anattā, usually rendered as Impermanence, Suffering and Absence of any “soul”.

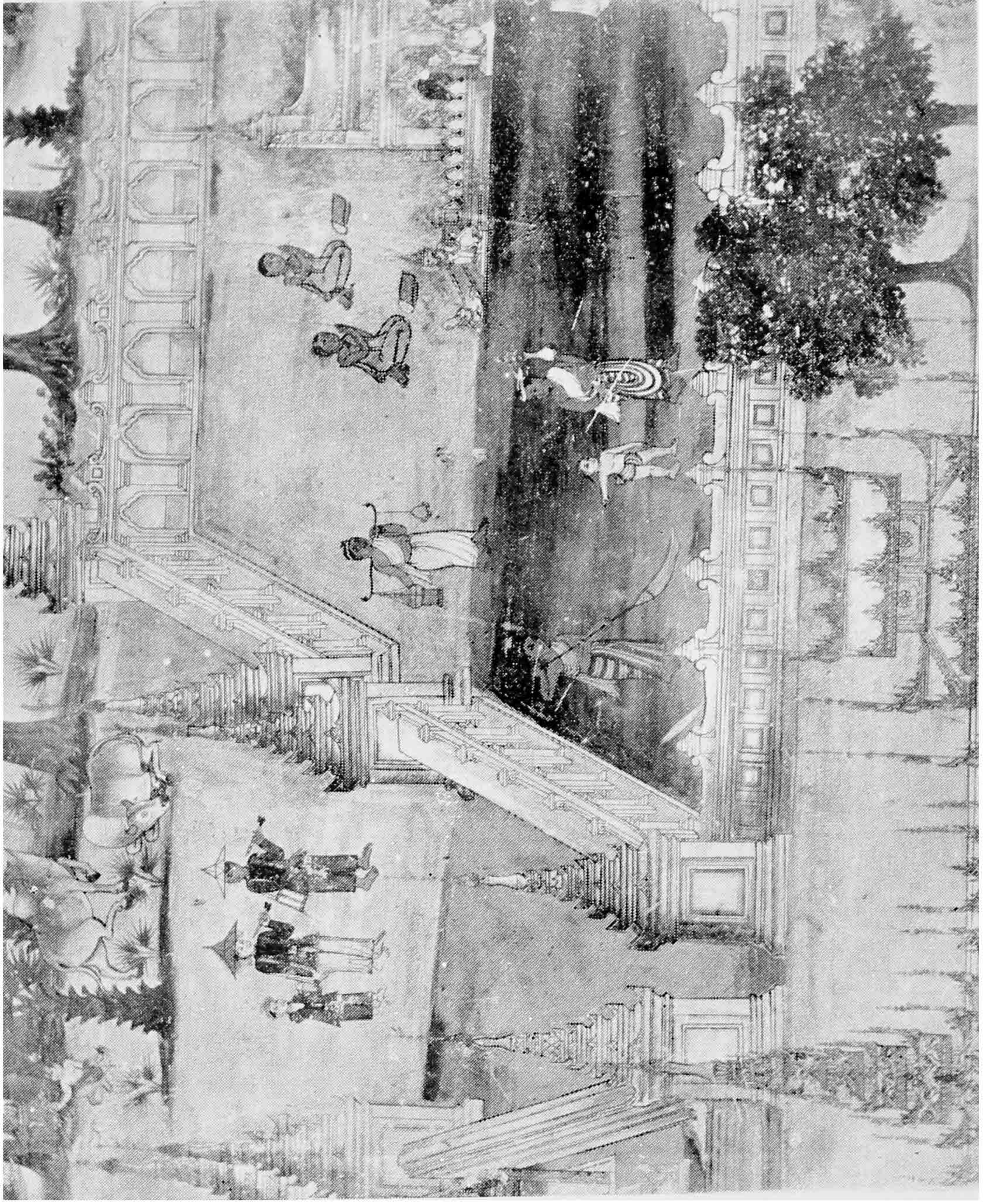
\*\* Majjhima-Nikāya, i. 37; Aṅguttara-Nikāya, iii, 285.

‘ I, friend, have not given up the things of the present to pursue that which involves time. Nay, I have given up that which involves time to pursue the things of the present. Things involving time, friend, as the Exalted One hath said, are the pleasures of sense, full of ill, full of anxiety; that way lies abundant disaster. A thing of the present is this Discipline, not involving time, inviting to come and see, leading onward, to be regarded by the wise as a personal experience.’

*Samyutta Nikāya.*

As one downsmitten by impending sword,  
As one whose hair and turban are aflame,  
So let the brother, mindful and alert,  
Go forth, leaving soul-fallacy behind.

*Samyutta Nikāya.*



Fresco painting on the southern side of the inner walls of the Eastern entrance at Taungthaman Kyauktawgyi Pagoda, Amarapura.

# BUDDHIST PAINTING IN BURMA

By

*Thiripyanchi U Lu Pe Win, M.A.*

The earliest paintings extant in Burma belong to the Pagān period beginning from the 11th century C.E., but inasmuch as an earlier school of architecture and sculpture was active since the 5th century, there is no doubt about the existence of an art in Burma in pre-Pagān times. Time and climate have destroyed whatever remained of the ancient architecture which used wood as its material, and with those religious edifices might have perished the first native representations in colour and sculpture of Buddhist legends. The paintings at Pagān are executed on the walls of masonry temples, and just as different types of religious architecture extend beyond the historic epoch of the Pagān dynasty, so also the remains of Buddhist paintings represent a long period of more than seven centuries, thus offering the various aspects of the history of art of the well-known Buddhist centre, Pagān, which virtually is the history of art in Burma.

The ruins of Pagān cover an area of nearly seventeen square miles. Among the thousands of monuments in different stages of decay are square hollow temples the interior of all of which seem to have originally been decorated with paintings. Today we find fairly preserved a good number of the mural paintings to enable us to form an accurate idea of the scope and capacity and also the method of execution of them. Contemporary lithic inscriptions also contain many allusions to the art of painting which afford us ample evidence of the technique and the extent to which this popular practice was promoted during the Pagān period.

Technically speaking, these mural paintings are not frescoes in the strict sense of the term. As the plaster of the walls is allowed to dry before applying the background of white lime wash, preparing the outlines and filling in the colours, the method is actually that of tempera painting as is still practised in the present day. Very few of the early paintings therefore survive today in their original charm of colour. A characteristic feature of these mural paintings is the outlining of all forms with a clear black line and,

rarely, with red, and the absence of perspective and shading in the earlier period is discernible. Yet most of them are of absorbing interest as they fulfil the primary object of telling edifying stories in an attractive way and producing works of art which are epic in character rather than artistic in the modern sense.

The reign of Anôrathā\* who first united the whole of Burma, synchronised with the advent of Theravāda Buddhism to Pagān. The king, a champion for the propagation of the pure faith, resorted to all means by which to rouse the religious fervour of all his subjects. The result of the powerful influence exercised by the doctrine of the Buddha on the minds of the people was the efflorescence of an art dedicated to the glorification of the Master's life. The theme of the paintings on the walls of the temples is therefore religious in character and mostly centres round the Buddha, incidents from the life of the Buddha and the Jātakas.\*\* These afforded vivid representations and illustrations to supplement the teachings of the elder monks to their students at the religious institutions or colleges.

The style of the Pagān paintings shows strong South-Indian influence in the earlier stage and the technique of the Varendra school of Bengal can be traced in the paintings of 12th-13th century. But Burmese art was inspired to a great extent by Burmese nature and religious teaching so that the fully developed paintings at Pagān in particular and in the whole country in general indicate no traces of foreign elements.

The rulers of Pagān were benevolent despots, but in religious matters they tolerated the existence of various sects of Hinduism and the Mahāyāna form of Buddhism which flourished side by side with the purer faith for sometime after the latter's introduction to Upper Burma. This is evident by the presence in not a few temples of paintings of Bodhisattvas and their embracing *saktis*\*\*\* and other non-Theravādin themes, Hindu, Tantric or Mahāyānist.

\* 1044-86 C.E.

\*\* Stories of previous lives

\*\*\* *Sakti* is the female organ or female force worshipped by the Tantric branch of the so-called 'Mahāyāna' (an attempt to combine Buddhism with other teachings). Here *sakti* is symbolised as female counterparts of 'Beings striving for Buddhahood'.

At the Patothamyā temple, one of the earliest structures of 10th- 11th century C.E. may be seen Indian figures on the begrimed walls. A royal personage with a crown, halo, ear-ornaments and drapery and a bearded musician beating a pitcher-like drum, bear all semblance of Indian features. The temple also contains large panels of painting depicting scenes from the Buddha's life. They have become much blurred owing to the ravages of time, but enough remains to show that these paintings were the work of no mean artist. There is a greater precision in the proportions of each figure than in the case of later period paintings. Below each scene is a legend in Mon in archaic type of characters. Traditionally, the Patothomya is said to have been built by King Taungthugyi (931-964 C.E.) but it is not yet possible to confirm that date. From the style of the paintings and the epigraphs below the panels we may safely assign the temple to a date not later than the 11th century C.E. Two of the noteworthy scenes here are the Foretelling of Siddhattha by Rishi Kāla Devīla and the performing of the Twin Miracles by the Buddha. The male royal personages are invariably represented with large cloaks covering the whole body, on which are shown patterns of geometrical design. The facial expressions seem to represent the characteristics of Indians.

Another contemporary temple, the Nat-hlaung Kyaung stands a few hundred feet to the east of the Patothamyā. The Nat-hlaung Kyaung is the only Hindu temple now extant at Pagān. The interior walls of the temple are painted with figures, now mostly obliterated, of Vishnu seated with his devotees. The outlines of a few may still be traced and the attributes, namely, the cakra, conch, lotus club or sword are distinguished in the case of images with four hands. These wall paintings must be contemporaneous with the building and the sculptures of the Ten Avatars in the niches of the outer walls.

A unique example of a series of painting reflecting the influences from three sources, namely, Brahmanism, Mahāyānism and Theravāda may be noticed at the Abèyadanā Temple at Myinkaba, Pagān. The temple was built by Kyanzittha (1084- 1112 C.E.) and consists of a sanctum with an arched corridor running around it. The only entrance to the sanctum is on the north. In a band around the inner face of the outer walls of the corridor, and placed at a height

of about seven feet above the floor level, there may be noticed, in panels simulating mountain caves, many figures of Mahāyānist gods and goddesses, both in their peaceful and fierce forms, as well as images of Bodhisattvas. The erotic representations of the Tantric sect are, however, totally absent here. The Bodhisattvas, arranged in three rows, one above the other, have two arms each and the attributes they carry are lances, clubs, cakras, daggers, swords and books, without any sign of Tantric character in them. There is no writing below the figures and it is difficult to identify them but for their attributes in their hands by which Vajrapānī, Padmāpānī, Avalokitesvara and Mañjusrī are distinguishable among them. Added to the figures of Bodhisattvas are the representations of a monk, an ascetic and other Mahāyānist deities. On the inner walls of the corridor are small circular panels between the niches for sculptures. Each panel has a Brahmanic god painted on it and the representations of Brahmā, Sivā and Vishnu each on his own mount are discernible. The panels on the porch, however, illustrate scenes from the Jātakas and each scene is explained in a legend in Mon in addition to attaching the number of the Jātaka represented. The arrangement of the Jātakas follows very closely that given in Fausboll's edition of Jātakas, and it is remarkable that the same smet with in many other temples at Pagān.

Unlike the Abèyadanā, the Nagayon Temple built by the same king, Kyanzittha, contains mural paintings solely devoted to Theravāda Buddhism. The plan of the building is similar to that of Abèyadanā though it carries an elegant superstructure. The Nagayon also houses some of the earlier stone sculptures representing scenes from the Buddha's life. The porch of the temple is adorned with paintings depicting incidents from the Buddha's life, his lents, sermons, miracles and conversions. These are fully explained in Mon legends below the scenes which enable us to identify the illustrations easily. Among the noteworthy pieces of art executed on the walls are scenes showing a deva beseeching the Buddha to preach the Mangala Sutta; Dipankara's prophecy to Sumedhāpaṇḍita; preaching of the Mettā Sutta; the Twin Miracles of the Buddha; Devadatta's attempts to kill the Buddha; Kusa Jātaka, Chaddanta Jātaka, Mahāsutasoma Jataka, etc.

The Kubyauk-kyi Temple at Myinkaba is another structure wherein orthodox Theravāda paintings are predominantly exhibited. Built about 1113 C.E. by Rājakumar in solemn and revered dedication to his father, Kyanzitha, the temple assumes the traditional early type of a square structure with a dark sanctum encompassed by a corridor lighted through perforated windows. The vaulted hall faces east. Inside the hall and corridor are paintings depicting the Vimānavatthu. The main block is ranged around in nine rows with the 547 Jātakas, each fresco carrying a Mon legend below it. One of the most popular scenes from the Buddha's life, namely the Descent from Tāvātimsa,\* is a remarkable feature exhibited therein. This temple is not devoid of Mahāyānist painting. In the outer porch is a fairly large panel painted with the figure of a ten-handed Bodhisattva attended by seated *saktis*. This is presumably a later accretion.

The Loka-Ōkshaung Temple at Pagān, though built later than the Abēyadanā and Kubyauk-kyi, portrays figures of Vishnu on its walls. Some of the mural paintings of Pagān are not contemporary with the buildings which they decorate. The Kyanzitha cave temple at Nyaungoo, east of Pagān, is one of the examples of this category. Here, some of the paintings pertain to the earlier period of the Pagān dynasty and some figures of secular character seem to have been executed as late as the Mongol invasion of Pagān in 1287 C.E. The building is traditionally assigned to Kyanzitha. One of the frescoes depicts the footprint of the Buddha on which may be noticed the entire absence of the numerous symbolical figures usually found on such a representation. Scenes of local incidents are of much interest. The figure of a venerable lady wending her way to a Buddhist shrine has much the same prominent facial characteristics as the drummer from a painting found on the wall of the Patothamya. These forms and expressions convince us of the antiquity of the first series of paintings. Another series represents several Mongol types. Some of the inner walls of the cave are ornamented with a variety of well-executed frescoes which on the whole are very well preserved. All do not represent Mongol personages but those that do were probably painted during the Mongol

invasion of the city. One represents a Buddha seated in European fashion on a high chair, his feet resting on a lotus. Another shows a seated Buddhist monk holding a rosary and his dress indicates that he is a Chinese. A Mongol officer seated on a low wooden stool and a Mongol soldier in the act of shooting with bow and arrow certainly show strong Central Asian influence.

The Aloyi-gū, a small square hollow temple south of the Pagān-Nyaungoo road, is one of the earlier structures with peculiar features of mural paintings. The vaulted roof is decorated with lotus and flowers and numerous small Buddhas enclosed in circular designs. The paintings on the walls depict Buddhas preaching Suttas as indicated by the Mon legends below. The most interesting series is a row of the last twenty-eight Buddhas under their respective Bodhi-trees. The description under each painting enlightens us with the name of the Buddha and the nomenclature of the tree in Old Mon, the importance of this lies in its being the only specimen in that language.

Jātaka scenes fill the walls of many a temple built throughout the Pagān dynasty and the Kubyauk-kyi near Wetkyi-in village figures prominently in this respect. Each scene here is painted in a small square panel very neatly delineated in rows on rows of the vast wall of the eastern vaulted hall. The legends which are in Burmese give the title of each Jātaka and mention the main character depicted in the scene; thus, *Jambu Jat. sacpañ nat* signifies the Jambukhādaka Jātaka, the main personage represented being identified as the tree-spirit.

In the temples of late 12th century and 13th century C.E. we find that the art of painting has reached a high level of Burmanisation. The scheme of colouring becomes more complex and many contemporary inscriptions record the decoration of temples with colourful paintings on the walls and especially on the ceilings. The Old Burmese word *kyak-tanuy* which often occurs in the Pagān epigraphs undoubtedly refers to the interior of the vaulted roof painted with a multiplicity of medallions in variegated colours each of which contains a small seated Buddha, though possibly the term was originally applied to a canopy above the central image of a temple.

\* An abode (world) of Devas where the Buddha preached the Doctrine especially to that Being who was His mother, Queen Māyā, in her preceding existence.

Lamp black is obviously used to draw the outlines and to fill in certain details. The use of other materials, namely, orpiment, vermilion, lac and chalk is also mentioned in the inscriptions. The paintings executed during post-Kyanzittha period may be found in the Thayambū, Lokahteikpan, Theinmazi and Panethāgū temples at Pagān, the Thetkyamuni and Kōndawgyi temples at Nyaungoo and in almost all the lesser temples in Minnanthu area. The walls are covered not only with the Jātaka scenes but also the eight miracles of the Buddha and scenes of the mansions of the blessed from the Vimānavatthu. The Thetkyāmuni contains scenes from the life of Asoka, the Convenor of the Third Buddhist Council, and the advent of Mahinda to Ceylon. Portrayal of the last twenty-eight Buddhas, from Tanhānkara onwards, under their respective Bodhi trees is also a very popular theme, and not a few of the paintings show the traditional Burmese cosmography.

Fine paintings, the technique of which parallels that of the Ajanta frescoes, may be seen in the Thambūla temple at Minnanthu. The building was erected in 1255 C.E. by Princess Sumlūla, the daughter of King Kyazawā, and wife of king Uzanā. It is square in plan with a corridor running right round the central square pile which supports the *sikhara*\* above. On one side of this pile is a large recess containing a seated figure of the Buddha in the earth-touching attitude. On the face of the cubical mass surrounding this recess, is a splendid fresco representing the assault of Māra's hosts to oust the Buddha from his seat. The diversity of the figures pressing in disorder on their onward march, the life infused into the attitude of each of them and the size of the painting which, representing one scene, covers several square yards, renders it one of the most remarkable paintings in Burma.

Close to the Thambūla temple are two noteworthy structures, the Payathonzu and the Nandamañña which contain well preserved frescoes distinctly Mahāyānist and Tantric in character.

The former consists of three distinct small square buildings with narrow passages leading from one to the other. This is a unique feature in Burma. The interior walls are covered with frescoes quite peculiar and

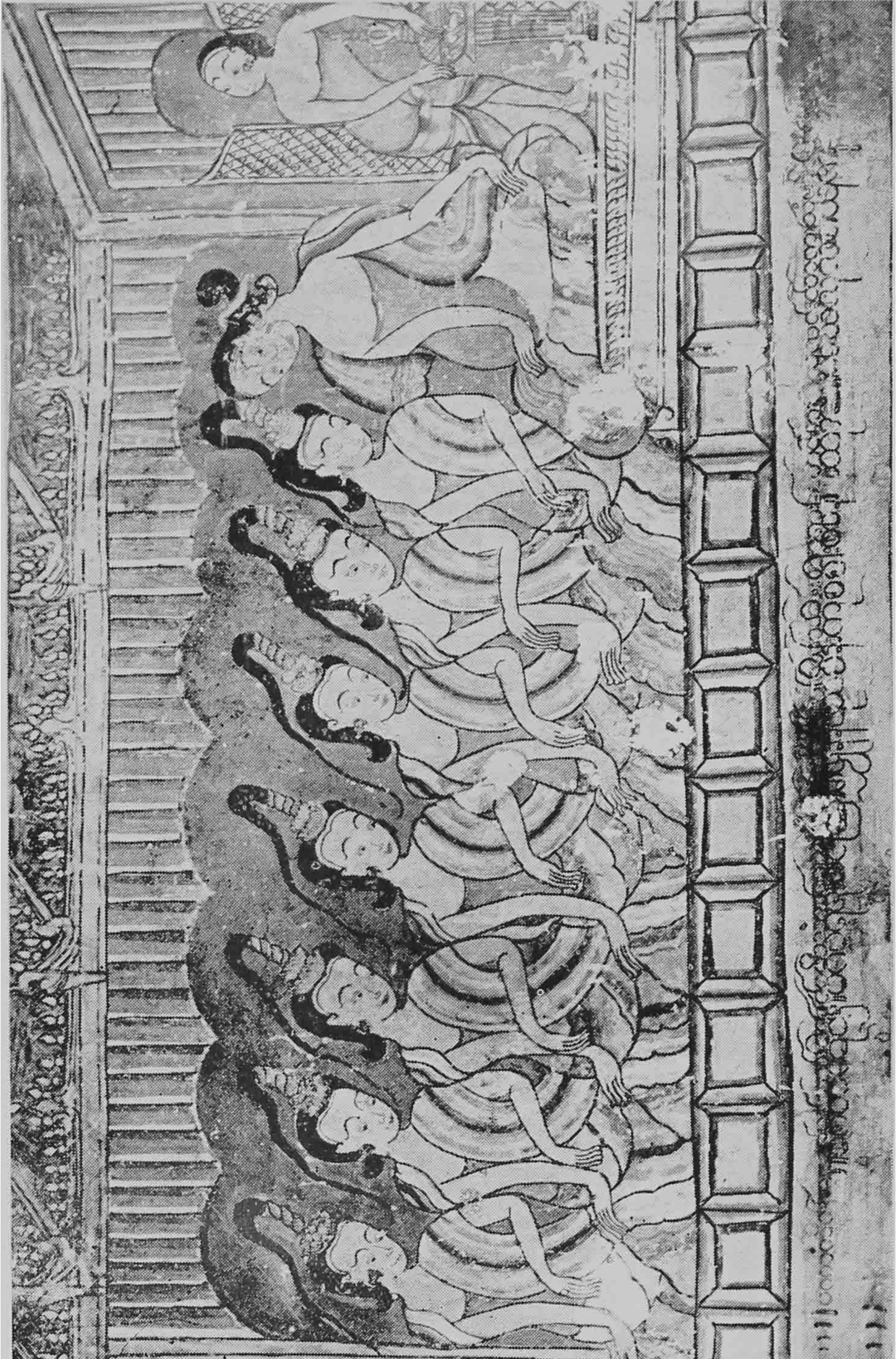
unlike any other as yet found. They represent that phase of religion so much abhorred later when the pure Theravāda Teaching had been firmly established at Pagān. The walls, monsters and the vaulted ceilings are all covered with floral motifs in which mythical monsters, animals, birds and human figures are cleverly interwoven. A striking feature is the portrayal of Bodhisattvas mostly in worldly dresses, embracing their female counterparts; others are seated with one or two *saktis* sitting on their knees. The painting on the westernmost portion of this structure is left unfinished and the scenes are merely outlined, which indicates that the work of decorating the interior of the building had to be abandoned, presumably due to the outbreak of a civil strife or to the Mongolian invasion of Pagān close to the end of the 13th century C.E.

The Nandamañña is only a few hundred yards away from the Payathonzu. The frescoes therein, still better preserved, are also Tantric in character, and in some instances of an unspeakable eroticism. The temple was built in 1248 C.E., according to an inscription within its precincts. Minnanthu was no doubt one of the strong-holds of one of the sects of Mahāyānism, and this is borne out by the fact that it is only about one mile distant from Thamati which is the traditional centre of Ari monks\*\* who indulged in grossly immoral practices. The presence of Tantric frescoes in the Nandamañña temple indicates that Northern "Buddhism" was still extant at Pagān in the 13th century. In fact it was actively promoted side by side with Theravāda Buddhism as is evidenced by a few scenes in the same temple depicting the performance of the Twin Miracles by the Buddha, and the birth of Siddhattha.

After the fall of the Pagān dynasty, the artistic life went on but with diminished vigour. However, when peaceful periods were ushered in during the late 17th century and early 18th century C.E. the traditional art was revived with the royal patronage from the later capitals of Ava and Amarapura. Thus in some of the buildings at Pagān we find fresh frescoes which have been painted with purely Burmese ideals. The Upāli Sīmā (ordination hall) assigned to the second quarter of the 13th century has its walls

\* A pinnacle

\*\* A Mahāyāna sect.



Painting on the inner walls of Ānanda Ōkkyang Monastery, Pagan.

adorned with frescoes belonging to early 18th century. The scenes here represent not only the incidents from the life of the Buddha but also the circumstances under which the last twenty-eight Buddhas renounced the world. In conformity with the utility of the building is a scene showing the rehabilitation of a monk who has committed an offence that can be expiated only by undergoing penance, the ecclesiastical ceremony for which has to be performed strictly in accordance with the Vinaya rules in an ordination hall. Lively scenes portraying the Jātakas as well as the secular life of the day are painted on the inner walls of the Ānanda Ōkkyang, a brick monastery close to the venerated Ānanda Temple at Pagān. The building and the frescoes are contemporaneous, dating back to 1775 C.E. The Sūlamani Temple built by King Narapatisithu (1173-1210 C.E.) also contains frescoes executed in the late 18th century. Typical of the latter period, the scheme of painting here is delineated in horizontal panels from the floor level to the frieze, the upper panels being devoted to religious themes while the lower ones portray contemporary secular life and infernal scenes and animals.

The paintings at the Upāli Sīmā, the Ānanda Ōkkyang and the Sūlamani temple are peculiarly striking in that the variety of

subjects is fairly large and the narration of Jātakas and incidents from the Buddha's life is comprehensive and continuous. The highlights of social and economic developments are discernible in the lively secular scenes which pronounce the artistic originality of the period. As far as the themes and forms of expression are concerned the Burmese painting then had, in fact, reached the pinnacle of success.

Similar contemporary Burmese frescoes may be seen in many religious buildings other than at Pagān. The Tilokaguru cave temple at Sagaing, the Taungthaman Kyauktawgyi at Amarapura and the Pogalon temple at Shwezayan near Mandalay are repositories of fine frescoes of 18th and early 19th century C.E.

The Pagān frescoes afford scholars a unique opportunity of interpreting the early Buddhist images and throw much light on the religious history of Burma. Later paintings are equally valuable in that they present a faithful interpretation of Burmese life and thought. If anyone argues that the Burmans have not advanced very far in the art of painting, it may be pointed out that the motive of ornamentation and decoration is solely dedicated to religious devotion and the forms of expression are rarely the product of conscious effort exclusively towards that end.



For him who hath renounced them utterly,  
Chains of illusion as to self or soul  
Exist no more. Scattered are all such bonds.  
He, rich in wisdom, hath escaped beyond  
Conceits and deemings of the errant mind.  
He might say: "I say"; "they say"; "it's mine".  
So saying, he, expert in usages  
of men, 'ware of the worth of common names,  
Would speak merely conforming to such use.

*Saṃyutta Nikāya.*



# INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM ON THE BURMESE PEOPLE

*David Maurice*

Correspondents have often asked what has been the influence of Buddhism on the people of this country. To really evaluate the effect of Buddhism on the people of Burma, one would have to perform the impossible and peep back through time—twentyfive centuries of time—to see what the Burman was before he became a Buddhist. Even then, one would only see what the Burman was before he became a Burman, for to separate a Burman from Buddhism is another impossibility.

Therefore one well may ask: 'Did the Burman accept Buddhism so long ago because he was fitted temperamentally or is the temperament of the Burman the result of centuries of Buddhism?' There would be a deal of truth in either proposition.

If we look at our blunt and sturdy citizens on our northern borders, 'the rough wood from which the Burman has been carved' as one fanciful western writer termed some of them, we find them somewhat like Shakespeare's soldier: 'Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel' but with an innate sense of decency and of justice under a rough exterior, and with a high degree of logical common-sense also. These are Buddhist virtues and I am thinking, nevertheless of some of these brothers who have for centuries been animists but to whom now, with the extended facilities of our newly-won freedom, we are taking the Teaching of the Omniscient Buddha.

Though it is something new and strange to them it nevertheless jibes in well with their own temperaments and it changes their natures not so much to a different kind, though it does that too, but to a higher degree. All Burmans must have been very much like that in the olden days.

Before discussing the Buddhist virtues which are in many cases now the Burmese virtues, I should at once avoid the charge of flattery by saying that, like all peoples, the Burmese have their failings as well as their good points. As was first remarked very many years ago, they are practically all Buddhists but not yet all Buddhas.

The Buddhist Teaching is so very much a part of the Burmese way of life. Even in

folk-lore we find elements of the Buddhist Jātaka stories intertwined, and centuries of sitting at the feet of pious and learned monks have given even the humblest a little of the flavour of the Great Teaching. The Order of Buddhist Monks, the Sangha, is a great democratic body, the first real democracy (using the word in its best sense) that the world has known; and every Burman at some time in his life, be it for a shorter or a longer period, takes the vows and dons the Yellow Robe.

Small wonder is it then that in every dwelling, be it in rich man's house or peasant's hut, there is some evidence of the Master. It may be a more or less elaborate shrine with gold images, or a cheap lithograph pasted to the bamboo wall. It may be well-kept and tended with loving care or not so well looked-after, but always the Buddha's benign Teaching is evidenced by some token. Small wonder then is it also that in every Burman's life there is some practical evidence of the influence of that Teaching.

On the weekly Buddhist Fast-days many of the elders go to monasteries and pagodas to take special fast-day vows. The younger people go less often, nevertheless quite a few do go; and all, for all of these reasons, are influenced by the Buddhist virtues.

Although only a percentage of the people of Burma are able to discuss Buddhist Philosophy, nevertheless the philosophy of Buddhism has had an influence on all, and basic to this is the great Teaching, first given to the world by the Omniscient Buddha: "As I am, so are they; as they are, so am I" thus one should identify oneself with all that lives, and should not kill nor hurt any living being.\* That was given more than 2500 years ago; and we find the same idea exactly 2000 years ago, enunciated in Palestine by the great and saintly Rabbi Hillel: 'Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you' and repeated by Jesus Christ some decades later.

It is this teaching that has influenced Burma greatly. Fielding Hall in his 'Soul of a People' notices the great tolerance of Burmans, and this is to be attributed largely to philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, and

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\* Dhammapada, 129, 130; Samyutta Nikāya, Veḷu-dvāra-vagga.

self-culture and the following of this 'Golden Rule'. Fielding Hall says :—

'A remarkable trait of the Burmese character is their unwillingness to interfere in other people's affairs. Every man's acts and thoughts are his own affairs, think the Burmans; each man is free to go his own way, to think his own thoughts, to act his own acts, as long as he does not too much annoy his neighbours. Each man is responsible for himself and for himself alone, and there is no need for him to try and be guardian also to his fellows. And so the Burman likes to go his own way, to be a free man within certain limits; and the freedom that he demands for himself, he will extend also to his neighbours. He has a very great and wide tolerance towards all his neighbours, not thinking it necessary to disapprove of his neighbours' acts because they may not be the same as his own, never thinking it necessary to interfere with his neighbour as long as the laws are not broken.'

Fielding Hall goes on to say: 'We Westerners are for ever thinking of others and trying to improve them . . . We are sure that other people cannot but be better and happier for being brought into our ways of thinking, by force even if necessary. We call it philanthropy. But the Buddhist does not believe this at all. Each man, each nation, has, he thinks, enough to do managing his or its own affairs. Interference, any sort of interference, he is sure can do nothing but harm. *You* cannot save a man. All dispositions that are good, that are of any value at all, must come spontaneously from the heart of man. First he must desire them, and then struggle to obtain them; by this means alone can any virtue be reached. This, which is the key of his religion, is the key also of his private life. Each man is a free man to do what he likes, in a way that we have never understood . . . . . This tolerance, this inclination to let each man go his own way, is conspicuous even down to the little events of life. It is very marked, even in conversation, how little criticism is indulged in towards each other. Of all the lovable qualities of the Burmese, and they are many, there are none greater than these — their light-heartedness and their tolerance.'

I've quoted that at length because there has been some misunderstanding of their attitude in the West and because I think

Fielding Hall came very close to finding the key to their religion and their way of life.

Another Westerner who was struck by Burmese tolerance and goodwill, Allan Bennett, who became the Bhikkhu Ānanda Metteyya, quotes a verse of the Dhammapada which is also well known among all people in Burma: 'To abstain from all evil; to fulfil all good and to purify the mind—this is the Teaching of the Buddhas'.\*

He sees in this Teaching and their understanding of it, the key to much of their character. He points out that the first truth herein: 'To abstain from all evil' is the negative side, the adherence to and following of the Precepts to abstain from killing, from taking what is not given, from sexual impurity, from lying or harsh speech, from partaking of intoxicants; and the second truth, 'to fulfil all good' is the positive. He says: 'Never was there a people more generous, more full of charity than this; it has been the wonder of every author who has truly gained an insight into the hearts and lives of this most fascinating race. All the land is covered with tokens of their charity, from the golden glory of the vast fabric of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda at Rangoon — gilded all over at intervals of a few years, at a cost of lakhs of rupees, by voluntary offerings of the people—to the village well, or Monastery, or rest-house for chance travellers; down to the little stand containing a few vessels of clear, cool water, which even the poorest can set up by the roadside and keep daily replenished for the benefit of thirsty passers-by'.

He, and other Westerners are struck, too, by the truth of the closing sentence of the Text, 'To purify the mind'. Here is something in which Buddhism differs from every other religion and system of thought. To purify the mind, without thinking of any permanent unchanging 'self' and without thinking in terms of 'after death nothing', is to put the onus for everything squarely on a man himself. This makes him, or tends to make him, self-reliant and individualistic in the best sense. This it is that tends to preserve the Burman against materialist, regimented ideologies.

Under the heading of 'to purify the mind' we have the three signs characteristic of all being as our starting proposition. These are Impermanence, Suffering and

\* Dhammapada, 183. Quoted in "THE RELIGION OF BURMA".

Impersonality. Every Burman repeats this formula if not daily then at frequent intervals. They cannot fail to have impressed the national character, as indeed they have, with a clearer, wider vision of the universe. Superficially it might appear and has appeared to some superficial observers, as gloomy. Actually it has made them the happiest people in the world. There is a goal which we all may reach, by our own efforts, sooner or later. Morality brings us closer, immorality sets us further back. But all depends on ourselves. This accounts for much of their attitude, their helpfulness and at the same

time refusal to interfere, their lovingkindness to all. It comes out in their welcome to all, of any class or creed or colour, to come and eat with them, in the water-vessels for thirsty passers-by, in the good wishes towards all. They have their murders, mainly crimes of sudden passion, they have their thefts—they have their crimes, they are but humans like all races—but running through their lives are golden threads of love and knowledge, the knowledge that the other fellow is like them and suffers like them, and these threads make their life really a 'many-splendoured thing'; and it is Buddhism that has given them these threads to weave into their lives.



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# ĀṄGUTTARA-NIKĀYA ATTHAKA-NIPĀTA, PATHAMA-PANṆĀSAKA GAHAPATI-VAGGA, ĀNURUDDHA-MAHĀVITAKKA SŪTTA

Discourse on the Great Reflections of Venerable Anuruddha

(Translated by the Editors of the 'Light of the Dhamma')

On one occasion the Bhagavā was staying at the Deer Park in Bhesakaḷa grove at Saṁsumāgiri in the kingdom of Bhagga. At that time the venerable Anuruddha was dwelling in the Eastern Bamboo Forest in the kingdom of Ceti. Then the venerable Anuruddha, being in a secluded place, reflected:

'This Buddha-Dhamma is for one whose wants are few, this Buddha-Dhamma is not for one whose wants are many. This Buddha-Dhamma is for the contented, not for the discontented. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who practises seclusion, not for one fond of society. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is energetic, not for one who is indolent. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is setting up mindfulness, not for one who is heedless. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who has composure of mind, not for one whose mind is confused. This Buddha-Dhamma is for the wise, not for the unwise.'

Now the Buddha, knowing these reflections of Anuruddha, by His higher spiritual power, just as a strong man might stretch forth and bend back his arm, travelled from Bhesakaḷa Grove in Bhagga to the Eastern Bamboo Forest, appeared before the venerable Anuruddha and sat down on the seat specially prepared for Him. Then the venerable Anuruddha made obeisance to the Buddha and sat at one side. When Anuruddha was thus seated, the Buddha addressed him :

'Well done! Well done! Anuruddha. You have entertained the thoughts of a superman: "This Buddha-Dhamma is for one whose wants are few, this Buddha-Dhamma is not for one whose who wants are many. This Buddha-Dhamma is for the contented, not for the discontented. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who practises seclusion, not for one fond of society. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is energetic, not for one who is indolent. This Buddha-

Dhamma is for one who is setting up mindfulness, not for one who is heedless. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who has composure of mind, not for one whose mind is confused. This Buddha-Dhamma is for the wise, not for the unwise." As you have reflected so far Anuruddha, you should reflect on this eighth thought of a superman: "This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is free from Hindrances and who delights in things which are free from Hindrances, not for one who indulges in sensuous pleasures and who delights in things that impede spiritual progress."

'Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time you will be devoid of sensuous pleasures and evil thoughts and abide in the first Jhāna,\* which is accompanied by Thought-conception and Discursive thinking, is born of Detachment, and filled with Rapture and Joy.

'Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time you will, after the subsiding of Thought-conception and Discursive thinking, abide in the second Jhāna, which is born of Concentration, and accompanied by Rapture and Joy.

'Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time you will, after the fading away of rapture, dwell in equanimity, be mindful and clearly conscious; and will experience in your person that ease which the Noble Ones talk of when they say: "Happy lives the man of equanimity and attentive mind"; thus will you enter the third Jhāna.

'Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time, after having given up pleasure and pain, and through the disappearance of the previous joy and grief which you had, you will enter into a state beyond pleasure and pain, into

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\* Jhāna has been variously translated as "Ecstasy", "Rapture", "Absorption" (Nyanatiloka); and the latter, though best, does not give a completely satisfactory definition. It is a state which supervenes on the practice of "awareness" of "setting up of mindfulness" and so the opposite of a hypnotic "trance". There is only one way to arrive at the meaning of the word and that is to enter the state.

the fourth Jhāna, a state of pure Equanimity and clear mindfulness.

‘Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time, whenever you will, you can enjoy these four Jhānas according to your wish, without difficulty and pain, bringing comfort here and now. Then Anuruddha, just as a box containing multi-coloured clothes is an object of delight to some householder or householder’s son; you who are contented with any clothing will contemplate that this robe which is besmeared with dust serves you as an object of delight in the sense that you use this robe simply as a requisite, that you have no attachment for this robe, and that it will lead you to the portals of emancipation.

‘Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time, whenever you will, you can enjoy these four Jhānas according to your wish, without difficulty and pain, bringing comfort here and now. Then, Anuruddha, just as a meal of rice served with deliciously cooked curries is an object of delight to some householder or householder’s son; the alms-food which you receive by begging from door to door will be an object of delight to you in the sense that you simply take food as a requisite, that you have no attachment for that meal, and that it will lead you to the portals of emancipation.

‘Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time, whenever you will, you can enjoy these four Jhānas according to your wish, without difficulty and pain, bringing comfort here and now. Then, Anuruddha, just as a gabled house, plastered both inside and outside, with doors barred and shutters closed, and draught-free, is an object of delight to some householder or householder’s son; the place at the foot of some tree will be an object of delight to you who are contented with dwelling, in the sense that you simply use the foot of the tree as a requisite, that you have no attachment for this dwelling, and that it will lead you to the portals of emancipation.

‘Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time, whenever you will, you can enjoy these four Jhānas according to your wish, without difficulty and pain, bringing comfort here and now. Then, Anuruddha, just as a place with fleecy cover, woollen cloth or coverlet, spread with rugs of deer-skins, with awnings

over it, with crimson cushions at either end, is an object of delight to some householder or householder’s son; to you who are contented with bed and seat, this bed and seat, made of grass will be an object of delight in the sense that you simply use it as a requisite, that you have no attachment for it, and that it will lead you to the portals of emancipation.

‘Anuruddha, when you entertain these eight thoughts of a superman, at that time, whenever you will, you can enjoy these four Jhānas according to your wish, without difficulty and pain, bringing comfort here and now. Then, Anuruddha, just as the variegated medicines: butter pure and fresh, oil, honey and treacle, are objects of delight to some householder or householder’s son; to you who are contented, this medicine made of cattle urine will be an object of delight in the sense that you simply use it as a requisite, that you have no attachment for it and that it will lead you to the portals of emancipation.

‘Wherefore, Anuruddha, stay here in this Eastern Bamboo Grove in Ceti during the coming Vassa.’

And the Venerable Anuruddha replied: ‘Yes, Lord.’

Then the Buddha, having given His advice to the venerable Anuruddha, just as a strong man might stretch his arm and bend it back, returned by His power and appeared at Bhesakala Grove in Bhagga. Now the Buddha sat down on the seat specially prepared for Him and addressed the monks as follows:

‘Monks, I shall declare the “Discourse on the eight thoughts of a superman”. Listen to me’.

‘Yes, Lord’ the monks replied, and the Buddha said:

‘This Buddha-Dhamma is for one whose wants are few, this Buddha-Dhamma is not for one whose wants are many. This Buddha-Dhamma is for the contented, not for the discontented. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who practises seclusion, not for one fond of society. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is energetic, not for one who is indolent. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is setting up mindfulness, not for one who is heedless. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who has composure of mind, not

for one whose mind is confused. This Buddha-Dhamma is for the wise, not for the unwise. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is free from Hindrances and who delights in things which are free from Hindrances, but not for one who indulges in sensuous pleasures and who delights in things that impede spiritual progress.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one whose wants are few, this Buddha-Dhamma is not for one whose wants are many, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, a monk wanting little does not wish: “May they know me as wanting little; may they know me as contented; may they know me as practising seclusion; may they know me as energetic; may they know me as setting up mindfulness; may they know me as composed; may they know me as wise; may they know me as one who is free from Hindrances and who delights in things that are free from Hindrances.”

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one whose wants are few, this Buddha-Dhamma is not for one whose wants are many—so, what is said, is said on this account.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for the contented, not for the discontented, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, a monk is contented with such requisites—robe, alms, dwelling, medicine for illness.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for the contented, not for the discontented—so, what is said, is said on this account.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who practises seclusion, not for one fond of society, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, while a monk practises seclusion, there come to him visitors such as monks, nuns, male and female devotees, kings and their chief ministers, heretics and their disciples. Then the monk with his mind inclined towards seclusion, leaning towards seclusion, abiding in seclusion and delighting in the life of a recluse, entirely confines his talk to that which encourages him to live in a place free from all worldly troubles.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who practises seclusion, not for one fond of society—so, what is said, is said on this account.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is energetic, not for one who is indolent, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, a monk strives energetically to avoid unwholesome deeds and to perform wholesome ones; firm and steadfast, he does not lay aside the yoke of performing wholesome actions—so, what is said, is said on this account.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is setting up mindfulness, not for one who is heedless, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, a monk sets up mindfulness, he is endowed with supreme intentness of mind and discrimination; he recollects and remembers both the doings and sayings of long ago— So, what is said, is said on this account.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who has composure of mind, not for one whose mind is confused, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, a monk having got rid of sensuous desires . . . enters and abides in . . . the first . . . second . . . third . . . and fourth Jhāna—so, what is said, is said on this account.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for the wise not for the unwise, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, a monk is wise; is endowed with a knowledge by means of which he is able to see the physical and mental phenomena as they really are, and is also able to penetrate into the complete destruction of suffering— so, what is said, is said on this account.

‘O monks! This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is free from Hindrances and who delights in things which are free from Hindrances, not for one who indulges in sensuous pleasures and delights in things that impede spiritual progress, thus it is said. But why is this said ?

‘Herein, monks, a monk’s mind is at the portals of emancipation, becomes calm, composed and free. This Buddha-Dhamma is for one who is free from Hindrances and who delights in things which are free from Hindrances, not for one who indulges in sensuous pleasures and who delights in things

that impede spiritual progress— so, what is said, is said on this account.'

And the venerable Anuruddha spent his Vassa at Ceti in the Eastern Bamboo Forest.

There, dwelling alone, solitary, earnest, strenuous, resolute, he attained not long after, in this world, by the knowledge gained in the practice of meditation, the realization of the *cessation of suffering*, for the sake of which householders rightly go forth from their

homes to the homeless life, He realised: 'Rebirth is no more; I have lived the pure life; I have done what ought to be done; I have nothing more to do for the realisation of Arahatship.

And the venerable Anuruddha was numbered among the Arahats.

Now at the time of his attaining Arahatship, the venerable Anuruddha uttered these verses :

'The Master knew what thoughts were in my mind.  
With Power supreme He then appeared before me.  
Great were the thoughts I 'd had anent the goal,  
But what was still unthought He taught to me.  
He who had first attained defilement's end,  
Taught me the way to reach that selfsame goal.  
Hearing, I followed close the Path He showed :  
Won is the Threefold Knowledge\* by His Way,  
Done is the task the Buddha set for me!'

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\* *Tisso vijjā* = *Te-vijja* : Three-fold knowledge : —

- (1) Remembrance of former births, (2) Insight into the arising and passing away of all beings,  
(3) Full recognition of the origin of Suffering and of the Way to its removal which culminates in the Extinction of all Biases.



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# A GUIDE TO THINGS AS THEY ARE

By Sithu U San Thein,

(Translated from The Burmese by the Editors of 'The Light of the Dhamma'.)

You have made some advancement in the attainment of Perfections in your past existences during the Sāsanas \* of the Buddhas in this world-cycle and the previous ones. Had it not been for this, you would have no belief or confidence in the Teaching of Gotama Buddha. You sense some mental impulse to such confidence arising in your mind. The reason for your possession of such a mentality is because of your repeated progression in your past existences and the resultant effects of this. It is now time for you to make to grow these seeds of Pāramitās (Perfections) which you have in hand.

The Light of the Sāsana is shining more brightly than the rays of the sun. Let all the people who have advanced sufficiently in the Perfections, whether they are big or small, quick-witted, of mediocre intelligence, or dull, receive the Light of the Dhamma while the Buddha-Sāsana exists, allow the seeds of Pāramitās to blossom, and strive their best to become the real disciples of the Buddha.

## COMPASSION OF THE BUDDHA

The Buddha gave His Teaching through great compassion to allow those who have advanced sufficiently in the Perfections to inherit it. His compassion for all beings was of the same degree. The compassion which He had for His son Rāhūla or for Yasodharā, Rāhūla's mother, did not exceed the compassion He had for any other being.

For a period so long that it is not within the range of thought, during which world-systems arose, perished and decayed, the Compassionate One strove to attain Omniscience by which He could bring the worldlings from the world of unsatisfactoriness, and lead them to Freedom. Countless times had the Buddha-to-be sacrificed his health, his life, his property and his wife and children in fulfilling the Pāramitās. Yet the 'Omniscience' he gained far outweighed these sacrifices. Did he undergo so much pain and trouble merely to attain his own Freedom? No. During his Sumedhā existence, if he wished, he could have become a fully purified Arahāt and attained Nibbāna, but

as he desired to save fellow beings from this Saṁsāra (Round of Rebirth), he made a solemn declaration in the presence of the Buddha Dīpaṅkarā that he would strive to become a Buddha and having undergone much suffering he advanced sufficiently in the Pāramitās. How great was the Buddha's compassion is clearly discernible. While there are people who have advanced sufficiently in the Pāramitās in the past existences, it is now time for them to follow the Teaching of the Buddha, practise it and realise it, so as to become the real heirs of the Buddha.

The late Venerable Ledi Sayadaw once pointed out : "Even if persons have advanced sufficiently in the Pāramitās, present day people who are *aniyata-neyya-puggala* (persons who must be instructed and who are not "men of spiritual genius") are able to attain Freedom, only when they strive with utmost diligence, so that they are fit to attain Freedom. During the lifetime of the Buddha, Mahādhana the son of the banker, passed his time enjoying sensuous pleasure during his early youth, and when he grew up he had no time to pay his homage to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, not to speak of attaining Freedom. When the Buddha saw this state of affairs, He spoke to Ānanda : 'This banker's son, had he become my follower during the first period of his life, would have become an Arahāt and attained Parinibbāna in this very life ; or had he become a monk in the Order during the second period of his life, he would have become an Anāgāmin, and on his death he would be reborn in Suddhavāsa Brahma Plane where he would attain Parinibbāna; or had he become a monk in the Order during the third period of his life, he would have become either a Sakadāgāmin or Sotāpanna and would never be reborn in the Four Lower Worlds.' Even if a person be of the *paccima-bhavika* type (one in whom exists the possibility of attaining Freedom in this very life), he will not attain if he indulges in sensuous pleasures and neglects the further striving. Again, if for the unwholesome actions done by him in this very life, he were to be reborn in the *Apāya* state of suffering and were to remain there for a great

\* Periods during which Teachings of the Buddha exist.



length of time, he might have no opportunity to encounter the next Buddha, the Buddha Metteyya. After that, too, he might be in world-cycles in which no Buddha would arise, and wait uncountable ages for an opportunity to hear a Buddha's Teaching, just as the banker's son who had an opportunity to attain Freedom during his lifetime missed that opportunity.

Now in saying that the light of the Buddha-Sāsana is shining more brightly than that of the sun, 'the light of the Sāsana' means 'the light of *yathābhūta pañña* (penetrating knowledge of the truth)'. These realities or truths cannot be seen with the naked eye. A person who possesses 'the eye of wisdom' will be able to realise these truths, or see things as they really are, much more than he sees the brightness of the sun with his naked eyes. Just as it would not be right for a blind person to say that there are no sun, moon and stars, because he is not able to see them with his eye, it would not be proper for one to say that the Sāsana does not shine, because he is not able to see the light of the Sāsana.

The light of the Sāsana is shining brilliantly and is doing good to those who have 'eyes of wisdom' and to those who are trying to acquire the 'eyes of wisdom'. Since people possess different degrees of knowledge, at present we have different grades of the 'practices of the Dhamma' which the Buddha so compassionately taught for the people to practise and attain knowledge grade by grade. A person of no wisdom sees all things wrongly owing to hallucinations. It is therefore highly important to cultivate this higher knowledge in order to dispel these hallucinations.

In order to understand it better, let us discuss the word "gratefulness", for example. About thirty years ago a certain Ko Nyo Thee of Upper Burma and another person Ko Mya Gyi of Lower Burma earned their living by jointly trading in a boat along the river. One day the boat was caught in a gale on the wide river and capsized. Both Ko Nyo Thee and Ko Mya Gyi fell into the river. Ko Mya Gyi knew how to swim; but as Ko Nyo Thee could not swim and was thus helpless, Ko Mya Gyi, with the greatest difficulty, helped Ko Nyo Thee towards the river bank, thus saving his life. Twenty years later, Ko Mya Gyi, in order to avoid the dangers of war, went to his old friend Ko Nyo Thee's place in Upper Burma and resided there as a war refugee. Ko Mya Gyi was

rich and so had brought some jewels and personal property with him, whereas Ko Nyo Thee was poor. During the troubled time, Ko Mya Gyi greatly relied on his old friend Ko Nyo Thee, and at the same time was very anxious about the security of his valuable properties. People are tempted to become greedy during a period of unsettled government, and Ko Nyo Thee had at times attachment for Ko Mya Gyi's properties through his *lobha* (greed). During such a war time it was very easy to get rid of Ko Mya Gyi under pretence of an attack by robbers etc. and get all of his valuable properties. Looking with the eyes of hallucination, they were good to look at, valuable and would command a great rank in wealth and position. These thoughts were born of delusion. He was not able to see the 'gratitude' — the kindness which Ko Mya Gyi had done him some 20 years before. As that 'gratitude' was not of a tangible nature, he had not been able to store it. While Ko Nyo Thee had a greedy eye on Ko Mya Gyi's properties, his 'eye of wisdom' was blind. Then, owing to a certain impulse, he suddenly remembered the incident when his life had been saved by Ko Mya Gyi. At first this cognition was very feeble. When he contemplated on the inherent qualities of Ko Mya Gyi in that respect, the greed that obliterated the real qualities of gratitude gradually waned. Ko Nyo Thee then paid more regard to his benefactor Ko Mya Gyi and treated the latter better than before. A band of insurgents came to the district and Ko Mya Gyi, being very uneasy in mind about his personal properties, one day early in the morning went to a place not very far from his temporary residence carrying the bundle containing his jewels. Thinking that none was present in his neighbourhood he dug a hole near a big tree and hoarded his properties there. At that moment Ko Nyo Thee, who happened to be nearby, saw Ko Mya Gyi's movements. When later the insurgents attacked their village they had to leave the village and run away for safety. Ko Mya Gyi had to take refuge in a Buddhist rest-house together with Ko Nyo Thee, and there he was taken ill. One day when Ko Nyo Thee went to the village to look at the condition of his house, he went to the place where Ko Mya Gyi had hidden his treasures. He unearthed them and had a look at them. The jewels were very beautiful and very valuable. But when he mentally weighed

them in the 'balance of wisdom', the 'gratitude', which could not be seen with the eye but could be realised only by means of wisdom, became heavier than the valuable properties. This showed that Ko Nyo Thee could overcome greed in that respect. Without leaving the properties in an insecure place, Ko Nyo Thee brought them to Ko Mya Gyi, and they then kept them in a new and more secure place. Ko Mya Gyi later on recovered his health and his properties were also intact. While the properties remained in Ko Mya Gyi's hands as valuable things, to Ko Nyo Thee they seemed to be a poison, and this incident shows the importance of 'the sense of gratitude'. This is only an instance to show how important a single Dhamma such as 'gratitude' is. There are many and higher units of Dhamma, and in order to see them as they really are, it is now time to practise the Dhamma and thus increase our power of understanding the Truth step by step.

Ko Nyo Thee had knowledge enough to know the Truth to some extent. Thus, he did not get the precious jewels, but obtained a priceless Dhamma which was more valuable. Persons who are able to understand the truth more than Ko Nyo Thee, possess various grades of 'ascending' knowledge. Those who do not understand as much as Ko Nyo Thee possess various grades of 'descending' ignorance. Although the resultant effects of *dāna* (almsgiving), *sīla* (morality) and *bhāvanā* (mental development) clearly exist in this world, different persons view these from different angles; that is to say that the grades of knowledge of these persons in relation to *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā* also vary according to their respective calibre. These variations are by way of 'ascent' and 'descent'. Although jewels and precious things which we see with our eyes are said to be beautiful, useful or valuable, naturally their values are not equal. For example, Maung Pyu and Maung Ni had each ten thousand kyats, one having gained them lawfully and the other illegally. Though, in ordinary parlance, their values might be equal, the amount that was procured lawfully would carry more real weight than that obtained illegally.

The rays of the Sāsana are radiating the Realities. Those who have gradually seen things as they really are, step by step, have reached the highest step and got rid of *dukkha*

(suffering) and finally attained *santi-sukha* (Absolute Peace—*Nibbāna*). The Buddha-Sāsana now exists as an instrument to differentiate between the Real and the Unreal. The Buddha-Sāsana does not appear as a mere religious creed; it is the Truth, of universal application, leading to Enlightenment after allowing us to eradicate all grades of ignorance, thus paving the way to the field of Enlightenment. Only when one realises the wrong, step by step, will he be able to realise the right, step by step. Only if one sees things as they really are, will he be able to dispel ignorance, and go steadily towards Realities. The end of all the Supramundane knowledges is Omniscience.

During the lifetime of the Buddha, when Vakkali gazed at the various supernormal physical characteristics of the Buddha and the halo round His body, and was inspired with great admiration, the Buddha declared: 'Vakkali, one who does not see the Dhamma does not see me; one who sees the Dhamma sees me also. You have not seen me in the Ultimate sense. Only when you practise the Dhamma taught by me and realise it yourself, will you be able to see me in the Ultimate sense. You will then be able to realise the inherent qualities of the Buddha and have strong faith in them.' The real meaning of this Declaration is that only by following the Teaching of the Buddha and practising it, could Vakkali reach the stage where he could realise the truth. In the matter of paying one's veneration to the Buddha, Vakkali should be ranked among the foremost. Though he possessed such a high mundane morality, his wholesome action in this respect was not sufficient to allow him to realise the truth. He abandoned his inferior type of merit, and having practised the Dhamma to his utmost, finally attained Freedom. This is an important point to note.

If one is not able to see the light of the Sāsana and realise the Dhamma just as the Noble Ones did, it is certain that for him the world of suffering will be lengthened. By whatever means one may try to enjoy sensuous pleasures, he is sure to experience the 'Unsatisfactoriness of life'. However wealthy and high-ranking a person may be, brought up in the lap of luxury, it is evident that his enjoyment is not a pleasure in the Ultimate sense, since this too must pass. The Dhamma alone can lead one to see

things as they really are, realise the origin of *dukkha*, and attain absolute peace.

### S A M S Ā R A

*Anamatagga-samsāra* means 'Round of Rebirth', the beginning of which is unattainable to thought. The Mind and Body have arisen and vanished, all the elements dying and being reformed in rapid succession in the past existences, do so in the present existence, and will, too, do so in the future existences. Let me give you an example. Follow it with your mind's eye. Suppose there is an instrument which can be propelled continually for days, months and years. Send it up to the sky; when will it come to a final destination? Will it reach the end of the journey after it has travelled ten million miles, one billion miles or more than that? Will it approach a destination? Again, in your mind's eye, send several of such instruments in all directions in such a way that there is not a single interspace. Now, after these instruments have travelled for a hundred years, can you say that they will be nearing their destinations? Or is the destination nearer than it was 50 years earlier? Can you call the place whence you sent these instruments as the starting point of this infinite expanse of space? What is the starting point and what will be the destination? When did it start and when will it stop? These are the things to be considered in connection with time and space.

Will you take the time of your birth in this very life as the beginning or take the time of your death after enjoying sensuous pleasures, as the end? The sphere of 'Unsatisfactoriness of life' with its space and time will not come to an end; nor will they approach the end. The sphere of suffering (*dukkha*) is becoming wider and wider and the end becomes farther and farther away. Worldly pleasures are *dukkha* because they are not permanent. If they were permanent, we would not grumble; but as they are impermanent, we shall have to work out our own salvation with diligence. Most beings having delusively taken time and space as one complete whole, wandered in the Round of Rebirth, the beginning of which is both unattainable to thought, by arising at times in a Happy Course of Existence and at others in an Unhappy Course of Existence. Though a billion of existences might have been passed, do you think that you will get out of this Round of Rebirth?

No, you will not; far from it. Even if more existences be passed in the future, Freedom will be far, far away too. The animal world, ghost world, demon-world, hell, worlds of men, Devas and Brahmās are all involved in Samsāra, the beginning of which is beyond the range of thought. Whether the light emitted from the sun and reflected from the moon, stars and other shining celestial bodies exists or not, in the Ultimate sense, the world is covered with the darkness of ignorance. One plane of existence is interrelated with another by way of space and time. It is for this reason that a being who took rebirth in one plane will take rebirth in another plane after his death; in one existence he was reborn in a noble family, and in another in an ignoble one. If he has performed a great many wholesome actions, he will arise in the worlds of men, Devas and Brahmās; and if he has performed unwholesome actions he will arise in the 4 Lower Worlds. The worlds of men, Devas and Brahmās are connected with the 4 Lower Worlds; because all these planes are involved in Samsāra. Men, Devas and Brahmās on their dissolution or death may arise in the Lower Worlds, and those in the Lower Worlds may, on their death, arise in the higher planes. When a world system comes nearly to an end, all beings except some who hold very wrong views are reborn in the world of men where they have to practise *Samatha-bhāvanā* (Development of mental concentration), and after death they arise in the Brahmā-planes. Even these Brahmās on their death may again be reborn in the lower planes. Although aeons may come and go, time and space are never destroyed, and they will always be governed by the principle of "arising and vanishing". Even if a being has been reborn in the planes of men and Brahmās for a billion times will he be approaching the portals of emancipation? Certainly not. Even if he has been reborn as virtuous men and Devas for a hundred million times, will he be nearing the real *sukha* (Happiness)? No, he will still be far away and because of his delusion there exists the possibility to be reborn in the 4 Lower Worlds in his future births.

Thus we find that both in the lower and higher planes of existence there are time and space. Is the life-span of a man, Deva or Brahmā long? It is infinitesimally short if it be compared with '*anumatagga*' (the beginning of which is unattainable to thought).

From the above explanations we can clearly see how great the Compassion of the Buddha was. The Omniscience which the Buddha attained after fulfilling His Pāramitas with great sacrifices, enabled Him to show to the world a Path leading to the Extinction of Delusion and Suffering. He taught that all suffering and all rebirth is produced by Craving, and that by practising the Noble Eightfold Path, Craving, which is the cause of suffering and rebirth, can be extinguished. By Buddha-Dhamma only will one be able to get rid of *dukkha* (suffering). You should now see that the ordinary wholesome and unwholesome actions cannot help one to get rid of *dukkha*, and so contemplating the benefits of the Sāsana, one should practise the Dhamma so as to dispel all cravings and attachments and to realise Nibbāna.

Therefore, in this *anamataḅga-saṁsāra*, it is highly important to realise the Dhamma while we are still so fortunate as to be able to see the light of the Sāsana, in order to pass over the boundary of the sphere of *dukkha*, rather than to try and achieve power and glory.

### KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

If one possesses a knowledge that penetrates the truth, he will be able to dispel evils. Some people say : 'Everybody seems to have some knowledge of the Dhamma, and yet they are foolish ; they still follow sensuous pleasures in the "Spheres of Greed", in spite of their knowledge of the Dhamma'. Here, 'knowledge' does not relate to ultimate truths, but it relates to Conventional truths. For example, a child in his infancy plays with faeces discharged by him as pleasurable things and does not consider them abhorrent. But when grown up, he sees the faeces as detestable things and does not touch them, taking care not to get his body dirty. So seekers of truth when their 'Eyes of Wisdom' become clearer and clearer avoid evils step by step according to their degrees of knowledge, and practise the Dhamma so that they may achieve higher grades of knowledge. Just as a person who has put on new and better clothes will keep himself away from dirty objects which will spoil his clothes, those who reach the 'Sphere of the light of the Sāsana' have extended their light of vision to a wider and wider degree and they have left behind them the 'Sphere of Ignorance'. It is highly important to exert oneself to realise Ultimate truth, and

not to be content with the conventional, general knowledge.

Some people are under the impression that the practice of the Dhamma is advantageous only to the practiser, and has nothing to do with the welfare of other beings. They say so because they do not comprehend Suffering and other delusive phenomena. For example, vultures are creatures of foul type. They take bloated corpses as agreeable things and live on them with the greatest pleasure. If one could possibly say to them : 'Friends, the dead body of the dog which you are now eating, is bad indeed, and is much to be abhorred. The existence in which you arise is really low' ; would you call that man selfish ? If some of these vultures, realising their condition, gave up the filthy food and tried to find more wholesome food, would you call those birds selfish ?

The act of striving to get out of the sphere of 'wrong' and arrive at the 'right', is very certainly not a selfish act, but will be important to those who have realised their error in the sphere of 'wrong'. Just as the saying 'If a tree be splendid, ten thousand birds can take refuge in it', the distinguished benefactors who realise the truth by climbing the ladders of knowledge, cause their disciples and followers to climb up the ladder of knowledge step by step, by practising the Dhamma.

Although we say that the Buddha-Sāsana will last for another 2500 years, we are able to come within its light only while we arise in the world of men, or, if we consider more deeply, only when we possess a virtuous mind and practise the Dhamma. It means that as the period in which one is able to come in contact with the Buddha-Sāsana is very short, we should strive to practise the Dhamma with zeal and fervour and without wasting time.

During that period also, it is highly important that in practising the Dhamma, one is able to reach the topmost. It is a grievous loss if one makes a mistake by whiling away the time without practising to realise the truth.

In the Buddha-Sāsana there really exists the opportunity of practising the Teaching of the Buddha, which is able to put an end to all Suffering and which can bring Absolute Peace to the practiser. *Pariyatti* (Learning of the Doctrine) exists as the trunk

root of the Sāsana and we have the opportunity to practise the Dhamma. This practice is called *Paṭipatti Sāsana*. The knowledges pertaining to the Holy Paths and the Fruitions thereof exist, because one is able to attain them by *Paṭipatti*. Only the Omniscient Buddha is the Knower of All Things. He knows in the Ultimate sense. The Buddha's disciples, Arahats knew the mental and physical phenomena as they really are, but did not know all things in the manner of the Buddha. They knew things by degrees, and their knowledge cannot be compared to the Buddha's Omniscience which is infinite, boundless and not within the range of thought. The Buddha having attained the highest insight-knowledge was able to eradicate all defilements along with their natural dispositions. As regards the Arahats they

are able to eradicate the defilements only, but are not able to dispel some of their individual dispositions. Anāgāmins are not yet able to eradicate Conceit, Inclination to Existence in higher realms, and Ignorance. Sakadāgāmins and Sotāpannas are not yet able to dispel *kāma-rāga* (Sensuality), *paṭigha* (Ill-will), Conceit, Inclination to Existence, and Ignorance. Although they cannot dispel all these latent inclinations they have come out of 'darkness' into the light. As they are emerging out of ignorance and have entered the sphere of knowledge, they are able to enjoy safely the essence of the Dhamma which is the heritage of the Sāsana. They become the real disciples of the Buddha, and will be reborn in higher and higher realms, where they will attain Nibbāna.

*(To be Continued)*



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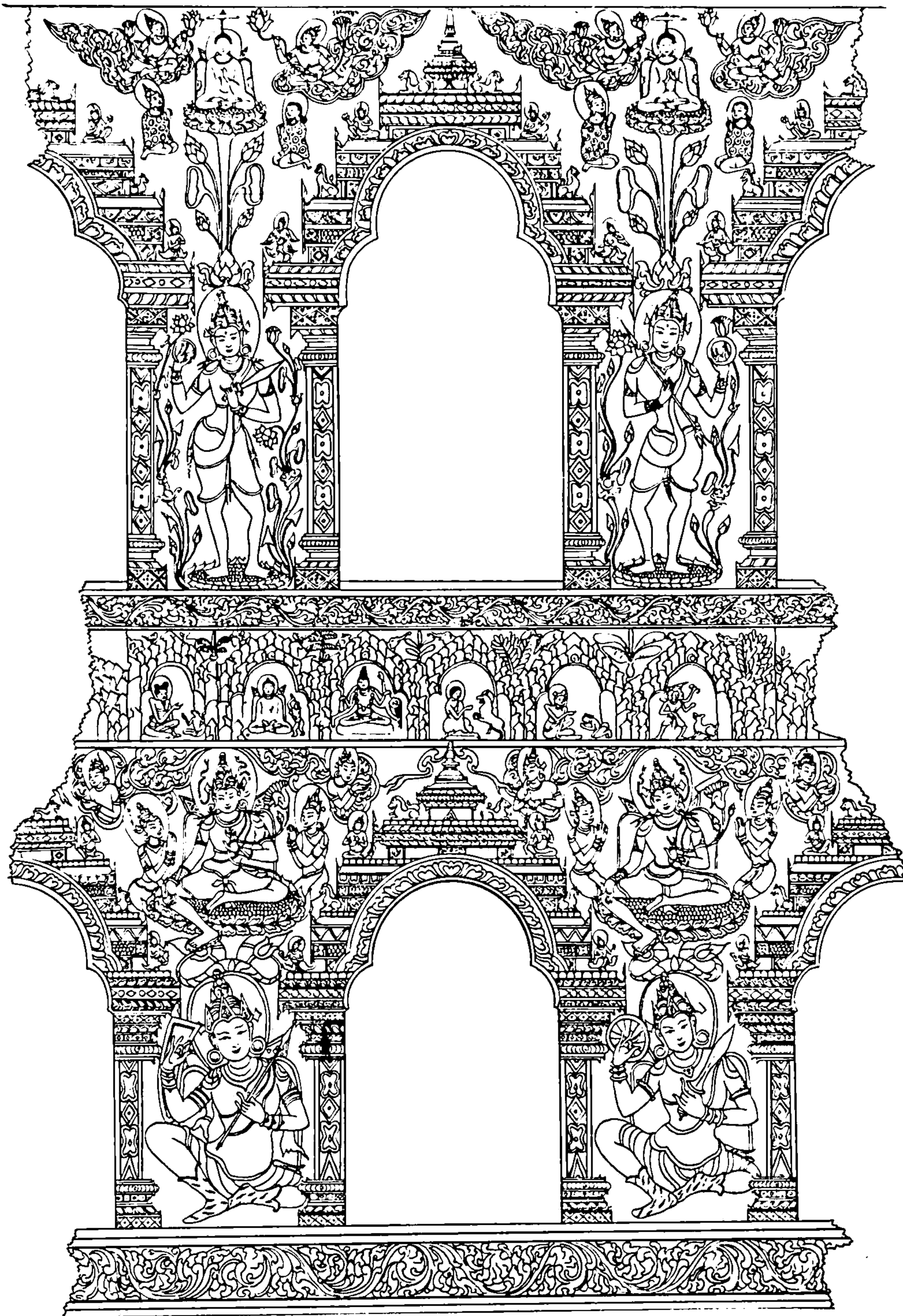
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Mural painting on the southern wall of the inside of Abhaya-dana Pagoda, Myinkaba, Pagan.

## THE BUDDHA'S DAILY LIFE\*

*By F.L. Woodward. M.A.,*

Ah ! When the Lord of the World went forth to beg,  
The gentle winds made smooth the ways before Him,  
The clouds poured down their waters on the dust  
And from the sun's hot rays protected Him.  
The breezes wafted flowers to His path,  
Raised were the ruts and hollows of the road,  
Smoothed the rough places, and where'er the Lord  
Trode, even was the ground and soft ; thereon  
Sprang lotus-flowers to receive His feet.  
No sooner had He reached the city-gates  
Than all the six-rayed brilliance of His form  
Raced here and there o'er palaces and shrines  
And decked them as with yellow sheen of gold  
Or with a painter's colours. Then the beasts,  
Birds, elephants and horses, one and all,  
Gave forth melodious sounds, and all the folk  
Crashed loud the drums ; lutes twanged and instruments  
Of divers sounds ; tinkled the women's jewels :  
And by these tokens did the people know  
' The Blessed One has entered now for alms. '  
So donning their best robes and finery  
And taking perfumes, flowers and offerings  
They issued from their houses to the street,  
And worshipping the Blessed One therewith  
Some said ' Lord ! Give us ten monks for to feed.'  
And some, 'Give twenty,' some, 'Lord ! Give a hundred !'

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\* Being a literal and metrical version of Buddhaghosa's *Sumangala-Vilasini*, ( 1.45 ) or Commentary on the *Dīgha Nikāya* of *Sutta Pitaka*.

And then they took His bowl, prepared a seat,  
 And eagerly their reverence displayed  
 By placing choicest food within the bowl.  
 Now when the meal was done, the Blessed Lord  
 With nice discrimination of their minds  
 And dispositions, taught each one the Doctrine.  
 Thus, some were stablished in the Refuges,  
 Some in the Precepts Five, some reached the Stream,  
 While others would attain the Second Path,  
 And some the Path of No-Return, and some  
 Became established in the Highest Fruit,  
 Were Arahats and left the world. Thus showing  
 Such kindness to the folk the Lord would rise  
 And, to His dwelling-place would wend His way.  
 And there when He arrived He sat Him down  
 On a fair Buddha-mat they spread for Him,  
 And waited till the monks their meal had eaten.  
 This done, the body-servant told the Lord,  
 And to the scented chamber He retired.  
 Such were the duties of the morning meal.  
 These duties done, in the scented chamber sitting,  
 On a seat made ready, He would wash His feet.  
 Then, standing on the jewelled stairs that led  
 Unto the scented chamber, He would teach  
 The gathering of monks and thus would say :  
 ‘ Oh monks. Apply yourselves with diligence ! ’  
 For rarely comes a Buddha in the world,  
 And rarely beings come to birth as men ;  
 Rare the propitious moment and the chance  
 To leave the world and hear the Doctrine true ! ’  
 Thereat some one would ask the Blessed One  
 For meditation-lessons, which He gave  
 Fit for each man’s peculiar bent of mind.



Then all would do obeisance and depart  
 To places where they spent the night or day ;  
 Some to the forest, some to the foot of trees,  
 Some to the hills, some to the heavens where rule  
 The Four Great Kings, or Vasivatti's heaven.  
 Then going to His room, the Blessed One  
 Would lay Him down and rest there for a while,  
 Mindful and conscious, on His right side lying,  
 Like a lion ; till, His body now refreshed,  
 He rose and gazed forth over all the world.  
 Then came the folk of village or of town  
 Near which He might be staying, they who gave  
 The morning meal, garbed in their best, and brought  
 Their offerings of flowers and scents. The Lord,  
 His audience thus assembled, would approach  
 In such miraculous fashion as was fit ;  
 And, sitting in the lecture-hall prepared  
 On the fair Buddha-mat they spread for Him,  
 He taught the Doctrine fit for time and season,  
 And seasonably bade the people go.  
 Then all would do obeisance and depart.  
 Such were the duties of the afternoon.  
 These things all done, He left the Buddha-seat,  
 Entering the bath-house, if He wished to bathe  
 And cool His limbs with water there prepared  
 By His body-servant, who fetched the Buddha-seat  
 And spread it in the scented room. The Lord,  
 Donning His double tunic orange-hued  
 And binding on His girdle, threw His robe  
 Over the right shoulder and thither went and sat  
 And stayed retired, in meditation plunged.

Then came the monks from this side and from that  
 And waited on the Blessed One. Some asked  
 The solving of their doubts, and some would beg,  
 For meditation-lessons, others a sermon.  
 Thus answering, teaching, preaching, would the Lord  
 Spend the first night-watch, granting their desires.  
 Such were the duties of the first night-watch.  
 When the duties of the first night-watch were done,  
 The monks would do obeisance and depart.  
 Then came the Gods of the ten thousand worlds,  
 Seizing the chance of questioning the Lord,  
 Were it but single words of letters four.  
 He, answering those questions, passed the night.  
 Such were the duties of the middle watch.  
 Into three parts the last watch He divided ;  
 And forasmuch as, since the morning sitting,  
 His body would be tired, He spent one part  
 In pacing up and down to ease His limbs.  
 Then going to the scented room the Lord  
 Would lay Him down and rest there for a while,  
 Mindful and conscious, on His right side lying,  
 Like a lion. But in the third He rose and sat,  
 Gazing with Buddha-eye o'er all the world,  
 To see if any man, by giving alms,  
 Keeping the Precepts, or by deeds of worth,  
 Under some former Buddha took the vow  
 Himself to be a Saviour of the world.  
 Such were His habits of the last night-watch.



## WHY AND HOW WE CELEBRATE DHAMMACAKKA DAY

*Broadcast from the BBS by Venerable U Thittila, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, on Thursday the 11th July, 1957, Full Moon of Waso.*

Almost all religions have the same teaching of the minor moralities of 'Be good and do good'. These moralities are very necessary but nevertheless they will not get one permanently out of this whirlpool of existence. They will take us to a heaven, but no heaven is permanent. Buddhism has this teaching of morality, and indeed it was the Buddha who first gave the full teaching of morality, as morality is accepted to-day by most great religions.

But the Buddha gave something very much more, something which makes the Buddha Dhamma so very much more than a system of ethics. The Buddha showed the Way, the only way, out of this morass of Suffering.

Immediately after His full Enlightenment, He surveyed the world with the eye of Omniscience and saw how sunk were beings in the Ignorance and Craving from which He had escaped. He hesitated to teach, but then realised that there were some 'whose eyes were only lightly covered with dust' who would listen and understand and make the effort to attain Enlightenment.

He therefore considered to whom He should first tell the glad tidings and saw that of His former associates, His most recent companions were still living and to this group of five ascetics He went and delivered His first sermon exactly two thousand five hundred and forty six years ago.

This short sermon gives the whole Teaching of the Buddha in brief and may be regarded as the very foundation of the Teaching. It is as follows :—

### **The Discourse of setting in motion the Wheel of the Doctrine.**

Thus have I heard: at one time the Lord dwelt at Banares at Isipatana in the Deer Park. There the Lord addressed the five monks :—

"These two extremes, Bhikkhus, are not to be practised by one who has gone forth from the world. What are the two ? That conjoined with passions and luxury, low vulgar, common, ignoble and unprofitable; and that conjoined with self-mortification, painful, ignoble and unprofitable.

"There is a Middle Way, O Bhikkhus avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathāgata—a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nibbāna."

And what, Bhikkhus, is that Middle Path which gives Vision, which gives Knowledge, which causes Calm, Enlightenment and Nibbāna ?

Verily it is this Noble Eightfold Path, that is to say :

**RIGHT VIEW, RIGHT AIM, RIGHT SPEECH, RIGHT ACTION, RIGHT LIVING, RIGHT EFFORT, RIGHT MINDFULNESS, RIGHT CONTEMPLATION.**

This, Bhikkhus, is that Middle Path which gives Vision, which gives Knowledge, which causes Calm, Insight, Enlightenment and Nibbāna.

Now this, Bhikkhus is the Noble Truth about Suffering :

Birth is Suffering, Decay is Suffering, Sickness is Suffering, Death is Suffering. To be conjoined with things which we dislike, to be separated from things which we like—that also is Suffering. Not to get what one wants—that also is Suffering. In a word, this Body, this fivefold Mass which is based on Grasping, that is Suffering.

Now this, Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth about the Origin of Suffering :

It is that Craving that leads downward to birth, along with the Lure and the Lust that lingers longingly now here, now there, namely, the Craving for Sensual pleasure, the Craving connected with *Sassata-diṭṭhi* i.e. the belief in an eternal life, the Craving connected with *Uccheda-diṭṭhi* i.e., the belief that there is no future existence. Such Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth about the Origin of Suffering.

And this, Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth about The Ceasing of Suffering :

Verily it is the utter passionless cessation of, the giving up, the forsaking, the release from, the absence of longing for, this Craving.

Now this, Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth about the Way leading to the Ceasing of Suffering. Verily it is the Noble Eightfold Path, that is :

**RIGHT VIEW, RIGHT AIM, RIGHT SPEECH, RIGHT ACTION, RIGHT LIVING, RIGHT EFFORT, RIGHT MINDFULNESS, RIGHT CONTEMPLATION.**

At the thought, Bhikkhus, of this Noble Truth of Suffering, concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

At the thought, Bhikkhus, "This Noble Truth of Suffering is to be understood", concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

At the thought, Bhikkhus, "This Noble Truth of Suffering has been understood", concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

Again, at the thought, Bhikkhus, of this Truth of the Origin of Suffering, concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

At the thought, Bhikkhus, "The Origin of Suffering must be put away," concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

So also at the thought, Bhikkhus, "The Origin of Suffering has been put away", concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

Again, at the thought, Bhikkhus, of this Noble Truth of the Ceasing of Suffering, concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

At the thought, Bhikkhus, "The Ceasing of Suffering must be realised, " concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

At the thought, Bhikkhus, "The Ceasing of Suffering has been realised", concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

Finally, Bhikkhus, at the thought of This Noble Way leading to the Ceasing of Suffering, concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

At the thought, Bhikkhus, "The Way leading to the Ceasing of Suffering is to be developed", concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight,

Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

At the thought, Bhikkhus, "The Way leading to the Ceasing of Suffering has been developed", concerning things unlearnt before, there arose in me Vision, Insight, Understanding; there arose in me Wisdom, there arose in me Light.

Now so long, Bhikkhus, as my knowledge and my insight of these thrice-revolved twelvefold Noble Truths, in their essential nature, were not quite purified,—so long did I not profess to have attained Supreme Enlightenment in this world, together with the Devas, the Māras, the Brahmās, among the hosts of recluses and Brahmins, of devas, and mankind.

But so soon, Bhikkhus, as my knowledge and my insight of these thrice-revolved twelvefold Noble Truths, in their essential nature, were quite purified,—then, Bhikkhus, I declared that I have attained Supreme Enlightenment to the world and Devas, Māras and Brahmās, and with regard to the hosts of recluses and brahmins, of devas and mankind.

And now Knowledge and Insight have arisen in me, so that I know, "Sure is my heart's release. This is my last birth. There is no more becoming for me."

This First Sermon has been elaborated and the development of the Sangha and the necessity to make all things clear, gave rise to many Sermons, to the Vinaya Rules and to the philosophical Teaching, the Abhidhamma.

Nevertheless the First Sermon remains as the very foundation, a clarion call to all 'whose eyes are but lightly covered with dust' to penetrate the veil of illusion.

In recognition of this and of the beginning of the Great Teaching, we celebrate today as 'Dhammacakka Day'.

The Sermon is chanted, laymen make visits to Pagodas and Monasteries and offer lighted candles and incense and flowers in respectful homage and gratitude for the Teaching and make offerings to the monks.

The Bhikkhus dedicate themselves anew to their great work of practising the steps of the Way, of undertaking with new resolve the strict Discipline, of Learning and of Teaching and of Practising Vipassanā-bhāvanā the Right Contemplation which leads to Insight and Enlightenment.

All orient their minds once again to the Great Teaching and its great purpose, utter and final release from this weary round of rebirth.

# MUNDANE VERSUS SUPRAMUNDANE KNOWLEDGE

*U Khin Moun*

To appreciate the true meaning of the super-science of Gotama Buddha it is essential as a first step to realise the difference between mundane and supramundane knowledge. We shall therefore begin with the study of the methods used for the acquirement of mundane knowledge up to the highest stage attainable by worldly persons. If we take as an example, ordinary water that is known to everybody, we usually find it in two different states, *i.e.*, in the form of ice when it is very cold and in the form of liquid if it is not very cold. We can see, smell, taste and touch the solid ice and the liquid water. This is the primary state of our mundane knowledge. But those who are not given the opportunity to learn elementary science will hesitate to believe that water is present around our bodies in the form of moisture, because they cannot see, taste, smell, or touch it, although this phenomenon is fully understood as a fact even by children, when they have studied primary science.

This is how we acquire our worldly knowledge step by step till we attain the highest possible stage. We are born with deep-seated ignorance that has to be dispelled gradually by acquiring right knowledge. We are also born with eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind, and from childhood till death we gain experience and learn to know things external to us with the help of these sense organs.

But I would like to mention that the object of this simple illustration is not only to show the gradual acquirement of worldly knowledge but also to point out the nature of our mental inertia or resistance or tendency to refuse to believe the truths which we have not yet understood. It is the human weakness that arises from inherent ignorance. This weakness was displayed more glaringly during our primitive stage when our forefathers went to the extent of killing deep thinkers for telling truths which they could not understand. Another peculiar nature of this weakness is its tendency to believe untruths as demonstrated by our superstitious beliefs before the development of scientific knowledge. Ignorance has an affinity for untruths. Due to this inherent mental resistance we usually find it a hard task to force ourselves to believe the truths

that lie beyond the range of our sense perceptions. If we were deprived of facilities for the development of our faculty of understanding, we should be no better than our forefathers who killed the deep thinkers for revealing truths.

Nevertheless, as a result of the concerted efforts of scientists, many truths that cannot be detected by our sense organs have been discovered. Let us take for instance the discovery of electronic radiations. Their existence was unknown when first experiments were carried out. People would have ridiculed James Maxwell and Heinrich Hertz, if they had failed to find the hidden phenomena of electromagnetic waves thus substantiating their assertions. But we now find that we are surrounded on all sides by powerful electronic waves radiated from a large number of wireless transmitting stations all over the world. In fact we cannot see, hear, smell, taste or touch them. Yet we are unable to refuse to believe the truth of their existence around our bodies because we are using them in various ways. Besides them we always have around our bodies similar natural electronic particles called cosmic radiations. We never knew that they were in existence until the scientists had gone out of the ordinary way of thinking and taken a bold step to explore this hidden phenomenon, which has been in existence since the time of our forefathers.

These discoveries are possible because of the endeavours of the deep thinkers who have the courage to give up their preconceived notions born of narrow-mindedness. They have implicit faith in the existence of hidden phenomena, which we have not yet found. To shut our eyes to the possibilities of unknown phenomena would be to impoverish the possibilities of human knowledge. If we rest content with our limited knowledge our advance will be at a standstill. Progress is impossible if we have closed minds. These are known facts that need no further elaboration. But they are simple, relevant facts that will help us to fully realise the importance of dispelling our narrow views and preconceived notions for a thorough realisation of the wide scope of supra-mundane knowledge. Besides that there is another more important fact that should be fully realised before we

begin with the study of the Buddha-Dhamma, *i.e.*, the limitation of mundane knowledge. If we just take one obvious fact as the basis of our study, we are in a position to judge correctly the depth of our mundane knowledge, without much difficulty. This basic fact is that all of us including the scientists and the philosophers are unavoidably stuck with gravitational force to this mass of floating earth, which is only a small particle in the scheme of the universe. We shall therefore find that this basic fact alone can give us sufficient evidence to realise that our knowledge, which we have acquired with the help of our sense organs is limited to this earth only. We can now come to a safe conclusion that our mundane knowledge cannot go beyond this limit. No doubt our scientists with the help of their powerful telescopes are able to form a rough idea of the stars and planets, which they can know only as visual phenomena. But this is all they can do so far as the things that lie beyond our earth are concerned. None of them has reached as yet the nearest planet although they are now planning to build space ships to go there. Even if they can go there, their knowledge about the rest of the universe will not in any way be improved appreciably, because they tell us that the countless numbers of distant stars are so far from us that it will take them thousands of years to reach there even if they travel with a speed of about 1, 86,000 miles per second.

But we know for a fact that it is utterly impossible for our physical bodies to travel with all our flesh, blood, bones, brains and sinews intact with a speed of about 1,86,000 miles per second. Even if we could travel with such fantastic speed it would take thousands of years to reach one of the distant stars. Furthermore we know that the size of these stars is so great that thousands of years would have to be spent to survey one star completely. It is now clear that it is absolutely impossible for us to get first hand knowledge of the nature of millions of such stars in the universe by physical means. We can now definitely say that the mastery over physical force cannot by any means help us to understand completely the phenomena of the wide universe in which our earth is floating like a very fine dust-particle compared to the enormous size of galaxies which are countless in number.

Therefore our scientists and the philosophers, the foremost leaders of thought and learning, will have to admit that their know-

ledge about the things in the universe is very insignificant or almost nil. Even then the sum total of our knowledge about the phenomena which are within our reach is not direct or real or absolute as it based on an "awareness" of differential sensory stimuli.

Now after having dispelled our preconceived notions and prejudices let us go ahead and study the supra-mundane knowledge of Gotama Buddha. We shall find that if an insignificant event such as the drop of an apple from an apple tree on to the ground could become a subject of interest to a brilliant genius like Newton to visualise this common natural physical happening as a serious subject that needed profound study and to eventually lay the foundation stones for building the mighty physical science, it is no wonder that the ever present ills of life such as old age, sickness and death should become a subject of interest to an extraordinarily gifted genius like prince Siddhattha. Just as the fall of an apple from a higher to a lower place happened to be the main cause for the appearance of the magnificent intellectual edifice in the form of modern physical science, so also the sight of the ordinary ills of human beings was the main cause for the discovery of supramundane knowledge by prince Siddhattha. The only difference between modern science and the super-science of Gotama Buddha is that the former is the beginning whereas the latter is the end.

At the age of 29 he made a really manly determination that he would by all means search for the required solution to the problems of life. He underwent an intensive course of training for 6 years under different teachers and finding that pure reason, logical thinking, philosophic imagination, ordinary meditations, asceticism and other known methods could not help him to understand the true nature of life, he finally resorted to concentration of mind to one-pointedness with strong determination that he would keep on concentrating until he found the solutions he wanted. At last he succeeded in harnessing and developing his potential psychic powers to the highest stage by meditation and attained his unique supra-mundane knowledge. He then discovered the phenomena of life completely. In the light of His supramundane knowledge or insight or enlightenment He found the physical and psychical phenomena as they really are.

We can get an idea of His mighty supramundane knowledge if we closely study His superpsychology that deals completely with mental process.

He revealed all His various basic discoveries in His discourses which were delivered by Him for 45 years. He left for us a complete theoretical and practical course for the attainment of supramundane knowledge. He did not keep back any "secret doctrines" for some favoured initiate. In fact His main object of acquiring the highest grade of supramundane knowledge was not only for His good but also for the good of all.

Before the attainment of supramundane knowledge, prince Siddhattha used his developed psychic powers in the same way as we are using our artificially generated electronic waves in radio communications. His developed psychic powers or energised mental forces radiated powerful thought-waves all over the universe and with the help of these energised thought-waves he could find all living beings in various forms of existence. He found that there are 31 planes of life, some living beings with physical bodies only and some with mental process only. He discovered an astounding phenomenon governing these celestial beings, *i.e.*, their life term is very long but they are also subject to the natural process of death like human and other living beings. He then realised the extent of the nature of death which is inherent even in the god-like beings in the higher celestial worlds. This fresh knowledge about the extent of death gave an added encouragement to find out all the more the needed remedy to cure this disease of death. But the developed or energised psychic powers could not help him to find the method to stop the process of life in 31 planes of existence.

He discovered it only when He attained His unique supramundane knowledge, which is higher than the energised psychic powers. Supramundane knowledge or insight or enlightenment is the direct penetrative realisation of the phenomenon of life by actual personal experience. Prince Siddhattha discovered the physical and the psychical phenomena and their causal relations. He also discovered that the process of arising and vanishing of physical and psychical phenomena momentarily and causally is the main cause for the manifestations of the universe in various forms of existence.

When he saw the things as they really are, he discovered the hindrances and delusions creating the problems of life and when these hindrances and delusions disappeared completely from him, he enjoyed transcendental happiness. He then had a new outlook on life. The deceptive world that we find through our sense perceptions had given way to Nibbāna of which He said: 'No measuring is there of him who has disappeared, whereby one might know of him that he is not; when all qualities are removed, all modes of speech are removed also' (Sutta Nipāta 1076). That is to say, words cannot describe the unconditioned. So of this Nibbāna we can only say as the Buddha said, that it is Supreme Happiness, that it is everlasting, in the sense that it is outside time itself, and that it is unconditioned. It was this that was realised by the Buddhas and Arahats of former times. Gotama Buddha therefore taught us that there are two kinds of happiness. The first one is mundane that is associated with sense desires, feelings, emotions, craving and grasping. Such happiness is only momentary and not real at all. It is only a gilded misery like the bait of the fishing hook. The other is the transcendental type that emerges on the realisation of the phenomena of life by a systematic course of Buddhist meditation. The momentary mundane happiness will be nothing compared with the transcendental type.

Now we are in position to study with open mind the nature of supramundane knowledge of Gotama Buddha. Since, however, we have not yet discovered by ourselves the wonders of potential psychic powers we may not be able fully to appreciate their possibilities. Nevertheless we can get an idea of them if we compare them with physical force latent in various material resources. We know that as a result of continuous and intensive research the hidden power of physical force was discovered, and through being able to control it by means of ingenious devices we can make good use of it in various ways to help us to live a better life. At the same time we all know the wonders of certain physical waves, which travel with a speed of about 186,000 miles per second. Like physical waves the thought-waves also travel but they travel with much higher speed. If we just think for a moment about a particular star our thought-waves reach there almost instantaneously although it will take thou-

sands of years for the swiftest physical waves to travel that distance. The difference in speed between thought-waves and physical waves is immeasurable. But just like a blind, deaf and dumb person, the ordinary thought-waves radiated by undeveloped mental process have no power to get first hand knowledge of the particular star in question.

We shall now study the nature of energised thought-waves or psychic powers generated by developed mental process and if we take physical science as an analogy we can appreciate the possibilities of such hidden phenomena. It is a known fact that the advancement of physical science is greatly due to the discoveries of Maxwell, Faraday, and Einstein and it is also a known fact that at bottom of everything in electricity and radio is a field. When something occurs at one point in space because something else happened at another point with no visible means by which the "cause" can be related to the "effect" we say that the two events are connected by a field. This wonderful phenomenon, which is apparent in radio communications can help us to realise the possibilities of many things which we have not found as yet. As a matter of fact all of us have latent psychic powers and it is up to us to try and develop them by proper methods to realise their possibilities. Certain psychic powers manifest as intuition, that is attained by one who deeply concentrates his mind on a particular subject. Wonders of even a flash of such intuition will be appreciated by studying the biography of Albert Einstein, the foremost scientist, who shaped the course of scientific thought and research to an extent that nobody before his time could touch. He told us that he had discovered his theory of relativity in the light of intuition and not with the help of pure reason and logical thinking. That kind of intuition is somewhat akin to developed psychic powers. Just like physical waves, the thought waves also radiate in quanta of thought-moments with much higher fre-

quency than that of physical waves. The Buddhist psychology teaches us that a trillion thought-moments arise and vanish in a finger-snap or split-second whereas the frequency of physical quanta is stated to have been seventeen times slower than that of a thought moment. Like the physical field the mental process also has a mental field and Gotama Buddha attained his psychic powers with the help of the mental field. We also know that telepathy or mental communication will not be possible if there is no mental field.

Psychologists are beginning to realise that all our activities including wonderful achievements by ourstanding personalities are the manifestations of nothing more than the mental process. Men who work with their heads and men who work with their hands must alike depend on their efficient mental process, which is, without any doubt, the driving force that keeps us going. The science that studies mental process is gradually gaining ground and is now recognised as an essential study connected with all human activities. Psychology has been so extensively applied in several institutions and organisations that "psychological effect" has become a common expression everywhere.

We are on the threshold of a new era, when psychic powers will be properly understood and extensively utilized effectively for the good of mankind and I would even venture to predict that side by side with the learned Buddhist scholars our psychologists, scientists and the philosophers will have to play the part of the leaders of the forthcoming movement to usher in the new era.

To the psychologists and scientists, the Buddha Dhamma can give a reasoned morality and a reason for morality, and the necessary guidance to understand their findings and to help them to use these findings both efficiently and ethically, in the highest sense.



"I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine; for in respect of the truths, Ānanda, the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who keeps something back."

*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*



# THE MESSAGE OF GOTAMA BUDDHA

*U Ba Htu, B.J.S. (Retd.)*

Gotama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was born in the year 624 B.C. on the borders of what is now Nepal in Oudh Province.

In point of age, therefore, most other religious systems are young when compared with this venerable religion. After 25 centuries of its noble dispensation, Buddhism today surpasses in the number of its adherents and the area of its acceptance, any other form of religion.

In fact more than one-third of mankind daily repeat the formula 'I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha'. Forests of flowers are daily laid before the images of the Buddha and upon his stainless shrines by fervent devotees in exaltation of the sterling attributes of His Buddhahood, the attributes which He had perfected in millions of the past world Kappas.\*

The embryo Buddha had the necessary qualifications and accomplishments to attain Nibbāna millions of Kappas back when he was hermit Sumedha but, actuated solely by the desire to show light to humanity which was bound to the ever-revolving wheel of Saṃsāra, he took upon himself the vow to become a Buddha. Having voluntarily taken the awesome vow, the vow which could not be fulfilled by a feeble, vacillating mind, but only by a firm, resolute and a lofty one, he started building up the ten "Pāramitās" or Perfections and in the course of their fulfilment throughout the slow and tedious round of millions of World Kappas he inflicted upon himself terrible austerities and there was no sacrifice that he did not make or suffering that he did not willingly undergo. Having gone through those vicissitudes for innumerable World Kappas, He attained Enlightenment, Supreme Knowledge and Wisdom and thus finally blossomed forth as the Omniscient Buddha incomparable in glory and unrivalled in wisdom. The past, present and future opened out before Him and there remained nothing hidden from His intuitional vision.

The Omniscient Buddha had shed all traces of Kilesas *i.e.* moral filth and corruptions, and had thereby become immaculately clean in his thoughts, words and actions. Having thus purified his mind, he remained ever serene, composed and clear and imbued with the highest form of loving-kindness and compassion for all living creatures. In an enthusiastic outburst in praise of the Buddha an eminent scholar of Buddhism writes:—

'There was never an occasion where the Buddha flamed forth in anger, never an incident when an unkind word escaped his lips. He had vast tolerance for His kind. In short throughout the canonical works of Buddhism there is no record of a single act or word by the Buddha which mars the perfect purity and tenderness of His mind.'

The Dhamma enunciated 2500 years ago by the Buddha has stood the test of time and up to this day it has naught to fear from the advance of science in any way. In matters where science still fumbles, the Buddha had declared 'Sabbe Saṅkhārā Aniccā'. 'All compounded things both corporeal and incorporeal are impermanent.'

The first principle that life is impermanent is comprehensive in the sense that it comprises both animate and inanimate objects. The Buddha says 'In this phenomenal world nothing stays and everything moves incessantly towards disintegration and destruction and when the contributory causes for its existence are exhausted it entirely ceases to exist.' When an ardent disciple of the Buddha reaches that stage and sees that incessant changes are taking place in the "Dhātu" of mind and matter uncontrolled by any outside agency and that these Dhātu are simply affirming their intrinsic characteristics, then there arises in him a poise, a calmness, a serenity of mind which makes life all the more pleasant and refreshing.

The second principle that life is suffering is apparent only to a person who is not content with the superficialities of life but delves deep beyond the surface of things in general. It becomes clear to such an ardent follower of the Buddha that the sum total of life consists of a round of pains and pleasures—ups and downs only, and that it is commonly the lot of man to suffer the aches of life, the stings of love and loss, the fiery fever and the agony of abominable diseases. This eternal law of Karma may be compared to the fixed arithmetic of the universe. There is no 'Being' to show favour or frown to anyone but good for good, and ill for ill is the inexorable rule of nature.

Therefore the Buddhist exerts himself to perform meritorious deeds in this life with the belief that goes to the core of his heart that there will be as good a then as now. We come to the third doctrine of Buddhist selflessness or Non-Egoism. The Buddha says

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\* Kappa : An æon ; a cycle ; an inconceivably long space of time.

there is no self in life. We can prove the truth of this doctrine of selflessness by relating it to present day conditions. It must be admitted by all thinking men that the excessive display of self or egoism by individuals as well as by nations is the root of the world's unhappiness today. To be highly egoistic is to be like a huge creature that has grown no eyes. It is blind to the needs and reality of other persons. Self or egoism does not exist long by itself. It gives birth to an undesirable twin known as "Pride and Prestige". We suppose that the world did not need two wars in one generation to become aware of the vacuity and the transitoriness of wealth, power, pride and prestige.

Two world wars taught the most secure and the most arrogant of us that if wealth, power, pride and prestige are all we care for, they can vanish in no time.

If we earnestly desire for peace however urgent things may seem, a great mental renaissance must precede any effectual reorganization of the world. A change in the minds of men must be made by adopting the universal principle of *Mettā*, stainless unbounded loving-kindness and compassion for all living creatures as preached by the Buddha. In the all-pervading glow of the Buddha's compassion and loving-kindness, there are no distinctions of castes or creeds, high or low, pure or vulgar, friend or foe, but he sees them as being a combination of mind and matter only and as such they equally form objects of His great compassion. The Buddha's compassion is not confined to human beings only but extends to lower forms of life as well; thus the compassion of the Buddha knows no bounds. In short when practised to the right degree by any person, the potential qualities of *Mettā* rise above all natural and artificial barriers. The powers of *Mettā* are unique. It is found to be the most effective weapon to disarm hate, suspicion and distrust. Reactions to *Mettā* are immediate and far-flung. Its reciprocity among human beings is marvellous and it is common knowledge that even the lower animals reciprocate the sentiment of our love and tenderness for them.

The Buddha enjoins us to send out thoughts of love not only to beings who are on amicable terms with us but also to our enemies as well, so that they may be free from animosity, from want, from cares and anxieties and that they may enjoy peace and happiness as we all wish to.

We must say that the world is suffering from a terrible malady. It is heaving for

breath with the greatest effort and pain. It is time for the world physicians to decide if they will prescribe the right medicine for the burning fever to subside, or whether they will prescribe the usual time-honoured specific, the application of which this time would surely aggravate the disease and bring about a condition of raving madness. It is not yet too late, nor beyond the state of correction. Materialism with its multitudinous glamour and deceptions gives fuel to the ever-burning flames of greed, pride and delusion, in Pāli known as *Taṇhā*, *Māṇa*, *Diṭṭhi*. Ways and means should be sought for peaceful co-existence of the peoples of the world, and in so doing the unfailing specific prescribed by Gotama Buddha, the greatest physician the world has ever known, should be adopted by all nations irrespective of their ideologies. This unfailing specific for curing human ills and averting disastrous upheavals is *Mettā* and *Mettā* alone. The Buddha practised it during his life time and through it tamed and won over His enemies.

The old reformers of the middle ages dreamed of creating Utopias on earth, but history records that they lacked the wherewithal to translate their ideals into practice. Modern science has made tremendous advances in all fields of human activity and latest discoveries show that many human needs can be drawn from the air we breathe. With the rapid control of the elements by man it will not be long before he will be able to turn a desert into a garden. The twentieth century man takes pride in his civilization both cultural and material, and it would be a mere negation of that civilization if the nations were again to resort to arms as a means of solving the various outstanding issues amongst them, the use of which on two previous occasions has left the world with more intricate problems for solution. The wounds and scars of the two wars still remain, thus reminding the peoples of the nature of atrocities and the extent of damage done both physically and mentally. Wars should therefore be avoided under all circumstances. With the powerful weapon of science in hand it appears to us that great and rare opportunities lie before the leaders of thought and leaders of nations to do a distinct and single service in the cause of humanity by adopting Gotama Buddha's doctrine of *Mettā* as their yardstick for solving problems in the highest level of international relations. Then they will have won not only immortal fame but also the fervent gratitude of millions of people of the world and there will surely be a long and lasting peace.

# THE ESSENTIALS OF BUDDHISM

## RIGHT VIEWS

### THE NECESSITY OF RIGHT UNDERSTANDING

*U Hla Maung, B.A., B.E.S. (Retd).*

“ For, my friend, in this very body, six feet in length, with its sense impressions and its thoughts and ideas, I do declare to you, are the world, and the origin of the world, the ceasing of the world, and likewise the Way that leads to the ceasing thereof. ”

—(*Anguttara-Nikāya, Catukka-pathama Paṇṇāsaka, Rohita-vagga.*)

In the profound words of this declaration lie the essentials of Buddhist philosophy. A right approach and a right understanding is required to see the truth in and behind these essentials. Buddhism is a regulated way of life grounded on a sane and mellow philosophy which keeps itself within the bounds of reason and probability and which leaves certain subjects as unprofitable, since they are not conducive to the realisation of Nibbāna.

It insists on starting with Right Views. One should not get into the wrong train if one wants to reach one's destination. If Truth—man's final goal and good—be the destination we should sit in the carriage of Morality. Then, through continuous progress from station to station our train should carry us to our destination. To all reasoning people life must appear as a journey, the end of which must depend on how we set about it, theoretically and practically.

If we regard Truth and Wisdom as our highest good and goal, then we ought to assume that our starting point is something opposite, that is to say, our starting point is ignorance. Yes, ignorance or non-appreciation of the Four Noble Truths. Also an unawareness of the need for following the Eightfold Noble Path. To get out of the mesh of Ignorance and misleading worldly knowledge, Right Views are essential. Of course, Right Views will be strangers to people without moral steadfastness, and Wisdom will not come to those who are not sobered down by morality and tranquilised by integration of thought or mind.

To taste the full flavour of Buddhist wisdom, one should convince oneself of Rebirth as a view which is not only within the bounds

of probability and reason but also as a view<sup>9</sup> right and sound.

As against Rebirth there is the belief in only a single terrestrial life without any repetition. Whether this belief flows from a belief in God as arbiter or in pure chance as an alternative, it is a case of arbitrariness. It offends the sense of evolution, and we can see no redeemable reason in either of the alternatives. All the great religions of the world preach of a life hereafter, either in bliss or in misery. But of a life “before”, these religions, except Buddhism, conveniently, fancifully and egoistically place it in the “breath” of a Creator. Buddhism takes a midway position and says there is for each life a kind of natural and formative beginning provided by a discernable cause, and also that there is a very long, but indefinable, period of continuity of life in flux and change. It refuses to fix the duration in definite terms and says there have been countless worlds and existences for each life. Therein it sees life's enormity of flux and change—an enormity spelling sorrow.

We shall not go into the undeniable fact that the tradition of life after life or rebirth formed a part of the long-standing beliefs of all ancient races until the one life theory, somehow or other, was grafted upon the believers of Western theology or of Mechanical Materialism. The two great Eastern religions have nurtured the tradition of rebirth, which is as old as the human race itself. There is nothing unnatural or unscientific about rebirth. It is not a mere superstition with us but a belief founded on conviction. Our Arahats, whose minds can reach and abide in the higher planes of consciousness, can recall their many previous births distinctly. Our system of mental development which enables Arahats to visualize their rebirths is nearly a closed book to the Western mind which fights shy of giving up the mundane or of renouncing false and flattering views of “culture” and “progress.”

Buddhism stands or falls on the actuality of rebirth. In fact the very first utterance made by the Buddha at the supreme moment of gaining Enlightenment at the foot of the Bodhi tree was a paean of triumph over

rebirth. Sir Edwin Arnold in "The Light of Asia" has expressed this memorable utterance in beautiful poetic language, which, owing to its ornamentation, is not a literal translation. But the main ingredients are there.

"Many a house of life  
Hath held me—seeking ever him who  
wrought  
These prisons of the senses, sorrow-  
fraught ;  
Sore way my ceaseless strife !  
But now,  
Thou builder of the Tabernacle—Thou !  
I know Thee ! Never shalt thou build  
again  
These walls of pain,  
Nor raise the roof-trees of deceits, nor lay  
Fresh rafters on the clay ;  
Broken Thy house is, and the ridge-pole  
split !  
Delusion fashioned it !  
Safe pass I thence—deliverance to  
obtain."

The Buddha's discourse was to a group of five ascetic truth-seekers from whom He had parted some time before He had attained to Buddhahood. The first discourse was on the Four Noble Truths.

After expounding these truths the Buddha again declared His joy of deliverance from rebirth in these words :

"Thus the fruit of knowledge and vision  
arose in me ;  
Unshakeable and sure is the deliverance  
of my mind ;  
This is my last birth.

There is no more Becoming for me". From these it is evident that rebirth and its cessation are the beginning and end of the Buddha's teaching. Cessation from rebirth depends upon taking the Right View that life, by the very nature of its repetition is suffering. It also depends upon treading the Noble Eightfold Path towards mental equanimity, tranquillity and the ultimate peace of no more birth.

Rebirth may take place in any one of thirty-one planes according to the quality and value of one's previous existences, that is to say, on the quality of thoughts and deeds in the preceding series of persons' life.

The following stanza from "Theragāthā" will be helpful to the understanding of the nature and course of rebirth in the various planes and the attendant joy felt by an Arahāt

on his release from the field of Becoming or Saṃsāra.

"Through countless ages I have been  
devoted to the body,  
This is the last of them as this living con-  
junction,  
The round of rebirth and death ; there  
is now no more coming to be of it.  
In the round of existence, I came to the  
hell-world.  
Again and again I came to the realm of  
the shades,  
In suffering born from the wombs of  
animals of various kinds I lived for  
long.  
A man I became, too, very well pleased ;  
To the heaven world I came now and  
again ;  
To the form-worlds, to the formless  
worlds ;  
To the realm of neither perception nor  
non-perception ;  
All Becoming well seen as without  
substance, put together, unstable  
and changeable.  
Having seen this complete Becoming of  
myself, heedful, I have attained  
Peace !" \*

How strikingly the stanza brings out the truth that this universe subsists and maintains itself as a process of continuous Becoming. As each little atom is a miniature solar-system each life is also the mirror of the universe of Becoming. Such thought and insight may be staggering but that which is of the truth of nature must be holy.

The Buddhist's fear of Becoming is the greater in degree as the greater grows his mature realisation of life's tribulation in the ocean of Saṃsāra. Is such fear to be lightly dismissed as pessimism ? On the contrary it represents the most courageous facing of a staring and staggering truth. Equally courageous and high-minded is the optimistic conviction that one by one's own effort, along the way pointed out by the Buddha, will be able to declare "there will be no more birth for me". Well, this of course, is possible because, as the Arahāt in the closing lines of the above stanza has said :

All Becoming is well seen to be without  
substance, a putting together, which  
is unstable and changeable.

The Buddhist belief in the formation and existence of life on 31 planes should not be

regarded as merely mythical or mystical. We are more and more frequently hearing talk of life on Mars and other planets in scientific circles. Physicists of the present day have been preoccupied with pursuing the atom, both in its theoretical and practical aspects, and they have now discovered, in addition to the electron and all its associates, what they call "the Ghost of the atom." On the other hand, Buddhism has been pursuing the 'mental' atom, as it were at the expense of the 'material' atom for 2,500 years, and has thus attained the highest degree of knowledge of life and mind.

Take also into consideration the ancient Greek theory of the atom, slightly different from ours. For example, the teaching of Epicurus (341-270 B.C.) He taught that atoms in perpetual motion were always giving rise to new worlds and these were always tending towards dissolution and towards a series of creations. Epicurus did not accept the doctrine of inevitable fate and he did not also believe in divine intervention in the universe. What is remarkable is that he rejected fatalism (as we Buddhists do), while accepting the atomic views of his predecessors. He was able to explain that fatalism (which he believed to be as deadly to man's true welfare as current superstition) was not a necessary consequence of his atomic theory. In the movements of the atoms he introduced a sudden change in direction which rendered their aggregation easier and thus the law of destiny was broken. This theory of the "free" action of electrons in certain cases (accepted in modern physics) is on a par—it must be emphasised—with our Buddhist Doctrine that the course of Kamma can be changed and broken.

Our Buddhist views and the almost contemporaneous views of the great Greek minds are not so crude as they may seem on a superficial examination and some of these ancient views show a remarkable similarity to the theories of a number of physicists and astronomers, as admitted by those who have made a comparative study of the subject.

More than one scientist has deplored the fact that the atomic theory of the ancients did not receive general acceptance. This was due to the influence of Aristotle, whose philosophy was largely responsible for influencing European thought for more than a thousand years, and whose dominance delayed the progress of science in many ways. The atom in fact remained almost forgotten

in Europe until the 19th century when the theory came back to life, and the atomic theory, which now fixes our horizons, was placed on a sound basis. Much earlier than Epicurus, Democritus maintained that the atom was divisible; this squares with the splitting of the atom at the present day. Buddhism, in its turn, maintains that the atom is divisible until the atom is no more conceivable as atom but as a principle of Energy (Dhātu) expressing itself in the form or guise of solid-heat-gas-liquid. These four "Dhātu" constituents are always present in every form of matter. This represents a difference of idiom between the ancient Buddhist and the modern view of matter.

Had not Aristotle shut out the atom from the European mind for so long and had Europe given study to the mental atomism of India a thousand years ago or earlier, the belief in rebirth on thirty-one planes might now be as strong in the West as in the East.

By way of an analogy I should like to point out how two eminent British scientists have been thinking and speaking of the universe in terms of forty-one shelves. This is what Professor Blackett, F.R.S., has to say about it in his talk about different worlds in continuation of the talk given by Sir William Bragg, O.M., F.R.S.

"Many speakers in this series of talks have referred to the admirable idea of the late Sir William Bragg of demonstrating the different orders of size in the world by means of a row of shelves, each shelf representing a magnitude of ten times smaller than the next above. It has been left to me in this talk to raise the question: 'Is there a lowest shelf, or do the shelves continue downwards to smaller and smaller sizes indefinitely?' And if one asks this question, one can hardly avoid asking the closely related one: 'Is there a top shelf or do the shelves go on upward, representing larger and larger things indefinitely?' No one is quite sure of the answer to these two questions, but I will risk being wrong by saying that there probably is both a top and a bottom shelf.

"What are the objects on the lowest shelf? You have already heard about most of them from Professor

Cockroft and from Dr. Allibone. The fundamental particles—electrons, protons, neutrons—out of which the physical world around us is made, all seem to be rather less than one millionth of a millionth of a centimeter in size. They thus belong to the thirteenth shelf down. Still smaller particles may perhaps some day be discovered. But at the present time it looks as if the size of these electrons and protons is the smallest size that can exist at all. In some obscure way, when one gets down to the size of an electron, one has got down to the smallest size that has any meaning.

Now comes the question of 'How large is the Universe?' The upper shelf (if it exists) can contain only one object, the largest object that it is possible to imagine, and that is the Universe itself! We are not sure how large the Universe is. But it is clearly larger than the distance of the farthest things we can see. Some nebulae, clusters of many millions of stars, have been proved to be about one hundred million light years, that is, one hundred million million, million,

million centimeters distant from the earth. It is possible that the Universe is at least ten times larger than this.

Hence we have twenty-seven shelves up, which with the thirteen down and the one in the middle makes forty-one shelves."

The lesson of the analogy is that the Buddhist view of life on thirty-one planes, according to grades of mind, is a discernable and accepted fact when mental science is developed in the Eastern way.

We feel that, at this stage, we should make a pause in our exposition of "Right Views", We have discussed rebirth in the Universe of "Becoming" and shown that rebirth goes on in thirty-one planes. Rebirth has been presented as Sorrow and the cessation of rebirth as Bliss. The cessation of rebirth depends upon the right understanding of the Four Noble Truths which become clearer and clearer as we make the right effort to tread the Eightfold Noble Path until it becomes complete realisation. A clear understanding of Kamma and the causal laws of origination of birth will comprise, with other Right Views, the Essentials of Buddhism.

ဗုဒ္ဓ ဓမ္မ လောက

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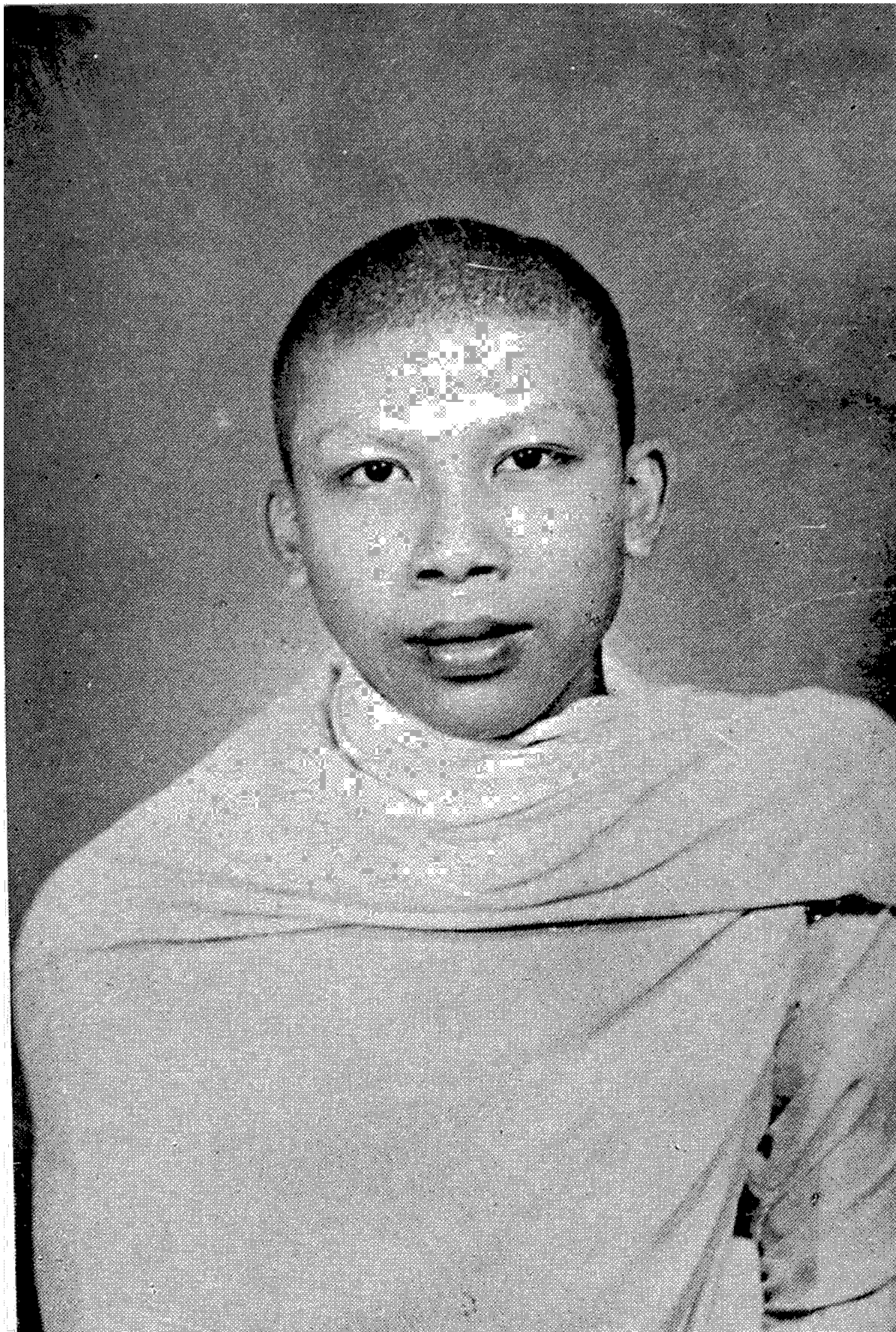
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Bhikkhu Preah Korou Viriyamuni (Thach-Prang) Indapañño.

## NOTES AND NEWS

# Buddhism in Cambodia

Bhikkhu Preah Korou Viriyamuni (Thach-Prang) Indappañño.

Of all the countries of Asia where Buddhism flourishes, Cambodia is one of the most prominent. Though the country is small and the population is only a few millions, Cambodia has a very well-organised Sangha (Order of Monks).

Watered by the river Mekong which flows right through the country, Cambodia is bounded on the North and West by Thailand and on the Southwest by the Gulf of Siam. Phnom-Penh, the capital city and seat of the Royal Government, has a population of about five hundred thousand. As most of the countries of Asia, it is an agricultural country, and its chief exports are rice, timber, cotton and dried fish.

The Sangha of Cambodia is in two Nikāyas (sections which both follow the pristine Buddhism of the Pāli Canon) namely, Mahānikāya \* and Dhammayutta Nikāya. In the former Nikāya there are more than two thousand six hundred monasteries whereas in the latter there are only about ninety.

According to the latest census there are more than eighty thousand bhikkhus and sāmaṇeras in the country. The Dhammayutta Nikāya was introduced from Thailand, and this body consists of about two thousand bhikkhus and sāmaṇeras. The Mahānikāya claims to be more advanced in Pariyatti Sāsana (the learnig of the Doctrine).

All the bhikkhus and sāmaṇeras in the Mahānikāya are under the leadership of His Holiness Samdach Preah Mahā-Sumedhādhipati (C.N.) Jotaññāno, the Sangharājā of Cambodia, who presides over the huge temple of "Wat Unnalom" in the capital city. Although His Holiness is now more than seventy years old, he devotes a great deal of his time every day to his duties pertaining to the Sāsana. He has been thrice to Burma to participate in the deliberations of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā which was held at the great sacred cave in Rangoon from May 1954 to May 1956 C.E. In appreciation of his valuable contributions towards

the Sangāyanā in particular and to the Sāsana in general, the Government of the Union of Burma conferred on him the title of "Abhidhajamahāraṭṭhaguru", the highest ecclesiastical title in Burma, in May of this year.

Each monastery in Cambodia has its own Dhammavinaya and Pāli classes. As do all devout Buddhists, Cambodians visit the temples on Uposatha (Fast) Days to take the Precepts and listen to discourses on the Dhamma.

### CHURCH AND STATE

It is necessary for every layman to undergo a training in the study of the Vinaya Rules, for at least three or four months before taking ordination, and any layman who seeks ordination either as a samanera or bhikkhu must have a testimonial from a Government official that he bears a good character. In Cambodia it is not possible for anyone who has committed a serious crime to enter the Sangha. After taking the ordination, a new bhikkhu is given by his preceptor an identity card or certificate which bears the name of his preceptor, the candidate's name in the Order, and the time, date and place of his ordination. It is the duty of every bhikkhu or sāmaṇera to carry this card with him wherever he goes. If a bhikkhu is found to be doing something that should not be done by him, a policeman asks for his card and interrogates him. He is then, in the case of a minor misdemeanour, sent to his preceptor who admonishes him to refrain from doing anything that is detrimental to the sāsana in the future. For these reasons an immoral bhikkhu or sāmaṇera is almost unheard of in Cambodia.

Whenever bhikkhus or sāmaṇeras move about they always wear their robes properly. They are never to be found smoking in the streets or in public. It is very rare that one comes across a bhikkhu who roams about the town buying things or visiting football

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\* Not to be confused with the so-called 'Mahāyāna Buddhism'.



matches, cinemas or theatre houses. Bhikkhus in Cambodia devote a great deal of their time to the study and practice of the Dhamma, for they realise they have entered the Order for this and no other purpose. A strong public opinion also acts as a deterrent to those who might break the Vinaya Rules.

In every province or district there is a Mahāthera who is an authority on the Vinaya rules. If any dispute arises between bhikkhus or monasteries, this Mahāthera usually acts as an arbitrator. If the dispute is beyond his power to settle, he forwards the case to the Minister of Religious Affairs who has a number of competent and learned Mahātheras to assist him in such matters. The case goes before the Sangharājā only when all the previous attempts at settlement fail.

At present there are over 300 Pāli Elementary Schools in Cambodia. The course is for three years and is divided as follows:—

1st. year : Pāli Grammar.

2nd. year : Translations of Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā (Pubbabhāga, Dutiyabhāga, Tatiyabhāga and Catutthabhāga).

3rd. year : Translations of Dhammapadatthakātha (Pañcamabhāga, Chatthamabhāga, Sattamabhāga and Atthamabhāga).

Practice in delivering discourses on the Dhamma in Cambodian.

Practice in relating stories from the Dhammapada Commentary, Vinaya, Dictation in Cambodian, Arithmetic.

The Graduate of a Pāli Elementary School is offered the title of "Mahā Pariyatti Pathamavijjā" by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

The Pāli Superior School, the highest seat of Buddhist learning in Cambodia, is situated close to the Royal Palace in the heart of Phnom-Penh. The curriculum is as follows :—

1st. year: Translation of Mangalattadīpanī (4 volumes), Exercises in speaking Pāli Grammar, French, Arithmetic and Sanskrit.

2nd. year : Translation of Visuddhimagga (Pathamabhāga and Dutiyabhāga), History, Geography, Science, Essay writing in Pāli, Pāli Grammar, Geometry, Arithmetic, Sanskrit, Practice in speaking Pāli and French.

3rd. year : Translation of Visuddhimagga (Tatiyabhāga), History, Science, Geography, Geometry, Arithmetic, French, Written essays on Pāli, Sanskrit.

4th. year : Translation of Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī, Explanation of Vinaya, Pātimokkha, Abhidhamma, French, Sanskrit, Arithmetic, History, Geometry, Geography, Science, Hygiene, Written and oral exercises in Pāli.

A Bhikkhu-student after completing his four years' course at this Institution is awarded the title of "Mahā Uttamavijjā." More than one thousand bhikkhus have graduated from the time of its inception in 1933. There are about 600 bhikkhu-students at present. There are also the Royal Library and the Buddhist Institute which were established in 1925 and 1930 respectively. Soon after the establishment of these Institutions a commission composed of the most eminent Mahātheras in the country was formed to compare the Tipiṭaka in existence with that of other countries and revise the whole collection of the Pāli Canon. The Commission was also responsible for translating the Tipiṭaka into Cambodian so that people who did not know Pāli might have an opportunity to study the Dhamma.

Now that Cambodia is able to decide her own destiny there is every reason to believe that the Sāsana will prosper much more than ever before in this scientific age when men no longer profess a faith blindly but take refuge in it only after full reasoning and verification, since the Buddha Dhamma is the only Teaching that allows and encourages independent thinking.

## BURMESE BUDDHIST MISSION TO JAPAN

Many Japanese Buddhists were invited to Burma as observers to the Opening Ceremonies of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā in May 1954 and in December of the same year when the Third Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists was held in Rangoon. Some of them, on observing that Buddhism as it is practised in Burma and other Theravādin countries is in accordance with the Buddha's Word, had the idea that it would be good to introduce the pristine teaching to Japan. As a consequence a mission consisting of 12 young men and a lady was sent to Burma by the Japan Buddhist Federation in May 1955 to study and practise the Dhamma thoroughly. Soon after their arrival the Union Buddha Sāsana Council sponsored the ordination of the youths as sāmaṇeras and later on as Bhikkhus. Meanwhile a Society known as "The Japan Buddha Sāsana Society" was formed with its headquarters at Tokyo for the purpose of introducing and firmly establishing the pure teaching, Theravāda, in Japan.

This Society has such eminent Buddhists as Dr. Benkyo Shiiro, President of the Taisho University, Tokyo, and Vice-president of the Japan Buddhist Federation; Dr. Tokani Sumi of the Aichi University, Nagoya; Mrs. Myosin Iisuka, President of the Kashiwa Kai; and Dr. Chitoku Morikawa, President of the Ryukoku University, as its members.

The Society asked for the co-operation and collaboration of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council in its projects. At the invitation of the Society Ven. U Thittila and Ven. U Nyanuttara were requested by the Council to go on a Dhammadūta tour to Japan in April-May 1956. Reports were received from Japan that the lectures given by these Mahātheras were very much appreciated. It was then planned to establish Dhammadūta Centres in Matsushima, Moji and Ise-shima and in other places later. Ten Burmese Dhammācariya Bhikkhus then underwent an intensive training at the Dhammadūta College, Rangoon, in the language, history and culture of Japan to be able to go on a mission and reside at the new Dhammadūta Centres in Japan.

Bhikkhu Visuddhasaya (formerly Shinya Uchida) is a most active member of the Japan Buddha Sāsana Society.

As requested by the Society in Japan, the Council decided to bear the expenses for the construction of three Pagodas (similar in shape to the World Peace Pagoda at Rangoon) at the Dhammadūta Centres in Japan.

### *Second Japanese Students' Mission*

For the purpose of propagating orthodox Buddhism in Japan, a batch of 17 Japanese students came to Burma in 1957 to study and practise the Buddha-Dhamma here. They have recently been ordained as sāmaṇeras and will soon be given the Higher Ordination as Bhikkhus. They are at present prosecuting their studies in Burmese and in Buddhist literature at the Japanese Dhammadūta Centre in the Jambūdīpa Hostel, near the World Peace Pagoda.

The Union Buddha Sāsana Council decided to donate K 6,00,000/—towards the construction of three Pagodas in Japan, and to depute a Dhammadūta Mission to Japan.

Accordingly a Burmese Buddhist Dhammadūta Mission was sent to Japan in June 1957. The Mission comprised the following Mahātheras :—

- (1) Ven. U Khemācāra, Union Ovād' ācariya, Veḷuvam Monastery, Bahan Quarter, Rangoon (President of the Mission)
- (2) Ven. Aggamahāpaṇḍita U Pandita (Anisakhan Sayadaw)
- (3) Ven. Aggamahāpaṇḍita U Sobhana (Mahāsi Sayadaw)
- (4) Ven. Aggamahāpaṇḍita U Visuddha, Sangha Supreme Council, Kāba Aye, Rangoon (Secretary to the Mission)
- (5) Ven. U Sobhita (Kosaung Sayadaw) of Myingyan
- (6) Ven. U Kheminda, Dhammācariya, one of the Japanese Dhammadūta personnel.

The Mission left Rangoon on the 11th June 1957 and was accompanied by Justice Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon and Wunnakyawhtin U Saing Gyaw, an Executive Officer of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council. The Mission safely arrived at Tokyo the same evening, and at the airport was greeted by the Mayor of Moji, Mayor of Kyoto, various Buddhist organisations and lay devotees. At the airport the venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw administered the Five Precepts to the audience and the Hon'ble Justice Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon read a Message from the Union

Buddha Sāsana Council: While at Tokyo the Mission was busy in receiving guests and discussing with them various problems relating to the propagation of Theravāda Buddhism in Japan.

The Mission visited Moji on the 13th June and was received warmly at the City Hall by the Mayor and the people of Moji. At the meeting, the mayor delivered an address of welcome and in reply the Hon'ble U Chan Htoon spoke of the Dhammadūta work during the past seven years and of the building of a Pagoda and the consecration of a *Sīmā* (Ordination Hall) at Moji. The venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw gave the Five Precepts to the audience and the Mahātheras chanted Mangala Sutta, Mettā sutta and Pubbaṅga Sutta. A Press Conference was held on the same day and the Mission went to the site where the Pagoda was to be constructed at Moji.

On the 14th June a religious ceremony was held at the site where a Pagoda is to be constructed. There the Mayor of Moji delivered an address wherein he mentioned that the site for the construction of the pagoda and the *sīmā* are offered to the Society by the Government, and then dug the first spadeful of sand as a ceremony. Mr. Ichihara, Vice-President of the Society sprinkled some grains of sand which were brought from the bed of the Irrawaddy near Sagaing in Burma. The representative of the Governor of Moji delivered an address of welcome and after that Ven. U Visuddha and the Hon'ble U Chan Htoon dug a spadeful of sand from the pagoda site. Thado Mahā Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon told the audience that very soon there will be seen a beautifully built Pagoda just like that of the World Peace Pagoda in Rangoon, and that people from all parts of the world will have an opportunity to pay homage to the Pagoda thus promoting the Buddha Sāsana. Then school girls recited religious verses and after setting 100 pigeons free, the ceremony came to a close.

At 9 a.m. on the same day, the six Mahātheras consecrated the site for the building of a *sīmā* according to the Vinaya rules.

#### *Buddhist lectures*

The Mission went to the Meeting Hall of the Mainichi Newspaper. The Editor-in-chief gave an address of welcome. Then Mr. Ichihara introduced the members of the Mission to the staff of the Press. The

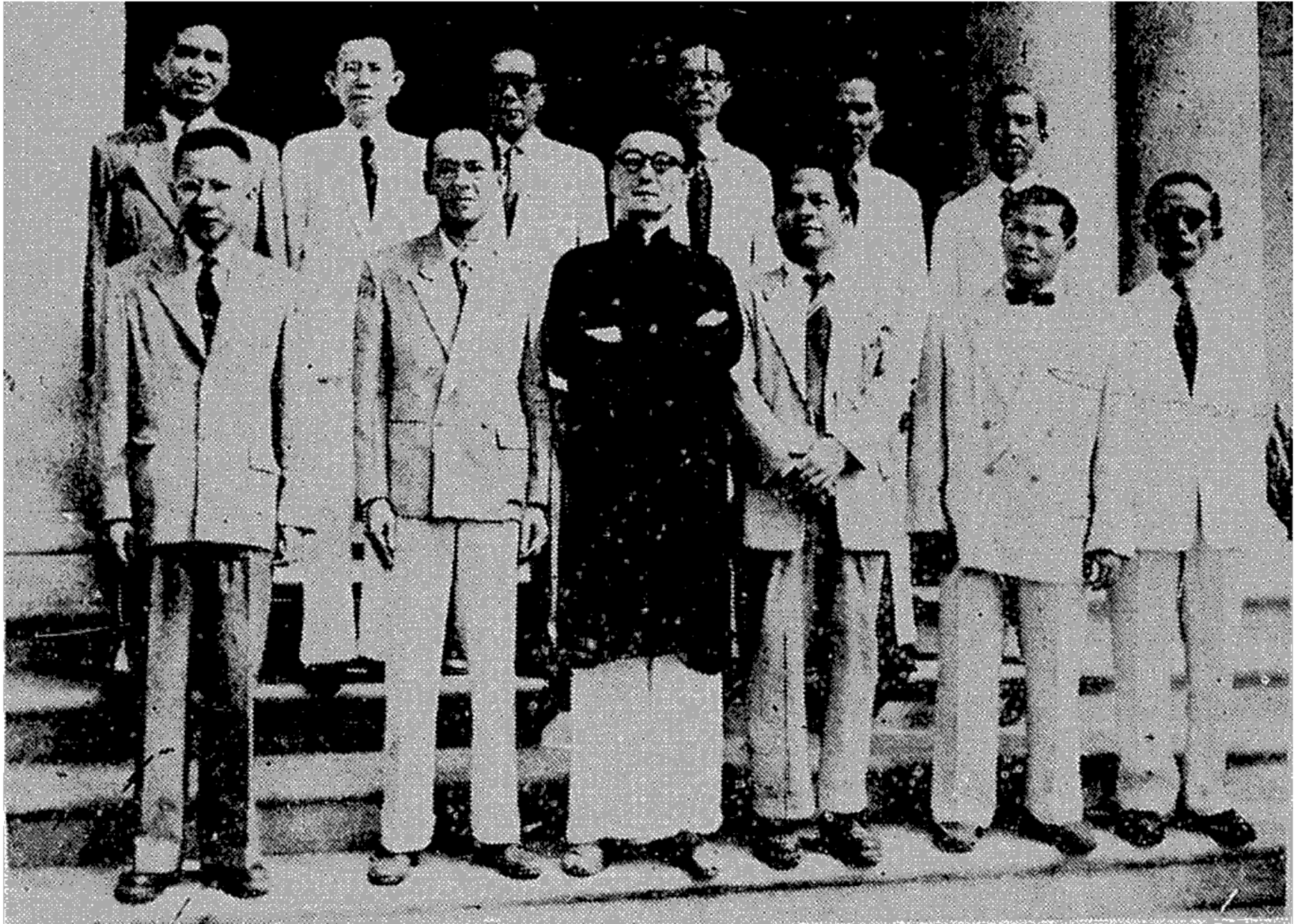
Mayor of Moji and Ven. Visuddhasaya (Japanese monk) described the holding of the Six Great Buddhist Councils and the Dhammadūta projects in Japan. The Mahātheras also told how the Buddha-Sāsana can flourish in Japan with the co-operation and collaboration of the Theravāda Buddhists from Burma. U Chan Htoon then delivered a speech in English wherein he stated that the Teaching of the Buddha is able to bestow Peace on the people of the world, and that the Japanese people who are scientifically advanced, should follow the Buddha's Teaching and work for the prosperity of the Buddha Sāsana.

The Mission visited Kyoto on the 22nd, where they were met by the Mayor of Kyoto and representatives from various religious organisations. The Mayor of Kyoto delivered an address of Welcome. U Chan Htoon in his reply stated the purpose of the Mission and what the projects are for the propagation of orthodox Buddhism in Japan. A Press Conference was held where U Chan Htoon outlined the programme and the purpose of the Mission and also stated that a Pagoda and a *sīmā* will be constructed in Kyoto under the auspices of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council.

On the 23rd, June the Mission went to Yawata by car and then went up the hill where another Dhammadūta Centre is to be established. There a religious ceremony was initiated with the lighting of candles and offering of flowers to the Buddha. Ven. U Visuddhasaya (Japanese monk) spoke at length about the Dhammadūta works in Japan. Justice Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon also stated that the site chosen for the Dhammadūta Centre is an auspicious one and that there are signs indicating that Theravāda, the pure Buddhism, will flourish in Japan. Then the Mission and the lay devotees went up the hill to the *sīmā* site which is about 2 furlongs away from the site on which another World Peace Pagoda is to be constructed in Japan.

The Mahātheras then consecrated the site and the ceremony came to a close at about 4 p.m.

The Mission then visited many other important cities and towns in Japan, met the Heads of various religious Sects, and discussed with many lay devotees the matters relating to the propagation of Buddhism in Japan. The Mission also visited many places of historic and religious interest and returned to Burma on the 2nd of July.



Members of Vietnamese Theravāda Buddhist Association, Saigon. M. Nguyen van Hieu the ardent promoter of the Association is seen in the middle.

## NEW BUDDHIST SOCIETY IN MALAYA

The University of Malaya Buddhist Society  
Dunearn Road Hostel, Singapore- 3.

The University of Malaya Buddhist Society was formed on the 24th, November 1956 by a group of students of the University of Malaya, its aims being :—

1. to promote and propagate Buddhism, and to foster and develop the qualities of Truth, Loving-Kindness and Compassion, in accordance with the practice and teachings of Buddhism ;
2. to encourage friendship and understanding among members irrespective of race and religion ;
3. to sponsor debates, discussion groups, and talks by members and guest-speakers, for the above purposes ;
4. to promote active participation in charitable and welfare work.

The response to the Society was encouraging and it was interesting to note that the composition of the membership very clearly reflected the religious tolerance and the cosmopolitan nature of our population for among the members were Buddhist students of many races, and non-Buddhist students of other religions such as Christianity and Islam.

The present office-bearers of the Society for 1957 were :—

<i>President</i>	Mr. A.F. Wells
<i>Vice-President</i>	Mr. Lim Soon Tee
<i>Hon. General Secretary</i>	Mr. Tan Chye Koong
<i>Assistant Secretary</i>	Mr. Teh Kok Leong
<i>Hon. Treasurer</i>	Mrs. Lim Lian Choo
<i>Committee Members:—</i>	Mr. Ong Yech Chean Huat
	Mr. Goh Keng Leng
	Mr. Tay Yew Seng
	Mr. S. Dhanabalingham.
<i>Auditor</i>	Mr. Chan Hiang Meng.

## VIET-NAM THERAVĀDIN BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

As the result of hard labour for several years and with the ardent support of the devotees, the Vietnamese Theravādin group was able to found an Association under the name of Viet-Nam Theravādin Buddhist Association, which has also been recognised by the Vietnamese Government. The Association is located at Jetavana Vihāra, 610, Phan-Dinh-Phung, Saigon.

The aims and objects of the Association are to open branches all over Viet-Nam and to propagate the Buddha-Dhamma all over the country.

The following is the tentative programme of work drawn by the Association for the propagation of the Buddha-Dhamma in Viet-Nam :

Ordination of Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras,  
Translation of Pāli Suttas into Vietnamese,  
Appointment of lay-instructors,  
Appointment of the Buddhist Youth Organisation,  
Charity and mutual help etc.

A school for Samaneras and Bhikkhus has recently been established. Although the funds of the Association are somewhat meagre to subsidise the teachers and the pupils at present, it is hoped to be able to subsidise them in the future, as the Buddha-Dhamma is propagated and the number of pupils increases.

Some Suttas have already been translated into Vietnamese and they will be given free of charge to the new entrants. Young Buddhists are forming a convenient frame, and they are making periodical contributions to social organisations. The Association is now arranging to provide a school building for the young people in the suburbs of Saigon.

This undertaking has been carried out with voluntary contributions on the part of the members who are mostly of the poorer class. Thanks to their activities, Theravāda Buddhism has become known and appreciated in Viet-Nam over the last two years, and also thanks to the moral support received from the Elders of foreign countries, particularly the Union of Burma, Ceylon and Thailand, the vital elements of our group have been developed.

May the Buddha-Dhamma endure for a great length of time !

### JAPANESE YOUTHS ORDAINED AS BUDDHIST NOVICES

The Sacred Cave near the World Peace Pagoda at Yegu, Rangoon, was the venue of a special religious ceremony on August 4, when 17 Japanese were ordained as Buddhist Novices in the presence of a distinguished gathering.

These 17 young Japanese came to Burma to be trained as Dhamadūtas, Buddhist Missionaries, in order to propagate orthodox Buddhism in Japan, under a project jointly arranged by the Japan Buddha Sāsana Association and the Union Buddha Sāsana Council.

The initiation ceremony was performed by Venerable Sayadaws and witnessed by a large gathering of lay people including Hon'ble Prime Minister U Nu and other Cabinet Ministers.

### BUDDHIST NOVICES HONOURED

On the morning of August 10, the Hon'ble Prime Minister, U Nu, presented certificates and other religious gifts to 10 Buddhist

Novices who passed with distinction the Third Annual Sāmaṇeras' Examination, sponsored in Rangoon by a Committee headed by the Prime Minister.

The ceremony, which was held in the reception pandal in the compound of the Prime Minister's residence, was attended by State Ovād'ācariya Sayadaws including 16 Japanese monks, who were initiated into the Theravāda Buddhist Order on August 4, the Minister for Religious Affairs U Ba Saw and other Cabinet Ministers, the Mayor of Rangoon and representatives of Buddhist Organisations in the city.

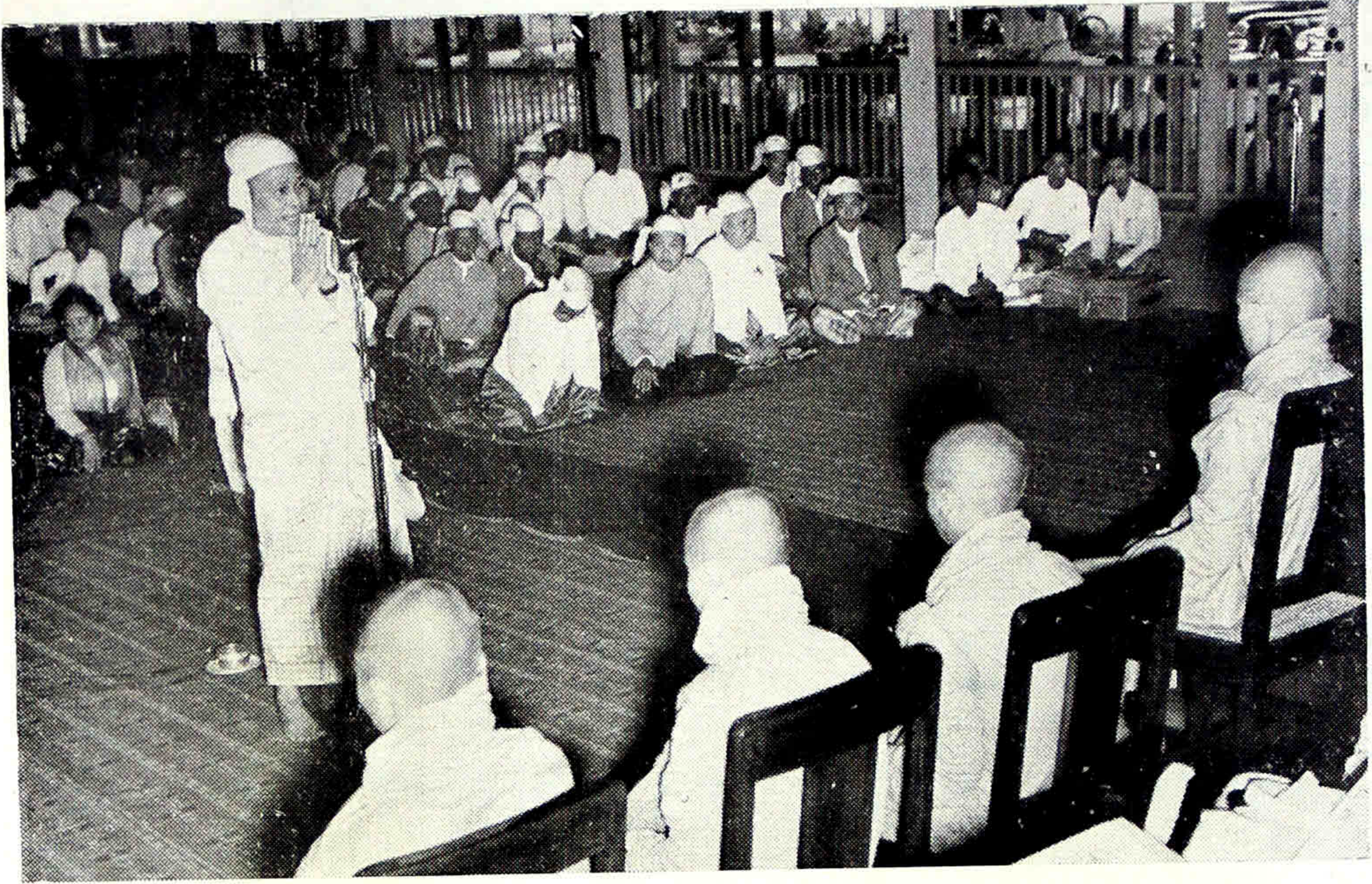
In an address to the Sangha, U Nu said the ceremonial presentation of certificates and gifts to brilliant novices was aimed at encouraging the appearance of more and more such distinguished monks in the country. In future years, he added, such ceremonies would be held on a much more elaborate scale than this. The Government and the Buddhist public, he said, were now doing everything to promote the welfare of the Sangha in independent Burma.



'Again, Vāseṭṭha, if this river Akiravatī were full of water even to the brim, and overflowing. And a man with business on the other side, bound for the other side, making for the other side, should come up, and want to cross over. And he, standing on this bank, should invoke the further bank, and say, "Come hither, O further bank ! come over to this side !"

'Now what think you, Vāseṭṭha ? Would the further bank of the river Akiravatī, by reason of that man's invoking and praying and hoping and praising, come over to this side ?'

*Tevijja Suttanta.*



The Hon'ble Premier U Nu delivering an address at the ceremony of presentation of certificates and other religious gifts to ten Buddhist Novices who passed with distinction the Third Annual Sāmaṇeras Examination.



Seventeen Japanese youths seen with Ovād'ācariya Sayadaws after their ordination as Buddhist Novices.

## HELP TO SPREAD THE BUDDHA DHAMMA

The low subscription rate by no means covers the cost of production of "The Light of the Dhamma" and in publishing this magazine the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council has but one sole and abiding purpose; the propagation of the Buddha's Teaching. The Council has no desire whatsoever to profit financially from the magazine.

You can help in this Dhammaduta work (Propagation of the Dhamma) by buying copies for your friends here and by sending copies abroad.

You can earn Merit and at the same time earn the gratitude of your friends by subscribing for them for one year or for several years. We shall be happy to send the magazine direct to them with your compliments.

May we also enrol you as a friend of "The Light of the Dhamma", a friend who will gain us more and more subscribers? We hope to be able eventually to publish a list of such friends.

**THE UNION OF BURMA BUDDHA SĀSANA COUNCIL**  
KABA AYE P. O., RANGOON.

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