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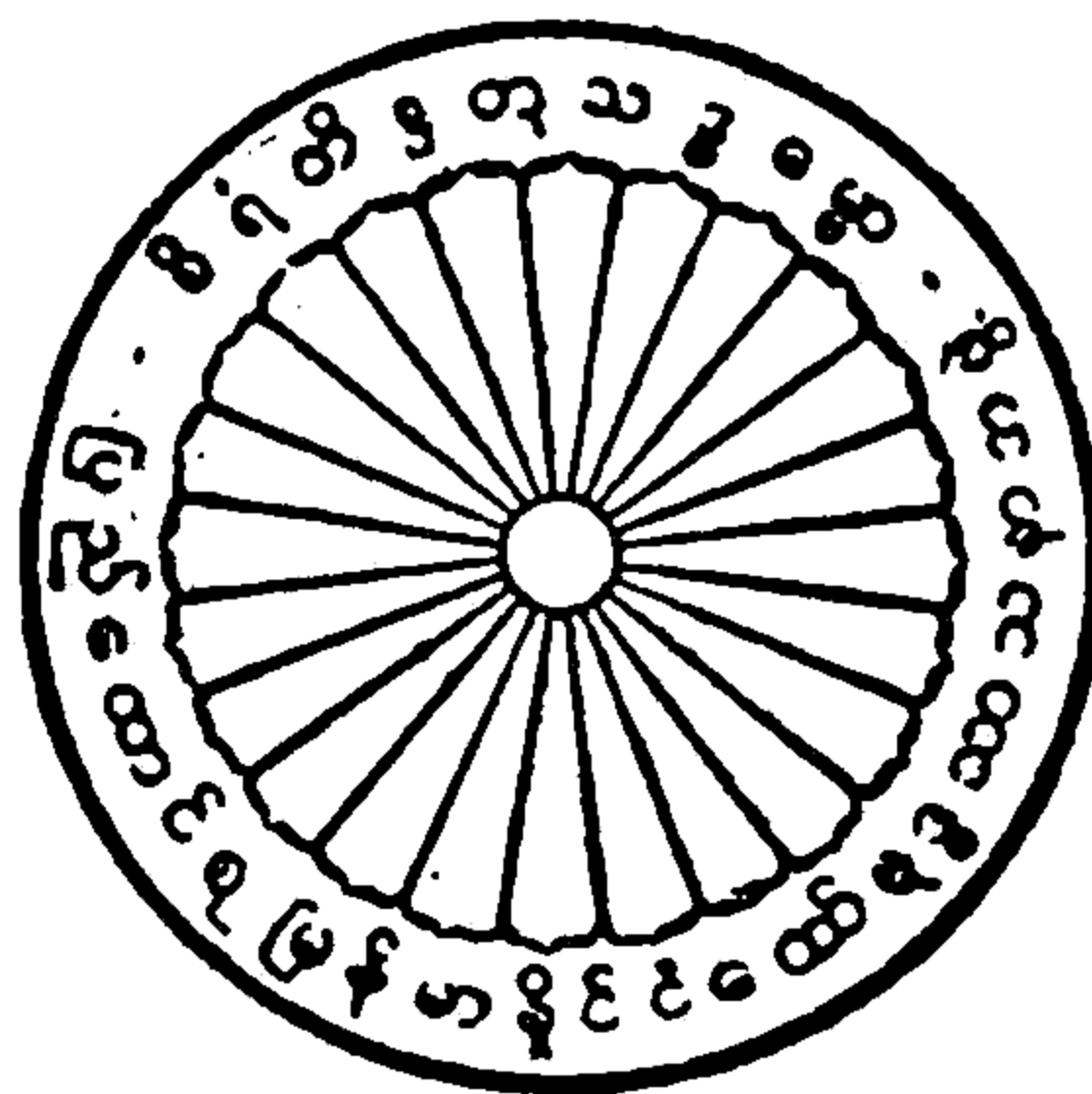
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## THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA

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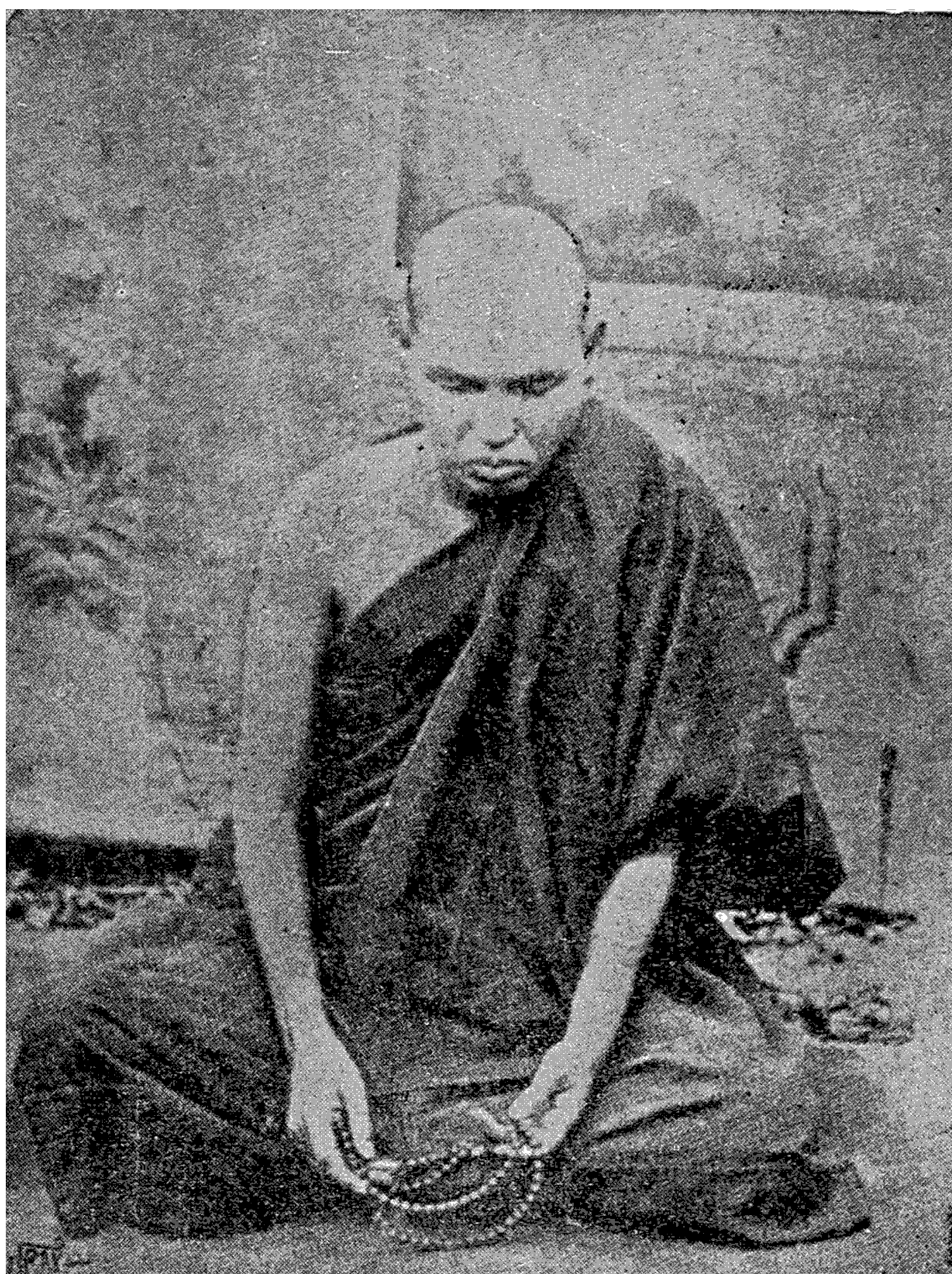
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Venerable Mahāthera Ledī Sayadaw,  
D.Litt., Aggamahāpaṇḍita

# SAMMĀDIṬṬHI DĪPANĪ

(The Manual Of Right Views)

*By Mahāthera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamahāpāṇḍita, D. Litt.*

TRANSLATED FROM PALI INTO BURMESE BY LEDI PANDITA U MAUNG GYI, M. A.

(Translated by the Editors of "The Light of the Dhamma.")

## PART ONE

*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa.*

*Veneration to Him, the Most Exalted, the Purified, the Supremely Enlightened Buddha.*

### P R E A M B L E

“Diṭṭhibandhanabandheyya,  
Taṇhāsotena vāhite ;  
Satte nāyaka tāresi,  
Bhagavantassa te namo.”

(By means of a ship named “The Noble Eightfold Path”, the Buddha, the Great Leader of men, Devas and Brahmās, has rescued beings, who, entangled with Wrong Views, were drifting aimlessly in the current of the Ocean of Craving. To this Exalted One I pay my deepest homage.)

The Manual of Right Views was originally written in Pāli by the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw who has instructed me to translate it into plain Burmese. Accordingly, I now give the Burmese translation of the Sammādiṭṭhi Dīpanī (The Manual of Right Views).

### Three Kinds of Wrong Views

“O monks, there are three kinds of beliefs, addicted to which, discussing about which, and making them their object, some recluses and Brahmans reach the extremes and become *akiriya-diṭṭhi* (holders of the ‘View of the Inefficacy of action’).

“What are these three ?”

They are :—

- (1) Pubbekata-hetu-diṭṭhi;
- (2) Issaranimmāna-hetu-diṭṭhi; and
- (3) Ahetu-apaccaya-diṭṭhi.

#### Pubbekata-Hetu-Diṭṭhi

(View that all sensations enjoyed by beings in the present existence are caused and conditioned only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences.)

“Monks, there are some recluses and Brahmans who set forth and hold the following view :—

‘All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present existence are

caused and conditioned only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences.’ This view is known as Pubbekata-hetu-diṭṭhi.

#### Issaranimmāna-Hetu-Diṭṭhi

(View that all sensations in the present existence are created by a Supreme Being or God.)

“Monks, there are some recluses and Brahmans who set forth and hold the following view :—

‘All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present existence are created by a Supreme Brahmā or God.’ This is known as Issaranimmāna-hetu-diṭṭhi.

#### Ahetu-Apaccaya-Diṭṭhi

(View of the ‘Uncausedness and Unconditionality’ of existence).

“Monks, there are some recluses and Brahmans who set forth and hold the following view :—

‘All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present life come into existence of their own accord and are not caused by janaka-kamma (Generative kamma) and upatthambhaka-kamma (Sustaining kamma). This is known as Ahetu-apaccaya-diṭṭhi.’

Here ends the synopsis of the three Wrong Views.

### Refutation of Pubbekata-Hetu View

In the Anguttara Nikāya, Tika-nipāta, we have the Omniscient Buddha’s words :—

“Monks, of these three views, there are some recluses and Brahmans who hold and set forth the following view :

‘All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present existence are caused only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences.’

I approach them and ask : “Friends, is it true that you hold and set forth this view: ‘That all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present life are caused only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences?’ ”

To this those recluses and Brahmans reply, “Yes, Venerable Sir.”

Then I say to them: “ Friends, if that be the case, there will be persons who, conditioned by volitional actions done by them in their past existences,

- (1) will kill any living being ;
- (2) will steal ;
- (3) will tell lies ;
- (4) will indulge in immoral sexual intercourse ;
- (5) will slander ;
- (6) will use harsh language ;
- (7) will foolishly babble ;
- (8) will be avaricious ;
- (9) will maintain ill-will against others;
- (10) will maintain Wrong Views.”

‘Monks, indeed, in the minds of those who confidently and solely rely on the volitional actions done by beings in their past existences and hold this view, there cannot arise such mental factors as chanda (Desire-to-do) and vāyama (Effort), as to differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be refrained from.’

‘Monks, indeed, in the minds of those who cannot truly and firmly differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be avoided, and live without the application of mindfulness and self-restraint, there cannot arise righteous beliefs that are conducive to the cessation of Defilements.’

‘ Monks, this is the first factual statement to refute the heretical beliefs and views advanced by those recluses and Brahmans who maintain that all sensations enjoyed by beings in the present life are caused and conditioned only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences.’

### Refutation of Issaranimmāna View

The Buddha declared:

“ Monks, of these three views, there are some recluses and Brahmans who hold and set forth the following view:

‘All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present existence are created by a Supreme Brahmā or God. ’

I approach them and ask: “ Friends, is it true that you hold and set forth this view: ‘That all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations, and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present life are created by a Supreme Brahmā or God?’ ”

To this those recluses and Brahmans reply, “ Yes, Venerable Sir.”

Then I say to them: “ Friends, if that be the case, there will be persons who, owing to the creation of a Supreme Brahmā or God,

- (1) will kill any living being;
- (2) will steal;
- (3) will tell lies;
- (4) will indulge in immoral sexual intercourse;
- (5) will slander;
- (6) will use harsh language;
- (7) will foolishly babble;
- (8) will be avaricious;
- (9) will maintain ill-will against others;
- (10) will maintain Wrong Views.”

‘Monks, indeed, in the minds of those who confidently and solely rely on the creation of a Supreme Brahmā or God, there cannot arise such mental factors as Desire-to-do and Effort, as to differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be refrained from.’

‘Monks, indeed, in the minds of those who cannot truly and firmly differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be refrained from, and live without the application of mindfulness and self-restraint, there cannot arise righteous beliefs that are conducive to the cessation of Defilements.’

‘Monks, this is the second factual statement to refute the heretical beliefs and views advanced by those recluses and Brahmins who maintain that all sensations enjoyed by beings in the present life are created by a Supreme Brahmā or God.’

### Refutation of Ahetuka View

The Buddha declared:

“Monks, of these three views, there are some recluses and Brahmins who hold and set forth the following view:

‘All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present life come into existence of their own accord and without the intervention of the Generative and Sustaining karmas.’

I approach them and ask: “Friends, is it true that you hold and set forth this view: ‘That all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present life come into existence of their own accord and not due to the Generative and Sustaining karmas?’”

To this those recluses and Brahmins reply: “Yes, Venerable Sir.”

Then I say to them: “Friends, if that be the case, there will be persons who, without any cause or condition,

- (1) will kill any living being;
- (2) will steal;
- (3) will tell lies;
- (4) will indulge in immoral sexual intercourse;
- (5) will slander;
- (6) will use harsh language;
- (7) will foolishly babble;

- (8) will be avaricious;
- (9) will maintain ill-will against others;
- (10) will maintain Wrong Views.”

‘Monks, indeed, in the minds of those who confidently and solely rely on the “Uncausedness and Unconditionality” of existence, there cannot arise such mental factors as Desire-to-do and Effort, as to differentiate between what should be done and what should be avoided.’

‘Monks, indeed, in the minds of those who cannot truly and firmly differentiate between what should be done and what should not be done, and live without the application of mindfulness and self-restraint, there cannot arise righteous beliefs that are conducive to the cessation of Defilements.’

‘Monks, this is the third factual statement to refute the heretical beliefs and views advanced by those recluses and Brahmins who maintain that all sensations enjoyed by beings come into existence of their own accord and not due to the Generative and Sustaining karmas.’”

Here end the expositions according to the Anguttara-Nikāya, Tika-nipāta.

### Three Wrong Views

(Below are the expositions according to the other Suttas.)

In the world there are three Evil Views. They are:—

- (1) Pubbekata-hetu-diṭṭhi;
- (2) Issaranimmāna-hetu-diṭṭhi; and
- (3) Ahetu-apaccaya-diṭṭhi.

These three Wrong Views have already been explained and were also expounded by the Omniscient Buddha in the Anguttara-Nikāya, Tika-nipāta—Dutiyapaṇṇāsaka—Dutīya-vagga, First Sutta and in the Paññāsa-nipāta—Mahābodhi-paribbājaka Jātaka.

In some of the Suttas, the Issaranimmāna View is known as Issarakāraṇa-vāda (View that a Supreme Brahmā or God has performed all these) or Issarakuttika-vāda (View that a Supreme Brahmā or God has arranged all these). The Omniscient Buddha refuted these three Wrong Views in various ways and instructed His disciples in conformity with the Truth.

I shall therefore explain these three Wrong Views serially, in detail and more completely.

### Refutation of Pubbekata-hetu View

(View that the past volitional actions of beings are the sole causes)

Individuals and beings enjoy all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations. They enjoy such sensations as relate to inferiority, superiority, foolishness, cleverness, things within one's power and things beyond one's power. Those who hold the Pubbekata-hetu View maintain as follows :

“Conditioned solely by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences, people enjoy such things as agreeableness, disagreeableness, satisfactoriness and unsatisfactoriness of life. All these things are not created by any one, nor are they caused by acts done diligently by people in the present existence.”

As this view disclaims the Generative and Sustaining karmas it is unreasonable and grossly mistaken. Hence it is called a Wrong View.

Suppose this Pubbekata-hetu-vāda were really true. There are people who kill living creatures, only because they are prompted by their past volitional actions. There are also people who, being conditioned by the wholesome volitional actions done by them in their past existences, have become recluses and Brahmans endowed with Good Conduct. At times these recluses and Brahmans are prompted by their past volitional actions to commit Evil deeds. Then they, prompted by their Evil Actions, kill living creatures ; take what is not given ; indulge in illicit sexual intercourse ; tell lies ; carry tales ; use harsh language ; uselessly babble ; are avaricious ; maintain ill-will against others ; and maintain Wrong Views.

In this world there are such things as “Hearing the Discourses delivered by the wise” and “Wise Consideration”, which are the conditions to become wise and virtuous. Supposing all wholesome and unwholesome volitional actions done by people in the present life are solely caused by their past karmas, then those things such as “Hearing the Doctrine”, and “Wise Consideration” will become fruitless and useless, because the holders of this view believe that “to become a wise man”

or “to become a fool” is solely caused by their past kamma and by no other causes.\*

In reality, people are able to become virtuous recluses or brahmans only when they perform such wholesome volitional actions as “keeping company with the wise” and “hearing the Doctrine”, and not otherwise. We have noticed such states of affairs in our daily lives. As the Pubbekata-hetu View disclaims the Generative kamma and the Sustaining kamma, it should be declared as a Wrong View.

This is a way of refutation.

### Absence of ‘Desire-to-do’ and ‘Energy’

In the minds of these recluses and Brahmans who confidently rely on the volitional actions done by them in their past existences and hold the same view; who hold that this Pubbekata-hetu View only is the true view; and who hold that other views are false and useless, there cannot arise ‘Desire-to-do’ and ‘Energy’ by which they are able to differentiate between what should be done and what should be refrained from, because they believe that all present actions are caused by their past volitional actions, and not by ‘Desire-to-do’ or ‘Energy’ exercised by people in the present life.

In reality, only when people have Good Intention and Right Effort, are they able to perform what should be done and refrain from what should not be done, and not otherwise. We have noticed such states of affairs in our daily lives. The view held by those who reject all present causes, such as ‘Desire-to-do’ and ‘Energy’ and believe only in the past volitional actions, should be taken as a Wrong View.

This is another way of refutation.

### How Virtuous Practices can be Impaired

If Desire-to-do and Energy to perform what should be done and to avoid what should be refrained from, do not arise in the minds of those people who hold the Pubbekata-hetu view, they being unable to perceive what is Good and what is Evil, remain without performing wholesome volitional actions which should be performed, and on the other hand perform unwholesome volitional actions which should be avoided. They having no Mindfulness and Self-restraint, their view cannot be a righteous

\* NOTE—This is the ‘Doctrine of the Elect’ held by sects in some faiths even today.

samaṇa-vāda (view of a recluse). In the world there are such conventional terms as “samaṇa” (recluse), “brahmaṇa” (a person leading a pure, stainless and ascetic life), “virtuous people” and “wise people”, because these are the people who perform what should be performed and avoid what should be avoided. The conventional terms of “righteous persons”, “persons leading a pure and stainless life” or a “sappūrisa (worthy man)” cannot be applied to those who hold this Pubbekata-hetu view, because to them there is no difference between what actions should be done and what should be refrained from, which courses of actions are usually practised by householders, recluses and wise people alike.

In reality, there are actions which should be done and which should be refrained from. Some people do not always perform wholesome volitional actions which should be done, and do those Evil actions which should be abstained from. Such people are called pakati-manussa (worldlings). Some people having Mindfulness and Self-restraint perform Good actions and abstain from Evil actions. They are called ‘samaṇa’ (recluses), ‘brahmaṇa’ (ascetics), or ‘sappūrisa’ (worthy people). If one differentiates between these classes of people—Evil ones and Wise ones, he is said to maintain the Right Samaṇa view or the Right Brahmaṇa view. As the Pubbekata-hetu view disclaims all present causes such as Mindfulness etc., and firmly believes in the volitional actions performed by beings in their past existences, their view should be regarded as a Wrong View.

This is the third way of refutation.

### **The Possibility of Becoming the Holder of the View that all Things are Uncaused or Unconditioned**

If this Pubbekata-hetu-ditṭhi-vāda (View of the inefficacy of action) be scrutinized or thoroughly analysed by the intelligence of wise people, it will be found that in all fields of actions, there is nothing worthy for people to do but for them to follow the line of least resistance. How? It is in the following manner: those who hold this view reject all actions that should be done by people in the present life and also do not put forth the Energy to be exercised by the virtuous. They also reject the functioning of Energy and Wisdom. They maintain that the benefits relating to the present life and those relating to the next existence as declared by

the wise are false. In the minds of those who hold this Wrong View, there cannot arise the mental factors of Desire-to-do and Energy to perform all wholesome actions that should be performed by the virtuous. Thus this view becomes akiriya-ditṭhi (the Wrong View of the Uncausedness of existence).

Those who hold this Pubbekata-hetu view are, therefore, good for nothing, and resemble a heap of refuse, or a piece of wood. For the reasons mentioned above, the Supreme Buddha was able to confute this Wrong View.

### **Exposition of the Word—“Kammasakā”**

(One whose kamma is his own property)

*A query—*

Here one may say to another: “Friend, if it is true that the Supreme Buddha had well refuted the Pubbekata-hetu view, why and for what reason did the Buddha declare the following in the Subha-sutta?

“Kammassakā māṇavasattā, kamma-dāyādā, kammayonī, kammabhandhū, kamma parissaraṇā.

Only the wholesome and unwholesome volitional actions done by beings are their own properties that always accompany them, wherever they may wander in many a becoming or kappa (world-cycle).”

*Beings are the heirs of their own kamma.*

All beings are the descendants of their own kamma.

Kamma alone is the real relative of all beings.

Kamma alone is the real Refuge of beings. Whatever wholesome and unwholesome actions are done by beings, bodily, verbally and mentally, they become the heirs of their kamma.

The following are the replies to the above question:—

- (1) Those who maintain the Pubbekata-hetu view hold that all Pleasures and Sufferings experienced by beings in the present life are conditioned and caused only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences. They reject all present causes, such as Energy and Wisdom. As this Pubbekata-hetu view rejects all present causes, it is known as Ekapakkha-hīna-vāda (the view which is deprived of one side i.e. present kamma).

- (2) Those who hold the Pubbekata-hetu view maintain that all Pleasures and Sufferings experienced by beings in the present life are created by a Supreme Brahmā or God. They reject all past and present karmas of beings. So this view is known as Ubhaya-pakkha-hīna-vāda (the view which is deprived of both sides, *i.e.* both past and present karmas of beings).
- (3) Those who hold the Pubbekata-hetu view maintain that all Pleasures and Sufferings experienced by beings in this life come into existence of their own account, and reject all causes whatsoever. As this view rejects all causes of existence, it is known as Sabba-hīna-vāda (the view which is deprived of all, *i.e.*, all kinds of causes whatsoever).

Of these three, the Supreme Buddha desiring to refute the Issaranimmāna-vāda (the view that all sensations in the present existence are created by a Supreme Brahmā or God) and ahetuka-vāda (the view of the 'Uncausedness and Unconditionality' of existence) declared: "Kammassakā māṇava-sattā kammadāyādā."

#### Another way of Explanation

The Buddha, in a general manner, declared: "Kammassakā sattā kammadāyādā" and not specifically as "*Pubbekata* kammassakā sattā *Pubbekata* kammadāyādā". Here, kammassakā and kammadāyādā mean both past and present karmas of beings. If we truly interpret in this way, "kammassakā" will mean "past and present karmas of beings".

#### Three Great Spheres

Here I shall explain the Past and the Present karmas. There exist three Great Spheres :

- (1) Kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna,  
(Sphere in which Karma functions)
- (2) Vīriyasādhaniya-ṭhāna;  
(Sphere in which Energy functions)
- (3) Paññāsādhaniya-ṭhāna;  
(Sphere in which Wisdom functions)

Of these, Kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna is subdivided into two parts :—

- (1) Atīta-kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna;  
(Sphere in which Past Karmas function.)
- (2) Paccuppanna-kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna. (Sphere in which Present Karmas function).

#### Exposition of Kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna

##### *Atīta-kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna*

The following resultant effects being caused and conditioned by the volitional actions done by beings in their past existences are called atīta-kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna :—

- (1) Rebirth in the Happy Course of Existence or in the Woeful course of Existence through the medium of any of the four kinds of paṭisandhi.\*
- (2) Rebirth in a noble family or in an ignoble family even in the Happy Course of Existence.
- (3) Presence or absence of any of the sense organs, such as eyes, ears, etc.
- (4) Endowment with Wisdom, or lack of Wisdom at the conception-moment.
- (5) Deformity or non-deformity.

The actions performed by beings in the present life cannot cause such effects. The beings reborn in the Happy Course of Existence by virtue of their past wholesome kammical actions cannot transform their bodies into those of the Woeful Course of Existence by dint of their present actions, such as Wisdom and Energy without the dissolution of their bodies of the Happy Course of Existence. In the same way, the beings who are reborn in the Woeful Course of Existence by virtue of their past kamma cannot transform their bodies into those of the Happy Course of Existence by means of their present kamma without the dissolution of their bodies of the Woeful Course of Existence. No man, Deva, Brahmā or God, by means of present kammic action, such as Wisdom and Energy is able to restore the eye-sight of a being whose optical organs have been impaired from the very

\* There are four kinds of Rebirths. They are:—

- (1) Upapatti-paṭisandhi (Spontaneously-manifesting beings);
- (2) Samdedaja-paṭisandhi (moisture-born beings);
- (3) Andaja-paṭisandhi (beings born from eggs); and
- (4) Jalābuja-paṭisandhi (beings born from a womb).

moment of conception owing to that being's past unwholesome kamma.

Again, when a being's optical organs which he obtained by virtue of his past kamma are utterly destroyed by some dangerous causes in the present life, no man, Deva, Brahmā or God is able to restore his lost eye-sight by means of the man's, Deva's, Brahma's, or God's Wisdom and Energy exercised by him in the present life. The same principle holds good for the audible organs etc. that come into existence owing to the past kmmas of beings.

Here ends the brief exposition of Atītakammasādhaniya Sphere.

### **Paccuppanna Kamma Sādhaniya-ṭhāna**

*Sphere in which the present kmmas operate*

Here, I shall first expound the paccuppanna-kamma (present kamma). Briefly speaking, all bodily, verbal and mental actions performed by beings in the present life for their happiness or misery are all paccuppanna-kamma.

Broadly speaking, there exist such actions as agriculture, cattle breeding, sheep-farming, trade and commerce. There also exist branches of study, such as various types of arts, crafts, etc. Besides, there exist the following arts:

Bhūmi-vijjā (the art of determining whether the site for a proposed house or garden is suitable or not), anga-vijjā (the art of character-reading from marks on the body), nakkhatta-vijjā (astronomy), sutamaya-paññā (knowledge based on learning), cintā-maya-paññā (knowledge based on thinking—philosophy), and bhāvanā-maya-paññā (knowledge based on Mental Development). Those actions, crafts, arts and knowledges mentioned above are called paccuppanna-kamma (present volitional actions). Apart from the above-mentioned actions, there also exist countless number of evil actions, stupidity and negligence which cause the destruction of life and property; injury to health; defamation and libel; injury to morality; and hindrance to progress of knowledge. All these actions are present kmmas. So, there really exist various kinds of actions, some of which are profitable and others disadvantageous in the present life. These two kinds of actions are within the

paccuppanna-kammasādhaniya-ṭhāna (Sphere in which the present kmmas operate.)

Here ends the brief exposition of the Sphere in which the present kmmas operate.

### **Missaka-naya**

*Miscellaneous method of exposition*

Past kamma is subdivided into three kinds:

- (1) Mahanta (Major kamma);
- (2) Majjhima (Medium kamma);
- (3) Appaka (Minor kamma).

Present kamma is also subdivided into three kinds:

- (1) Vuddhibhāgiya (kamma that will lead to one's prosperity);
- (2) Ṭhitibhāgiya (kamma that will keep one in stability);
- (3) Hānabhāgiya (kamma that will lead to one's decrease.)

### **Mahantātīta-Kamma-Mūlakatika**

*Three types of persons who are conditioned by their past major kmmas.*

Conditioned by their past major kmmas, some people are reborn in the families of kings, wealthy people and rich people. Of these, some people perform vuddhibhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma (present kamma that will cause one to prosper). They are prosperous with worldly riches and authoritative powers. They rise up from the position they first attain and do not go down to a lower position.

Some people perform ṭhitibhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma (kamma that will keep one in normality). Their wealth and glory will be at *status quo*; they neither rise up nor go down from their normal position.

Some people perform hānabhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma (kamma that will cause their wealth and position to decrease). They lose their property and glory; they are not able to keep their position at normality, nor are they able to improve their status.

Here ends the exposition of the three kinds of present kamma basing on past major kmmas.

### Majjhimātita-Kammamūlakatika

*Three types of persons who are conditioned by their past medium kammās.*

Conditioned by their past medium kammās, some people are reborn in the families of moderately rich people. Of these, those who perform vuddhi-bhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma are prosperous with wealth and glory in the present life.

Those who perform t̥itibhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma will be in their normal position without having any progress or decrease in wealth and standing.

Those who perform hānabhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma will lose their wealth and honour, unable to keep themselves in normal position, let alone improve their status.

Here ends the exposition of the three kinds of present kamma basing on past medium kammās.

### Appakātita-Kammamūlakatika

*Three types of persons who are conditioned by their past minor kammās.*

Conditioned by their past minor kammās, some people are reborn in the families of poor people. Of these, those who perform vuddhi-bhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma increase their wealth.

Those who perform t̥itibhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma remain in their normal position without any progress or decrease.

Those who perform hānabhāgiya-paccuppanna-kamma cannot remain even in their normal position, but will become poorer and poorer.

Here ends the exposition of the three present kammās basing on past minor kammās.

Thus there are two great spheres—Atīta-kammāsādhaniya ṭhāna (Sphere in which the past kamma operates) and paccuppanna-kammāsādhaniya-ṭhāna (Sphere in which the present kamma operates.)

Here ends the exposition of kammāsādhaniya-ṭhāna.

*Viriyasādhaniya-ṭhāna (Sphere in which Energy operates) and Paññāsādhaniya-ṭhāna (Sphere in which Wisdom operates)*

Viriya (Energy) and Paññā (Wisdom) function to help the accomplishment of the two present kammās. The greater the

Energy and Wisdom, the greater will be the Mahanta-kamma (Major kamma). If Energy and Wisdom be of medium strength, they are able to cause Medium kamma. If Energy and Wisdom be feeble, they are able only to cause Minor kamma. So, when two kinds of Kammāsādhaniya-ṭhāna (Sphere in which kamma operates) are great, the Spheres in which Energy and Wisdom operate also become great.

Here ends the exposition of Viriyasādhaniya-ṭhāna and Paññāsādhaniya-ṭhāna.

*Relations between Past and Present kammās and Viriya (Energy) and Ñāṇa (Knowledge).*

In the case of beings who are thus wandering in the Round of Rebirths, Past and Present kammās are the primary causes in conditioning Happiness and Suffering experienced by beings in the present life. Other causes such as kāla (time), desa (locality; region), etc. are called secondary causes. The Buddha, therefore, expounded Past and Present kammās and declared: “Kammāsakā māṇava sattā kammadāyādā” [Only the wholesome and unwholesome volitional actions done by beings are their own properties that always accompany them, wherever they may wander in many a becoming or kappa (world-cycle). Beings are the heirs of their own kamma.]

When the Buddha expounded the Primary causes, that exposition also relates to the Secondary causes. So, when He declared “Kammāsakā, etc.” and expounded the two kammās—Past and Present kammās—He had thereby explained that these two Primary kammās are conditioned by such causes as “associating with the wise”, “Hearing the Doctrine” and “practising the Dhamma”. When the Omniscient Buddha declared “Kammāsakā etc.”, it should be taken that the exposition of that Declaration also included the exposition of their elements.

People like Subha came to the Buddha and related to Him their (wrong) views on Past kammās. With reference to these people the Buddha expounded Past kammās in the Cūlakammavibhanga-sutta and the Mahākamma-vibhanga-sutta of the Upari-paṇṇāsa, Majjhima-nikāya.

People like Sigāla related to the Buddha their (wrong) views on Present kammās. With reference to these types of people,

the Buddha expounded the present kamma in in Sigālovāda sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya and the Vāsetṭha-sutta of the Sutta-nipāta.

In the Aṭṭha-nipāta and others of the Anguttara-nikāya, the Omniscient Buddha gave the exegesis of both Past and Present kammās.

In regard to those people who do not realise the advantages of Energy and Wisdom, the Omniscient Buddha expounded the advantages of Energy and Wisdom in many hundreds of Suttas.

Past and Present kammās which cause Pleasurable Sensations enjoyed by beings, cannot exist without the functioning of Energy and Knowledge. So when the Buddha expounded Past and Present kammās, it should be noted that Energy and Knowledge were also included in that exposition.

Energy and Knowledge exist only for the coming into existence of, or for the accomplishment of those volitional actions. This statement is true. Because, if there are no actions to be energised, where will Energy function? And if there be no knowable things, what will Knowledge know then? It should therefore be noted that where the Buddha expounded Energy and Knowledge, His exposition also included the two kammās caused by Energy and Knowledge.

Briefly, the benefits enjoyed by beings are classified as follows:

- (1) *Diṭṭhadhammikattha*—Benefits enjoyed by beings in the present life.
- (2) *Samparāyikattha*—Benefits to be enjoyed by beings in the future existences.
- (3) *Paramattha*—Supramundane benefits.

The Tipiṭaka—the Teaching of the Buddha—is conditioned on these three classes of benefits. When the Buddha expounded the benefits to be enjoyed by beings in the present life, it should be remembered that Present kamma is expounded in the Piṭakas where those benefits are expounded. When He expounded the benefits to be enjoyed by beings in the future existences, it should be noted that Past kamma is expounded in those Piṭakas also. In some sermons He expounded *kandhā* (Groups of Existence), *āyatana* (Bases), *dhātu* (Elements), *sacca* (Noble Truths,) and *paṭiccasamuppāda* (Dependent Origination) in connection with *suññata-dhamma* (Doctrine of Unsubstantiality). It should also be noted that when the Omniscient Buddha expounded these, His exposition included Supramundane benefits which are the Absolute Truths. These Supramundane benefits also have some bearing on *diṭṭhadhammikattha* (benefits enjoyed by beings in the present life) and *samparāyikattha* (benefits to be enjoyed by beings in the future existences). Therefore it should be borne in mind that as the Omniscient Buddha expounded the dhamma relating to *suññata* (Unsubstantiality), the Three Piṭakas include Past and Present kammās, and that the whole Tipiṭaka is based on Past and Present Kammās. For these reasons, wise people know that when the Buddha declared: “*Kammassakā sattā, kammadāyādā*”, He also meant thereby: “*ñāṇavīriyassaka-sattā, ñāṇavīriyadāyādā*” (Knowledge and Energy are the properties of beings; beings are the heirs of their Knowledge and Energy).

Here ends the brief exposition of the Buddha's declaration on wholesome volitional actions.

Those monks who bar out both the letter and the spirit, by taking the discourses wrongly and interpreting according to the letter,—such are responsible for the loss of many folk, for the discomfort of many folk, for the loss, discomfort and sorrow of devas and mankind. Moreover such monks beget demerit and cause the disappearance of this true Dhamma.

But those monks who, by taking the discourses rightly and interpreting according to the letter, conform to both letter and spirit,—such are responsible for the profit, for the welfare of many folk, for the profit, the welfare, the happiness of devas and mankind. Moreover such monks beget merit and establish this true Dhamma !

*Anguttara-Nikāya*, THE BOOK OF THE TWOS,  
Chapter IV.

# BUDDHISM IN A NUTSHELL

By Ven. Nārada Mahāthera

“NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA-SAMBUDDHASSA.”

## THE BUDDHA

IN the year 624 B.C. there was born in the district of Nepal an Indian Sākyan Prince, by name *Siddhattha Gotama*. At the age of sixteen he married his cousin, the beautiful Princess *Yasodharā*.

For nearly thirteen years after his happy marriage, he lived in the lap of luxury, blissfully ignorant of the vicissitudes of life outside the palace gates. With the march of time truth gradually dawned upon him.

In his 29th year, which witnessed the turning point of his noble career, his son *Rāhula* was born. This he regarded as a bondage, for he realised that all without exception were subject to birth, death, and decay, and that all worldly pleasures were only a prelude to pain. Comprehending thus the universality of sorrow, he wanted to find a panacea for this universal sickness of humanity.

Eventually he renounced his royal pleasures, donned the simple garb of an ascetic, and wandered as a seeker of Truth. He approached many a distinguished teacher of his day, but nobody was competent enough to give him what he earnestly sought. All the so-called philosophers were groping in the dark. It was a matter of the blind leading the blind, as they were all enmeshed in ignorance and were caught in the whirlpool of *Samsāra*.

As it was the belief in the ancient days that no salvation could be gained unless one led a life of strict asceticism, he strenuously practised all forms of severe austerities. “Adding vigil after vigil, and penance after penance”, he made a super-human effort for six long years.

His body was reduced almost to a skeleton. The more he tormented his body, the farther his goal receded from him.

His strenuous and unsuccessful endeavours taught him one important lesson—that is, the utter futility of self-mortification.

Benefiting by this invaluable experience, he finally decided to follow an independent course, avoiding the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. The former retarded his spiritual progress, and the latter weakened his intellect. The new path which he himself discovered was the *Majjhima Paṭipadā*, the Middle Path, which

subsequently became one of the salient characteristics of His teaching.

While He was seated under the Bodhi tree, unaided and unguided by any super-natural agency, but solely relying on His efforts and wisdom, He eradicated all passions and attained Enlightenment (Buddhahood) at the age of 35.

Having attained Buddhahood, that supreme state of perfection, He devoted the remainder of His life to serve humanity both by example and precept, dominated by no personal motive whatsoever.

After 45 long years the Buddha, as every other human being, succumbed to the inexorable law of change, and finally passed away, in His 80th year.

The Buddha was, therefore, a human being. As a man He was born, as a man He lived, and as a man His life came to an end. Though a human being, He became an extraordinary man—*Acchariya Manussa*. The Buddha laid stress on this important point and left no room whatever for anyone to fall into the error of thinking that He was an immortal divine being. Fortunately there is no deification in the case of the Buddha.

The Buddha is neither an incarnation or a messenger of a god, nor is He a saviour who saves others by His personal salvation. The Buddha exhorts His disciples to depend on themselves for their salvation, for both purity and defilement depend on oneself. In the *Dhammapada* He says : “*Tumhehi kiccaṃ ātappaṃ—Akkhātāro Tathāgatā*. You yourselves should made the exertion, the Tathāgatās are only teachers.”—*Verse 276*.

The Buddhas point out the path, and it is left for us to follow that path to obtain our purification.

“To depend on others for salvation is negative, but to depend on oneself is positive.” Dependence on others means a surrender of one’s effort.

In exhorting His disciples to be self-dependent the Buddha says in the *Parinibbāna Sutta*: “Be ye islands unto yourselves, be ye a refuge unto yourselves, seek not for refuge in others.”

Furthermore, the Buddha does not claim the monopoly of Buddhahood, which, as a matter of fact, is not the prerogative of

any specially graced person. He reached the highest possible state of perfection any person could aspire to, and without the closed fist of a teacher He revealed the only straight path that leads thereto. According to the teachings of the Buddha anybody may aspire to that supreme state of perfection if he makes the necessary exertion. The Buddha does not condemn men by calling them wretched sinners, but, on the contrary, He gladdens them by saying that they are pure in heart in reality. In His opinion the world is not wicked, but is deluded by ignorance. Instead of disheartening His followers and reserving that exalted state only to Himself, He encourages and induces them to emulate Him.

As a man He attained Buddhahood and proclaimed to the world the latent possibilities and the creative power of man. Instead of placing an unseen, Almighty God over man and making him subservient to him, He raised the worth of mankind. It was He who taught that man can gain his salvation by his own exertion without depending on a God or mediating priests. It was He who taught the ego-centric world the noble ideal of selfless service. It was He who revolted against the degrading caste system and taught equality of mankind and equal opportunities for all to distinguish themselves in every walk of life.

He opened the gates of success and prosperity to all deserving ones despite the natural barriers of birth. He gave complete freedom of thought and made us open our eyes to see things as they truly are. He comforted the bereaved by His consoling words. He ministered to the sick that were deserted. He helped the poor that were neglected. He ennobled the lives of those called "sinners", purified the corrupted lives of criminals. He encouraged the feeble, united the divided, enlightened the ignorant, clarified the mystic, guided the benighted, elevated the base, dignified the noble. Both rich and poor, saints and "sinners" loved Him alike. Despotism and righteous kings, famous princes and nobles and the obscure, generous and stingy millionaires, haughty and humble scholars, destitute paupers, down-trodden scavengers, wicked murderers, despised courtesans—all benefited by His words of wisdom and compassion.

His noble example was a source of inspiration to all. His serene and peaceful countenance was a soothing sight to pious eyes.

His message of Peace was welcomed by all with indescribable joy and was of eternal benefit to everyone that came in contact with it.

Wherever His teaching penetrated it left an indelible impression upon the character of the peoples. The cultural advancement of all the Buddhist nations was mainly due to His sublime Teaching. Though 2,500 years have elapsed since the passing away of this greatest Teacher, yet His noble personality still influences all those who come to know Him.

Of the Buddha a St. Hillaire might say—"The perfect model of all the virtues He preaches...His life has not a stain upon it." A Fausboll would say—"The more I know Him, the more I love Him." A humble follower of His would say—"The more I know Him, the more I love Him; the more I love Him, the more I know Him."

The teaching founded by the Buddha is, in popular language, known as Buddhism.

## THE DHAMMA

### *Is it a Philosophy?*

The Omniscient Buddha has passed away, but the sublime Dhamma, which He unreservedly bequeathed to humanity, still exists in its pristine purity.

Although the Master has left no written records of His Teachings, His distinguished disciples preserved them by committing to memory and transmitting them orally from generation to generation.

Immediately after His demise 500 chief Arahats, versed in the Dhamma and Vinaya, held a convocation to rehearse the Doctrine as was originally taught by the Buddha. Venerable Ānanda Thera, who enjoyed the special privilege of hearing all the discourses, recited the Dhamma, whilst the Venerable Upāli recited the Vinaya.

The Tipiṭaka was compiled and arranged in its present form by those Arahats of old.

During the reign of the pious Sinhala King *Vaṭṭagāmaṇi Abhaya*, about 80 B.C., the Tipiṭaka was for the first time committed to writing on ola leaves in Ceylon.

This voluminous Tipiṭaka, which contains the essence of the Buddha's Teaching, is estimated to be about eleven times the size of the Christian Bible. A striking contrast between the Tipiṭaka and the Bible is that the former is not a gradual development like the latter.

As the word itself implies the Tipiṭaka consists of three baskets. They are the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya Piṭaka*), the Basket of Discourses (*Sutta Piṭaka*), and the Basket of Ultimate Doctrine (*Abhidhamma Piṭaka*).

The *Vinaya Piṭaka* mainly deals with rules and regulations which the Buddha promulgated, as occasion arose, for the future discipline of the order of monks (*Bhikkhus*) and nuns (*Bhikkhunīs*). It describes in detail the gradual development of the *Sāsana* (Dispensation). An account of the life and Teaching of the Buddha is also given. Indirectly it reveals some important and interesting information about ancient history, Indian customs, arts, sciences, etc.

This Piṭaka consists of the five following books :—

1. *Pārājika Pāli*—Major Offences, *Vibhanga Khandhaka*.
2. *Pācittiya Pāli*—Minor Offences, *Vibhanga Khandhaka*.
3. *Mahāvagga Pāli*—Greater Section, *Vibhanga Khandhaka*.
4. *Cullavagga Pāli*—Shorter Section, *Vibhanga Khandhaka*.
5. *Parivāra Pāli*—Accessory Section, *Vibhanga Khandhaka*.

The *Sutta Piṭaka* consists chiefly of discourses delivered by the Buddha Himself on various occasions. There are also included a few discourses, delivered by some of His distinguished disciples such as the Venerable *Sāriputta*, *Ānanda*, *Moggallāna*, etc. It is like a book of prescriptions, as the sermons embodied therein were expounded to suit the different occasions and the temperaments of various persons. There are no contradictory statements, but they should not be misconstrued as they were opportunely uttered by the Buddha to suit a particular purpose ; for instance, to the self-same question He would maintain silence (when the inquirer is merely foolishly inquisitive), or give a detailed reply when He knew the inquirer to be an earnest seeker.

This Piṭaka is divided into five *Nikāyas* or Collections :—

1. *Dīgha Nikāya* (Collection of Long Discourses),
2. *Majjhima Nikāya* (Collection of Middle-length Discourses),
3. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Collection of Kindred Sayings)

4. *Anguttara Nikāya* (Collection of Discourses arranged in accordance with number),
5. *Khuddaka Nikāya* (Smaller Collection).

The fifth is subdivided into fifteen books :—

1. *Khuddaka Pāṭha* (Shorter Texts),
2. *Dhammapada* (Way of Truth),
3. *Udāna* (Heartfelt Sayings or Paeons of Joy),
4. *Iti Vuttaka* ("Thus said" Discourses),
5. *Sutta Nipāta* (Collected Discourses),
6. *Vimāna Vatthu* (Stories of Celestial Mansions),
7. *Peta Vatthu* (Stories of Petas),
8. *Theragāthā* (Psalms of the Brethren),
9. *Therīgāthā* (Psalms of the Sisters),
10. *Jātaka* (Birth Stories),
11. *Niddesa* (Expositions),
12. *Paṭisambhidā* (Analytical Knowledge),
13. *Apadāna* (Lives of Arahats),
14. *Buddhavaṃsa* (The History of the Buddha),
15. *Cariyā Piṭaka* (Modes of Conduct).

The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* is, to a deep thinker, the most important and the most interesting collection, as it contains the profound philosophy of the Buddha's Teaching, in contrast to the illuminating and simpler discourses in the *Sutta Piṭaka*.

In the *Sutta Piṭaka* is found the *Vohāra Desanā* (conventional teaching), whilst in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* is found the *Paramattha Desanā* (ultimate teaching).

In the *Abhidhamma* the so-called being is microscopically analysed and its component parts are minutely described. The ultimate goal, together with the method of achieving it, is also explained in detail. The four ultimate things (*Paramattha*) enumerated in the *Abhidhamma* are (i) *Citta* (Consciousness), (ii) *Cetasika* (Mental Concomitants), (iii) *Rūpa* (Matter), and (iv) *Nibbāna*.

The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* consists of seven books :—

1. *Dhamma Sangani* (Classification of Dhammas),
2. *Vibhanga* (The Book of Divisions),
3. *Kathā Vatthu* (Points of Controversy),
4. *Puggala Paññatti* (Description of Individuals),
5. *Dhātu Kathā* (Discussion with reference to Elements),
6. *Yamaka* (The Book of the Pairs),
7. *Paṭṭhāna* (The Book of Relations).

The sublime Dhamma, enshrined in these sacred texts, deals with truths and facts, and is not concerned with theories and philosophies which may be accepted as profound truth today only to be thrown overboard tomorrow. The Buddha has presented us with no new astounding, philosophical theories, nor did He create any new material science. He explained to us what is within and without, so far as it concerns our emancipation, and ultimately expounded a path of deliverance, which is unique. Incidentally, He has, however, forestalled many a modern scientist and philosopher.

Schopenhauer in his "World as Will and Idea" has presented the truth of suffering and its cause in a Western garb. Spinoza, though he does not deny the existence of a permanent reality, asserts that all existence is transitory. In his opinion sorrow is conquered "by finding an object of knowledge which is not transient, not ephemeral, but is immutable, permanent, everlasting." Berkley proved that the so-called indivisible atom is a metaphysical fiction. Hume, after a relentless analysis of the mind, concluded that consciousness consists of fleeting mental states. Bergson advocates the doctrine of change. Prof. James refers to a stream of consciousness.

The Buddha propounded these doctrines of Transiency, (*Anicca*), Sorrow (*Dukkha*) and No-soul (*Anattā*) some 2,500 years ago whilst He was sojourning in the valley of the Ganges.

It should be understood that the Buddha did not preach all that He knew. On one occasion whilst the Buddha was passing through a forest, He took a handful of leaves and said:— "O Bhikkhus, what I have taught is comparable to the leaves in my hand, what I have not taught is comparable to the amount of leaves in the forest.

"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.)

He taught us only that which is necessary for our emancipation. Incidentally, however, He has made some statements which are accepted as scientific truths today.

Buddhism no doubt accords with science, but both should be treated as parallel teachings, since one deals mainly with material truths whilst the other confines itself to moral and spiritual truths. The subject-matter of each is different.

The Dhamma He taught is not merely to be preserved in books, nor is it a subject to be studied from a historical or literary point of view. On the contrary it is to be learnt and put into practice in the course of one's daily life, for without practice one cannot appreciate the truth. The Dhamma is to be studied, and more to be practised, and above all to be realised. Self-realization is its ultimate goal. As such the Dhamma is compared to a raft which is meant for the sole purpose of escaping from the ocean of Samsāra. Buddhism, therefore, cannot strictly be called a philosophy.

### IS IT A RELIGION ?

It neither is a religion in the sense in which that word is commonly understood, for it is not a system of faith and worship.

Buddhism does not demand blind faith from its adherents. Here, mere belief is dethroned and is substituted by confidence based on knowledge, which, in Pāli, is known as *Saddhā*. The confidence placed on the Buddha by a follower is like that of a sick person in a noted physician, or a student in his teacher. A Buddhist seeks refuge in the Buddha because it was He who discovered the Path of Deliverance.

A Buddhist does not seek refuge in the Buddha with the hope that he will be saved by His personal salvation. The Buddha gives no such guarantee. It is not within the power of a Buddha to wash away the impurities of others. One can neither purify nor defile another.

The Buddha, as Teacher of Devas and men, is instrumental in our purification, but we ourselves are directly responsible for our purification or defilement.

Although a Buddhist seeks refuge in the Buddha, he does not make any self surrender. Nor does a Buddhist sacrifice his freedom of thought by becoming a follower of the Buddha. He can exercise his own free-will and develop his knowledge even to the extent of becoming a Buddha himself.

The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding, or, in other words, *Sammā-Diṭṭhi*.

To the seekers of truth the Buddha says :—

“Do not accept anything on (mere) heresay—(i.e., *thinking that thus have we heard it from a long time.*) Do not accept anything by mere tradition—(i.e., *thinking that it has thus been handed down through many generations.*) Do not accept anything on account of mere rumours—(i.e., *by believing what others say without any investigation.*) Do not accept anything just because it accords with your scriptures. Do not accept anything by mere supposition. Do not accept anything by mere inference. Do not accept anything by merely considering the reasons. Do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your pre-conceived notions. Do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable—(i.e., *thinking that as the speaker seems to be a good person his word should be accepted.*) Do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic is respected by us (*therefore it is right to accept his word*).

“But when you know for yourselves—these things are immoral, these things are blameworthy, these things are censured by the wise, these things when performed and undertaken, conduce to ruin and sorrow—then indeed do you reject them.”

“When you know for yourselves—these things are moral, these things are blameless; these things are praised by the wise; these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to well-being and happiness—then do you live acting accordingly.”

These inspiring words of the Buddha, uttered more than 2,500 years ago, still retain their original force and freshness.

Though it be proved that there is no blind faith, one might argue whether there is no worshipping of images etc., in Buddhism.

Buddhists do not worship an image expecting worldly favours, but pay their homage to what it represents.

An understanding Buddhist, in offering flowers and incense to an image, designedly makes himself feel that he is in the presence of the living Buddha, and thereby gains inspiration from His noble personality and breathes deep His boundless compassion. He tries to follow His noble example.

The Bo-tree is also a symbol of Enlightenment. These external objects of homage are not absolutely necessary, but they are useful as they tend to concentrate one's attention. An intellectual could dispense with them as he could easily focus his attention and visualise the Buddha.

For our own good, and out of gratitude, we pay such external homage, but what the Buddha expects from His disciples is not so much obeisance as the actual observance of His Teachings. The Buddha says : “He honours me best who practises my teaching best.” “He who sees the Dhamma sees me.”

Further, it must be mentioned that there are no prayers in Buddhism. However much we may pray to the Buddha we cannot be saved. The Buddha does not grant any worldly favours to those who pray to Him. Instead of prayers there are meditations intended to purify the mind. The Buddha not only speaks of the futility of offering prayers but also disparages a slave mentality. A Buddhist should not pray to be saved, but should rely on himself and win his freedom.

Dependence on an external power means a surrender of human effort.

“Prayer takes the character of private communications, selfish bargaining with God. It seeks for objects of earthly ambitions and inflames the sense of self. Meditation on the other hand is self-change.” \*

In Buddhism there is no God whom Buddhists should obey and fear. The Buddhist does not believe in a cosmic potentate, omniscient and omnipresent. There are no dogmas that we must believe. There are no creeds that we must accept on faith. There are no priests to act as mediators. There are no special rites and

ceremonies to become a Buddhist, no prayers and sacrifices to be offered, no penances and repentance to be made to gain one's salvation.

Buddhism cannot, therefore, strictly be called a religion because it is neither a system of faith and worship, nor "the outward act or form by which men indicate their recognition of the existence of a god or gods having power over their own destiny to whom obedience, service, and honour are due."

If by religion is meant "a teaching which teaches a view of life that is more than superficial, a teaching which looks into life and not merely at it, a teaching which furnishes men with a guide to conduct, that is in accord with this 'in-look', a teaching which enables those who give it heed to face life with fortitude and death with serenity,"\* or even a teaching (Āgama) which is conducive to the good and happiness of self and that of others, then it is certainly a religion of religions.

### IS BUDDHISM AN ETHICAL SYSTEM?

It no doubt contains an excellent code of morals which is adaptable to all climes and ages, but is much more than ordinary morality. *Sīla* or morality is only the ABC of Buddhism, and is the first stage on the Path of Purity. Conduct, though essential, is itself insufficient to gain one's emancipation. It should be coupled with wisdom or knowledge (Paññā).

In observing the principles of morality a Buddhist should not only regard his own self but also should have a consideration for others as well—animals not excluded.

In Buddhism there are deeds which are ethically good, deeds which are ethically bad, deeds which are neither good nor bad, and deeds which tend to ceasing of all deeds. Good deeds are essential for one's emancipation, but when once the ultimate goal of the Holy Life is attained, one transcends both good and evil. Says the Buddha :—

"Righteous things (Dhamma) you have to give up, how much more the unrighteous things (Adhamma)."

—*Majjhima Nikāya*.

The deeds of an Arahāt, a perfect Saint, are neither good nor bad because he has gone beyond both. This does not mean

that he is passive. He *is* active, but his activity is selfless and is directed to help others to tread the Path he has trod himself. His deeds, ordinarily accepted as good, lack a creative power as regards himself. Purest gold cannot further be purified. He accumulates no fresh Kammic activities. Understanding things as they truly are, he has finally shattered the cosmic chain of cause and effect.

It should be mentioned that an Almighty God or any other external supernatural agency plays no part whatsoever in the moulding of the character of a Buddhist. In Buddhism there is no one to reward or punish. Pain or happiness are the due results of our actions. The question of incurring the pleasure or displeasure of a God does not enter the mind of a Buddhist. A Buddhist is aware of future consequences, and he refrains from evil because it retards, does good because it aids, progress to Bodhi-Enlightenment. There may also be some who do good because it is good, refrain from evil because it is bad.

To understand the exceptionally high standard of morality the Buddha expects from His ideal followers, one must carefully read the *Dhammapada*, *Sigālovāda Sutta*, *Vyagghapajja Sutta*, *Mangala Sutta*, *Karaniya Sutta*, *Parābhava Sutta*, *Vasala Sutta*, *Dhammika Sutta*, etc.

In one sense Buddhism is not a philosophy, in another sense it is the *philosophy of philosophies*.

In one sense Buddhism is not a religion, in another sense it is the *religion of religions*.

As a moral teaching it excels all ethical systems, but morality is only the beginning and not the end of Buddhism.

The original Pāli term for Buddhism is Dhamma, which literally means that which upholds. There is no English equivalent that exactly conveys the meaning of the Pāli term.

The Dhamma is that which really is. It is the Doctrine of Reality. It is a Means of Deliverance, and Deliverance itself. Whether the Buddhas arise or not the Dhamma exists. It is a Buddha who realises this Dhamma, which ever lies hidden from the ignorant eyes of men, till He, an Enlightened One, comes and compassionately reveals it to the world.

This Dhamma is not something apart from oneself, but is closely associated with oneself. As such the Buddha exhorts:—

“ Abide with oneself as an island, with oneself as a Refuge. Abide with the Dhamma as an island, with the Dhamma as a refuge. Seek not for external refuge. ”

—*Parinibbāna Sutta*.

### SOME SALIENT FEATURES OF BUDDHISM

The foundations of Buddhism are the four Noble Truths—namely, the Noble Truth of Sorrow, the Noble Truth of the Cause of Sorrow, (*i.e.* Craving), the Noble Truth of the Annihilation of Sorrow, *i.e.* Nibbāna, and the Path leading to the Destruction of Sorrow.

What is the Noble Truth of Sorrow ?

Birth is sorrow, old age is sorrow, disease is sorrow, death is sorrow, to be united with the unloved is sorrow, to be separated from the loved is sorrow; not to receive what one craves for is sorrow, in brief the five Aggregates of Attachment are sorrow.

What is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Sorrow ?

It is the craving which leads from rebirth to rebirth accompanied by lust of passion, which delights now here and now there ; it is the craving for sensual pleasures (*Kāma-taṇhā*), for existence (*Bhavataṇhā*)\* and for annihilation (*Vibhava-taṇhā*).\*\*

What is the Noble Truth of the Annihilation of Sorrow ?

It is the remainderlessness, total annihilation of this very craving, the forsaking it, the breaking loose, fleeing, deliverance from it.

What is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Annihilation of Sorrow ?

It is the Noble Eightfold Path which consists of right understanding, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

Whether the Buddhas arise or not these four Truths exist in the universe. The Buddhas only reveal these Truths which lay hidden in the dark abyss of time.

Scientifically interpreted the Dhamma may be called the law of cause and effect. These two embrace the entire body of the Buddha's Teachings.

Buddhism rests on the pivot of Sorrow. But it does not thereby follow that Buddhism is pessimistic. It is neither totally pessimistic nor totally optimistic, but on the contrary, it teaches a truth that lies midway between them. One would be justified in calling the Buddha a pessimist if He had only enunciated the Truth of Suffering without suggesting a means to put an end to it. The Buddha perceived the universality of sorrow and did prescribe a panacea for this universal sickness of humanity. The highest conceivable happiness to Buddha showed, is Nibbāna—“*Nibbānam paramam sukham*”—Nibbāna is bliss supreme.

The Buddha on the other hand did not expect His followers to be constantly brooding over this fact and lead a miserable unhappy life. He exhorts them to be always happy and cheerful, for joy (*Pīti*) is one of the Factors of Enlightenment.

Real happiness is found within, and is not to be defined in terms of wealth, children or honours. If such possessions are misdirected, forcibly or unjustly obtained, misappropriated or even viewed with attachment, they will be a source of pain and sorrow to the possessors.

The so-called happiness of the ordinary man is merely the gratification of some desire. “No sooner is the desired thing gained than it begins to be scorned.” Insatiate are all desires. Worldly bliss, heavenly bliss not excluded, is only a prelude to pain. Sorrow is, therefore, essential to life and cannot be evaded. If it can find entrance in no other form, then it comes, as Schopenhauer says, in the sad grey garments of tedium and ennui.

Suffering exists as long as there is craving. It can only be annihilated by treading the Noble Eightfold Path and attaining the supreme bliss of Nibbāna.

These four Truths can be verified by experience. Hence the Buddha Dhamma is not based on the fear of the unknown but is founded on the bedrock of facts which can be tested by ourselves and verified by experience. Buddhism is, therefore, rational and practical.

Such a rational and practical system cannot contain any mysticism or esoteric doctrines. Blind faith therefore is foreign to Buddhism. Where there is no blind faith there cannot be any coercion or persecution or fanaticism. To the unique credit of Buddhism it

\* Taṇhā associated with “Eternalism” (*Sassatadiṭṭhi*)

\*\* Taṇhā associated with “Nihilism” (*Ucchedadiṭṭhi*).

must be said that throughout its peaceful march of 2,500 years no drop of blood was shed in the name of the Buddha, no mighty monarch wielded his powerful sword to propagate the Dhamma, and no conversion was made either by force or by any repulsive methods.

In the name of Buddhism no altar was reddened with the blood of a Hypatia, no Bruno was burnt alive.

Buddhism appeals more to the intellect than to the emotion. It is concerned more with the character of the devotees than with their numerical strength.

On one occasion Upāli, a follower of *Nigantha Nātaputta* approached the Buddha and was so pleased with the Buddha's exposition of the Dhamma that he instantly expressed his desire to become a lay disciple of the Buddha. But the Buddha cautioned him, saying :—

“Of a verity, O householder, make a thorough investigation. It is well for a distinguished man like you to (first) make a thorough investigation.”

Upāli, who was overjoyed at this unexpected remark of the Buddha, said : “Lord, if I had been a follower of another religion, its adherents would take me round the streets in a procession proclaiming that such and such a millionaire had renounced his former faith and embraced theirs. But, Lord, your reverence advises me to investigate further. The more pleased am I with this remark of yours. For the second time, Lord, I seek refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha.

Buddhism is saturated with this spirit of free inquiry and complete tolerance. It is the teaching of the open mind and the sympathetic heart which, lighting and warming the whole universe with its twin rays of wisdom (*Paññā*) and compassion (*Karuṇā*), sheds its genial glow on every being struggling in the ocean of birth and death.

The Buddha was so tolerant that he did not even exercise His power to give any commandments to His lay followers. Instead of using the imperative, He says :— It behoves you to do this—It behoves you not to do this.

This tolerance the Buddha extended to men, women and all living beings.

It was the Buddha who first spoke against slavery and vehemently protested against

the degrading caste-system which was firmly rooted in the soil of India. In the Word of the Buddha it is not by mere birth that one becomes either an outcaste or a Brahmin, but by one's actions. Caste or colour does not preclude one from becoming a Buddhist or entering the Order. Fishermen, scavengers, courtesans, together with warriors and Brahmins, were freely admitted to the Order and enjoyed equal privileges and were also given positions of rank. *Upāli*, the barber\*, for instance, was made in preference to all others the chief in matters pertaining to Vinaya discipline. The timid *Sunīta*, the scavenger, was admitted by the Buddha Himself to the Order and enabled to attain Saintship. *Angulimāla* the robber and criminal, was converted to a compassionate Saint. The fierce *Ālāvaka* sought refuge in the Buddha and became a *Sotapanna*. The courtesan *Ambapālī* entered the Order and attained *Arahatship*. Such instances could easily be multiplied from the Tipiṭaka to show that the portals of Buddhism were wide open to all, irrespective of caste, colour, or rank.

It was also the Buddha who raised the status of women and brought them to the realisation of their importance in society.

The Buddha did not humiliate women, but only regarded them as feeble by nature. He saw the innate good of both men and women and assigned to them their due places in His teaching. Sex is no barrier to attaining Sainthood.

Sometimes the Pāli term used to denote women is “*Mātugāma*” which means “mother-folk”, or “society of mothers”. As a mother, woman holds an honourable place. The wife is regarded as “the best friend” (*paramā sakhā*) of the husband.

Hasty critics are only making “*ex-parte*” statements when they reproach Buddhism with being inimical to women. Although at first the Buddha refused to admit women into the Order on reasonable grounds, yet later He yielded to the entreaties of His foster mother *Pajāpati Gotamī* and founded the *Bhikkhunī* Order. Just as the *Arahats Sāriputta* and *Moggallāna* were made the two chief disciples in the Order of monks, even so He appointed *Arahats Khemā* and *Uppalavannā* as the two chief female disciples. Many other female disciples too were named by the Buddha Himself as His distinguished and pious followers.

\* Not to be confused with the millionaire Upāsaka Upāli.

On one occasion the Buddha said to King Kosala who was displeased on hearing that a daughter was born to him :—

“ A woman child, O Lord of men, may prove  
Even a better offspring than a male.”

Many women, who otherwise would have fallen into oblivion, distinguished themselves in various ways, and gained their emancipation by following the Dhamma and entering the Order. In this new Order, which later proved to be a great blessing to many a woman—queens, princesses, daughters of noble families, widows, bereaved mothers, destitute women, courtesans, all despite their caste or rank, met on a common platform, enjoyed perfect consolation and peace, and breathed that free atmosphere which is denied to those cloistered in cottages and palatial mansions.

It was also the teaching of the Buddha which put a stop to the sacrifice of poor beasts and admonished His followers to extend their *Mettā* or loving-kindness to all living beings, —even to the tiniest creature that crawls at one's feet. No man has the power or the right to destroy the life of another as life is precious to all.

A genuine Buddhist will exercise this *Mettā* towards every living being and identify him-

self with all, making no distinction whatsoever with regard to caste, colour, or sex.

It is this Buddhist *Mettā* that attempts to break all the barriers which separate one from another. There is no reason to keep aloof from others merely because they belong to another persuasion or another nationality.

Buddhism is not confined to any country or any particular nation. It is universal. It is not nationalism which, in other words, is another form of caste system founded on a wider basis. Buddhism, if it is permitted to say so, is supernationalism.

To a Buddhist there is no far or near, no enemy or foreigner, no renegade or untouchable, since universal love, realised through understanding, has established the brotherhood of all living beings. A real Buddhist is a citizen of the world.

Buddhism is, therefore, unique, mainly owing to its rationality, practicability, efficacy, and universality. It is the noblest of all unifying influences and the only lever that can uplift the world.

There are some of the salient features of Buddhism, and amongst some of the fundamental doctrines it may be said are :—Kamma, or the Law of Causation, the Doctrine of Rebirth, Anattā, and Nibbāna.

( *To be continued* )

### VINAYA RULES

‘Monks, it was to bring about these pairs of results that the Observances were enjoined on his disciples by the Tathāgata. What two ?

The excellence and well-being of the Order....

The control of ill-conditioned monks and the comfort of good monks...

The restraint, in this very life, of the āsavas, guilt, faults, fears and unprofitable states: and the protection against the same in a future life.

Out of compassion for householders, and to uproot the factions of the evilly disposed....

To give confidence to believers, and for the betterment of believers....

To establish true Dhamma, for the support of the Discipline...

*Anguttara-Nikāya*, The Book of the Twos, Chapter XVII.

‘It is impossible, monks cannot come to pass, that a person who is possessed of right view should regard any one phenomenon as permanent. But, monks, it is quite possible for the uneducated many folk to do so.

It is impossible, monks it cannot come to pass, that a person is possessed of right view should regard any one phenomenon as happiness. But, monks, it is quite possible for the uneducated many folk to do so.

It is impossible, monks, it cannot come to pass, that a person who is possessed of right view should regard any one thing as the self. But, monks, it is quite possible for the uneducated many folk to do so.

*Anguttara-Nikāya*, The Book of the Ones, Chapter XV.

# WAY TO PERFECT PEACE

By Ven. U Wisāra,

BURMA BUDDHIST DHAMMASALA, 10-A, EDEN HOSPITAL ROAD, CALCUTTA-12

IN this world we have not yet fully learnt the art of living nor do we know what is the higher or supreme state beyond the present one. We live a worldly life and we think of the world as a paradise. Our sole aim is to seek pleasure by whatever means available to us.

The consideration of the conditions bounding our life has not yet come to our thought rightly and therefore it is essential to ponder on our life and to ask ourselves many questions. Should we be content with our way of living? Since we are born we have so far done what we think best for our happiness; is there then any single work which has been completed to our full satisfaction? Is there anyone who is really completely happy anywhere in this world? The honest answers to these questions must be "No". However hard we have worked and enjoyed the worldly pleasures, we are still in thirst and need for more lasting happiness. We have to leave all properties and indeed our life itself sooner or later.

It is this thirst and need, in Buddhism, "Lobha"—"greed", which causes us to suffer. Whatever we have we are not content with and still want some more; then the more we want the more we suffer. That is why the Buddha said: "Yam piccham na labhati tam pi dukkham"—not to get what one wants, that also is Suffering. That is true, indeed, in the highest sense of the word. There is nothing but Suffering (dukkha) in this world, and one cannot escape it. "Sabbe sankhārā aniccā; sabbe sankhārā dukkhā (All component things are impermanent; all component things are Suffering.) So, we are born in Suffering, live in Suffering and at last decay and die in Suffering.

But we think of the necessities of life in terms of sensual pleasures and we think we are really happy. In point of fact, this pleasurable sensation cannot be called genuine happiness, because it is merely the happiness of the insect which is flying to the flame which will burn it. The necessities of life are, therefore, hindrances to our goal. We have only unreal and distorted happiness of the senses which is due to ignorance and craving "Avijjā and Taṇhā". Hence, it is said, "Avijjā taṇhā vasena dve mūlāni"

(Ignorance and craving are the two roots). They are the main causes leading to the production of Mind and Form "Nāma and Rūpa" and to rebirth.

Ignorance is not knowing—not knowing the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering, the truth of the cessation of suffering and the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Craving is the very keen desire for sensual pleasure and for rebirth.

If we do not attempt to get rid of these two main roots, ignorance and craving, we shall continue to float on the ocean of suffering. These two roots are not far from us; they are in our hearts and minds always prompting to evil.

It is, therefore, necessary for us to seek the perfect way to the ultimate goal—the permanent release from suffering. It is not easy, but an extremely arduous task. The actual practice of right concentration must be in our daily life. It is based on the faculty of our consciousness.

*Sabbapāpassa akaraṇam,  
kusalassa upasampadā,  
sacittapariyodapanam,  
etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ.*

To abstain from bad action, to produce what is good, to purify one's thought—that is the teaching of the Buddha.

—*Dhammapada*...183.

*To abstain from bad action.*

Bad actions are ten in number, "Akusala kamma" which are caused by Deed, Word and Thought. All bad actions are included in these three.

1. Pānātipāta—killing living creatures;
2. Adinnādāna—stealing others' properties;
3. Kāmesu micchācāra—sexual misconduct. These three are evils of Deed.
4. Musāvāda—lying;
5. Pisunavācā—harsh speech;
6. Samphapalāpa—harsh talk.  
These four are evils of Word.
8. Abhiṇṇhā—covetousness;

9. Vyāpāda—ill-will;
10. Micchādiṭṭhi—false view.

These three are evils of Thought.

*To produce what is good.*

There are three kinds of good “Kusala kammās” which should be produced.

1. Dāna—offering what is good to others;
2. Sīla—observing the precepts;
3. Bhāvanā—mental development; meditation;
4. Apacayana—respecting the elders;
5. Veyyāvacca—serving or helping others;
6. Pattidāna—transferring one’s merit to others;
7. Pattānumodanā—rejoicing in others’ merits;
8. Dhammasavana—listening to the doctrine;
9. Dhammadesanā—delivering the doctrine;
10. Diṭṭhijukamma—holding right view.

*To purify one’s mind.*

To purify one’s mind is to control the mind to make it cultured and powerful. For this it is necessary to practise the three terms with care:

Sammā Vāyama, Sammā Sati and Sammā Samādhi—Exertion, Mindfulness and Concentration.

1. Sammā Vāyama—exertion to remove the existing evil thoughts that have been remaining in our mind, to

keep the mind from being polluted by fresh evil thoughts and to preserve and to increase the good thoughts.

2. Sammā Sati—mindfulness of all that is happening within our body and mind.
3. Sammā Samādhi—concentration, that is one-pointedness of mind, a fixation of mind on a single object by means of exertion and mindfulness leading to complete awareness.

We have now a powerful microscope, that of concentration. If we look at the world through this microscope, we will obtain a clear and correct view of life, and then if we contemplate what we see, understanding the three characteristics “Tilakkhaṇa—Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā—Impermanence, Suffering and Soullessness”, we will realize that all things are impermanent, all things are suffering and all things are without a “soul”.

*Sabbe sankhārā aniccā  
Sabbe sankhārā dukkhā  
Sabbe dhammā anattā.*

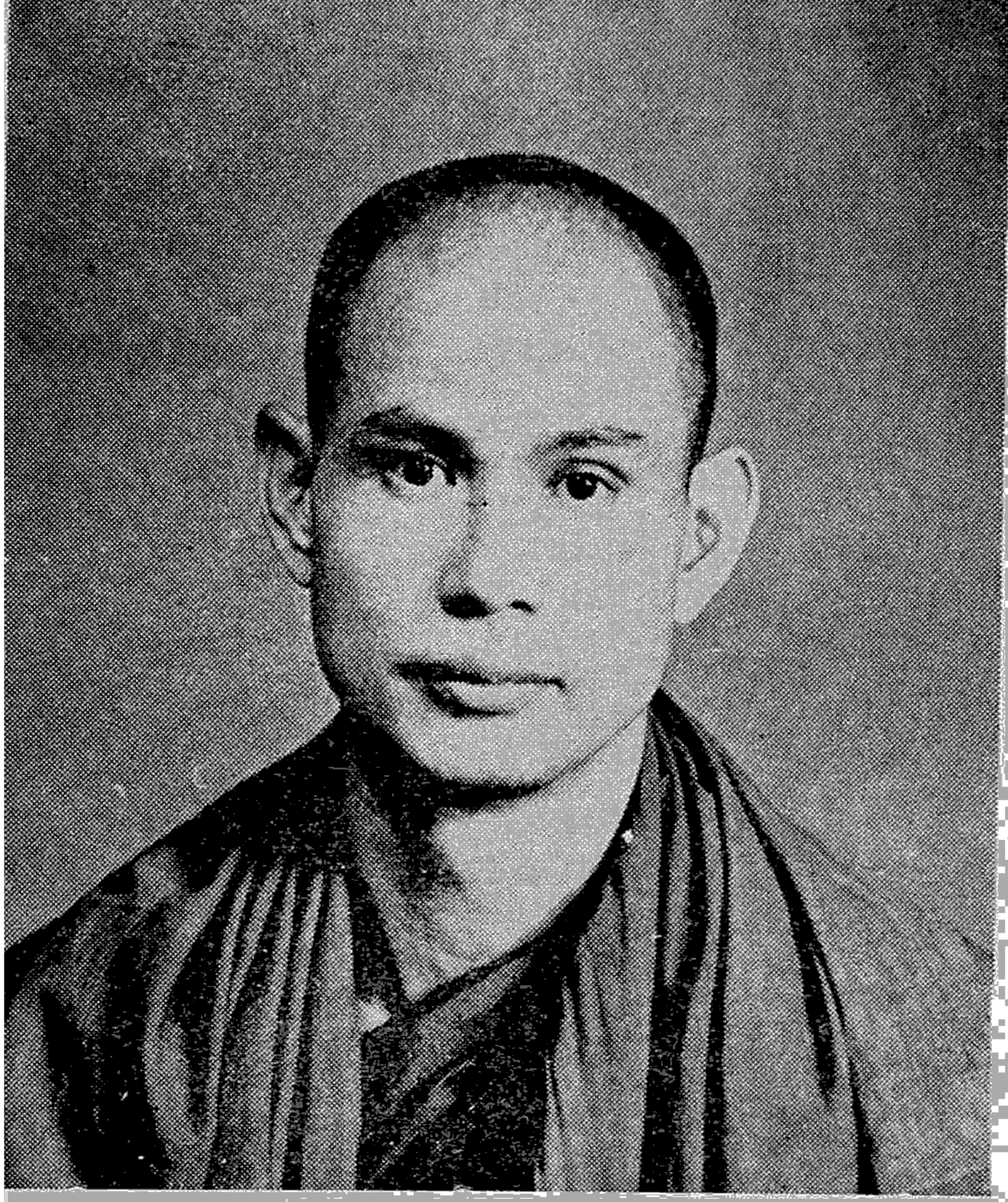
Now, we have learnt the fundamental way to perfect peace, let us endeavour to achieve it by practising it, and in order to achieve it, let us strive hard in the true path with determination.

PEACE TO ALL LIVING BEINGS.  
MAY ALL BEINGS BE HAPPY.



Now, monks, all those who in future time shall be Arahats.....nay, I myself who am now Arahāt, a Fully Enlightened One, I am a teacher of the deed, of the efficacy of the deed, of energy to do. Me also does Makkhali, infatuated man, excludes by his doctrine of: There is no doing of a deed: there is nothing done thereby: there is no energy to do.

*Anguttara-Nikāya, THE BOOK OF THE THREES, Chapter 135.*



Ven. U Wisāra of Calcutta

# MAHĀSATIPATTHĀNA-SUTTA

( *Discourse on the Four Applications of Mindfulness* )

A SERIES OF BROADCASTS BY VENERABLE MAHATHERA SOBHANA,  
MAHASI SAYADAW, *Agga Māhā Paṇḍita*.

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

## ONE

The Discourse for exposition is the Mahāsatipatthāna-sutta (the Discourse on the Four Applications of Mindfulness). This Sutta is perhaps the most important of the Buddhist Suttas. Why ? Because, many Vipassanā methods known as pubba-bhāga magga (preliminaries to the Path) are fully described therein. It also tells how the various types of special Vipassanā-knowledge come into existence. The Four Noble Truths clarified by pariññeyya (Full Comprehension in right knowledge), pahātabba (Abandonment ; rejection), sacchikātabba (Seen with the eyes of wisdom ; realization), and bhāvetabba (developed by means of meditation), have also been completely and vividly described in this Sutta. In the epilogue there is a firm and bold assurance of Attainment which serves as an encouragement :

‘Whoever practises these Four Applications of Mindfulness for seven years.....let alone seven years.....for seven days then by him one of the two fruitions may be expected in this life : the Fruition of Holiness or the Fruition of Never Return.’

Should any moderately-witted person make become the Four Applications of Mindfulness in this manner for seven years, then by him one of the two fruitions may be expected : the fruition of Holiness or the Fruition of Never-Return....Should any quick-witted person make become these Four Applications of Mindfulness in this manner for seven days, then by him one of the two fruitions may be expected : the Fruition of Holiness or the Fruition of Never-Return. Now, according to this Declaration of assurance, it is evident that one is able to become a Sotapanna or a Sakadāgāmin in no long time. Also in the preamble of the Discourse, the Buddha declared concerning this Sutta :

“ *Ekāyano ayam maggo, sattānam  
visuddhiyā,  
sokaparidevānam (samattikkamāya,  
dukkha domanassānam*

*atthangamāya, ñāyassa adhigamāya,  
nibbānassa  
sacchikiriyāya, yadidaṃ cattāro sati-  
patthānam.*”

This is the only way, O bhikkhus, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the attainment of Nibbāna, namely, the Four Applications of Mindfulness.

Here, ‘purification’ means ‘to win free from defilements and to become an Arahāt’. This is the only way for the attainment of Nibbāna. The practice of the Four Applications of Mindfulness is the only sure way that leads one to the stage of Sainthood. Well, then, if you wish to become Arahats, free from Defilements, you should practise the Four Applications of Mindfulness. Here, one may say to another : ‘I do not desire to become an Arahāt at once. I only desire to become a Sotapanna so that I may escape the danger of being reborn in the Lower Worlds in my next existence. Will it not be feasible ?’ This need not worry you. To become an Arahāt, you will have first to become a Sotapanna, then a Sakadāgāmin and an Anāgāmin. This state can be achieved only after fulfilling the requirements with diligence. One who desires to become a Sotapanna will attain this state only after his strenuous endeavour. So one who desires only to become a Sotapanna should practise this Satipatthāna.

‘ *Ekāyano ayam bhikkhave maggo soka-  
pariddavānam samattikkamāya.*

For the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, this is the only way, O bhikkhus.’

In the world, people are oppressed by sorrow and lamentation in the losing of their parents, husbands, wives, children, by being separated from loved ones and by their adverse positions. These troubles can be overcome by this Way of Mindfulness. So, if you wish to attain a state where there is no sorrow and lamentation, and where you can

find absolute happiness, you should practise Satipaṭṭhāna in full.

‘Ekāyano ayam bhikkhave maggo, dukkha domanassānam atthagamāya.

For the destruction of suffering and grief, this is the only way, O bhikkhus.’

Dukkha = kāyika dukkhā-vedanā (Bodily disagreeable sensations) and domanassa = cetasikā dukkhā-vedanā (Mentally disagreeable sensations) are the most dreaded sufferings. They can be totally overcome by this Way of Mindfulness. If you desire to enjoy an absolute happiness free from all kinds of suffering, you should practise this Satipaṭṭhāna in full.

(Ekāyano ayam bhikkhave maggo, ñāyassa adhigamāya, nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya)

‘This is the only way, O bhikkhus, the Noble Eightfold Path, for the attainment of Nibbāna and realising it face to face by means of Insight-Wisdom.’

The Paths of Sainthood, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna are the highest good among the Teachings of the Buddha. The way to attain these is also this Way of Mindfulness. Moreover, this Way of the Application of Mindfulness is conducive to the realisation of the Supramundane Way. If you really have a determination to attain the paths of Sainthood, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna in this present life, you have simply to follow the correct method—this Way of Mindfulness. So, I am now expounding this Discourse of the Four Applications of Mindfulness as the path to be followed by those yogīs who have such determination.

In the epilogue of the Sutta, the Omniscient Buddha declared that the following seven advantages can be achieved by practising the Four Applications of Mindfulness:

- (1) the purification of beings;
- (2) the overcoming of sorrow;
- (3) the overcoming of lamentation;
- (4) the destruction of suffering;
- (5) the destruction of grief;
- (6) reaching the right path; and
- (7) the attainment of Nibbāna.

It is evident that these seven advantages are the most desirable to and essential for every being. Every person who desires to possess for himself the knowledge of the Holy paths and the Fruitions thereof, should practise the Four Applications of Mindfulness.

Some people set forth questions of the following nature: ‘By practising these Four Applications of Mindfulness, can a person fly in the air? or

What miracles can he perform?’

Those who set forth such questions are not aware of the Assurance of the Buddha Himself, because in that Assurance, the Buddha did not mention even the slightest hint of such statements as ‘One would be able to fly in the air, or perform miracles after practising the Four Applications of Mindfulness.’ Those who are aware of this Assurance will not ask such irrelevant questions. However, if such questions are asked, no Kammatṭhāna Teacher will be able to say more than what was assured by the Buddha Himself in the epilogue of the Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.

What is meant by ‘satipaṭṭhāna’? It means ‘to be ever mindful’ or ‘awareness and attentiveness’. To be mindful about what then? ‘Here, one lives contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending it and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief; he lives contemplating sensations in the sensations, ardent, clearly comprehending them and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief; he lives contemplating consciousness in consciousness, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief; he lives contemplating mental objects in mental objects, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief.’

What is meant here is this: One should contemplate\* the body in the body, sensations in the sensations, taking at the same time a mental note of the physical and mental phenomena as they arise, and without allowing any phenomenon to escape one’s cognition. The Omniscient Buddha declared such contemplations as Kāyānupassī (Contemplating the body in the body) and Vedanānupassī (Contemplating sensations in the sensations). Take for instance the case of ‘going’. Physical action born of mental activity produces bodily expressions in the form of ‘lifting’, ‘pushing’, ‘putting’ or ‘up’, ‘forward’, ‘down’, and a disciple should objectify all causally-conditioned arising and vanishing physical phenomena

\* Contemplation in the sense of being full aware of and not in pondering over or discursive thinking.

and contemplate the body in the body without leaving any detail in the processes of movement pertaining thereto. Such contemplation should be performed at every step and none of the steps should be left out without being contemplated in such a manner. Do not take anything else into consideration. If, however, any idea may chance to creep into your mind, you should make a mental note of it. In stretching and bending your hands and legs also, you should contemplate the arising-and-vanishing physical phenomena during the processes of movement. Likewise this holds good for all bodily movements. Do not allow any physical or mental phenomenon to pass by without being contemplated in the above manner. You should contemplate in such a manner that you are always mindful of all the processes of movement pertaining to the four modes of deportment—walking, standing, sitting, lying—and the physical and mental phenomena that arise in connection therewith.

In any dukkha-vedanā (bodily disagreeable sensations), such as strain, pressing and pain, you should objectify such sensations in the sensations. If a thought or idea arises in your life-continuum, you should objectify that thought or idea and contemplate sensations. Again, if such things as agreeableness and disagreeableness in seeing and hearing arise, you should objectify each of them as it arises and contemplate sensations in the sensations.

Although it is stated that a disciple should make a mental note of all physical and mental phenomena as they arise, it will be difficult for a beginner to perceive all of them, and he will find that he was not able to make a mental note of many of them. However, by dint of earnestness, constant application and zeal, if you concentrate in this manner for five or six days, you will strikingly establish yourself in sati-samādhi (Attentive Concentration). After that stage you will find that there will be very few phenomena that escape your perception and knowledge. At such a stage, every time you perceive any object, your consciousness will be found to have one-pointedness on the object you perceive. This one-pointedness is called Vipassanā-khaṇika-samādhi (the Concentration acquired while carrying out the Insight-exercises). When this samādhi becomes well established, you will be able to understand clearly all the objects you perceive. In what manner? It is as follows: If you perceive a physical phenomenon, you definitely know that it is so,

and that the physical phenomenon has in itself no power of knowing sensation. When you perceive a sensation, you understand that this sensation group experiences agreeable or disagreeable sensations. If you cognize any consciousness, you understand that this consciousness group is directed towards the object it objectifies. Moreover, you understand that these objects, perceptions and consciousness arise and vanish then and there. So you understand that all these are nothing but Impermanence, Suffering and mere Law of Cosmic Order, and thus do not take these objects as either pleasant or hateful. Thus you are free from abhijjhā (covetousness) and domanassa (mentally disagreeable sensation).

You should make a mental note of the physical phenomena and their properties as they arise so as to dispel the Defilements, such as pleasantness and hatefulness, and understand them as Impermanence and Suffering as a 'Law of Cosmic Order'. This is Kāyānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna (Contemplation of the body in the body in the Four Applications of Mindfulness.)

Also you should contemplate sensations, consciousness and mental objects as they arise and understand them as Impermanence and Suffering as a 'Law of Cosmic Order'.

The Buddha declared:

*“Kāye kāyānupassī viharati,  
vedanāsu vedānanupassī viharati,  
cittē cittānupassī viharati,  
dhammesu dhammānupassanā viharati,  
ātāpī sampajāno satimā vinneyya loke  
abhijjhādomanassam.”*

(He lives contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief ;

He lives contemplating sensations in the sensations, ardent, fully comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief ;

He lives contemplating consciousness in consciousness, ardent, fully comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief ;

He lives contemplating mental objects in mental objects, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief.)

You should contemplate sensations in the sensations, consciousness in consciousness and mental objects in mental objects as they arise, in accordance with the truth. You must also have constant application of mindfulness and understand them in the Ultimate sense. As you know them in this manner, so you are free from Defilements.

I should like to stress on one very important thing. This Discourse was delivered by the Omniscient Buddha with an Assurance of Attainment. It is a sandiṭṭhika-dhamma (the Teaching that can be tried and proved). It is not like any teachings that one has to be satisfied with by hearsay. If you actually practise the Dhamma, you will be able to realize the Truth here and now. If you desire to test its truth, then get instructions on the Satipaṭṭhāna method from an instructor of meditation, and practise ardently for yourself. You will then find the various kinds of knowledge and concentration, as already explained.

## TWO

In the First Part I have mentioned the synopsis of the Sutta and in the present talk I shall describe the analytically expository portion of the Sutta. But, as there are 21 sections in the expository portion, I shall be able to deal herein only with the section on the Four Modes of Deportment. First of all, I should like you to bear in mind that the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta does not contain any hidden meaning or metaphorical expression, and also I should like you to understand that this Sutta directly explains in a simple manner all Satipaṭṭhāna methods that are conducive to the attainment of the Paths of Sainthood, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna. I should therefore like you to listen to the present talk with determination and attentively, keeping in mind at the same time that you will have an opportunity to know the Satipaṭṭhāna methods which lead to the attainment of Nibbāna and which were expounded by the Omniscient Buddha.

The Vipassanā practice that leads one to the attainment of Nibbāna is most essential. Only when one understands this Vipassanā-bhāvanā precisely, will he be able to attain Nibbāna ; otherwise, he is liable to miss the Paths of Sainthood, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna. Here, I should like to point out that there are two things that can cause one

to miss the Paths, the Fruitions and Nibbāna. They are:

- (1) Pāpamittatā (association with wicked people)
- (2) Kiriya-parihāni (negligence in performance of duty).

“Pāpamittatā” means ‘to associate with wicked persons’ or ‘to be under the domination of a wicked master’. The reason why King Ajātasattu could not attain to Deliverance, and missed Nibbāna should be attributed to this ‘Pāpamittatā’, because he listened to the words of Devadatta. It should also be borne in mind that if any one acts according to the instigation of any other person to perform an act that may impede the attainment by him of the Supramundane Paths, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna or to the dictates of one who objects to the contemplation of the Vipassanā-bhāvanā that leads to Supramundane Paths, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna, he is liable to miss the Paths, Fruitions and Nibbāna.

“Kiriya-parihāni” means negligence in ‘Preaching’, ‘Hearing’ and ‘Practising’. Of these the first is the duty of a preacher and the others are the duties of a meditating disciple. The teacher should explain the Vipassanā methods thoroughly and completely ; otherwise, he will fail in his duty, and on this account a meditating disciple is liable to miss the Holy Paths, and the fruitions thereof. The disciple, on his part also, should carefully note the instructions given to him by his teacher and practise accordingly. If he does not listen to the instructions and fails in his duty by not practising the Dhamma according to the teacher’s instructions, he is liable to miss the Holy Paths and the fruitions thereof, just as Pessa, who did not listen to the Buddha’s sermon attentively and left his place before the conclusion of the Discourse, thus losing an opportunity of attaining Deliverance. Had this Pessa listened to the Discourse up to its end, he could have become a Sotapanna (Stream-winner). The Majjhima-Nikāya says: “As Pessa returned home without listening to the Discourse till its end, he lost the opportunity of becoming a Sotapanna.” Nowadays too, there may be many who have lost the opportunity of attaining the Path-knowledge for the following reasons :

- (1) Through not listening to the Discourses which expound methods leading to the Paths and Fruitions thereof ;

- (2) Through not practising the Dhamma, though they have listened to the Discourses ; and
- (3) Through not practising Vipassanā to the end with zeal and fervour.

You should therefore remember that I am now expounding the Discourse on the Four Applications of Mindfulness to fulfil my duty as a teacher, and that you, on your part, will accomplish your duty by carefully listening and then practising Vipassanā-bhāvanā with zeal and fervour.

You will now hear the disquisition on the Four Modes of Deportment as declared by the Supremely Enlightened Buddha. Please pay attention to it.

When a disciple is going, he understands: "I am going"; when he is standing, he understands: "I am standing"; when he is sitting, he understands: "I am sitting"; when he is lying down, he understands: "I am lying down"; or just as his body is disposed so he understands it.

The Satipaṭṭhāna method just mentioned is not a new Kammatṭhāna method invented by any Kammatṭhāna teacher. It is the ancient Kammatṭhāna method which was declared by the Omniscient Buddha 2,500 years ago.

Is it not easy to note that one is going and to understand as such when he is going? Again, is it not easy to note that one is standing, when one is standing ; to note that one is sitting, when one is sitting ; and to note that one is lying down, when one is lying down ?

In summing up the foregoing statements, the phrase "Or just as his body is disposed so he understands" means that a yogī should make a mental note of all states of going, standing, etc. by way of causes and conditions whether they are great or small. Here, if the body is disposed in the "states of the rising and falling of the abdomen of a being", the noting of these states and the understanding of these as such come under this category. So, when a yogī has a tranquil mind and is not occupied in contemplating any other subject of meditation, he should make a mental note of the rising and falling of the abdomen, in the states in which the body is disposed, and understand as such. Is it not easy to do so ? Is it not easy for an intending yogī if he desires to practise Vipassanā according to the method I have just expounded ? Yes, it will be easy, because the Buddha declared this method in the simplest way. He declared this method

in such a simple way that it is accessible to all—adults, children, males, females, educated people, uneducated people alike. We find that during the lifetime of the Buddha, boys and girls of 7 years of age became Sotapannas and Arahats. Again the reason why 5/7th of the population of Sāvattī became Holy Ones was due to the simplicity of the practising methods. If these methods had to be studied for a long time before entering into practice, such a state of affairs would never arise. If a person were to practise meditation after possessing a good knowledge of the Abhidhamma, such as Types of Consciousness, Psychic-factors, Courses of Cognition, Material Qualities and the Philosophy of Relations, there would be practically none to practise such Vipassanā-bhāvanā in those days when people were mostly uneducated. A dull-witted person, as was in the beginning, Venerable Cūlapanna would encounter greater hardship. Working on these premises, it will be clearly seen that all subjects of mental training declared by the Buddha are as simple as the Satipaṭṭhāna method.

Here, when I say that it is simple, I mean that the method is easy to pick up. But, to practise the Dhamma so as to attain Concentration and Wisdom is not easy. It appears to be a hard task after all. It can only be done by right exertion, constant application, zeal and earnestness. With slackness all round, nothing good can be expected.

Returning to the subject of actual practice. In the sentence "he understands that he is going, when he is going", those who have not realised the word of the Buddha may raise questions in regard to this. The Commentator, Venerable Buddhaghosa, had studied and also given his explanation. An ignorant person may say to another: 'In this matter of "going", readily do dogs know, when they move on, that they are moving. When a yogī knows in the same manner, will not the awareness be similar in both cases ? Let us hear what the Commentator says. "Yes, it is true that men as well as dogs know when they move that they are moving. But human reason is quite different from animal instinct. The two cases are really diametrically opposite. How ? The answer is this: both dogs and ordinary people recognise the physical and mental phenomena and their functionings as *nicca* (Permanence), *sukha* (Pleasure) and *attā* (Soul-essence). Although they may

say that they are aware of their 'going', they are not aware of this movement, item by item, in a detailed manner, at every time they go, walk or move. They know only very superficially and most of their attention is diverted to other objects. Even when they pay some attention and thus 'know', they do not know that the moving on of the whole body is merely a phase of physical motion born of mental activity called 'going'. Such a person thinks: 'The one who desires to go am I. The going is mine too.' He is swayed by the idea of 'I am'. These types of people are entirely ignorant of the incessant syntheses and dissolutions of phenomena. They think that the Soul is permanent and unchangeable throughout the whole life. Thus, such kind of awareness, instead of knocking out the concept of a soul, strengthens it more. Awareness of this sort, unaccompanied by any kind of contemplation, neither becomes a subject of meditation nor develops the Applications of Mindfulness. The Buddha did not declare such sort of 'awareness'.

The kind of awareness taught by the Buddha is the awareness of the fact of moving on and the knowledge of the characteristic qualities of moving on. A yogī trained in this way knows: 'If there arises the thought, "I shall go", that thought produces a phase of physical motion born of mental activity, which in turn produces bodily expression.' Who goes? Whose going is it? These are the two questions that may be asked. The answer to these two questions is: Who goes? No living being or person whatsoever. Whose going is it? Not the going of any living being or person. Thus the yogī clearly understands that there are only the following two things:

- (1) The thought 'I shall go' born of mental activity, and
- (2) The bodily expressions produced by the process of physical motion born of mental activity.

One of the particular modes of bare phenomenal movement due to appropriate cause-and-effect is called 'going'. Apart from these two bare phenomena, there is no such thing as 'I go' or 'he goes'.

On what account is this going? On account of a phase of physical motion born of mental activity. Because of that the yogī knows: If there arises a thought 'I shall go', that thought produces a phase of physical motion born of mental activity; this phase

produces expression—that change which takes place together with the intention. The consequent moving of the whole body is called 'going'.

As has been explained before, the clear comprehension of the answer to the above three questions—Who goes? Whose going is it? and on what account is this going?—is called *sampajāna-ñāṇa* (comprehending clearly item by item in a detailed manner). These are the words of the Commentator. Such complete comprehension is in accordance with the word "*pajānāti*" (knows in every respect).

To repeat the words of the Commentator: 'a yogī understands in this way: "Owing to a phase of physical motion born of mental activity, bodily expression comes into existence". Here, 'rigidity' in the sense of supporting or holding up with energy is the supporting characteristic of *vāyo-dhātu* (the element of motion), and 'moving' is the functioning of the same element. Thus the Commentator gives us to understand that the moving of the whole body through the mind-produced physical motion, is called 'going'. These are the amplifications of the word '*pajānāti*'.

A yogī must understand the arising of the thought 'I shall go' born of mental activity; and also he must understand the process of movement produced thereby; and finally, the bodily expression produced by that process. He should also understand that the whole body moves forward, and that this movement has to be termed 'I am going' or 'he is going'. In fact there is no goer, but only the going takes place. A yogī must understand in this manner, and this understanding is called *asammoha-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of non-delusion), which itself is a subject of meditation. Also as this clear comprehension arises after perceiving subjects of meditation, it becomes *Satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā* (contemplation of the Four Applications of Mindfulness). The Buddha, therefore, thus declared: 'A yogī understands that he is going, when he is going'.

If we read the Text in conjunction with the relevant Commentary, it will be apparent that the Text directly shows the method of meditating in accordance with the *gocara-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of resort). The Commentator explains that when a meditating disciple who practises in this manner attains a considerable degree of

Concentration and Wisdom, his understanding becomes clear comprehension of non-delusion. With these words the Commentator supported the Text. We also rely on the words of the Commentator and give instructions to the disciples on the Satipaṭṭhāna method as declared in the Text. Many persons have tried this method, and, so far, many hundreds of my disciples have attained the stage of this *asammoha-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of non-delusion). They include those who are well conversant with Buddhist literature, those who are not so, bhikkhus and lay devotees. This being the case, do not entertain doubt by asking yourself: 'By simply contemplating the matter of "going", can such a clear comprehension be attained? If you do so, you will resemble a person who is born blind, and who does not believe that other people can see visible objects because he, being born blind, cannot see things himself. Moreover, you have the opportunity to obtain the *dullabhas* (rare opportunities) and are fortunate enough to have become a man. If you entertain such kind of doubt, you will forego all benefits derived from your having become a man. So if you really love yourself (the term used conventionally), and desire to work out your own salvation, try to practise *Vipassanā-bhāvanā* by the Satipaṭṭhāna method. If you practise so for four or five days according to my instructions, I can guarantee that you will attain such clear comprehension.

As has been explained before, and as in the case of 'going', a yogī understands that owing to the phase of physical motion born of mental activity, 'standing', 'sitting' and 'lying down' take place. Such kind of contemplation is called *samudaya dhammā-nupassī* (Contemplating origination-things), because a yogī lives contemplating origination things in the body, or he lives contemplating origination-and-dissolution-things in the body. This *sammoha-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of non-delusion) is the outcome of this sort of contemplation.

If a yogī continues to contemplate in this manner, his knowledge consisting in such contemplation will be gradually increased till he attains the Holy Paths, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna. For this reason the Omniscient Buddha declared: "*ñāyassa adhigamāya nibbānassa sacchikiriya*" (For reaching the right path—the Real Eightfold Path and for the attainment of Nibbāna.)

### THREE

The Declaration is "*Abhikkante paṭikkante sampajānakārī hoti*. (The yogī practises only clear comprehension and is nowhere without comprehension, in going forwards and going backwards.) Thus in going forwards and in going backwards the yogī must understand that he goes forwards or that he goes backwards. He should not go forwards or go backwards without clearly comprehending that he does so. Therefore the yogī should practise clear comprehension with regard to standing, sitting, swaying backwards and forwards, etc. Again he should practise in the same manner when his body sways from left to right. Here, one may say to another: 'The swaying of the body from side to side is not contained in the *āhacca-bhāsita-desanā* (a Discourse of the Scriptures)'. Do not entertain doubt by saying to yourself: 'Will it amount to the contemplation of body in the body, by practising clear comprehension of those things that are not directly mentioned by the Buddha?' *Āhacca-bhāsita-desanā* means the Discourse which briefly explains the fundamental principles pertaining to the Practices as mentioned in the Text. It is not a full explanation. If it were, the treatise would be voluminous. The most important point to note in this regard is that, whether it is the swaying of the body forwards, backwards, left or right, the *swaying* itself in any form is a physical phenomenon. These physical phenomena can be delusively taken as *nicca, sukha, attā*. Thus all mental and physical phenomena that can be delusively taken as such, are to be treated as the subjects of meditation for the purpose of dispelling such delusion. This is the fixed procedure of the *Vipassanā*-practice. That being the case, it should be clearly borne in mind that all mental and physical phenomena that can be delusively taken as *nicca, sukha* and *attā*, are fit to be meditated on as briefly shown in the Discourse.

There are four kinds of clear comprehension: (i) *sāthaka-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of purpose), *sappāya-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of suitability), *gocara-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of resort), and *asammoha-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of non-delusion).

Among these four kinds of clear comprehension, the comprehension of purpose is the comprehension of a worthy purpose

after considering what is worthy and what is not, with the thought, 'Is there any use to any one by doing thus, or not ?'

Clear comprehension of suitability is the comprehension of the suitable after considering what is suitable and what is not, in comparison with one's own status and dignity.

Clear comprehension of purpose and clear comprehension of suitability are useful both for mundane and supramundane affairs. If one is endowed with these two kinds of clear comprehension, he is able to prosper in this world, and at the same time these are able to serve as the foundation of his practice in Vipassanā-bhāvanā. These two clear comprehensions which are the auxiliaries to the mental development of Calm and Insight, are also called Pāhihārika-paññā (Knowledge connected with the preservation or sustaining). But it is not yet bhāvanā-paññā (Knowledge based on Mental Development).

Clear comprehension of resort means the subject of meditation in the sense of the locus of contemplative action. That is to say that the yogī has one-pointedness on the spheres of action which are being objectified by him. In the province of Insight-practice, the clear comprehension of bodily, verbal and mental actions signified by kāya (body), vedanā (sensation), citta (consciousness), dhamma (mental object). This gocara-sampajañña is the working field of Insight-practice. Only when one has acquired the clear comprehension of resort, will he also acquire asammoha-sampajañña (clear comprehension of non-delusion). In the Commentary the following set of four has been explained in connection with this clear comprehension of resort :

- (1) A certain bhikkhu on the journey out for alms takes with him in mind the subject of meditation, but on the journey back from the work of alms-gathering he does not bring it along with him, having become unmindful of it.
- (2) There is another bhikkhu who does not take it along with him on the outward journey, but returns from the alms-tour with the subject of meditation in his mind. Many Bhikkhus such as this, after taking food and then exerting themselves in the development of insight, have reached the Holy Paths and the Fruitions thereof. In olden days, in Lankā-dīpa (Ceylon) alone, there was not a sitting place in any of the various villages which was not a

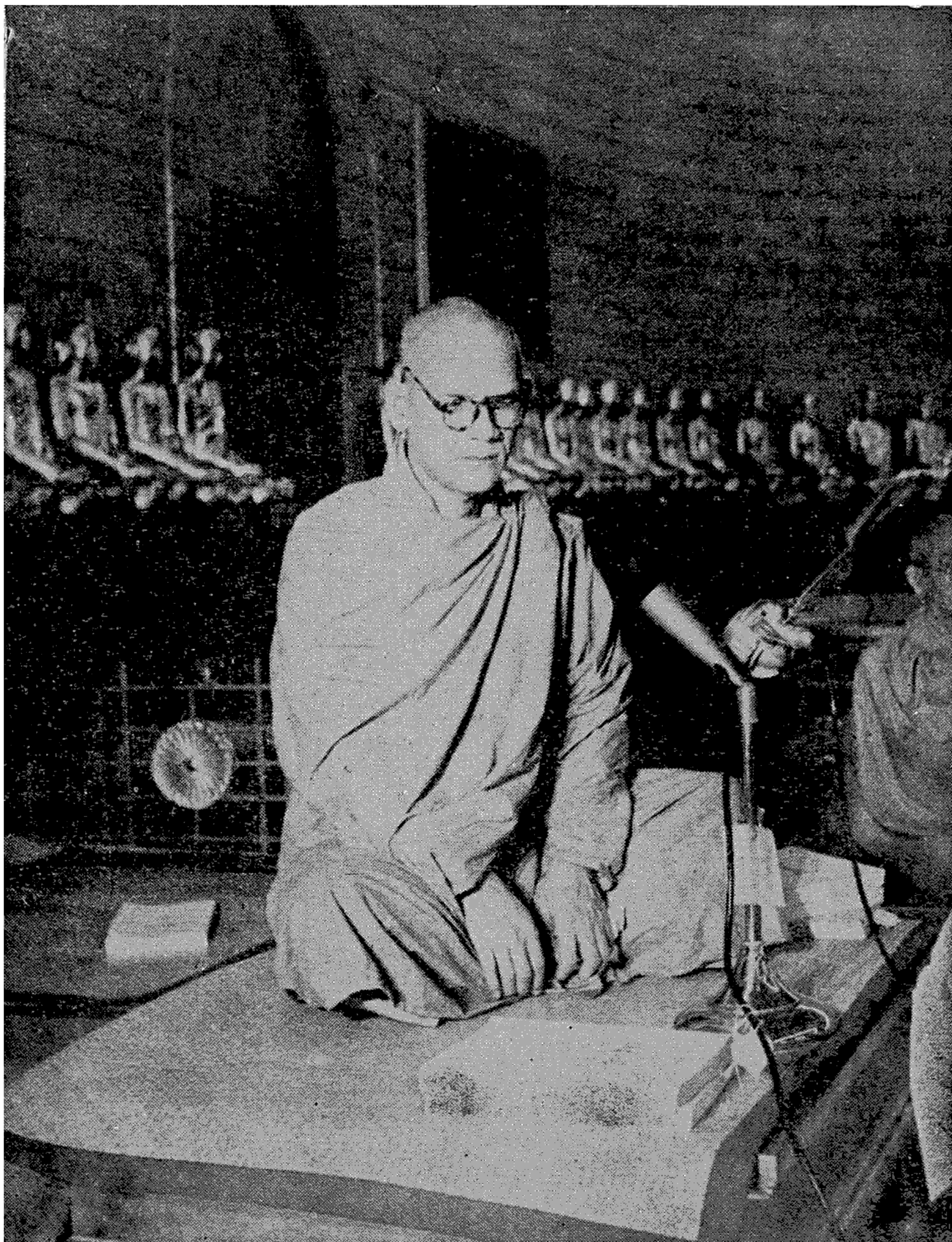
place where bhikkhus, having sat and drunk gruel, a tainted Sainthood. So it should be believed that there are people who attained to Deliverance by exerting themselves in practising Vipassanā-bhāvanā.

- (3) The third type of bhikkhu is one who neither takes it along with him on the outward journey nor returns with it on the way back home. Such is called Nikkitta-dhūrapuggala (one not yoked with meditation). He is also called Pamāda-vihārī (one who lives with carelessness or negligence). That is to say that he has thrown away the yoke—or the burden of right exertion—and so is an irresponsible person. He will give up all hopes of attaining to Deliverance during the present birth and abandon all kinds of Vipassanā-practices. Such a person will not even notice that there is such a thing as kammaṭṭhāna (spheres of action). But there are people worse than that. They are the people who object to others practising Vipassanā on the ground that none is able to attain Freedom during the present lifetime.

One will have to take this matter into very deep consideration. Just as a patient can procure medicine, if he is in possession of the correct prescription, and cure his disease, people with ripe Pāramitās (Perfections) are able to practise according to the Teaching of the Buddha so long as it remains extant, and attain the Holy Paths and the Fruitions thereof. This point should not be ignored. No canonical book says that a yogī cannot attain to Deliverance during the present existence. On the other hand, the Commentaries say that by practising Vipassanā according to the Teaching of the Buddha, one is able to become an Arahat endowed with (i) remembrance of former births; (ii) insight into the future destiny of beings; (iii) recognition of the origin of *Dukkha* and the way to its removal. The Commentary to the Vinaya says that one is at least able to become an Anāgāmi by practising so.

The most reliable authority is the Declaration made in the Mahāparinibbāna-sutta which runs as follows :

*'Ime ca subhadda bhikkhu sammāvihareyyum asuñño loko arahantehi assātī'*



Ven. Mahāthera Sobhana (Mahāsī Sayadaw), Aggamahāpaṇḍita

(But let these my disciples, O Subhadda, live rightly, and the world will not be destitute of saints).'

In this Declaration it is highly necessary for us to clearly understand the true interpretation of the phrase 'sammāvihāreyyum'. If the Noble Ones and yogīs practise Vipassanā silently and in solitariness, without propagating the Teaching of the Buddha, can the Buddha's Sāsana endure for long? No. Only by preaching of the Dhamma by teachers to the disciples and encouraging them to practise the Dhamma, then only will the Sāsana be able to endure for long. So the phrase 'Sammā vihāreyyum' should be understood in this manner :

According to the Commentary 'to live righteously' means 'to preach to the people whatever little of the Dhamma he knows, to show them the method of practising it and to encourage them so that they may understand the Dhamma as much as the preacher does.'

I shall further explain the words of the Commentator who says : "Sammā vihāreyyunti ettha sotāpanno atano adhigataṭhānam aññassa kathetvā tam sotapannam karon-to sammā viharati nāma esanayo sakadāgāmi ādisu". ('To live righteously' means this : If a Sotapanna explains to another particulars about the Path-knowledge he has already attained, and causes that the latter to become a Sotapanna. The same holds good for a Sakadāgāmi and an Anāgāmi.)

Again, 'Sotāpatti maggatthāya āraddha vipassako attano paṇaṃ kammatthānam kathetvā aññampi sotāpattimaggatthāya araddha-vipassakam karonto sammāviharati nāma ; esa nayo sesamaggatthāya āraddha-vipassakesu idam sandhāyāha sammā-vihāreyyum.'

(If a yogī who aspires to become a Sotapanna explains to another all about the Spheres of Action he has traversed so that the latter may be able to acquire the same amount of knowledge as the explainer, he is said to live righteously'. The same holds good for those who are practising 'Vipassanā to attain the Path of 'Once-Returning' and the Path of 'Never-Returner'. Such kind of living means 'to live righteously'.)

These are the explanations given by the Commentator. That being the case, there can appear any number of persons who have penetrated to the Truth, and the Buddha-Sāsana will prosper for long. The phrase 'to live righteously' implies 'the imparting of Vipassanā practice with an introduction of the Teaching of the Buddha in this respect, and it is the *Pariyatti* (Learning the Wording of the Doctrine) or (Theory). Well now, do we not find nowadays the 'Learning of the Wording of the Doctrine', in conformity with the phrase "Sammāvihāreyyum" ? Since this *Pariyatti* exists, it undoubtedly follows that the world is not destitute of Holy Ones and Arahats, in accordance with the Declaration, "Asuñño loko arahantehi assā" (the world will not be destitute of saints). If you only consider the sure and certain benefits to be derived therefrom, you will come to this: 'When a meditating disciple practises Vipassanā in consonance with the methods provided by the Teaching of the Buddha, even if he is unable to attain to Deliverance in the present existence, he will establish himself in Sīla (Morality), Samādhi (Concentration) and Paññā (Wisdom), and thus strengthen his Pāramitās. A Buddhist should not therefore prevent another from practising Vipassanā-bhāvanā if he is doing so according to the Word of the Buddha. People should carefully note that if they prevent others from practising they will be performing an action the resultant effect of which will hinder them themselves in attaining the Knowledge of the Holy Paths, and that they will also be causing damage to the Buddha-Sāsana.

- (4) The Fourth and the last type of bhikkhu is the one who both takes the subject of meditation along with him on the journey out for alms and brings it back with him on the journey home. This type is the best of all. The Commentator says: Such a person may be able to attain Arahatsip in the present birth. If he fails to reach Sainthood at an early stage, then he reaches it at the time of death; if he fails at the time of death, then, after becoming a Deva; or if not then, immediately on meeting a Fully Enlightened Buddha will he become one endowed with quick intuition and psychic powers. So, the intend-

ing yogīs should never give up; there is plenty of hope for them. We are also teaching our disciples ‘clear comprehension of resort’ in the same manner as set forth in regard to the fourth type mentioned above.

*Asammoha-sampajañña* means ‘clear comprehension of non-delusion’; that is clear comprehension with no dullness or stupidity. That is to say that the meditating disciple contemplates the arising and dissolution of mental and physical phenomena, and is constantly aware of and comprehends anicca (Impermanence), dukkha (Unsatisfactoriness) and anattā (Impersonality). Further, non-confusion in going forwards and so forth is the clear comprehension of non-delusion. When the clear comprehension of resort is fully established this clear comprehension of non-delusion appears automatically. It is not necessary for one to work for it separately. The yogī thus understands: ‘When there is the arising in one of the thought “I am swaying”, just with that thought, appears the process of movement originating from mind which brings to birth bodily expression. The act of swaying is not produced by the soul; nor is the act of swaying produced by me. Only by way of the movement due to mental activity, this skeleton called “the body” is swaying.

The yogī will have to work for *gocara-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of resort), and *asammoha-sampajañña* (clear comprehension of non-delusion) will appear of itself.

*Clear comprehension in looking straight on and in looking away.*

The Declaration is: “*Ālokite vilokite sampajānakārī*” (Practising clear comprehension in looking straight on and in looking out in all other directions).

*Clear comprehension in the bending and the stretching of limbs.*

“*Sammiñjite pasārite sampajānakārī*”. The meaning of this sentence is ‘Practising clear comprehension in the bending and the stretching’. It means that one should contemplate the clear comprehension in the bending and the stretching of the joints as they arise, and not to bend or stretch the joints for the purpose of this exercise.

*Clear comprehension in wearing robes and so forth.*

“*Sanghāti patta cīvara dhāraṇe sampajānakārī*” (Practising clear comprehension in wearing the robes and in handling the bowl, personal requisites, etc.)

*Clear comprehension in taking food and drink “Asite pite sampajānakārī”* (Practising clear comprehension in the partaking of food and drink).

*Clear comprehension in cleansing the body “Uccārapassāvakkamme sampajānakārī”* (Practising clear comprehension in defecating and in urinating).

In short, it means that the yogī should develop the Applications of Mindfulness on such bodily movements as the movement of the lips, the movement of the tongue, the movement of eye-lids, the opening of the eyes, the shutting of the eyes, blinking, in fact, all bodily expression or movement, and thus live contemplating origination-and-dissolution-things in the body.

Thus the yogī understands: ‘There is no doer of things. Only there are the thought, the process of movement born of mental activity, and the bodily movements produced by the process of movement. So there is no confusion in going forwards and so forth. This is called the clear comprehension of non-delusion.

By contemplating clear comprehension of resort and also of non-delusion, the yogī will gradually acquire various kinds of Vipassanā-knowledge, stage by stage, and finally attain Nibbāna, ‘Extinction of greed, extinction of hatred and extinction of delusion’.

In order to help the yogī to attain such a state, I am now giving you some instructions in regard to the Applications of Mindfulness.

#### FOUR

I have dwelt at length upon “*Kāyānupassanā*” (the Contemplation of the Body in the Body). Now I shall deal at some length with “*Vedanānupassanā*” (the Contemplation of Sensations in Sensations), “*Cittānupassanā*” (the Contemplation of consciousness in consciousness) and “*Dhāmanupassanā*” (the contemplation of mental objects in mental objects), together with the various grades of Vipassanā-knowledge. But those who have never heard of these and those who have no practical knowledge of them may find some difficulty in understanding them.

There are two fundamental methods of practising Vipassanā. They are ‘*Samathayānika*’ method and ‘*Vipassanā-yānika*’

method. In the '*Samatha-yānika*' method the yogī establishes himself in *Upacāra-samādhi* (Neighbourhood- or Access-concentration) or *Appanā-samādhi* (Ecstatic-concentration), and then practises *Vipassanā-bhāvanā*. In the case of '*Vipassanā-yānika*' method, it is not necessary for the yogī to establish himself in these Concentrations, but to practise mere Insight which does not involve these two Samādhis. It is also known as '*Suddha-vipassanā-yanikā*' method, meaning that it is just Insight and nothing else. The Commentary says: '*Vuttappakāram samatham anuppādetva*' (Contemplating the subject of meditation without allowing the two kinds of Concentration to arise). But when a yogī is concentrating completely on the arisings and dissolutions of the mental and physical phenomena as they arise, the Concentration thus temporarily achieved by him during the period of meditation becomes as strong as *Upacāra-samādhi* and is able to dispel 'Hindrances' or 'Obstacles to the mind'. So most of the Commentators have placed this kind of Samādhi under the category of *Upacāra-samādhi*. I am explaining all this to show that although a yogī does not establish himself in Concentration separately, he is able to acquire *Citta-visuddhi* (Purity of mind).

Vipassanā means 'to contemplate Mind and Body that can be delusively taken as Permanence, Pleasure and Soul-essence, in such a manner that all these delusions may be dispelled.' It is also apparent that these psycho-physical elements arise at the six Bases of every person's Santāna (continuity). In what manner do they arise? Conditioned through the eye, the visible object, light and attention, eye-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the ear, the audible object, the ear-drum—the conducting medium, and attention, ear-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the nose, the odoriferous object, air and attention, nose-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the tongue, the sapid object, humidity and attention, tongue-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the body, bodily impression, the element of solidity and attention, body-consciousness arises. Conditioned through the mano-dhātu (mind-element), the mind-object and attention, mind-consciousness arises. But an ordinary irresponsible person who never contemplates the Way of Mindfulness will never be aware of the arisings and dissolutions of physical and mental phenomena. Thus he takes these arising and vanishing phenomena as one continuous

series and under the idea of compactness he takes them as permanent Personality or Being or pleasurable 'I' or 'Being'.

If the yogī directs his attention to these psycho-physical elements as they arise and vanish, he will be able to understand them item by item thus: 'This is anicca (Impermanence), this is dukkha (Unsatisfactoriness) and this is anattā (Impersonality). For this reason a meditating disciple has to live contemplating these psycho-physical elements as they arise. However, one will be able to make a mental note of all these only when he has firmly established himself in Concentration.

A beginner will not be able to make a mental note of all these phenomena. If he attempts to do so, he will not be able to attain Concentration of mind. So, the Commentator says: '*Yathāpākaṭam vipassanābhini-veso....*' (One should contemplate the arising of perceptible physical phenomena). Among the twenty-eight kinds of physical phenomena also, the Four Great Primaries or the Four Great Essentials should be contemplated first. Of these Four Great Primaries too, *pathavī* (the element of extension or solidity), *tejo* (the element of kinetic energy) and *vāyo* (the element of motion) are all tangible objects. Thus, if you objectify the tangible objects and contemplate the body in the body saying, 'touching', 'touching', you are sure to realise one of these three elements. As regards *āpo* (the element of cohesion or the holding, the fluid), it is not to be perceived by touch or contact. But, if you are making a mental note of the arisings and vanishings of these tangible objects, you will notice the appearance of such qualities as 'liquidity', 'cohesion', which are *lakkhaṇa* (characteristic), *rasa* (function) and *paccupaṭṭhāna* (manifestation) of this element of *āpo*. So you must understand that whenever you contemplate the body in the body by way of 'Impression', you will clearly notice the characteristic, functions and manifestations of these Four Great Primaries.

I shall now expound the properties of *vāyo-dhātu* (the element of motion). Its characteristic is 'to support'; its function is 'to set in motion', and its manifestation is 'to move'. The other three elements—*pathavī*, *āpo* and *tejo* have their own characteristics, functions and manifestations. In short, whatever dhamma it may be, if a meditating disciple applies mindfulness on one of the Four Great Primaries, he will soon be able to realise its characteristic, function and manifestation. This is in accordance with the

*Visuddhi-magga* (the Way of Purity), because that is based on the Teaching of the Buddha.

Therefore, bearing in mind that the *Mahā-satipaṭṭhana-sutta* provides various methods of practising Vipassanā, one should apply mindfulness on physical and mental phenomena as they arise, and contemplate the body in the body. While contemplating so, if one experiences such disagreeable sensations as 'straining', 'pressing', or 'pain', one should direct one's attention towards the spot where this sensation arises and contemplate the sensations in the sensations. This is called *Vedanānupassanā* (contemplating the sensations in the sensations). In this connection the Commentator has explained the different grades of knowledge acquired by a child, an ordinary person, and a meditating disciple respectively, but I shall have to deal with this very briefly. If one desires to estimate how much Vipassanā-knowledge a yogī has acquired under such circumstances, he should practise for 4, 5 or 6 days, when he will be able to acquire such a clear understanding as he has never before experienced in his life.

There is another point to note. While a yogī is contemplating the body in the body, he will find that his mind flits from one object to another, or that he is wool-gathering. When such fanciful thought arises, the yogī should make a mental note of this also, saying to himself, 'going', 'thinking', 'knowing' etc., and contemplating the arising and vanishing of the same. This is called *cittānupassanā* (contemplating consciousness in consciousness). The Buddha declared : "*Sarāgam vā cittam sarāgam cittanti pajānāti*" (understands the consciousness that is accompanied by lust, as consciousness with lust.) The Commentator further points out that every consciousness must be contemplated as it arises.

Again, whenever such Hindrances as *kāmacchanda* (Sensuous Lust), *vyāpāda* (Ill-will), *thina-middha* (Torpor and Languor), *uddhacca* (Restlessness), *kukkucca* (Worry), *vicikicchā* (Sceptical Doubt) arise, the yogī should apply mindfulness on such hindrances and contemplate the arisings and vanishings of these, until they totally disappear. A beginner will find some difficulty in making a mental note of these, but as his Concentration becomes more and more established, he

will be able to overcome these hindrances, just as a child listens to his parents' words. This kind of contemplation is called *Dhammānupassanā* (contemplating the mental objects in the mental objects).

I have hardly enough time to expound *khandha* (Groups of existence), *āyatana* (Bases), *dhātu* (Elements), *bojjhanga* \* and *saccā* (Noble Truths), even in regard to the expounding of the various stages of Vipassanā knowledge. I shall have to dwell upon them in brief. As has been stated before, when the yogī applies his mindfulness on the arisings and vanishings of the mental and physical phenomena as they appear, the amount of concentration which he acquires during the period of his Insight-practice will become stronger and stronger, and he will have one-pointedness on the very subject of meditation he objectifies. As there is no discursive thinking or wavering of the mind, it becomes pure. This is called *citta-visuddhi* (Purity of Mind).

At such a stage, perception to the yogī becomes conspicuous by itself, and so on, whenever he makes a mental note of any object, he understands that only physical and mental phenomena arise and vanish side by side forming duads and nothing else. Thus, he clearly understands that, apart from these two kinds of phenomena—*nāma* and *rūpa* (Mind and Matter) there is no 'I', no 'Being'. This is called *ditṭhi-visuddhi* (Purity of Understanding) and *nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa* (Knowledge determining Mind and Body).

In the cases of bending the body and so forth, the yogī understands that, conditioned by the physical motion born of mental activity, bodily expression or intimation (in the form of effect) arises. Also, while contemplating in this manner, the yogī understands : 'Conditioned through the eye, the visible object, light and attention, eye-consciousness arises.' Thus he knows that there are only conditions or causes and their resultant-effects, and there is no seer, doer, etc. This is called *paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa* (Knowledge determining the relations of one phenomenon to another). It is also called *kankhāvitaraṇa-visuddhī* (the Purity of Escape from all doubt). If the yogī really and strenuously practises Vipassanā for 2 or 3 days, he will be able to acquire such kind of purity. Again, the yogī, while contemplat-

\* *Bojjhanga* : 'The 7 Links of Enlightenment', are : Attentiveness (*sati-sambojjhanga*), Investigation of the Law (*dhamma-vicaya bojjhanga*), Energy (*virīya bojjhanga*), Rapture (*pīti bojjhanga*), Tranquillity (*passaddhi bojjhanga*), Concentration (*saṃādhi bojjhanga*), Equanimity (*upekkhā bojjhanga*). "Because they are leading to Enlightenment, they are called Links of Enlightenment".

ing in this manner finds that mental and physical phenomena having arisen vanish immediately, at times he also experiences sensations that are intolerable. He then considers in this manner: 'As the phenomena having arisen pass away immediately, they are *anicca*.' As the life-continuum of the yogī is constantly oppressed by such arisings and vanishings, he experiences misery. Again, these phenomena come and go and none can prevent them from doing so : none can hold sway over them ; they are functioning of themselves according to the Law of Cosmic Order. This is called *Sammasana-ñāṇa* (Knowledge to observe, explore and determine all phenomena of existence as Impermanent, Unsatisfactory and Impersonal.)

Also, the yogī will find that the phenomena which he is contemplating, arise and vanish immediately. They do not go to any other place. They arise and disappear immediately then and there. This is called *Udayabbaya-ñāṇa* (Knowledge consisting in Contemplation of Arising and Vanishing). To reach such a stage, the yogī will have to practise hard for about 4 or 5 days.

During such insight, however, there arise the so-called *Vipassanūpakilesa* (Defilements of Insight), such as effulgence of light, rapture, tranquillity, happiness, etc. When the yogī experiences such extraordinary things, he becomes very delighted and attached to them. He should not do so. He should make a mental note of these and contemplate them as Impermanent, Unsatisfactory and Impersonal. If I were to explain this upakkilesa fully, I should have to speak at great length. The detailed explanation may be found in my Manual of Vipassanā-practice, Part II.

Then again, while the yogī is thus contemplating, he will notice that phenomena arise and vanish immediately, without an admixture of concepts and ideas. This is called *bhanga-ñāṇa* (Knowledge in Contemplation of Dissolution). Some people are under the impression that it is *bhanga-ñāṇa* only when they see the mental pictures of the subjects of meditation followed by a mental note of seeing them destroyed. You should note that it is not *bhanga-ñāṇa*, because in that insight there is no concept or idea whatsoever. Only in the *sammasana-ñāṇa*, will you find such things. During your insight-practice, if you notice that you reach a stage where you discern the arisings and immediate vanishings of these phenomena, you must remember that it is *bhanga-ñāṇa*. It is, therefore, highly necessary for the yogī

to practise Vipassanā methodically and to achieve such a knowledge as *bhanga-ñāṇa*. After that the yogī will gradually be able to achieve such higher knowledges as *bhaya-ñāṇa* (Knowledge of Awareness of Fear), *ādinava-ñāṇa* (Knowledge in Contemplation of Misery), *nibbida-ñāṇa* (Knowledge in Contemplation of Aversion), *muccitu-kamyatā-ñāṇa* (Knowledge of the Desire for Deliverance), *patisankhā-ñāṇa* (Knowledge of the Reflection of Contemplation) and *sankhārupekkhā-ñāṇa* (Knowledge in Equanimity in regard to all formations of existence). I merely mention that it is not difficult to acquire such higher knowledge, since I have not time to explain them in full. There are also some difficulties to overcome until the yogī acquires the Path-knowledge. So the service of a *kammaṭṭhā-nācariya* (Instructor in meditation) is absolutely necessary.

However, if the yogī applies his mindfulness on the arisings and vanishings of the phenomena as they appear, and contemplates them as *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* with zeal and fervour, he will at last acquire such knowledge as *vuṭṭhānagāmini-vipassanā-ñāṇa* (Insight leading to the Ascent) and *anuloma-ñāṇa* (Adaptation-knowledge). Immediately upon this Adaptation-knowledge there arises the *gotrabhū-ñāṇa* (Maturity-knowledge) taking as object the Unconditioned, the standstill of existence, the absence of becoming, cessation, Nibbāna. Such a state is called 'realisation of Nibbāna' or 'seeing Nibbāna face to face'. It is in accordance with the Declaration: "*Dhammacakkhum udāpādi yam kinci samudaya-dhammam sabbantam nirodha-dhamanti*" (the Eye of Wisdom arises; all causally-conditioned phenomena that have arisen are liable to cessation). Milinda-pañhā (the Questions of Milinda) also says : '*Appavatta manuppatto nibbānam sacchikarotīti vuccati*' (When the state of non-continuance of the phenomena of existence comes to be, it is called 'seeing Nibbāna face to face'. In order to allow one to practise Vipassanā and realise Nibbāna here and now, the Omniscient Buddha propounded the *Mahāsatipatṭhāna-sutta*. I have now given you a hint as to how to attain Nibbāna.

'May all be able to follow the Discourse on the Four Applications of Mindfulness.'

'May all be able to contemplate the Four Applications of Mindfulness.'

'May all accomplish the course of training methodically, and finally attain the the Holy Paths, the Fruitions thereof and Nibbāna.'

## VICTORY OF THE SĀSANA

*Broadcast on 24th May 1956 by U Ohn Ghine*

**I**N the early days of civilisation, in the West as in Asia, if somebody shouted 'Victory ! Victory !' the guards of the local ruler would come tumbling out with drawn swords and the populace would panic. 'Victory' meant just 'battle, murder and sudden death'. It was the Omniscient Buddha who changed all that. He gave a new meaning to many words because He changed many of the old concepts. 'If a man win a victory over tens of thousands of men in battle, that is not a true victory, the real victory is to conquer oneself' He taught.

And now a great victory for Peace has been won, in the only way in which victories for peace *can* be won, by peaceful means. That victory is the preservation of the word of the Buddha for a full 2,500 years, and the victory is now being celebrated throughout Asia and in many Western countries also. More than that, the victory has been consolidated by the laying of a sure foundation for a further victory. Efforts of the Buddhist world have ensured that the Sāsana, the Teaching of the Buddha is preserved in its purity so that it may well last a further twenty-five centuries.

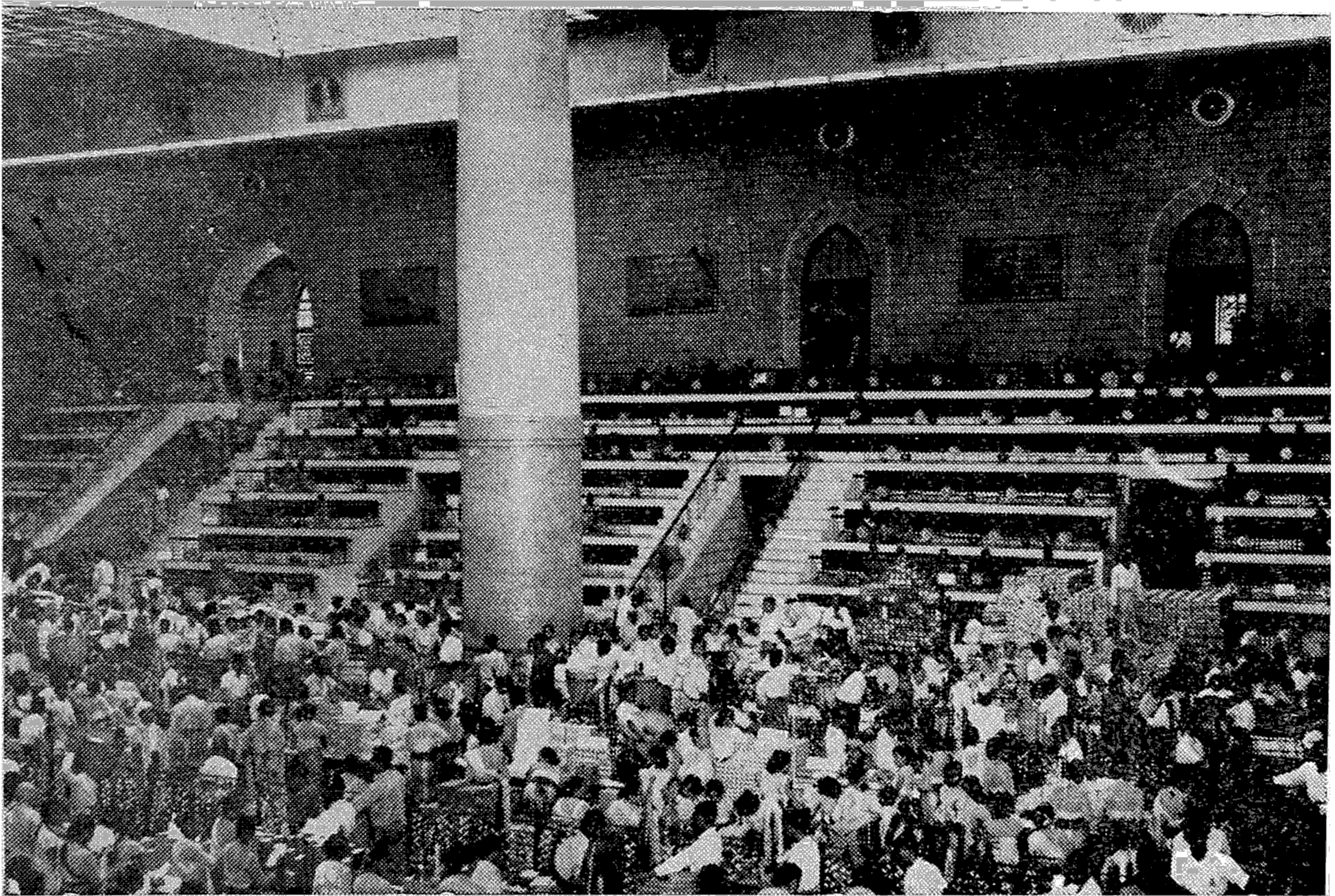
Some Westerners who have no direct knowledge of Buddhism, tend to think at first that it is contemplative, a static religion and even a running away, an escape, a retreat, and as such to be deplored. Life, they say, is dynamic and to be lived. They are rather surprised when one points out that most of the things *they* do are done as an escape from reality, such things as most reading, as plays and cinemas and even 'good music' and stamp-collecting and company and chatter and even many ideologies, especially those one feels called upon to fight for. It is Buddhism that is a facing of the facts of life, the very terrible facts of life, because we are all going more or less swiftly to death, and to an after-life or existence that will be according to our deeds ; and unless we have lived very good lives, and how many of us have done that?, the future is going to be very, very unpleasant. Most men know that in their hearts and that is why they play games, striving to forget. There is no comfort in the thought of mere good deeds, they can take one but to an impermanent heaven whence the descent may be to an equally impermanent hell. Mere faith can do the same and cannot do more. No God or Buddha can save one :

'You yourself must make the effort, even Buddhas merely point out the way' .. And the Way, enshrined in the Pāli Tipiṭaka, is no easy way; it is a strict discipline though there are no elements of self-torture in it. The Buddhist, if he is a good Buddhist, is constantly aware of this and constantly striving, with more or less intensity to realise it fully. 'Escapist' is a word therefore that can be applied to anything but Buddhism.

Then take the idea that Buddhism is static, which is part of the concept of some non-Buddhists. The world as such, in our present civilisation, so-called, is dynamic only in its rushing to more terrible wars with more terrible weapons in its motivation by Craving and Ignorance. It is Buddhism that is alive and dynamic, not with the feverishness of 'modern civilisation' but with the quiet energy that is motivated by love and reason, that alone can save the world.

Peace and tranquillity are by no means static, they are more dynamic than war and struggle. It is only that man has been led away by the fighters that has made us for so long tend to think that the reverse is the case. That Buddhism is dynamic is evidenced by the great mass movement towards brotherhood in Asia and in the world at large which was inspired in the first instance, six hundred years before the birth of Christ, by the Teaching of the Omniscient Buddha, the man who became greater than any God. This movement has been kept going in ever-widening circles of influence through these 25 centuries by the reason and love and law first given to mankind in this world-period by the Buddha.

Part of the dynamics of Buddhism is the Great Councils of which today we have just concluded so successfully the Sixth. During the lifetime of the Buddha many of those who joined the Noble Order of monks took as part of their training the learning of the Teaching by heart and at the First Great Council, called a matter of weeks after the Passing Away of the Exalted One, the Teaching was canonised and entrusted part by part to groups of Bhāṇakas or Reciting Monks who daily recited this Teaching, those parts entrusted to them, and the Reciting



Presentation of Tipiṭaka Texts and other Offerings inside the Mahāpāsāṇa Guhā (The Great Sacred Cave), Rangoon, during the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā and 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations

Monks of to-day are their descendants who have carried the Teaching through the ages in unbroken succession.

Some thirty years before Christ, there was a great famine in Ceylon, which was at that time the main repository and guardian of the Sāsana. In addition to the famine and accompanying it was a cruel war. Monks were scattered and unable to get proper sustenance. It is recorded that some groups were so weak that they could merely whisper. Nevertheless they repeated their portion of the Tipiṭaka and that they might hear each other lay down on the ground with their heads close together and their bodies radiating out like the spokes of a wheel. There are many other instances where all has been sacrificed so that the Sāsana might live.

The Buddha had been questioned as to the reasons and causes why the Saddhamma, the Sāsana, might last or might wane away, and gave to his questioner the necessary conditions. The venerable Kimbila who had asked the question was told :

“ Kimbila, when the Tathāgata has passed away, monk, nun and lay-disciple may dwell without reverence, without respect for the Master ; without reverence, without respect for the Dhamma; without reverence, without respect for the the Order; without reverence, without respect for the training; without reverence, without respect for zeal ; without reverence, without respect for goodwill. This, Kimbila, is a reason, this a cause whereby, when the Tathāgata has passed away, Saddhamma shall not endure. But, Kimbila, let monk and nun, lay-disciple, man and woman, live with reverence and respect for the Master, Dhamma, Order, training, zeal and goodwill ; and it shall be a reason, a cause, whereby, when the Tathāgata has passed away, Saddhamma shall endure.”

This reverence and respect, accompanied by the positive training and dynamic zeal, we find still in the world to-day. Indeed we can say, in spite of the many dangers and difficulties and materialisms that beset us, that they are increasing. This is the victory of the Sāsana. Without these things as

part of the very hearts of the people there would have been no Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā to preserve the Sāsana.

The Six Great Councils have all had one end in view, the preservation of the Teaching that alone can lead men to final victory and as part of that end the propagation of the Teaching. The Great Councils have not been ends in themselves but have been means to an end and this Council is no exception. Here is the Sāsana preserved again, and again men's minds oriented towards that Teaching and again we may expect a wave of influence. Naturally it will be a beneficent, a peaceful influence. In its history of 25 centuries the Teaching has not ever attempted to make converts through force or fear or bribery. Truth and Love and the utmost Tolerance are the weapons since they are part of what we call 'Buddhism'. By Tolerance we mean respect and reverence for everybody's point of view so long as that point of view is based on the minimum moralities. Since these moralities are common to all great religions, to Hinduism, to Christianity, to Islam as well as to Buddhism, they need no definition. They are themselves basic. Maybe they could be summed up in as short a way as possible by using the word 'goodwill' which, you remember, the Buddha gave to Kimbila as one of the necessary conditions for the Teaching to survive.

But Tolerance does not mean allowing immorality or impurity to be propagated as Buddhism. The Texts have been scanned by editing groups working day and night for two years and there has been this great recension and then the chanting of the Texts and their printing. In perfect harmony and with great devotion, the five predominantly Buddhist countries, Thailand, Laos, Ceylon, Cambodia and Burma have worked as one family. All this has been done to keep the Sāsana pure. We must continue to keep it pure and not allow any extraneous ideas to be put forward as 'Buddhism' be they from the East or from the West. In all Loving-kindness we must point out Dhamma as Dhamma and what is not Dhamma as not Dhamma, as enjoined by the Buddha. Then if we fulfil the other conditions, our victory will be a continuing one and generations as yet unborn will call us blessed.

# ANGUTTARA-NIKĀYA

## Tikanipāta—Mahāvagga,

### TITTHĀYATANA-SUTTA

#### (DISCOURSE ON HERETICAL VIEWS)

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

#### Three Kinds of Wrong Views

"Monks, there are three kinds of wrong views, which although fully enquired into, deeply considered and discussed by recluses and brahmans, nevertheless they go to extremes and become *akiriya-diṭṭhi* (holders of the 'View of the Inefficacy of action')"

"What are these three ?"

"Monks, there are some recluses and brahmans who set forth and hold the following view :

'All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present existence are caused and conditioned only by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences.' " \*

"Monks, there are some recluses and brahmans who set forth and hold the following view :

'All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present existence are created by a Supreme Being.' " \*\*

"Monks, there are some recluses and brahmans who set forth and hold the following view :

'All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present existence are uncaused and unconditioned.' " \*\*\*

Now, monks, as to those recluses and brahmans who set forth and hold the first of these three wrong views—that all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present existence are caused and conditioned solely by the volitional actions done

by them in their past existences—I approach them and say : 'Friends, is it true that you set forth and hold the wrong view that all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations are caused and conditioned solely by the volitional actions done by beings in their past existences ?'

To this those recluses and brahmans reply : "Yes, Venerable Sir."

I then declare : "Friends, if that be the case, there will be persons who, conditioned by the volitional actions done by them in their past existences,

- (1) kill any living being ;
- (2) steal ;
- (3) tell lies ;
- (4) practise illicit sexual intercourse ;
- (5) slander ;
- (6) use harsh language ;
- (7) foolishly babble ;
- (8) are avaricious ;
- (9) maintain ill-will against others ;
- (10) maintain Wrong Views.

"Monks, indeed, in those who believe only in the volitional actions done by beings in their past existences and hold this view, there cannot arise such mental factors as *chanda* (Desire-to-do) and *virīya* (Energy), to differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be refrained from.

"Monks, indeed, in those who cannot truly and firmly differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be avoided, and who live without the application of mindfulness and self-restraint, there cannot arise righteous beliefs that are conducive to the cessation of Defilements.

"Monks, this is the first factual statement to refute the heretical views advanced by those recluses and brahmans who maintain that all sensations experienced by beings in

\* Pubbekata-Hetu-Diṭṭhi

\*\* Issaranimmāna-Hetu-Diṭṭhi

\*\*\* Ahetu-Apaccaya-Diṭṭhi

the present life are caused and conditioned only by the volitional actions performed by them in their past existences.”

### Refutation of Issaranimmāna View

“Monks, of these three wrong views, there are some recluses and brahmins who hold the following view :

‘All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present life are created by a Supreme Being or God.’

I approach them and ask : “ Friends, is it true that you hold and set forth the following view : ‘That all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present life are created by a Supreme Being or God ? ’ ”

To this those recluses and brahmins reply : “ Yes, Venerable Sir.”

I then declare : “ Friends, if that be the case, there will be persons, who, owing to the creation of a Supreme Being or God,

- (1) kill any living being ;
- (2) steal ;
- (3) practise illicit sexual intercourse ;
- (4) tell lies ;
- (5) slander ;
- (6) use harsh language ;
- (7) foolishly babble ;
- (8) are avaricious ;
- (9) maintain ill-will against others ;
- (10) maintain Wrong Views.”

“ Monks, indeed, in those who believe only in the creation of a Supreme Being or God, there cannot arise such mental factors as Desire-to-do and Energy to differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be refrained from.”

“ Monks, indeed, in those who cannot truly and firmly differentiate between what actions should be done and what actions should be refrained from, and who live without the application of mindfulness and self-restraint, there cannot arise righteous belief that are conducive to the cessation of Defilements.”

“ Monks, this is the second factual statement to refute the heretical beliefs and views advanced by those recluses and brahmins

who maintain that all sensations experienced by beings in the present existence are created by a Supreme Being or God.”

### Refutation of Ahetu-Apaccaya View

“ Monks, of these three wrong views, there are some recluses and brahmins who set forth and hold the following view :

“All bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present existence are uncaused and unconditioned.” \*

I approach them and ask : ‘ Friends, is it true that you hold and set forth the following view : “ That all bodily and mentally agreeable sensations, all bodily and mentally disagreeable sensations, and all indifferent sensations experienced by beings in the present life are uncaused and unconditioned ? ” ’

“ To this those recluses and brahmins reply : “ Yes, Venerable Sir.”

“ I then declare : ‘ Friends, if this be the case, there will be persons who, without any cause or condition (or without the Generative and Sustaining Kammās),

- (1) kill any living being ;
- (2) steal ;
- (3) practise illicit sexual intercourse ;
- (4) tell lies ;
- (5) slander ;
- (6) use harsh language ;
- (7) foolishly babble ;
- (8) are avaricious ;
- (9) maintain ill-will against others ;
- (10) maintain Wrong Views.”

“ Monks, indeed, in those who believe only in the ‘ Uncausedness and Unconditionality ’ of existence, there cannot arise such mental factors as Desire-to-do and Energy to differentiate between what should be done and what should be avoided.”

“ Monks, indeed, in those who cannot truly and firmly differentiate between what should be done and what should not be done, and who live without the application of mindfulness and self-restraint, there cannot arise righteous beliefs that are conducive to the cessation of Defilements.”

“ Monks, this is the third factual statement to refute the heretical beliefs and views

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\* i. e. beings in the present life come into existence of their own accord and without the help of the Generative and Sustaining Kammās.

advanced by those recluses and brahmins who maintain that all sensations experienced by beings in the present existence are uncaused and unconditioned."

"Monks, these are the three wrong views, which although fully enquired into, deeply considered and discussed by recluses and brahmins, nevertheless they go to extremes and become *akiriya-ditṭhi* (holders of the 'View of the Inefficacy of action'.)"

Now, monks, this Dhamma do I teach, one not refuted, pure, unblamed, uncensured by intelligent recluses and brahmins. And what is this Dhamma ?

"These are the six elements"—that Dhamma do I teach, one not refuted, pure, unblamed, uncensured by intelligent recluses and brahmins.

"These are the six sense organs of contact—that Dhamma do I teach, one not refuted, pure, unblamed, uncensured by intelligent recluses and brahmins.

"These are the eighteen *manopavicārā* (things with which the mind preoccupies itself)—that Dhamma do I teach, one not refuted, pure, unblamed, uncensured by the intelligent recluses and brahmins.

"Monks, I teach the six elements as the Dhamma, one not refuted, pure, unblamed, uncensured by the intelligent recluses and brahmins. Depending upon what do I teach them ?"

"Monks, these six elements are the element of extension, the element of cohesion, or the holding, the fluid, the element of kinetic energy, the element of motion, the element of space and the element of consciousness"....

"And depending upon what do I teach these sense organs of contact ?"

"The six sense organs of contact are these: The organ of eye-contact, that of ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, and the organ of mind-contact.".....

"And depending upon what do I teach these eighteen applications of mind ?"....

"Seeing an object with the eye one's thoughts are concerned with the object, whether it gives ground for agreeable, disagreeable or indifferent sensation. The same as regards ear, nose, tongue and other sense-organs.....Contacting a mental object with the mind one's thoughts are concerned with the object, whether it gives ground for agreeable, disagreeable or indifferent sensation.

This is what I mean when I teach the eighteen applications of mind."

"And as to these four Noble Truths, depending upon what do I teach ?"

"Conditioned by the six elements, conception in the womb arises. This conception taking place, Mind and Form come into existence. Through the Mental and Physical Phenomena the 6 Bases are conditioned. Through the 6 Bases Contact is conditioned. Through Contact Sensation is conditioned. Now to him who has sensation, monks, I make known : This is Suffering. I make known: This is the Origin of Suffering. I make known : This is the Extinction of Suffering. I make known : This is the Path leading to the Extinction of Suffering."

"And what, monks, is the noble truth of the Suffering ?

Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, death is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are suffering : in short the 5 groups of existence connected with clinging are suffering.

And what, monks, is the noble truth of the Origin of Suffering ?

Through Ignorance Kammaformations are conditioned ;

through Kammaformations Consciousness is conditioned ;

through Consciousness Mental and Physical Phenomena are conditioned ;

through Mental and Physical Phenomena the 6 Bases are conditioned ;

through the 6 Bases Contact is conditioned ;

through Contact Sensation is conditioned ;

through Sensation Craving is conditioned ;

through Craving Clinging is conditioned ;

through Clinging the Process of Becoming is conditioned ;

through the Process of Becoming Rebirth is conditioned ;

through Rebirth are conditioned Old Age and Death (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus arises the whole mass of suffering again in the future.)"

This, monks, is called the noble truth of the Origin of Suffering.

“ And what, monks, is the noble truth of the Extinction of Suffering ?

From the utter fading out and extinction of Ignorance comes the extinction of the Kammaformations ; from the extinction of the Kammaformations, the extinction of Consciousness ; from the extinction of Consciousness, the extinction of the Mental and Physical Phenomena ; from the Mental and Physical Phenomena, the extinction of the 6 Bases ; from the extinction of the 6 Bases, the extinction of the Contact ; from the extinction of the Contact, the extinction of Sensation ; from the extinction of the Sensation, the extinction of Craving ; from the extinction of Craving, the extinction of Clinging ; from the extinction of Clinging, the extinction of the Process of Becoming ; from the extinction of the Process of Becoming, the extinction of

Rebirth ; from the extinction of Rebirth, the extinction of Old Age and Death (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus ceases the whole mass of suffering.)” This, monks, is called the noble truth of the Extinction of Suffering.

“ And what, monks, is the Path leading to the Extinction of Suffering ?

“ It is just this Eightfold Noble Path namely, Right View, Right Aim, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. This is called the noble truth of the Path leading to the Extinction of Suffering.

This Dhamma, monks, do I teach, these four Noble Truths, Dhamma not refuted, pure, unblamed, uncensured by intelligent recluses and brahmans.”



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# THE CONVENTIONAL VERSUS THE REAL

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

Gotama Buddha was born in the year 624 B.C. in Northern India which commanded the central position of the then known world. Being the son of a ruling prince he was born into riches and luxury and was accordingly brought up amidst pomp and splendour. At his birth the court astrologers predicted that if he took up the worldly life he would become the ruler of the Cakkavāḷa (Universe), but if he followed the ascetic life he would become the All Enlightened Buddha. Naturally his father wanted him to become the ruler of the Cakkavāḷa. For that reason he was purposely kept away from the ugly sights of the world which might incline him to the way of Buddhahood. But the young prince Siddhattha was not satisfied with the environmental pomp and luxury and he wanted to see what life looked like outside the palace gates.

He went out with his charioteer, Channa, and there saw visions of old age, disease, death and, lastly, of a hermit. Shortly after, his young and beautiful wife, Yasodhara, gave birth to a son. He determined that very night to renounce the worldly life and thus leave his wife, new born child, and the luxury of palace life. He discarded all princely garments and took on the scanty robes of a hermit and marched alone into the rough and dreary world in search of that Truth and Enlightenment which he had vowed to attain in many of his previous lives. Undergoing the austerities of the ascetic life for six years, he finally attained the highest attainable goal, the Omniscience of Buddhahood and Nibbāna, and thereupon taking the exalted title of Sammāsambuddha—the completely Enlightened One.

## Gotama Buddha's Teaching

Gotama Buddha's teaching shows that it is highly intellectual and that it has reached a height of knowledge and wisdom unparalleled in any other philosophical literature known in human history. The vastness and comprehensiveness of the subject involved is co-extensive with the vastness and innumerability of the Universes in the past, present, and future and the occupants therein.

In the past, attempts have been made by Western writers and scholars to interpret this assemblage of Dhammas in the light of their culture and traditions with the result that in some instances it is not altogether happy. Nevertheless, the Eastern Buddhist World stands greatly indebted to those writers and scholars in general and the Pāli Text Society in particular for the pioneering work of elucidating and translating Pāli Texts into English thus bringing them within easy reach of the reading public of the West and therein stimulating interest in Buddhism.

Here is an attempt by an Easterner, a born Buddhist, but with no special claims to scholarship, to interpret some profound aspects of the Buddha Dhamma in the light of the Eastern background and civilization. Gotama Buddha preached the doctrine for 45 years after obtaining the Supreme Enlightenment, thereby building His edifice of Dhamma into stately proportions. It may well be compared to a four-storeyed edifice with deep and broad based foundations on the Universal Laws of Nature (Niyāma Dhammas). In the first storey there is Sīla (morality), in the second, Samādhi—concentration of the mind, in the third, Paññā—that essential wisdom for attaining Enlightenment, and lastly at the top storey there is Nibbāna. Each storey contains a flight of steps to reach to the higher floor.

As we ascend step by step, we find that our vision widens and we feel that we are on firmer grounds. It may be some time before we reach the top of each ladder but it is not long before we realize that we are rising to greater heights morally and spiritually than before. As we rise step by step we feel the growing powers of the mind and experience the cooling and stabilizing effect of knowledge thus gained in the process.

## Worldlings' attitude to life

A Puthujjana (worldling) is always attracted by the surface of things perceptible through the five sense organs, the eye, nose, ear, tongue and body. To satisfy his wants and cravings modern science and industry have combined to provide a variety of sense objects in a most wonderful way ; yet his cravings are not diminished.

On the other hand they are multiplied. The more he gets the more he craves. Then science creates more sense objects with the help of industry to meet the growing demands of the worldlings. The unending process thus goes on with the result that the Puthujjana passes his years of life immersed in these sense objects only. In short he lives in the world of senses alone. What does his world of senses consist of? It consists of "I, you, man, woman, son, daughter, motor car, tables, chairs, clubs, dinners, dances, cinemas" and so on. He never cares to think, or he pretends that he never has time to think, what the essence of life is. In Pāli such a person is known as "*Andha Puthujjana*" that is a person who has eyes but does not use his eye-sight for his benefit. Such a person lives in a world of delusions, in Pāli known as "*Avijjamāna Paññati*".

The above terms "I, you, man, woman," etc. are mere conventionalities or names sanctioned by custom and usage and the Buddha clearly points out that they possess no essential characteristics in the higher Paramattha sense.

### Paramattha Dhammas

Now we come to the realm of the highest good. Here the Buddha Dhamma is deep and profound. It requires earnest and patient study to understand its implications. To the Omniscient Buddha no horizon bounds the vision of world life. It extends to innumerable World Kappas (Cycles) through immeasurable distances of time. He sees a chain of lives for each individual being, past, present, and future, all transitory, impermanent and unsatisfying. He sees the restless and substanceless procession of Mind and Body alone moving and surging on the turbulent waters of the Ocean of Samsāra. This procession of mind and body begins from the past infinity and will continue into the future infinity. This combination of mind and body which in general parlance is known as "a being" is constantly subject to the vicissitudes of birth, decay, disease, sorrow and death. This is the lamentable picture of Putthujanas travelling to and fro on the Ocean of Samsāra as seen by the Omniscient Buddha. As against this sorrowful picture of life, the Omniscient Buddha also sees and himself enjoys the calmness, coolness, serenity and bliss of Nibbāna which is not associated with birth, decay, disease, sorrow and death.

Seeing these two incompatible Dhammas there arose in the Omniscient Buddha a desire to extricate the drowning masses of Puthujanas from the labyrinth of repeated births and sorrow and to point out the birthless and deathless realm of Nibbāna and He then prescribed the Eightfold Noble Path .... the Middle Way that unerringly leads the true follower to the deathless and priceless Nibbāna. The All Enlightened Buddha made this famous declaration about Nibbāna. "There is an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed. Were there not this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, there would be no escape from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed."

There are two categories of Paramattha Dhammas— (1) Sankhata Paramattha, (2) Asankhata Paramattha. Mind and Matter take their position under the category of Sankhata Paramattha, while Nibbāna, the Real of all Realities, can be given the exalted title of Asankhata Paramattha—the Highest Good. These Paramattha Dhammas unlike Avijjamāna Paññati described earlier, do exist with their essential characteristics. In contradistinction to Avijjamāna Paññati these Paramattha Dhammas are known as Vijjamāna Paññati. Although Sankhata and Asankhata Paramatthas are called by the general term "Paramattha", a distinct demarcation line may be drawn between the two, for they possess diametrically opposite qualities or characteristics. Sankhata Paramattha, that is Mind including mental tendencies and Matter, is directly associated with birth, decay, disease and death while in Asankhata Paramattha, Nibbāna, these undesirable features are totally absent. Sankhata Paramattha is compound, conditioned and phenomenal while Asankhata Paramattha is uncompound, unconditioned, and non-phenomenal. Sankhata Paramattha is associated with transitoriness and suffering but Asankhata Paramattha is associated with deathlessness and bliss.

From the above comparison it is amply clear that Nibbāna is a positive Reality for which language has no appropriate expression but for which the well disciplined mind of an Ariya has a clear notion.

### Gotama Buddha the Greatest Analyst

The alchemist is interested to find the quintessence of gold. So he uses different chemical methods to get gold in its purest

form. Likewise the Omniscient Buddha, 2,500 years ago, analysed the entire content of the Universe to find out the quintessence of the Paramattha Dhammas. He therefore analysed the whole Universe firstly into five Khandhas (aggregates), secondly into twelve Ayatanas (sense organs and sense objects), thirdly in eighteen Dhatus (sense organs, sense objects and mental states) and fourthly and lastly into four Saccas (Truths). In this exhaustive analysis, He has found that

Nibbāna is the quintessence of all the Paramattha Dhammas, that is, the Highest Good. Nowhere in the whole Universe is there a thing to be called “Attā, Self, Ego or Soul”. Everything is Anattā. Therefore, the Buddha Dhamma is truly the doctrine of ANATTĀ. It is the fact—the truth when we say that the Omniscient Gotama Buddha of 2,500 years ago is the Greatest Analyst the World has ever seen.



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# THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

## AN INQUIRY INTO THE SCOPE OF BARE ATTENTION AND THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF ITS STRENGTH

*By Nyanaponika Thera*

### Part I

#### *Is Mindfulness a Power ?*

IS mindfulness actually a power in its own right as claimed by our title? Seen from the view-point of the ordinary purposes of life it does not seem so. From that angle, mindfulness, or attention, has a rather modest place among many, and seemingly more important, mental faculties that serve the purposes of variegated wish-fulfilment. There, mindfulness means just "to watch one's steps", so that one may not stumble or miss a chance in the pursuit of one's aims. Only in the case of specific tasks and skills mindfulness is sometimes cultivated more deliberately, but here too it is still regarded as a subservient function, and its wider scope and possibilities are not recognised.

Even if one turns to the Buddha's doctrine, taking only a surface view of the various classifications and lists of mental factors in which 'mindfulness' appears, one may be inclined to regard this faculty just 'as one among many', and may get the impression that here too it has a rather subordinate place and is easily surpassed in significance by other faculties.

Mindfulness, in fact, has, if we may personify it, a rather unassuming character. Compared with its mental factors like emotion, energy, imagination or intelligence 'are certainly 'more colourful personalities', making an immediate and strong impact on people and situations. Their conquests are sometimes rapid and vast, though often insecure. Mindfulness, on the other hand, is of an unobtrusive nature. Its virtues shine inwardly, and in ordinary life most of its merits are passed on to other mental faculties, which receive generally all the credit. One must know it well and cultivate the acquaintance before one can appreciate the value and the silent penetrative influence of mindfulness. Mindfulness walks slowly and deliberately, and its daily task is of a rather humdrum nature. Yet, where it places its feet it cannot easily be dislodged, and it acquires and bestows true mastery of the ground it covers.

Mental faculties of such a nature are, like actual personalities of a corresponding type, often overlooked or underrated. In the case of mindfulness it required a genius like that of the Buddha to discover the 'hidden talent' in the modest garb and to develop the vast inherent power of that potent seed. It is, indeed, the mark of a genius to perceive, and to harness, the power of the seemingly small. Here, truly, it happens that "what is little becomes much." A revaluation of values takes place. The standards of greatness and smallness change. Through the master mind of the Buddha, Mindfulness is finally revealed as the archimedal point from where the vast revolving mass of world's suffering is levered out of its two-fold anchoring in Ignorance and Craving.

The Buddha has spoken of the power of Mindfulness in a very emphatic way :

"Mindfulness, I declare, is all-helpful."  
(*Samy. Nik.* 46, 55.)

"All things can be mastered by Mindfulness."  
(*Angutt. Nik., Atthaka Nip.*, 83)

And further, that solemn and weighty utterance opening and concluding the Sati-paṭṭhāna Sutta, the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness :

"This is the only way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of pain and grief, for reaching the right path, for the attainment of Nibbāna, namely the four Foundations of Mindfulness."

#### *Bare Attention*

If in ordinary life mindfulness, or attention, is directed to any object, it is rarely sustained long for the purpose of factual observation. Generally it is followed immediately by emotional reaction, discriminative thought, reflection, purposeful action, etc. Also in life and thought governed by the Dhamma, mindfulness (sati) is mostly linked with Clear Comprehension (*sampajañña*) of the right

purpose, of reality, etc. But for tapping the actual and potential *power* of mindfulness it is necessary to understand and deliberately cultivate it in its basic, unalloyed form, which we shall call *Bare Attention*.

By Bare Attention we understand the clear and single-minded awareness of what actually happens *to* us and *in* us, at the successive moments of perception. It is called "bare" because it attends just to the bare facts of a perception without reacting to them by deed, speech, or mental comment. Ordinarily, that purely receptive state of mind is, as we have remarked, just a brief phase of the thought process of which one is often scarcely aware. But in the methodical development of mindfulness, aiming at the unfolding of its latent powers, Bare Attention is sustained for as long a time as one's strength of concentration permits. Bare Attention is the key to the meditative practice of Satipaṭṭhāna, opening the door to mind's mastery and final liberation.

Bare Attention is developed in two ways: (1) as a methodical meditative-practice with selected objects; (2) applied, as far as practicable, to the normal events of the day, together with a general attitude of Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension. The details of the practice have been described elsewhere, and need not be repeated here \*.

The purpose of these pages is, in the first instance, to meet any doubts as to the efficacy of this method, *i.e.* as to the actual power of mindfulness. Particularly in an age like ours, with its superstitious worship of ceaseless external activity, there will be those who ask: "How can such a mere passive attitude of mind as Bare Attention possibly lead to the great results claimed for it?" In reply, one may be inclined to suggest to the questioner not to rely on the words of others, but to put those assertions of the Buddha to the test of personal experience. But those who do not yet know the Buddha sufficiently as a reliable guide, may hesitate to take up, without good reasons, a practice that, just on account of its radical simplicity, may appear strange to them. In the following, a number of such "good reasons" are therefore proffered for the reader's scrutiny. They are also meant as introduction into the general spirit of Satipaṭṭhāna and as pointers to its wide and significant perspectives. It is also hoped that he who has taken

up the methodical training, will recognise in the following observations certain features of his own practice and be stimulated in their deliberate cultivation.

#### *Four Sources of Power in Bare Attention*

We shall now deal with four aspects of Bare Attention, which are the main springs of the Power of Mindfulness. They are not the only sources of its strength, but they are the principal ones to which the efficacy of this method of mental development is due. These four are :—

1. The functions of 'tidying-up' and 'naming', exercised by Bare Attention ;
2. its non-violent, non-coercive procedure ;
3. the capacity of stopping and slowing-down ;
4. the directness of vision bestowed by Bare Attention.

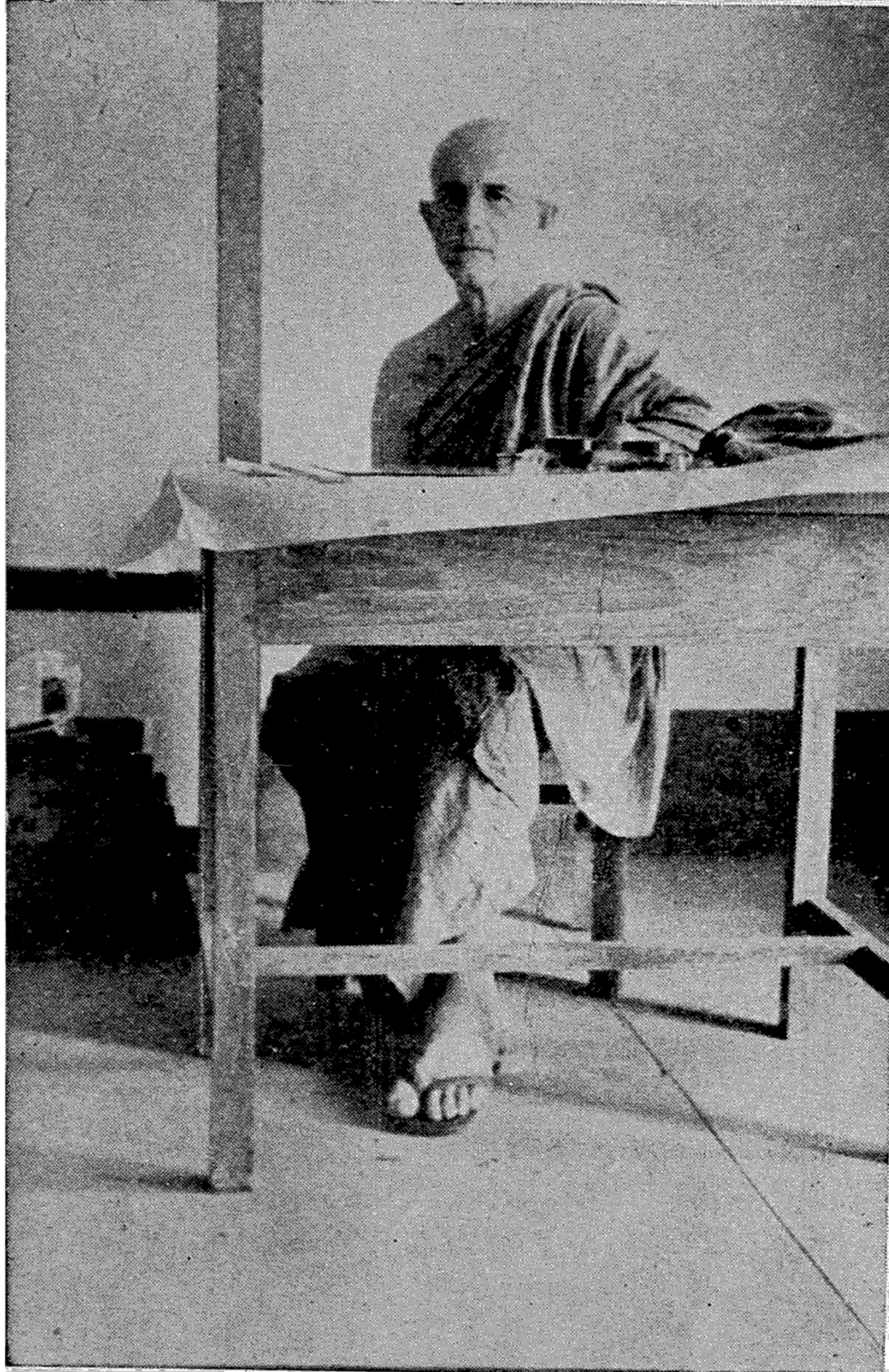
#### **1. The Functions of 'Tidying' and 'Naming'** *Tidying-up the mental household.*

If anyone whose mind is not harmonized and controlled through methodical meditative training, should take a close look at his own every-day thoughts and activities, he will meet with a rather disconcerting sight. Apart from the few main channels of his purposeful thoughts and activities, he will everywhere be faced with a tangled mass of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, casual bodily movements, etc., showing a disorderliness and confusion which he would certainly not tolerate, *e. g.*, in his living-room. Yet this is the state of affairs that he takes for granted within a considerable portion of his waking life and normal mental activity. Let us now look at the details of that rather untidy picture.

First we meet a vast number of casual sense impressions, sights, sounds, etc., that pass constantly through our mind. Most of them remain vague and fragmentary, and some are even based on faulty perceptions, misjudgements, etc. Carrying these inherent weaknesses they often form the untested basis for judgements and decisions on a higher level of consciousness. True, all these casual impressions need not and cannot be objects of focussed attention. A stone on our road that happens to meet our glance, will have a claim on our attention only if it obstructs our

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\* See Nyanaponika, "Satipaṭṭhāna—The Heart of Buddhist Meditation" Colombo 1954.



**Bhadanta Nyanaponika Thera**

progress or is of interest to us for any other reason. Yet, if we neglect too much these casual impressions, we may stumble over many an actual, or figurative, stone, and overlook many a gem lying on our road.

Next, there are those more significant and definite perceptions, thoughts, feelings, volitions, etc., which have a closer connection with our purposeful life. Here too we shall find that a very high proportion of them is in a state of utter confusion. Hundreds of cross currents flash through the mind, and everywhere there are "bits and ends" of unfinished thoughts, stifled emotions, passing moods, etc. Many of them meet a premature death owing to their innate feeble nature, our lack of concentration, or through being suppressed by new and stronger impressions. We shall notice how easily diverted our thoughts are, and how often they behave like indisciplined disputants constantly interrupting each other and refusing to listen to the other side's arguments. Again, many lines of thought remain rudimentary or are left untranslated into will and action, because courage is lacking to accept the practical, moral or intellectual consequences of these thoughts. If we continue to examine closer the reliability of average perceptions, thoughts or judgements, we shall have to admit that many of them are just the products of habit, led by prejudices of intellect and emotion, by our pet preferences or aversions, by laziness and selfishness, by faulty or superficial observations, and so on.

Such a look into long-neglected quarters of the mind will come as a wholesome shock to the observer. It will convince him of the urgent need for methodical mental culture extending not only to a thin surface-layer of the mind, but also to those vast twilight regions of consciousness to which we have paid now a brief visit. The observer will then become aware of the fact that a reliable standard of the inner strength and lucidity of consciousness in its totality cannot be derived from the relatively small sector of the mind that stands in the intense light of purposeful will and thought, nor can it be judged by a few maximal results of mental activity achieved in brief, intermittent periods. The decisive factor in determining the quality of individual consciousness is the circumstance whether that twilight region of every-day mind and the uncontrolled portion of every-day activity are in the process of increasing or decreasing.

It is the dark, untidy corners of the mind where our most dangerous enemies dwell. From there they attack us unawares, and much too often they succeed in defeating us. That twilight world peopled by frustrated desires and suppressed resentments, by vacillations and whims and many other shadowy figures, forms a background from which upsurging passions—greed and lust, hatred and anger—may derive powerful support. Besides, the obscure and obscuring nature of that twilight region is the very element and mother soil of the third and strongest of the Roots of Evil (*akusala-mūla*), *i.e.* Ignorance or Delusion.

Attempts at eliminating mind's main defilements—greed, hate and delusion—must fail as long as these defilements find, as it were, a refuge and support in these uncontrolled twilight regions of mind ; as long as the close and complex tissue of those half-articulate thoughts and emotions forms the basic texture of mind into which just a few golden strands of noble and lucid thought are woven. But how to deal with that unwieldy, tangled mass ? Man usually tries to ignore it, and to rely on the counteracting energies of his surface mind. But the only safe remedy is just to face it—with mindfulness. Nothing more difficult is needed than to acquire the habit of noticing these rudimentary thoughts as often as possible, *i. e.* to direct Bare Attention on them. The working principle here is the simple fact that there cannot exist two thoughts at the same time : if the clear light of mindfulness is present, there is no room for mental twilight. When sustained mindfulness has secured a firm foothold, it will be a matter of, comparatively, secondary importance as to which ways the mind will then deal with those rudimentary thoughts, moods and emotions. It may just dismiss them and replace them by purposeful thoughts ; or it may allow them, and even compel them, to complete what they have to say. In the latter case, they will often reveal how poor and weak they actually are ; and it will then not be difficult to dispose of them, once they are forced into the open. This procedure of Bare Attention is very simple and effective ; the difficulty here is only the persistence in applying it.

Observing a complex thing means identifying its component parts, singling out the separate strands forming that intricate tissue. If this is applied to the complex currents of mental and practical life, automatically a

strong regulating influence will be noticeable. As if ashamed in the presence of the calmly observing eye the course of thoughts will proceed in a less disorderly and wayward manner ; it will not so easily be diverted and will resemble more and more a well-regulated river.

During decades of the present life and throughout millenniums of traversing the Round of Existence, there has been steadily growing within man a closely fitted system of instinctive and reflex actions (beneficial and harmful ones), of prejudices of intellect and emotions,—in brief, of bodily and mental habits that are no longer questioned as to their rightful position in human life. Here again it is the application of Bare Attention that loosens the hard soil of these often very ancient layers of the human mind, preparing thus the soil for sowing the seed of methodical mental training. Bare attention identifies and pursues the single threads of that closely interwoven tissue of our habits. It sorts out carefully the subsequent justifications of passionate impulses and the pretended motives of our prejudices ; it questions fearlessly old habits, often grown senseless, and by uncovering the roots it helps in abolishing all that is seen to be harmful. In brief, Bare Attention lays open the minute crevices in the seemingly impenetrable structure of unquestioned mental processes. Then the sword of Wisdom yielded by the strong arm of constant meditative practice will be able to penetrate these crevices, and finally to break up that structure where it is required. If the inner connections between the single parts of a seemingly compact whole become intelligible, then it ceases to be inaccessible. If the facts and details of its conditioned nature become known, there is a chance of effecting fundamental changes in it. In that way, not only those hitherto unquestioned habits of the mind, its twilight regions and its normal processes as well, but even those seemingly solid, indisputable facts of the world of matter,—all of them will become “questionable” and lose much of their self-assurance. By that bland self-assurance of assumed “solid facts”, many people are so impressed and intimidated that they are reluctant to take up any spiritual training, doubting that it can effect anything worthwhile at all. The

results of applying Bare Attention to the task of tidying and regulating the mind will therefore greatly encourage those who are still hesitant to enter a spiritual path.

In conclusion, we wish to point out that the tidying or regulating function of Bare Attention is of fundamental importance for that “purification of beings”, mentioned by the Buddha as the first aim of Satipaṭṭhāna. It refers of course to the purification of their minds, and here the very first step is to bring an initial order into the way of functioning of the mental processes. We have seen how this is done by Bare Attention. In that sense, the Commentary to the Discourse on Mindfulness explains the words “for the purification of beings” as follows :

“It is said : ‘Mental taints defile the beings ; mental clarity (citta-vodāna) purifies them.’ That mental clarity comes to be by this Way of Mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna-magga).”

#### *Naming.*

We have mentioned before that the tidying or regulating function of Bare Attention takes the form of sorting out and identifying the various confused strands of the mental process. That identifying function is, like any other mental activity, connected with a verbal formulation. In other words, “identifying” proceeds by way of expressly “naming” the respective mental processes.

There is an element of truth in the “word-magic” of primitive men. “Things that could be named had lost their secret power over man, the horror of the unknown. To know the name of a force, a being or an object was (to primitive man) identical with the mastery over it.” \* That ancient belief in the magical power of “knowing the name” appears also in many fairy tales and myths where the power of a demon is broken just by facing him courageously and pronouncing his name.

In the practice of Bare Attention, one will find a confirmation of that power of naming. Particularly, the “demons of the twilight region” of the mind cannot bear the simple, but clarifying question about their “names”, much less the knowledge of these names, which alone is often sufficient to diminish

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\* Anagarika B. Govinda : “ The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy ” (Patna 1937) p. 19f.

their strength. They cannot bear the calmly observing glance of the Wanderer on the Buddha's Way of Mindfulness. That glance, however, has not the effect of driving them back into their hiding places, but it has, on the contrary, the magical power to force these demons of our passionate impulses and obscure thoughts into the open, into the day light of consciousness. There they will feel embarrassed and obliged to justify themselves, though, at this stage of Bare Attention, they have not yet even been subjected to any closer questioning except that about their "names", their identity. If forced into the open, while still in an incipient stage, they will be incapable of withstanding scrutiny, and will just dwindle away. Thus a first victory over them may be won, even at an early stage of the practice.

The appearance in the mind of undesirable and ignoble thoughts, even if they are very fleeting and only half-articulate, is an unpleasant experience to one's self-esteem. Therefore such thoughts are often simply shoved aside, unattended and unopposed. Often, also, they are camouflaged by more pleasing and respectable labels which hide their true nature. Thoughts disposed of in either of these two ways, will increase the accumulated power of ignoble tendencies in the subconscious. Furthermore, the procedure adopted will weaken one's will to resist the arising and the dominance of mental defilements, and it will strengthen the tendency to evade the issues. But by applying the simple method of clearly and honestly 'naming', that is registering, any undesirable thoughts, these two harmful devices, ignoring and camouflaging, are excluded, and their detrimental consequences on the structure of subconsciousness and on our conscious mental effort, are avoided.

Calling those ignoble thoughts, or one's shortcomings such as laziness, by their right names, will arouse in one's mind a growing inner resistance and even repugnance against them, which may well succeed in keeping them in check and finally eliminating them. Even if these undesirables are not fully brought under control by such means, they will carry with them the impact, that is the recollection, of a repeated resistance against

them, and this will weaken them in cases of their reappearance. If we may continue to personify them, we may say that they will no longer feel to be unopposed masters of the scene, and that diffidence of theirs will make it considerably easier to deal with them. It is the power of moral shame (*hiri-bala*) that has been mustered here as an ally, and methodically strengthened by these simple, yet subtle psychological means.

The naming and registering extends of course also to noble thoughts and impulses which will be encouraged and strengthened by it. Without such deliberate attention to them, they may often pass unnoticed and remain barren, while a clear awareness of them will stimulate their growth.

In several passages of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* the function of "naming" or "bare registering" seems to have been indicated through formulating the respective statements by way of direct speech. There are not less than four such instances in the Discourse :

- (1) "When experiencing a pleasant feeling, he knows, 'I experience a pleasant feeling' ", etc.;
- (2) "He knows of a lustful (state of) mind, 'Mind is lustful' ", etc.;
- (3) "If (the hindrance of) sense desire is present in him, he knows, 'Sense desire is present in me' ", etc.;
- (4) "If the enlightenment factor Mindfulness is present in him, he knows, 'The enlightenment factor Mindfulness is present in me' ", etc.

In conclusion, it may briefly be pointed out that the *tidying-up* and the *naming* of mental processes is the indispensable preparation for fully understanding them in their true nature, which is the task of Insight (*vipassanā*). These functions, exercised by Bare Attention, will help in dispelling the illusion of compactness (*ghana-vinibbhoga*) of mental processes ; they will also be helpful in tracing their specific nature or characteristics, and in noticing their momentary arising and disappearing.

**End of Part I.**

# NATURAL PHENOMENA, MENTAL AND PHYSICAL, AS ANALYSED BY THE BUDDHA

*U Saw Tun Teik, B.A., B.L.*

**B**uddhism is the mightiest monument of the greatest success ever achieved by a sentient being in overcoming the then incomprehensible and most elusive natural phenomena in both physical and mental aspects.

The greatest and most powerful *rishis* (non-Buddhist recluses), who could see existences of sentient beings extending over a long period of forty kappas (world-cycles), and who were either living or dead at the time of the Buddha, were incapable of scientifically analysing the phenomena that audaciously confronted them.

But these wild obstinate phenomena when subjected to the purifying action of the Buddha brain, tamely melted away and were at once controlled, systematised and scientifically treated by the Buddha.

Attaining *sabbaññuta ñāṇa* (Full Enlightenment), the Buddha came to discover that both this world (*loka*) and the world beyond (*lokuttara*) contain *dhātu* (elements) only. And this discovery inflicts a deadly blow on the belief in *Brahmā* as Creator, God or any other similar idea entertained by human beings.

The *dhātu* is divided into *asankhata dhātu* and *sankhata dhātu*, the former being designated by the Buddha as *Nibbāna* and the latter, *Saṃsāra*, or the Thirty-one Abodes mentioned in the three *Piṭakas*. The beginning and the end of the *dhātu* are not apparent.

The *asankhata dhātu* is unoriginated and unchangeable, and is consequently absolutely peaceful, the final goal of Buddhism. The *sankhata dhātu*, which by nature is changeable and therefore impermanent, is unpeaceful and therefore causes *dukkha* (suffering both mental and physical) and is for this reason condemned by the Buddha.

The *sankhata dhātu* which pervades the Thirty-one Abodes of *apāya* (lower worlds), human beings, *brahmā* and *devas*, is again subdivided into *nāma* and *rūpa*, mind and body respectively. The *nāma* and *rūpa* never remain permanent for one second, the former changing seventeen times faster than the latter, and the latter, millions of times in an eye-wink. It is therefore evident that each and every sentient being, inhabiting the Thirty-one Abodes, is constantly changing and is therefore permanently within the

grip of *dukkha* (suffering both mental and physical).

These discoveries and other more important ones were made by the Buddha under the Bodhi tree at *Buddhagaya*, Bihar District, Northern India, two thousand five hundred and forty-five years ago, when He attained *sabbaññuta ñāṇa* at the age of thirty-five as a royal prince.

Our Omniscient Buddha first met *dukkha* consciously as a prince at the age of twenty-nine, when he saw an old man bent double under years outside the royal palace on his way to his garden. He had never seen an old man like that before in his life, and he was very curious to know who or what that was. When informed that it was an old man and one day he himself would become old like that man if he lived long enough, he became extremely frightened. In fact he was then the most distressed man this world had ever seen, since the time the last Buddha *Kassapa*, immediately before our Buddha, passed away into *Nibbāna*. The prince became unbearably distressed at the idea of becoming an old man, weak, bent double under years, toothless, grey-haired, and weak-eyed ; and he at once made up his mind to seek for a method of preventing old age. His further meeting with a sick man, a corpse and finally with a *rishi*, seeking happiness, and his further knowledge that one day he would naturally become old, ill and dead, expedited his determination to be free from old age, disease and death. His consultations in this respect with the pious and learned *rishis* and laymen both in and outside his royal father *Suddhodana*'s palace, must have proved to be of no avail. Even *Devīla rishi*, who was the religious teacher of his royal father and who spent the daytime in the *deva loka*, could not satisfy Prince *Siddhattha* in solving the most heartburning question of how successfully to fight old age, disease and death. The inevitable result, as is well-known, was, he left the palace, his family, royal parents and relations, entertaining a firm and unchangeable determination to seek for a solution or a method for overcoming the three most unpleasant and frightful aspects of life. This horrid idea of life never left him afterwards and he endeavoured to undertake this research work under the

then most well-known religious teachers. His endeavours though earnest and intensive, were not crowned with success and being highly disappointed, as a last resource, he approached the world-famous Bodhi tree and decisively and finally made up his mind to sit down underneath it and not to get up until he had evolved the correct method for the required solution. At this stage we must not forget that during these six years of intensive application Prince Siddhattha had acquired an enormous amount of experience both practical and theoretical in the course of his research work on old age, disease and death, and had also learned a great deal from those famous and learned recluses.

The solution of the problem of old age, disease and death by the Omniscient Buddha is clearly direct and boldly scientific. In the person of the All-Enlightened Buddha the world has produced the noblest and greatest scientist, dealing with this world and the world beyond for the purpose of achieving absolute freedom from Dukkha, designated by him as Nibbāna *i.e.* Absolute Peace. In solving the difficult problem of old age, disease and death, he discovered four basic facts :— (1) Dukkha—Suffering, (2) Dukkha Samudaya—Cause of Suffering, (3) Dukkha Nirodha—Extinction of Suffering, and (4) Dukkha Nirodhagāmini Paṭipadā—Way to the Extinction of Suffering.

- (1) Dukkha, as defined by the Buddha, means and includes birth, old age, disease, death, association with those one dislikes, separation from those one likes, getting what one does not require, not getting what one requires, and in short, all the five Khandhas (Groups) constituting each sentient being.
- (2) Dukkha Samudaya—Cause of Suffering is taṇhā, desire.
- (3) Dukkha Nirodha—Extinction of Suffering, *i.e.* Nibbāna.
- (4) Dukkha Nirodhagāmini Paṭipadā—Way to the extinction of Dukkha—is the Eightfold Path of Right View, Right Mindedness, Right Speech, Right Bodily Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Attentiveness, and Right Concentration.

The Buddha spent the latter part of those hard six years almost alone, having finally come to the definite conclusion that the

methods of the *rishis* for the solution of the problem of old age, disease and death were not the right ones, and that He Himself could successfully strive for the real solution, having come in contact with the actual facts of life in his mature life and with the external phenomena of the world, benefiting also by the experience acquired by him in the course of his intensive and varied discussions with the learned and famous *rishis* of the time. It is therefore clear that, when he sat down under the Bodhi tree not to rise up until he had solved the problem, he must have been right on the verge of success, and it was in order just to give a final finishing touch that he made the well-known resolve.

The Omniscient Buddha proclaims that these Four Noble Truths were first discovered by Him after His immediate predecessor, Kassapa Buddha, attained Nibbāna, and these truths were never taught by any of the then religious teachers and were not found in the religious literature of His time and before.

We have been told that the aim and object of Buddhism is to get rid of the Sankhata dhātu *i.e.* to escape from the sphere of Samsāra or Thirty-one Abodes which are saturated with Dukkha, and to get into that of Asankhata dhātu *i.e.* Nibbāna and the way thereto is the Eightfold Path referred to above, which consists of three main divisions: Sila (Morality), Samādhi (Concentration) and Paññā (Wisdom).

The most essential point in the Path is to achieve Paññā defined by the Buddha. In striving to acquire Paññā, one must, of necessity, practise Sila and Samādhi as defined and taught by the Omniscient Buddha.

Paññā is composed of the first two factors of the Path—the Right View and the Right Mindedness, and when a person has achieved Paññā, his mind automatically becomes devoid of all the kilesas (mental impurities and defilements), and with this purification of the mind the five Khandhas, which constitute the Dukkha in the Thirty-one Abodes, become extinct, and Nibbāna is thus attained.

In the Tipiṭaka, Paññā occupies the paramount position, and it is consequently crystal clear that no dull-minded person can gain Nibbāna.

The courageous claim so confidently and publicly made by the Buddha that the Noble Eightfold Path is the only way to the attainment of Nibbāna can be tested, as a scientist would test the correctness of his modern scientific principles. “Ehi passiko” (Come

and see the truth of my Teaching) is one of the famous six qualities of His Teaching.

### Test

The sight of a beautiful woman or a handsome young man gives rise to a desire in the hearts of man or woman respectively to possess the beautiful or handsome person, and desire is, as already mentioned above, the cause of Dukkha, because the desire may not be fulfilled, or even if so fulfilled, the beautiful or handsome person cannot live long enough, and if the desire could be overcome, the Dukkha also naturally would not arise, and the way to overcome the desire should be found. And the Buddha's method is the application of the Right View, because the Buddha has also discovered that the cause of desire is Avijjā (Ignorance), which is the first step of Paṭiccasamuppāda; and this Avijjā can be overcome only by the Right View mentioned above. And in the present illustration of a beautiful woman or a handsome man, it is not Right View to maintain that it is a woman or a man. The person called a "woman" or a "man" is nothing but a collection of the four Mahābhūtas (Great Essentials), i.e. Pathavī (element of hardness or extension), Āpo (element of fluidity or cohesion), Tejo (element of kinetic energy), and Vāyo (element of motion), and either a woman or a man does not really exist. The "woman" and "man" are merely terms applied to certain collections of the four elements, which are changing millions of times in an eye-wink. Again these Mahābhūtas are themselves ever changing and thereby create Dukkha. Now there is nothing that can stop Dukkha—there is nothing that can control Dukkha. Hence the non-existence of any agency to stop the change and Dukkha, i.e. the non-existence of "I" (Attā), which is expressed by the Buddha as Anattā. This is what is termed by the Buddha as Right View, and only this Right View can overcome Avijjā (Ignorance), Taṇhā (Desire) and Dukkha (Suffering). This test can be tried by any person with regard to anything and the result will always be the cessation or prevention of Dukkha—Suffering in any form.

At first Dukkha will stop for a short time, as the Right View cannot be maintained either for a longer time or permanently, but even a temporary extinction of Dukkha will certainly bring about temporary Real Peace. If the Right View can be upheld longer

and longer, Real Peace will be enjoyed longer and longer, and the gradual improvement will enable the devotee to attain the first stage, Sotapanna (the Stream-Winner), the second stage, Sakadāgāmi (the Once-Returner), the third stage, Anāgāmi (the Never-Returner), and the fourth stage, Arahatsip (Holy One), who attains full Real Peace permanently even in this world before the Khandhas break up at the time of death in the last life.

We may now take the case of a motor car for a further test. If we see a beautiful car a desire is set in motion in us to have one similar to it, and immediately excites us, that is, it causes Dukkha in us, because we look at it under the influence of a wrong view; and if a Right View is applied, the Dukkha immediately disappears. If any person tried it, he would personally experience the truth of the Buddha's Teaching.

One of the remarkable teachings of the Buddha is that a person should not believe a thing to be true, because elders of the village or town say so, or because one's own relations both living or dead say so. A person should, so says the Buddha, believe a thing to be true when he has personally tested the truth of it, and finally satisfied himself that it is true. This is an exceedingly astounding remark from the lips of the greatest world reformer and Real-Peace-Finder. Hence the world opinion that the Buddha's Teaching, which at this age is designated as Buddhism in the West, confers the greatest liberty and independence of thought on all humanity without the slightest hint of overbearing dogmatism.

Admittedly the most charming aspect of Buddhism is that the more a person critically reads and understands it, the more interested and satisfied he becomes: "*Paccatam vedītabbo viññūhi*" — the Buddha's Teaching is to be understood by the wise each by himself, which is one of the sterling qualities of the Buddha-Dhamma.

This analysis of phenomena both mental and physical by the Omniscient Buddha illumines the most essential aspect of Buddhism—the Way to the destruction of Dukkha, resulting in certain attainment of Nibbāna, Real Peace. And the Buddha's constant exhortation to His followers is that they should exert themselves to train and develop their mind, until it attains a state in which it becomes absolutely devoid of all Kilesas, mental impurities, and that to be done immediately.

The urgency so imparted evoked an impressive and illuminating discourse, when the Omniscient Buddha on one occasion laid a little quantity of earth on His finger-nail and asked His followers which one was of greater quantity—the earth on His finger-nail or the earth of the world. The answer was that the earth on the finger-nail was immeasurably less than the whole earth. The Omniscient Buddha then explained that in the same proportion as many of the human beings as the particles of earth on the finger-nail, are reborn in the upper worlds of human beings, devas and brahmās, the remaining ones being reborn in Apāya, lower worlds of animals and so forth. The same principle applies to those of the deva abode ; but it is just the reverse in the case of those who die in Apāya—only a few of them being reborn in the higher abodes of men and devas and the rest, in Apāya again.

It is by way of illustrating the urgency that the Buddha says that it is the duty of every sentient being to try to attain Sotapanna, Stream Winner, the first stage of Ariyaship *i.e.* by developing the Right View. Just as a man whose hair is on fire should at once put the fire out without first asking who has done it, who is responsible for it and so forth, so in the same way it is the most urgent duty of every person in this human world to acquire the Right View and thus attain the first stage, Sotapanna, to avoid being reborn in Apāya. It is so difficult to be released from Apāya, once one is reborn there by any means.

On one occasion when the Omniscient Buddha was in Kosambhi a country in Northern India, He happened to be stopping in an *in-jin* (Sal) grove, and taking a handful of *in-jin* leaves, He asked His followers near Him which was the more numerous of the two—the leaves in His hand or all the leaves of the whole grove. On His followers answering that those of the grove were countless more numerous, He told them what He had actually taught them after His Full Enlightenment was in the same proportion to what He fully came to know on attaining the Full Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at Buddhagaya. He went on to explain that what He had taught them was all that was necessary to the attainment of Nibbāna, and the rest was not so and therefore not divulged to the world.

The interesting and instructive incident relating to the *in-jin* leaves also reminds us of what the Buddha told Mahā Moggallāna in the Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha,

a town in Bihar District, west of Bengal. One day Mahā Moggallāna was coming down the Gijjakūṭa Hill in Rājagaha, accompanied by another Bhikkhu. On the way down, Mahā Moggallāna smiled and the Bhikkhu, noticing it, asked him the reason and was told that the answer would be given in the presence of the Buddha. Having finished the alms-round in the city and partaken of the food, they both went to the monastery, and having approached the Omniscient Buddha, respectively took their seats on one side of Him, and Moggallāna, when so questioned again by the other Bhikkhu, respectfully narrated to the Omniscient Buddha what had happened between him and that Bhikkhu and revealed to the Buddha that he smiled because he saw in the sky a man covered all over his body with long hairs, which from time to time flew out into the sky from his body, only to drop down again on his very body, and it seemed that the falling hairs were as pointed and sharp as iron lances, and the man vociferously kept shouting, feeling the pitiless pain thus caused. In addition to this Mahā Moggallāna narrated other similar experiences, including a Bhikkhu and a Bhikkhūnī wearing robes, both their bodies and the robes being on fire in the sky above the hill. On hearing these accounts, the Buddha explained that He Himself had seen similar things under the Bodhi tree in Buddhagaya after His Full Enlightenment, but that He kept silent, because if the people did not believe it, ridiculing it, they would possibly be reborn in Apāya, and that He spoke out to Mahā Moggallāna, because He was thus supported by Moggallāna, who had had a similar experience on Gijjakūṭa Hill, and continued to explain why that man and the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhūnī had to suffer in this way as the results of their evil actions in their previous existences.

It is noteworthy that the Omniscient Buddha was never in haste in doing anything, but patiently waited for an opportunity to avail Himself of it, and the above incident is the unquestionable proof of the truth of this observation. Again it is crystal clear that there are many things, which, though known to Him, the Buddha has not revealed to the world, either because it is not useful and necessary to the attainment of Nibbāna, or because the people's minds are not sufficiently developed to be able to realise what He teaches.

The following historical incident will prove how deep and true the Buddha's Teachings are even after a lapse of two thousand

five hundred years after His Mahā-parinibbāna. About fifty years ago it was held by the medical profession that the human body underwent a complete change in ten years, and later on the period was reduced to seven years. At that time one Major Ross, I.M.S., Burma, became keenly interested in the Buddha's Teachings, and while studying the Abhidhamma, he came in contact with the famous Thitchadaung Sayadaw U Tiloka, and entered into a discussion of its intricacies with him. When the discussion reached the subject of anicca (Impermanence), the learned doctor expounded the theory of seven years ; but when the Sayadaw told him that the human body underwent change millions of times in an eye-wink, and the mind changed seventeen times faster than the body, he became thunderstruck, and asked the Venerable Sayadaw on what authority he said so. The Sayadaw coolly enlightened the doctor on this point by replying that the Buddha discovered and divulged this truth two thousand four hundred and ninety-five years ago in India, and that it was still recorded in the Abhidhamma. This explicit statement of the Buddha made so long ago cannot as yet be proved to be untrue even by the most modern scientists. And I do not think the modern medical doctors have largely, if at all, changed their predecessors' opinion. Major Ross was a sincere Buddhist, Theravādin, studied the Abhidhamma well, wrote pamphlets, books and articles on Buddhism, and died in London, where his remains were cremated in accordance with the Buddhist rites as expressed in his last will.

While earnestly and intensively making uninterrupted, consistent endeavours to exterminate Dukkha in all its forms, the Omniscient Buddha gradually developed the realisation that He must first probe into the phenomena and study their properties, with

which, He came to see, Dukkha is vitally connected. His analysis of the phenomena, both mental and physical, has resulted in the appearance of Abhidhamma, Buddhist Philosophy, which is exceedingly deep, intricate and difficult to understand, and is founded on a two-fold base of nāma and rūpa. And it is in the Abhidhamma that the ways and means of exterminating Dukkha and of achieving Peace are set forth.

While the correct, practical and only method of overcoming Dukkha and achieving Peace is found enshrined in the Buddha's Teaching and is available and accessible to the wide world, leaders of powerful nations are at present putting forth their best efforts to attain Peace in this troubled world by inventing most dangerous and deadly war weapons. *Puthujjano ummattako* (the worldlings *i.e.* non-ariyas are mad)—so says the Omniscient Buddha. “*Andhabālo puthujjano*” (foolish are the worldlings *i.e.* non-ariya people). And to entertain a right view of life is one of the seven things, which is hard to get in this human world.

The Buddha Dhamma is simple in a way, but profound and scientific when properly studied; and its depth, immensity and practical truth can be discerned and appreciated by listening in, when the *Chattā Sangāyanā* questions and answers were broadcast in Burma. Those who have already been to such places as Buddhagaya, Rājagaha, Migadāya (Sarnath) Banaras and Sāvattthi, will feelingly enjoy the various and numerous accounts of the Buddha Himself from His own lips, contained in such questions and answers.

May I attain Nibbāna by virtue of this deed.

Peaceful Happiness be to all beings.



# THE DHAMMAPADA COMMENTARY

( Aggasāvaka Vatthu )

## THE STORY OF THE CHIEF DISCIPLES

TRANSLATED BY THE PALI DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF RANGOON.

( Continued from previous issue )

**M**ONKS, ninety-one *kappas* (world-cycles) ago, there appeared in the world the Buddha Vipassī. At that time two householders, who were brothers named Mahākāla and Cūlakāla, had a large paddy field cultivated. Then one day Cūlakāla went to the field and opening a ripening paddy seed ate it and found it to be very sweet. As he was desirous of making a gift of ripening paddy to the Order of monks with the Buddha as its head, he approached the elder brother and said, "Brother, let us husk the ripening paddy, have it cooked in a way fitting for the Buddhas and offer it as a gift." "Brother, what are you talking about? There has been no such a thing before as husking the paddy prematurely and offering it as a gift nor will there be any in the future. Don't spoil the crop." Cūlakāla kept on requesting again and again. Then his brother told him, "Well then, divide the field into two parts and without touching my portion do as you please with your own portion of the field." Saying "Very well", he divided the field, sought help from many people, caused ripening paddy to be husked; and having had it cooked in milk free from water, mixed it with ghee, honey and sugar and offered it to the Order of monks with the Buddha at its head. At the end of the meal he said, "Venerable Sir, may this first gift of mine lead to the comprehension of the foremost Dhamma, first amongst all those who will comprehend it." The Master expressed His approval saying, "May it be so." Later on, when Cūlakāla went and looked at the paddy field, he found the whole field covered with a thick crop of paddy which appeared as if it were bound into a sheaf and he felt the five-fold joy \*. Believing that it was a great gain to him, he offered the first gift of the paddy in ears during the time when the paddy was in the ears. Along with the villagers he gave the gift of the first crop. When the paddy was reaped, he gave the first portion of what had been reaped. When it was bunched, sheafed, threshed and stored, the first portion of the crop was offered on each

occasion. Thus, nine times did he make a gift of the first crop in a single harvest. On all these occasions whatever crop was offered as a gift, it was replenished. He had a bumper crop. The Dhamma guards one who observes it.

So said the Bhagavā :

The Dhamma indeed protects one who practises it. The Dhamma well-practised brings about happiness. This is the advantage when the Dhamma is practised thoroughly. He who practises the Dhamma never goes to the downward path.

Thus, at the time of Vipassī, the Perfectly Enlightened One, Cūlakāla, aspiring to be the first to realise the foremost Dhamma, made the gift of the first crop nine times. A hundred thousand world-cycles ago in the city of Hamsāvatī, at the time of the Buddha Padumuttara, he made a great gift for seven days and falling down at the feet of that Bhagavā he made an aspiration to be the first to realise the foremost Dhamma. Thus have I given him just what he had aspired to. I have not bestowed the gift with partiality.

Venerable Sir, what was the deed performed by the fifty-five persons headed by Yasa?

Aspiring to Arahatsip in the presence of a certain Buddha, they also performed many meritorious deeds. Later on, before the appearance of the next Buddha, while performing meritorious deeds as a group of friends they used to take care of the corpses of paupers. One day seeing a dead woman who was pregnant, they took the body to the cemetery for cremation. Leaving five of them in the cemetery saying "Cremate it", the rest entered the village. While burning the corpse by piercing it with a pointed stick and turning it over and over again, the youth Yasa got the idea of repugnance of the body and pointed it out to the other four saying : "Well, look at this body. Wherever the skin has been torn off there it resembles the appearance of a spotted cow. It is impure,

\* Pañcavidha pīti (five-fold joy):—Khuddhikā pīti (slight interest), khaṇikā pīti (momentary joy), okkantikā pīti (flood of joy), ubbegā pīti (ecstasy); pharaṇā pīti (rapture).

the nature of this world only, but not that of the next. The beings that are born are sure to die. I think I should enter some religious order and search for the way of Emancipation." He went to his friend and said, "Friend Sirivaḍḍhaka, I shall renounce the world and search for the way of Emancipation. Will you be able to leave the world along with me or not?" "Friend, I shall not be able to. You had better do it." He thought: "No one has ever passed away to the next existence taking with him his companions, relations or friends. What one does, is one's own." Then, he had his treasure-chamber opened, made a gift to paupers, travellers, supplicants and beggars, went to the foot of a mountain and adopted the life of a hermit. Following him, at first one, then two, then three, and in this way seventy-four thousand men became ascetics with matted hair. Sārada acquired the five-fold superknowledge and the eight higher attainments and taught those matted-hair ascetics the preliminaries of *Kasiṇa* meditation and all of them acquired the five-fold superknowledge and the eight higher attainments.

At that time, there appeared in the world the Buddha Anomadassī. The capital was Bandhumatī by name; His father was a *khattiya* named Yasavanta and His mother was the queen Yasodharā. His *Bodhi* tree was Ajjuna\*\* and His two Chief Disciples were Nisabha and Anoma. His personal attendant was Varuṇa and His two female Chief Disciples were Sundarī and Sumanā. His term of life was a hundred thousand years. His body measured fifty-eight cubits in height and the radiance from it spread over twelve *yojanas*. He had a hundred thousand monks as followers. One day, early in the morning, rising from the state of meditation on deep compassion and surveying the world He saw the ascetic Sārada and said to Himself, "As a sequel to my visit to ascetic Sārada today, there will be an occasion for elaborate preaching of the Dhamma. He will aspire to the Chief Discipleship and his friend, Sirivaḍḍhaka the householder, will aspire to the Second Discipleship. At the end of the preaching, his seventy-four thousand Jāṭila followers will attain Arahatsip. I should go there." He took His bowl and robes and without telling anyone, He, like a lion, went away all alone. When

the pupils of Sārada had departed in search of fruits, He willed that Sārada should know that He was the Buddha and descended to the ground while the ascetic Sārada was looking on. The ascetic saw the splendour and perfection of His body, and noting the bodily marks, knew that if one endowed with these characteristics, lived the household life, he would be a paramount sovereign; and if he were to renounce the world, he would be the Omniscient Buddha who would lift the veil of ignorance, and he was convinced that he was a Buddha. He went forward to meet Him, made obeisance with the five-fold posture and prepared a seat for Him. The Bhagavā sat on the seat that was offered. The ascetic Sārada found a suitable seat for himself and sat down. At that time the seventy-four thousand Jāṭilas returned to their teacher with many delicious and nutritious fruits. Looking at the respective seats of the Buddha and of their teacher they said, "Sir, we used to consider that there was no one greater than you; but now it appears that this person is superior to you." "My dear ones, what do you say? Do you wish to compare Mount Meru, which is sixty-eight thousand *yojanas* high, with a mustard seed? My dear pupils, do not compare me with the Omniscient Buddha." Then those ascetics thought, "If this person were a mean fellow, then he, our teacher, would not have made such a comparison. So, noble indeed is this man". And they all fell at the Buddha's feet and saluted Him with their heads at His feet. Then their teacher said to them, "My dear pupils, we have no gift fit enough to be offered to the Buddha, but the Master has come here while on His round for alms. We shall offer Him gifts according to our means. Procure whatever delicious fruits you can." Thus he caused them to bring the fruits, washed his hands and himself put them into the bowl of the Tathāgata. As soon as the Master accepted the fruits, the gods put celestial nutrition into them. The ascetic also filtered the water himself and offered it to the Buddha. Then, when the Master remained seated after finishing His meal, he called his pupils and sat near the Master, speaking pleasant words. The Master wished, "May the two Chief Disciples come with a company of monks." Knowing the desire of the Master, they arrived accompanied by one hundred

thousand monks whose *Āsavas*\* were exhausted, (i.e. who were all Arahats), paid obeisance to the Master and stood at one side. Then the ascetic Sārada addressed the pupils saying, "My dear ones, the seat of the Buddha is low and there is no seat for the hundred thousand monks. Today, it is proper for you to do great honour to the Buddha. Go and fetch flowers rich in colour and fragrance from the foot of the mountain."

"Talking takes much time. Inconceivable, however, is the capacity of one who is endowed with supernormal powers", thus thinking those ascetics in a very short time brought flowers rich in colour and fragrance and prepared the Buddha's seat of flowers which was a *yojana* in extent, seats of flowers, each three *gāvutas* in extent, for both the Chief Disciples, seats of flowers, each of which was half a *yojana* or less in extent, for the rest of the monks and seats of flowers for the newly ordained ones, each of which was an *usabha* in extent. It is rather hard to imagine how such enormous seats could be arranged in a single hermitage. But this is within the range of supernormal power. When the seats had thus been prepared, the ascetic Sārada stood in front of the Tathāgata stretching forth his folded hands and said, "Venerable Sir, please ascend this seat of flowers for my lasting weal and happiness."

Therefore it is said:

He gathered together various kinds of flowers and scented things, prepared the flowered-seat and spoke these words—

"O Hero, this seat, fit for you, has been prepared by me. Gladdening my heart please sit on this seat of flowers".

The Buddha sat on the seat of flowers for seven days and nights gladdening his heart and causing joy to the world of gods.

When the Teacher was thus seated, the two Chief Disciples and the remaining monks sat on the seats prepared for them. The ascetic Sārada taking a big umbrella of flowers stood holding it over the head of the Tathāgata. The Master said, "May this honour shown by the Jāṭilas be rich in result" and entered into the attainment of cessation of feeling and perception. Knowing that the Master had

entered into the attainment of cessation of feeling and perception the two Chief Disciples as well as the other monks did likewise. While the Tathāgata remained seated after having entered upon the attainment of cessation of feeling and perception for seven days, the pupils ate various kinds of wild roots and fruits when the time came for the begging of alms, and for the rest of the time, they remained standing stretching forth their folded palms in adoration. The ascetic Sārada, however, did not go on his round for alms and spent the week in joy and happiness holding up the umbrella of flowers. Then the Master emerging from the attainment of cessation of feeling and perception spoke to Nisabha thera, the Chief Disciple, who was seated on his right, "O, Nisabha, do you express appreciation to the hermits who have done us honour by preparing the seats of flowers." Nisabha, just like a person who was highly delighted on receipt of much riches and wealth from a Universal Monarch, or like one who was very valiant, rejoiced at the offering of flowers made to him, and having himself become established in the Path-Knowledge obtainable by the Chief Disciples of Buddhas, delivered a Discourse in connection with the offering of flowers. When he had finished speaking, the Master said to the Second Disciple: "You too deliver a religious discourse to the monks." The thera Anoma gave a discourse touching on the three Piṭakas which are the words of the Buddha. But not even one person could comprehend the Truth from the sermons of the two disciples.

Then, the Master, established as He was in the immeasurable province of the Buddha, began His religious discourse. At the end of the discourse all of the seventy-four thousand Jāṭilas except the hermit Sārada attained Arahatsip. The Master stretched forth his hand saying "Come, you, O monks." At that very moment their hair and beards disappeared and they became equipped with the eight requisites.

Why was it that Sārada the ascetic did not attain Arahatsip ?

Because of the distraction of his mind.

\* *Āsava* :—This word has been translated as "poisons", "banes", "biases", "inflows", "cankers", "intoxicants", "fluxes" and "fluxions". The latter are perhaps academically correct translations but "canker" (Childers) seems to give the more correct concept to the average Westerner. It is used figuratively in the sense of surrounding or flowing up to, much as in Western writings one finds the expression "a wave of sentiment" or "an upwelling of . . . . .". The *Āsavas* are: *Kāmāsava*, sensuous bias; *Bhavāsava*, bias for existence; *Diṭṭhāsava*, bias of views; *Avijjāsava*, bias of ignorance, and they are of course corrupting biases or cankers and the manner in which they may be overcome or eradicated or cured is taught in the *Bhavāsava Sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

It is said that at the time he began to listen to the religious discourse of the Chief Disciple, who was established in the wisdom of the perfection of the Disciple, and was preaching a discourse sitting on the seat next to that of the Buddha this thought arose in him : “Well indeed, may I too attain the status attained by this disciple in the dispensation of the Buddha who is to appear in future.” As a result of such a deliberation he was unable to achieve insight into the Path and Fruition. However, he made obeisance to the Tathāgata, stood in front of Him and said, “Lord, in this congregation of yours who is the monk seated immediately next to you ?” He is the Chief Disciple in my congregation who will set rolling the Wheel of Law, which has been set in motion by me. He has reached the limit of the wisdom of the Perfection of the Disciple and has penetrated into the sixteen classes of knowledge. “Venerable Sir, I have shown my respect by holding the umbrella of flowers for seven days, and I do not aspire to any other existence, either that of a Sakka or a Brahmā, as a result of this, but in future, like this thera Nisabha, may I be the Chief Disciple of a Buddha.”—Thus did he aspire.

The Master thought, “Will the aspiration of this person be fulfilled ?” and looking into the future with His power of discernment He foresaw its fulfilment after a period of one *asankheyya* and a hundred thousand kappas and said to Sārada the ascetic, “This aspiration of yours will not be in vain. In the future, however, after the lapse of one *asankheyya* and a hundred thousand kappas, a Buddha, Gotama by name, will appear in the world ; His mother will be Mahāmāyā the queen, His father will be the king Suddhodana, His son will be Rāhula, His attendant will be Ānanda, His Second Chief Disciple will be Moggallāna, and you will be His Chief Disciple, the General of the Dhamma, Sāriputta by name.” Thus He made the prediction to the ascetic, and having delivered a discourse on the Dhamma, He went forth through the air accompanied by the company of monks. The ascetic Sārada also went to the resident theras and sent the message to his friend Sirivaḍḍhaka the householder saying, “Venerable Sirs, please tell my friend : ‘Your friend Sārada

the ascetic, sitting at the foot of the Buddha Anomadassī, had aspired to the position of the Chief Disciple in the dispensation of the Buddha Gotama who will appear in future ; you aspire to the Second Discipleship.’” And having said this, he went ahead of the theras by a different path, and stood at the door of Sirivaḍḍhaka. Said Sirivaḍḍhaka, “It is a long time since my esteemed friend came ” and made him take a seat and taking a lower seat for himself he asked, “Sir, I do not see your esteemed disciples ?”

“Yes, friend, Buddha Anomadassī visited our hermitage. We did Him honour as much as we could and the Master gave a discourse to all of us. At the end of the discourse, all, excepting me, attained Arahatsip and became monks. I saw Nisabha thera, the Chief Disciple of the Master, and aspired for the Chief Discipleship in the dispensation of the Buddha, Gotama by name, who is to appear in future. You had better aspire to the Second Discipleship in His dispensation.” “Venerable Sir, I am not acquainted with the Buddha.” “Let your talk with the Buddha be my responsibility. You had better make elaborate preparation to receive Him. Sirivaḍḍhaka, hearing his words, had the place, eight *karīsa*\* in extent according to the king’s measurement, decorated and caused it to be sprinkled with sand, had flowers with fried grain\*\* as the fifth scattered, caused a pavilion with a roof of blue lotuses to be built in front of the door of his residence, had a seat for the Buddha prepared and seats for the rest of the monks arranged, and made preparations for showing great honour and respect. Then he gave intimation to the ascetic Sārada to invite the Buddha. The ascetic bringing the order of monks headed by the Buddha came to Sirivaḍḍhaka’s residence. Sirivaḍḍhaka went forward to meet them, took the bowl from the hands of the Tathāgata, led them to the pavilion and solemnised by the pouring of water his offerings to the Order of monks headed by the Buddha, who was seated on the seat arranged for Him. He then served them with delicious food. At the end of the meal he presented costly robes to the Buddha and the Order and said, “Venerable Sir, this effort is not for the sake of an insignificant position. Please show me favour in this way

\* *karīsa* = a measurement equal to a basket of paddy ; approximately weighs 46 lbs. A square measure of land, being that space on which a *karīsa* of seed can be sown.

\*\* Fried grain = fried corn ; Pāli is, *lāja*, which means fried grain ; parched corn ; the flower of *Dalbergia arborea*, used for scattering in bunches (with other flowers making 5 kinds of colour) as a sign of welcome, usually in the phrase *lāja-pañcamāni-pupphāni*.

for seven days.” The Master consented. In that way he bestowed a great gift for seven days, made obeisance to the Bhagavā, stretched forth his folded palms and said, “Venerable Sir, may I be the Second Disciple of that Master whose Chief Disciple my friend Sārada the ascetic aspired to be.”

The Master looking into the future, saw the fulfilment of his aspiration and foretold, “You will become the Second Disciple of the Buddha Gotama after a lapse of an asankheyya and a thousand kappas.” Having heard the prediction of the Buddha, Sirivaḍḍhaka was filled with joy and happiness. The Master spoke words of appreciation after the meal and returned to the monastery with his following.

The Buddha said, “This, O monks, was the aspiration made by my disciples and they receive just what they aspired to. I do not act with partiality.”

When the Buddha said this, the two Chief Disciples bowed down to the Bhagavā and related the whole story of the present time beginning with “Venerable Sir, while living as householders we went to see *Giragga* festival,” and related everything up to the discernment of the fruition of Sotāpatti from Assaji therā. They said further: ‘Venerable Sir, we went to our teacher and desiring to lead him to Your feet told him of the hollowness of his views and also spoke to him of the advantages of coming here. He said, “For me to become a pupil now would be like a jar turning into a cup. It is not possible for me to live like a pupil.” On being told “Sir, now that the people carrying perfumes, garlands, etc. in their hands, will go to pay obeisance to the Master, what will become of you?” He asked whether in this world there were more wise men or dullards. When we replied, “Sir, the dullards are many and the wise are few”, he said, “Well, the wise will go to the wise monk, Gotama, and the dullards will come to me who am a dullard. Go your way” and Venerable Sir, he would not come.’ Hearing that, the Master said, “Monks, because of his wrong view, Saṅgya considered the inessential as the essential

and the essential as the inessential. But you, with your own wisdom, knew the essential as essential and the inessential as inessential and putting away the inessential you held on to the essential. He spoke these verses :—

Asāre sāramatino sāre cāsāradassino,  
te sāram nādhigacchati micchāsaṅkapa-  
pagocarā,  
Sāram ca sārato ñatvā asāraṇ ca  
asāraṇto,  
te sāram adhigacchanti sammāsaṅkapa-  
pagocarā.

—*Dhammapada* vs. 11 and 12.

Therein, “Asāre sāramatino” means “those who consider the inessential as essential”, namely, the four requisites and teaching connected with the ten kinds of object relating to Wrong Views ; this is said to be the inessential. “Sāre cāsāradassino” means “those who consider the essential as the inessential”, namely, the teaching connected with the ten kinds of objects relating to Right Views ; this is said to be the essential. “Te sāram” here means “those who are holding Wrong Views and are moving steadfastly in sensuous thoughts etc. do not attain to the essence of sīla (Morality), samādhi (Concentration), paññā (Wisdom), vimutti (Freedom), vimuttiñāṇadassana (Knowledge and Insight into Freedom), paramattha (Ultimate Truth) and Nibbāna. “Sāram ca” means “knowing that very essence, such as the essence of sīla (Morality) and so on, as the essential, and knowing the inessential mentioned before as inessential. “Te sāram”, in this regard, means “those wise men, who hold the Right Views and are moving steadfastly in the right sphere of thought conditioned by minds free from sense desire etc. attain to the truth as mentioned above.”

At the end of the utterance of the verses many people attained to the fruition of Sotāpatti (Stream-Winning) and the religious discourse became beneficial to those who had assembled.

*The Story of the Chief Disciple, the eighth.*

THE END.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Known to scholars of many countries, the Ven'ble Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt., was perhaps the outstanding Buddhist figure of this age. With the increase in interest in Western lands, there is a great demand for his Buddhist discourses and writings which are now being reprinted in the "Light of the Dhamma".

Bhikkhu Nyāna who was later known as Ledi Sayadaw was born in 1208 Burmese Era (1846 C.E.) at Saing-pyin Village, Dipayin Township, Monywa District. At the age of puberty he was ordained a sāmaṇera and at the age of 20 a bhikkhu, under the patronage of Sayadaw Salin U Pandicca. He received his monastic education under various teachers and later was trained in Buddhist literature by the Venerable San-kyaung Sayadaw, Sudassana Dhaja Atuladhipati Sīri-pavara Mahādhamma Rājādhi-rāja-guru of Mandalay. He was a bright student. It was said of him:—"About 2,000 students attended the lectures daily delivered by the Ven. San-kyaung Sayadaw. One day the Sayadaw set in Pāli 20 questions on Pāramitā (Perfections) and asked all the students to answer them. None of them except Bhikkhu Nyāna could answer those questions satisfactorily." He collected all these answers and when he attained 14 Vassā and while he was still in San-kyaung monastery, he published his first book, "Pāramitā Dīpanī (Manual of Perfections)". During the reign of King Theebaw he became a Pāli lecturer at Mahā Jotikārāma Monastery in Mandalay. A year after the capture of King Theebaw, i.e. in 1887 C.E., he removed to a place to the north of Monywa town, where he established a monastery by the name of Ledi-tawya Monastery. He accepted many bhikkhu-students from various parts of Burma and imparted Buddhist education to them. In 1897 C.E. he wrote Paramattha Dīpanī (Manual of Ultimate Truths) refuting the two sub-commentaries—Abhidhammatthavibhāvanī and Mani-sāra-mañjūsā-tikā, both of which contain many errors and misrepresentations. When this book was published in 1906 C.E. it was severely criticised by some learned scholars. However, its teaching prevailed, as Truth does, and his book is largely used by students nowadays.

Later he toured in many parts of Burma for the purpose of propagating the Buddha-

Dhamma. In the towns and villages he visited he delivered various Discourses on the Dhamma and established Abhidhamma classes and Meditation Centres. He composed Abhidhamma rhymes and taught them to his Abhidhamma classes. In some of the principal towns he spent a Vassa imparting Abhidhamma and Vinaya education to the lay devotees. Some of the Ledi Meditation Centres are still existing and still famous. During his itinerary he wrote many Manuals in Burmese. He has written more than 50 such Manuals, of which three have been translated into English. Vipassanā Dīpanī (Manual of Insight) was translated by his disciple Sayadaw U Nyāna, Pathamagyaw. Paṭṭhānuddesa-Dīpanī (A concise exposition of the Buddhist Philosophy of Relations) was originally written in Pāli by the late Ledi Sayadaw and translated by U Nyāna. Niyāma Dīpanī (Manual of Cosmic Order) was translated by U Nyāna and Dr. Barua and edited by Mrs. Rhys Davids.

He was awarded the title of Aggamahāpaṇḍita by the Government of India in 1911 C.E. Later the University of Rangoon conferred on him the degree of D. Litt. (*Honoris Causa*). In his later years he became blind and settled down at Pyinmana where he died at the age of 77.

### BHADANTA SOBHANA MAHĀTHERA (Mahasi Sayadaw) Aggamahāpaṇḍita

Born at Seikkhun Village, Shwebo Township on the 3rd Waning of Second Wazo in 1266 Burmese Era (1904 C.E.). Became a Sāmaṇera at 12 at the village monastery under the patronage of the Ven'ble U Ādicca, his preceptor. Took the Upasampadā (higher ordination) at the age of 20 in 1285 Burmese Era (1923 C.E.).

Learned the Scriptures under the guidance of such eminent Mahātheras as the Ven'ble U Ādicca of Shwebo, and the Ven'ble Khin-ma-kan Sayadaw of Mandalay. Passed the Lower, Middle and Higher Pāli Examinations and Dhammācariya (Lecturership) Examinations conducted by the Government.

In 1949 the Mahāthera came to Rangoon on the invitation of Hon'ble U Nu and Thado Thiri Thudhamma Sir U Thwin to give lessons in Vipassanā Bhāvanā to devotees from Burma and abroad. There are at present more than 100 Meditation Centres in Burma,

Thailand and Ceylon which give instructions in Vipassanā Bhāvanā according to this Mahāthera's method. He has played a very important role in the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā by not only acting as the "Questioner" in the proceedings, but also in re-editing the Tipiṭaka Texts and the translations of the same into Burmese. In 1953 the Government of the Union of Burma conferred on him the title of "Aggamahāpaṇḍita" in recognition of his great learning, and for training several devotees in Vipassanā Bhāvanā.

### BHADANTA NYANAPONIKA THERA

Born in 1901, at Hanau, near Frankfort, in Western Germany, from Jewish parents. As far as known, he was the first Jew who joined the Sangha, and might still be the only one. When he was 22, he became a Buddhist through the study of Buddhist literature. Only some years later he met other German lay Buddhists when he moved to Berlin. There, and later in Königsberg (East Prussia) he joined the Buddhist societies existing in these cities. In February 1936, he arrived in Ceylon, at the Island Hermitage Dodanduwa, where, in the same year, he received his Novice Ordination (Pabbajjā) under the great German monk-scholar, the Venerable Nyanatiloka Mahāthera. In the following year, he took the higher ordination (Upasampadā). At the outbreak of the second world-war, he was interned, as a German citizen, and returned to Ceylon, from India, only in 1946. Some years later he became a citizen of Ceylon. He participated in the Opening and Concluding Sessions of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā.

#### *English publications :—*

Abhidhamma Studies. Researches in Buddhist Psychology  
Satipaṭṭhāna. The Heart of Buddhist Meditation (two editions)  
The Five Mental Hindrances.  
The Four Sublime States.  
The Three-fold Refuge.

#### *German publications :—*

Satipaṭṭhāna (The German edition includes also a translation of the Commentary, etc.)

Sutta Nipāta. Translation with Commentary.

Dhammasaṅgani. Translation with introduction and notes.

Der Einzige Weg ("The Sole Way"). An anthology of texts on Satipaṭṭhāna). In preparation.

#### *Unpublished manuscripts in German :—*

Translation of Atthasālinī, parts of Samyutta-Nikāya, etc.

### THE VEN'BLE U WISARA

U Wisāra, the eldest son of U Po Shin, bailiff, and Daw Gauk was born in 1916 at Lemyethna, Henzada District. On completion of his studies at the American Baptist Mission Middle School at Lemyethna, he was initiated a Sāmaṇera under the patronage of the Ven'ble Kanthit Sayadaw at Thabyegon in Henzada District. Under the preceptorship of the same Mahāthera he was ordained a Bhikkhu at the age of 20 in 1936. He has studied the Scriptures at East Ledī, Monywa, Mandalay and Amarapura. During the 2nd World War the Venerable Thera stayed with his preceptor in Henzada District and gave lessons in the Scriptures to Sāmaṇeras and other pupils. At the end of the war he came to Rangoon for further studies in Burmese and Buddhist literature.

He then went to Ceylon and India to prosecute his studies in English and Hindi. He is now residing at the Burmese Dhammasala in Calcutta where he is of great help to Burmese pilgrims to holy places in India. The Ven'ble Thera is now studying Hindi under a private tutor.

# GLOSSARY

FOR VOL. III—No. 4.

## A

- Acchariya** : Wonderful ; surprising ; marvellous.  
**Akkhātāro** : Teachers ; proclaimers.  
**Ātappam** : Ardour ; zeal ; exertion.  
**Attā** : Soul ; soul-essence.

## G

- Giragga** : Mountain top.

## K

- Khandhaka** : Division ; chapter.  
**Kiccam** : Duty ; service ; that which is to be done.

## M

- Manussa** : Man

## N

- Nicca** : Permanence.

## P

- Parābhava** : Defeat ; destruction ; ruin.  
**Pariddavānam** : Lamentation.

## S

- Saddhamma** : The true Dhamma; the sublime Teaching of the Buddha.  
**Samatikkamāya**:To cross over; to transcend.  
**Sukha** : Joy ; happiness.

## T

- Tirokuḍḍa** : Outside the fence or wall.

## V

- Vodāna** : Purity (from Defilements).

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