

The **LIGHT**
of the
DHAMMA

Published by the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council

Vol. VIII No. 3

K 1.50

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867 Larmon Road
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360.978.4998
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of the
DHAMMA

VOL. VIII

No. 3

2505 B.E.

July 1961 C.E.



THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA

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THE EDITOR,
 "THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA"
 Union Buddha Sasana Council
 16, Hermitage Road, Kokine
 Rangoon, Union of Burma



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“ALL MANKIND ARE MY BRETHREN”

(A talk by Myanaung U Tin broadcast by B.B.S. on 6th March 1961.)

In this modern world newspaper reading has become a common habit. In fact, it has become almost a drug habit. We hardly realise that we have become addicts or near-addicts. We miss a newspaper as tantalizingly as an inveterate smoker misses a cigarette or cigar. How many of us can say, like Richard Sheridan, “The newspapers! No, I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper”? The modern world has become very small, indeed. We must take interest not only in the affairs of our country but also of the whole world because what takes place anywhere today may affect our lives tomorrow. We must, therefore, read newspapers and yet as Charles Lamb once remarked. “Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment. I often remember these lines:

“What, what, what,
What’s the news from Swat?
Sad news,
Bad news,
Comes by cable led
Through the Indian Ocean’s bed.”

Every morning we turn the pages of a newspaper with avid interest. What do we find? By and large, sad news and bad news. We lay it down with a feeling of disappointment and distress.

Let us recall a few sample news we got during the past few weeks. We learn with great concern that People’s China had a bad crop, for two years in a row, ascribed to “the most severe natural calamities in a century”—floods, droughts, typhoons, insects, plagues and frosts. We are likewise very sorry to hear that the agriculture has failed to reach planned production target in the Soviet Union, and the people are not getting enough meat, butter, milk and eggs, which are considered to be essential for those living in cold regions. Of course, there is no food crisis in the Soviet Union, but the failures in the farms

programmes, partly due to the vagaries of the weather, had forced Moscow to cut its planned grain shipments to People’s China. However, we find some comfort in the news that large exports of grain have been arranged with Australia and Canada.

It is not only the Communist countries that are in a bad way. On the 30th January 1961, the new American President, in his State of the Union Message, said, “The present state of our economy is disturbing. We take office in the wake of seven months of recession, three and one half years of slack, seven years of diminished economic growth, and nine years of falling farm income.....In short, the American economy is in trouble. The most resourceful industrialized country on earth ranks among the last in the rate of economic growth. Since last spring our economic growth has actually receded.” A few days later, American Secretary of Labour said, “We are in a real recession in the United States and if we don’t take the proper action we will be in a real depression.”

Again, we read the news that the blizzard which began to strike the United States at the time of the inauguration of President Kennedy remained unabated for some considerable time.

From the United Kingdom came the news about the influenza epidemic, believed to be of the same type as that of the flu that girdled the globe in the year 1957. But judging by the number of casualties the present flu appears to be more dangerous than the previous one.

Serious troubles are, of course, not confined to the Big Powers. K.M.T. guerillas are still giving us trouble. Indonesia suffers a national disaster caused by natural calamities, rendering homeless half a million people and creating havoc among the crops and live stock. Three strong earthquakes took place in Chile, reminding us of most severe earthquakes in that country some months ago. The Congo, Laos, Cuba and Algeria have been headline

news for quite a long while. The latest developments in the Congo are deplorable and dangerous, indeed. In fact, no week passes by without some bad news or other from different parts of the world, the news that excite our solicitude and sympathy. But all these distressing news pale when placed besides the grim prospect of the mankind's final war, because, in the words of President Kennedy, "the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction."

Everyday we read newspapers which record the world events but many of us have neither time nor inclination to look deeper into the news for their causes.

"Events are writ by History's pen
Though causes are too much to care for".

Harold J. Laski wrote in *The Reflections on the Revolution of our Time*, "We are in the midst of a period of revolutionary change. As always in a period of revolution, the drive to fundamental change is accompanied by disintegration and conflict; and, as always also, these are attributed to wanton choice of evil men instead of to those deeper and impersonal causes which they are powerless to control and of which they are no more than transient symbols. As always also, we seek less to discover those impersonal causes than to find some easy and partial remedy which will effect, at least for our own time, a passing obscuration of the obvious and more painful symptoms of the disease."

Now, in the light of the Buddha Dhamma, let us seek the deeper and impersonal causes of all what has been happening in this miserable world of ours. I have just given you the sample news of the three traditional destroyers. 'What are the three traditional destroyers? They are war, famine and pestilence. The news about them are so continual that their poignancy is ever with us.

In the Tika Aṅguttara Nikāya,¹ the Buddha teaches us that because "people are ablaze with

unlawful lusts, overwhelmed by depraved longings and obsessed by wrong doctrines." they encounter the three traditional destroyers."

Newspapers give us news not only about war, famine and pestilence but also about sex orgies, escapades for sensual pleasures, aggressive personal aggrandizement, ruthless exploitation and persecution in the names of high-sounding "isms", which, to say the least, put undue emphasis on the material aspect of life and so are inimical to the inner development of man.

We cannot fail to observe that the cinema films reflect the real life that is going around us. And the cinema fans appear to relish sex-kittens and sadists, power-maniacs and trigger-happy guys, weapons for mass destruction and terrifying creatures from other planets.

In these terrible conditions, we must, first of all discover the deeper and impersonal causes, and knowing them we must endeavour to correct the false steps and follow the right path, thereby jointly and severally removing the causes of the dreadful situation confronting us. We are now living in a period of disintegration and conflict, and unless and until we, as individuals and communities, seek to lay a new ethical foundation and that truly and well, we cannot make lasting achievements in the drive to fundamental change or, in other words, it is not at all possible for us to usher in a new era, which will witness the synthesis of the best of cultural heritage and the best of scientific knowledge.

As a Sinhalese writer puts it, "the Buddhist way of life offers in the present anarchy of ethics a creed to live for, and a principle to live by. The creed is Righteousness, translated to the ideal of Brotherhood of Man; the principle, justice. The measure of that justice is the good of community and not the good of this or that section, class or nation. Buddhism is a doctrine of the brotherhood of all men. Frontiers of nationality, race, religion or colour have no place in it."

¹ 6. Paloka Sutta, p. 159, 6th Syn. Edn.

This Brotherhood of Man or Universal Brotherhood fits in well with the oecumenical state envisaged by Arnold Toynbee, who writes in *A Historian's Approach to Religion*, "An oecumenical state could afford to concern itself less with its own self-preservation and more with the service of human beings. It could, in fact be primarily a 'Welfare State', and could dedicate itself to promoting the interests of Mankind as a whole."

The Buddha, having made a diagnosis of the ills of the world, provides a remedy too. He enjoins upon us to eradicate the causes hereof. What are the causes? They are *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*: greed, ill-will and ignorance. The essence of the Buddha's teaching is to refrain from evil, to do good and to purify one's mind. If we practice in accordance with His teaching, we must be able to reduce by stages, greed, ill-will and ignorance, until we get rid of them altogether.

Having appreciated the essence of the Buddha's teaching or the Buddha Dhamma, we ought to live the Buddhist way of life or, in other words, translate it into the terms of a practical religion. William Blake said, "Religion is politics; and politics is brotherhood." Those of us who take active interest in religion or in politics or in both are afforded a good opportunity to promote a Brotherhood of Man, based on social justice.

Universal Brotherhood is the only goal before us. If the Buddha were still in this

world, He would have said "Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu," when Thomas Paine declared,

"The world is my country,
All mankind are my brethren,
To do good is my religion."

To do good for whom? For all mankind, irrespective of creed, class or colour. To do good implies to refrain from evil. To do good, therefore, precludes imposition of one's will upon others either by intimidation or by force. These are the criterions, and if the adherents of the old religions or the advocates of the new ideologies fail to live up to them, they have no legitimate right to declare that their way of life is of universal validity.

The circumstances of the world are changing with amazing swiftness. But the change of attitude on the part of those following the traditional ways is not keeping pace. Their change of heart is still a problem. On the other hand, the protagonists of the modern creeds are in a violent hurry to build a paradise on earth. Consequently, they are doing more harm than good. If the old are bigoted and the new fanatical, the end of the world is bound to come sooner than expected. Both the traditionalists and the revolutionaries should realise that all mankind are brethren, and the Brotherhood of Man, founded on Righteousness and Justice, is the only alternative to total destruction of the mankind.

May all appreciate that "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin!"

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founded in 1902.

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THE PLACE OF ANIMALS IN BUDDHISM

By *Anāgārika P. Sugatananda*

In an article on evolutionary ethics, Sir John Arthur Thomsom, Regius Professor of Natural History, Aberdeen University, makes the striking observation that 'Animals may not be ethical, but they are often virtuous'.

If this opinion had been expressed by a Buddhist writer it might have met with skepticism from those who hold 'commonsense' practical views on the nature of animals. Perhaps even more so from those whose religion teaches them to regard man as a special creation, the only being with a 'soul' and therefore the only one capable of noble and disinterested action. Scientific evidence that man differs from animals in quality, but not in essential kind, has not yet broken down the age-old religious idea of man's god-bestowed uniqueness and superiority. It is a view that is both flattering and convenient to *homo sapiens*, and so will die hard, if it dies at all, in the popular mind. To be quite fair to theistic religious ideas, the anthropocentric bias is quite as strong among people who are pleased to consider themselves rationalists as it is among the religiously orthodox.

But Prof. Thomson's verdict is that of an unbiased scientific observer and student of behaviour, and most open-minded people would endorse it. Its full implication lies in the distinction between 'ethical' and 'virtuous'. Ethical conduct is that which follows a code of moral rules and is aware, to some extent of an intelligible principle underlying them. Virtue, on the other hand, is the source from which spring unpremeditated acts of kindness, self-abnegation and heroism, prompted by love or some other primal and instinctive urge. It is not an ethical sense that makes the female animal defend her young with her life, or a dog remain with its unconscious master in a burning house rather than save itself. When, as Prof. Thomson points out, animals 'are devoted to their offspring, sympathetic to their kindred, affectionate to their mates, self-subordinating in their community, courageous beyond

praise', it is not because they are morally aware or morally trained, but because they have another quality, which can only be called virtue. To be ethical is man's prerogative because it requires a developed reasoning faculty; but since virtue of the kind found in animals takes no account of rewards or punishments it is in a certain sense a higher quality than mere morality. Moral conduct may be based on nothing more than fear of society's criticism or sanctions, or the expectation of reprisals from a punitive god. In morality there may be selfishness; in virtue there is none.

No one is benefited by having extravagant claims made for him, and what has been said is not intended to deny that for the most part animals are rapacious and cruel. It cannot be otherwise when they live under the inexorable compulsions of the law of survival. But what of man, who has been called the most dangerous and destructive of animals? Would the majority of human beings be much better than animals, if all restraints of fear were removed? Just as there are vast differences between one man and another in nature and conduct, so there are between animals. Anyone who has taken pleasure in feeding monkeys in a wild state will have noticed that there is usually one old male who tyrannizes over the females and their young, greedily snatching more than he needs himself rather than let the weaker members share the *dāna*. But that does not mean that all monkeys are egoistic bullies. A few years ago it was reported from India that a monkey had jumped into a swollen river and saved a human baby from drowning at great peril to its own life. The incident is noteworthy because it concerns a wild animal; such actions by domesticated animals are so frequent that they often pass unnoticed. It suggests a special relationship between animals and those human beings who live at peace with them; perhaps a rudimentary sense of gratitude or even a dim idea of the need for

mutual help against the forces of nature. Monkeys are treated with kindness by the Indian villager, and all the higher animals are well able to distinguish between kindness and enmity. But now one wonders sadly whether Hanuman-ji will be able to prevail over the demand for polio vaccine.

Prof. Thomson has something to say regarding the human-animal relationship also, and it has a special significance for Buddhists. He writes that although there is no warrant for calling animals moral agents, for the reason we have seen, ‘a few highly-endowed types, such as dog and horse, which have become man’s partners, may have some glimpse of the practical meaning of responsibility’, and that there are cases in which possibly ‘ideas are beginning to emerge’. That there is the possibility of such ideas being formed in the animal mind, and that they can be encouraged and cultivated, is nothing strange to Buddhist thought.

Buddhism takes into full account the animal’s latent capacity for affection, heroism and self-sacrifice. There is in Buddhism more sense of kinship with the animal world, a more intimate feeling of community with all that lives, than is found in Western religious thought. And this is not a matter of sentiment, but is rooted in the total Buddhist concept of life. It is an essential part of a grand and all-embracing philosophy which neglects no aspect of experience. The Buddhist does not have to ask despairingly, ‘Why did God create obnoxious things like cobras, scorpions, tigers and mycobacterium tuberculosis?’ The kitten on the lap and the possible cobra in the bed are all part of a world which, while it is not the best of all possible worlds, could not be different, since its creator is craving.

So in the Buddhist texts animals are always treated with great sympathy and understanding. Some animals, such as the elephant, the horse and the Naga, the noble serpent, are used as personifications of great qualities, and the Buddha Himself is Sākya Siha, the Lion of the Sākya. His Teaching is

the Lion’s roar,¹ confounding the upholders of false views.

The stories of animals in the canonical texts and commentaries are sometimes very faithful to the nature of the beasts they deal with. Thus the noble horse Kanthaka² pined away and died when its master renounced the world to attain Buddhahood. That story has the ring of historical truth. In a later episode an elephant, Parileyaka³ and an intelligent monkey were the Enlightened One’s companions when He retired to the forest to get away from quarrelling Bhikkhus. (Here one is reminded of Walt Whitman: ‘Sometimes I think that I could live with animals...’) Then there was the case of the elephant Dhanapāla⁴, which suffered from homesickness in captivity and refused food for love of its mother. The Buddha immortalized it in the stanza:

*Dhanapālako nāma kuñjaro
Kaṭukappadhebano dunnivarayo
Baddho kabalañ na bhunjati.
Sumarati nāgavanassa kuñjaro.*

—Dhammapada, verse 324.

Also from the Dhammapada Commentary is the tale of Ghosaka⁵, the child who was laid on the ground to be trampled on successively by elephants and draught-oxen, but was saved by the compassionate beasts walking round instead of over him. The suckling of this child by a she-goat is reminiscent of other stories, such as that of Romulus and Remus, suckled by a wolf, and Orson, by a bear. These may or

¹ Majjhima Nikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāḷi, 2. Sīhanāda-vagga, 2. Mahāsīhanāda Sutta, p. 100, 6th Syn. Edn.

² Dhammapada-Aṭṭhakathā Book II, page 128, 6th Syn. Edn.

³ Dhammapada-Aṭṭhakathā, Book I, page 321, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁴ Dhammapada-Aṭṭhakathā, Book II, page 314, 6th Syn. Edn. Meaning of the verse: (The elephant named Dhanapālaka, which is in rut and is hard to control, being in captivity eats no morsel, but longs for the elephant-forest.)

⁵ Buddhist Legends Part 1, Burlingame, p. 256.

may not be legendary, but there have been well-attested cases in recent times of human children being nurtured and raised by animals.

The good qualities of animals is the subject of several Jātaka stories, the best known being that of the hare in the moon (Sasa Jātaka)¹ and the story of the heroic monkey-leader who saved his tribe by making his own body part of a bridge for them across the Ganges (Mahākapi Jātaka)². Less well-known stories of the same kind are the Chaddanta Jātaka³, in which the Bodhisatta appears as a six-tusked elephant, Saccamkira Jātaka⁴, which contrasts the gratitude shown by a snake, a rat, and a parrot with the ingratitude of a prince, and the curious tale of the Mahāsuka Jātaka⁵, where a parrot out of gratitude to the tree that sheltered it, refuses to leave the tree when Sakka causes it to wither. There is even an elephantine version of Androcles and the lion in the Alina Citta Jātaka⁶, where a tusker gives itself and its offspring in service to some carpenters out of gratitude for the removal of a thorn from its foot.

Whether we choose to take these last examples literally, as events that occurred in previous world-cycles when animals had more human characteristics than now, or as folktales of the Pancatantra type, is immaterial. Their function is to teach moral lessons by allegory, but they are also important as illustrating the position that animals occupy side by side with men in the Buddhist world-view. By and large the Jātakas do not exalt animals unduly, for every tale of animal gratitude or affection can be balanced by another showing less worthy traits which

animals and men have in common. There is at least one, however, which satirises a peculiarly human characteristic, hypocrisy. In the Vaka Jātaka⁷, a wolf, having no food decides to observe the Uposatha fast. But on seeing a goat the pious wolf decides to keep the fast on some other occasion. If the story were not intended to be satirical it would be an injustice to wolves. Whatever other vices it may have, no animal degrades itself with sham piety, either to impress its fellows or to make spiritual capital out of an involuntary deprivation.

Buddhism shows that both animals and human beings are the products of Ignorance conjoined with Craving, and that the differences between them are the consequences of past Kamma. In this sense, though not in any other, 'all life is one'. It is one in its origin, Ignorance-Craving, and in its subjection to the universal law of causality. But every being's Kamma is separate and individual. So long as a man refuses to become submerged in the herd, so long as he resists the pressure that is constantly brought to bear upon him to make him share the mass mind and take on the identity of mass activities, he is the master of his own destiny. Whatever the Kamma of others around him may be, he need have no share in it. His Kamma is his own, distinct and individual. In this sense all life is not one, but each life is a unique current of causal determinants, from lowest to highest in the scale. The special position of the human being rests on the fact that he alone can consciously direct his own personal current of Kamma to a higher or lower destiny. All beings are their own creators; man is also his own judge and executioner. He is also his own saviour.

Then what of the animal? Since animals are devoid of moral sense, argues the rationalist, how can they be agents of Kamma? How can they raise themselves from their low status and regain human birth?

The answer is that Buddhism views life against the background of infinity. Saṃsāra is

¹ Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Book III., page 48, 6th Syn. Edn.

² Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Book III., page 349, 6th Syn. Edn.

³ Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Book V, page 37, 6th Syn. Edn. Six-tusked here means "Six-worer tusked"

⁴ Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Book I, page 341, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁵ Jātaka Pāḷi, page 72, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁶ Jātaka Pāḷi, page 37, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁷ Jātaka Pāḷi, page 91, 6th Syn. Edn.

without beginning, and there has never been a time when the round of rebirths did not exist. Consequently, the Kammic history of every living being extends into the infinite past, and each has an unexpected potential of Kamma, good and bad. When a human being dies, the nature of the succeeding life-continuum is determined by the morally wholesome or unwholesome mental impulse that arises in his last conscious moment¹, that which follows it being his *Paṭisandhi-viññāṇa*, or rebirth-linking consciousness. But where no such good or bad thought-moment arises the rebirth-linking consciousness is determined by some unexpended Kamma² from a previous existence. Animals, being without moral discrimination, are more or less passive sufferers of the results of past bad Kamma, as are morally irresponsible human beings, such as congenital idiots and imbeciles. But the fact that the animal has been unable to originate any fresh good Kamma does not exclude it from rebirth on a higher level. When the results of the Kamma which caused the animal birth are exhausted some unexpended good Kamma from a previous state of existence will have an opportunity to take over, and in this way the life-continuum is raised to the human level again.

How this comes about can be understood only when the mind is divested of all belief in a transmigrating 'soul'. So long as there is any clinging, however disguised or unconscious, to the idea of a persisting self-entity the true nature of the rebirth process cannot be grasped. It is for this reason that many people, although they maintain that 'all life is one', fail to understand or accept the Buddhist truth that life currents oscillate between the human, the animal and many other forms. However comforting it may be to believe that beings can only ascend the spiritual ladder, and that there is no retributive fall for those who fail to make

¹ This *kamma* is known as *Āciṅṇaca kamma*.

² This *kamma* is called *aparāpariyāya-vedanīya-kamma* (*Kamma* ripening in future births).

the grade, that is not the teaching of the Buddha.

It is now necessary to introduce a qualification to the statement that the higher rebirth of animals must depend upon unexpended good Kamma. Within the limitation we have noted it is certainly possible for animals to originate good Kamma, notwithstanding their lack of moral sense. As Prof. Thomson suggests, contact with human beings can encourage and develop those qualities which we recognise as virtue in the higher animals, and even bring about in them a dawning consciousness of moral values. When the compulsions of the law of are removed, as in the case of animals which show examples of those endearing, and even noble qualities in animals which have sometimes put human beings to shame, and have even caused non-Buddhists to ask themselves uneasily whether man really is a special creation of God, and the only being worthy of salvation.

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A Brief Exposition of Kamma-Section of Nibbedhika Sutta

Written in Burmese by Mahā Paññā Bala Saya Nyan,

(Translated by the Editors of the Light of the Dhamma)

1. *Kamma* should be understood.¹
2. The origin of *kamma* should be understood.
3. The variety of *kamma* should be understood.
4. The resultant of *kamma* should be understood.
5. The cessation of *kamma* should be understood.
6. The practice leading to the cessation of *kamma* should be understood.

1. Kamma should be understood:

What is *kamma*?

“*Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi,*

Cetayivā kammaṃ karoti, kāyena vācāya manasā.”

(The volition, O monks, do I call *kamma*. Through volition one performs *kamma* by means of body, speech and mind. It means that *cetanā* is capable of inciting any action. It incites any action, bodily, verbal or mental. *Kammas* are caused by *cetanā*. So *cetanā* itself is called *kamma*.)

During sleep numerous subconsciousness (*bhavaṅga-citta*) arises, but no full consciousness arises. So there must be a kind of Dhamma which is capable of arousing mind to action. In this world, when an offence has been committed, the culprit must be found out. So in this case also, the factor that causes bodily, verbal or mental action should be sought for. It is none other than the energetic concomitant *Cetanā*. *Cetanā* is the cause and *kamma* is the effect; thus *cetanā* is figuratively called *kamma*.²

Here, although all wholesome and unwholesome volitions may be called *kammas*, some inconspicuous wholesome and unwholesome volitions do not amount to *kammas*. In order to show that those volitions which do not culminate in action at the six sense-doors do not amount to *kammas*, the Buddha declares “*Cetayivā* (having incited) *kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā*”.

The meaning is this: Only those volitions that arise at the sense-door amount to *kammas*.

The Commentator says: “*Cetayivā ti dvārappavatta cetanā*” (*Cetayivā* means “volition that arises at the Door”).

Cetanā which incites all bodily, verbal and mental actions, resembles the steam which gives motive power to the machinery. So, it should be noted that in the matter of *kamma*, the Buddha declared *cetanā* as the predominating factor.

2. The origin of *kamma* should be understood:

The Buddha says: “*Phasso bhikkhave kamnānaṃ nidānasambhavo*”. [*Phassa* (contact) is the origin of *kamma*.]

When the six external objects come into contact with their respective bases there arises awareness of the presence of the objects. This awareness of the objective presence is called contact (*phassa*). When the external objects such as visible object, sound, etc. come in contact with the internal bases such as Eye-base, etc., it is the function of *phassa* to crush and grind the objects and bring the mind to the level of full consciousness. Then it is the function of *kamma* dominated by *cetanā* to incite or urge to perform bodily, verbal and mental actions. So it is declared that *phassa* is the origin of *kamma*.

¹ Aṅguttara Nikāya, Chakka Nipāta Mahāvagga, Nibbedhika Sutta, p. 359, 6th Syn. Edn.

² The figure of speech in this case is Metonymy.

3. The variety of kamma should be understood:

- (i) *Kamma* that bears fruit in hell.
- (ii) *Kamma* that bears fruit in the animal-world.
- (iii) *Kamma* that bears fruit in the *peta*-world.
- (iv) *Kamma* that bears fruit in the world of men.
- (v) *Kamma* that bears fruit in the *deva* (*Brahma*) *loka*.

Here, unwholesome volitional actions, such as killing will lead to hell, the animal-world and the *peta*-world. The Commentary¹ says: “Due to *tanhā-lobha* (greed) beings are generally reborn in the *peta*-world; due to *dosa* (hatred) they are reborn in hell; and due to *moha* (delusion) they are reborn in the animal-world.

Again, *kāma-kusala* (wholesome actions in the Sensuous Sphere) will bear fruit in the human world and the *deva-loka*; *rūpa kusala* and *arūpa kusala* (wholesome actions pertaining to the Form Sphere and the Formless Sphere) will bear fruit to arise in the Form and the Formless Spheres, respectively.

4. The resultant of kamma should be understood:

There are three kinds of *kamma*-resultants. They are:—

- (i) A certain *kamma* works out its effects in the very same existence in which it is performed. It is then called *diṭṭha-dhamma-vedanīya-kamma* (*kamma* bearing fruit during life-time).
- (ii) A certain *kamma* works out its effects in the next life. It is then called *upapajja-vedanīya-kamma* (*Kamma* bearing fruit in the next life).
- (iii) A certain *kamma* can give resultant from the second rebirth onwards, whenever favourable opportunities

occur. It is then called *aparāpariyāya vedanīya-kamma* (*Kamma* bearing fruit in later lives).

Thus the three resultants of *kamma* should be understood.

Herein, it should first be noted that the seven volitions comprised in the seven impulsive moments (*javana*) are called *kamma* (actions). Of these the *cetanā* comprised in the first impulsive moment gives resultant in this very existence. So, it is called *diṭṭha-dhamma-vedanīya-kamma*.

The volition comprised in the seventh impulsive moment gives resultant in the next birth. So it is called *Upapajja-vedanīya-kamma*.

The volitions comprised in the middle five impulsive moments give resultants, whenever circumstances are favourable, from the second rebirth onwards till Nibbāna is attained. So it is called *Aparāpariyāya vedanīya-kamma*.

If the volitions comprised in the first and the seventh impulsive moments fail to bear fruit, they became ineffective for ever. As regards the volitions comprised in the middle five impulsive moments, they cannot become ineffective until Nibbāna is attained. So in the *samsāra* (round of rebirths), there is not a single being who is free from *aparāpariyāya-vedanīya-kamma*.

The life-continua of beings are accompanied by numerous wholesome and unwholesome past *kammās*, as these *kammās* always accompany their life-continua so long as they have no favourable opportunity to give resultants. Thus *kusala-kammās* and *akusala kammās* bear fruit in the circumstances favourable for their fulfilment.

There are four kinds of *sampatti* (favourable circumstances for fulfilment of *kusala*).

Four kinds of sampatti:

- (1) *Gati-sampatti* (having an existence as a human or a *deva*-existence)
- (2) *Upadhi-sampatti* (having good personality)

¹ Aṭṭasālinī Aṭṭhakathā, Cittuppāda-kaṇḍa, p. 172, 6th Syn. Edn.

(3) *Kāla-sampatti* (being at good times)

(4) *Payoga-sampatti* (being endowed with energy associated with wisdom).

Four kinds of vipatti:

(1) *Gati-vipatti* (being reborn in a woeful existence)

(2) *Upadhi-vipatti* (lack of personality)

(3) *Kāla-vipatti* (being reborn in bad times)

(4) *Payoga-vipatti* (lack of energy associated with wisdom).

5. The cessation of kamma should be understood:

The Buddha declares:

“*Phassanirodho bhikkhave kammanirodho*”

(Cessation of *Phassa*, O monks, is cessation of *kamma*. Why? Because as has been explained before, *kamma* can arise only when *phassa* arises.

So the Buddha declared the cessation of *phassa* as the cessation of *kamma*, i.e., The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering).

6. The practice leading to the cessation of kamma should be understood.

Which is the practice leading to the cessation of *kamma*? It is the unsoiled Noble Eightfold Path composed of:

1. *Sammā-ditthi* (Right Understanding)

2. *Sammā-saṅkappa* (Right Thinking)

3. *Sammā-vācā* (Right Speech)

4. *Sammā-kammanta* (Right Action)

5. *Sammā-ājīva* (Right Livelihood)

6. *Sammā-vāyāma* (Right Effort)

7. *Sammā-sati* (Right Mindfulness)

8. *Sammā-samādhi* (Right Concentration).

When these eight constituents (of the Path) are in proper co-ordination, there arises ability to eradicate all defilements. The combination of these eight constituents which results in this ability is called *Magga* (Holy Path).

When a Noble Disciple understands (1) *kamma*, (2) the origin of *kamma*, (3) the variety of *kamma*, (4) the resultant of *kamma*, (5) the cessation of *kamma* and (6) the practice leading to the cessation of *kamma*, then he fully understands the noble practice which leads to the complete destruction of defilements and final cessation of *kamma*.

The follower of the Buddha in upholding truth and rejecting untruth, according to his understanding, will not go beyond clearly stating what he believes to be true and not subscribing to and not supporting in any way what he has found to be untrue. He will not hate those who hold views different from resentment even under the most difficult circumstances. Adherence to the truth is a most important thing for the good life, and it will always keep the ways of reason free and clear and produce in a person the readiness to own his errors and to change a course of action that has been found to be wrong. This malleability of spirit, this humility, and freedom from pride, can be seen in all who have the open mind, which is most needed for the attainment of inner peace.

(Discipline for the Layman, by Soma Thera,)

THE FIVE HINDRANCES

By Nyanaponika Mahāthera

There are five impediments and hindrances, overgrowths of the mind that stultify insight. What five?

Sensual desire is an impediment and hindrance, an overgrowth of the mind that stultifies insight. Ill-will . . . Sloth and Torpor . . . Restlessness and Worry . . . Sceptical Doubt are impediments and hindrances, overgrowth of the mind that stultify insight.

Without having overcome these five, it is impossible for a monk whose insight thus lacks strength and power, that he can know his own true weal, the weal of others, and the weal of both; or that he will be capable of realizing that superhuman state of distinctive achievement: the knowledge and vision enabling the attainment of sainthood.

But if a monk has overcome these five impediments and hindrances, these overgrowths of the mind that stultify insight, then it is possible that, with his strong insight, he can know his own true weal, the weal of others and the weal of both; and that he will be capable of realizing that superhuman state of distinctive achievement: the knowledge and vision enabling the attainment of sainthood.¹

He whose heart is overwhelmed by unrestrained covetousness, will do what he should not do, and neglect what he ought to do. And through that, his good name and his happiness will come to ruin.

He whose heart is overwhelmed by ill-will . . . sloth and torpor . . . restlessness and worry . . . by sceptical doubt, will do what he should not do, and neglect what he ought to do. And through that, his good name and his happiness will come to ruin.

But if a noble disciple has seen these five as defilements of the mind, he will give them up.

And doing so, he is regarded as one of great wisdom, of abundant wisdom, clear-visioned, well endowed with wisdom. This is called 'endowment with wisdom'.²

There are five impurities of gold impaired by which it is not pliant and wieldy, lacks radiance, is brittle and cannot be wrought well. What are these five impurities? Iron, copper, tin, lead, and silver.

But if the gold has been freed from these five impurities, then it will be pliant and wieldy, radiant and firm, and can be wrought well. Whatever ornaments one wishes to make from it, be it a diadem, ear rings, a necklace or a golden chain, it will serve that purpose.

Similarly, there are five impurities of the mind impaired by which the mind is not pliant and wieldy, lacks radiant lucidity and firmness, and cannot concentrate well upon the eradication of the taints (*āsava*). What are these five impurities? They are: sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, agitation and worry, and sceptical doubt.

But if the mind is freed of these five impurities it will be pliant and wieldy, will have radiant lucidity and firmness, and will concentrate well upon the eradication of the taints. To whatever state realizable by the higher mental faculties one may direct the mind, one will, in each case, acquire the capacity of realization, if the (other) conditions are fulfilled.

How does a monk practise mind-object contemplation on the mental objects of the five hinderances?

Herein, monks, when *sense desire* is present in him, the monk knows "There is sense desire in me," or when sense desire is absent he knows "There is no sense desire in

¹ Aṅguttara Nikāya, Pañcaka-nipāta, Dutiyaparṇāsaka, 1. Nīvaraṇa-vagga, 1. Āvaraṇa Sutta, p. 56, 6th Syn. Edn.

² Aṅguttara Nikāya, Catukka-nipāta, 1. Patta-kamma Sutta, p. 378, 6th Syn.

me.” He knows how the arising of non-arisen sense desire comes to be; he knows how the rejection of the arisen sense desire comes to be; and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the rejected sense desire comes to be.

When *ill-will* is present in him, the monk knows “There is ill-will in me,” or when ill-will is absent he knows “There is no ill-will in me.” He knows how the arising of non-arisen ill-will comes to be; he knows how the rejection of the arisen ill-will comes to be; and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the rejected ill-will comes to be.

When *sloth and torpor* are present in him, the monk knows “There are sloth and torpor in me,” or when sloth and torpor are absent he knows “There are no sloth and torpor in me.” He knows how the arising of non-arisen sloth and torpor comes to be; he knows how the rejection of the arisen sloth and torpor comes to be; and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the rejected sloth and torpor comes to be.

When *restlessness and worry* are present in him, the monk knows “There are restlessness and worry in me,” or when agitation and worry are absent he knows “there are no restlessness and worry in me.” He knows how the arising of non-arisen restlessness and worry comes to be; he knows how the rejection of the arisen restlessness and worry comes to be; and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the rejected restlessness and worry comes to be.

When *sceptical doubt* is present in him, the monk knows “There is sceptical doubt in me,” or when sceptical doubt is absent he knows “There is no sceptical doubt in me.” He knows how the arising of non-arisen sceptical doubt comes to be; he knows how the rejection of the arisen sceptical doubt comes to be; and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the rejected sceptical doubt comes to be.¹

¹ Majjhima Nikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāli, 1. Mūlapariyāya-vaggā, 10. Mahāsatipatthāna Suttā, p. 70, 6th Syn. Edn.

To note mindfully, and immediately, the arising of one of the Hindrances, as recommended in the preceeding text is a simple but very effective method of countering these and any other defilements of the mind. By doing so, a brake is applied against the uninhibited continuance of unwholesome thoughts, and the watchfulness of mind against their recurrence is strengthened.

This method is based on a simple psychological fact which is expressed by the commentators as follows: “A good and an evil thought cannot occur in combination. Therefore, at the time of knowing the sense desire (that arose in the preceding moment) that sense desire does no longer exist (but only the act of knowing).”

Just as, O monks, this body lives on nourishment, lives dependent on nourishment, does not live without nourishment,—in the same way, O monks, do the five Hindrances live on nourishment, do not live without nourishment.²

I

Sense Desire

A. Nourishment of Sense Desire.

There are beautiful objects; giving frequently unwise attention to them,—this is Nourishment for the arising of sense desire that has not arisen, and nourishment for the increase and strengthening of sense desire that has already arisen.³

B. Not-Nourishing of Sense Desire.

There are impure objects (used for meditation); giving frequently wise attention to them,—this is the Not-Nourishing of sense

² Saṃyutta Nikāya, Mahāvagga Saṃyutta Pāli, Bojjhaṅga-saṃyutta, 2. Kāya Sutta, p. 58, 6th Syn. Edn.

³ Saṃyutta Nikāya, Mahāvagga Saṃyutta Pāli, Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta, 1. Āhāra Sutta, p. 90, 6th Syn. Edn.

desire that has arisen, and the not-nourishing of the increase and strengthening of sense desire that has already arisen.¹

Six things are conducive to the abandonment of sense desire:

- (1) Learning how to meditate on impure objects;
- (2) Devoting oneself to the meditation of the Impure;
- (3) Guarding the sense doors;
- (4) Moderation in eating;
- (5) Noble friendship;
- (6) Suitable conversation.²

(1) *Learning how to meditate about impure objects.*

(2) *Devoting oneself to the meditation of the impure.*

(a) In him who is devoted to the meditation about impure objects, disgust against the beautiful objects is firmly established. This is the result.³

(“Impure Object” refers, in particular, to the Cemetery Meditation as given *e.g.*, in the Satipaṭṭhāna-Sutta and explained in the Visuddhi-Magga; but it refers also to the repulsive aspects of the objects of sense, in general.)

(b) Contemplation on Loathsomeness the body (or the 32 Parts of the Body)—Herein, monks, a monk reflects on just this body, confined within the skin and full of manifold impurity, from the soles upward and from the top of the hair down, saying: “There is in the body: hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs,

intestines, bowels, excrements, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, lymph, saliva, mucus, fluid of the joints, urine (and the brain in the skull).”

By bones and sinews knit, with flesh and tissue smeared,
And hidden by the skin, not as it really is,
the body does appear
The fool, he deems it beautiful, his
ignorance misguiding him⁴

Read also the whole Vijaya-Satta, Suttanipāta, verse 193 ff.

(c) Various contemplations—Little enjoyment gives sense-objects, but much pain and much despair; the evil in them prevails.⁵

The unpleasant overwhelms a thoughtless man in the guise of the pleasant the disagreeable overwhelms him in the guise of pleasure.⁶

(3) *Guarding the sense-doors*

How does one guard the sense-doors? Herein, a monk having seen a form, does not seize upon its (delusive) appearance as a whole, nor of its details. If his sense of sight were uncontrolled, covetousness; grief and other evil, unwholesome things would flow into him. Therefore he practices for the sake of its control, he watches over the sense of sight, he enters upon its control. Having heard a sound . . . smelled an odour . . . tasted a taste . . . felt a touch . . . cognized a mental object, he does not seize upon its (delusive) appearance as a whole . . . (*to be continued as above*)⁷

¹ Saṃyutta Nikāya, Mahāvagga Saṃyutta Pāḷi, Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta, 6. Sākaccha-vagga. 1. Āhāra Sutta, p.90 6th Syn. Edn.

² Satipaṭṭhāna-aṭṭhakathā, p. 230 et seq., 6th Syn. Edn. “Sense desire”: For any of the five sense objects.

³ Aṅguttara Nikāya, Pañcaka-nipāta, Satisūpaṭṭhita Sutta, p. 126, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁴ Suttanipata, verse 194, 10. Vijaya Sutta, p. 307. 6th Syn. Edn.

⁵ Majjhima Nikāya, Mūla-pañṇasa, Cūladukkhakkhanda Sutta, p. 126, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁶ Udāna Pāḷi, II. 8. Suppavāsā Sutta, p. 93, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁷ Saṃyutta Nikāya, Saḷāyatanavagga Saṃyutta, 7. Sāriputtasiddhi-vihārika Sutta, p. 322. 6th Syn. Edn.

There are forms, perceptible by the eye, which are desirable, lovely, pleasing, agreeable, associated with desire, arousing lust. If the monk does not delight in them, is not attached to them, does not welcome them, then in him, thus not delighting in them, not being attached to them and not welcoming them, delight (in these forms) ceases; if delight is absent, there is no bondage. There are sounds perceptible by the ear odours perceptible by the nose mind (*to be continued as above*).¹

(4) *Moderation in eating*

How is he moderate in eating? Herein a monk takes his food after wise consideration not for the purpose of enjoyment, of pride, of beautifying the body or adorning it (Commentary: with muscles); but only for the sake of maintaining this body, to avoid harm and to support the Holy Life, thinking: “Thus I shall destroy the old painful feeling and shall not let a new one rise. Long life will be mine, blamelessness and well-being!”

(5) *Noble friendship*

(Reference is here, in particular, to such friends who have experience and can be a model and help in overcoming Sensual Desire, especially in meditating about Impurity. But it applies also to noble friendship in general. The same twofold explanation holds true also for other Hindrances, with due alterations.)

The entire Holy Life, indeed, O Ānanda, is noble friendship, noble companionship, noble association. Of a monk, O Ānanda, who has a noble friend, a noble companion, a noble associate it is to be expected that he will cultivate and practise the Noble Eightfold Path.²

(6) *Suitable Conversation*

(Reference is here in particular, to conversation about the overcoming of Sensual

Desire, especially about meditating on Impurity. But it applies also to every conversation which is suitable to advance one’s progress on the Path. With due alteration, this explanation holds true also for the other Hindrances.)

If the mind of a monk is bent on speaking, he (should remember this): “Talk which is low, coarse, worldly, not noble, not salutary, not leading to detachment, not to freedom from passion, not to cessation, not to tranquility, not to higher knowledge, not to enlightenment, not to Nibbāna,—namely talk about kings, robbers and ministers, talk about armies, dangers and war, about food and drink, clothes, couches, garlands, perfumes, relatives, cars, villages, towns, cities and provinces, about women and wine, gossip of the street and of the well, talk about the ancestors, about various trifles, tales about the origin of world and ocean, talk about what happened and what did not happen—, such and similar talk shall I not entertain!” Thus he is clearly conscious about it.

But talk about austere life, talk suitable for the unfolding of the mind, talk which is conducive to complete detachment, to freedom from passion, to cessation, tranquility, higher knowledge, enlightenment and to Nibbāna,—namely, talk about a life of frugality, about contentedness, solitude, aloofness from society, about rousing one’s energy, talk about virtue, concentration, wisdom, deliverance, about the vision and knowledge of deliverance—suchlike talk I shall entertain.” Thus he is clearly conscious about it.³

These things in addition, are helpful in conquering Sensual Desire

One-pointedness of Mind, of the Factors of Absorption (*jhānaṅga*),
Mindfulness, of the Spiritual Faculties (*indriya*),
Mindfulness, of the Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*).

¹ Saṃyutta Nikāya, Migajāla Sutta, p. 263. 6th Syn. Edn.

² Saṃyutta Nikāya, Mahāvagga Pāḷi, Magga-Saṃyutta, 2. Upaddha Sutta, p. 2, 6th Syn. Edn.

³ Majjhima Nikāya, Uparipannāsa Pāḷi, 2. Mahāsuññata Sutta. p. 151, 6th Syn. Edn.

C. Simile

If there is water in a pot, mixed with red, yellow, blue or orange colour, a man, with a normal faculty of sight, looking into it, could not properly recognize and see the image of his own face. In the same way, when one's mind is possessed by sensual desire, overpowered by sensual desire, one cannot properly see the escape from sensual desire which has arisen; then one does not properly understand and see one's own welfare, nor that of another, nor that of both; and also texts memorized a long time ago do not come into one's mind, nothing to say about those not memorized.

II

Ill-Will

A. Nourishment of Ill-will

There are objects causing aversion; giving frequently unwise attention to them,—this is the Nourishment for the arising of Ill-will which has not yet arisen, and for the increase and strengthening of Ill-will which has already arisen.

B. Not-Nourishing of Ill-will

There is the Liberation of the Heart by Loving kindness; giving frequently wise attention to it,—this is the Not-Nourishing of the arising of Ill-will which has not yet arisen, and of the increase and strengthening of ill-will which has already arisen.¹

Cultivate the Meditation of Loving kindness! For, by cultivating the Meditation of Loving kindness Ill-will disappear.

Cultivate the Meditation of Compassion! For, by cultivating the Meditation of Compassion, annoyance disappears.

Cultivate the Meditation of Equanimity! For, by cultivating the Meditation of Equanimity, aversion disappears.²

Six things are helpful in conquering Ill-will:

- (1) Learning how to meditate on Loving-kindness;
- (2) Devoting oneself to the Meditation of Loving kindness;
- (3) Considering that one is the owner and heir of one's actions (*Kamma*);
- (4) Frequent reflection on it (e.g. in the following way:)

Thus one should consider: "Being angry with another man what can you do to him? Can you destroy his virtue and his other qualities? Have you not come to your present state by your own actions, and will also go hence according to your own actions? Anger towards another is just as if someone wishing to hit another person takes hold of glowing coals, of a heated iron-rod, or of excrement. And, in the same way, if the other person is angry with you, what can he do to you? Can he destroy your virtue and your other good qualities? He too has come to his present state by his own actions and will go hence according to his own actions. Like an unaccepted gift or like a handful of dirt thrown against the wind, his anger will fall back on his own head."

- (5) Noble friendship;
- (6) Suitable conversation.³

These things, in addition, are helpful in conquering Ill-will:

Rapture, of the Factors of Absorption (*jhānaṅga*);
Faith, of the Spiritual Faculties (*indriya*);
Rapture and Equanimity, of the Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*).

¹ Saṃyutta Nikāya, Mahāvagga Pāli, Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta, 1. Āhāra Sutta, p. 90, 6th Syn. Edn.

² Majjhima Nikāya, Majjhimapannāsa Pāli. Mahārāhulovāda Sutta, p. 87, 6th Syn. Edn.

³ Satipatthāna-aṭṭhakathā, p. 230 *et seq.*, 6th Syn. Edn.

C. Simile

If there is a pot of water, heated on the fire, the water seething and boiling, a man, with a normal faculty of sight, looking into it, could not properly recognize and see the image of his own face. In the same way, when one's mind is possessed by Ill-will, overpowered by Ill-will, one cannot properly see the escape from the Ill-will which has arisen; then one does not properly understand and see one's own welfare, nor that of another, nor that of both; and also texts memorized a long time ago do not come into one's mind, nothing to say about those not memorized.

III

Sloth and Torpor

A. Nourishment of Sloth and Torpor

There arises listlessness, lassitude, lazy stretching of the body, drowsiness after meals, mental sluggishness. Giving frequently unwise attention to it,—this is the Nourishment of Sloth and Torpor which has not yet arisen and of the increase and strengthening of Sloth and Torpor which has already arisen.

B. Not-Nourishing of Sloth and Torpor

There is the element of rousing one's energy, the element of exertion, the element of continuous exertion; giving frequently wise attention to it,—this is the Not-Nourishing of Sloth and Torpor which has not yet arisen and of the strengthening of Sloth and Torpor which has already arisen.

“May nothing remain but skin and sinews and bones; may flesh and blood dry up in the body! What can be achieved by manly strength, manly energy, manly exertion,—not before having achieved it, shall my energy subside !”¹

¹ Majjhima Nikāya, Majjhima-panṇāsa Pāḷi. Kīṭāgiri Sutta, p. 146, 6th Syn. Edn.

Six things are conducive to the abandonment of Sloth and Torpor:

- (1) Knowing that overeating is a cause of it;
- (2) Changing the bodily posture;
- (3) Thinking of the Perception of Light;
- (4) Staying in the open air;
- (5) Noble friendship;
- (6) Suitable conversation.

These things, in addition, are helpful in conquering Sloth and Torpor:

The Recollection of Death:

To-day the effort should be done!
Who knows if morrow Death will come?²

Perceiving the Suffering in Impermanence.

In a monk who has got accustomed to see suffering in impermanence and who is frequently engaged in this contemplation, there will be established in him such a keen sense of the danger of laziness, idleness, lassitude, indolence and thoughtlessness, as if he were threatened by a murderer with drawn sword.³

Sympathetic Joy

Cultivate the Meditation of Sympathetic Joy! For, by cultivating it, listlessness will disappear.⁴

Thinking, of the Factors of Absorption
(*jhānaṅga*)

Energy, of the Spiritual Faculties
(*indriya*)

Investigation of Reality, Energy and Rapture, of the Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*).

When the mind is sluggish it is not the proper time for cultivating the following Factors of Enlightenment: Tranquility,

² Majjhima Nikāya, Uparipannāsa Pāḷi, 2. Mahasuññata Sutta, p. 151, 6th Syn. Edn.

³ Aṅguttara Nikāya, Sattaka-nipāta. Dutiyasaññā Sutta, p. 437, 6th Syn. Edn.

⁴ Saṃyutta Nikāya, Mahāvagga Pāḷi, Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta, 1, Āhāra Sutta, p. 90, 6th Syn. Edn.

Concentration and Equanimity, because a sluggish mind can hardly be aroused by them.

When the mind is sluggish it is the proper time for cultivating the following Factors of Enlightenment: Investigation of Reality, Energy and Rapture; because a sluggish mind can easily be aroused by them.¹

Contemplation of the Road of one's Spiritual Journey

"I have to tread that Path which the Buddhas, the Pacceka Buddhas and the Great Disciples have trodden. But by an indolent person that Path cannot be trodden."

Contemplation of the Master's Greatness

"Full application of energy was praised by my Master, and he is unsurpassed in his injunctions and a great help to us. He is honoured by practising his Doctrine, not otherwise!"

Contemplation on the Greatness of the Heritage:

"I have to take possession of the Great Heritage, called The Good Law. But one who is indolent cannot take possession of it!"

How to stimulate the mind

How does one stimulate the mind at a time when it needs stimulation. If due to slowness in the application of wisdom or due to non-attainment of the happiness of tranquility, one's mind is dull, then one should rouse it through reflecting on the eight stirring objects. These eight are: Birth, Decay, Disease and Death; the suffering in the worlds of misery; the suffering of the past, rooted in the Round of Existence; the Suffering of the future, rooted in the Round of Existence; the suffering of the present, rooted in the search for food.

How to overcome sleepiness

Once the Exalted One spoke to the Venerable Mahā Moggallāna thus: "Are you

drowsy, Moggallana? Are you drowsy, Moggallana?"—"Yes, Venerable Sir."

(1) "Well then, O Moggallana, at whatever thought torpor has befallen you, to that thought you should not give attention, you should not dwell in it frequently. Then it is possible that, by so doing, torpor will disappear.

(2) But if, by so doing, that torpor does not disappear, you should think and reflect within your mind about the Doctrine as you have heard and learnt it, and you should mentally review it. Then it is possible that, by so doing, torpor will disappear.

(3) But if, by so doing, that torpor does not disappear you should recite the Doctrine in its fullness, as you have heard and learnt it. Then it is possible

(4) But if, by so doing, that torpor does not disappear you should pull your ears, and rub your limbs with the palm of your hand. Then it is possible

(5) But if, by so doing, that torpor does not disappear you should get up from your seat, and, after washing your eye with water, you should look around in all directions and look upwards to the stars in the sky. Then it is possible

(6) But if, by so doing, that torpor does not disappear you should firmly establish the (inner) perception of light: as it is by day, so also by night; as it is by night, so also by day. Thus with a mind clear and unobstructed, you should develop a consciousness which is full of brightness. Then it is possible

(7) But if, by so doing, that torpor does not disappear, you should, conscious of that which is before and behind, walk up and down, with your senses turned inwards, with your mind not going outwards. Then it is possible

(8) But if, by so doing, that torpor does not disappear, you may lie down on your right side, taking up the lion's posture, covering foot with foot,—mindful, clearly conscious, keeping in mind the thought of rising. Having

¹ Majjhima Nikāya, Majjhimapāṇṇāsa Pāḷi, Mahārāhulovāda Sutta, p. 87, 6th Syn. Edn.

awakened again, you should quickly rise, thinking: ‘I won’t indulge in the enjoyment of lying down and reclining, the enjoyment of sleep.’

Thus, O Moggallana, you should train yourself!”¹

The Five Threatening Dangers

An incentive to “Effort Now”

If, O monks, a monk perceives these Five Threatening Dangers it is enough for him to live heedful, zealous, with a heart resolute to achieve the unachieved, to attain the unattained, to realise the unrealised. Which are these Five Dangers?

1. Here, O monks, a monk reflects thus: “I am now young, a youth, young in age, black-haired, in the prime of youth, in the first phase of life. But a time will come when this body will be in the grip of old-age. But one who is overpowered by old-age cannot easily contemplate on the Teachings of the Buddhas; it is not easy for him to live in the wilderness of a forest or jungle, or in secluded dwellings. Before this undesirable condition, so unpleasant and disagreeable, approaches me, should I not, prior to that, muster my energy for achieving the unachieved, for attaining the unattained, for realising the unrealised, so that, in the possession of that state, I shall live happily even in old age!”

2. And further, O monks, a monk reflects thus: “I am now free from sickness, free from disease, my digestive power functions smoothly, my constitution is not too cool and not too hot, it is balanced and fit for making effort. But a time will come when this body will be in the grip of sickness. And one who is sick cannot easily contemplate upon the Teachings of Buddhas; it is not easy for him to live in the wilderness of a forest or jungle, or in secluded dwellings. Before this undesirable

condition, so unpleasant and disagreeable, approaches me, should I not, prior to that, muster my energy for achieving the unachieved, for attaining the unattained, for realising the unrealised, so that, in the possession of that state, I shall live happily even in sickness!”

3. And further, O monks, a monk reflects thus: “Now, there is an abundance of food, good harvests, easily obtainable is a meal of alms, it is easy to live on collected food and offerings. But a time will come when there will be a famine, a bad harvest, difficult to obtain will be a meal of alms, it will be difficult to live on collected food and offerings. And in a famine people migrate to places where food is ample, and there habitations will be thronged and crowded. But in habitations thronged and crowded one cannot easily contemplate upon the Teachings of the Buddhas; it is not easy to live in the wilderness of a forest or jungle, or in secluded dwellings. Before this undesirable condition, so unpleasant and disagreeable, approaches me, should I not, prior to that, muster my energy for achieving the unachieved, for attaining the unattained, for realising the unrealised, that, in the possession of that state, I shall live happily even in a famine!”

4. And further, O monks, a monk reflects thus: “Now people live in concord and amity without quarrels, they are gentle like milk and look at each other with friendly eyes. But there will come a time of danger, of unrest among the jungle tribes, when the country people are driving about in cars. And in a time of danger people migrate to a place of safety, and there habitations will be thronged and crowded. But in habitations thronged and crowded one cannot easily contemplate upon the Teachings of the Buddhas; it is not easy to live in the wilderness of a forest or jungle, or in secluded dwelling. Before this undesirable condition, so unpleasant and disagreeable, approaches me, should I not, prior to that, muster my energy for achieving the unachieved, for attaining the unattained, for realising the unrealised, so that,

¹ Aṅguttara Nikāya. Sattaka-nipāta, Pacālayamāna Sutta, p. 463, 6th Syn. Edn.

in the possession of that state, I shall live happily even in danger!”

5. And further, O monks, a monk reflects thus: “Now the Congregation of Monks lives in concord and amity, without quarrels, lives happily under one rule. But a time will come when there will be a split in the Congregation. And when the Congregation is split, one cannot easily contemplate upon the Teachings of the Buddhas; it is not easy to live in the wilderness of a forest or jungle, or in secluded dwellings. Before this undesirable condition, so unpleasant and disagreeable, approaches me, should I not, prior to that, muster my energy for achieving the unachieved, for attaining the unattained, for realising the unrealised, so in the possession of that state, I shall live happily even when the Congregation is split!”¹

C. Simile

If there is a pot of water, covered with moss and water-plants, then a man, with a normal faculty of sight, looking into it could not properly recognize and see the image of his own face. In the same way, when one’s mind is possessed by Sloth and Torpor, overpowered by Sloth and Torpor, one can not properly see the escape from Sloth and Torpor which has arisen; then one does not properly understand one’s own welfare, nor of another, nor that of both; and also texts memorized a long time ago do not come into one’s mind, nothing to say about those not memorized.

¹ Aṅguttara-nikāya, Pañcakanipāta Pāli, Dutiyānāgatabhaya-sutta pp. 90-93. 6th Syd. Edn. This Discourse is One of the seven canonical texts recommended by the Emperor Asoka in the Second Bhairāt Rock Edict: “Reverend Sirs, these passages of the Law, to wit:—‘Fears of what my happen’ (anāgata-bhayāni) . . . spoken by the Venerable Buddha,—these, Reverend Sirs, I desire that many monks and nuns should frequently hear and meditate; and that likewise the laity, male and female, should do the same. (Vincent A. Smith, Asoka. 3rd ed., p. 54).

IV

Restlessness and Worry

A. Nourishment of Restlessness and Worry

There is unrest of mind; giving frequently unwise attention to it,—that is the Nourishment for the arising of Restlessness and Worry which has not yet arisen, and for the increase and strengthening of Restlessness and Worry which has already arisen.

B. Not-Nourishing of Restlessness and Worry

There is quietude of mind; giving frequently wise attention to it,—that is the Not-Nourishing for the arising of Restlessness and Worry which has not yet arisen, and for the increasing and strengthening of Restlessness and Worry which has already arisen.

Six things are conducive to the abandonment of Restlessness and Worry:

- (1) Knowledge of the Buddhist scriptures (Doctrine and Discipline),
- (2) Questioning about them,
- (3) Familiarity with the Vinaya (the Code of Monastic Discipline; and for lay followers: with the principles of moral conduct),
- (4) Association with those mature in age and experience, who possess dignity, restraint and calm,
- (5) Noble friendship,
- (6) Suitable conversation.

These things, in addition, are helpful in conquering Restlessness and Worry:

- Joy, of the Factors of Absorption (*jhānaṅga*);
- Concentration, of the Spiritual Faculties (*indriya*);
- Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity, of the Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhanga*).

“When the mind is restless it is not the proper time for cultivating the following Factors of Enlightenment: Investigation, of the Doctrine, Energy and Rapture, because an agitated mind can hardly be quieted by them.

When the mind is restless, it is the proper time for cultivating the following Factors of Enlightenment: Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity, because an agitated mind can easily be quieted by them.

C. Simile

If there is water in a pot, stirred by the wind, agitated swaying and producing waves, a man, with a normal faculty of sight, could not properly recognize and see the image of his own face. In the same way, when one’s mind is possessed by Restlessness and Worry, overpowered by Restlessness and Worry, one cannot properly see the escape from Restlessness and Worry which has arisen; then one does not properly understand one’s own welfare, nor that of another, nor that of both; and also texts memorized a long time ago do not come into one’s mind, nothing to say about those not memorized.

V. Doubt

A. Nourishment of Doubt

There are things causing Doubt; giving frequently unwise attention to them,—that is the Nourishment for the arising of Doubt which has not yet arisen, and for the increase and strengthening of Doubt which has already arisen.

B. Not-Nourishing of Doubt

There are things which are wholesome or unwholesome, blameless or blameworthy, noble or low, and (other) contrasts of dark and bright; giving frequently wise attention to them,—that is the Not-Nourishing for the arising of Doubt which has not yet arisen, and for the increase and strengthening of Doubt which has already arisen.

Six things are conducive to the abandonment of Doubt:

Of the six things conducive to the abandonment of Doubt, The first three and the last two are identical with those given for ‘Restlessness and Worry’; the fourth is here:

Firm conviction concerning Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

These things, in addition, are helpful in conquering Doubt:

Reflecting, of the Factors of Absorption (jhānanga)

Wisdom of the Spiritual Faculties (indriya)
Investigation of Reality, of the Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhanga*).

C. Simile

If there is a pot of water which is turbid, stirred up and muddy, and this pot is placed in a dark place, then a man, with a normal faculty of sight, could not properly recognize and see the image of his own face. In the same way, when one’s mind is possessed by Doubt, overpowered by Doubt, then one cannot properly see the escape from Doubt which has arisen; then one does not properly understand one’s own welfare, nor that of another, nor that of both; and also texts memorized a long time ago do not come into one’s mind, nothing to say about those not memorized.

BUDDHIST AIDS TO DAILY CONDUCT

By Edward Greenly.

To arrive at a proper understanding of any ethical system, there are many aspects of it that need to be considered. We may inquire into its theory concerning the origin of ethical ideas in general, into its relationships or indebtedness to other systems, into the validity of the sanctions that it attaches to them.

That which will be considered in the following pages is the Buddhist motives and aids to conduct, the machinery by which Buddhism endeavours to ensure the conversion of its precepts into practice. Taking as granted the Buddhist code, assuming as valid the Buddhist ideas, the question will be: What follows as to conduct? Nor is this a matter of interest that is merely academic. For, suppose any of the considerations to turn out sound and valid, then, clearly, they have an interest that is practical enough,—applicable here or now or anywhere, they must have an immediate bearing on our own lives, on how we are to think and act this very day, whether we use the Buddhist name or not.

The first thing to be observed is that Buddhism does not make what we may perhaps call a “frontal attack” on evil. There is in it no “commandment”, no “thou shalt” or “thou shalt not”, but merely an “it is good to” or “it’s not good to” and that always for the reason “such and such a thing helps or hinders Sorrow’s Ceasing.”

Again, the system being not faith but knowledge, evil is in its eyes not “wickedness” but a “not-understanding”, a mental blindness, a failure to see things as they really are. The remedy, then, evidently, must be “right understanding”, sane and unclouded mental vision, a coming to see things as they really are.

We all know only too well (who is there that does not?) the inner moral conflict, the cry

of the aspiring heart in all ages, “The good that I would I do not, the evil that I would not, that I do”. Whence this terrible internal conflict, this division of the mental house against itself? Again, it is Right Understanding that is wanted: the mind has come (by mere precept) to see some things rightly, but it sees other things wrongly; and so there arises a conflict between two wholly inconsistent views of things. “See all things rightly all round”, says Buddhism, “you are as one awaking from a dream; some things you see as in the wakened world, but some you still see as in the dream world, the trouble can only be ended by waking up altogether.”

And what is this Right Understanding, this undistorted view of life, this Buddhist picture of the Truth of Things? Well, certain general ideas or principles which at first sight may appear to us to have little if any bearing upon ethical matters at all, except, indeed, in so far as they are rather dreaded than otherwise by the exponents of the ethical system that is most prevalent among us in the West.

In their briefest form, these are what are known as the great Signs, the Characteristics of all existence, combined with the principle of Universal Causation, which is in reality implicit in them. The three Signs are: (1) *Anicca*, that is, Impermanence or “Momentariness”; (2) *Dukkha*, Sorrow, or, better, Dissatisfaction; and (3) *Anattā*, the absence of abiding substance, especially of psychic substance (called ‘soul’ or ‘self’).

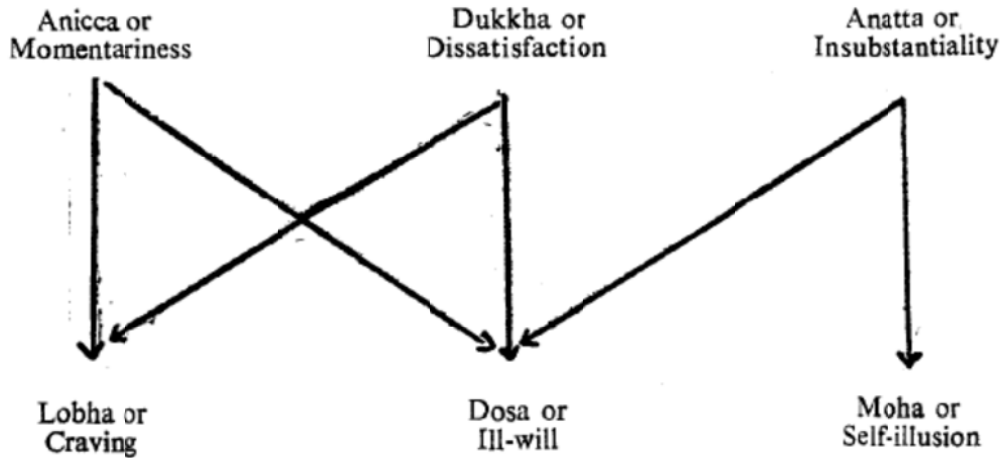
The sources of evil, again, Buddhism places, for practical purposes, under three heads: (1) *Lobha*, or Craving, (2) *Dosa*, or Ill-will, (3) *Moha*, or Illusion, especially Self-illusion. In both of the groups the several members are not independent, but interdependent, each being more or less involved in the other two principles. These, then, are the things whereof a comprehension is the Right

Understanding that we seek. And how are they applied?

Well, each of the three great sources of evil is taken separately, in the order in which they are given above, and to it, for its cure, is made a special, direct, application of the

corresponding member, again in the same order, of the group of the three Signs.

There are also what we may call intercrossing applications, so that it is possible to construct a sort of “graphic” representation of the more important lines of remedy thus:—



We will take the direct application first.

A man is smitten with a craving for wealth or one or other of the many much-hankered-after things of life. Moral precept comes and says, “You ought not to grasp after that.” “Why should I not, when I can get it?” he will perhaps say; or, possibly, “I know I ought not, but I cannot help the hankering.” And then Buddhism comes to him and says, “No, you can never, though you think it, grasp that thing. *Anicca!* all things are ever changing. That after which you hanker is changing while you grasp at it: the hand which you stretch out towards it is changing while it grasps. An ever-changing flux without, an ever-changing within, the mind—How can the flowing grasp the following?” And then to the, perhaps, disillusioned and embittered mind it further whispers, “There is a satisfaction after all, but it is not in grasping. Look for it in Sorrow’s Ceasing, and Sorrow ceases when you see things as they really are.” And so, finding that there is really no such thing as getting, the

mind begins to look for satisfaction elsewhere.

To Ill-will, Aversion, Hatred, Anger, or any of the many forms of *Dosa*, Buddhism applies its second Sign of *Dukkha*—that most unpopular of all its doctrines in the West. Orthodox and heretic alike alternately scout or fear this doctrine, yet in it is to be found that which is a solvent for all the bitterness of *Dosa* (Ill-will). Nowhere, moreover, is the ethic of mere precept more apt to fail than here, as is, indeed, very generally admitted. “Love your enemies.” May-be; but the world is full of very unkind, unpleasant people; people who are always in the way, people whose very presence is a source of irritation to us. And they are so complacent, these people, so self-satisfied, sometimes even prosperous as well, flourishing like the green bay-tree of the Hebrew psalmist. Well, if the experience of the readers of this article is at all like that of the writer of it, they will by this time have sadly found that all the precepts in the world, and all

the resolutions to obey them, have never succeeded in getting them to love these people. Civilisation can restrain the angry hand; precept and training may restrain the angry tongue; virtue may even prompt external acts of kindness; but hostile feeling still remains, the inner attitude has not been changed. Nor does example effect the change we need. It is, indeed, a powerful stimulus to effort. We may be roused thereby to emulate the Buddha, who, alone of the world's teachers, appears to have succeeded in this matter. We shall but discover before very long, that to live as he lived, there is nothing for it but to see as he saw! And the Vision so seen—what is that? It is no other than this same *Dukkha* sign, this same unwelcome “Holy Truth of Suffering”. Looking through the Buddha-eyes we see all these unkind, unlovely people suffering. Behind the thick mask of prosperity and pride, transparent to rays of Buddha-sight, goes on dissatisfaction always, always striving after what they have not, are not; never an hour of satisfaction with what they have or are. For that is life's conditioning; “Man never is, but always to be blest,” and so the never-ceasing chase goes on, while the face grows hard or worn or ennui-weary, until, with life's meaning still unlearnt, the inevitable passing comes. And the seer of the vision, what of him? Why, though he could not love, though even now he cannot like, yet at sight of sorrow he can pity, nay more, he cannot help but pity. And, where Compassion is, there is left no room for hatred, nor room for any of the minor forms of *Dosa*, indignation, anger, even “righteous anger;” all these disappear in presence of Compassion. And so this feared and scouted Sorrow-doctrine brings peace and light where all precepts and commandments fail. It is a cure, too, for what we may call the negative forms of *Dosa*, the callous indifference to our fellow beings that refined and cultured minds are so addicted to. A crowd, an unsavoury, prosaic mob, how we draw back our phylacteries almost at the very thought of it; the horses up and down the street, we give them, save when they are badly

beaten scarcely a single passing thought. Yet once we see all these as, by life's very inner nature, suffering, and instead of indifference, pity comes at once. And so, where all precepts and commandments fail, this Sorrow-doctrine can make possible the full practice of the “golden rule,” and lead our feet into the path of peace.

Moha, the Self-illusion, is for Buddhism the root of all evil, the parent both of Craving and Ill-will; so that whatever be the remedy for it cuts really at the root of them as well. Still, there are special ills that arise immediately out of this illusion, and to them the Sign of signs, as we may call it, of *Anattā*, has immediate and direct application. Self-esteem, self-importance, pride, the troubles that come of these, are a commonplace of moralisers, and a perennial perplexity to whom falls in any way leadership or management of the affairs of men. And not the least part of the trouble is that, granted the ordinary view of life, these things positively have logic on their side! Mere vanity, of course, the baseless foible of the foolish and light-headed, needs no discussion; but the knowledge of just merit, from which arises “That last infirmity of noble mind.” that is very far from baseless. A good mechanic knows his work is good; a master in painting knows that he can paint; one that is born a leader is quite aware that he can lead. Sometimes, defying modesty, one such will say so. “It cannot be done better,” wrote Durer, they say, to Raphael, sending him a drawing. Now, if in each of us there be a “soul,” then obviously and logically enough, as the deed is, so the soul is, What, then, if I know my deed is good? Why, of course, I cannot help but know my soul is good. If I have thought a clever thought, I cannot fail to be aware I have, or am, a clever soul? With manifest danger to my morals. That genius often is modest proves nothing but that, in so far it holds, or thinks it holds, a soul or *attā* creed it is illogical. Apply the *Anattā* principle, however, and what follows? This that I am, it

is compound, it is caused, it is *Kamma*¹; by the arising of such-and-such it has come to be; heredity, teaching, environment, a hundred things unknown, untold, have made it what it is. In no wise a substance, thing or space, it is rather to be likened to a mathematical point, itself without parts and without magnitude, a meeting-place of intercrossing lines of cause, coming together from we know not where, to radiate at once we know not whither. Or we might compare it with a line, the locus of a point, moving in the resultant of these interacting lines of force. What room, in the light of such a concept, is there left for self-esteem?

Of the innumerable cross-applications, only one or two can be touched on here. The bearing of *Dukkha* on Craving, for example, is plain enough. For he who knows that the tempting “pleasure” cannot bring him satisfaction, will he crave like other man? And he who sees his fellows as *Anattā*, void of self, will he hate? For him there exists no such evil, wicked mind; those that trouble, they too are, like himself, *Anattā*, component, cause-driven; what is there in that to hate? We are not angry when we clearly discern the causing of some evil, such as an earthquake or storm. That which sets up the real *Dosa*-feeling in us, the real anger, is the supposed self-originatedly hateful “Soul”, embodiment (or rather enpsychiment) of malignity; out of its own free and evil will bringing uncaused hurtfulness to birth.

One most important bearing of Transience upon conduct, however, is so often overlooked, that it is well worth pointing out. Obvious enough in its external, general, aspects it is far more deeply penetrative than at first appears. Perhaps a sharp unkind word passes; perhaps a kindly act is left undone; for a moment we regret, and then we think, “Ah, we will set that right another day”. And then, perhaps, that day comes, and we forget again, and yet again; perhaps half subconsciously we even reckon

on that “future life”, that “all eternity” in which to set it right. With what result? Is there anyone, at any rate anyone past his early youth, who knows not that bitterest of all reflections. ‘O, to have done this or left undone that, to have said this or left unsaid that—but now the beloved is gone, the rest is silence. O, for that chance back again!’ Transience, however, is something far more than a reflection concerning three score years and ten and then a passing; it is the knowledge that the life is *always* passing; it is more than transience, it is *momentariness*, a far more subtle, penetrating thing. There is a remarkable passage in the Visuddhi Magga: “The duration of the life of a being is, strictly speaking, extremely brief, lasting only while a thought lasts.”

If this be so, however, what follows as to conduct? Why, manifestly, this—that, just as to the longer life, we crudely think of, can good be done only while it lasts, so also to life considered thus. Would we be good to those we love, to anyone? The we must do it *now*: there is no other time. Yesterday’s sufferings, longings, fears, are not today’s; tomorrow’s will be different again. Let pass the ever-slipping opportunity, and not all the trusted-in tomorrows, not all the immortal paradises that man ever dreamed of, can bring that opportunity again. Not in the past is the life, it is not in the future, it is nowhere but in the present, passing, fleeting thought, and only in that thought-moment can we do the good we would.

Such are some of the considerations by which Buddhism converts its fundamental, highly philosophical ideas into aids for daily conduct.

But for a thought to be effective, it must become habitual. These thoughts are wanted not now and then or here and there, but all day long, and on all manner of occasions, unexpected almost always too. They are of little use if put off to those occasions. He that would save his life by swimming does not wait until he falls into the water; he learns the art,

¹ It is produced by *kamma*.

and practises and practises, until to float is more instinctive than to sink. So with these life-saving thoughts. They must be practised and practised assiduously, when they are not wanted, until they become a mental habit, and come uppermost when they are wanted.

For this purpose, what are generally called "meditations" are generally recommended; introduced by the old Buddhist master, and through long ages of experience proved of value. There are many of them and endless variations can be made of them.

For instance, we may take the several root ideas, these three signs, with *Kamma* and the others, day by day, throughout a week; and applying them each especially to our characteristic hindrances of temperament or circumstance, practise *looking at life that way*.

Or we may review the episodes of each day in order backwards, asking concerning each of them "Was this good to have been done: was it well done?" (*never* "Did I do well?"). "Was there in it any doing, separately activating soul, or was it wholly *Kamma*—action? Did it contain any element of *Dukkha* of suffering for myself, for others or for both?" Few things are more profitable than this very simple-seeming exercise, because from it we learn the real

nature of the life-process almost better than by any other means. It bears much the same relation to the study of Buddhist theory as does laboratory work to the reading of a textbook. *Anattā*, *Dukkha* and the like we have demonstrated no doubt, to our complete satisfaction, and so, indeed, we ought to do. But to discover by direct introspection that every episode that makes up life is of these very elements compact,—that makes of the conviction a seen and vivid thing, like the visit to a foreign country that we have only known from books. After six months of it, indeed, Life appears in very different guise. The disturbing heats of Craving die away; through the cool, clear, transparent air of Truth we begin to "see things as they really are."

Yet it is but a beginning. For deep has been the sleep, and tremendous is the Buddhavision, dawning but gradually on the mind. Hour after hour we lapse back into the dreamland, dreaming, indeed, at first for far longer than we wake; and what we believe "to be awake" is too often a mere half-awakeness. As we see things, however, so we live; so we cannot help but live; and therefore, while those minutes of awakening last, the conduct problem solves itself. And in them are the first foretastes of the final Peace.

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THE BUDDHIST WAY OF LIFE

(A talk by Myanaung U Tin, broadcast from B. B. S. on 12th June 1961)

Recently I was present at an interview given by the Venerable Masoyein Sayadaw, who is virtually the Sangha Rājā or Thāthanābaing of Burma, to some Buddhist monks of European origin. His advice to them is, "Of course, you must learn the Dhamma during your stay there. But I would stress the importance of practice. Strive to be free from craving. If you succeed appreciably, you will be able to do a lot for your fellow-men when you return to your countries."

In the very first sermon, Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta,¹ the Buddha proclaims, "What, O monks, is the origin of suffering? It is that craving which gives rise to ever fresh rebirth and, bound up with pleasure and lust, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight. It is the Sensual Craving (*Kāma taṇhā*), the Craving for Existence (*bhava taṇhā*), the Craving for Self-annihilation (*vibhava taṇhā*).

In this talk, I do not propose to deal with the Craving for Existence, which is connected with the view of Eternalism, and the Craving for Self-annihilation, which is connected with the view of Nihilism. They require separate treatment.

So far as the Sensuous Sphere (*Kāma-loka*) is concerned Sensual Craving is most harassing. There are six kinds of craving corresponding to the six sense objects: craving for sights, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily impressions and mental impressions.

To put an end to these cravings, at least to keep them under proper restraint, learning alone would not suffice. I can therefore understand fully why the Venerable Masoyein Sayadaw stresses the importance of practice of the Dhamma for the control and eradication of cravings.

The Buddha discovers and teaches us the Four Noble Truths.

(1) the universality of suffering, (2) the cause of suffering, (3) the cessation of suffering, and (4) the Path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Craving is the cause of suffering, and once the fact of suffering is recognised, effort must be made to remove its cause.

The Noble Eightfold Path, which forms the last of the Four Noble Truths, consists of eight links:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| (1) Right Understanding | Pāññā |
| (2) Right Thoughts | (Wisdom) |
| (3) Right Speech | Sīla |
| (4) Right Bodily Action | (Moral |
| (5) Right Livelihood | training) |
| (6) Right Effort | Samādhi |
| (7) Right Mindfulness | (Concen- |
| (8) Right Concentration | tration) |

Right Speech, Right Bodily Action, and Right Livelihood constitute moral training (*Sīlā*). Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration constitute mental training (*Samādhi*). Right Understanding and Right Thoughts constitute wisdom (*Pāññā*). In the enumeration, wisdom is placed first as it forms a really unshakeable foundation of the Noble Path from the tiniest germ of faith and knowledge to the realisation of *Nibbāna*.

In practice, however, moral training comes first. Moral training enables us to control and guide our verbal and bodily actions. The second stage is mental training. Right Effort means the effort of avoiding or overcoming evil and unwholesome things, and of cultivating and developing wholesome things. Right Mindfulness is awareness on contemplating the body, feelings, mind and mental objects (four applications of

¹ Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga, Pañcavaggiyakathā, p. 14, 6th Syn. Ed.

Satipaṭṭhāna.) Right Concentration is one-pointedness of the mind, which eventually may lead to the four Absorptions (*Jhānas*). The third stage is wisdom. Right Understanding is of two kinds: mundane and supramundane. In the mundane sphere, the understanding is that it is good to give alms and offering (*dāna*), that both good and evil actions (*kusala* and *akusala kamma*) will bear fruit and be followed by results. The supramundane understanding, conjoined with the Noble Path, is the penetration of the Four Noble Truths. Right Thoughts are threefold: thoughts free from sensual cravings, from ill-will, and from cruelty, for example, thoughts of renunciation of sensual cravings (*nekkhama*), thoughts of loving-kindness (*mettā*), and thoughts of compassion (*karuṇā*).

Now I have given you a brief sketch of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path, which form the bedrock of the Buddha Dhamma. A considerable number of Western-educated friends of mine are keen to practise the Dhamma but they have practically no idea from where to start. They say that the books are so deep and the teachers so erudite that they find them very difficult to understand. It is all so confusing and confounding, they complain. Some of them seek my help to put them on the right track.

Having been myself in the same plight, I explain to them that the books are not at fault neither are we to blame. We are the victims of circumstances. It is true that we are Buddhists but we have never had a reasonably sound Buddhist education. Although we know a string of Buddhist terms and can recite several stanzas, they are for us almost empty of content for practical purposes.

As the creatures born of the encounter between two different civilizations, it appears that many of us have inherited the vices of both and the virtues of none. One distinguishing feature of our hybrid life is that many of us have much more craving for sensual pleasures than our forebears. I often feel that we are like an old woman who spent

half of her life-time to collect lots of knickknacks, and has been busy ever since in trying to get rid of them. Now that we feel like settling down in our own cultural setting and leading a Buddhist way of life we find that we are off our moorings. Fortunately, some of us have a start over the rest and can be of service of them.

To those who are in the same plight as my Western-educated friends, I must avail myself of this opportunity to make a short address. You need not be disheartened, much less despair. The Buddhist way of life is not as hard as you think. In fact, it is simple and straightforward. It promises hope and happiness. I take it that you have an abiding faith in the *Buddha*, the *Dhamma*, and the *Sanghā*. We recite daily the formula; I take refuge in the *Buddha*. I take refuge in the *Dhamma*. I take refuge in the *Sanghā*.

That is called *Saddhā*, faith or trustful confidence. The Buddhists are not idol worshippers. The images of the Buddha and the pagodas constantly remind us of the holy qualities of the Buddha and the practical values of His Teaching. Lights and incense, fruits and flowers offered at the shrines are the symbols of our deep respect for them. They must not be misunderstood to be a form of ritual. The Buddhist way of life imposes monks, who are the members of the *Sanghā*, to carry on the Buddha's Teaching from generation to generation. They learn the Dhamma, practise it, and become our teachers. Knowing their noble attributes, we support them with four requesties: food, robes, dwelling and medicine. They are not priests appointed to perform rites and rituals.

Five moral rules to be observed daily and eight moral rules that may be observed on Uposatha days are not precepts or commands. The Buddhist lay followers voluntarily take a vow that they will observe them, knowing that moral training is the foundation of the whole Buddhist practice. Alms can be offered to the Buddha and the Bhikkhus, and gifts can be made to all right down to the animals. Morality

(*sīla*) and almsgiving (*dāna*) constitute two of the three meritorious activities, the last being mental development (*bhāvanā*).

I take it that you observe five moral rules every day, and give alms and tell beads occasionally. But most of us do these things in a customary manner, without or little knowing the essentials of the Buddha's Teaching.

Verse No 183 of the Dhammapada summarizes the Buddha's Teaching:—

“Not to do evil, to cultivate good, and to purify one's mind, this is the teaching of the Buddhas.”

What is associated with the roots of craving (*lobha*), ill-will (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) is evil; what is associated with their opposites; generosity (*alobha*), good-will (*adosa*) and wisdom (*amoha*) is good.

How shall we avoid doing evil? How shall we cultivate good? How shall we purify our mind?

Let us start with moral training (*sīla*). Buddhist morality is not, as it may appear from the negative formulations in the Sutta texts, something negative. It does not mean merely not-committing of evil actions, but is at each instance the clearly conscious and intentional restraint from the bad actions in question, and corresponds with the simultaneously arising volition (*cetanā*). Moral training enables us to keep under control and guide our verbal and bodily actions. In other words, moral training enables us to avoid doing evil and to cultivate good. But moral training is not enough.

Just as we must clean our body daily, so must we cleanse our mind. To purify our mind we must have mental training (*samādhi*) It is of two kinds: *Samatha bhāvanā* Development of Tranquility and *Vipassanā bhāvanā* (Development of Insight). These are the two parts in the system of Buddhist meditation. The Development of Tranquility aims at the full concentration or one-pointedness of the mind, attained in the meditative absorptions (*jhāna*). It must be borne in mind that in the

Buddhist teaching, the Development of Tranquility or the Meditative Absorptions are only means to an end, and cannot lead, by themselves, to the highest goal of liberation which is attainable only through Insight.

The Development of Insight is therefore necessary. Here the mental phenomena present in the Absorptions and the bodily processes on which they are based, are analysed and viewed in the light of the three Characteristics of life: Impermanence (*anicca*), Suffering (*dukkha*), and Impersonality (*anattā*). Insight is the direct and penetrative realization of these three characteristics. It is in the nature of Insight to be free from craving (*lobha*), ill-will (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). To put it in the language of Anattā Lakkhana Sutta,¹ the Buddha's second sermon, the noble disciple sees things as they really are. He becomes disgusted with form, disgusted with feeling, disgusted with perception, disgusted with mental formations, and disgusted with consciousness. Becoming disgusted with all that, he gets detached, and from detachment he attains deliverance. And there is no more rebirth for him; he has led the holy life.

Even if we do not, or cannot as yet, reach the final liberation or deliverance, mental training enables us to keep under proper control our volitions and mental actions. Mental training leads us to wisdom (*paññā*).

I have drawn your attention to the grouping of the eight links of the Noble Eightfold Path under three heads: Morality, (*Sīla*), Concentration, (*Samādhi*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*). These three subjects are fully dealt with in the Venerable Buddhaghosa's Visuddhi Magga. Professor Pe Maung Tin's English translation “The Path of Purity” is out of print, but can be borrowed from International Institute of Advanced Buddhistic Studies and big libraries. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli's English

¹ Saṃyutta Nikāya, Khandhavagga Pāli, 1. Khandha Saṃyutta, 1. Upaya-vagga, 7. Anattalakkhana Sutta, p. 55, 6th Syn. Edn. See the Light of the Dhamma, Vol, No.4, p. 36.

translation “The Path of Purification” is available in Ceylon. The Burmese translation is available at Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council Press. With particular reference to meditation, I should like to refer you to Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta,¹ the Burmese and the English translations of which are available. The Buddha declares, “*Satipaṭṭhāna is the only way* that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering of the right path, and to the realization of *Nibbāna*”. From my own experience I may say that these two books are quite enough to guide us in the practice of the Dhamma, in our leading the Buddhist way of life. Of course, we also need at least a good teacher (monk or laymen) who

will have a sympathetic understanding of our dual background.

Let us make right effort to see things as they really are. Then we shall become disgusted, at least, with sensual craving. Then we shall be able to cultivate detachment that will sooner or later lead us to deliverance.

The Buddha’s final exhortation in His last sermon, Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta,² is:

“Subject to change are all compounded things. Strive on with diligence”

¹ Dīgha Nikāya, Mahāvagga Pāli, 99. Mahā-satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, p. 231, 6th Syn. Edn.

² Dīgha Nikāya, Mahāvagga, Mahā-parinibbāna Sutta, p. 61, 6th Syn. Edn.

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OF GODS AND MEN

By Francis Story

We are all familiar with the fact that man in former days readily believed in the existence of an unseen world, a world of ghosts, demons, nature-spirits which were worshipped as gods, and a host of other supernatural beings. This world lay all about him and in some respects was more real to him than the physical world. It was his belief in it, and in the power of the forces it contained, that gave birth first to primitive magic and later to religion.

Even today, vast numbers of people all over the world, and not merely among savage tribes or backward peasantry but in advanced and educated communities, particularly in Asia, still believe in this mysterious realm and in various classes of beings that inhabit it, to an extent that would surprise most Westerners apart from those who have made a study of the subject. To the Asian mind it is equally surprising that Westerners, with the exception of spiritualists, are sceptical regarding it.

Since this widespread belief cannot be attributed to ignorance or any collective infirmity of mind, there must be another reason for it. If it is a reason that the average Englishman, American or Australian finds difficult of acceptance, the obstruction may be in his own mental attitude. We are all conditioned by past habits of thought, the mental climate of our environment and concepts, those 'idols of the market place and of the theatre'¹ which we take to be established truths without having troubled to question them. Before dismissing the ideas of a considerable portion of the human race as mere fantasy we should do well to examine first the background of our own thinking.

For many years past, science has been exploring the physical world and laying bare its secrets. In order to do so, scientists have worked on the assumption that for every

visible phenomenon there must be a physical explanation, and this axiom has had to be taken as a fundamental principle of scientific method. It must always be so, in regard to the substance and laws of this tangible world in which we live and receive our ordinary sense-impressions, for once it were admitted that a certain phenomenon was not to be explained by any but supernatural means, all systematic investigation of it would come to a stop at whatever point the investigator found himself baffled. It must always be believed that if the answer to a particular problem is not at present available within the limits of scientific knowledge it will ultimately become known through an extension of the methods already in use. This may quite legitimately be called the scientist's creed; it states his faith in the *rationale* of the principles on which he works.

The remarkable success of the method has given the ordinary layman a picture of the universe that appears to leave no place whatever for any laws or forces apart from those the scientist knows and employs in his work. But as knowledge increases and the scientist develops a philosophic mind his own picture of the world changes. He knows, better than the reader of popular science literature, how limited scientific knowledge is when it is confronted with the ultimate questions of man's being. So we get Sir James Jeans with his concept of a universe which, although it excludes God, nevertheless bears all the marks of a mental construction; Bertrand Russell with his opinion that it is unreasonable to suppose that man is necessarily the most highly-developed form of life in the universe; Max Loewenthal showing on physiological and dialectical principles that the mind must be something independent of the brain cells, and a number of other eminent scientific thinkers who are not afraid to admit that knowledge gained on the material level, while it can show us the way in which physical processes take

¹ Two of Bacon's classifications adopted by him from Giordano Bruno.

place, has brought us no nearer to a revelation of their underlying causes.

But the non-technical man-in-the-street who sees only the astonishing success of scientific research has come to hold the mistaken view that the principle which calls for a material explanation of all phenomena must mean that there cannot, *ipso facto*, be any other laws or phenomena apart from the physical. In other words, he mistakes the principle adopted as the necessary basis of a certain method for a final verdict on the nature of existence. That in itself is an unscientific view, for science does not deliver any final verdicts on any question, least of all on those beyond its present scope. The materialist who adopts a dogma is to that extent departing from true scientific principles. If, as a scientist, he tries to make his discoveries conform to his dogma, he is betraying the first rule of his calling.

Fortunately, that does not happen where scientists are still free men, and the horizons are being expanded to include phenomena that cannot be classed as material. We now have not only biologists who are seemingly on the verge of discovering how non-living matter becomes transformed into living organisms, but also workers in the field of parapsychology who are intensively studying hitherto neglected phenomena connected with the *mind* itself. Their findings, surprising and sometimes disturbing as they are, do not come before the general public to the same extent as do those of scientists whose work has a more immediately applicable function, such as that of the nuclear physicists. But these discoveries, nevertheless, may prove ultimately to be of greater value to mankind than the more sensational work of the scientists who are giving us new, and potentially dangerous, sources of power.

Para-psychology is the term used to cover all forms of extra-sensory perception (ESP); it has given scientific respectability to a wide range of mental phenomena whose existence has always been known to non-scientific

peoples, such as clairvoyance, telepathy and trance-mediumship. One reason for the fact that it has not yet received wide recognition is that no absolutely satisfactory scientific methodology has so far been devised for investigating these faculties, since obviously the formulas of physical experiment and verification cannot be applied. So far, the investigators have been able to present the results of experiments in telepathy, telekinesis, clairvoyance and clairaudience which show the existence of such extra-sensory faculties in certain persons, but they cannot yet offer a scientifically-formulated account of the laws or conditions under which they operate. This is the case at present with the work of the Society for Psychical Research and that of Dr. J.B. Rhine of Duke University, California, Prof. Thouless of Cambridge and a number of other independent investigators. They are having to formulate tentative principles as they go along, which is not a simple task when dealing with a realm of intangible and highly variable phenomena. It is complicated by the fact that the faculties in question manifest themselves in the same person to different degrees at different times and appear to be intimately connected with emotional states. There is already an extensive literature on the subject, from which anyone who is interested may form his own theories. It is important if only for the light it sheds on the religious and mystical experiences, to say nothing of the miraculous element in religion, that man from the earliest times has believed in. Since the so-called 'supernatural' has always been a part of man's universal experience it obviously does not 'prove' the truth of any particular religion. It only proves that there are indeed realms outside our normal range of perception, and faculties that are not subject to the limitations of the physical sense-organs. But this we already know from physical science itself, for it has shown that the world we perceive is something quite different from the actual world; so different that it is in fact impossible to establish a convincing relationship between them. No one has yet succeeded in showing

how the subjective world can be made to tally with an objective reality.

The European tradition of materialistic thinking goes a long way back. Even in an age when ‘philosophy’ still meant the natural sciences it was necessary for Hamlet to remind Horatio that ‘there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy’, with the accent on the last word. Yet still quite a large number of people in the West continue to believe in ghosts, or ‘entities on the Other Side’, as some spiritualists prefer to call them. The persistence of the belief along rational and practical-minded people can be accounted for only on the assumption that there is some objective basis for it, or at least that it represents some aspect of experience which they, in common with people in more primitive societies, have known. If this were not the case it must surely have been eradicated completely by the centuries of realistic thinking that lie behind us.

There is scarcely any need, then to explain away the fact that Buddhism does not confine its view of life to the world or our immediate sensory experience. On the contrary as a system of thought claiming to embrace every aspect of man’s experience it would be incomplete and seriously defective if it did so. Realms of existence other than the human may not be strictly necessary for the working out of the all-important Buddhist principle of moral cause and effect; but if Buddhism denied them, as it categorically rejects the theory of a Creator-God and an immortal soul, it would be denying something that may one day be proved as a scientific truth; something, moreover, which is already accepted by some on the basis of logical inference and by many others through direct experience.

Although Buddhism lays all the emphasis on the importance of the human plane of existence, since it is here, and here alone, that there is freedom of choice between good and bad action, the Buddhist texts mention other spheres of being, some below and some above the human realm. In particular, there are many

references to *Devas* and the various spheres they inhabit. The *Devas*, or ‘Shining Ones’, are beings born in higher realms as the result of good *Kamma* generated in previous lives as human personalities. They are of various grades and enjoy the appropriate results of their past meritorious deeds, but their condition is not permanent; they are not ‘enjoying the bliss of heaven’ for all eternity. When the force of the good *Kamma* has expended itself in results they pass away and the current of their life-continuum finds a new manifestation elsewhere; they are reborn as the consequence of some residual *Kamma*, good or bad, from previous lives,¹ which has not hitherto taken effect. All beings have an undetermined store of such *Kamma*, technically known as *Kaṭattākamma*, which comes into operation in the absence of any fresh *Kamma* from the immediately-past life.²

Thus, although the word *Deva* is usually translated ‘god’, these beings are not in any sense gods as the term is generally understood. They are not considered to have any power over human actions or destiny, nor even necessarily superior knowledge. One of the titles given to the Buddha is that of *Satthā deva manussānaṃ*, the ‘Teacher of gods and men’, because in the Pāḷi scriptures it is said that the *Devas* themselves came to Him for instruction in the Dhamma. Their place, therefore, is below that of the highest human being, the All-Enlightened One, who is also a *Visuddhi-deva*, or ‘god by (self-) purification.’

¹ It also Includes Aparapariyāya-vedanīya-kamma (Kamma ripening in successive lives.)

² This comes about because some kinds of *Kamma* are of greater moral consequence than others. An action of heavy moral significance bears its results before one that is of lesser importance and so delays the results of the latter. Furthermore, the results of *Kamma* have to wait upon the arising of suitable conditions to bring them about. The interplay of counteractive forces in the good and bad *Kamma* of an individual is the factor that makes Kammic operations incalculable.

Beings who are reborn in the higher realms carry with them the beliefs they held when they were living on the human plane, so that 'revelations' from other worlds do not necessarily carry any more truth than those that have a human origin. But the *Devas* who have understood the Buddha Dhamma themselves pay respect to the human world, as being the most suitable sphere for moral endeavour and for the attainment of *Nibbāna*. Alone among the realms of existence, it is the human plane whereon Buddhas manifest themselves; so it is said that the god *Sakka*, after his conversion to Buddhism, daily saluted the direction in which the human world lay.

At the same time, the *Devas* have a claim to the respect of human beings, for it was by the practice of virtue, and by deeds of supreme merit, that they attained to their present condition. The reverence paid to them by Buddhists on this account is of a quite different order from the worship given to gods who are believed to be controllers of human destiny.

In this sense it is true to say that Buddhism is non-theistic; the worship of gods for favours or forgiveness of sins has no part in it. To this extent it is quite unimportant whether a Buddhist believes in the existence of higher states of being or not. But it is important for the appreciation of Buddhist philosophy to have a clear understanding that whatever other realms of existence there may be, they are all subject, like our own, to the law of cause and effect. Since cause and effect belong to the natural order, even though they may operate in ways that are non-physical, as in the case of the mental faculties of extra-sensory perception, the realms of the *Devas* are not supernatural worlds; it is more accurate to regard them as extra-physical. The distinction may not be at once apparent; but if our own world of sense-data is a mental construction, as *Yogācāra* philosophy and Berkeleyan immaterialism maintain that it is, there is no reason why there should not be other realms of being constructed on the same basis. We know for a fact that the world as it appears to us is something quite distinct from the world of

physics, and that alone should make us chary of accepting it at its face value. Our familiar world of objects that appear to be substantial and real is nothing more than the interpretation we give to a something that is quite other than our senses report to us—a world of atomic energy, with scarcely anything substantial in it. The true nature of that world still remains a matter for metaphysical speculation, with which the Buddha was not concerned. He taught that the reality could be known only through insight developed in meditation, and that the secret lay not outside but within ourselves: 'Within this fathom-long body, O Bhikkhus, equipped with the mental faculties of sensation, perception, volition and consciousness, I declare to you is the world, the origin of the world, its cessation and the Path leading to its cessation.'

Aldous Huxley, in his two brilliant essays, 'The Doors of Perception' and 'Heaven and Hell', (1956), cites Bergson's theory that the function of the brain, nervous system and sense organs is in the main eliminative and not productive. According to this view, the area of individual awareness is practically infinite and extends to modes of being outside those commonly experienced; but with such an awareness continually present, life in the ordinary sense would not be possible. There has to be a 'reducing valve' (Huxley's term) which filters this multiple complex down to the essentials of consciousness that are required for biological survival. The reducing valve is the brain and nervous system, which isolate us in the sphere of individual consciousness formed by our sense-impressions and concepts. If for some reason the efficiency of the reducing valve is lowered, other material flows in, material which is not necessary for biological survival and may even be inimical to it, by lessening the seeming importance of ordinary life. From this come the trance experiences of mystics and the visionary entry into other worlds that has been the common property of mankind in all ages. Huxley's conclusion is that these experiences have a validity of their own which is independent of

the means used to obtain them. I quote the final paragraph of his 'Heaven and Hell', the second of the two essays on his experiences under the influence of mescaline:

'My own guess is that modern spiritualism and ancient tradition are both correct. There is a posthumous state of the kind prescribed in Sir Oliver Lodge's book, *Raymond*; but there is also a heaven of blissful visionary experience; there is also a hell of the same kind of appalling visionary experience as is suffered here by schizophrenics and some of those who take mescaline; and there is also an experience, beyond time, of union with the divine Ground.'

Huxley's 'divine Ground', since it is not a personal God and is free from attributes, functions and any remnant of personal selfhood, appears to be of the same nature as the highest Brahma-realms of Buddhism, if it is not that complete cessation of becoming which is the final goal of all, *Nibbāna*.

All beings live in worlds created by their own *Kamma*; the nature of the being creates the peculiar features of the world it inhabits. But in Buddhist doctrine there is no abiding ego-entity, no immortal and unchanging essence of selfhood. When it speaks of rebirth it does not mean the transmigration of a soul from one body or state to another. It means that a new being is created as the result of the volitional activities, the *Kamma*, of one that has lived before. So long as desire remains unextinguished, and with it the will-to-live, the stream of cause and effect continues to project itself into the future, giving rise to one being after another in the causally-related sequence. Their identification with one another lies solely in the fact of each belonging to the same current of *Kamma* generated by desire, so that what each one inherits from its predecessors is only a complex of tendencies that have been set in motion by the act of willing and doing.

In this connection even the word 'birth' has to be understood in a peculiarly Buddhist sense, as meaning 'arising' (*jāti*) or coming into existence, and not merely in the sense of physical generation. It also stands for the

moment-to-moment coming into existence of mental impulses or units of consciousness in the ordinary course of life. The stream of consciousness is made up of a series of such momentary births and deaths. In sleep and unconsciousness the current still flows on in the form of the subconscious life-continuum. And at death the last moment of the series is immediately followed by the first of a new sequence, in perhaps a different form and under entirely different conditions of birth. In Pāli, the language of the Buddhist texts, another word, *Punabbhava*, is used to denote this renewed existence after death. The old personality, being a psycho-physical compound and therefore unstable and impermanent, has passed away; but a new one arises from the mental impulses it had generated. In this way the *Kamma* of a human being may bring about renewed existence below or above the human level, in a being of a quite different order.

The question of identity between any two beings belonging to the same sequence is not in any way different from the same question as it relates to different stages in the life of an individual. In the ordinary course of life we find that the nature of some persons alters radically for better or worse with the passage of time, while that of others remains fairly constant. Change is sometimes slow and imperceptible, sometimes it comes with dramatic suddenness; but change is continually and inevitably taking place. Birth and death—or death and rebirth—are merely points of more complete psycho-physical transition in the continuous flow of 'becoming'. The new being may inherit many characteristics, both mental and physical, from the previous one, or it may differ in everything except the predominant characteristic developed in the last life. The deciding factor is the nature and strength of the *Kamma* of the human being, and more especially the *Kamma* present in the consciousness at the last moment before death.¹

¹ Death-proximate *Kamma*, consisting of a mental (cont'd)

Impermanence, suffering and absence of any enduring self-essence; these are the three characteristics of all life. Whatever sentient beings there may be in the cosmos besides man and animals, they are all marked by these three characteristics. They are all subject to decay and dissolution. When we come to realise this we cease to concern ourselves with heavenly states or with metaphysical speculations connected with them. All that is left is the urgent need to gain release from the delusions and attachments that bind us to the incessant round of renewed existences. It is only in the attainment of *Nibbāna*, the Unconditioned and Absolute, that eternal peace is to be found. The Buddha, Supreme Teacher of Gods and Men, discovered the Way, and out of His compassion for suffering beings revealed it to all. But, having found it, He could be no more than a guide and instructor to others. Each of us has to tread the path for himself, working out his own deliverance. Worlds may be infinite in number, but the same law prevails everywhere and gods must again become men to fulfill their destiny. Like the deeds that caused them, rewards and punishments—man's interpretation of the universal law of action and reaction—pass away. There have been men, like Alexander the Great, deified by

priests while they were yet alive; but it is not by bloodshed that gods are made; it is not by ceremonies that men are sanctified. The humblest man living, if he has all his mental faculties intact, can forge for himself a higher destiny than these. In the law of change lies opportunity. Piled up, the bodies of our dead selves would raise a mountain loftier than the peak of Sumeru.¹ And the man who has made his own mountain should try to climb it. Who knows where it might lead him? Perhaps to the abode of the gods—or Beyond.

(cont'd from prev. page) reflex (*Nimmita*) symbolizing some act, or aggregate of actions, performed in the past life. This arises in the last moment of consciousness and forms the basis good or bad, for the consciousness-moment that immediately follows it. The last consciousness moment therefore gives the key-signature to the next existence. Death in unconsciousness or in sleep also has its death-proximate *Kamma*; this occurs on the dream level and does not manifest outwardly. Those who die in full or semi-consciousness frequently show, by their happy or fearful state of mind, the kind of death-proximate *Kamma* that is coming into operation: Huxley makes some interesting observations on this in his references to the Tibetan Book of the Dead in the two essays mentioned previously.

¹ Mount Meru, the mythological home of the gods; the Indian Olympus.

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(An exposition of five kinds of Light)

*Written in Burmese by The Venerable Mahāthera Ledi Sayadaw,
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(Translated by the Editors of the Light of the Dhamma)

CHAPTER I

Five kinds of Stark Ignorance and five kinds of Light

(A) The five kinds of Stark Ignorance are:—

- (1) *Kamma-sammoha* (Stark Ignorance of *Kamma*).
- (2) *Dhamma-sammoha* (Stark Ignorance of *Dhamma*).
- (3) *Paccaya-sammoha* (Stark Ignorance of Causation).
- (4) *Lakkhaṇa-sammoha* (Stark Ignorance of Three Characteristics of life).
- (5) *Nibbāna-sammoha* (Stark Ignorance of *Nibbāna*).

(B) The five kinds of Light are:—

- (1) *Kammasakatā-ñāṇa* (Knowledge of the fact that all beings have *kamma* only as their own property).
- (2) *Dhamma-vavatthāna-ñāṇa* (Analytical knowledge of the *Dhamma*).
- (3) *Paccaya-vavatthāna-ñāṇa* (Analytical knowledge of Causation).
- (4) *Lakkhāna-paṭivedha-ñāṇa* (Knowledge realising the Three Characteristics of life.)
- (5) *Nibbāna-paṭivedha-ñāṇa* (Knowledge realising *Nibbāna*).

(A) 1. and (B) 1. *Kamma-sammoha* and *Kammasakatā-ñāṇa*

I shall now expound the first pair—*Kamma-sammoha* and *Kammasakatā-ñāṇa*.

(A) 1. Of these *kamma-sammoha* means the following:—

- (i) Not understanding *kamma*, and
- (ii) Not understand the resultant of *kamma*.

(i) Not understanding *kamma*:

- (a) Not understanding the fact that all beings have *kamma* only as their own property; that all beings are the heirs of their own *kamma*; that *kamma* alone is their origin; that *kamma* alone is their relative; and that *kamma* alone is their real refuge.
- (b) Not understanding which of the actions done by them, bodily, verbally and mentally are unwholesome.
- (c) Not understanding the fact that unwholesome actions would give them bad resultants in their future births and would drag them to the Four Lower Worlds.
- (d) Not understanding which of the actions done by them, bodily, verbally, and mentally are wholesome.
- (e) Not understanding the fact that wholesome actions would give them good resultant in their future births and would cause them to arise in the Happy Existence of the human world and the world of devas.

“Not understanding *kamma*” means not understanding the nature and characteristics of *kamma* in the above manner.

(ii) Not understanding the resultant of *Kamma*:

- (a) Not understanding the fact that the lives of beings do not end at their

biological death, but that they would arise in another existence where their *kamma* assigns them.

- (b) Not understanding the fact that there exist immense number of beings in hell, *petas*, *asurakāyas*, (which are invisible by the naked eyes) and animals.
- (c) Not understanding the fact that if they perform unwholesome volitional actions, they will have to arise in those *Apāya* regions.
- (d) Not understanding the fact that there exist immense number of human beings who are visible by our naked eyes, and that there exist immense number of beings which are invisible by our naked eyes, such as good and bad devas and also those inhabiting the six deva-planes and higher planes in the Form Sphere and the Formless Sphere.
- (e) Not understanding the fact that when beings give alms, practise morality and develop mental concentration, by virtues of their wholesome deed they will have to arise in those various planes.
- (f) Not understanding the fact that there exists the beginningless and endless *samsāra*¹ (round of rebirths).
- (g) Not understanding the fact that in this *samsāra* beings have to wander incessantly wherever they are assigned by the wholesome and unwholesome deed performed by them.

All the above kinds of ‘not understanding’ are called *kamma-sammoha*.

B (1). Of these *Kanimassakatā ñāṇa* means the following:—

- (i) Understanding *kamma*, and
- (ii) Understanding the resultant of *kamma*.

¹ It should however be noted that when one attains Nibbāna, the continuity of rebirths ceases.

Understanding *kamma* and its resultant:

- (a) Understanding the fact that all beings have *kamma* only as their own property; that all beings are the heirs of their own *kamma*; that *kamma* alone is their origin; *kamma* alone is their relative; and that *kamma* alone is their real refuge.
- (b) Understanding which of the actions done by them bodily, verbally and mentally, are unwholesome; that they would give bad resultants in their future births; and that these unwholesome deed would drag them to the Four Lower Regions.
- (c) Understanding that such and such actions are wholesome; that these would give good resultant in their successive births, and these deeds would cause beings to arise in the Happy Existence, such as human world and the world of *devas*.

All the above kinds of ‘understanding’ are called *Kammasakatā ñāṇa*.

This Stark Ignorance of *kamma* is very dreadful. In the world all *micchādiṭṭhi* (wrong views) arise out of this Ignorance, *Kammasakatā ñāṇa* is the refuge of those beings who wander in this beginningless round of rebirths. Only when such Light of Knowledge exists, beings perform such wholesome volitional actions as giving alms, practising morality, and developing mental concentration and attain the bliss of men, *devas* and *Brahmās*. Such *pāramī-kusala* (wholesome volitional actions leading to Perfections) as Perfection leading to Buddhahood, Perfection leading to Individual Buddhahood,² and Perfection leading to Noble Discipleship originate in this Light.

² Pacceka-buddha: Individual Buddha. He is an Arahāt who has realised Nibbāna without ever in his life having heard from others the Buddha’s doctrine. He does not possess the faculty to proclaim the doctrine to the world, and to become a leader of mankind.

In the innumerable number of universes this Light of *kammassakatā-ñāṇa* exists in those men and *devas* who maintain Right Views. In this universe too, even during the zero world-cycles where no Buddhas arise this Light exists in those men and *devas* who maintain Right Views. This word “*Sammādiṭṭhi*” here means this Light of *kammassakatā-ñāṇa*.

At present in the world, this Light exists in Buddhists and Hindus. It does not exist among other people and in the animal world. It also very rarely exists in hell, *asurakāya*-world and *petā*-world. Those beings who do not possess such Light remain within the sphere of *kammasammoha*. Those beings who exist in this sphere have no access to the path leading to Happiness in the *samsāra* and also to the path leading to rebirths in the higher abodes of men, *devas* and *Brahmās*. Thus the door is closed to these higher abodes and only the door to the Lower Abodes remain open. Thousands, tens of thousand, hundreds of thousand existences may pass, and yet they will not be able to come near to the sphere of Light even for once.

The Light of the World:

As for embryo Buddhas who have received confirmation under previous Buddhas, even if

they arise in the animal-world this Ignorance cannot overcome them. This Light of *kammassakatā-ñāṇa* does not disappear in them. Although mention has often been made of this *kammassakatā-ñāṇa-sammā-diṭṭhi* in many Buddhist texts, as this Light also exists in other numerous universes where Buddha do not arise and in the world-cycle where a Buddha does not arise, the Omniscient Buddha arises in this world not to expound this Light, but to expound the Light that realises the Four Noble Truths. So this Light of *kammassakatā-ñāṇa-sammā-diṭṭhi* does not deserve the epithet of the Light of the Buddha Sāsanā It cannot be termed so. It can only be termed as the Light of *samsāra* the Light of the world.

Those wise people who encounter the Buddha Sāsanā now, should not be satisfied with the mere attainment of the Light of *kammassakatā-ñāṇa-sammā-diṭṭhi* which is not the Light primarily intended by the Supreme Buddha. This is a very good point for the wise people to note.

Here ends the exposition of the first pair—
Stark Ignorance of *Kamma* and the First Light.

To be continued.

ACINTEYYA SUTTA

(The Discourse on the Unthinkables)

Bhikkhus, there are these four unthinkable, not to be thought of, thinking of which would lead one to madness and frustration. What are the four?

1. Bhikkhus, the realm (*gocara*) of Buddhas is unthinkable, not to be thought of, thinking of which would lead one to madness and frustration.
2. Bhikkhus, the range of *Jhānas* attained by one who has practised *Jhānas* is not thinkable, not to be thought of, thinking of which would lead one to madness and frustration.
3. Bhikkhus, the resultant of *kamma* is not thinkable, not to be thought of, thinking of which would lead one to madness and frustration.
4. Bhikkhus, *loka-cīṅta* (evolution of the world) is unthinkable not to be thought of, thinking of which would lead one to madness and frustration.

Āṅuttara Nikāya, Catukka-nipāta, Aparaṇṇaka-vagga, 7.
Aciṅteyya Sutta, p.329, 6th Syn. Edn.

Notes and News

ABHIDHAMMA PRIZE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY

The Abhidhamma Prize Distribution Ceremony was held at the Mahā Pāsāna Guhā (Great Sacred Cave), Kabā-Aye, Rangoon, on the 21st. May 1961. Among those present were the Ovādācariya Mahātheras, Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Maha Thray Sithu, Dr. U Thein Maung. President of the Union Buddha Sāsānā Council, U Chan Htoon Aung, Retired Chief Justice of the High Court, Parliament Secretary U Than Sein, Chatthin U Ba Tin, U Thein Maung, M.P. for Pyawbwe, U Awe of Shwebo, U Win of Tharrawaddy, Religious Officers. Officers of the Union Buddha Sāsānā Council, representatives from various Buddhist Organizations of Rangoon, distinguished guests, many devotees and the successful candidates. The presiding Mahāthera administered the Five Precepts to the audience. After that, an Admonitory Address was delivered by the Venerable Bahan Veḷuvaṃ Sayadaw. Next, Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Maha Thray Sithu, Dr. U Thein Maung, President of the Union Buddha Sāsānā Council delivered an address of veneration as follows

“Venerable Bhante,

The object of holding today’s function is

(1) To award medals and cash prizes to those successful candidates who stood First, Second and Third in all the three grades of the Abhidhamma Examination held for the ninth time in 159 centres of the Union on the 17th, 18th and 18th of December 1961;

(2) To award a medal and a cash prize to the successful candidate who stood First in all the three grades of the Abhidhamma (Honours) or Tikā-gyaw Examination held

for the sixth time in 113 centres of the Union on the above-mentioned dates;

(3) To award a medal and a cash prize to the successful candidate who stood First in the Visuddhi-magga Examination held for the fourth time in 63 centres of the Union on the above-mentioned dates; and

(4) To award pass certificates to 141 students who passed the Abhidhamma Examination from Rangoon centre.

The travelling expenses of the said five medalists are defrayed by the Union Buddha Sāsānā Council.

The Abhidhamma Examination has been conducted annually by the Union Buddha Sāsānā Council since 1314 Burmese Era and it was held for the ninth time in 1322 B.E.; the Abhidhamma (Honours) Examination has been held annually since 1317 B.E. and it was held for the sixth time in 1322 B.E.; and Visuddhi-magga Examination has been held annually since 1319 B.E. and it was held for the fourth time in 1322 B.E.

In the Abhidhamma Examination held for the ninth time, 13723 candidates sat for the various grades from 159 centres, and 7377 candidates passed in the examination.

In the Abhidhamma (Honour) Examination held for the sixth time, 1860 candidates sat for the three grades from 113 centres of the Union, and 903 candidates passed the examination.

In the Visuddhi-magga Examination held for the fourth time, 219 candidates sat for the examination from 63 centres, and 73 candidates passed the examination.

In regard to the Abhidhamma Examination, in comparison with last year’s figures, the number of examination

centres is increased by 6; the number of candidates who sat for the examination is increased by 329 and the number of passes is increased by 1174.

In regard to the Abhidhamma (Honours) Examination, if compared with last year's figures, the number of examination centres is decreased by 4, the number of candidates who sat for the examination is increased by 202 and the number of passes is decreased by 18.

In regard to the Visuddhi-magga Examination, if compared with last year's figures, there is a decrease of 9 examination centres, the number of candidates who sat for the examination is decreased by 162 and the number of passes is decreased by 45.

Abhidhamma Examination:

First Prize

1. Maung On Win,
Roll No.20, Letpadan Centre.
Presented with a gold medal worth K 150 and a cash prize of K 200.
Donated by the philanthropic residents of Wuntho, Katha District.

Second Prize

2. Maung Ko Win,
Roll No. 14, (Wadan) Ayadaw Centre.
Presented with a gold-centred medal worth K75 and a cash prize of K 100.
Donated by the philanthropic residents of Indaw, Katha District.

Third Prize

3. Maung Htin Paw,
Roll No. 630, Magwe Centre.
Presented with a silver medal worth K 25 and a cash prize of K 50.
Donated by U Thein Maung, M.P. for Pyawbwe and his wife Daw Yin May.

Abhidhamma (Honours) Examination First Prize

4. Maung Way Kyan.
Roll No. 141, Twante Centre.
Presented with a gold medal worth K 200 and a cash prize of K 300.
Donated by U Chan Htoon Aung, Retired Chief Justice and Daw Ma Ma Gyi.

Visuddhimagga Examination First Prize

5. U On Pe,
Roll No. 1, Mogok Centre.
Presented with a gold medal worth K 300.
Donated by U Thein Maung, Chief Executive Officer, Union Buddha Sāsana Council and Daw Mya Tin.
Also awarded an ordinary prize of K50 and a Pass certificate by the Union Buddha Sāsana Council.

Bhante, as the medals and cash prizes for the five recipients of the special prizes have been given by the respective donors, the Union Buddha Sāsana Council rejoicingly say "Sādhu" and have recorded their gifts.

Bhante, I firmly believe and hope that in future years too, similar donors will come out to honour the winners of special prizes.

Bhante, I most respectfully and earnestly wish

- (1) that with the help and co-operation of both Bhikkhus and lay persons of the country, these examinations will prosper year by year; and
- (2) that these examinations may be pillars of support for the prosperity and longevity of the Buddha Sāsana.

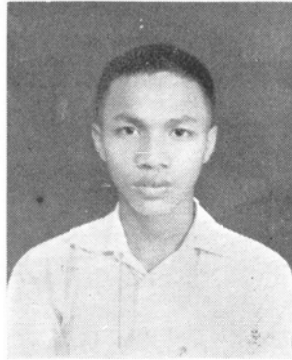
Ciraṃ tiṭṭatu saddhammo.



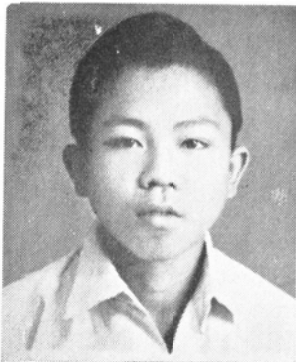
**U On Pe,
Roll No. 1, Mogok Centre,
Visuddhimagga 1st. Prize Winner.**



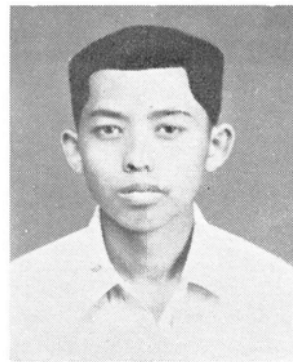
**Maung Way Kyan,
Roll No. 141, Twante Centre,
Abhidhamma (Honours)
1st. Prize Winner.**



**Maung On Win,
Roll No. 20, Letpadan Centre,
Abhidhamma 1st. Prize Winner.**



**Maung Ko Win,
Roll No. 14, Ayadaw Centre,
Abhidhamma 2nd. Prize Winner.**



**Maung Htin Paw,
Roll No. 630, Magwe Centre,
Abhidhamma 3rd. Prize Winner.**

BUDDHA DAY CELEBRATIONS AT RANGOON

Buddha Day Celebrations at Rangoon.

Buddha Day Celebrations were held at the Shwe Dagon Pagoda on the full moon day of Vesakhā (Kason) 28-4-61.

Bodhi Tree Watering Ceremonies:

A few Mahātheras of Rangoon, Prime Minister U Nu, Thado Thiri Thudhamma Sir. U Thwin, Agga Mahā Thray Sithu Dr U Thein Maung, U Ba Saw (Minister for Religious Affairs), Justice U San Maung, Parliamentary Secretary U Than Sein, Henzada U Mya, the Trustees of the Shwedagon Pagoda and many hundreds of devotees assembled around the Bodhi Tree at the south-eastern corner of Shwedagon Pagoda platform. At 6-10 a. m. Wunnakyaw-htin U Ba Swe, Deputy Secretary of the Religious Affairs Ministry recited some Gāthās inviting the *devās*. Prime Minister U Nu then chanted the stanza “*Mahābodhi dume nātho* and opened the ceremonies. The Venerable Hnakyai-shit-su Sayadaw administered nine precepts to the audience. U Ba Saw, Minister for Religious Affairs then recited the stanza beginning with “*Uddhisīyaṃ Jinaṃ buddhaṃ*”. This was followed by an address of veneration by Thado Thiri Thudhamma Sir U Thwin pointing out the significance of “Pouring water on the Sacred Bodhi Tree”. Many young men and girls resplendently dressed as *Bhramās*, *devās*, *nāgas*, *garuḷas* and *gandhabbas* sang poems in Pāli and Burmese. The Prime Minister and persons present poured water on to the Sacred Bodhi Tree in golden and silver bowls. The ceremony came to a close at about 7 a.m.

Paritta-Chanting and Mettā-radiating ceremonies by 2500 Bhikkhus.

At 7 a.m. 2500 Bhikkhus headed by His Holiness the Most Venerable Abhidhaja Mahāratṭha Guru Masoyein Sayadaw, assembled at the Buddha Jayanti Dhammārāma Hall on the western slope of the Shwedagon Pagoda. Prime Minister U Nu, Chief Justice of the Union Thado Mahā Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon (President of the Buddha Day Celebrations Committee), U Tha Win (Honorary Treasurer of the W.F.B.), leaders of various communities, many diplomats, and representatives from Buddhist organisations of Rangoon numbering many thousands were also present. All the proceedings were broadcast direct to the return by the Burma Broadcasting Service.

When U Tha Win (master of the ceremonies) announced that the time for commencement of the ceremonies had arrived, Thado Mahā Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon conducted the Prime Minister U Nu to the flag mast and U Nu recited “*Cīraṃ tiṭṭhatu saddhammo*” thrice and unfurled the Buddhist flag. He then paid homage to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha by reciting “*Buddhaṃ-Pūjemi, dhammaṃ pūjemi, sanghaṃ pūjemi*” and the audience repeated his words after him.

His Holiness the Most Venerable Abhidhaja Mahāratṭha Guru Masoyein Sayadaw administered the Nine Precepts and 2500 Sangha assembled then recited the Buddha Bhiseka gāthā and chanted Maṅgala Sutta, Mettā Sutta and Pubbaṅha Sutta.

Exactly at 8 a.m., a minute silence was observed during which all present sent forth thoughts of *mettā* (loving-kindness) to all sentient beings. After that, an Address of Felicitations and Encouragement by His Holiness the Most Venerable Masoyein Sayadaw was delivered.

Prime Minister U Nu then performed the libation ceremony in sharing merits

with all sentient beings. When the Most Venerable Masoyein Sayadaw came down from the “Dhamma Pallanka (Throne)”, Prime Minister U Nu Presented him a bowl containing morning meal, and Chief Justice U Chan Htoon presented him a set of robes.

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