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of the
DHAMMA

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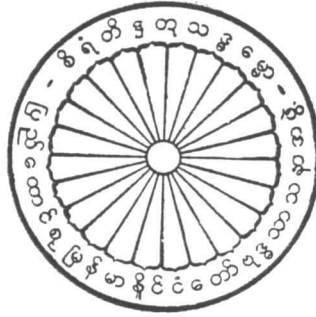
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THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA

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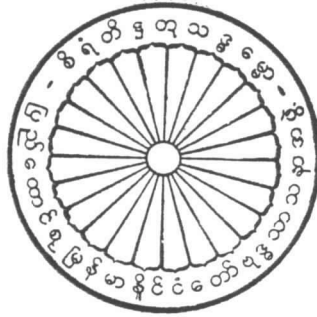
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Kakucapama Sutta (Translated by Pāli Department of University of Rangoon)

Five Questions (Ledi Sayadaw)

Dhammapada Commentary (Translated by Pāli Department of University of Rangoon)

THE INFALLIBLE GUIDE

By VEN. PIYADASSI THERA, VAJIRARAMA, COLOMBO.

*Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ
Kusalassa upasampadā
Saccitta parlyodapanāṃ
Etaṃ Buddhānasāsanāṃ*

“To put aside each ill of old,
To leave no noble deed undone
To cleanse the mind, in these behold,
The Teaching of the Enlightened One.”

Purification comes not from an external agency and self-purification can only come to one who is free to think out his own problem without hindrance. Others may help if one is ready to receive such help or seek it. The thought that another raises him from lower to higher levels of life and ultimately rescues him, tends to make man indolent and weak, supine and foolish. This kind of thinking degrades a man and smothers every spark of dignity in his moral being. Purity and impurity depends on self. No one purifies another no one defiles another. So says the Buddha who, for the first time in the world’s history, taught His followers that deliverance from suffering should be sought independently of a deliverer. Others may lend us a helping hand indirectly, but deliverance from misery must be wrought out and fashioned by each one for himself upon the anvil of his own actions. The Buddha, the Enlightened One, tells us that each living being is his own creator. By our actions we make our character, personality, individuality. We are all self-made. Infinite possibilities are latent in man, and it must be man’s endeavour to develop and unfold these possibilities.

Let us ponder over the exhortation that the Blessed One gave his son, Rahula, a Samanera, a novice, aged seven:

“What do you think Rahula, What is a mirror for?” For the purpose of reflecting Lord.” “In just the same way, Rahula, you must reflect again and again in doing every act, in speaking every word, and in thinking every thought; when you want to do anything, you must reflect whether it would conduce to your own harm or to the harm of others or to that of both yourself and others; and so is a wrong act, productive of pain and entailing suffering. If reflection tells you this is the nature of that contemplated act, assuredly you should not do it. But if reflection assures you there is not harm, but good in it then you may do it, if while you are doing that act, reflection tells you it is harmful to you or to others or to both and is a wrong act productive of pain and entailing suffering, abandon it. But if reflection assures you there is no harm but good in it then you may go forward with it.

And the same holds good for speech and for thought also.”

“Train yourself, Rahula, by constant reflection to win purity in thought, word and deed. Joy and gladness shall be yours as you train yourself by day and by night in the things that are right.”

May All Beings be well and Happy

The Right Knowledge Of The Path To Bliss

Bhikkhu M. JINANANDA, NAYAKA THERO

Kotahena, Colombo

Ours is a changing world; everything about us changes with lightning-like rapidity. The thoughtless man, like a babe in its simplicity is ignorant of this eternal law of impermanency and in his ignorance tries to grasp and retain various kinds of these changing forms which elude his anxious grasp. Thus is man made unhappy, being unable to retain the objects of his desire. Craving after the objects of sense is similar in its consequences to that of the moth after the flame; for in either case ill awaits the one who thirsts after the glamour of sensuous pleasure.

We are suffering from a disease the diagnosis of which had not been known until the Buddha enlightened the world with His Dhamma. His message is nothing but a description of this disease and its remedy. Hence just as an eager patient ailing from some chronic disease has to carry out the directions of his doctor, so must man who is ill follow the Master's injunctions if he desires to get rid of this ill and win perfect bliss.

Therefore it behoves us to inquire what bliss is, and how it can be attained. As a traveller needs must know his destination and how to reach it, so must we understand the nature of bliss and the path which leads to it. To attain bliss by the gratification of the senses is an impossibility. Therefore it must necessarily be sought for in absolute non-gratification of the senses or in non-willing as produced by a correct understanding of the universal law of transiency.

The path to the understanding of this law lies in wisdom and knowledge alone. As a traveller in the dark guides himself by means of a light, so must we in this ignorant world of ours guide ourselves with the light of knowledge in treading the path to perfect bliss. Although perfect understanding is not possible without actual realization, intellectual assent to clearly stated facts is possible to all reasonable beings.

Whatever the world may say to the contrary a little reflection must make it quite clear that religion after all is a systematised means of self-correction. That being so, the most reasonable method of procedure is the regulation of the mental outlook, since the mind is the fountainhead of all conscious action. Therefore in evaluating an action the subjective effect should be the main consideration and not the objective benefit; for the objective however useful it may be in the external world, falls outside the door.

As all religions save Buddhism teach some form of the delusion of 'soul' they have in all good actions an objective aim—to obtain divine aid, by which means they hope to save themselves. Buddhism is the only religion which faces the facts of life as they really are with that degree of fearlessness which only a perfect comprehension of things can engender. Buddhism alone is concerned with the subjective, for "all beings from mind their characters derive, mind marshalled are they and wholly mind-made."

The saying that all religions teach good is due to the ignorance of the relative value of the term 'good'. A system may produce good hypocrites, good financiers, good business men, millionaires, rich cities, and powerful nations; but all these are beside the point. The one question to be investigated is whether or not a religion tends to produce a tranquillized mind working in perfect equilibrium. This is the ideal of Buddhism, and it reaches this goal as surely as day succeeds night.

What qualifications should characterize an earnest seeker?

An earnest seeker should,

(a) Enter into the quest with an open mind.

(b) Be keenly impressed with the necessity of possessing the object of his search, and

(c) Possess some knowledge of the nature of that which he seeks.

How do these conditions apply to a seeker after bliss ?

(a) He should be prepared for conviction after careful observation and analysis,

(b) He should be well aware of the fact that he is not in possession of real and lasting bliss and

(c) He should know wherein lies bliss and what it is.

What proof have we that we have no real and lasting bliss?

The fact that we are ever subject to disease, pain, dotage, decay and death is sufficient proof that life is ill.

Why do many fail to realize this fact in ordinary life?

Many fail to see this at all, because though one's life is wholly an ill thing, it

is only at moments of deep thought or acute distress that the consciousness of this fact dawns upon him. Yet the cares of a worldly life smother this wholesome thought before it has had sufficient time to take root in his mind. Hence, to whatever extent a man is caught up in the whirlwind of the enjoyment of wealth and worldly comfort, to the same extent is he prevented from realizing the fact of ill.

This fact about life, that it is bound up with sorrow, has been recognised more or less by all schools of thought; as for instance when they call it "a vale of tears" and renounce the world as "vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Why do people generally fail to attain bliss in this world?

They fail because they generally cling to shadows in the shape of sensuous pleasures believing them to be realities; and do not possess the right understanding necessary to attain bliss.

What is the right understanding necessary for the attainment of bliss?

The right understanding necessary for the attainment of bliss is the comprehension that this life, as everything else in the universe is a continuous change, it is an ill thing, a sorrow: bliss must prevail where sorrow is not.

What is there to understand about the arising of ill?

About the arising of ill this fact must be clearly understood, that such and such an undesirable state as this life, has arisen in dependence upon a certain foregoing state hence with the ceasing of the antecedent state the succeeding untoward state, or life as we term it, will also cease. For example, a fever is due to an indigestion; remove or cure the indigestion and the fever disappears.

What is ill in a sentient being?

He being ever subject to change, every bit of the sentient being is ill. His flesh is ill; decay, dotage and death are all ill. Hence his whole existence is ill.

What is then the immediate cause of ill?

Ill for a living being comes to be through the fact of his having come “to be”; in other words “being” is ill.

Had he never been; ill (of no matter what kind) could never befall him.

Whence comes it that we have come to be?

We have come to be because of the ceaseless action of the universal process of becoming.

Through what arises this process of becoming?

The fuel that sustains this mighty fire of becoming, and in its burning produces new manifestations is the fuel of attachment of the mind to the external.

How does this attachment which feeds the flame of becoming take its rise ?

Such attachment arises through craving, that is, through the thirst of the mind after the objects of sense.

How does this craving come to be?

Craving is made possible by the fact that there is such a thing as sensation; i.e., because the various organs of sense are affected by the objects of sense corresponding to them.

How comes it that there is such a thing as sensation?

Sensation comes to be through contact between sense organs and corresponding sense objects.

What is that which has made possible this contact between sense and objects of sense?

Such a contact is possible only because of the existence of sense and objects of sense.

How do the senses and their corresponding sense objects take their rise?

They take their rise on account of the demarcation which divides all things into subject and object, i.e., the thing affecting and the thing affected.

Upon what depends the existence of subject and object?

This demarcation depends upon the existence of consciousness. All consciousness is consciousness of something. Hence arises a difference between the knower and the thing known or the perceiver and the thing perceived.

Upon what depends the arising of consciousness, the real starting point of a seeming-fresh becoming?

The arising of consciousness, the nucleus round which the phenomenon of a seeming fresh-becoming crystallises, depends upon the life-affirming activities of that same becoming which passes from one state to the other not as a separate entity but rather as cause and effect.

How has this life-affirming activity come to be?

This life-affirming activity and all the ill that accompanies it arise through ignorance.

What does this ignorance lead up to?

It makes us regard as lasting what is essentially transitory. It invests an illusory Ego with a real existence.

The ignorance we are concerned with is not the ignorance of material sciences or of the beginning and the end of the universe. This ignorance is the one big ignorance found here amongst the living

in this palpitating present, the ignorance of ill, the ignorance of the root cause of ill in craving, the ignorance of the ceasing of ill through the ceasing of craving, and the ignorance of the path that leads to the ceasing of ill through the ceasing of craving.

Hence what is the duty of every seeker after bliss if he really means to attain his object?

The duty of every such seeker is to set to work to remove the ignorance that is productive of ill.

What are the chief elements therefore, that comprise right understanding?

The four elements that comprise right understanding are,

(I) The understanding that here is ill.

(ii) The understanding of the sequence in which that ill arises.

(iii) The understanding of the sequence in which that ill is made to cease.

(iv) The understanding of the path through which the sequence of ill is made to cease.

Can bliss be attained by more intellectual assent?

No. Bliss has to be attained only through ceaseless effort in the right direction along the proper path, guided by the light of that intellectual assent.

What is it then that needs to be practised ceaselessly for the attainment of bliss?

The practice of virtue, 'Sīla' should be made a matter of every day life.

What is virtue?

Virtue is that which helps to keep one and to guide him along the path to bliss, and therefore vice is that which hinders his progress and clouds the path.

What is that path of virtue which leads to bliss?

That path is the Noble Eight-fold Path: right understanding, right mindedness, right speech, right bodily action, right livelihood, right effort, right attentiveness, and right concentration.

Which are the chief obstacles that hinder one's progress along the path, and cloud the bright light of right understanding?

The chief obstacles that do this are the five vices of killing, stealing, lusting, lying, and the consumption of things that rob him of his wits.

In what way does right knowledge help him to realize the harm wrought by these five vices?

Right Knowledge will help him to understand the root-cause of these vices.

What is the chief cause of all vices?

The chief cause of all vices is the delusion of a separate self. Where selfishness and self-gratification are absent, no vice whatever can exist.

Now, in conclusion what is the natural sequence in which ill comes to an end through the ending of ignorance "Avijjā"? * *

The natural sequence is as follows

(i) Where ignorance of ill is removed existence is fully understood.

(ii) Where imperfect existence is understood all motive for life-affirming action (Action Prompted by Craving) is withered at the root.

(iii) Where all motive for life-affirming action is withered at the root, such life-affirming action comes to an end.

(iv) Where life-affirming action comes to an end, consciousness, the nucleus of a self, no longer can arise.

(v) Where consciousness does not arise subject and object have no place.

(vi) Where subject and object do not exist the six senses, and their corresponding sense-objects have no existence.

(vii) Where sense and sense objects do not exist, there can be no contact between them.

(viii) Where there is no contact, there is no sensation of any kind.

(ix) Where there is no sensation of any kind, there is no craving, no thirst for pleasurable sensation.

(x) Where there is no craving, there is no attachment to sensation or objects of sensation.

(xi) Where there is no attachment, the process of becoming is deprived of its

motive-force and so comes to an end.

(xii) Where the process of becoming which we term life comes to an end, there is no more of all the ill that follows becoming. Thus is bliss attained. To see and understand this, is to understand life aright.

** Note — It should be understood that Paticca-samupāda, the doctrine of Dependent Origination, can only be fully explained by interpreting it from several different angles. The presentation given above is but one of such renderings, and cannot be taken as a comprehensive exposition on its own. The reader will find the subject dealt with in all its aspects in subsequent issues of the “Light of the Dhamma”.

WHERE BUDDHISM STANDS UNIQUE

What is Buddhism?

Buddhism is a practical religion based on moral philosophy.

How is it that Buddhism is generally regarded as only a philosophy and not a religion?

Obviously the answer to this depends upon the definition of the term “religion”. If by religion is meant a hankering after the unknown, or the fear of a supernatural deity on whom man feels dependent, then Buddhism is certainly not a religion. On the other hand if by religion is meant something which inspires man with a yearning for a higher life and impels him to seek that which is universally regarded as the best, thus raising him above the level of ordinary goodness, then Buddhism is undoubtedly a religion and the best possible.

How is Buddhism a philosophy?

It is a philosophy in that it analyses all

forms of human knowledge and the sources from which they spring. Based on this ‘psycho-analysis’ it has evolved the most comprehensive and admirable code of ethics ever known to man.

In what respect does Buddhism occupy a unique position among religions?

First and foremost Buddhism deals with demonstrable facts, as opposed to the hypothetical dogmas of other religions, and no one need mechanically agree with another’s opinion; not even with that of the Master Himself who has distinctly laid down that the investigation of His doctrine is one of the essentials of wisdom. Since the mental calibre of various persons differs in many respects, neither need they start their investigations from the same point. Absolutely logical reasoning, independent of any hypothesis whatever is the chief characteristic of this system.

Is Buddhism then only for the intellectual few?

No. Even a superficial student of Buddhism will discover that it offers various types of problems to the intellectual for solution; while it does not neglect the emotional character of the great mass of its adherents.

Is emotion compatible with such a rigid system of philosophy as Buddhism?

As pointed out above Buddhism is not solely a philosophy. Its analysis of mental functions serves as a justification for the code of morals it lays down for practice by one and all. In the practice of these moral laws emotion can reasonably operate to further the practice of such conduct. For example, we see this in the devotion with which one approaches the image of the Buddha with flowers as a token of reverence and gratitude.

Does such emotion help the moulding of conduct?

Yes. All forms of emotion are chiefly subjective and they stand to gain or lose little from outside oneself, though theists believe otherwise. Within the duration of these noble emotions, such passions as lust, hatred, anger, etc., are at least for the time being subdued in imitation of the Master's example. Thus an impression for good, however slight, is formed on each occasion, and it will in time be deepened by repeated practice. Finally the evil emotions themselves will automatically cease to operate when the mind has gained a hold on the nobler emotions. All emotions however, will find their dissolution with the acquisition of right knowledge.

Is the practice of overcoming unprofitable emotions by the cultivation of the profitable, a doctrine of Buddhism?

Yes. This is the only reasonable way of counteracting and transcending past lapses from the path of 'virtue'.

Is not repentance just as efficacious in the conquest of passion?

No. According to Buddhism continual repentance is both unprofitable and injurious. This is a characteristic of Buddhism which many fail to understand.

How does Buddhism justify this attitude?

All conscious mental activities being subjective, the more frequent these activities are the deeper will be the impression left on the mind by them. This applies to all mental activities whether profitable or unprofitable. Therefore repentance or the recalling to mind of an unprofitable action would be to impress it deeper on the mind rather than to eradicate it. On the other hand Buddhism wisely enjoins its adherents to fix their conscious attention on things unconnected with the particular lapse by continuous floods of profitable emotions of an opposite character until the evil association is completely blotted out.

This could be further illustrated by the following anecdote from the ancients. A certain person wishing to be purified by bathing in a certain river was told that he could gain the desired end by forgetting the presence of a certain monster in that part of the river. He accordingly made arrangements for the holy bath, and before entering the water, paused and reflected thus "What did the master want me to forget? Yes. I remember. It was the monster in the river. I will carefully remember the master's injunction and not think of the monster." Thus by trying to suppress the thought by a conscious effort of suppression he was obliged to think of it throughout his bath. In this way the

pupil learned for himself the folly of attempting to forget by a conscious effort. On the other hand the thought of the monster could have been suppressed by directing his attention, for example, on the innumerable lotus blossoms surrounded by the honey bees. This is exactly the attitude of mind of the Buddhist with regard to overcoming difficulties.

What is the consequent frame of mind of a Buddhist in accordance with this doctrine?

In accordance with this doctrine a Buddhist will necessarily see that while ill-will, anger, hatred, or jealousy are less powerful to harm the person against whom they are directed, they do certainly have much power to sully instantaneously his own mind and stain his own character. In like manner, benevolence, charity, devotion, and other noble emotions have a contrary effect, namely to purify his mind, illumine the future, and build up a noble character.

Is this the reason why Buddhism has ever been the most tolerant of all religions?

Just so. Intolerance cannot find a place in a system where freedom of thought and selflessness are the strongest characteristics. For what is tolerance but selflessness in demonstration. Argumentation and discussion are quite justifiable, but on no grounds is any form of violence permitted in Buddhism. Hence many are the instances recorded in history where Buddhism consistently refused to persecute even when most cruelly persecuted.

How does Buddhism distinguish mental operations tending to ‘virtue or vice’?

‘Virtue and vice’ as understood by

theists are not found in Buddhism. The closest Buddhist equivalents of these terms may be regarded as beneficial and harmful actions—profitable or unprofitable for the deliverance of the mind from craving. From this it must be obvious that they are wholly subjective in their results.

Is the state of mind of a Buddhist then the only measure by which all his thoughts and actions are gauged?

Precisely so. Hence it is clear that a man’s action, whether mental or physical, if directed towards the approbation of another or for the purpose of obtaining supernatural aid, can avail him nothing. Therefore Buddhism provides a sure relief for man from the ills of life in the one safe haven of an intellectual and ethical mind acquired through self-culture and self-control.

Is then every good action of a Buddhist independent of objective results?

The question of the objective results of an action, whether there be any or not, does not concern a Buddhist at all at the time of his action. He is concerned primarily with his own frame of mind irrespective of objective results which may accompany it or follow from it. In other words his one consideration is whether the state of his mind at the time of each action is conducive or not to its final deliverance from craving.

What are the subjective and objective results of a Buddhist’s act in giving alms?

The subjective result is that frame of mind in the giver which loosens the bonds of attachment to the thing given. The objective result is the benefit the receiver and perhaps society in general derive therefrom.

What is uppermost in the mind of a Buddhist when he parts with his possessions?

To a Buddhist, worldly possessions are in fact chains which hold his mind in bondage as a necessary result of craving. Therefore the thought that is uppermost in his mind when he parts with his possessions is one of mental relief and freedom; and thereby a wholesome frame of mind is created as a preliminary exercise for the final and complete deliverance of the mind from craving.

How does a Buddhist look upon meritorious acts?

He looks upon them as the unburdening of the mind from things to which it had unwittingly enslaved itself in the past.

Does a Buddhist then identify himself with his mind?

On the contrary a Buddhist knows no entity and he looks upon the mind as the process of craving of which he is ever trying to gain deliverance. By his profitable actions he lays the axe right on the root of the tree-of-ego which lies embedded in the mind as a result of long craving, and keeps within, the wholesome thought plying upon the main root of egoism stroke after stroke, thereby inflicting wounds of which sooner or later it must die. For it is all the time being deprived of some of its strength, and is on the sure road to ultimate decay. Thus does the Buddhist doctrine of non-ego at one stroke set upon an unshakable foundation all right life, all morality.

What is the seed of egoism that lies so deeply embedded in the mind?

It is a fiction of the brain resulting from 'avijjā' (ignorance) which is recognized as vital for the genesis of mental qualities,

as the protoplasm is for the production of the physical body.

Is it also wholesome for a Buddhist to recall with pleasure a profitable action, and even communicate the fact to others?

Yes. Both are wholesome. For in either case the mind is trained to take delight in the thought of denying itself all attachment, and the more it ponders and dwells upon this wholesome idea, the deeper must each subsequent impression be on mind. Further, the communicating of such an action, devoid of the remotest idea of vanity or selfishness, has apart from its subjective result the noble object of setting a good example to others.

In all efforts for mental emancipation what did the Master enjoin his followers to bear constantly in mind?

His strict injunction was to follow 'the middle path,' the golden mean. Rigid asceticism, involving corporal mortification or the lightheaded indulgence in worldly comfort are both to be avoided. For the one with conscious pain and the other with sensuous delirium cloud the mental vision. Even renunciation of worldly possessions and self-denial in other forms should be resorted to, only when one feels through right knowledge that he renounces any particular possession or luxury not so much in the spirit of deprivation as in the spirit of ridding oneself of certain impediments in the path of mental emancipation. For, in fact a spirit of deprivation leaves the possibility of a later regret which will set at naught all the benefits derived from such renunciation.

In what consists the greatest singularity of Buddhism?

Unlike the revealed religions

Buddhism does not require blind faith to prop up and vivify dogmatic mysteries. For what else is such faith but the will to hold something certain which one feels to be uncertain. On the other hand Buddhism being based on the results of experience and knowledge is wholly a scientific system. ‘Saddha’ in Buddhism is totally different from “Faith” as found in revealed religions. It is the product of experience tested in the light of reason.

On what grounds can it be asserted that Buddhism is scientific in its outlook and constitution?

It is scientific because it deals with present human experiences and submits them to a thorough psychological analysis and finally bases its conclusions on the results of such analysis.

What guarantee can be found, of the accuracy of this analysis and the validity of the conclusions?

To all good Buddhists these are matters of personal experience; for theirs is a practical and a realizable religion. To others it can be pointed out that the modern scientific achievements being mere glimpses of the one great truth, must necessarily harmonise with the Dhamma which is only an explanation of things as they are. The composite nature of matter, its infinity in space and time, cause and effect, the theory of relativity, the non-ego theory of psychology and various other modern scientific achievements are in complete harmony with Buddhism. It must not be thought presumptuous if the modern scientists are advised to test the accuracy of their conclusions by a reference to Buddhism. Whatever this may be, there can never be a divorce between Buddhism and science as in other religions.

What is the crux of Buddhism?

The crux of Buddhism is the doctrine of universal “anattā”.

What is meant by “anattā”?

All forms of existence being transitory phenomena, lasting only as long as the cause of each phenomenon lasts, there is not reasonable ground to suppose that there is a hidden entity which persists throughout life and after death. Buddhism summarises this by the formula “all is anattā.” As revealed religions are in complete ignorance of the co-ordination of anabolism and katabolism which constitutes all life they declare that man has a hidden ego-entity which emanated from a hypothetical god while scientists assert that whenever they try to detect an ego-entity they invariably fall upon a particular conception and nothing more. This experience of the scientist is in complete harmony with the Buddhist doctrine of “anattā”, and the denial of deity has been necessitated by the alleged existence of the so-called “attā” or ‘soul’ and ‘God’ by theists prior to the Buddha. Except for refutation the terms ‘God’ and ‘soul’ have no place in a system dealing with facts.

Does not Buddhism take an extreme view with regard to the body and the senses?

No. Even here Buddhism takes a sober view as it does in all things. The body is only a creation of the senses. Both the body and the senses are inevitable reactions of craving and it is because of sensations and volitions that craving is made possible, and sensations and volitions are impossible without mind and body. Further without sensations and volitions the nature and working of the mind cannot be understood. Without such

understanding the deliverance of the mind from craving is impossible. Therefore Buddhists are rightly advised to make use of the body with its sensations as a vehicle to bear the mind, and the mind to guide the vehicle by means of correct interpretations of the experience gained through the senses.

Thus though our being is an ill thing it is only by the correct use of the constituents of 'being' that deliverance is made possible. Once this goal is reached, the vehicle with all its parts is needed no more. The questionings of the mind are then at an end, and it stands calm and serene in the intellectual comprehension of the whole.

What is the position that Buddhism allots to man?

Man is not a fallen creature, who needs must beg and pray for mercy. According to Buddhism man is a potential master of the universe, but through ignorance he fails to realize his power. What he needs to do is to pluck up a little courage and break through the bonds that he himself has unwittingly created. In this vast ocean of 'Samsāra' to exist as man is no mean advantage especially when such existence is accompanied with the possibility of deliverance from ill, latent within himself. It is only by good Kamma after aeons of existence that one has gained this great advantage of manhood.

If the present opportunity is not taken advantage of, aeons may pass without a

similar opportunity recurring. Such is the position of man in Buddhism.

If man can be the master of the universe, may he not develop the so-called "miraculous powers"?

Yes, he may. But in Buddhism they are not helpful to one's deliverance, and if such powers manifest themselves they are never to be taken advantage of for selfish display.

Will not 'miracles' help in the propagation and teaching of Buddhism?

This is what the Master says regarding 'miracles'. "There are three kinds of 'miracles.' The first is the 'miracle' of power in which extraordinary power is manifested as in walking on water, exorcising devils, raising the dead, and so forth. When the believer sees such things his faith may become deepened but it would not convince the unbeliever, who might think these things are done by the aid of magic. I therefore see danger in such 'miracles' and I regard them as shameful and repulsive. The second is the 'miracle' of prophecy, such as thought-reading, soothsaying, fortune-telling, etc. Here also there would be disappointment, for these too, in the eyes of the unbeliever, would be no better than extraordinary magic. The last is the 'miracle' of instruction. When any of my disciples by instruction causes a man to rightly employ his intellectual and ethical powers, that is the true 'miracle'.

SHRINES OF BURMA

No. 3. The Shway Sandaw of Prome.

U OHN GHINE

Round this ancient pagoda linger many interesting legends, and since legends are truths wrapped in poetry and since what was once thought fantastic is, now that science is growing up and losing the scornful attitude of adolescence, often found to be founded more on fact than on fancy, we may the less readily disbelieve the truth of these old stories.

For instance the old tales speak of Hmawza, the capital of the kingdom of Thiri Khettara, as a seaport town and place it a few miles from where stands the present town of Prome. Now Prome is 160 miles approximately north-west of Rangoon and farther than that from the sea in that direction and though it is only about 70 miles from the sea at its nearest, there is a range of hills standing as barrier between. Nevertheless both geology and archaeology are showing that here where the Irrawaddy River is now so far from its goal, was once, many centuries ago, the sandy margin of the great ocean across which, how perilously, bold men sailed in their crude junks to drop anchor for trade at populous and wealthy Hmawza, now but a tiny village five miles down-river from Prome.

It is told how in those days, twenty-four centuries ago, when the Kingdom of Thiri Khettara was founded, the first king, with the help of those possessed of psychic powers, discovered a ruined pagoda already old in those ancient days since it had been founded, it was said, in the lifetime of the Buddha, 140 years

before. The pious king cleared the jungle overgrowth and taking the enshrined relics, re-enshrined them in a new pagoda which he had built and which was to last until 623 B.E. (Buddhist Era) (1873 years ago) when it was again covered by the encroaching jungle.

There exists no exact record or account as to why Hmawza was abandoned at this time but there is thought to have been a severe drought and it is possible that seismic upheavals and the silting up of the shores, which still continues round the Irrawaddy delta, helped to spell the end of an interesting civilisation and scattered the peoples who went north and west.

One interesting account, lingering on in tradition, is that the Buddhist Teachings were written down on gold plates and enshrined in the old pagoda. Exact history places the first written Teachings at about 30 years B.C. (513 B.E.) when they were recorded on palm leaves in Ceylon.

Tradition, a much stronger tradition, has it that here in the old pagoda had been enshrined a hair of the Buddha. Those who were inclined to disbelieve such stories were less sure of themselves when, in the case of a similar story, of the Botataung Pagoda in Rangoon, after a severe wartime bombing the rubble was cleared away and an excavation made for the foundations of a rebuilt pagoda, a buried treasure chamber was uncovered which contained, among other relics, a hair that had been carefully mounted and preserved evidently a great many centuries ago.

During the reign of Nara-thi-ha-pa-te, coming to more recent history of the pagoda at Prome, that is, only 666 to 699 years ago, the king sent his son as Viceroy of Prome. The son built the new headquarters of the district at the site of the present Prome and the town has been there since then. Hmawza was in ruins and the old pagoda near which he built the new town was covered by dense jungle. With the help of a wise old woman, a religieuse, residing in the neighbourhood, he found the ancient shrine, then had the jungle cleared and rebuilt the pagoda once more. He resigned from the viceroyalty in favour of a more worldly and ambitious brother and devoted himself to the practice of "Insight" under the instructions of visiting Arahants.

He named the rebuilt pagoda, "The Shway Sandaw Pagoda" "The Golden Pagoda of the Hair Relic" and it is this pagoda which, with some additions and repairs since that time, is so prominent a feature of the modern riverine town of Prome and which rises from the flat, surrounding paddy-land in stately golden loveliness.

Wars, earthquakes, fires, pestilences, the struggles of men and the struggles of nature have changed the whole landscape of the country, but still this impressive shrine rises again and again and endures to capture the hearts of men in its shining symbol of truth and to increase its power for good in Burma and thus in the whole world.



Sai-htat-jee Image:

About 100 yards to the east of the Shway Sandaw Pagoda at Prome is the famous Sai-htat-jee Image, about 60 ft. high and about 42 ft. at the base. It was erected only a little over thirty years ago at the site of an old and ruined pagoda and is perhaps the highest image of its kind in the whole of Burma.

BUDDHISM AND THE SPIRIT-WORLD

By MR. FRANCIS STORY.

Spiritualism in the West can now be said to have passed beyond the stage of a superstitious belief, held only by the credulous or those determined to find what they hoped to find. Psychic phenomena have been accepted by science to the extent that they are being made the subject of methodical research, and although the conclusions of the scientific observer do not always coincide with those of the spiritualist, there yet remains a sufficient body of evidence that cannot be explained away, to force the materialist to admit the existence of super-physical realms and laws beyond the boundaries of his present knowledge.

There are still, however, people ready to entertain the possibility of astral-entities, poltergeists, elementals and other disembodied or subtle-bodied beings, who are not prepared to accept the spiritualistic belief that the phenomena of the seance room are the work of those who have passed over.

They are able to cite impressive proof in support of a different theory. From time immemorial, and all over the world, men have believed in the existence of Nature-spirits, and have propitiated them with age-old rituals. The Greeks knew these beings as Nymphs, Dryads, Fauns and Nereids; the Celts have their fairies, pixies and leprechauns. They were beings who could help or hinder humans, according to whether they offended or befriended them. In East and West alike this belief still exists among rural people. The Hindu makes propitiatory offerings to the nature-spirits, and in Buddhist Burma the cult of

the Nat (minor deities, often associated with particular trees, buildings or areas) is widespread. The Nats are tutelary Devas who take under their protection households or whole villages; they frequently show themselves in visible form to those who invoke them. They also manifest by possession of the bodies of mediums in the manner familiar to Western spiritualists. What is known as "direct-voice mediumship" is well known in Burma.

Poltergeist phenomena, which have of late years become more common in Europe, and have been vouched for by disinterested witnesses, are common in the East, and are mostly attributed to the elementals or nature-spirits amusing themselves at the expense of human beings who have offended or neglected them. It is spirit-activities of this kind, apparently irresponsible and not serving any purpose, that incline many people to the belief that all spirit-communications come from a similar source.

The spiritualistic explanation is that these mischievous and futile phenomena are caused by persons of malignant nature, who preserve the characteristics they had in life, after they have left the physical body. This theory does not, however, explain the often puerile nature of many messages alleged to have come from persons of good character and intellect.

Investigators have been frequently disappointed by the naive and trivial utterances, or automatic writings received from spirits from whom something of a higher order was expected. They argue

that since a Shakespeare or Keats, while in the flesh, could produce works of immortal genius despite the limitations of human personality he should, having become heir to a widely extended sphere of supra-mundane experience, be able to communicate thoughts of a correspondingly larger and deeper significance. They expect, in fact, that the intellect and consciousness of every individual, if not actually increased by the knowledge of the after-death state, should at least not be diminished in the spirit-life. Instead, they find more often that their friends who have 'passed over' content themselves with communicating thoughts below the standard of those they had in life— simple platitudes that any adolescent of active brain could improve upon, or reiterations of things to be found already in the works of Swedenborg and other mystics, with which the medium is probably familiar.

Western ideas of survival are based on belief in an immortal soul which after the decay of the physical body preserves the characteristics of the earth-life, and should therefore constitute a recognisable entity through all possible phases of spiritual evolution. The Buddhist conception of life and death states differs fundamentally from this. The Abhidhamma or Transcendental doctrine, which is one of the most important sections of the Buddhist Tipiṭaka, deals exhaustively with the thirty-one states of existence (Lokas) in which rebirth takes place; it is from this that the highest teaching of the Buddhist Theras derives, and it throws quite a different light on some of the more puzzling aspects of psychic phenomena.

In accordance with the universal Law of Causality, death is followed by

immediate rebirth in one of the thirty-one planes of existence as a result of previous Kamma. That is to say, a being arises in the appropriate sphere to which past conscious actions and habitual tendencies culminating in the "death-proximate Kamma", or last conscious thought-moment, have led him. If his actions of the three types (mental, physical and vocal, manifesting in thought, action and speech) have been directed by a purified consciousness (Kusala Citta) he will re-manifest in a higher plane or Brahma-loka; if they have been of mixed type he will be reborn in one of the intermediate spheres of the Kāma-loka (world of desire or sensory gratification). If his Kamma has been predominantly bad, with a strong reflex at the moment of death, he will be reborn in what are called the Duggati (unhappy) states, including the world of earth-bound spirits or Peta-loka. The death-proximate Kamma is an important factor in deciding the immediate rebirth. It may be good or bad, but whichever it is, it tends to be the state of mind characteristic of the individual in his previous life, which takes possession of his last moments of consciousness before it leaves the body. Thus a person whose predominant characteristic is a mental attitude of hate will at once re-manifest in a form embodying his hatred, as that is his death-proximate Kamma, induced by habitual past thoughts. If he has cultivated Mettā and Karuna (benevolence and sympathy) it is that consciousness that will arise in his last moments and he will take rebirth in a higher plane where these characteristics manifest.

The most common type of habitual consciousness is neither of active love nor

active hatred, but desire (tahnā). It is desire and attachment that bind the individual to the wheel of Samsāra. They provide the motives of all activity; hatred and love themselves arise from the root-cause of desire—love towards the object of attraction, hatred when the desire is thwarted. Most Kamma, therefore, is of mixed type and its effects alternate in the experiences of the future life in the Kāmaloka.

The world of human beings

This world is included in the Kāmalokas, as it is one of the spheres dominated by desire and sensual attachment.

The highest doctrine teaches the basic truth of Anattā, which means that even in the earthly life-continuity of the individual there is no persistent or unchanging entity. All is a condition of flux; a causal continuum of successive thought-moments and material conformations arising and passing away in obedience to the law of Dependent Origination (Paticca-samuppada). That which is developed by mental discipline and spiritual purification is not a personality, but a tendency. An infant carries the latent tendencies of the past existence and the seeds of the future life before it but the child of five is not the same personality as the subsequent boy of fifteen or man of fifty. Body, mind and all the elements will have changed many times between these stages of the individual's life. When we allude to them as the same 'person' we are only using a necessary convention; there is no identity linking the child of five, the boy of fifteen and the man of fifty. There is only a causal continuity; because the child existed the man exists, and his personality is the aggregate of his

thoughts, words, actions and experiences during the intervening period. It is the function of memory alone which gives this causal-continuum an appearance of being an identical personality continuous in time. When age, or any organic alteration of the physical brain, causes the faculties to decay, further changes of character or personality arise, this time caused solely through change in the material structure of the body. This is further explained in the Buddhist doctrine of Anicca (Impermanence of all phenomena).

We are now in a better position to understand what actually takes place at death and rebirth. The being that is reborn bears the same relationship—a causal one—to the being of the previous life as the boy of fifteen does to the child of five, or the man of fifty to the boy of fifteen. It is the same 'person' only in the sense that the one carries on the cause-effect current of the other. To use a familiar illustration if we knew a boy of fifteen and then lost sight of him until he reached the age of fifty, we should find scarcely anything by which to recognise him. Unless he bore some unusual physical characteristic of a kind to endure all his life, even his own mother would not be able to identify him. Those who maintain that a mother can always, by some instinct, recognise her own child, should consider the historical Tichborne case of assumed identity and others of a similar nature.

A section of the Buddhist scriptures, the Peta Vatthu, describes the state of those reborn in the Duggati spheres, and how they can be helped by the living. The word 'Peta' may be roughly translated 'ghost', though it is related to the Sanskrit Pitri, meaning ancestor. In the Peta Vatthu it is

shown that those reborn in the spirit-world nearest the earth-plane often have an inferior type of consciousness to that which they were equipped in their previous existence. Far from having access to wider realms of knowledge, as they are expected to have by Western spiritualists, they re-manifest with a limited consciousness and intellect with imperfect memory of the past life, and inhabiting a vague, indeterminate half-world. At the same time because of their strong attraction to the sphere they have left, their contacts with it are relatively easier and more frequent than those of beings in the higher Lokas. In a sense, they exist side by side with the 'living'; the step between their plane and ours is only small, and one easily taken by the psychically-sensitive.

It is from these beings that the trivial messages and meaningless phenomena emanate. They have not the same 'personality' they had on earth, but retain only the accumulated characteristics most predominant in that personality. This condition prevails until that particular Kamma-resultant is exhausted, when they are reborn once again in the ceaseless round of Saṃsāra from which final escape is only possible through the realisation of Nibbāna.

On the human (manussa) level of the Kāma-loka there is pain and pleasure, good and evil, hatred and love. It is the sphere of opposites, from which we as free agents have to make our own choice for the fulfillment of our evolution. All the Lokas must be regarded as planes of consciousness which are attainable by the developed Yogāvacara while still in the physical body. By the practice of Jhana (meditation) the consciousness is elevated

to a higher level; once this has been attained and established by practice there is no rebirth in a lower sphere, unless during the first stages the faculty is lost before death and a lower type of consciousness supervenes. This may happen in the case of those who practise systems of Yoga outside the Buddhist path, but in Buddhism once the first stages, Sotāpatti-magga and Sotāpatti-phala, are attained with the destruction of the first three Saṃyojanas, there cannot be any further rebirth in lower spheres of existence. The reason for this is because in the Sotāpanna there is no longer any diṭṭhi (delusion of Self), Vicikiccā (doubt and wavering) or Sīlabbata-parāmāsa (superstitious observances.) This means that his eyes are opened to the fundamental truths; he sees the path, though he has not yet trodden it to the end, and he cannot any longer lose himself in the mazes of Saṃsāra through following delusions.

This means in effect that while still on earth we can raise ourselves to the plane of our choice, and will inevitably re-manifest there when the term of earthly existence is ended. But any law, to be a true universal principle must operate both ways; we cannot logically expect the cosmic law to work only in our favour. If it did, there would be no point in man's freedom of choice in moral issues. Where it is open to man to go upward, forward, it must be open to him to descend in the scale of spiritual evolution also.

Greed, hatred, sensuality and inertia all have their appropriate spheres of manifestation and their corresponding corporeal forms. When these types of consciousness arise more frequently than their spiritual opposites of generosity,

love, purity and energy, they create the form of the next birth. It is at death that the Jekyll and Hyde metamorphosis takes outward effect, not by any process of transmigration or passing of a soul from one body to another, but in accordance with the subtle and universal law of causality that rules the cosmos. The *Abhidhamma* deals with the psychological exegesis of this principle, while the *Peta Vatthu* reveals its *modus operandi* as exposed to the insight of the perfected Arahant. The lower planes of the spirit-world are peopled by creatures imperfect in form and sub-human in intellect, the direct result of misuse of their faculties during earthly life. Spirits such as these linger about the places with which they were associated in life, drawn thither by the strong force of attachment, and they are able to make use of psychically defenceless persons to make that contact with the world for which they crave. Themselves living in a dim and cheerless world, they seek to share the life they once knew, as a cold and homeless traveller looks with longing into a warm and comfortable room, where friends are seated round a glowing fire.

Impermanence is the inherent nature of all conditions, and neither suffering nor heavenly happiness lasts for ever. In time the *Kamma* that produces them runs its course, and another phase of existence is entered. So the state of these unhappy beings is only temporary. Far from having greater knowledge and power than human beings, they have less, and the teaching of Buddhism is that they should be regarded with compassion. They can be helped by the loving thoughts of the living, and good deeds done in their name can if they take advantage of the

opportunity offered, by rejoicing in these deeds, alleviate their unhappiness. The method of doing this by psychic dedication is also fully dealt with in the *Pāli* commentaries, and is regularly practised in all Buddhist countries.

The wrong interpretations that are too often put on psychic phenomena, both by the spiritualist and the sceptic, could be avoided if more were known in the West about the laws that govern death and rebirth, particularly where the misconceptions arise from identifying character and personality with the idea of an immortal soul.

A very interesting *Mahāyāna* work dealing with the operation of these little-known laws at the critical time of transition is the Tibetan *Bar-do*, an ancient treatise of the Himalayan schools. It directs the aspirant in the highest technique of spiritual purification by which insight is gained into the after-death states and by means of its teaching (usually imparted through a Guru) the pupil is able to remain in full control of his discriminative faculties at the moment of departure of his consciousness from the physical body. This control he retains throughout the ensuing psychic experiences, being trained to know what awaits him and to remain master of the situation. It is sufficient here to indicate one important respect in which all Buddhist teaching on this point differs from that of Christianity. The Christian at his last moments is urged to reflect upon his sins and repent them. The Buddhist, on the contrary, is instructed to keep his good actions to the forefront of his last thought-moments. This is so that the impulse toward the new birth will spring from this good consciousness rather than

from awareness of his demeritorious actions; he should clear his mind of all guilt-consciousness and go forward fearlessly on the next stage of his spiritual pilgrimage. In this he is aided by the progress he has made in cultivating concentration of mind and detachment. The psychological soundness and profound significance of this teaching can be grasped when we have understood that all states of existence really *spring from the mind itself*, in that they have their origin in the causal nexus of the ever-changing sequence made up of the point-moments of consciousness, and that they are determined by the interdependence of cause and effect. The Seers who impart this knowledge have themselves seen and studied the law as an inherent property of the cosmos; understanding its principles they are able to use it by adapting their activities to it. A man who falls from a high building will be killed by the law of gravity, but one who is in an aeroplane is using means by which he is making gravity itself serve him; he is not defeating the law, but harnessing it to his purpose. In the same way the deep psychic laws are used by the perfected seers whose instrument is supramundane knowledge.

Note on the Peta Vatthu

References to spirits, happy and unhappy Petas, and other beings reborn in realms adjacent to our own are to be found scattered throughout the books of the Pāli Canon and the Commentaries. The Paramattha Dīpanī is a Commentary on such accounts included in the Petavatthu (Peta stories) of the Khuddaka Nikāya. The stories are introduced to illustrate the law of Kamma and Vipāka, the facts of the previous life and actions which gave rise to the unhappy rebirth being known

to the Buddha through His supramundane insight, and used by Him to emphasise the moral nature of the law of cause and effect. Sometimes the facts are related by the Petas themselves. Many of them form the background to the verses of the Dhammapada, and elucidate and enforce their meaning. Others are to be found incorporated in the Jātaka stories, where they are incidental to the narratives of the Buddha's own previous lives.

The Vimānavatthu, in contrast to the Petavatthu, deals with those reborn in relatively happy conditions as the result of meritorious deeds; these beings, inhabit palaces (Vimāna) and come into existence by the process called Opapātika; that is, spontaneous arising as distinct from the mundane processes of birth by the womb, the egg or moisture-generation. The disputed question as to the possibility of abiogenesis was known in pre-Buddhist India, when Opapātika arising was believed by some schools to be fortuitous; the Buddha, however, showed that it was subject to cause, as every other form of birth, the cause being the previous Kamma.

In the West, this spontaneous arising of a Peta at the moment of death has been wrongly interpreted as the passing of a "soul" or "spirit" out of the body. The traditions, as well as modern instances, of hauntings and ghosts, which are too well-attested and worldwide to be dismissed lightly, are drawn from real happenings as these Peta stories clearly show, and are to be explained by the attachment generated by craving which keeps "spirits" earth-bound to certain places. The so-called "spirits" are formed of the same group of Five Khandhas as a human being; the Rūpa Khandha, or

physical substance, may be of a finer texture, or exist on a different plane from that of the human, while the four immaterial groups may be different in type and degree, but all are present. The ability to see them is conditional on the tendency, sometimes involuntary, of certain people to shift their consciousness from the human plane to other contiguous planes which may be higher or lower. In the four-dimensional space-time continuum there is actually no question of “higher” or “lower”; this is a merely conventional arrangement (*Loka vohāra*), as when on a map England is depicted on top and Australia underneath. The space-time complexes exist side by side, interdiffusing one another; hence the Petas sometimes appear in the stories, as in modern experience to be actually dwelling on the earth level, while at the same time their substance penetrates and is capable of passing through earthly matter.

Jesus of Nazareth said “In my father’s house are many mansions”. From this it may be assumed that he was himself a psychic who had actually seen the *Vimānas* of happy realms, for he “spoke as one having authority, not as the Scribes and Pharisees”. The same may be said of Swedenborg and other mystics; in fact the worldwide consensus of opinion from these psychics forms an overwhelming testimony to the existence of the *Peta Lokas*, the *Vimānas* and the heaven and hell states. Swedenborg and the others who were accustomed to move about in realms adjacent to ours, all speak of the lower planes as being even more densely material than our own, the very atmosphere being thick, semi-opaque and ponderable, while the higher realms

become progressively more immaterial until they become fields of energy without discernible substance. These are classified as the “Fine Material” (*rūpavacara*) realms and their nature and place in the Thirty One Abodes is fully set forth in the Buddhist *Abhidhamma*. Above these are the “Formless Realms” (*arūpavacara*) abodes of the *Arūpa Brahmas*, who cannot be contacted by mundane consciousness and are only accessible to those who have attained the corresponding *Jhanic* (meditation) states.

To the Buddhist, the importance of these *Peta* stories lies, not in the evidence they present of an after-death state, but in the moral teachings they convey, and it was for this the Buddha made use of them. The *leit motif* in most of them is the necessity for practising charity, particularly towards the *religieux* of the *Saṅgha*, although every form of charity is commended, including *Dāna* given to ascetics of other orders. Perfect tolerance is enjoined, but this does not mean that false doctrines were to be encouraged, and no merit results from supporting religious teachers who propagate doctrines contrary to the *Dhamma*. The stories also show the necessity for practising self-restraint in thought, word and deed, and illustrate the results of mixed *Kamma*, as for instance in the *Khalātyapeta Vatthu*, where a female *Peta* is found inhabiting a celestial mansion, the result of a gift made by her in her former life to some religious ascetics, while at the same time she could not leave the celestial palace because she was nude, covered only by her long and luxuriant hair. Her lack of clothing was the result of some *Akusala Kamma*. In the same way, other *Petas* are discovered enjoying great benefits, such as a golden

and godlike form, yet with hideous features, the result of misdirected action in some other respect.

Another teaching strongly emphasised in these stories is the universal law of impermanence and the uselessness of grief. In the Ubbaripeta Vatthu we find the following:

“Some eighty-six hundred thousands of kings by the name of Brahmadata have been cremated on this spot. Whose death dost thou mourn? I have been born and reborn as women, men and sometimes as animals; no bounds can be discovered to the course of rebirth”.

“Na hi ruṇṇam vā soko vā c’ aññā paridevana, na taṃ petānaṃ atthāya evaṃ tiṭṭhanti ñātayo” - “Not tears, nor grief nor any form of lamentation can be of advantage to the dead, even though the kinsmen stand in the attitude of mourning”, says the Tirokudda Yatthu. Yet, though grief be unavailing, it is possible to share the merit of good actions with the dead, and many of the Peta stories relate how their unhappy conditions have

been alleviated by meritorious actions performed on their behalf by living relatives. In order to make this transference of merit effective, the “spirits” must be aware of the intention and must share mentally by rejoicing in the act of offering. The impulse of the good thought then raises them from their state of misery, for all states are but the reflection of thought-impulses; they are formed and conditioned by thought and volition, as the oft-quoted first gatha of the Dhammapada teaches.

“Manopubbangamā dhammā
manoseṭṭha manomayā;
manasā ce paduṭṭhena
bhāsati vā karoti va,
tato naṃ dukkhaṃ anveti
cakkam’va vahato padaṃ.

Mind precedes all mental states (Dhamma); mind is chief; they are mind-made. If with an impure mind a person speaks or acts then misery follows him as the wheel follows the hoof of the beast of burden.”

‘If, monks, there were a Self, would there not also be a My Own?’

‘There would, Lord.’

‘If monks, there were a Mine, would there not also be a Me Myself?’

‘But since such things as a Me and a Mine are really and truly nowhere to be found, what of the theory: “There is the world. There is Self. In a future state I shall be permanent, stable, lasting, untouched by change, existing on, ever the same?” Is not such an idea an utterly and entirely foolish idea?’

Majjhima Nikāya 22nd Discourse.

What Is Happiness?

A TALK GIVEN BY PATHAMAGYAW U THITILA AT A MEETING IN RANGOON

What is happiness? Happiness is a mental state which can be attained through the culture of the mind. Physical sources such as wealth, name, fame, social position and popularity are but temporary sources of happiness. Whatever we do, we do essentially for happiness. You may say this is for money, that is for power, but whatever we do is really for happiness. Even in religion what we do is done for happiness. Whatever we do, then we do essentially for happiness but do we attain it? No. Why? Because we look for happiness in the wrong place. People think they can find happiness in money, so they try their best to be wealthy. When they are wealthy, are they happy? If wealth is the source of happiness, wealthy people would be happier than the poor people. But we find in many cases, the ordinary people, who are not very well-to-do, are happier than the rich. We have even heard of some millionaires who have tried to commit suicide. They would never think of committing suicide if wealth were the source of happiness. So, wealth is not really the source of happiness. Then power, name or fame, may be a temporary source of happiness. When people lose their name or fame or power they are in a state of anxiety, worry. It shows that name or fame or power is not the main source of happiness since it can also be a source of worry and since Impermanence affects it. Some people think that a partner, a good congenial partner, may be the source of happiness. It may be to some extent but not to the fullest extent. Some people think

that children might be the source of happiness but when they are separated for some reason or other as soon or later they must, they feel unhappy. Some people think horse races and dog races might be the source of happiness. So they bet. Even when they are winners, they are happy only for a short while. Some people hope to find happiness in drinks. For a short while they are happy, but eventually they become as unhappy as ever. The outside sources are not the real sources of happiness. But the main thing is the mind. The mind which is controlled, cultured, is the real source of happiness.

Now, how to attain happiness? How do we define happiness? Happiness is a state, a mental state, which is agreeable to one's nature or which appeals to one's nature, or which satisfies one's nature. This state can be applied to such levels as:

- (1) Material or materialistic,
- (2) Emotional,
- (3) Intellectual and
- (4) Spiritual.

To make it clear take a delicious lunch or dinner. When you have a delightful lunch or dinner, if you are a person proud of your physical attainments, you would have happiness of a material, physical nature. You enjoy your food for physical culture, for physical health. You have happiness of a material nature from this food. If you are eating something which you have been longing for, you would have added happiness of an emotional nature. You would say, "I like it, because

it is very good and very nice". You can appreciate a lunch or dinner because it is nice. You attain happiness from it, through it, and your happiness is of an emotional nature. You do not care whether it is for strength or health but for taste. If you were intellectual, reasonable and happened to be on a diet, you might have happiness of an intellectual nature and say, "This food is very good because it is suitable for my health". So you judge this food from your particular nature. If you were of spiritual or moral nature, you would find happiness through the dinner or lunch. You would say, "This food is good because it is pure. It is good for moral principles: good since its effect is helpful to me for meditation." So your happiness is different, your judgment is also different from others. Even the same food or lunch is appreciated and also happiness is attained according to the nature of different people. The highest happiness one can attain is a state, a mental state, which is agreeable and satisfactory to all the levels. But such a state is not always possible to be achieved. If we cannot have the highest happiness which is satisfactory to all levels, the next one is harmony with the higher levels which gives greater happiness than the harmony with the lower levels.

We judge, react and take things according to our nature. Therefore it is necessary for each one of us to know what type of person we are. Because we act and react to outside stimuli according to our nature: that is, we see everything through coloured glasses of our own. If a person is supposed to be broad-minded and unprejudiced, he is so only to the extent of his particular nature, Unless we are spiritually advanced none of us can

be broad-minded and unprejudiced to any great extent because we see and judge things with coloured glasses which we have made for ourselves, not anybody else's which are made for himself. Then how can we know what types of persons we are? It is only by a personal study of our own reaction to outside stimuli, outside objects by watching, by taking notice of our reaction to what it comes to, that we can know or we can put ourselves under one of the categories.

Now first material or physical level. A person at this level being materialistic, will be interested in material gains. His main consideration and concentration are of material gains. Material, physical comfort is his importance. These materialistic persons are very practical and would like everything, even religion or philosophy to be materialistically "practical". And nothing more. Anything which needs thinking and concentration will not attract them, they will not be interested in any religion or philosophy. Their interest is in physical comfort and ideas which give them material gains. So there is no wonder why many people are not interested in any religion, because religion, as you know, does not directly give anybody material or physical wealth. How many do you think are there in the world who have lost interest in religion? To most people material gain is so very important. When we say we are busy, we are busy about gain, money. What for? For physical pleasure, happiness, comfort, dress, food, home, any physical convenience. So we can realise that most of us are rather materialistic.

Next is the emotional level. People who are on this level are very sensitive. They are mainly concerned with likes and

dislikes and pleasant and unpleasant feelings, sensations. They judge things according to their emotions, no matter whether their judgment is right or wrong. These emotional people are interested in devotional religions which suit their emotions. They find any religion which has no ceremonial aspect, very dull.

The third level is intellectual. Those who are of this level are mainly concerned with reasoning, studying things intellectually. They find happiness in literature and science too. They gain happiness through intellectual pursuits. But they being mentally active, are not active physically. They know many things through their readings or learnings but in practice they are not active.

The fourth is the spiritual or moral level. Those who are on this level are concerned with service and sympathetic understanding; they emphasise the importance of justice or fair dealing. They are realistic. So you see, each person acts and reacts to things, criticises, feels and judges according to his particular nature: according to his particular level. Knowing how and why we differ in thinking, feeling, judging and outlook in life, we are able to make ample allowances for other types to act according to their nature thereby we cultivate a sense of tolerance, patience towards others.

When we are less advanced spiritually it is the material and the emotional pleasure and happiness that appeals to us most. Unfortunately some of us never try to get out of this rut. Even in this lower stage they are very proud of it. They don't want to get out of it, because they think they attain happiness when they feel that they have pleasure of the world. They won't like Nibbāna which sounds dull to

them. Why? Because they are less advanced in spiritual evolution. When they progress in spirituality, studies in literature, science and philosophy can appeal to them. Some people cannot appreciate even reading and learning. They think it is a waste of time and that reading won't do any good. Western people are very practical, very busy and very active physically. A clergyman of The Church of England asked me something about Nibbāna. "I couldn't tell you about Nibbāna in a few words and in so short a time" said I. He said he was always busy. I asked him, "If you are busy, how much time could you give me?" He said, "I have no time, just tell me in two or three words." I said, "Nibbāna is a state which is free from suffering, old age, death, sickness, and the state of highest happiness which is free from all troubles or worries, and hardships." He said, "Do you mean to say that if you reach Nibbāna, you have nothing to do?". I said, "Yes". "Then I won't like it because I would always like to do something," he replied. A man also said that he could not appreciate poetry or science which gives people some peculiar pleasure. He said that he went to the National Gallery where the most beautiful pictures are shown. He thought that watchers there were fools, for if they wanted to see the actual beauty, why should they see those imitations? Poetry, he thought, was to spoil the language, for there was no proper order of words. To him literature is nothing. So you see there are many stages of development. When we grow still older we realise that moral or spiritual happiness is the genuine highest happiness because it is real and lasting. According to his practical nature

a man acts and reacts and thereby he makes himself either happy or miserable.

This growth, this progress from lower level to higher level can be attained. It is not really very difficult. Nibbāna itself can be attained in this life. Most of us think it is very difficult. If so, why do we have 6 qualities of Dhamma? The Buddha himself repeated these 6 qualities of Dhamma many times, one of which is sandiṭṭhika - Immediate effect. If that is true, why should we not attain happiness of a true nature? Nibbāna can be attained at any time, akalika. There is no tomorrow, no next month. You can attain it according to your own effort and understanding. Some people have asked me whether there is a purpose of life. I say "Yes, there is!" Purpose of life is growth, progress from ignorance to enlightenment and from unhappiness to happiness. The Buddha himself said many times that the purpose was for his enlightenment. One of the Greek philosophers said that he came to this world only for one purpose, that is, to perfect himself. So this growth this progress is possible here and now. As we can develop our own muscles by constant exercise, so our mind can be developed. We can surely come towards perfection spiritually through the attainment of happiness and realisation of Nibbāna: intellectually through the attainment of knowledge, emotionally through the control and good use of our emotions, and physically by exercise thereby attaining perfect health and also through the control of the body.

At every level there is action which has a past that leads up to it as well as a future proceeding from it. An action is the manifestation of the mind and a desire for

anything stimulates the mind. At every level there is action and reaction, i.e. cause and effect. So it is our reactions to outside stimuli that we have to control. This action and reaction work at all levels, at the physical level of movement, emotional level of feelings and intellectual level of thinking and the spiritual level of realisation. At each level there is a good side and a bad side, good aspect and bad aspect. A person, for example, who is on the bad side of materialistic nature can do harm physically which will produce pain. He uses his material strength, material weapons. In his good aspect of material level he can do good actions physically. So everybody should do physical action for service, thereby he can grow from this level to the higher level. Whatever you do mentally and emotionally is not perfect until you do it physically. There is a story. Once there was a washing stone - A washing stone is not understood by Westerners. Once an English lady in the audience asked me, "What is a washing stone?" She had never heard of such a name as washing stone. A washing stone is a stone to wash on used by washermen in the East. It is a flat stone on which the soaped clothes are beaten. Just to wash dirty clothes there was a stone on the bank of a stream just outside a village. The villagers used this stone for washing their dirty clothes. One day a geologist came and saw that the stone contained many pieces of precious stones.

He thought that the villagers were very ignorant and were using such a valuable stone for washing only. So he persuaded all the people including the head of the village to exchange the stone with a new and better one. They all agreed. He gave

them a broader and more beautiful stone and took the old one. All the villagers were delighted and thankful and he was more thankful to them for the stone, out of which he could get valuable precious stones.

The Buddha advised us to be like the geologist and not the ignorant villagers. We should use our bodies not only for pleasure but for service so that, whether we have sought it or not, we shall have a perfect figure, perfect health. The Bodhisatta acted everywhere he went for service mentally, physically, even in his last life as the Buddha.

You remember the story of a sick monk who fell in his own filth? There was

nobody help him. The Buddha without hesitation took the dirty, filthy clothes of the monk and washed them himself. There is nothing in the world which is below his dignity.

Since everything in the world is subject to impermanence there can be no true and lasting happiness in the material things of this world. This would be a most pessimistic outlook, were it not that there is a way out—a real happiness beyond the material which changes it to a realistic and an optimistic outlook.

Culture is the answer; culture not necessarily of the body but of the mind and further of the higher moral nature, to achieve Nibbāna.

And of his foolishness he ponders thus: ‘Have I verily been in bygone times or have I not been? What have I been in those bygone times? How have I been in bygone times? What was I before I became what I was in the far distant past? Shall I verily be in far-off days to come or shall I not be? What shall I be in those far-off days to come? How shall I be in the far-off days to come? What shall I be before I become what I shall be in the far distant future?’ The present also supplies him with matter for doubt, and he asks himself: ‘Am I now or am I not? And if I am, what am I and in what way? This present being,— whence has it come and whither is it going?’

And with such cogitations he arrives at one or other of the following six views, the which becomes his solemn and settled conviction:—either the view, ‘I have a self’, or else the view, ‘I have not a self’; or the view, ‘By self I apprehend self;’ or the view, ‘By self I apprehend non-self,’ or else the view, ‘By non-self I apprehend self.’ Or perhaps he adopts the view: ‘This identical self of mine, I maintain, is veritably to be found, now here, now there, reaping the fruits of its good and of its evil deeds; and this my self is a thing permanent, constant, eternal, not subject to change, and so abides for ever.’ But this, monks, is a walking in mere opinion, a resorting to mere views; a barren waste of views, an empty display of views. All this is merely to writhe, caught in the toils of views. Held thus fast in the bonds of views, the uninstructed man of the world remains unfreed from birth, growth, and decay, and death; is not delivered from sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, in brief, he obtains no release from suffering.

Majjhima Nikāya First Discourse.

EXTRACTS FROM “PRACTICAL BUDDHISM”

By NYANASATTA THERA

(Kolatenne Hermitage)

The Buddha lived in the sixth century B.C. He expounded his Norm in North India. The Word of the Buddha has been handed down in the Pāli language, the tongue used in North India in the Buddha's time. The form of Buddhism which has been preserved for 2500 years in the Pāli and is known and practised in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and other countries, is called Theravāda, the Teaching that the immediate disciples of the Buddha received from their Master. This Theravāda is admitted by all scholars to be the authentic Word of the Buddha. Another form of Buddhism, the Mahāyāna, the “Great Vehicle”, is a form of the original teaching, modified to make it more acceptable to a greater number of both the erudite and the simple members of the Indian society several centuries after the Buddha, and to the non-indian peoples of Asia who could not comprehend the pure Theravāda, who yearned for higher knowledge without being able to follow the arduous Path to self-realization.

At present the Buddhist Scriptures are studied in Europe, America, and all the other continents. The Word of the Buddha is accepted as their religion by thousands of Europeans and Americans; and disciples of the Buddha of all races, both laymen and monks, can be found all over the world. Buddhist publications in English are now eagerly read and appreciated in more than fifty countries of the five continents of the globe.

The Essence of the Teaching

The quintessence of the Buddha's Doctrine are the Four Noble Truths (a) Suffering, (b) its Cause, (c) its Cessation, and (d) the Path.

(a) All conditioned existence, especially human life, is unsatisfactory. Life is a Conditioned process initiated by conception, followed by birth, pain, sorrow, grief, lamentation, disappointment, despair, union with objects which we hate, separation from what we love, old age, disease and death, which is followed by a new rebirth.

(b) The conception of a new life and with it all the manifold suffering is conditioned - or caused - by Craving. The Craving for a new life and for the objects of the world is nourished by ignorance, or Delusion about the true nature of the world and life. This Delusion makes man crave for eternal life in heaven, or for a rebirth as a powerful King or a great personage. Instead of learning all about the real nature of things, we always crave for new objects which, when attained, will not satisfy us. Meanwhile one individual existence ceases and the Craving links one life with another.

(c) By attaining true Insight, the real nature of life and the world of Delusion and Craving is understood, and therewith all Suffering ceases.

(d) The Path that leads to the self-realization of the end of craving is moral life, culture of mind by the practice of mindfulness, and insight.

Concentration of mind and mindfulness lead to the acquisition of insight into the real nature of things. When we see them as impermanent, unsatisfactory, and void of an abiding self, all Delusion and with it all Craving cease. Then Deliverance from all sorrow is attained and Enlightenment with the serene condition of Nibbāna is achieved. The individual who has realised this Perfection lives his span of life free from all selfish desires. He devotes himself to the service of others: he is a guide of his fellows who strive for what he has already attained. When such a Holy One dies there is no more rebirth for him, because this life-linking craving has ceased. After the death of such a Saint there comes perpetual Supramundane bliss called Nibbāna. Nibbāna is freedom from Craving and Delusion. Positively it can be called Enlightenment, and a serenity unperturbed by any external contingency. What enters at the passing-away of the Buddha and of the true Saints is the basic element of supramundane bliss and peace which abides, and which is called the supreme good, the blissful lasting peace of Nibbāna, which is the object of all the striving of every genuine Buddhist.

The Practice of Buddhism in The Daily Life of Laymen

“By effort, earnest striving, discipline and self-control, let the wise man make an island which cannot be swamped.”

Dhammapada ii - 5

The following sketch of application of Buddhism as guidance in the busy life of laymen is aimed at dispelling the wrong view prevalent among beginners in the study and practice of the Dhamma, that it

is a pessimistic, melancholy, lethargic, impracticable, sceptical and nihilistic teaching—an erroneous notion introduced by non-Buddhists and used as a weapon for checking the phenomenal appeal and spread of the Dhamma everywhere, and specially in the West. Nothing is more inaccurate than this charge levelled against the teaching that rouses up our energy, gives us self-confidence and self-reliance, and thus induces us to strive to the utmost in leading such a life as will make for our economic, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual progress, and at the same time exercise a wholesome influence on our family, relations, friends and associates, the community or society we belong to, our nation and the whole human race. No religious teacher other than the Buddha evokes in man such determination and desire to strive for the conquest of all obstacles to progress, and for achievement of one’s ideal of perfection.

Buddhism is concerned mainly with the present life, and hence all thought of the past and future receives just so much attention as may stimulate us to a greater zeal in our striving for the good and progress of mankind, our own present existence being viewed as but one aspect of the whole. As Buddhism does not teach salvation by proxy, neither by a saviour nor by an automatic evolution, nor by a violent revolution, It requires all followers to live and act so as to save themselves and so, by example, save others instead of merely praying for deliverance, or expecting it from evolution or revolution. And therefore Buddhism makes us tolerant and forbearing with regard to others: for when we see how slowly we

progress on the road to perfection, we cannot be angry with others for not being better than they are. Hence our love embraces not only all Buddhists but all humanity.

We have duties to ourselves, our family and relations, the community or society we live in, our country and the whole world. The progress of others is our progress, the sufferings of others affect us too; and our own progress influences our environment.

The Realism and Optimism of Buddhism

In order to deal with the charge of pessimism, we must first realize that almost all religions which face reality are more or less pessimistic. The Indians in Vedic times and the early Greeks of Homer's era were optimistic; but the succeeding generations had to revise their naive optimism. Now Buddhism is neither a child's optimism nor the sceptic's pessimism: it is just between the two extremes, for it is realism. The Buddha does not ignore the fact of sorrow but He by no means yields to melancholy or despair, for the whole body of His teaching is but the means to passing beyond all forms of suffering and disharmony, unhappiness and pain, to the peak of perfection, Enlightenment, and Nibbāna: that is to say the highest form of happiness realizable in this very life and world, with our own body and mind, by following the path of the Perfect One. Far from being pessimistic, Buddhism is the boldest optimism ever proclaimed on this earth, by no lesser personage than the All Enlightened One Himself and by his true followers.

Solution of all apparent paradoxes in Buddhism

All the apparent paradoxes that confront the beginner in the study and application of Buddhism are solved as soon as we begin to listen earnestly and attentively to the voice of the Perfect One and make a start in treading His way of Enlightenment. Then this way is seen to be realism nearer to optimism rather than to pessimism; and melancholy gives way to hopeful confidence in the good results of our change, and a firm faith that the final outcome of our striving will be a glorious condition of Enlightenment. Lethargy will pass away and we shall become dynamic, ever anxious to advance in doing positive good. By our own practice we become convinced that, far from being impracticable, the Dhamma, the way of the Buddha, becomes automatically practical as soon as we have seen the pernicious effects of stagnation and indifference both in matters of self-culture and in promoting the progress of others in the same direction. Then all our doubts melt away, and as soon as we begin to put in practice the principles we have accepted as our guidance we never more fall a prey to scepticism. And finally, the so-called "nihilism" of Buddhism is realized as the most solid and positive system that leads to present happiness, to bliss in other worlds and lives, and to the consummation of Enlightenment, Peace, Purity, and boundless love of all that is, and to the assurance that even the death of such a noble one that has achieved this goal does not at all mean the annihilation of a being or a self but the passing into Nibbāna beyond all change and sorrow,

with no possibility of reentering any new birth any more: the “Nihilism” of Buddhism is aimed at the going beyond all forms of suffering through the attainment of the lasting bliss of emancipation.

The reproach that Buddhism leads to passive indifference proves baseless when we begin to arouse in ourselves, and by our example in others, the courage and continued energetic effort to achieve the goal of passing beyond all sorrow. None but the Buddha is the ideal of the highest self-sacrificing service to humanity; and whenever Buddhism was really practised, as by King Asoka and other Buddhist kings, and their subjects, the traces of this zeal in universal service and surrender of their own selfish interests for the good of all mankind remain indelible throughout thousands of years.

The Buddha’s own answer to the charge of passive indifference is: “People call us warriors, and we profess to be warriors, for we wage war for lofty moral conduct, perfect culture of the mind, and highest wisdom with supreme deliverance.” “Wander forth and live for the welfare of the many, for the good of the many, for the happiness and progress of the whole world”— this was the exhortation with which the Teacher sent out His first band of missionaries to be radiant embodiments of perfection, wisdom, love and service.

**The Buddha’s Instruction on
Accomplishments—
Vyaggbapajja Sutta, Aṅguttara
Nikāya, viii-vi-4.**

A Buddhist layman should achieve

1. Accomplishment in exertion, by skill and diligence, endowed with genius

in finding the right way to perform the duties of his profession.

2. Accomplishment in caution, by preserving his earnings, saving wisely, and investing safely.

3. Good friendship with those who have faith, virtue, charity, and wisdom, and the endeavour to acquire the good qualities he admires in friends.

4. Regular mode of life within one’s income, avoiding all false show of abundance, and thus never being in want or debt.

5. Accomplishment in faith, by knowing the good qualities of the Enlightened One and the Dhamma.

6. Accomplishment in virtue by the observance of the five moral precepts, viz respecting and promoting life, property, chastity, truth, and ever-present vigilance of mind, by abstaining from violence, theft, misconduct, falsehood and intoxicants.

7. Accomplishment in charity, free from meanness, being liberal, generous, giving gladly what is needed and when asked, cheerful in sharing.

8. Accomplishment in wisdom leading to spiritual growth, and penetrating insight and vision of reality that leads beyond all woe and change.

How to practise Buddhism

This is the syllabus of our studies and practice, the curriculum of the application of Buddhism. Though we at times imagine that we shall never accomplish our course of studies, yet as we try it, we gain more courage. By repeated intention, renewed efforts directing the mind to the practice, and viewing dispassionately in moments of calm and passing or

spontaneous awareness the progress or relapses in our practice, we soon learn to be mindful and restrained in thought, speech, and bodily action. The four factors of right endeavour, that is to say concentrated intention, sustained energy, thought, and investigation are the means to achievement of progress and anything possible can be attained if we have developed the four links of right endeavour. Then the five moral controlling faculties or forces, confidence, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom are the tools we must use in the training school of Buddhism. Right intention to undergo the course of training, effort and sustained energy, accompanied by mindfulness are the most essential points to be applied in the practice of Buddhism in the daily life of laymen.

What others call Grace we name right effort, and faculties latent in us only waiting to be discovered, developed, and used. Only by the application of such hidden forces do we become genuine Buddhists, the follower of the Perfect One. To practise loving kindness by being always kind, polite, gentle, and ready to help, is the hallmark of the true Buddhist. Even when we are unable to help materially, an encouraging smile, a kind word, or patient listening to the complaint of others is a helpful service, applied loving kindness, Buddhist mettā.

We can well use for meditation the gaps between our routine work, or the moments when we would otherwise seek company and unprofitable gossip, or even some foolish and destructive forms of pastime. Buddhist meditation is an essential part of the Dhamma, and no

Buddhist is able to live the good life required by the Norm unless he or she devotes at least five minutes a day to the cultivation of the right type of meditation.

Radiating Mettā—Loving Kindness

Late in the evening or at dawn, when all is still and silent and our mind is quite fresh, seated in a comfortable position, we just radiate loving kindness in one direction, or towards a definite person, whom we try to visualise by calling to our mind his or her good qualities and kindness. First of all we should practise mettā to ourselves, for though it sounds absurd, in most cases it is quite true that we really do not love ourselves. Then if we are asked to love others as we love ourselves, how can we love our neighbour if we hate ourselves? For do we not often enjoy our suffering, illness and misery, and even expect and welcome them? And this is why Buddhism advises us to love ourselves before radiating love to others and loving all. Let us then begin our practice by thinking or saying mentally to ourselves. “May I be happy, cheerful, healthy, gentle, hopeful and contented”. When after some time of such repeated practice we wish to advance, we take for our subject a person respected by us, our spiritual teacher for instance, or any living person of our own sex whom we respect and love. We then radiate our love towards him: “May this venerable one be happy, cheerful, healthy, gentle, hopeful and contented”.

Or we may choose a person whom we neither like nor dislike, or even an individual who was once our enemy: we think of his good qualities and wish him happiness, “May he be happy, cheerful, healthy, gentle, hopeful and contented”.

To make our love more impersonal we may penetrate the quarters of the world, taking one direction at a time, and thinking that our love radiates over all equally. "May beings living in this quarter be happy, cheerful, healthy, and contented". Any direction is good; and when we forget self entirely, and the world as well, by being filled with the thought of love, we have well advanced in our practice of mettā.

If we were to spend the best moments of our leisure thus, how happy we should be all day. We should have calm sleep, enjoy our work and make others enjoy living and working with us. Think of how much money could be saved on medicines, doctors, and hospitals! The right application of mettā leads to health, happiness, a cheerful disposition, success, popularity and new energy for more work in the service of humanity. What a high position Mettā occupies in Buddhism is seen from the fact that the future Buddha is to be Lord Metteyya, the Buddha of Love.

Mettā practised toward others, especially those who oppose us, will save us from litigations and the bills of proctors. Thinking kindly of others, we shall be loved by all, live in peace, contentment and in harmony with our environment and we shall be free from envy, ill-will, and all forms of craving and hatred. Hence this practice is recommended to those who are irritable, neurotic, and who easily flare up and give vent to anger.

Meditation on the Buddha-Dhamma-Saṅgha

Another student may feel inclined to

practise the contemplation of the Enlightened One. At first he or she may have in mind the term or idea "Buddha". Then, being dissatisfied with this cold word "Buddha", we shall use more affectionate terms, such as the "Enlightened One", "All Enlightened One", "The Sammā Sambuddha", "The Perfect One", "The Blessed One", "The Happy One", "The Accomplished or Auspicious One", "The Holy One". Or the student cultivating this contemplation of the Buddha may acquire a fine picture or a small lovely artistic image of the all Enlightened One, and concentrate on it before falling asleep or rising. One will dust the picture or statue with a new silken handkerchief and keep it on a piece of good cloth, and in a prominent place of one's best room. Later on one can lay some flowers, and light a small lamp or a candle before it. At this state one may feel like having some concrete formula of contemplation. Though we discourage parrot-like repetition of unintelligible invocations and prayers in a language unfamiliar to the student, yet for those who cannot do without a text for meditation we offer these brief and venerable formulae from the time of the Buddha. When kneeling, squatting, sitting, standing before an image, or in any posture, even lying or walking, one may think thus:—

"Thus indeed is the Exalted One: a Holy One is He, an All-Enlightened One, perfect in wisdom and conduct, a Happy One, Knower of the World, the supreme guide to those who wish to be conducted to Perfection, the Teacher of all intelligent beings, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One".

Contemplation of the Dhamma— the Law of the Blessed One

“Well proclaimed by the Blessed One is the Law, as bearing on the present life, bringing immediate fruit to those who observe it, inviting all to come and practise it, to be understood by the wise man for himself.”

Contemplation of the Sangha— the Order of Bhikkhus

“Well is it trained, the order of the Blessed One’s disciples, even the four branches thereof: the eight classes of holy individuals, well trained in uprightness in principles and courtesy. This order should be respected and revered, gifts should be given it in homage, for it is the world’s unsurpassed field of merit.”

If we often meditate on such noble objects and practise loving kindness by radiating metta in all directions for two or five minutes only, at moments when we have withdrawn, we shall use our leisure properly.

Contemplation of the Breath- Ānāpānasati

Those who do not need any external objects for their meditation may practise the contemplation of breathing. Seated comfortably (if possible though not necessarily cross-legged) on a well-padded seat and without leaning the back against anything, to ensure free unobstructed blood circulation, one fixes one’s whole attention on the process of respiration. If one’s mind and body are agitated, one may calm down by preliminary contemplation of the Buddha or by transmitting mettā. Then one makes oneself conscious of the air striking the nostrils, or simply the fact of breathing;

without forcing the breaths to be longer or shorter, one is just aware that one is breathing. Then one begins to feel the air pass through the nostrils; one consciously calms the process of breathing, feeling pleasure, interest, and happiness in this meditation, after eliminating all intruding irrelevant thoughts.

Contemplation of mind and reality

When respiration has become so refined that one does not feel it at all, one may meditate on the nature of the process, and then on one’s body and mind, the base of respiration. One contemplates the arising and passing away of material and mental processes, their impermanence, suffering, and the conditioned nature of all phenomena. Then a vision of reality opens to us as we are thus concentrated. Such moments of unforced, spontaneous, or passive awareness of what is—these are the really creative moments. They transform and mould our character, without our having forced any change. We advance in understanding, peace, happiness, and have an unshaken confidence in our progress on the right path to Enlightenment. We always emerge from such meditation refreshed, strengthened, as if entering a new world of understanding, love, peace, and harmony.

No churchgoing or visiting of temples, nor merely reading of books on Buddhism can yield such a sublime happiness as this practice of Buddhism. Every layman or laywoman is able to devote a few minutes to this genuine practice. Let us persevere in this noble practice of Buddhism, in the daily life of both laymen and monks, until it yields to us the entire fruit of Enlightenment, and the vision of the ultimate reality of Nibbāna.

Is Dhamma A Religion?

By MR. MAUNO NORDBERG

The first Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists in Colombo in 1950 did me the honour to appoint me member of the Dhammadūta Committee and this appointment put a heavy burden on my shoulders as we are left here on our own initiative and judgment to act as circumstances demand.

To propagate the Dhamma we have tried various means and among others to penetrate, up-to-date without success, into circles which, at least theoretically, should welcome the message of the Dhamma, the freethinkers who have left the fold of the Church. But they tell us that the Dhamma is a religion and they do not want to listen to it or to read literature on the Dhamma. The monthly periodical "The Freethinker" (in Finnish) refused to take our advertisement offering the books and booklets our society "The Friends of Buddhism" has published, as they pretend to consider them as "religious literature". And why? - Because missionaries in the East say so and these are supported by numerous authors on Buddhist subjects both in the East and the West who call it a religion without thinking what this noun implies to the Western mind.

Such writers do not stop to think that the word "religion" in the West calls up the ideas of an anthropomorphic god and consequently a complicated theology, of an immortal soul to be saved at any cost, of worship of this god created by the human mind, of a clergy as intermediary between god and man, sin as its consequence of eternal damnation unless divine grace wipes it off through the

sacrifice of an innocent victim, of blind belief in the dogmas of the churches, prayers, sacraments and ceremonies, with belief in their efficacy, to mention only the most salient points, which all are in direct contradiction and incompatible with the teachings of the BUDDHA, which you, Eastern Brethren, know better than we who are so far from the source.

Do you wonder, friends, that the free thinkers turn us the cold shoulder? - It is of no avail that we on every occasion emphatically deny that the Dhamma is a religion when known authors put a wrong and misleading label upon it.

You might perhaps strain the point and say that the Dhamma is a religion in the etymological sense (Latin religare - to bind together), but people cannot stop at such subtleties and just accept the current interpretation. In our language the case is still worse. The word for religion is "uskonto" derived from "usko" - belief, implying blind belief, and you cannot argue about it as you can do with the word religion, with long explanations, as for instance we have read in the books of Nārada Thera and other Buddhist authorities.

Do you imagine that people who for various reasons have abandoned one religion, would accept another if they think that they have to sacrifice once more their intellectual and spiritual freedom?

It is therefore indispensable to give up words like religion, sin, worship, salvation and the like, when writing or speaking to Western audiences about the Dhamma. This applies to any Western language.

Though I am not fully conversant with English which is not my maternal language, I venture to suggest the words “doctrine” or “teaching” and why not call it simply Dhamma instead of Buddhism. Dhamma has such a wide meaning that it would require a footnote to explain it as there is in no European language a single word which would cover it entirely.— Unless this is done in the future the prevailing prejudice cannot be overcome in the minds of those who do not yet know it.

If you abandon “religion” discard also the word “worship”. There can be no worship of the BUDDHA, who declared himself to be a man as we all are. We may revere, cherish and bless his memory and, if we are sincere, try to follow his noble example as well as we can, but “worship” is out of the question. In this connection we must say that the relic worship practised in the East on a wide scale is shocking to us European Buddhists as it has a strong taste of Roman Catholic relic worship. We must presume that the word “worship” is used in ignorance of its implications and it could probably be replaced by another to be suggested by an Englishman.

Our earnest request therefore is: discard all theistic and theological expressions from books in Western languages to be issued in the future, as they are most detrimental to the Dhammadūta work in the West. There is absolutely no necessity to use them and all can be replaced.

When the new Dhammapada translation into Finnish was completed (not yet out) the translator with the writer of these lines expurgated every such word and could find suitable substitutes in

Finnish. The same can be done in other European languages.

Some people might object that this is only playing with words, but in fact it is not that at all. We know that words are poor substitutes for ideas, but if certain words call up false ideas in the minds of your audience or readers, you should carefully avoid them in order not to cause or promote confused thinking, which is one of the many sources of our miseries. Elementary intellectual honesty imposes on us the duty of being as correct in our expressions as we can, and in this case the duty is imperative.

To follow up our idea we sent to the WFB, to be presented to the second Conference held in Japan in September/October, a motion reading as follows:

“CONSIDERING that the West is being slowly and surely dechristianized and that thousands of Westerners have, to quote the Buddha’s own word “only a thin veil of dust covering their eyes and who would accept the message if they hear it”,

CONSIDERING that the Dhamma offers to the scientifically trained minds of the West a clear, logical, coherent and scientific ethico-philosophical doctrine of spiritual liberation, satisfying both heart and intellect,

CONSIDERING that the Dhamma should be presented in terms acceptable to the modern mind, free from theological expressions: the Conference resolves to recommend to writers on Buddhist subjects in WESTERN languages to carefully avoid all such words which call up theological associations of ideas foreign to and incompatible with the Dhamma.”

We venture to make it known to your readers hoping they will realize its importance from the Western point of view, when pursuing Dhammadūta work.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

There is a very great deal in favour of Mr. Mauno Nordberg's view and it would be interesting to have a symposium by our readers on this subject. The Editor has had the same experience in the West as have our friends in Finland: those who rebelled at the dogmas and rituals of the Christian Churches, indelibly associate "religious" terms with those dogmas and rituals, and although it may make it harder for us to explain some of our concepts without the use of words such as "religion" and "worship" it is better to endeavour to do so rather than to colour those concepts with the inevitable associations of their inheritance.

A case in point is evidenced in the article above. The homage and veneration paid by us in the East is a totally different thing from the "relic worship" practised by the Animists, either the primitive

Animists or the more "cultured" Animists. Images and relics of the Buddha and His great disciples are, to some of us, necessary symbols of the mighty Teaching and rouse in us intense emotional power associated with high moral thoughts, which helps to change in us the very thought-stuff of the mind and to grave deeper the channels of mind's tool, the brain, so that emotion the more readily follows these channels. There are those to whom such acts of reverence and homage come the more easily and those who rarely if ever feel that way inclined. And there are good Buddhists of both types. Certain it is that at the peak of intellect, emotion is no more. And there is another point to consider. Only he for whom there are no secrets withheld from him by his own mind can presume to say with any degree of certainty whether there are not clinging round an object so venerated through many centuries, what, since there are no exact words, can be but inexactly termed "accretions of holiness".

'In the selfsame way, friend, purity of conduct leads to purity of mind; purity of mind to purified understanding; purified understanding to purified certitude; purified certitude to purified knowledge and insight concerning the right and wrong way; purified knowledge and insight concerning the right and wrong way to purified knowledge and insight concerning the Path; purified knowledge and insight concerning the Path to purified knowledge and insight complete, and complete purified knowledge and insight to the unconditioned Supreme Nibbāna. And it is for the sake of this unconditioned Supreme Nibbāna that the Holy Life is lived under the Blessed One.'

Majjhima Nikāya 24th Discourse.

“An Exposition Of The Brahmajāla Sutta”

MA TIN HLA, B.A. (Hons.)

Senior M. A. Pāli Student, University of Rangoon.

Being the first discourse of the first Nikāya, the Brahmajāla (Great Net) is an important discourse. To us in Burma it is doubly important, because this very discourse was delivered at Suvannabhūmi by Sona and Uttara, the first Buddhist missionaries who came to Burma in the 3rd century B.C.

It is mentioned in the Sāsanavamsa that Sona and Uttara after driving away an ogress recited the Brahmajāla sutta which caused the conversion of sixty thousand people to the new faith, while 3,500 young men and 1,500 girls of noble family entered the Order.

The Brahmajāla sutta consists of two parts, the Sīla (morality) section comprising the small, medium and great section, and the philosophical portions in which the various philosophical views held by individual philosophers or schools of philosophy are discussed.

From the section on morality we come to know how the Buddha was head and shoulders above all the contemporary teachers as regards morality and discipline. And from the philosophical portions it becomes clear that the Buddha was the greatest of the philosophers. If we understand the Brahmajāla sutta we shall correctly understand the Buddha's doctrines.

The moral precepts are arranged according to the number—the concise section contains a small number of moral precepts and very important ones at the same time. The medium section contains a number of moral precepts in the form of

certain practices and occupations followed by some schools of brahmins and monks. But the Blessed One and his monks avoided those practices and occupations. Similarly the elaborate section contains a large number of secondary professions by means of which the brahmins and monks of some schools earned their living, which the Blessed One and his disciples refrained from following. It is important to note that the Buddha's Teaching of morality was of a much higher order than that of some of the Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical sects, whose members did not consider it sinful to practise, for example, gambling, accepting gifts of maidens and women, and such things as land and cattle and to earn their livelihood by various questionable means, like foretelling the future, causing abortion, deafness and dumbness, etc. The study of the section on precepts on morality gives us also a glimpse into certain social customs and practices, occupations and professions, games and sports, certain arts and sciences such as astrology, physiognomy and medical science of ancient India.

In the philosophical portion we find descriptions of various views under the heading of Pabbanta-kappa and Aparanta-kappa (Speculation relating to the past and speculation relating to the future). The discussions mainly centre round the soul and the world—two important subjects discussed in all philosophies—the world and the soul theories relating to the past are discussed under Pabbanta-kappa and those relating to the future are discussed under Aparanta-kappa. Besides the questions of

the world and the soul other questions such as what is moral (Kusala), what is immoral (Akusala), whether the soul and the body are the same or different (taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sariraṃ) - one of the 10 indeterminates—and whether there are beings opapātika satta* etc. are discussed. There are mentioned sixty-two views altogether.

Strictly speaking, the number of views is eight, namely Eternalism, Semi-eternalism, Extensionism, Eel-wriggling, Fortuitous origination, Existence after death, Annihilationism and Hedonism, the doctrine of happiness in this life. (Sassata-vāda, Ekacca-sassata ekacca-asassata, Antānantika, Amarāvikkhepa, Adhicca-samuppāda; Uddh amāghatanika, Ucheda and Diṭṭha dhamma-nibbāna vāda). But each of these views is divided into several parts and these parts are regarded as separate views. Some of the views can be identified; for example Annihilationism No. 1 is the same as that held by Ajita of the hair blanket; Eternalism No. 1 is the same as the view of Pakudha Kaccāyana one of the heretical teachers. Rhys Davids in his American Lectures refuted the view of Garbe that the Eternalism was the Saṅkhya view. All the views could not be actually held, but they were logically formulated so that no view might be left out of this Great Net.

The Blessed One divided speculation relating to the past under 18 grounds, for instance, under the heading of Eternalism there exist four views, that is 4 grounds on which Eternalist views were held. The Eternalists held the view that the soul and the world are eternal, giving birth to nothing new, is steadfast as a mountain peak and is as a pillar firmly fixed. They believed that the living creatures run on and pass away,

fall from one state of existence and spring up in another yet they are for ever the same. Those who held the Eternalism No. 1 could remember by means of meditation a hundred thousand previous births; those who held No. 2 could remember past existences to the extent of ten world aeons, similarly No. 3 up to forty world aeons. As for the 4th group, they were the logicians who held the Eternalism by logical reasoning and not by practising concentration like the other three groups. These brahmins and monks who remembered their past came to the conclusion that the soul and the world which had persisted through those long periods must be permanent. But any such conclusion is wrong, for they moved within the domain of Nescience (Avijjā), and Nescience is beginningless (anamatagga). One under the influence of Nescience cannot know the Truth.

Under the same heading of Speculation relating to the past, Semi-eternalist views are mentioned. Those who came from the Ābbassara world of Radiance and were reborn in the world of Brahmā gods thought that Brahmā who was reborn in that world first, was permanent, eternal, and they themselves who had to pass away from that Brahmā world and were reborn in the human world were impermanent. So they held the Semi-eternalist view. Similarly, those who were gods called the “Debauched by Pleasure” (Khidḍā-padosikā) and the “Debauched in mind” (Mano-padosikā) were reborn in the human world and took the same view thinking they themselves were impermanent while those who were not spoiled by sport and were not envious were permanent. Fourthly those who were addicted to logical reasoning held

* Opapātika (Lit. “Accidental”) satta— “Spontaneously born beings, *i.e.*, born without the instrumentality of parents. This applies to all heavenly and infernal beings”. “After the disappearing of the five lower fetters he appears (spontaneously) in a spiritual world.”

that view by believing that the five senses namely the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the body are impermanent while the mind or consciousness is eternal. It may be mentioned here that whether it is a god or Mahābrahmā or our mind or consciousness, everything is impermanent and therefore the semi-eternalist view is wrong. It may be noted that in the list of 10 Indeterminates there is mention of the world as eternal and the world as not eternal but here we have world as well as soul; besides, the Semi-eternalist view is not mentioned in the 10 Indeterminates.

The Extensionist views are mentioned in four groups, three of them holding their view as usual due to their knowledge born of concentration and the last one by logical reasoning. Some believed that the world is finite and others believed that it is infinite; some believed that it is finite in the upwards and downwards directions and is infinite across. Another group held that it is neither finite nor infinite, by logical reasoning. Here they did not say anything about the soul. It may be added that in the list of 10 Indeterminates we have only the world as finite and the world as infinite, and not the other two mentioned here. The theories regarding the nature of the world or universe which certain monks and brahmins formulated did not interest the Buddha who regarded such discussion as useless for it does not help us to attain the goal of life which is making an end of suffering.

The Equivocators (Amarāvikkhepikas) or the eel-wrigglers refused to answer definitely the question whether this is good or bad (idaṃ kusalaṃ, idaṃ akusalaṃ), because they were afraid of telling lies, which will hinder their spiritual progress. Some were afraid of being influenced by feeling (chanda), desire (rāga), ill-will (dosa) and hatred (paṭigha), which might cause them attachment (upādāna) and thus

become a hindrance on their way to the goal. Some dared not discuss with other teachers as they would not be able to explain the reasons for their answers, and so they avoided by saying “This is not my view (Evaṃ pi me no), the other also is not my view (Tatñānti pi me no), different is not also my view (aññathā ti pi me no), “is not” is also not my view (No ti pi me no), and “not not” is also not my view (No no ti pi me no). Last of all some due to their stupidity gave the same answers in reply to the questions—whether there is another world or not, whether there are chance-born beings or not, whether there is result of good or bad deeds or not, whether any sentient being continues to exist or not after death, both exists and does not exist, neither exists nor does not exist after death. By reading these we find how those Equivocators were timid and stupid. The last four questions are the same as the last four Indeterminates—these questions the Blessed One also refused to answer not because of ignorance but because the posthumous state of an arahant defies description; besides, it is unprofitable to discuss them.

As regards the other questions which Saṅjaya avoided, the Buddha’s view was definite, namely whether there is the next world or not or whether there is result of good or bad deeds or not.

Saṅjaya Belaṭṭhiputta the heretical teacher was an eel-wiggler and he discussed the questions beginning with “Is there another world?” (atthi paraloka) etc. The eel-wrigglers were not interested in the theories of the soul and the world.

Another class of teachers held the Fortuitous-originist views, and they said the world and the soul arise without reason. Those who came down from the world of Unconscious Beings (Asaññasattā deva loka), by means of their exertion attained

concentration which led them to think that the soul and the world are fortuitous in origin. They thought that they not having been, had come into being. Some held that view by a process of reasonings. This unscientific doctrine is the opposite of the Law of Causal genesis (Paṭiccasamuppāda) formulated by the Buddha.

Thus we get 18 views of those who reconstructed the ultimate beginnings of things. The Brahmajāla sutta further mentions the Speculators on the future (Aparanta Kappikas) who arranged the future on forty-four grounds. Here we find under the heading of the views regarding conscious existence after death (Uddhamāghatanika saññi vāda), sixteen views about a conscious existence of the soul after death. They said that the soul after death is conscious and not subject to decay. They differed from each other in deciding whether the soul— 1. has form, 2. has not form, 3. has and has not form, 4. neither has nor has not form, 5. is finite or 6. infinite, 7. both finite and infinite, 8. neither finite nor infinite, 9. has one mode of consciousness, 10. has various modes of consciousness, 11. has limited consciousness, 12. has infinite consciousness, 13. is happy or, 14. miserable, 15. both happy and miserable, 16. neither happy nor miserable.

Speculators about the unconscious existence after death (Uddham-āghatanika asaññi vāda) were those who held eight views on an unconscious existence after death. The details are the same as under conscious existence up to number 8 of the above list.

And some held that the soul is neither conscious nor unconscious (Uddham-āghatanika neva saññi na saññi) on the same eight grounds as under unconscious existence mentioned above. In brief the future conditions of the soul have been discussed under three heads namely—

1. Conscious existence of the soul after death. (Uddham āghatanika saññi vāda)

2. Unconscious existence of the soul after death. (Uddham āghatanika asaññi vāda)

3. Neither conscious nor unconscious existence of the soul after death. (Uddham āghatanika nevasaññi nā saññi vāda).

These views are different ramifications of one question namely the condition of the soul after death. It may also be noted that these theorists were not interested in the question of the nature of the world. The Buddha showed the fallacy of belief in the existence of a soul surviving after death as believed by them. The so-called soul is nothing but successive states mistaken for an entity.

Then we find the Uchedavāda which was held by Annihilationists who in seven ways maintained the cutting off, the destruction, the annihilation of a living being. The first variety of this doctrine was held by Ajita Kesakambalī. The Annihilationists said that the soul after death is cut off, destroyed and is annihilated. They mentioned seven different kinds of souls namely:

1. The soul which is a product of the four elements (mahābhutas) 2. which is divine, has form, belongs to the sensuous plane and feeds on solid food, 3. which is divine and has form and made of mind, 4. which has attained the sphere of infinity of space (akāsānañcāyatana), 5. infinity of consciousness (viññānanañcāyatana, 6. nothingness (akiñcāññāyatana), 7. sphere of neither consciousness nor unconsciousness (neva-sañña-nāsañña-yatana). They all said that those various souls are annihilated after death and there is a complete end of a being. We find that the annihilationists are just the opposite of the Eternalists. From this we know that the

Arūpajhānas were pre-Buddhistic, and this can also be proved from the Ariyāpariyesana sutta wherein Alārakalāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta who held the doctrines of Nothingness (Akiñcāññā-yatana) and neither consciousness nor unconsciousness (neva-sañña-nāsañña-yatana) respectively, are mentioned as the philosophers under whom the Bodhisatta practised meditation of the immaterial sphere (Arūpajhāna). The Annihilationists regarded the body or a subtle kind of body or even the stages of Arūpajhānas as souls. It may be remarked that these soul theorists are necessarily annihilationists. The Buddhists are neither soul theorists nor annihilationists. There is continuity after death till the attainment of Nibbāna, but not the continuity of a soul. Thus in Buddhism the two views Annihilationism and Eternalism are avoided and reconciled.

Diṭṭhadhamma-nibbāna vādas were held by those who believed in the doctrine of happiness in this life on five grounds, namely 1. one can get happiness (Nibbāna) when one's soul is in full five pleasures of the senses, 2. when one attains first jhāna, 3. second jhāna, 4. third jhāna, and 5. fourth jhāna. Thus we find that they considered the fullest enjoyment of all the sense pleasures or the happiness derived from the attainment of the four stages of meditation (Rūpajhāna) to be equivalent to Nibbāna. But our Blessed One had mentioned in the Dhammapada that Nibbāna is Paramasukha, which is far exceeding the happiness born of jhānas. According to this the four Rūpajhānas appear to have been practised by the monks and brahmins at the time of the Buddha and these, like the Formless Meditation (Arūpajhānas), were pre-Buddhistic practices.

At the end of each of the views the Buddha declared that in contrast there are doctrines which are profound, difficult to

perceive, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, beyond the reach of reasoning, understandable only by the wise. In the Ariyāpariyesana sutta (Majjhima Nikāya) the same adjectives are used in connection with the causal genesis (paṭicca-samuppāda), the conditioned origination (idappaccayatā), the cessation of all the predispositions (sabba-saṅkhara-samatha), the abandonment of all the bases of life (sabba upadhi patinissagga), Nibbāna etc. Therefore it is clear that the doctrine of Nibbāna is the profound doctrine preached by the Buddha which is higher than the views preached by the monks and brahmins.

The Buddha declared that these sixty-two views are based upon sensation (Vedanā) which is caused by contact (phassa) and which leads to craving (taṇhā), and craving naturally leads to rebirth and suffering. So the Buddha advised his disciples not to follow those doctrines, as Nibbāna cannot be attained by the contact of the mind with the 6 sense objects, which are impermanent. One must go beyond mind in order to attain Nibbāna. The stage of neither consciousness nor unconsciousness which the Bodhisatta had attained under Uddaka Rāmaputta was a very subtle state of mind and therefore the Bodhisatta instinctively felt that the highest goal was not yet reached. And so he left him, and by his own effort attained to the complete cessation of both perception and sensation (Saññā-Vedayita Nirodha) stage and then to Nibbāna.

The great significance of the sutta may be judged from the statement made at the end of the sutta that the ten thousand world systems shook when this discourse was being delivered by the Buddha. No such incident is reported to have happened when other important discourses like Sāmaññaphala sutta were delivered.

No Secret Doctrine

U OHN GHINE

A famous publisher once said that the words “hidden” and “secret” in the title of a book were magic charms to produce enormous sales.

Certain it is that the mind of man quests always in search of some secret talisman to make him more powerful than his fellows and pander to his overweening vanity.

It is the glory of the Buddha’s Teaching of realism that it shows both the puerility of this attitude and the way to master this surviving remnant of the primitive mind.

For in Buddhism there is no “Secret Doctrine”.

Nevertheless, to the Western world, Buddhism was presented as being exactly the opposite of what it is in this respect by a few Theosophist writers of the latter years of last century and the early years of this. Unfortunately these rather pretentious folk had the merest smattering of Buddhist literature and the Buddhist Teachings and have misled some of the equally ignorant Western writers even up to the present day, so that they, blindly following the blind have fallen into the same ditch of error.

The Buddha gave a clear, realistic picture of the universe since He taught Truth itself, and the only “esotericism” of this Teaching is the intellectual esotericism created by the hearer himself; by his inability to understand the Truth. Truth itself is simple, it is the mind of man that, subtle, creates subtlety.

THE PARABLE OF THE SIMSAPA LEAVES

The Buddha termed His Doctrine “Ehi passiko” .. “That which invites investigation”, and we Theravādins, who follow the Pāli Canon (the Teachings of the Buddha handed down by successive groups of “Reciters” (Bhanakas) who daily repeated aloud and preserved these Teachings until they were written down) take note not of one single phrase but of a hundred important utterances to the effect that nothing that is conducive to salvation has been withheld by the Buddha.

Not the least of these utterances is in the parable of the Simsapa leaves, from the Saṃyutta Nikāya, an integral part of the Pāli Canon.

“At one time the Lord dwelt at Kosambi in the simsapa-grove. Then the Lord took a few simsapa leaves in his hand and addressed the brethren: “What do you think, brethren, which are the more, the few simsapa leaves I have taken in my hand, or those that are in the simsapa-grove?” “Small in number, Lord, and few are the leaves that the Lord has taken in his hand; those are far more that are in the simsapa-grove.” “Even so, brethren, that is much more which I have realised and have not declared to you; and but little have I declared.

“And why, brethren, have I not declared it? Because it is not profitable, does not belong to the beginning of the religious life, and does not tend to revulsion, absence of passion, cessation,

calm, higher knowledge, enlightenment, Nibbāna. Therefore have I not declared it.”

“And what, brethren, have I declared? This is pain, I have declared; this is the cause of pain, I have declared; this is the cessation of pain, I have declared; this is the Way leading to the cessation of pain, I have declared. And why, brethren, have I declared it? Because it is profitable, it belongs to the beginning of the religious life, and tends to revulsion, absence of passion, cessation, calm, higher knowledge, enlightenment, Nibbāna. Therefore have I declared it.”

“Therefore, brethren, to this you must be devoted: this is pain, this is the cause of pain, this is the cessation of pain, this is the Way leading to the cessation of pain.”

(Samyutta, v, 437.)

From this, quoted in full as it is here, it is apparent that the only truths “withheld” were those that would not tend to the higher knowledge but would on the other hand, tend to bind one the more to those delusive states of “intellectual argument” from which as Omar Khayyam said: “I evermore, came out by the same door as in I went”. All that does tend to the higher knowledge, to the attainment of all Truth, the Buddha taught.

NO ROOM FOR MYSTERY- MONGERS

So lucid and unequivocal is the Buddha-dhamma that it would seem almost impossible for mystery-mongers even to attempt to ply their craft under the guise of Buddhism. Yet, taking advantage of the ignorance of Buddhist

Teachings in the West and, one must be charitable, due to their own lack of knowledge, one still finds a few who prate of “the esoteric” and “secret transmission” in the name of Buddhism.

Yet it was the Buddha Himself who said: Secrecy is characteristic of three things; women who are in love seek secrecy and shun publicity; so also do priests who claim to be in possession of special revelations; and so do all those who stray from the path of truth. Three things shine before the world and may not be hidden. They are the moon, the sun and the truth proclaimed by the Tathāgata. There is no secrecy about them”.

As we are taught in the great “Mahāparinibbāna Sutta”, the Buddha’s personal attendant, Ānanda, who, and this is significant, had not yet attained Arahatsip, hinted that the Buddha would, ere he passed away “leave some instructions as touching the Order”. The Buddha replied:

“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.”

In this Sutta also we read that the Buddha asked Ānanda to “assemble in the Service Hall such of the brethren as reside in the neighbourhood” and to them said:

O brethren, ye to whom the truths I have perceived have been made known by me—having thoroughly made yourselves masters of them, practise them, meditate upon them, and spread them abroad; in order that pure religion may

last long and be perpetuated, in order that it may continue to be for the good and happiness of the great multitudes, out of pity for the world, to the good and the gain and the weal of gods and of men”.

Here, indeed, is a Teaching of the open hand and not of the closed fist, and only one woefully ignorant of the sublime Doctrine could think of “something withheld” by the Buddha. One may well quote the Buddha’s own words: “Now, Sunnakkhatta, would a Tathāgata utter any speech that was ambiguous?”

It was to these brethren that the Buddha delivered his final injunction. This was some time after Ānanda had expressed the wish that the Buddha would not depart without teaching everything.

To the great assembly of brethren the Buddha asked whether any doubts existed *as to the Buddha, or the doctrine, or the path, or the method.*” The brethren were silent and Ānanda then expressed his faith and belief.

“And the venerable Ānanda said to the Exalted One:— “How wonderful a thing is it, Lord, and how marvellous! Verily, I believe that in this whole assembly of the brethren there is not one brother who has any doubt or misgiving as to the Buddha, or the doctrine, or the path, or the method!’

“It is out of the fullness of faith that thou hast spoken, Ānanda! But, Ānanda, the Tathāgata knows for certain that in this whole assembly of the brethren there is not one brother who has any doubt or

misgiving as to the Buddha, or the doctrine, or the path, or the method. For even the most backward, Ānanda, of all these five hundred brethren has become converted, is no longer liable to be born in a state of suffering, and is assured of hereafter attaining to the Enlightenment of Arahantship.”

Then the Exalted One addressed the brethren, and said:— “Behold now, brethren, I exhort you, saying:— “Decay is inherent in all component things! Work out your salvation with diligence.”

This was the last word of the Tathāgata!”

(Mahā Parinibbāna Suttanta D.ii. 154)

Here, then, is the Teaching that is conducive to full knowledge; the Buddha taught to all men who can perceive it the full truth leading to enlightenment. He did not teach those part truths which lead but to interminable arguments.

Much that He knew, certainly He did not teach in so many words, for the words did not exist, do not exist now and cannot, in the nature of things, exist. He did teach the method by which one may train oneself to perceive ultimate Truth. That method lives to-day and here in Burma we have many teachers at our more than 500 approved Meditation Centres. We are prepared to welcome earnest seekers and “holding nothing back” to help them, in their search. Already from America, Australia, England, Holland, India, Italy, from all the world, have come those who have practised the method, and profited thereby.

WHAT METTĀ ALONE CAN DO

By PIYADASSI THERA, VAJIRARAMA, COLOMBO.

The Buddha's Mettā is all embracing. Like the Full moon that sheds its balmy rays on all things without making any distinction whatsoever, so the Lord of Compassion generated Mettā, selfless love towards all beings

Towards Devadatta His rival, Aṅgulimāla, the ruthless robber, Dhanapāla, the fierce elephant and prince Rahula His son, and toward all, of the same mind was He. "Sabbattha Sama Mānaso" (an equal mind towards all things). The Buddha never used a cudgel in taming others, therefore is He called "Nihita Daṇḍa" - One who has dropped cudgels "Nihita Sattha" - One who has cast aside weapons. The only weapon the Buddha wielded was that of universal love, selfless Mettā. The Buddha taught others both by precept and example. "Cultivate, O disciples, without malice a boundless heart above, below and all around." Thus spake the Blessed One. It is well to cultivate a mild, gentle and sympathetic voice, and the only way to secure it is to be mild, gentle and sympathetic.

As the Marquis of Zetland rightly says: "It was this spirit of loving-kindness that touched the heart of the Emperor Asoka, with incalculable results to the history of the Eastern world. He pursued the path of Ahimsa with a zeal which secured for him a reputation as the greatest missionary that the world has seen. He sent forth teachers to preach the gospel of loving-kindness to three continents: Western

Asia, Eastern Europe, and North Africa. And he spread the doctrine broadcast over India and Ceylon.

The Buddha's law of piety is a pure and simple code of conduct. Buddhism does not end here, but it is important to note that it certainly does begin here. It is the influence of such teaching which impresses itself upon the traveller in Buddhist lands and which displays itself in a certain atmosphere of gentleness and kindness in which the people live. The keynote of human relationships in such lands does indeed seem to be the word Ahimsa, rendered inadequately enough by the negative word "Harmlessness", in that it carries with it the more positive attitude of mind suggested by the word "Loving-kindness".

Thoughts of hatred, thoughts of ill-will and cruelty are powerfully detrimental and harmful to oneself as well as others. Each and every ugly thought, morally repulsive thoughts, soil the human heart tremendously. You have often noticed to what extent a man's mind and body undergo change when he is in a fit of anger. The beating of the pulse is quickened because his heart throbs faster and faster, and the propelling of the blood is intensified; thus the mental and the bodily energy are dissipated and both mind and body waste. Let us remember the wise saying of our ancestors: "Be not angry; anger makes one age". Mettā or loving-kindness is the best antidote for anger in oneself. Mettā is the best medicine to those who are angry with us.

Notes and News

Burma's Meditation Centres Attract Foreign Visitors

From all over the world come those who are sincere in their desire to study Buddhism and to practise Buddhist Meditation under Burma's famed teachers.

Some of our teachers are laymen and some are bhikkhus and some of our visitors are laymen and some bhikkhus: most of those who have come to study have made some worthwhile progress, although there are those who later regret that they had not allowed sufficient time for study and have realised that the progress they have made would have been very much more had they but been able to spend a week or two longer at the Meditation Centre.

A Koliya From Ajmer Takes Back Something For His People

One of our most interesting, and most interested visitors was Shree Koliya Putta Rahula Saman Chhawara, an ardent young man from Ajmer in India. In Ajmer are to be found quite a body of Koliyas, people descended from the Buddha's own kinsmen, who, in the past few centuries had lost much of their ancient Teaching and had fallen on evil times. Now, under new conditions, they are slowly rising again to their rightful status and they had sent Shree Chhawara to Burma to study Vipassanā. This he did with a will under the Venerable Mahā Thera, the Mahasi Sayadaw, at the Thathana Yeiktha at Kokine, Rangoon.

His return to India was marked by a Public Meeting of welcome at which the following resolution was passed:

"This mammoth public meeting of today congratulates the promising and rising star of the community, Shree Koliya

Putta Rahula Suman Chhawara on his successful visit to Burma.

It further expresses its sincerest gratitude to the Government of Burma and Union Buddha Sāsana Council for affording Shree Chhawara all facilities and deep affection as a result whereof he was able to complete his course of Vipassanā successfully.

Mr. J. Van Amersfoort, Sincere Dutch Buddhist

Though he had only a very brief visit Mr. Van Amersfoort is, as he says himself, "A Buddhist for eighteen Years" and expressed his sincerity and faith in the Teachings of the Buddha. He had, as he explained, meditated previously, so that though he had but a week in Burma, since he was a business man passing through, he gained a great deal from the practice of Meditation under a well-known lay Teacher, Sithu U Ba Khin. Mr. Amersfoort has written a short account of his experiences which he found most helpful and ends "I hope with all my heart that Guru U Ba Khin will have many followers and disciples in the near future, who can be helped by him as much as I have been".

Main Centre For Foreign Visitors

In a cool green belt just twenty minutes by bus from the heart of the city of Rangoon, is Kokine and here is situate the Thathana Yeiktha, a collection of modern buildings in park-like surroundings. This centre for the practice of Vipassanā is presided over by the Ven. Mahasi Sayadaw mentioned above and is the main centre in Burma. Here have come visitors from Ceylon, Thailand, India, Canada and England and there are many more students on the way from Europe and elsewhere.

U Kevalananda (Mr. Cyril Moore)

As organiser of a group of publications and as an editor. Mr. Cyril Moore did not find in England that inner peace that comes only from the stilling of craving; though as a sincere searcher and a Buddhist he kept up his efforts to find the right method to follow the Path.

Mr. Moore went to Ceylon where he stayed for a year and studied Buddhism deeply, then on the advice of monks of Ceylon he came to Burma and meditated. He has since taken the Yellow Robe as U Kevalananda and is making good progress in Vipassanā.

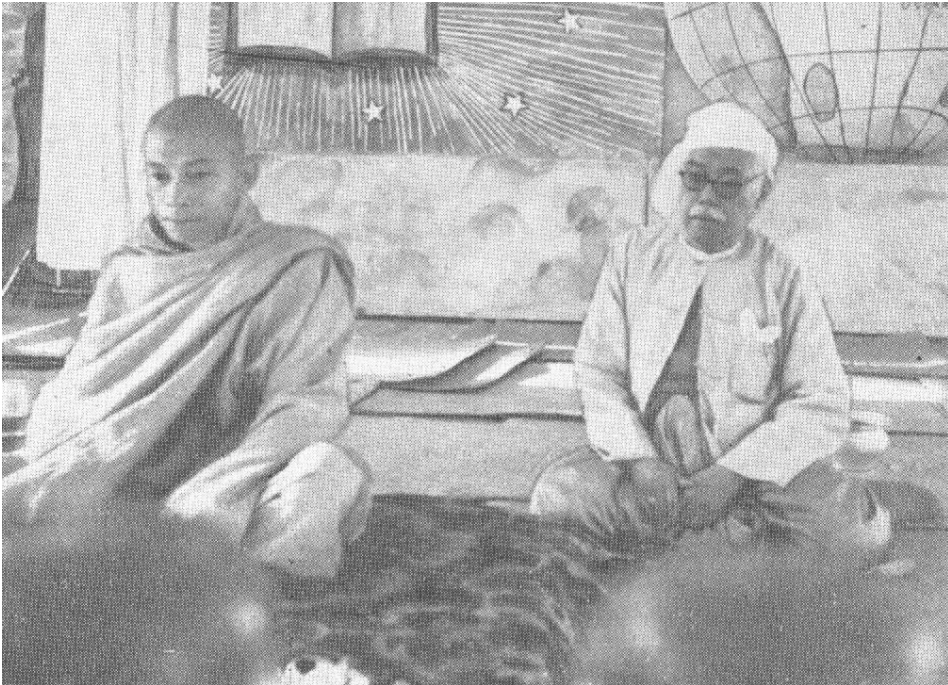
Buddhist College To Train Foreign Missionaries

The “Dhammadūta Vijjalaya” (Training College for Propagation of the

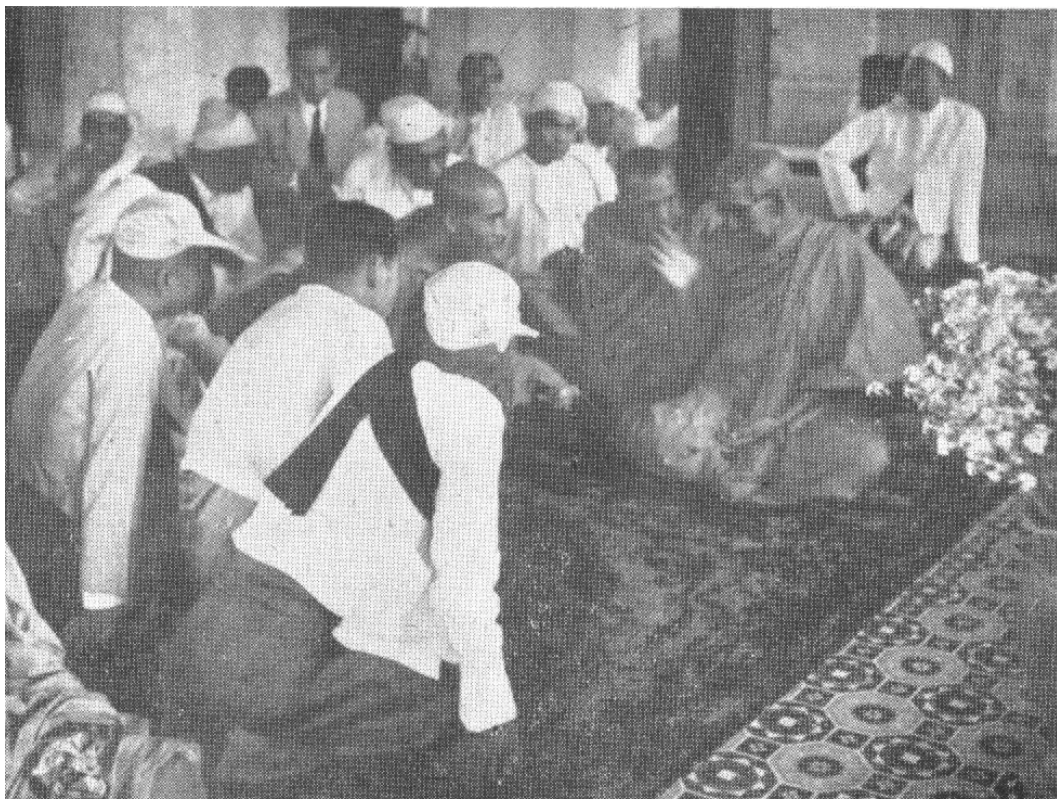
Dhamma) has been established with the view of training bhikkhus for service abroad. Opened in January of this year by Thado Thin Thudhamma Sir U Thwin, one of the devout Elders of Burma, with other members of the Committee, the ceremony was attended by the leading Mahā Theras and by the Hon. U Win, Minister for Religious Affairs.

The Principal is Ashin Kelasa, M. A., and the student bhikkhus are all holders of Dhamma Cariya titles (have passed examinations in Religious Teaching). The subjects they will now further study are English, Hindustani, Geography and other subjects including further foreign languages.

It is expected that within five years the first batch of those trained as propagators of the Dhamma will be ready to go abroad.



Ashin Kelasa, M.A., Principal, seen with Thado Thiri Thudhama Sir U Thwin, President of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council, at the opening ceremony of the Dhammaduta College on 20th December 1952.



The Saṅgha Raja of Cambodia preaching to an interested audience at the residence of Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon, Attorney-General of the Union of Burma

Chattha Sangāyanā (Sixth Great Buddhist Council) Goodwill Missions Arrive

On 19th March arrived a Mission headed by the Saṅgha Raja (the religious leader) of Cambodia and his speech broadcast over Rangoon Radio is given below.

An English translation of the speech broadcast by Cambodian Thathanabaing Maha Zawta Nyana, Maha Sumedh-dhipati from the Burma Broadcasting Service on the 22nd March 1953.

“Early in 1952 I received a letter from Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon, Attorney-General and Honorary Secretary to the Union Buddha Sāsana Council,

wherein it was stated that the Sixth Great Buddhist Council is to be held in Rangoon round about 2,500 B.E. As soon as I learnt about this I had an intention to take a responsible part in this colossal task.

I shall now briefly say as follows:— Many Cambodian people who are well conversant with the Tipiṭakas have them translated into Khamin and brought them in a series of 110 books. Of these, Nos. 1 to 36 have been printed, and a set of these printed books has already been presented to Burma for use in the ensuing Sixth Great Buddhist Council. Nos. 37 to 44 will be ready in 2498 B. E. and the remaining numbers will be ready before the time fixed for the holding of the Chattha



Offering of Ingyin (Sal) (*Shorea Robusta*) flowers at Sagaing by Sao Shwe Thaike, Ex-President and Speaker of the Chamber of Nationalities, to Saṅgha Raja of Cambodia during the latter's visit to Burma in March 1953

Sangāyanā. With this end in view, the Religious Department of the Cambodian Government is trying its utmost to expedite printing and publication of the remaining books.

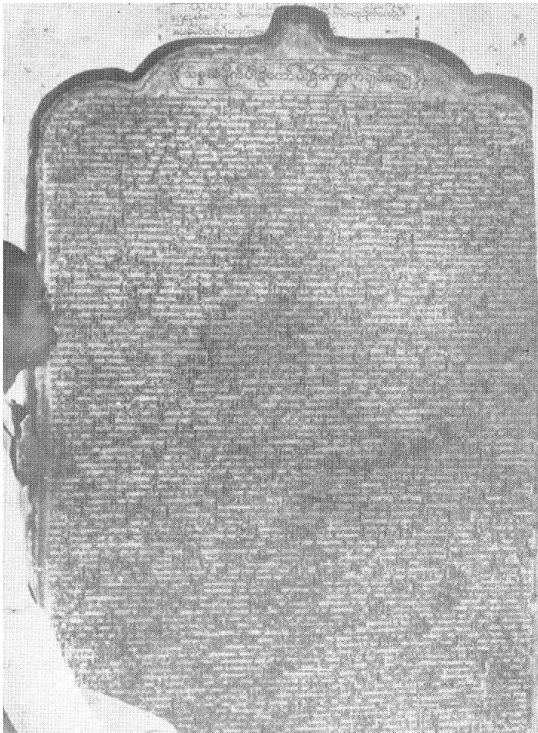
Although I have been invited to bring with me four bhikkhus and six lay-devotees, for want of time I could bring only Bhikkhu Dhamma Rama and Mr. Ung Kim Nguon, lay-devotee, as my disciple.

The sole purpose of my mission to Burma is to consult with the Ovada Cariya Wunzaung Committee and to take its advice on matters relating to the Sixth Great Buddhist Council. When I return to Cambodia I shall consult with my people there and give my best help to Burma. My mis-

sion has also the object of diffusing the whole world with the Light of the Dhamma. I have asked my Lay-attendant Mr. Ung Kim Nguon to suspend his daily pursuits for sometime and accompany me to this country, so that he may be able to plunge his heart and soul into religious matters.

When I was met at the Mingaladon airport by a good number of Buddhists and greeted with profound respect, I was glad to notice that I have arrived at a land where the Buddha's sāsana is still shining very brightly.

Immediately thereafter when I was taken to the famous Shway Dagon Pagoda by the pious Buddhists, I at last fulfilled



Above left: One of the many marble slabs of Pali inscription at Kuthodaw, in front of Mandalay Hill. These inscriptions were made after the Fifth Great Buddhist Council convened by King Mindon in Mandalay.

Above right: The Saṅgha Raja of Cambodia inspecting the Pāli inscription which were made after the Fifth Great Buddhist Council.

my long cherished wish to worship the famous Shway Dagon Pagoda. I then visited the Botataung Pagoda, the Sule Pagoda, the Kynikasan Pagoda and the Kaba-Aye (World Peace) Pagoda. When, in each of these places, I saw the Buddhists—bhikkus, lay men and lay women—paying their deepest respect to the Buddha, I could not but admire the way the Buddha's sāsana shines in Burma, and the ethical rules observed even by the laity of this country. I am fully confident that in the near future the whole world will be flooded with the light of the Buddha's sāsana.

May the people of Burma and the whole world achieve their ends speedily!

May the saddhamma endure for long!

May the Chattha Sangāyanā meet with success!

May the whole world be flooded with the light of the Buddha's Sāsana!

May all beings be hale and hearty and attain Nibbāna without fail!"

The Mission from Laos

Immediately following this came a Mission from Laos. Unfortunately, due to political and military troubles in their part of the world, they were delayed and as the great Buddhist Day of Commemoration, the Anniversary of the Birth, Attainment of Enlightenment and final Passing away of the Buddha was then

so close, necessitating so many ceremonies at which his presence was vitally necessary, particularly in these troublous times, the Saṅgha Raja of Laos was unable to come.

The Government of His Majesty, the King of Laos therefore sent the following three Maha Theras; Venerable Phra Maha Pradith, Venerable Phra Maha Bountheung Keokasomsouk and Venerable Phra Maha Chansouk with a layman, Mr. Maha Champa Saithrongdetch. They brought gifts of robes for the Burmese bhikkhus.

In a message from their country of Laos they told how the whole country, the Saṅgha Raja and the Bhikkhus, the King and the people, were overjoyed at having the opportunity to join in the great Sixth Buddhist Council, and they as one man expressed their delight and their felicitations; as one man, they said, the whole country honoured Burma for initiating the great project.

Buddha's Birthday Celebrations

Over 50,000 pilgrims including 5,500 monks, the President, Prime Minister Honble U Nu, Hon'ble U Win (Minister for Religious Affairs and National Planning) and other Cabinet Members, Chief Justice Thado Thin Thudhamma U Thein Maung, Attorney-General Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon, members of the diplomatic corps and Mr. Adlai Stevenson of U.S.A., attended the Shwaydagon Pagoda at day-break on 27th of April 1953 to commemorate Buddha Day - which falls on the fullmoon day of the Buddhist month of Visakha.

President Agga Maha Thray Sitha Dr. Ba U conducted the Nyaungyethun (watering of Bo tree) ceremony on the Shwaydagon platform at 6:30 a.m. and

proceeded to Mohnyin Damayon (Preaching Hall) where at 8:00 o'clock 5,500 bhikkhus (monks) recited the beatitudes of Lord Buddha. Two minutes, silence was then observed for world peace before the President offered food to the bhikkhus.

There was great rejoicing throughout the day and a good part of the evening.

On a full moon day of Visakha, some two thousand five hundred and seventy-six years ago, Queen Maya gave birth to Prince Siddhartha in the Lumbini Groves which lie just over the modern boundary of the Nepal Terai. At the age of 29, he renounced the world and led an ascetic life. At the age of 35 he attained Buddhahood on the Visakha Day of 528 B.C. On the Visakha Day of 527 B.C. the Supreme Buddha preached to his relatives at Kapilavatthu the Doctrine on "The Lives of the Buddhas". On the Visakha Day of 483 B.C., the Supreme Buddha attained Mahāparinibbāna. —

[Editor's note: If one takes 1956 as the 2500th anniversary of the Parinibbāna, then the following dates hold: Birth, 625 BCE; Enlightenment, 590 BCE, and Parinibbāna, 545 BCE.]

Reviews

The Maha Bodhi Society of India has issued a DIAMOND JUBILEE SOUVENIR of 216 pages which is really a splendid piece of work giving a great deal of interesting history and "background information" of events and personalities during the past sixty years in the Buddhist world.

Here for us Buddhists is a piece of vital, living history. We see how the Buddhist ideal had been almost forgotten

in the East due to the machinations of materialist Christian missionaries who used every blandishment, every artifice and every cruel mode of persecution, in the days when they were in power, to try to blot out the very name of Buddhism. We see how, very largely due to the efforts of the Anagarika Dharmapala, Buddhist Mettā and Tolerance prevailed over the intolerant Christians and how to-day in India Buddhism is growing in power in the hearts and minds of men.

There is a splendid article by Bhikkhu Sangharakkhitta on Anagarika Dharmapala and another on "The Queen of the Empire of Righteousness", Mrs. Mary E. Foster. A dozen other writers contribute articles of great interest and historical value, the Souvenir is well illustrated and two beautiful colour plates make it a wonderful gift for a Buddhist or non-Buddhist friend. It is priced at but six rupees.

Another publication we have for review is "THE INDO-ASIAN CULTURE," a quarterly. Three numbers of Vol. 1 have already been published and this, though not actually a Buddhist periodical, since it is published by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, also gives a very good idea of the wonderful power that Buddhism has exercised in forming India's culture and of the great renaissance of Buddhism which is taking place to-day. It also is well-got-up, well-printed and well-illustrated and has authoritative articles which are most scholarly and at the same time most interesting. They range from a partial rendering of the Buddha's first Sermon, in English and in Pāli to articles on the dances of India, Burma and Ceylon.

"THE GOLDEN LOTUS"

We are now receiving copies of "The Golden Lotus" which is produced in America and advertised in this issue. It is a magazine dedicated "to those, who seek the Way" and covers a very wide range. Using a different mode and a different terminology to ours, in many instances, we find it very interesting and instructive; the more so because we do not always completely agree. That does not mean that we are not moving towards the same goal.

"THE BUDDHIST WORLD"

This invaluable fortnightly fills a gap between the magazines. It is a must for every Buddhist and, sincere and straightforward, it gives the true Buddhist outlook, unhindered and uninhibited by any whining sentimentality or truckling subservience. It is refreshing to find that there is one outspoken publication which having the greatest of Mettā has the wisdom not to confuse Mettā with mawkishness. Vigorous in its defence of the Dhamma and its propagation of the Dhamma, the "Buddhist World" has the true Dhammadūta spirit.

"LE SENTIER BOUDDHIQUE"

An excellent little magazine published by the Mission Bouddhique Belge, 64 Rue Branche, Ans (Liege). It is extremely small in size—as all precious gems are small.

"WORLD BUDDHISM"

Published in Ceylon as the Monthly Journal of the World Fellowship of Buddhists this is of the "newsletter" type and has news from all over of Buddhists and Buddhism. It also carries an occasional article from some learned Buddhist scholar.

Pāli Glossary

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato samma sambuddhassa.

Veneration to Him, the Exalted Lord, the Purified, the Supremely Enlightened One.

(*Formula of salutation to the Buddha.*)

Abaddha: Not tied ; unbound ; natural.

Abhidhamma: Name of the Third Pitaka of the Buddhist Doctrine “Special Dhamma”; the “Higher Doctrine”.

Abhiññā: Higher knowledge; transcendental wisdom; psychic powers acquired in the process of “self-purification and liberation. They are six in number—five being mundane and one supramundane.

Adhamma: Unjust ; unrighteous.

Ahimsa: Non-injuring; harmless; non-violent.

Akusala-Kamma: Unwholesome volitional action.

Arahant: One who has attained the Summum Bonum of religious aspiration—Nibbāna; one who has realised the Path and the Fruition of Holiness.

Arahatta: The state or condition of an Arahant.

Ānanda: The ever present attendant and cousin of the Buddha.

Attā: Self; ego—or soul—principle; The central idea in all animistic religions, but shown by Buddhism, science and philosophy to be a false concept.

Anattā: Non-existence of Self, ego—or soul—principle. The most important Truth to be realised in order to attain liberation. (See under Sotāpanna).

Ariya: One of the Four Groups of Noble Personalities; i.e., Stream-Winner, Once-Returner, Non-Returner and Purified (Arahat). See under Sotāpanna.

Baddha: Limited; tied.

Buddha-Dhamma: The Doctrine taught by the Buddha.

Brahma: A being born in a higher realm than that of the Devas. (Although both ‘Deva’ and ‘Brahma’ are sometimes loosely translated as ‘gods’ or ‘angels’, they do not in any way correspond to these Western concepts.)

Dāna: Charity almsgiving; gifts made to the Holy Order of Monks.

Deva: A being born in one of the higher realms within the Sensuous Sphere (kāmaloka)

Gandhabba: A class of Devas.

Gāthā: Stanza.

Gāvuta: A distance just under two miles.

Jātaka: Birth-story. Stories told of the lives of the embryo Buddha.

Kamma: Volitional action; moral principle of the law of cause and effect.

Kappa: An aeon; a cycle; an inconceivably long space of time.

Khandha: Literally, “Mass”. In the Five Khandhas it means one of the composite group factors in the psycho-physical aggregate; i.e., Material Form, Sensation, Perception, Tendencies and Consciousness. The word has many other meanings in different contexts.

Loka: World; state of existence.

Lokuttara: Supramundane.

Nibbāna: It constitutes the highest and ultimate goal of all Buddhist aspirations, i.e., absolute extinction of that life-affirming will manifested as Greed, Hate, Delu-

sion, and convulsively clinging to existence, and therewith also the ultimate and absolute deliverance from all future rebirth, old age, disease and death, from all suffering and misery.

Nihita Daṇḍa: Having given up the cudgel; non-violent.

Nihita Sattha: Having given up the sword; non-violent.

Osadhī: Medicine; balm; healing preparations. (Osadhi-tārakā—the “star of healing”, identified with Venus on account of its white brilliance.

Parinibbāna: Full Nibbāna; the “Great Decease”.

Peta: A being born in one of the unhappy planes of existence.

Sabbattha Sama Mānaso: An even and tranquil mind everywhere and in all circumstances. It implies also an equal mind towards all beings; impartial good-will.

Sakkāyadiṭṭhi: Personality-belief:

Sakka: The “King of Devas”—the lord over the celestial beings in the heaven of the “Thirty-Three”.

Saṃsāra: “Round of Rebirth”.

Samyojanas: “Fetters”; such as Personality-belief, Sceptical doubt, Clinging to mere rules and ritual, Sensuous Craving, Ill-will, Craving for fine-material existence, Craving for immaterial existence, conceit, restlessness and ignorance.

Sankhāra: Formations: component things; arising-and-passing-away; physical and mental phenomena.

Sīla: The Five, Eight or Ten Precepts; moral conduct in general; self-restraint.

Sotāpanna: A “Stream Winner”; the first of the Four Groups of Noble Personalities. (See under Ariya). The Sotāpanna is one who by meditation has realised the

truth of Anattā, is confirmed in confidence in the Doctrine and hence has destroyed the first three fetters, *i.e.*, (1) Belief in Self (See under Attā), (2) Doubt and hesitation and (3) Belief in the efficacy of rites and ceremonies for the attainment of liberation. The Sotāpanna, who has gained the fruit of the first stage of the Path, is assured of his final emancipation within a measurable period, is not reborn more than seven times, and is no longer in danger of a lower rebirth. He may in this lifetime complete the further three stages and attain Nibbāna as an Arahant.

Tathāgata: The “Perfect One”.

Tāvātimsā: One of the heavenly realms of the Deva-loka.

Tipiṭika: (Lit. “Three Baskets”) The three divisions of the Buddhist Canonical works, *i. e.*,

(1) Section of the Discourses (Suttanta)

(2) The Section of the Saṅgha Rules (Vinaya)

(3) The section of the Higher Doctrine (Abhidhamma).

Theras: Elders or senior members of the Order of the Sangha.

Uposatha: Days set aside in conformity with the lunar calendar for special observance of religious duties and of the additional precepts. They occur on the new-moon day, the full-moon day and the two days of the first and the last moon quarter. (See under Sīla).

Utu: Favourable conditions for germination; warmth; season; physical compatibility.

Vimāna: Heavenly palace.

Vipāka: Result; fruit; consequence.

Yojana: A distance of about 7 miles.

This word is often quoted in the Suttas.