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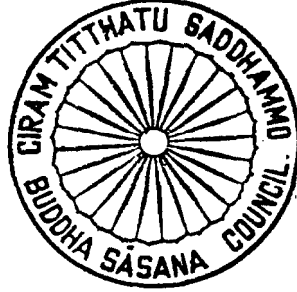


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## EDITORIAL

### *What Kamma Is*

*Kamma* is a Pāli word meaning action. It is called *Karma* in Sanskrit. In its general sense *Kamma* means all good and bad actions. It covers all kinds of intentional actions whether mental, verbal or physical,— thoughts, words and deeds. In its ultimate sense *Kamma* means all moral and immoral volition. The Buddha says: “Mental volition, O Bhikkhus, is what I call action (*Kamma*). Having volition one acts by body, speech and thought.” *Āṅguttara Nikāya* III 415).

*Kamma* is neither fatalism nor a doctrine of predetermination. The past influences the present but does not dominate it, for *Kamma* is past as well as present. The past and present influence the future. The past is a background against which life goes on from moment to moment. The future is yet to be. Only the present moment exists, and the responsibility of using the present moment for good or for ill lies with each individual.

Every action produces an effect and it is a cause first and effect afterwards. We therefore speak of *Kamma* as “the law of cause and effect.” Throwing a stone, for example, is an action. The stone strikes a glass window and breaks it. The break is the effect of the action of throwing, but it is not the end. The broken window is now the cause of further trouble. Some of one’s money will have to go to replace it, and one is thus unable to save the money or to buy with it what one wants for some other purpose, and the effect upon one is a feeling of disappointment. This may make one irritable and if one is not careful, one may allow the irritability to become the cause of doing something else which is wrong and so on. There is no end to the result of action, no end to *Kamma*, so we should be very careful about our actions, so that their effect will be good. It is therefore necessary for us to do a good, helpful action which will return to us in good *Kamma* and make us strong enough to start a better *Kamma*.

Throw a stone into a pond and watch the effect. There is a splash and a number of little rings appear round the place where it strikes. See how the rings grow wider and wider till they become too wide and too tiny for our eyes to follow. The little stone disturbs the water in the pond, but its work is not finished yet. When the tiny waves reach the edges of the pond, the water moves back till it pushes the stone that has disturbed it.

The effects of our actions come back to us just as the waves do to the stone, and as long as we do our action with evil intention the new waves of effect come back to beat upon us and disturb us. If we are kind and keep ourselves peaceful, the returning waves of trouble will grow weaker and weaker till they die down and our good *Kamma* will come back to us in blessing. If we sow a mango seed, for instance, a mango tree will come up and bear mangoes, and if we sow a chili seed, a chili plant will grow and produce chilis. The Buddha says:

“According to the seed that’s sown,  
So is the fruit ye reap therefrom,  
Doer of good will gather good,  
Doer of evil, evil reaps.  
Swown is the seed, and thou shalt taste  
The fruit thereof.

(*Saṃyutta Nikāya* Vol. I, P. 227).

Everything that comes to us is right. When anything pleasant comes to us and makes us happy, we may be sure that our *Kamma* has come to show us what we have done is right. When anything comes to us, hurts us or makes us unhappy, our *Kamma* has come to show us our mistake. We must never forget that *Kamma* is always just. It neither loves nor hates, neither rewards nor punishes. It is never angry, never pleased. It is simply the law of cause and effect.

*Kamma* knows nothing about us. Does the fire know us when it burns us? No. It is the nature of the fire to burn, to give out

heat. If we use it properly it gives us light, cooks our food for us or burns anything we wish to get rid of, but if we use it wrongly it burns us and our property. Its work is to burn and our affair is to use it in the right way. We are foolish if we grew angry and blame it when it burns us because we have made a mistake.

There are in equalities and manifold destinies of men in the world. One is, for example, inferior and another superior. One perishes in infancy and another at the age of eighty or a hundred. One is sick and infirm, and another strong and healthy. One is handsome another ugly. One is brought up in luxury and another in misery. One is born a millionaire another a pauper. One is a genius and another an idiot.

What is the cause of the inequalities that exist in the world? Buddhists cannot believe that this variation is the result of blind chance. Science itself is indeed all against the theory of "Chance", in the world of the scientist all works in accordance with the laws of cause and effect. Neither can Buddhists believe that this unevenness of the world is due to a God-Creator.

One of the three divergent views that prevailed at the time of the Buddha was: "Whatsoever happiness or pain or neutral feeling the person experiences all that is due to the creation of a Supreme Deity." (Gradual Sayings, I. 158) Commenting on this fatalistic view the Buddha said: "So, then, owing to the creation of a Supreme Deity men will become murderers, thieves, unchaste, liars, slanderers, abusive, babblers, covetous, malicious, and perverse in view. Thus for those who fall back on the creation of a God as the essential reason, there is neither the desire to do, nor necessity to do this deed or abstain from that deed." (ibid).

Referring to the naked ascetics practised self-mortification, the Buddha said: "If, O Bhikkhus, beings experience pain and happiness as the result of God's creation, then certainly these naked ascetics must have been created by a wicked God, since they are at present experiencing such terrible pain," *Devadaha Sutta, No. 101, Majjhima Nikāya, II. 222*).

According to Buddhism the inequalities that exist in the world are due, to some extent, to heredity and environment and, to a greater extent, to a cause or causes (*Kamma*)

which are not only present but proximate or remote past. Man himself is responsible for his own happiness and misery. He creates his own heaven and hell. He is master of his own destiny, child of his past and present of his future.

### The Laws Of Cosmic Order

Although Buddhism teaches that *Kamma* is the chief cause of the inequalities in the world yet it does not teach fatalism or the doctrine of predestination, for it does not hold the view that everything is due to past actions. The law of cause and effect (*Kamma*) is only one of the twentyfour causes described in Buddhist philosophy (See Compendium of Philosophy, p. 191), or one of the five orders (*Niyāmas*) which are laws in themselves and operate in the universe. They are:—

1. *Utu Niyāma*, physical inorganic order, e.g., seasonal phenomena of winds and rains. The unerring order of seasons, characteristic seasonal changes and events, causes of winds and rains, nature of heat, etc., belong to this group.

2. *Bija Niyāma*, order of germs and seeds (physical organic order), e.g., rice produced from rice seed, sugary taste from sugarcane or honey, peculiar characteristics of certain fruits, etc. The scientific Theory of cells and genes and physical similarity of twins may be ascribed to this order.

3. *Kamma Niyāma*, order of act and result, e.g., desirable and undesirable acts produce corresponding good and results. As surely as water seeks its own level so does *Kamma*, given opportunity, produce its inevitable result, not in the form of a reward or punishment but as an innate sequence. This sequence of deed and effect is as natural and necessary as the way of the stars and moon.

4. *Dhamma Niyāma*, order of the norm, e.g., the natural phenomena occurring at the advent of a Bodhisatta in his last birth. Gravitation and other similar laws of nature, the reason for being good, and so forth may be included in this group.

5. *Citta Niyāma*, order of mind or psychic law, e.g., processes of consciousness, arising and perishing of consciousness, constituents of consciousness, power of mind, etc. Telepathy, telesthesia, retro-cognition, premonition, clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought-reading, all psychic phenomena

which are inexplicable to modern science are included in this class. *Abhidhamma-vatara p. 54*).

These five orders embrace everything in the world and every mental or physical phenomenon could be explained by them. They being laws in themselves, require no lawgiver and *Kamma* as such is only one of them.

#### Classification of Kamma

*Kamma* is classified into four kinds according to the time in which results are produced. There is *Kamma* that ripens in the same lifetime, *Kamma* that ripens in the next life and *Kamma* that ripens in successive births. These three types of *Kamma* are bound to produce results as a seed is to sprout. But for a seed to sprout, certain auxiliary causes such as soil, rain, etc. are required. In the same way for a *Kamma* to produce an effect, several auxiliary causes such as circumstances, surroundings, etc., are required. It sometimes happens that for want of such auxiliary causes *Kamma* does not produce any result. Such *Kamma* is called "*Ahosi-Kamma*" or "*Kamma* that is ineffective."

*Kamma* is also classified into another four kinds according to its particular function. There is regenerative *Janaka Kamma* which conditions the future birth; Supportive (*Upatthambaka*) *Kamma* which assists or maintains the results of already-existing *Kamma* Counteractive (*Upapīlaka*) *Kamma* which suppresses or modifies the result of the reproductive *Kamma*, and destructive (*Upaghātaka*) *Kamma* which destroys the force of existing *Kamma* and substitutes its own resultants.

There is another classification according to the priority of results. There is serious or weighty (*garuka*) *Kamma* which produces its resultants in the present life or in the next. On the moral side of this *Kamma*, the highly refined mental states called *Jhānas* or Ecstasies are weighty because they produce resultants more speedily than the ordinary unrefined mental states. On the opposite side, the five kinds of immediately effective serious crimes are weighty. These crimes are: matricide, parricide, the murder of an Arahanta (Holy-one or perfect saint), the wounding of a Buddha and the creation of a schism in the Samgha.

Death-proximate (*Āsanna*) *Kamma* is the action which one does at the moment before death either physically or mentally—mentally by thinking of one's own previous good or bad actions, or having good or bad thoughts. It is this *Kamma* which, if there is no weighty *Kamma*, determines the conditions of the next birth.

Habitual (*āciṇṇa*) *Kamma* is the action which one constantly does. This *Kamma*, in the absence of death-proximate *Kamma*, produces and determines the next birth.

Reserved *Katattā Kamma* is the last in the priority of results. This is the unexpounded *Kamma* of a particular being and it conditions the next birth if there is no habitual *Kamma* to operate.

A further classification of *Kamma* is according to the place in which the results are produced, namely:—

- (1) Immoral *Kamma* which produces its effect in the plane of misery.
- (2) Moral *Kamma* which produces its effect in the plane of the world of desires.
- (3) Moral *Kamma* which produces its effect in the plane of form.
- (4) Moral *Kamma* which produces its effect in the plane of the formless.

Ten immoral actions and their effects:—

- (1) Immoral *Kamma* is rooted in greed (*Lobha*), anger (*dosa*) and delusion (*Moha*).

There are ten immoral actions (*Kamma*)—namely, Killing, Stealing, Unchastity (These three are caused by deed), lying, Slandering harsh language, Frivolous talk (These four are caused by word), covetousness, Ill-will and False View (These three are caused by mind).

Of these ten, killing means the destruction of any living being including animals of all kinds. To complete this offence of killing five conditions are necessary:—a being, consciousness that it is a being, intention of killing, effort and consequent death.

The evil effects of killing are:—Short life, Diseasefulness, Constant grief caused by the separation from the loved and constant fear.

To complete the offence of stealing five conditions are necessary, viz:—Property of other people, consciousness that it is so,

intention of stealing, effort and consequent removal. The effects of stealing are:—poverty, wretchedness, unfulfilled desires and dependent livelihood.

To complete the offence of unchastity (sexual misconduct) three conditions are necessary, viz:—intention to enjoy the forbidden object, effort and possession of the object. The effect of unchastity are:—having many enemies, getting undesirable wives, birth as a woman or as an eunuch.

To complete the offence of lying four conditions are necessary, viz:—untruth, intention to deceive, effort, and communication of the matter to others. The effects of lying are:—being tormented by abusive speech, being subject to vilification, incredibility and stinking mouth.

To complete the offence of slandering four conditions are necessary, viz:—division of persons, intention to separate them, effort and communication. The effect of slandering is the dissolution of friendship without any sufficient cause.

To complete the offence of harsh language three conditions are necessary, viz:—someone to be abused, angry thought and using abusive language. The effects of harsh language are:—being detested by others although blameless, and harsh voice.

To complete the offence of frivolous talk two conditions are necessary, viz:—the inclination towards frivolous talk and its narration. The effects of frivolous talk are:—disorderliness of the bodily organs and unacceptable speech.

To complete the offence of covetousness (*abijjhā*) two conditions are necessary, viz:—another's property and strong desire for it, saying "would this property were mine." The effect of covetousness is unfulfilment of one's wishes.

To complete the offence of ill-will (*Vyāpāda*) two conditions are necessary, viz:—another being and the intention of doing harm. The effects of ill-will are:—ugliness, various diseases and detestable nature.

False view (*Micchādiṭṭhi*) means seeing things wrongly without understanding what they truly are. To complete this false view two conditions are necessary, viz:—perverted manner in which an object is viewed and the misunderstanding of it

according to that view. The effects of false view are:—base attachment, lack of wisdom, dull wit, chronic diseases and blameworthy ideas. (Exporsitor pt. 1. p. 128).

11. Good *Kamma* which produces its effect in the plane of desires:—

There are ten moral actions—namely, generosity (*Dāna*), morality (*Sīla*), meditation (*Bhāvanā*), reverence (*apacāyana*) service (*veyyāvacca*), transference of merit (*pattidāna*), rejoicing in other's merit (*Pattānumodana*), hearing the doctrine (*Dhammasavana*), expounding the doctrine (*Dhamma-desanā*), and forming correct views (*Diṭṭhijukamma*).

Generosity yields wealth. "Morality" causes one to born in noble families in states of happiness. "Meditation" gives birth in planes of form and formless planes, and helps to gain Higher Knowledge and Emancipation.

"Reverence" is the cause of noble parentage. "Service" is the cause of large retinue. "Transference of merit" causes one to be able to give in abundance in future births. "Rejoicing in others' merit" is productive of joy wherever one is born. Both hearing and expounding the Doctrine are conducive to wisdom.

III Good *Kamma* which produces its effect in the planes of form. It is of five types which are purely mental, and done in the process of meditation, viz:—

1. The first state of *Jhāna* or ecstasy which has five constituents:—initial application, sustained application, rapture, happiness and one-pointedness of the mind.

2. The second state of *Jhāna* which occurs together with sustained application, rapture, happiness, one-pointedness of the mind.

3. The third state of *Jhāna* which occurs together with rapture happiness and one-pointedness of the mind.

4. The fourth stage of the *Jhāna* which occurs together with happiness and one-pointedness of the mind.

5. The fifth stage of *Jhāna* which occurs together with equanimity and one-pointedness of the mind.

IV. Good *Kamma* which produces its effect in the formless planes. It is of four types which are also purely mental and done in the process of meditation, viz:—

1. Moral consciousness dwelling in the infinity of space.
2. Moral consciousness dwelling in the infinity of consciousness.
3. Moral consciousness dwelling on nothingness.
4. Moral conscious wherein perception is so extremely subtle that it cannot be said whether it is or is not.

#### Free will

*Kamma*, as has been stated above, is not fate, is not irrevocable destiny. Nor is one bound to reap all that one has sown in just proportion. The actions (*Kamma*) of men are not absolutely irrevocable destiny. Nor is one bound to reap all that one has sown in just proportion. The actions (*Kamma*) of men are not absolutely irrevocable and only a few of them are so. If, for example, one fires off a bullet out of a rifle, one cannot call it back or turn it aside from its mark. But if, instead of lead or iron ball through the air, it is an ivory ball on a smooth green board that one sets moving with a billiard cue. One can send after it and at it, another ball in the same way, and change its course. Not only that, if one is quick enough, and one has not given it too great an impetus, one might even get round to the other side of the billiard-table, and send against it a ball which would meet it straight in the line of its course and bring it to a stop on the spot. With one's later action with the cue, one modifies, or even in favourable circumstances, entirely neutralise one's earlier action. It is much the same way that *Kamma* operates in the broad stream of general life. There too one's action (*Kamma*) of a later day may modify the effects of one's action *Kamma* of a former day. If this were not so, what possibility would there ever be of man's getting free from all *Kamma* for ever. It would be a perpetually self-continuing energy that could never come to an end.

Man has therefore, a certain amount of free will and there is almost every possibility to mould his life or to modify his actions. Even a most vicious person can by his own free will and effort become the most virtuous person. One may any moment change for the better or for the worse. But everything in the world including man himself is dependent on conditions and without conditions nothing whatsoever can arise or enter into existence. Man therefore has only a

certain amount of free will and not absolute free will. According to Buddhist philosophy, everything, mental or physical, arises in accordance with the laws and conditions. If it were not so, there would reign chaos and blind chance. Such a thing, however, is impossible, and if it would be otherwise, all laws nature which modern science has discovered would be powerless.

The real, essential nature of action *Kamma* of man is mental. When a given thought has arisen in one's mind a number of times, there is a definite tendency to recurrence of that thought.

When a given act has been performed a number of times, there is a definite tendency to the repetition of that act. Thus each act mental or physical tends to constantly produce its like, and be in turn produced. If a man thinks a good thought, speaks a good word, does a good deed, the effect upon him is to increase the tendencies to goodness present in him, is to make him a better man. If on the contrary, he does a bad deed in thought or in speech or in action, he has strengthened in himself his bad tendencies, he has made himself a worse man. And having become a worse man, he will gravitate to the company of worse men in the future, and incur all the unhappiness of varying kinds that attends life in such company. On the other hand, the man of a character that is continually growing better, will naturally tend to the companionship of the good, and enjoy all the pleasantness and comforts and freedom from the ruder shocks of human life which such society connotes.

In the case of a cultured man even the effect of a greater evil may be minimised while the lesser evil of an uncultured man may produce its effect to the maximum according to the favourable and unfavourable conditions. The Buddha says:—

“Here, O Bhikkhus, a certain person is not disciplined in body, is not disciplined in morality, is not disciplined in mind, is not disciplined in wisdom, is with little good and less virtue, and lives painfully in consequence of trifles. Even a trivial evil act committed by a person will lead him to a stage of misery.”

“Here, O Bhikkhus, a certain person is disciplined in body, is disciplined in morality, is disciplined in mind, is disciplined in



wisdom, is with much good, is high souled, and lives without limitation. A similar evil act committed by such a person expiates in this life itself and not even a small effect manifests itself (after death), not to say of a great one."

"It is as if, O Bhikkus, a man were to put a lump of salt into a small cup of water. What do you think, O Bhikkhus? Would now the small amount of water in this cup become saltish and undrinkable?" "Yes, Lord" "And why?" "Because, Lord, there was very little water in the cup, and so it becomes saltish and undrinkable by this lump of salt."

"Suppose, O Bhikkhus, a man were to put a lump of salt into the river Ganges. What think you, O Bhikkhus? Would now the river Ganges become saltish and undrinkable by the lump of salt?"

"Nay, indeed, Lord." "And why not?"

"Because, Lord, the mass of water in the river Ganges is great, and so it would not become saltish and undrinkable."

"In exactly the same way, O Bhikkhus, we may have the case of a person who does some slight evil deed which brings him to a state of misery; or again, O Bhikkhus, we may have the case of another person who does the same trivial misdeed, and expiates in the present life. Not even a small effect manifests itself (after death), not to say of a great one."

"We may have, O Bhikkhus, the case of a person who is cast into a prison for half-penny, penny, or for a hundred pence; or again, O Bhikkhus, we may have the case of a person who is not cast into prison for a half-penny, for a penny, or for a hundred pence."

"Who, O Bhikkhus, is cast into prison for a half-penny, for a penny, or for a hundred pence? Whenever, O Bhikkhus, anyone is poor, needy and indigent: he, O Bhikkhus, is cast into prison for a half-penny, for a penny, or for a hundred pence."

"Who, O Bhikkhus, is not cast into prison for a half-penny, for a penny, or for a hundred pence? Whenever, O Bhikkhus, any one is rich, wealthy and affluent: he, O Bhikkhus, is not cast into prison for a half-penny, for a penny, or for a hundred pence."

"In exactly the same way, O Bhikkhus, we may have the case of a person who does some slight evil deed which brings him into a state of misery; or, again, O Bhikkhus, we may have the case of another person who does the same trivial deed, and expiates in the present life. Not even a small effect manifests itself (after death), not to say of a great one." (*Āṅguttara Nikāya, Part I, p.249*).

### Lessons Taught By Kamma

The more we understand the law of *Kamma*, the more we see how careful we must be of our acts, words and thoughts, and how responsible we are to our fellow beings. Living in the light of this knowledge, we learn certain lessons from the doctrine of *kamma*.

1. **Patience.** Knowing that the Law is our great helper if we live by it, and that no harm can come to us if we work with it, knowing also it blesses us just at the right time, we learn the grand lesson of patience, not to get excited, and that impatience is a check to progress. In suffering, we know that we are paying a debt, and we learn, and if we are wise, not to create more suffering for the future. In rejoicing, we are thankful for its sweetness, and learn, if we are wise, to be still better. Patience brings forth peace, success, happiness and security.

2. **Confidence.** The Law being just, perfect, it is not possible for an understanding person to be uneasy about it. If we are uneasy and have no confidence, it shows clearly that we have not grasped the reality of the law. We are really quite safe beneath its wings, and there is nothing to fear in all the wide universe except our own misdeeds. The Law makes man stand on his own feet and rouses his self-confidence. Confidence strengthens, or rather deepens, our peace and happiness and makes us comfortable, courageous; wherever we go the Law is our protector.

3. **Self-reliance.** As we in the past have caused ourselves to be what we now are, so by that we do now will our future be determined. A knowledge of this fact and that the glory of the future is limitless, gives us great self-reliance, and takes away that tendency to appeal for external help, which is really no help at all. "Purity and impurity belong to oneself, no one can purify another" says the Buddha.

4. Restraint. Naturally, if we realise that the evil we do will return to strike us. We shall be very careful lest we do or say or think some thing that is not good, pure and true. Knowledge of *kamma* will restrain us from wrong-doing for others' sake as well as for our own.

5. Power. The more we make the doctrine of *kamma* a part of our lives, the more power we gain, not only to direct our future, but to help our fellow beings more effectively. The practice of good *kamma*, when fully developed, will enable us to overcome evil and limitations, and destroy all the fetters that keep us from our goal, *Nibbāna*,



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# Buddhism and Peace\*

By

Dr. R. N. Jayatilleke

While fellow-scientists have been able to come together and discuss their common problems without bitterness or acrimony, the idea that people of different religions can meet and discuss topics of mutual interest is of more recent origin. This is unfortunate since it is the religious men who profess to stand for the ideals of truth and love, who should have given a lead in this matter to the others. I need not go into the historical reasons for this, but I am glad that this organisation among others has in recent times succeeded in extending its hand of fellowship beyond sectarian boundaries.

What Buddhism has to say on the theme of peace and the concepts of truth, freedom, justice and love, is, I believe particularly appropriate to our times. This view, I also believe, would be shared by most of you in respect of your own religions. This raises a number of problems, Are we all saying the same things? Or are we saying a number of things which complement and supplement each other, each of us contributing some aspect of truth regarding these concepts, values and ideals? Or can it be that only one of us (or none of us) is right and the rest are wrong? Or is it the case that our talk about these things is devoid of meaning and has only an emotive significance for us and some of our hearers? We cannot hope to solve all these problems but I believe that discussions of this sort can go a long way to help us see each other's points of view and clarify our own views about them.

It is evident that there is a common content in the higher religions. All these religions profess a belief in a Transcendent Reality, in survival, in moral responsibility and moral values, and in a good life, despite the differences when we go into details. The Christians and Muslims seek communion with God, the

Hindus seek union with Brahman and the Buddhists seek to attain Nirvana. It is equally evident that on matters on which they disagree they cannot all be true—unless it can be shown that the disagreements are purely verbal. Christianity believes in one unique Incarnation. Hinduism in several. To Islam the very idea is blasphemy. To the Buddha it depends on what you mean. Now what I have to say on the concepts of peace, truth, freedom, justice and love in Buddhism belongs partly to the common content and partly to the disparate element, which distinguishes Buddhism from other religions. It would be necessary for me to point out both, if I am to give a clear picture of the account given of these concepts in Buddhism.

Peace is a central concept in the religion of the Buddha, who came to be known as the "santi-rājā" or the "Prince of Peace". For, on the one hand the aim of the good life, as understood in Buddhism, is described as the attainment of a state of "peace" or "santi", which is a characteristic of Nirvana or the Transcendent Reality. On the other hand the practice of the good life is said to consist in "sama-cariyā" or "harmonious (literally: peaceful) living" with one's fellow beings. It was this doctrine, which gave "inward peace" (*ajjhata-santi*, Sn. 837) and resulted in "harmonious living" (or "righteous living" *dharmacariyā* - as it is sometimes called), which the Buddha for the first time in the known history of mankind sought to spread over the entire earth, when he set up, as he claimed "the kingdom of righteousness" (*dhamma-cakkam*, literally, rule of righteousness) or "the kingdom of God" (*brahma-cakkam*).\*\*

The Buddha, who in the earliest texts is said to have been "born for the good and happiness of mankind" (*manussaloke hita-*

\* Talk given on 8 April 1961 at a Seminar organised by the international Fellowship of Reconciliation, held at All Souls College, Oxford University. The Seminar was on the theme of "Religion and Peace, with special reference to the concepts of Truth, Justice, Freedom and Love."

\*\* "Brahma" means here "the highest" or the "most sublime", without theological connotations.

*sukhatāya jāto*, Sn. 683), first trained sixty-one of his disciples to attain the highest spiritual goal in this life itself and then sent them out, requesting that no two of them were to go in the same direction. They were "to preach this good doctrine, lovely in the beginning, lovely in the middle and lovely in its consummation". It is necessary to stress the importance of this training which was intended to bring about the moral (*sīla*), intuitive (*samādhi*) and intellectual-spiritual (*paññā*) development of the person. For it was only those who had attained the "inward peace" who were considered fit to preach, since according to Buddhism "it is not possible for a man who had not saved himself to (help) save another" (M. I. 46). Those who went out on such missions were to train themselves in such a way that "if brigands were to get hold of them and cut them limb by limb with a double-edged saw," they should not consider themselves to have done the bidding of the Buddha, if they showed the slightest anger towards them (M. I. 129).

The practice of "mettā" or Compassionate Love was thus an essential part of the training. The worth placed on Love in Buddhism may be gathered from the following remark of the Buddha: "None of the good works employed to acquire religious merit is worth a fraction of the value of loving-kindness" (Itivuttaka, 19-21). The word "mettā" is the abstract noun from the word "mitra" which means "friend". It is, however, not defined just as "friendliness" but as analogous to a mother's love for her only child: "Just as a mother loves her only child even more than her life, do thou extend a boundless love towards all creatures". The practice of the "highest life" or the "God-life" (*brahma-vihāra*) is said to consist in the cultivation of compassionate feelings towards all beings, sympathy (*karuṇā*) towards those in distress who need our help, the ability to rejoice with those who are justly happy (the opposite emotion to that of jealousy, envy etc.) (*muditā*) and impartiality towards all. The person who has successfully developed these qualities is said to be "one who is cleansed with an internal bathing" after bathing "in the waters of Love and Compassion for one's fellow beings" (M. I. 39). When the Buddha's disciple Ānanda suggested to him that half of the religion of the Buddha consisted in the practice of friendliness, the Buddha's rejoinder was that it was not half but the whole of the religion. It was this

emphasis on Compassion which made it possible for Buddhism to spread its message over the greater part of Asia, without resorting to military force or political power. It is the proud boast of Buddhism that not a drop of blood has been shed in propagating its message and no wars have been fought for the cause of Buddhism or the Buddha. It was able to convert people to its view by its reasonableness and the inspiring example of those who preached it. Differences of opinion there were with regard to the interpretation of the texts among the Buddhists themselves and this was inevitable in a religion which gave full freedom of thought and expression to man. But these differences did not result in fanaticism and an attempt on the part of one party to persecute the other. History records the fact that those who subscribed to the ideals of Mahayana or Theravada Buddhism were able to study side by side in the same monastery. In world conferences of Buddhists, Mahayanists and Theravadins come together despite the known differences in their views. Another aspect of this practice of compassion on the part of the Buddhists is the fact that they were the first in history to open hospitals in India, Ceylon and China for the medical treatment not only of human beings but of animals as well, thus translating into action the saying of the Buddha that "he who serves the sick serves me" (Vinaya Pitaka, Mahavagga VIII. 26).

The effect that this doctrine of compassion had on the Buddhist emperor Asoka may be seen when he says. "All men are my children and as I desire for my children that they obtain every kind of welfare and happiness both in this world and the next world, so do I desire for all men". Here was a king, unique in history, who on his conversion to Buddhism gave up military conquest as an instrument of policy not after defeat but after victory. Asoka had conquered an area almost the size of Europe but he did not extend his conquest to the southernmost part of India or try to annex Ceylon, although he could have easily done so. The Rock Edict XIII contains a personal confession of his remorse at the sight of the suffering and carnage which his military campaigns involved. When he embraced Buddhism he indulged in spiritual conquest saying that "the reverberation of war drums" was now replaced by "the reverberation of the drum of

the dharma". It appears as if Asoka was trying to emulate the example of the righteous "universal monarch" (*cakka-vatti rājā*) as depicted in the Buddhist texts. The Buddha had said that "it was possible to rule a country in accordance with dharma without resorting to harsh punitive measures or engaging in military conquests" (S, I. 116).\* The "universal monarch" who is called a "king of righteousness" (*dhamma-rājā*) governs his country as a model state in which there is both economic prosperity as well as the practice of righteousness. The idea and fame of this Just Society spreads over the earth until the entire world follows its example and comes under a single rule "without the necessity for arms or the sword" (*adaṇḍena asaṭṭhena*). In any case he seems to have been impressed by the sentiments about war expressed in the Buddhist texts. The Dhammapada says: "Victory breeds hatred for the conquered sleep in sorrow; casting aside victory and defeat the peaceful one dwells at ease" (207) "The conqueror gets someone who conquers him" (S. I. 85) "Hatred does not cease by hatred—hatred ceases by love; this is the eternal law" (Dhp. 5). The Mahayana work, the Suvarṇabhasottama Sutra, contains a plea for peace and concord between "the 84,000 kings of India".

The Buddha not only preached against war but actually intervened on one occasion to prevent a war—the first practical lesson in *ahimsā* in the field of politics. Two tribes, the Sakyas and the Koliyas, who lived on either side of a river were making warlike preparations to destroy each other because they could not agree on dividing the waters for their use. It is on this occasion that the Buddha intervened and brought about a settlement after asking the warmongers what they considered to be of greater worth—water or human lives! It is these acts of compassion of the Buddha who gave up a kingdom to show humanity the way to enlightenment, which made one of his contemporaries say of him: "I have heard it said that God is Compassionate but I have seen with my own eyes how full of Compassion the Blessed One is". It is not surprising therefore that in the Mahayana, the Buddha should be conceived of as the

Incarnation of the "highest Compassion" (*mahākaruṇika*).

The idea of Compassion has its origins in pre-Buddhistic thought. It is first met with in the Chandogya Upanishad, where it is said that one should practise *ahimsā* (non-violence) towards all creatures with the sole exception of holy places (8.15)—in other words animal sacrifices to God were permitted. The concept of *ahimsā* also finds a central place in Jainism, where the Jain ascetic goes into extremes in practising this virtue. But it was Buddhism which made *ahimsā* basically a virtue to be practised in human relations and introduced the new word "mettā" (the abstract noun from *mitra*, friend) to denote this concept. But the object of one's mettā (Compassion, Love) is not only human beings but all beings both higher and lower than the human and it came to mean the completely selfless but boundless compassion of a Buddha.

The concept of "beings higher than the human" is unintelligible except in the background of the Buddhist cosmology. According to the Buddhist conception of the cosmos, there are an innumerable number of world-systems. The Buddha says: As far as these suns and moons revolve shedding their light in space, so far extends the thousandfold world system. In it are a thousand suns, a thousand moons, thousands of earths and thousands of heavenly worlds. This is the thousand-fold minor world-system. A thousand times such a thousand-fold minor world-system is the twice-a-thousand middling world system. A thousand times such a twice-a-thousand middling world-system is the thrice-a-thousand major world system" (A. I. 227, 228; IV. 59, 60). This is a conception that partially coincides with the modern physicist's view of the cosmos, with its hundreds of galactic systems or island universes, whether we accept the interpretations of Bondi and Hoyle or Ryle. The compassion of the Buddhist is to be extended not only to the humans and animals on our earth but to the beings in all these worlds. All beings within the cosmos, however low their state of evolution may be, are said to have the capacity to evolve up to the very highest state; and however high their stature may

\* According to Buddhist tradition, there are periods in the world cycles when human beings are at the peak of moral and intellectual development, and at such times a world ruler (*cakkavatti*) is able to govern in righteousness, without the use of force.

be are said to be subject to death so long as they remain within the cosmos—but these facts teach us the same lesson, namely that it is each one's duty to help his fellow beings and that no one has any right or valid grounds to despise another.

At the human level the need for mutual help is much greater. Buddhism taught the doctrine of the equality of mankind at a time when human inequality was taken for granted. We find here for the first time the biological argument that mankind was one species. The Buddha says, "Know ye the grasses and trees.... the marks that constitute species are for them and their species are manifold. Know ye the worms and the moths and the differen. sorts of ants, the marks that constitute species are for them.....As in these species the marks that constitute species are manifold, so among men the marks that constitute species are not found..... Not as regards their hair, head, ears..... Difference there is in beings endowed with bodies, but amongst men this is not the case—the difference amongst men is nominal (only)" (Sut. anipāta, Tr. Fausboll, Sacred Books of East, Vol. 10, pp. 111-113).

The Hindu conception of society was static and was dominated by the idea of caste. This was given a divine sanction by being considered a creation of God: "God created the fourfold castes with their specific aptitude and functions" (Bhagavad Gita, IV. 13). Against this was the dynamic evolutionary conception of society as pictured in Early Buddhism. The Buddha countered the arguments that the hierarchical fourfold division of society was fundamental by pointing out that in certain societies (e. g. among the Yona-Kambojas, i. e. certain Persian states), there were only two classes, the lords and the serfs and that even this was not rigid for "sometimes the lords became serfs and the serfs lords" (M. II. 1-7). While the Theists at that time urged that men were created unequal by God, the Buddhists turned the arguments of the Theists against them. Asvaghosa, a brahman convert to Buddhism, writes in his *Vajrasuci* (circa 1st. c. B. C.) in a polemic against caste that the fatherhood of God should imply the brotherhood of men. He says: "Wonderful! You affirm that all men proceeded from One, i. e. God (Brahma); how then can there be a fourfold insuperable diversity among them? If I have four sons by one wife, the four sons having one father and mother must be all

essentially alike". We also find moral and spiritual arguments for equality to show that all people, irrespective of caste, race or rank were capable of moral development and the highest spiritual attainments. The Buddhist idea of fellowship or mettā is thus founded on the conception of the oneness of the human species, the equality of man and the spiritual unity of mankind.

The Buddhist undertaking to refrain from killing is not a negative precept and has its positive side when fully stated, viz. "One refrains from killing creatures, laying aside the stick and the sword, and abides conscientious, full of kindness, love and compassion towards all creatures and beings" (D. I. 4). A Buddhist layman has to follow a righteous mode of living (*sammā ājīva*) and this meant that certain professions were not open to him. According to the texts five trades are forbidden; he should not engage in the sale of arms (*sattha-vijjā*), the sale of human beings or animals (*satiya-vijjā*), the sale of flesh (*mamsa-vijjā*), the sale of intoxicating drinks (*majja-vijjā*) and the sale of dangerous and poisonous-drugs (*visa-vijjā*) (A. III. 208). The order of monks were exhorted to practise the following, which are said to promote unity—to be compassionate in their behaviour, their speech and their thoughts towards each other and to have all things in common (M. I. 322).

I said that the ideal in Buddhism was to attain a permanent state of mind described as the "inward peace" not in the remote future but in this life itself. This is not a passive apathetic state of quietism as some Western critics of Buddhism have thought. For the passage from our finite self-centred existence to Nirvana is pictured as one from bondage to Freedom (*vimutti*) and Power (*vāsi*), from imperfection to Perfection (*parisuddhi, paramakusala*), from unhappiness to Perfect Happiness (*paramasukhā*), from ignorance to Knowledge (*vijjā, aññā, ñāṇa*), from finite consciousness to Infinite Transcendent Consciousness (*ananta-viññāṇā*), from the impermanent to the Permanent (*nicca*), from the unstable to the Stable (*dhuva*), from fear and anxiety to Perfect Security (*abhaya*), from the evanescent to the Ineffable (*amosadhamma*), from a state of mental illness to a state of Perfect Mental Health, etc. It is a peace that passeth understanding for it is the result of what is paradoxically described both as the extinction of one's self-centred

desires and the attainment of an ultimate reality. Let me explain. According to Buddhism, the springs of action are sixfold, comprising the three immoral bases of action (akusala-mūla) and the three moral bases of action (kusala-mūla), viz.

#### Immoral bases

1. (a) *rāga* (carving—*kāma-rāga* or *kāma-taṇhā*, the desire for sense gratification; *bhava-rāga* or *bhava-taṇhā*, the desire for selfish pursuits)
- (b) *dosa* (hatred): *vibhava-taṇhā*, the desire for destruction
- (c) *moha* (delusion): erroneous beliefs.

#### Moral bases

2. *arāga*—*cāga* (Charity)  
*adosa*—*mettā* (Love)  
*amoha*—*vijjā* (Knowledge)

Toynbee has said that the Buddha failed "to distinguish between self-devoting and self-centred desires" ("An Historian's View Of Religion", p. 29). But the distinction between the two is so marked in Buddhism that the former (the Moral bases) are not even called "desires". "Desires" or "thirsts" are threefold—(1) the desire for sense-gratification (*kāma taṇhā*), (2) the desire for selfish pursuits (e. g. self-preservation, self-continuity, self-assertion, self-display, etc.; *bhava taṇhā*), (3) the desire for destruction (*vibhava taṇhā*). These desires continually seek and find temporary satisfaction (*ta:ratatrābhīnandī*) through ever remaining unsatisfied and provide the fuel for the process called "the individual". They are said to be narrow and limited (*pamāṇa-katam*, M. I. 297) while their opposites—Charity and Love—are boundless (*appamāṇa*, loc. cit.). Now the Buddha urges only the total extinction of these self-centred desires (i. e. I (a) & (b) and the complete elimination of ignorance or delusion (i. e. I (c)). This is done by gradually cultivating and developing the opposite traits of Charity, Love and Knowledge until the mind at all its levels is finally purged of all such self-centred desires and considerations. The mind is said to be "divided into two compartments" (*ubhayato abbhocchinnam*, D. III. 105), the conscious and the unconscious. As long as it is affected by the threefold desires, there is an influx of defiling impulses (*āsvava*) into the conscious mind and it is in a state of tension and unrest. Now diseases are classified as twofold, bodily

disease (*kāyiko rogo*) and mental disease (*cetasiko rogo*). It is said that we suffer from bodily disease from time to time, but that mental illness is continual until the final state of sainthood is attained. This is the concept of the healthy mind as understood in Buddhism—a state in which the self-centred desires are utterly extinguished and the mind enjoys an "inward peace", which is said to be one of indescribable happiness. Toynbee has said that this goal "looks intrinsically unattainable" (op. cit., p. 64) since desires cannot be given up without cultivating the desire to give them up. This criticism has already been forestalled and met in the Pali Canon itself. The self-centred desires are to be eliminated by depending on Desire (*tanham nissāya taṇham pahātabbam*, A. II. 146)—namely the desire for Nirvana. But this latter master-desire, it is pointed out, is not on the same footing as the first-order desires for unlike the self-centred desires, which continually seek gratification from time to time without being permanently satisfied, the master desire would achieve final satisfaction and be extinguished with the eradication of the self-centred desires and the attainment of Nirvana, which coincides with it. This is the "inward peace" spoken of in the Buddhist texts. It is a word full of meaning but it has meaning only to those who have experienced it, partially or fully. To others it is devoid of meaning in the same way in which the formulae of a physicist would be devoid of meaning to one who does not understand his subject.

This brings us to the problem of meaning and truth in Buddhism. The two are related for before we can say that a statement is true or false, we are obliged to ask whether it is meaningful or significant. It is to the credit of the Buddha that he was one of the first thinkers of the East or West to discuss the problem of the meaning of statements, particularly of the statements of religion. We cannot go into this in detail and we may state briefly that according to the Buddha, a statement is meaningful if it is in principle verifiable in the light of experience, sensory or extra-sensory. A statement should also have a basis in a person's experience before he can meaningfully assert it, so that the same statement may be meaningful in one context and meaningless in another. Meaningful statements may be true or false. Truth is said to have the characteristic of "correspondence with fact" (*yathābhūtam*). If I

believe that there is a next world, and it is the case that there is a next world, then my belief is true (M. I. 403) and otherwise false (M. I. 402). Truth must also be consistent; it is said that "truth is one and there is no second truth" (Sn. 884). But consistency is not enough for it is possible to have several internally consistent systems of thought, mutually contradicting each other. For this reason any religion based on pure (*a priori*) reasoning (*takka*) is said to be unsatisfactory for even if the reasoning is sound (*sutakkitam pi hoti*, M. I. 520) and internally consistent, the theory may be false if it does not correspond with fact.

While Buddhist tolerance is partly derived from its emphasis on Compassion, it also has its roots in its attitude to truth and its general conception of man. If men did wrong it was because they were ignorant rather than sinful and it is therefore our duty to enlighten the ignorant and reform them rather than punish them for their wrongdoing. Ignorance again cannot be replaced with knowledge by imposing one's beliefs on others, even if they were true. People have to grow up and discover the truth themselves and the most that others can do (even the Buddha) is to help them to do this. Far from being detrimental the scientific outlook was considered to be essential for the moral and spiritual development of man; and our critical faculties should be exercised to the fullest extent in the discovery of religious truth. The Buddha tells a questioner on more than one occasion: "You have raised a doubt in a situation in which you ought to suspend your judgment. Do not accept anything because it is rumored so, because it is the traditional belief, because the majority holds it, because it is found in the scriptures, because it is a product of metaphysical argument and speculation, because of a superficial investigation of facts, because it conforms with one's inclinations, because it is authoritative or because of the prestige-value of your teacher" (A. I. 191). Even his own teaching was no exception and Buddha did not demand a blind faith or allegiance for it: "One must not" he says, "accept my Dhamma (teaching) from reverence but first try it as gold is tried by fire". The sincerity and frankness on which truly religious life should be grounded, demanded healthy criticism and continual self-examination and the importance of such an outlook is nowhere so well emphasised

as in the following exhortation: "If anyone", says the Buddha, were to speak ill of me, my doctrine or my order, do not bear any ill-will towards him, be upset or perturbed at heart for if you were to be so, it would only cause you harm. If on the other hand anyone were to speak well of me, my doctrine and my order, do not be overjoyed, thrilled or elated at heart, for if so it would only be an obstacle in your way of forming a correct judgment as to whether the qualities praised in us are real and actually found in us" (D. I. 3). There is a distinction drawn in the Buddhist text between a "rational faith" (*ākāravati-saddhā*) in what is verifiable and worth trying out and a "baseless faith" (*amūlikā saddhā*) in unverifiable dogmas—the former is commended and the latter condemned.

Buddhism parts company with other religions in holding that moral and religious truths (with one exception) are not different in principle from scientific truths. Paradoxical as it may seem, it was the Buddha—i. e. a religious teacher—who was the first in the history of thought to state formally the two principles of causal determination, namely that A and B are causally related, if whenever A happens B happens and B does not happen unless A has happened. The theory of causation is central to the understanding of Buddhism. The Buddha "tells us the causes of things that arise from causes" and adds that "he who understands causation understands the dhamma and vice versa". Causation however is not Strictly Deterministic since the mind (with its acts of will) can often divert and direct the operation of causal processes and the mind is said to have the capacity to act with degrees of freedom according to its state of development. The Buddhist concept of causation therefore stands midway between Indeterminism (*adhicca-amuppāda* Skr. *yadracca*) on the one hand and Strict Determinism (*niyati*) on the other. There were three forms of Determinism prevalent at the time to which Buddhism was—opposed one was Natural Determinism (*svabhāva-vāda*) which held that everything that happens is due to the innate constitution of things, another was Karmic Determinism (*pubbekatahetu*. Skr. *purātanakarma-kṛtam*), which held that everything that happens to an individual was due to his past Karma; lastly, there was Theistic Determinism (*issaranimāna-vāda*), which held that all that happens



was due to the fiat or will of a Personal God who has created the universe and sustains it.

In the universe there operate physical laws (*utuniyāma*), biological laws (*bijaniyāma*), psychological laws (*cittaniyāma*) and moral and spiritual laws (*dhammaniyāma*). While the natural scientists tell us about the first three, the Buddha discovers and reveals the latter. It is said that whether the Buddhas appear or not, these laws operate and we are subject to them. All that the Buddha does is to discover (or re-discover) them. What is thus discovered is said to be verifiable by each and everyone of us, by following the path that leads to their discovery. It is a contingent fact that the moral and spiritual life (i. e. the religious life) is both possible and desirable in the universe in which we live. If the universe was different from what in fact it is (e. g. if Indeterminism or Strict Determinism was the case, if the soul was identical with the body or was different from it, if there were no Transcendent Reality)—then the religious life may not have been possible and would not have been desirable.

One of the spiritual truths stated in Buddhism is the law of karma. As understood in Buddhism it merely states that there is an observable correlation between morally good acts and pleasant consequences to the individual and morally evil acts and unpleasant consequences. It does not state that all our present experiences are due to our past karma. This is in fact emphatically denied, where it is shown that many of our experiences are due to our own actions in this life or to causal factors (such as the weather, our state of physical health), which have nothing to do with our karma. The law of karma as stated is a causal correlation, which guarantees the fact of individual moral responsibility. It is said to be a correlation that is observable and verifiable by developing one's faculty of retrocognition, i. e. the ability to recall one's past lives. This faculty and others are said to be within the reach of all of us to develop by the practice of meditation. What evidence is there to believe in rebirth? Since rebirth or "reincarnation" is said to be a meaningful concept and a logical possibility (see A. J. Ayer, *The Problem of Knowledge*, Penguin Books, 1957, pp. 193, 194), the problem is whether it is the case or not. Briefly, the evidence today is of two sorts—(1) there are cases of spontaneous recall of previous lives, especially on the part of young children,

which have been verified and claimed to be found true. There was a recent case in Ceylon reported in "The Ceylon Observer" of 19th January, 1951 (cp. *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, December 15, 1935, "The Case of Shanti Devi"; also, "The Milwaukee Sentinel", September 25, 1892, reported in Ralph Shirley, *The Problem of Rebirth*); (2) there is also experimental evidence. People under deep hypnosis are able to recall not only the lost memories of this life but of previous lives as well (see a recent study by Dr. Jonathan Rodney, *The Explorations of a Hypnotist*, Elek Books, London, 1959—where the experiments are varied so as to eliminate hallucination). Several interpretations are possible of these experimental data but I believe that the simplest and best hypothesis to account for the data I have seen so far, is that of rebirth. It is hoped that with more and better experimentation on this verifiable theory of survival, we shall be able to know the truth about it before long.

While the Upanishadic thinkers interpreted the mystic experiences that they had as being due to the grace of God (*dhātuh prasādāt*, *Katha Upanishad* 2.20), Buddhism explains these experiences as due to the natural development of the mind. For Buddhism they result from the operation of causal processes relating to religious experience. They are, however, not considered subjective and are held to be of great value, though Buddhism does not subscribe to the metaphysical and theological interpretations given to them in the Upanishads and the rest of mystical literature in the East and West. One of the prerequisites for developing these experiences, which give meaning to the religious life, is the absolute moral integrity of the individual.

I have tried to illustrate what I meant by saying that for Buddhism spiritual truths were on a par with scientific truths. There is however one 'experience', if it may be called an experience, which is beyond the empirical, phenomenal and causal. This is the experience of Nirvana, which is called "the Truth" (*vacca*). This illumination is said to be comparable to that of a man born blind obtaining sight after a physician has treated him. It is described as a flaring up of a great light (*ālōko udapādi*) and is said to coincide with the extinction of the fires of greed, hatred and delusion, and the attainment of the peace that passeth understanding. It is not a conditioned

causal experience, since Nirvana is said to be the Unconditioned (*asankhata*), the Uncaused (*akataṃ, na paṭicca saṃuppannaṃ*) and the Timeless (*nibbānaṃ na vattaḅbam atītaṃ ti pi anāgataṃ ti pi paccuppannaṃ ti pi*), not located in Space (*na katthari, kuhiñci*). To say that one exists (*hoti, upapajjati*) in Nirvana or ceases to exist (*na hoti, na upapajjati*) are both said to be wrong. The question was put to the Buddha in his own life-time: "The person who has attained the goal—does he cease to exist or does he exist eternally without defect; explain this to me; O Lord, as you understand it". The Buddha explains, "A person who has attained the goal is beyond measure—he does not have that with which one can describe him" (*yena naṃ vajju taṃ tassa natthi, Sn 1076*). Elsewhere the Buddha explains that the question is meaningless. It is the concepts with which we are familiar that make us ask it. We can only conceive of two alternatives—the annihilation of the individual at some point of time or his eternal duration in time. The Buddha illustrates what he means with an example. If some one who has seen a fire in front of him go out, were to ask in which direction the fire has gone, northern, southern, eastern or western—it is a question which cannot be answered, since the question itself is meaningless. Wittgenstein takes the same example to illustrate the same point: Thus it can come about that we are not able to rid ourselves of the implications of our symbolism which seems to admit of a question like, "Where does the flame of a candle go to when it is blown out? Where does the light go to? We have been obsessed with our symbolism. We may say that we are led into puzzlement by an analogy which irresistably drags us on" (*The Blue and Brown Books, Oxford, p. 108*). The Buddha classified questions into four types, (1) questions which can be answered categorically, (2) questions which can be answered only after analysis, (3) questions which must be answered with a counter-question, and (4) questions which have to be put aside as meaningless. The question whether the saint exists in Nirvana or not, is said to be meaningless, although there is a psychological urge and a linguistic reason for asking it. Another set of questions which the Buddha set aside as meaningless were the questions, "Is the soul identical with the body?" or "Is the soul different from the body?". Having discarded as an empiricist and a verificationist the concept of the soul or substance is

meaningless these questions too were meaningless since they contained a meaningless concept. The traditional explanation says that these questions are like asking whether "the child of this barren women is fair or dark?" It was not agnosticism which made the Buddha discard these questions but a realisation of their very nature. It is not that there was something that he did not know but that he knew only too well what he was talking about. Where language failed the Buddha literally followed the dictum: Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent" but his silence was more eloquent than words. To those who have attained Nirvana, no explanation was necessary, to those who have not, no explanation was possible. The Buddha was very meticulous in the use of language. He often reformulates questions or removes ambiguities in words before answering them in order to remove misleading implications—he claims that he was not a dogmatist (*ekamsa-vādo*) but an analyst (*vibhajja-vādo*). The truth of Nirvana or the ultimate reality is thus strictly inexpressible but all else that belongs to the realm of moral and spiritual truth can be stated and stated precisely.

The final state of "inward peace" is also a state of Perfect Freedom (*sammā-vimutti*), for the mind then ceases to be conditioned by the load of its past and the desires raging within it. It becomes master of itself. In the state of normal everyday consciousness we are finite conditioned beings. According to what the texts say, we are conditioned by what we inherit from mother and father, by the store of unconscious memories going back to our childhood and our previous lives, by the desires and impulses which agitate within it and by the stimuli which come from the "six doors of perception", i. e. the data of the five senses our environment and the ideas that we imbibe and respond to. But despite the fact that the ordinary man is thus largely conditioned by his inner nature and environment, he has a certain degree of freedom to act within limits. During the time of the Buddha there were violent disputes on this problem between two schools of thought. There were *akiriya-vādins* who denied freewill because they were determinists in some sense or another and in the opposite camp were the *kiriya-vādins* who upheld freewill. The Buddha held that man was possessed of a degree of freewill, while not denying that he was largely conditioned. What is meant by

attaining salvation in Buddhism is the attainment of full freedom from our relative state of bondage. This is possible because of the very fact that we possess a degree of freewill and the processes of sublimation and deconditioning are causal processes, which can be understood and directed by the mind. It also means that man's salvation lies in his own hands and that he cannot and should not depend on an external saviour. As the Dhammapada (165) says :

By ourselves is evil done,  
By ourselves we pain endure,  
By ourselves we cease from wrong,  
By ourselves we become pure.  
No one saves us but ourselves,  
No one can and no one may,  
We ourselves must tread the path;  
Buddhas only show the way.

The Buddha says that there are four false religions and four unsatisfactory religions in this world (Majjhima Nikāya, Sandaka Sutta). One of the four false religions is that which denies causation and asserts that "beings are miraculously doomed or saved" (*natthi hetu natthi paccayo sattānaṃ sankilesāya... visuddhiyā*, M. I. 516). Buddhists pray that "all beings may be happy" (*sabbe sattā sukhitā honu*) but they do not pray for salvation either to the Buddha or to anyone else. When our salvation depends on what we ourselves do with our freewill, prayer is superfluous and is nothing more than a pious wish or hope. The Buddha compares a person who prays to God for salvation to one who wishes to cross a river and get to the other bank, but hopes to achieve this by incessantly calling on the other bank to come to him (D. I, 244, 245).

Religious truths, with the exception of the truth about Nirvana, are thus statable. They are all verifiable and have meaning only to those who verify them. There is individual moral responsibility and therefore justice in the universe. Freedom we have in a limited sense, which makes it possible for us to attain Freedom in the absolute sense. Seeking our own salvation may appear to be a selfish pursuit, but it is a paradoxical fact not only that we can attain this only by living in a completely selfless manner but that the goal itself is one in which our-self-centred individuality is lost in a state "beyond measure". Selfless charity (*cāga*), compassio-

nate love (*mettā*) and enlightened behaviour (*vijjācarana*) is what we have to develop in attaining this goal. The Buddhist monk does not cut himself away completely from society. His isolation is intended to provide him with the leisure to develop his mind and spiritual vision. He is thus in a position to speak from direct experience about the nature of spiritual truths and give guidance and advice to his fellow beings. He is one who is expected to specialise in his field of inquiry as much as the physicist specialises in his. The development of the mind is a full-time job and the findings of these explorations are of no less interest and value to society than the findings of the natural scientist working in his laboratory. Both have something to offer to society; and monasticism, if understood rightly has a big part as yet to play in the moral and spiritual regeneration of mankind.

There is no easy solution to the problem of how we can have peace on earth and goodwill among mankind. The West believes that their military potential is keeping the Communist monster at bay, while the Communists in turn are convinced that their military might prevents the Capitalist demon from swallowing them. Each side is certain that war is the lesser evil to being dominated by their opponents. The great powers are working for peace by forging the weapons of war and talking about peace for propagandist purposes. But the real alternative to peace today is the destruction of mankind. What is really happening is that while half the world is spending colossal amounts of money on armaments, the other half is dying of starvation, malnutrition and disease in an age when all this can be prevented if the resources are available and goodwill is present. People and governments tend to do what is expedient rather than what is morally good. Can we say that in such a world people have much faith in moral and spiritual values? There is hope in the possibility that the very fear of the dire consequences of the next war may prevent it. It would be too much to hope for a great power to have the moral courage and the spiritual strength to disarm unilaterally without fear of the consequences, but for those who love humanity more than themselves or nations there seems to me to be no other alternative but to work unreservedly for pacifism.

## THE REAL VALUES OF TRUE BUDDHIST MEDITATION

(Extract from the paper read to the press representatives of Israel by *Thray Sithu U Ba Khin*,  
President of the Internatinal Meditation Centre on the 12th December 1961).

### I. THE FOUNDATION OF A BUDDHIST

A Buddhist is a person who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.

We have four categories of Buddhists, namely.—

- (1) Bhaya = A Buddhist—because of danger;
- (2) Lābha = A Buddhist—because of need for gratification;
- (3) Kula = A Buddhist—because of birth;
- (4) Saddhā = A Buddhist—because of faith.

2. Buddhists may be further divided into two classes, namely,

- (i) Those who intend to make a bid for release in this very life;
- (ii) Those who are just accumulating virtues (Pāramī) with a view to becoming
  - (a) Buddha
  - (b) Pacceka Buddha
  - (c) Agga Sāvaka—Chief Disciples (2)
  - (d) Mahā Sāvaka—Leading Disciples (80)
  - (e) Arahat.

3. For the consummation of the vow to become a Buddha, Pacceka Buddha etc., the length of time that is required for the accumulation of the virtues is roughly,

(i) For (a) Viriyādhika Buddha	∞ ...	16 Asaṅkhyeyas and	100000 Kappas (World cycles)
(b) Saddhādhika Buddha	... ..	8 Asaṅkhyeyas and	100000 Kappas (World cycles)
(c) Paññādhika Buddha	... ..	4 Asaṅkhyeyas and	100000 Kappas (World cycles)
(ii) For a Pacceka Buddha	... ..	2 Asaṅkhyeyas and	100000 Kappas (World cycles)
(iii) For an Agga Sāvaka	... ..	1 Asaṅkhyeya and	100000 Kappas (World cycles)
(iv) For a Mahā Sāvaka	... ..		100000 Kappas (World cycles)
(v) For an Arahat	... ..		100—1000 Kappas (World cycles) or thereabouts.

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Viriyādhika	=	Predominating factor—Effort
Saddhādhika	=	" " —Faith
Paññādhika	=	" " —Wisdom
Asaṅkhyeya	=	A unit followed by 140 ciphers.

4. Once a person becomes a Buddhist, he acquires the seed of Buddha-Dhamma which he is to develop according to his capacity. Every Buddhist is expected to *walk on* the Noble Eight-fold Path to attain the goal of Nibbāna in his capacity as a Buddha or a Pacceka Buddha, or Agga Sāvaka etc., as he may choose and work out for consummation.

5. Amongst those, who intend to make a bid for release in the same life time, there are four types of individuals, namely,

- (1) Ugghātitaññū;
- (2) Vipañcitaññū;
- (3) Neyya; an
- (4) Padaparama.

An *Ugghātitaññū* is an individual who encounters a Buddha in person and who is capable of attaining the Holy Path and Holy Truth through the mere hearing of a short discourse.

A *Vipañcitaññū* is an individual who can attain the Path and the Fruits only when a discourse is expounded to him at some considerable length.

A *Neyya* is an individual who has not the capability of attaining the Path and the Fruits through the hearing of either a short or a long discourse, but who must make a study of the teachings and practise the provisions contained therein for days, months and years in order that he may attain the Path & the Fruits.

In this connection, to a question raised by Bodhi Rājakumāra, Buddha said, "I cannot say what exactly should be the time for the complete realization of the Truth. Even assuming that you renounce the world and join the order of my Sanghas, it might take you seven years or six years or five years or four years or three years or two years or one year as the case may be. Nay, it can be six months or three months or two months or one month. On the otherhand, I do not also discount the possibility of attainment of Arahatsip in a fortnight or seven days or in one day or even in a fraction of a day. It depends upon so many factors."

A *Padaparama* is an individual who, though he encounters a Buddha Sāsana, and puts forth the utmost possible effort in both the study and practice of the Dhamma, cannot attain the Paths and the Fruits within this life time. All that he can do is to accumulate habits and potentials. Such a person cannot

obtain release from Samsara within his life time. If he dies while practising Samatha for Samādhi (Calm), or Vipassanā for Pañña (Insight), and secures rebirth either as a human being or a Deva in his next existence, he can attain the Path and the Fruits in the existence within the present Buddha Sāsana which is to last for five thousand years from the date of the passing away of the Buddha into Mahā Pari-nibbāna.

It is therefore to be assumed that only those quite matured in the accumulation of virtues (Pāramī), such as those of the four types of individuals referred to above, will be *inclined* to make that bid for release and take seriously to courses of Buddhist Meditation. As a corollary, we have no doubt that whoever is determined to follow strictly and diligently the Noble Eight-Fold Path through a course of Buddhist Meditation under the guidance of a *qualified* Teacher, is an individual either of a *Neyya* or *Padaparama* type.

## II. THE ESSENCE OF BUDDHA-DHAMMA

The Buddha-Dhamma is subtle, deep, and difficult to understand. It is by strictly and diligently following the Noble Eight-Fold Path that one can

- (1) come to the realisation of the Truth of suffering or ill,
- (2) annihilate the cause of Suffering, and then
- (3) come to the end of it.

Only the accomplished saint, only the Arahats, can fully understand the Truth of Suffering or ill. As the Truth of Suffering is realised, the causes of Suffering become automatically destroyed, and so, one eventually comes to the end of Suffering or ill. What is most important in the understanding of the Buddha Dhamma is the realisation of the Truth of Suffering or ill through the process of meditation in accordance with the three steps of Sila, Samādhi and Pañña of the Noble Eight-Fold Path. As the Buddha said, "It is difficult to shoot from a distance an arrow after arrow through a narrow keyhole and miss not once. It is more difficult to shoot and penetrate with the tip of a hair split a hundred times a piece of hair similarly split. It is still more difficult to penetrate the fact that 'All this is suffering or ill'."

He, who has by the practice of Buddha Dhamma passed into the four streams of sanctity and enjoyed the Four Fruitions, can appreciate the six attributes of the Dhamma, namely—

(1) The Dhamma is not the result of conjecture or speculation, but the result of personal attainments, and it is precise in every respect.

(2) The Dhamma produces beneficial results *here and now* for those who practise it in accordance with the techniques evolved by the Buddha.

(3) The effect of Dhamma on the person practising it is immediate in that it has the quality of simultaneously removing the causes of Suffering with the understanding of the Truth of Suffering.

(4) The Dhamma can stand the test of those who are anxious to do so. They can know for themselves what the benefits are.

(5) The Dhamma is part of one's own self, and is therefore susceptible of ready investigation.

(6) The Fruits of Dhamma can be fully experienced by the eight types of Noble Disciples, namely—

- (a) One, who has attained the first Path of Sanctity, called Sotāpatti Magga.
- (b) One, who has attained the first Fruition of Sanctity, called Sotāpatti Phala.
- (c) One, who has attained the second Path of Sanctity, called Sakadāgāmi Magga.
- (d) One, who has attained the second Fruition of Sanctity, called Sakadāgāmi Phala.
- (e) One, who has attained the third Path of Sanctity, called Anāgāmi Magga.
- (f) One, who has attained the third Fruition of Sanctity, called Anāgāmi Phala.
- (g) One, who has attained the fourth Path of Sanctity, called Arahatta Magga.
- (h) One, who has attained the fourth Fruition of Sanctity and thus becomes an Arahat.

### III. ON THE PATH (Training at the Centre)

Whoever is desirous of undergoing a course of training in Buddhist Meditation must go along the Noble Eight-Fold Path. This Noble Eight-Fold Path was laid down by Buddha in his first sermon to the five Ascetics (Pañca Vaggi) as a means to the end, and all that is necessary for the student is to *follow strictly and diligently* the three steps of *Sīla*, *Samādhi*, *Pañña*, which form the essence of the said Noble Eight-Fold Path.

#### *Sīla*

( *Precept* )

1. Right Speech.
2. Right Action.
3. Right Livelihood.

#### *Samādhi*

( *Equanimity of Mind* )

4. Right Exertion.
5. Right Attentiveness.
6. Right Concentration.

#### *Pañña*

( *Wisdom-Insight* )

7. Right contemplation.
8. Right Understanding.

#### **Sīla :**

For the first step, *viz.*, *Sīla*, the student will have to maintain a minimum standard of morality by way of a promise to refrain from killing sentient beings, stealing others' property, committing sexual misconduct, telling lies and taking intoxicating drinks. This promise is not, I believe, detrimental to any religious faith. As a matter of fact, we noticed good moral qualities in foreigners who came to the centre for courses of meditation and a promise of the kind was of no moment to them.

#### **Samādhi :**

It is the second step for the development of the power of concentration to one-pointedness of Mind. It is a way of training the Mind to become tranquil, pure, and strong, and therefore forms the essence of religious life, whether he be a Buddhist, a Jew, a Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim, or a Sikh. It is, in fact, the greatest common denominator of all religions. Unless one can get the Mind freed from the impurities (*Nivarana*) and develop it to a state of purity, he can hardly identify himself with the *Brahmā* or God. Although different methods are used by people of different religions, the goal

for the development of Mind is the same, viz., a perfect state of physical and mental calm. The student at the Centre is helped to develop the power of concentration to one-pointedness by encouraging him to focus his attention to a spot on the upper lip at the base of the nose synchronizing the inward and outward motion of respiration with the silent awareness of in-breath and out-breath. Whether the induction of life is from the mental forces (Saṅkhāra) of one's own actions as in Buddhism, or from God as in Christianity, the symbol of life is all the same. It is the rhythm, pulsation, or vibration latent in Man. Respiration is, in fact, a reflection of this symbol of life. In the Ānāpāna meditation technique (*i.e.*, that of respiration mindfulness) which is followed at the Centre, one great advantage is that the respiration is not only natural, but also available at all times for the purpose of anchoring one's attention to it, to the exclusion of all other thoughts. With a determined effort to narrow down the range of thought waves firstly to the area around the nose with respiration mindfulness and gradually with the wave-length of respiration becoming shorter and shorter to a spot on the upper lip with just the warmth of the breath, there is no reason why a good student in meditation should not be able to secure the one-pointedness of Mind in a few days of training. There are always *pointers* to the progress of this meditation when steered in the right direction, by way of symbols which take the form of something "white" as opposed to anything "black". Rather, they are in the form of clouds or cotton wool, and sometimes in shapes of white as of smoke or cobwebs or flower or disc, but when the attention becomes more concentrated, they appear as flashes or points of light or as a tiny star or moon or sun. If these pointers appear in meditation (of course with eyes closed), then it should be taken for granted that "Samādhi" is being established. What is essential, then, for the student is to try after each short spell of relaxation to get back to *Samādhi* with the pointer of "light" as quickly as possible. If he can do this, he is quite ready to be switched on to Vipassanā meditation to gain insight into the Ultimate Truth and enjoy the Great Peace of Nibbāna. If he is able to focus his attention to *one point* at the base of the nose with a *minute point of light* remaining stationary for some time, it is all the better, because at that time he reaches the "Upacāra

Samādhi" or "Neighbourhood concentration".

"Mind is intrinsically pure", said Buddha. "It becomes polluted, however, by the absorption of impurities (Akusala forces)." "In the same way as salt water can be distilled into pure water, so also a student in Ānāpāna meditation can eventually get his Mind distilled of impurities and brought to a perfect state of purity."

### Pañña

Pañña means insight into what is true of nature and is realised only when one has attained the Paths of Sanctity (Magga) and enjoyed the Fruits (Phala) of his endeavours in Buddhist Meditation. Meditation is inseparable with the development of the power of mind towards Samādhi and the intimate study of what is true of nature towards the realisation of the Truth. When the student has reached a certain level of Samādhi, preferably the Upacāra Samādhi, the course of training is changed to Vipassanā or Insight. This requires the use of the powerful lens of Samādhi already developed and involves an examination of the inherent tendencies of all that exists within one's ownself. He is taught to become sensitive to the on-going processes of his own organism, which in other words are atomic reactions ever taking place in all living beings. When the student becomes engrossed with such sensations, which are the products of nature, he comes to the realisation, physically and mentally, of the Truth that his whole physical being is after all a changing mass. This is the fundamental concept of *Anicca* in Buddhism—the nature of change that is ever taking place in everything, whether animate or inanimate, that exists in this universe. The corollary is the concept of *Dukkha*—the innate nature of suffering or ill—which becomes identified with life. This is true because of the fact that the whole structure of a being is made up of atoms (Kalāpas in Buddhism) all in a state of perpetual combustion. The last concept is that of *Anatta*. You call a substance what appears to you to be a substance. In reality there is no substance as such. As the course of meditation progresses, the student comes to the realisation that there is no substantiality in his so-called self, and there is no such thing as the core of a being. Eventually he breaks away the ego-centralism in him—both in respect to mind and body. He then

emerges out of meditation with a new outlook—ego-less and self-less—alive to the fact that whatever happens in this Universe is subject to the fundamental laws of cause and effect. He knows with his inward eye the illusory nature of the separate self.

#### IV. THE FRUITS OF MEDITATION

The Fruits of Meditation are innumerable. They are embodied in the discourse on the advantages of a Samana's life (Samaññaphala Sutta). The very object of becoming a Samana or Monk is to follow strictly and diligently the Noble Eight-Fold Path and enjoy not only the fruits (Phala) of Sotapatti, Sagadāgāmi, Anāgāmi and Arahatta, but also to develop many kinds of faculties. A layman, who takes to meditation to gain insight into the Ultimate Truth, also has to work in the same way and if his potentials are good he may also enjoy a share of those fruits and faculties.

Only those who take to meditation with good intentions can be assured of success. With the development of the purity and the power of the Mind backed by the Insight into the Ultimate Truth of Nature, one might be able to do a lot of things in the right direction for the benefit of mankind.

*Buddha said:—*

“O monks, develop the power of concentration. He who is developed in the power of concentration sees things in their true perspective”

This is true of a person who is developed in Samādhi. It must be all the more so in the case of a person who is developed not only in Samādhi but also in Pañña (Insight).

It is a common belief that a man, whose power of concentration is good and can secure a perfect balance of mind at will, can achieve better results than a person who is not so developed. There is, therefore, definitely many advantages that accrue to a person who undergoes a successful course of training in meditation, whether he be a religious man, an administrator, a politician, a business man or a student.

My own case may be cited as an example. If I have to say something here about myself, it is with a sincere desire and with no other motive whatsoever, to

illustrate just what practical benefits can accrue to a person practising Buddhist meditation. The events are factual and, of course, one cannot deny the facts.

These are as follows:—

I took up Buddhist meditation seriously from January 1937. My life sketch in “Who is Who” of the Guardian Magazine, December 1961 gives an account of the duties and responsibilities of Government, which I have been discharging from time to time. I retired from the service of Government from 26th March 1953 on attaining the age of 55 years, but was re-employed as from that date *till now* in various capacities, most of the time holding two or more separate posts equivalent to those of Heads of Departments. At a time I was holding three separate sanctioned appointments of the status of Head of a Department for nearly three years, and on another occasion four such sanctioned posts simultaneously for about a year.

In addition, there were also a good number of special assignments either as member of Standing Committees in the Departments of Prime Minister and National Planning or as Chairman or member of Adhoc Committees.

Dr. Elizabeth K. Nottingham in her paper on “Buddhist Meditation in Burma” asked,

“May it (meditation) not possibly help to create a reservoir of calm and balanced energy to be used for the building of a “welfare state” and as a bulwark against corruption in public life?”

To this question, in view of statement “A” placed before you, my answer would definitely be “Yes”. I can say this with conviction, because the achievements in all spheres of work happened to be most outstanding in spite of the fact that each of the posts viz. the Director of Commercial Audit, the Chairman of the State Agricultural Marketing Board, and the Principal, Government Institute for Accounts and Audit, is a challenge to any senior officer of Government.

I was appointed Director of Commercial Audit, i.e. as Head of the Directorate of Commercial Audit with effect from 11-6-56 to reorganise the Directorate which was formed on 4-10-55 with a staff of just 50 men including only 3 qualified Accountants. The



problem was to re-organise the Directorate and raise the standard of its efficiency to cope with the work of audit of transactions of the developing Boards and Corporations of Burma, the annual receipts and payments of which were roughly 150 and 180 crores of kyats respectively in 1955-56.

Next, I was appointed as Chairman of the State Agricultural Marketing Board on 21-6-56 (just 10 days after appointment as Director of Commercial Audit) to take charge of the affairs of the Board, which were found to be deteriorating with the accounts in arrears for five years, the surplus stock at the end of the preceding year at 1.7 million tons and the market price of rice (S.M.S.) fallen from £ 60/- per ton in 1953 to £ 34/- per ton in 1956. There was also the problem of disunity between the officers and members of the subordinate ranks.

In 1958, acting upon the recommendation of Boards Enquiry Commission (headed by the Prime Minister) in which I was a member, the establishment of a Government Institute for Accounts and Audit was mooted. Burma was extremely short of Accountants and Account clerks. The result was that with the exception of two organisations of pre-war origin, the accounts of Boards and Corporations were badly in arrears, *i.e.* for 2 to 4 years, apart from a large number of irregularities which came to notice. I was accordingly charged, in addition to my own existing duties, with the responsibility of establishing a State Institute of Government Accounts and Audit for the purpose of giving training to the officers and staff of all the Boards and Corporations in Burma. I assumed charge of the post of Principal of the Government Institute for Accounts and Audit with effect from 1-4-58 for spade work, and the Institute was formally opened by the Prime Minister on 11th of July 1958.

The results of these undertakings will surely illustrate what "a reservoir of calm and energy" one can create with Buddhist meditation to be used for the building of a "welfare state."

## V. HUMAN RELATIONS

The attitude towards life of a Buddhist, who makes a bid for release during this life time differs from the one who is in the process of accumulation of virtues for consummation of his vow to become a Buddha. For

example, Raja Gahara and Sāvatti were the chief seats of the Buddha during his life time. Raja Gahara was the Kingdom of Bimbisāra, who had made a bid for release during the same life time and had attained the first Path of Sanctity and become an Ariya. He was very devoted to the Lord Buddha and built a stupendous monastery known as the Veluwunna Monastery for the Buddha and his Disciples. He accorded pardon to all the citizens who had committed crimes, if they join the order of the Buddha's sanghas. He was known as King Abaya or the Harmless King. He would not himself harm anybody and would avoid encouraging others to harm anybody. His power in administration was his love for humanity. On the other hand, Sāvatti was the Kingdom of Pasenadi Kosala, who was a king very much devoted to the Lord Buddha. In fact, Buddha stayed at Sāvatti longer than elsewhere. This king was in the process of accumulation of virtues to become a Buddha and although he would by all possible means try to avoid doing harm to others, where occasion demanded, he would be prepared to suffer himself the consequences of saving those depending upon him. Once he stopped at the Buddha's monastery on his way back to the palace after his conquest of the enemy in a battle which took place at the border of his kingdom. He led the army to fight out the enemies to save his country and his people from the invaders, failing which, his countrymen would have suffered their maltreatment and tortures. When he mentioned to the Buddha his conquest over the enemies the Buddha smiled and told him, "You have made more enemies than you had before the incident." It can, therefore, be understood that those who are in the process of accumulation of virtues cannot, at times, avoid committing an offence which would take them to the sub-human planes of existence, and in consequence are prepared to suffer themselves for the offence for the sake of humanity. As to how loving-kindness reinforced with the power of Truth could do something tangible in the matter of human relations, let me cite a few of my own experiences.

I was required by the Prime Minister to investigate into the many irregularities suspected in the State Agricultural Marketing Board, and was accordingly appointed on 15-8-55 as Chairman of the S.A.M.B. Special Enquiry Committee. The Reports made by

me to the Government led to further enquiries by the Bureau of Special Investigations, and their enquiries led to the arrest of four Officers of the Board including the General Manager during the time of the annual conference of the Board's Officers. This was so much resented by the Officers in conference that they submitted resignations *en masse* from their appointments under the Board. This action by the officers created an impasse and the situation became aggravated when the Union of Employees of the Board gave support to their cause through the medium of their all Burma annual conference being held at Pegu. The Government decided to accept their resignations, and this decision upset most of the officers, who half-heartedly had taken that course of action. Eventually, after some negotiations by third parties, they withdrew their resignations and surrendered themselves to the Government for a token penalty. It was in this atmosphere that I had to join the State Agricultural Marketing Board as its Chairman before I could forget their slogans denouncing the Special Enquiry Committee and the Bureau of Special Investigations. However, I had no grudge against anybody, because I had worked for the best interests of the country and was sure that I could prevail upon them my point of view that my acceptance of the offer of the post of Chairman of the Board was to save the situation of the Board and the country, at that critical juncture and to work for the efficiency and welfare of the employees, as well as other people connected with the business of the Board. In point of fact, after a few meetings with the representatives of these bodies, I should say I had really turned the tide. There was re-union between the officers and the staff, co-ordination between the Board and the Millers and other traders. New plans were drawn up and improved techniques introduced. The results happened to be what nobody would have dared even to think of. They have been already pointed out in the section "The Fruits of Meditation." For the whole-hearted co-operation and unrelenting effort made for the success of the undertaking I recommended very strongly, and the Government was very kind to grant the title of "Wunna Kyawhtin" to the two officers of the Board, one of whom was the Deputy General Manager (Administration) and the other, President of the State Agricultural Marketing Board Employees' Union. Employees' Unions

normally run counter to Government, and I presume such a case in which the President of an Employees' Union was awarded a title must be rare.

For the Directorate of Commercial Audit, the case is not at all difficult. There is a Buddhist Society, many of the members of which are my disciples in meditation, and there is also a Social Club, where there is brotherly feeling between all the officers and staff of the Directorate. Religious functions are held annually where one and all join hands for the common objective, and twice a year they pay homage to the Director, both as a Teacher and as the Head of the Organisation. The Social Club arranges annual trips in a chartered launch or other means to out stations for relaxation where members of the employees' families also join, and a pleasant atmosphere is created for all. All these help to promote understanding between each other and pave the way for efficiency in the Directorate.

For the Institute of Accounts & Audit where teachers with extra-ordinary patience and goodwill are required apart from their qualifications and teaching experience, the Vice-Principal and the lecturers are mostly those who have taken courses of meditation at the Centre. To whatever types the students may belong, the good intentions of the teachers prevail upon them and the response of the students in all the classes has been consistently excellent. From the date of the inception of the Institute, there was not a single complaint from the students. On the other hand, at the close of each course of study there are parties held by the students in honour of the Principal and the teachers, where they invariably expressed their gratitude for the kindness shown to them and the pains taken to help them understand their lessons thoroughly.

I have no doubt, therefore, that meditation plays a very important role in the development of the mind to enable one to have the best in human relations.

## VI. BY-PRODUCTS

In the section "Fruits of Meditation", I have explained what the advantages of meditation can be. Particularly, I would refer to the advantages of meditation as mentioned in the Samañña Phala Sutta (Discourse on the Advantages of a Samañña's Life), and the records of appreciation by Foreigners in

the "Introduction to the International Meditation Centre." What I am going to state here is about the very minor by products of meditation relating to physical and mental ills. This is not the age for showing miracles, such as rising into the air, and walking on the surface of water, which would be of no direct benefit to the people in general. But, if the physical and mental ills of men could be removed through meditation it should be something for one to ponder over.

According to the Buddhist way of thinking, each action, whether by deed, word or thought, produces or leaves behind a force of action (Saṅkhāra) which goes to the credit or debit account of the individual according to its good or bad objective. This invisible something which we call "Saṅkhāra" or forces of action is the product of the Mind with which each action is related. It has no element of extension. The whole universe is permeated with the forces of action of all living beings. The inductive theory of life has the origin, we believe, in these forces, each individual absorbing continually the forces of his own actions, at the same time releasing new forces of actions by deeds, words and thoughts creating, so to say, an un-ending cycle of life with pulsation, rhythm and vibration as its symbol. Let us take the forces of good actions as positive and the forces of bad actions as negative. Then, we get what we may call the positive and negative reaction, which is ever taking place everywhere in the Universe. It is taking place in all animate and inanimate objects, in my body, in your body and in the bodies of all living beings. When one can understand these concepts through a proper course of meditation, he knows nature as it truly is. With the awareness of the Truth of Anicca and or Dukkha and or Anatta, he develops in him what we may call the sparkling illumination of "Nibbāna Dhātu", a power that dispels all impurities or poisons, the products of bad actions, which are the sources of his physical and mental ills. In the same way as fuel is burnt away by ignition, the negative forces (impurities or poisons) within are eliminated by the "Nibbāna Dhātu", which he generates with the true awareness of Anicca in the course of meditation. This process of elimination should go on until such time as both the

Mind and Body are completely cleansed of such impurities or poisons.

Among those who have taken courses of meditation at the Centre, were some, who were suffering from complaints such as Hypertension, T.B., Migraine, Thrombosis, etc. They became relieved of these even in the initial course of ten days. If they maintain the awareness of Anicca and take longer courses of meditation at this Centre, there is every likelihood of the diseases being rooted out in course of time. Since anything which is the root cause of one's own physical and mental ills is "Samudaya" and this "Samudaya" can be removed by the "Nibbāna Dhātu", which one generates in true Buddhist Meditation, we make no distinction between this or that disease. One aspect of meditation is "Samudaya Pahātabba", which literally means "for the removal of the causes of suffering".

A note of caution is necessary here. When one develops "Nibbāna Dhātu", the impact of this "Nibbāna Dhātu" upon the impurities and poisons within his own system will create a sort of upheaval, which must be endured. This upheaval tends to increase the sensitivity of the radiation, friction, and vibration of the atomic units within. This will grow in intensity, so much so that one might feel as though his body were just electricity and a mass of suffering. In the case of those who have diseases such as those mentioned above, the impact will be all the stronger and, at times, almost explosive. Nevertheless, enduring it, he becomes alive to the fact that a change is taking place within himself for the better, and that the impurities are gradually diminishing, and that he is slowly but surely getting rid of the disease.

Mankind, today, is facing the danger of radio active poisons. If such poisons absorbed by a man exceeds the maximum permissible concentration (m.p.c.), he enters the danger zone.

I have a firm belief that the "Nibbāna Dhātu", which a person in true Buddhist Meditation develops, is *Power*, which will be strong enough to eradicate the radio active poisons, if any, in him.

# Purification Of View

By

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*"How blest from passion to be free,  
All sensuous joys to leave behind ;  
Yet far the highest bliss of all  
To quit th'illusion false—'I am'"*<sup>1</sup>

"The inner tangle and the outer tangle,  
This generation is entangled in a tangle.  
And so I ask of Gotama this question :  
Who succeeds in disentangling this tangle?"<sup>2</sup>

There is hardly any need to stress the hopelessness of the tangle that the present generation has found itself entrapped in through its inordinate craving, for one's own requisites (inner tangle), and for requisites belonging to others (outer tangle). Today we are in greater need of an answer to the above question than the generation that lived in the time of the Buddha. The Blessed One, the perfect physician for mental ills, specifically those concerned with the 'I' and 'Mine', and with 'We' and 'Our' provided the answer to the above question in the following stanza:—

*"When a wise man, established well in  
Virtue  
Develops Concentration and Understanding,  
Then as a Bhikkhu ardent and sagacious  
He succeeds in disentangling this tangle"*<sup>3</sup>

*Development of Understanding* or *Paññā* referred to above is divided by the Buddha into five stages, the first of which consists of PURITY OF VIEW or *Diṭṭhi-Visuddhi*, the subject matter of this essay. This implies the vision according to reality that what is commonly referred to as a living being consists merely of mental and material (corporeal)

phenomena. i. e. mind and body, or *nāma-rūpa*, and is void of an ego.

## Modern Conception Of Matter 4

Until the beginning of the present century our conception of the material world was one in which all things including our own bodies were made up of various permutations and combinations of 92 different kinds of atoms, meaning indivisible units, static and unchanging. But during the present century it has been found that atoms, despite their name are no longer the indivisible and static units they were once supposed to be, and that they are themselves complex structures composed of still smaller and more fundamental units moving at incredible speeds, and separated from each other by distances enormous by comparison with the minuteness of the size of these units themselves. We are told that the composition of the atom is comparatively simple, and consists of three kinds of 'elementary particles' or building bricks, the proton, the neutron, and the electron.

However the actual arrangement of these 'elementary particles' within the atom is complex, but a simplified picture consists of a central core or nucleus made up of a varying number of protons and neutrons, whilst electrons equal in number to the protons within the nucleus are disposed around the nucleus in 'shells', at a very much greater distance from the centre. Different combinations of these elementary particles form all the 92 naturally occurring elements from which all things including our own bodies as already mentioned are made.

### Abbreviations used :—

Ang : Anguttara-nikāya or The Book of the Gradual Sayings

M : Majjhima-nikāya or the Middle Length Sayings, Horner's translation.

Vis : Visuddhi-magga or the Path of Purification, translation by Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli.

1. Solemn utterance of the Buddha at the foot of the Mucalinda tree after his attainment of Buddhahood.

Translated by H. C. Warren in *Buddhism in Translations* § 9, from *Vinaya Pitaka, Mahā Vagga 1,3.*

2. Vis., § 1 (quoted from *Samyutta-Nik. I, 13*).

3. Vis., 1. (Quoted from *Samyutta-Nik. I, 13*).

4. Most of the statements in this para have been taken from "What is Atomic Energy" by K. Mendelssohn.

The modern conception of the *Properties of matter* in terms of atomic physics is that these 'Elementary particles' the protons, neutrons and electrons occupy an infinitesimally small volume compared to the remainder of the empty space within the atom. *The difference in the various qualities displayed by different objects of matter is a property not of the mass possessed by these minute elementary particles, but of the forces between them, firstly that of attraction between dissimilar charges of the negative electrons and the positive protons, secondly of the tremendously powerful force of repulsion between protons of similar (positive) charges, and thirdly of the still obscure phenomenon of 'exchange forces' due to change between protons and neutrons of the recently postulated 'mesons' whereby the strong forces of repulsion between the protons are more than counter-balanced, and result in the strong cohesion of the atomic nuclei. Lastly the properties of matter are greatly modified by the particular arrangement of the protons and neutrons within the nucleus, and of the electrons in the varying number of shells of the electronic cloud, particularly in the 'open' outermost shell, where most changes take place owing to its varying degrees of 'unsaturation'. Further Einstein has demonstrated that mass and energy equivalent. The property called mass is simply concentrated energy. In other words matter is energy, and energy is matter, and the distinction is simply one of temporary state.*<sup>1</sup>

#### **Buddhist Conception of the Properties of Matter**

What is thus outlined in the language of popular science of today was described by the Buddha in the ordinary or conventional language of his time so as to be understood by the educated people of his day. The Buddha described a living being as made up of mind and body or *nāma-rūpa*; the latter, i.e. the body, he described as being made up of four *Primary Qualities* or '*Elements*',<sup>2</sup> and of the *Space 'Element'*, or *Akāsa-dhātu*.

The importance of the four primary 'elements' lies not in their tangibility, but in their qualities and in the forces inherent in

them. One cannot conceive of an object, animate or inanimate existing apart from its qualities, and in reality one should not say that an object *has* this shape, this colour or this odour; but the object *is* this shape, this colour or this odour. Material bodies are nothing but groups of qualities coming together in different ways and proportions that constitute them; and exist in and with them. Such a group of qualities is called a *kalāpa*. The *Earthy Quality* or '*Element*' or *Paṭhavī-dhātu* derives its name from the word *paṭhavī* which means earth; it refers to qualities possessed by earth, e.g. of hardness (and of its opposite softness, for if something is less hard than something else, the first may be described as soft by comparison), of density, of heaviness and its opposite lightness, and of roughness and its opposite smoothness. The function of the *Earthy Element* is to act as a foundation for the other three Elements.

The *Watery Quality* or '*Element*' or *Āpo-dhātu*, from *appoti* to flow, refers to the quality that a fluid has to spread out and diffuse. If a small quantity of the watery element diffuses and penetrates amidst solid particles such as clay, cement or flour, the loose particles of the latter will be bound together into a lump. The function, of the watery element therefore is that of cohesion, or binding the three remaining elements together.

The '*Element*' of *Heat* or the *Fiery 'Element'*, or *Tejodhātu*, has a powerful control over the three remaining elements, varying their consistence even to the extent of converting a solid to a liquid or a gas. To this 'element' belong the properties of anabolism or building up and maturing and of katabolism or breaking down, aging and disintegrating, and in the case of living beings, of keeping them warm and of digesting the food they ingest.

The *Airy 'Element'*, or *Vāyo-dhātu* has two important characteristics, firstly that of motility; and secondly that of distending, of being prevented from collapse, of repulsion, of being blown out, or causing to be blown out. The above description of the '*Airy Element*' may be compared with the following statement "The tendency of any gaseous

1. The Universe & Dr Einstein, by Lincoln Barnett.

2. M. 140. Dhātuvibhaṅga sutta. M. 28 Mahāhatthipadūpama sutta. M. 62. Mahā-Rāhulovāda sutta. Vis. XI. 31-38, 81-92, 109.

atmosphere is to dissipate away into space".<sup>1</sup> All material things<sup>2</sup> must possess all the four 'elements' or qualities at one and the same time; no three of this elements can exist without the fourth being present simultaneously. Each quality or element is so intimately connected with the remaining three that together they appear as objects. Each 'object' thus merely consists of the coming together of the four Primary Elements, in groups of qualities or kalāpas, *the difference in the appearance of objects being due to the vastly different proportions in which the primary elements blend*. Generally when one element predominates in comparison with the remaining three elements it is conveniently, and conventionally spoken of as an object belonging to that element, e.g., solid, liquid, or gas.

The *Space 'Element'*<sup>2</sup> has the characteristic of delimitting matter. Its function is to display the boundaries of matter. It is manifested as the confines of matter, or as the state of gaps and apertures. It is on account of it that one can say of material things that 'This is above, below, around'. It is solely on account of this space element that the tiniest parts of one's body, or the body as a whole is able to move about freely, and to function properly; without the presence of the space element no movement or function is possible.

*To summarise*: the main property of the Earthy Element is that of stiffening and acting as a foothold for the other three elements, and of the Watery, Airy and Fiery elements that of cohesion; of distending or causing motion; and of maturing respectively.

The Buddha time and again, and in numerous ways, and with varying analogies suited to the intelligence of his audience, and the circumstances under which he spoke emphasised the lack of a permanent ego in living beings including man. Says the Buddha, "Just as when the component parts such as axles, wheels, frame, poles etc. are arranged in a certain way, there comes to be the mere term of common usage 'chariot',<sup>3</sup> yet in the ultimate sense when each part is examined, there is no chariot,—and just as when the component

parts of a *house*<sup>4</sup> such as water, clay, timber, creepers, and grass are placed so that they enclose a space in a certain way there comes to be the mere term of common usage 'house', yet in the ultimate sense there is no house,—so too *when a space is enclosed with bones and sinews, and flesh and skin there comes to be the mere term of common usage a 'being' a 'person'*,<sup>5</sup> yet in the ultimate sense there is no being as a basis for the assumption of 'I am' or 'I', in the ultimate sense there is only mind and body".

*"No doer of the deed is found  
No being that may reap the fruits  
Empty phenomena roll on,  
This is the only right view".<sup>4</sup>*

In modern terminology the same thought may be seen in the following lines from "The Universe and Dr. Einstein" by Lincoln Barnett. "However theoretical systems may change, and however empty of content' their symbols and concepts may be, the *essential and enduring facts of science and of life are the happenings, the activities, the events*. Within the frame-work of modern physics one can depict a simple physical event or happening, such as the meeting or collision of two electrons—two elementary grains of matter, or two elementary units of electrical energy—as a concourse of particles or of probability waves, or as a comingling of eddies in a four-dimensional space-time continuum. Theory does not define what the principles in this encounter actually are. *Thus in a sense the electrons are 'not real', but merely theoretical symbols. On the other hand the meeting itself is 'real'—the event is 'real'.*"

### Immaterial States

Now for the Immaterial States taught by the Buddha, and made evident to us through any act of cognition or consciousness, e.g. the four Groups or Khandhas,—feelings, perception, mental formation (saṅkhāra), and consciousness (viññāṇa), which are inseparable and which may be spoken of under the one term mentality or nāma. The *five modes of cognition through the five bases (exclusive of the mind base)*,—eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body have now to be appreciated.<sup>5</sup>

1. The New Outline of Modern Knowledge by Alan Pryce-Jones. Chapter on Astronomy, by Sir Harold Spencer Jones. 2. M. Sutta 140, and Vis. xiv. 63.  
3. M. Sutta 28; Vis. XVIII. 28. 4. Vis. XVIII. 28. 5. Vis. X. 43 & XVIII. 28; M- Sutta No. 28.  
4. Path to Deliverance. Nyanatiloka, para 176.  
5. Vis, xiv, 54-57

The eye and a visual object constitute materiality (*rūpa*), the visual (eye)-consciousness which arises by their coming together constitutes mentality (*nāma*).

Similarly

The ear and sound constitute materiality, and the ear-consciousness which arises by their coming together constitutes mentality:

The nose and odour constitute materiality, and the nose-consciousness which arises by their coming together constitutes mentality:

The tongue and taste constitute materiality, and the tongue-consciousness which arises by their coming together constitutes mentality:

The body and tangible object constitute materiality, and the body-consciousness which arises by their coming together constitutes mentality.

If an ear consciousness (mentality) arises owing to the presence of a sound and the ear-base (materiality), one is inclined to think of it as 'I hear it'; in the ultimate sense however this is incorrect for if these two be identical when at death the mind (ear-consciousness in this example) disappears the body should disappear at the same time; and again the mind must remain so long as the body remains.

But neither of these is true; *the reason is that in the ultimate sense there is only mind and body (nāma-rūpa), and no 'being' or person, which are only terms of convenience*".<sup>1</sup>

Says the Buddha,<sup>2</sup> "Even the ignorant, unconverted man, O bhikkhus, may conceive an aversion for this body which is composed of the four elements, may divest himself of passion for it, and attain freedom from it: for the increase and the wasting of this body which is composed of the four elements, and the way in which it is obtained (conceived), and afterwards laid away (at death) are evident. But, O bhikkhus, what is called the mind, intellect, consciousness—here the ignorant, unconverted man is not equal to conceiving aversion, is not equal to divesting himself of passion, is not equal to attaining freedom, because, O bhikkhus, from time

immemorial the ignorant, unconverted man has held, cherished, and affected the notion. 'This is mine: this am I; this is my ego.' But it were better, O bhikkhus, if the ignorant, unconverted man regarded the body which is composed of the four elements as an ego, rather than the mind. And why do I say so? Because it is evident, O bhikkhus that this body which is composed of the four elements lasts one year, lasts two years..... fifty years, lasts a hundred years and even more. *But that which is called the mind, intellect, consciousness keeps up an incessant round by day and by night of perishing as one thing, and springing up as another.*"

### Interdependence of Mind and Body

(*Nāma-Rūpa*)

Time and again the Buddha laid stress on the interdependence of these two factors. Here is the analogy of the *two sheaves of reeds* that are propped one against the other.<sup>3</sup> "Each one gives the other consolidating support, and when one falls the other falls, so too mind and body occur as an interdependent state, each of its components giving the other consolidating support, and when one falls owing to death the other falls too"; and again the analogy of the *marionette*,<sup>4</sup> "Just as a marionette is void, soul-less and without curiosity, and while it walks and stands merely through the combination of strings and wood, yet it seems as if it had curiosity, and interestedness; so too, this mind and body is void, soulless and without curiosity, and while it walks and stands merely through the combination of the two together, yet it seems as if it had curiosity and interestedness. This is how it should be regarded". Furthermore<sup>5</sup> "The mind has no effective power; it cannot occur by its own efficient power. It does not eat, it does not drink, it does not speak, it does not adopt postures. The body is without efficient power; it cannot occur by its own efficient power. For it has no desire to eat, it has no desire to drink, it has no desire to speak, and it has no desire to adopt postures. But rather it is when supported by 'the mind that the body occurs. *When the mind has the desire to eat, the desire to drink, the desire to speak, the desire to adopt a posture it is the body that eats, drinks, speaks, and adopts a posture*".

1. *Dīṭṭha Vipassanā*, Ven. Mohnyin Sayadaw, p. 20

2. H. C. Warren "Buddhism in Translations" ch. 18, from *Samyutta-Nikāya* (xii, 62)".

3. Vis. xviii. 32 4. Vis. xviii 31 5. Vis. xviii 34.

### Concepts of Compactness and Continuity

Despite all that has been said so far, and despite all that one has learnt on numerous occasions it is no easy matter to loosen—much less to get rid of, even temporarily—the notion of an ego that is so deeply ingrained within each and every one of us. In the first instance, the notion is so widely held and mental apathy for the effort necessary in the search for an alternative explanation precludes one from taking the trouble to question its validity. Further, appearances are very plausible that the idea of an ego is readily accepted just as the view that the sun rises and sets 'because the sun revolves round the earth' used to be accepted at one time not so long ago. Further because of the concept of Compactness,<sup>1</sup> we take phenomena in their entirety, hence the characteristics of 'not self' e.g., the absence of an ego, does not become apparent, until resolution of the compact into the various elements is given attention; and because of the concept of Continuity the characteristic of impermanence does not become apparent, until continuity is disrupted by discerning that phenomena rise and fall, and that nothing remains static even for the minutest fraction of a second. The Buddha has given us an apt illustration in *the difference between our attitude to a cow and its meat*:<sup>2</sup> Whilst feeding a cow, bringing it to the slaughter house, keeping it tied up after bringing it there, and seeing it slaughtered, and dead the butcher does not lose the perception of 'cow' so long as he has not carved it up and divided it into parts: but when he has divided it up and when he sits down to sell it he no longer retains the perception of 'cow', and in its stead the perception of meat occurs, he does not think 'I am selling cow', or 'they are carrying cow away', but rather he thinks 'I am selling meat' or 'they are carrying meat away', so too this bhikkhu, whilst still a foolish ordinary person does not lose the perception 'living being' or 'man' or 'person' so long as he does not by analysis of the compact into its elements review the body however placed, however disposed as consisting of elements. But when he does review it as consisting of elements, he loses the perception of 'living being', and his mind establishes itself upon elements".

*The corrective to these concepts of Compactness and Continuity in the corresponding terminology of modern physics is well illustrated by the following analogies. We are told* 3 "Then uclei of matter in an armour plate are as separatedly placed as a collection of apples separated from each other by a distance of about three miles, and yet the armour plate appears to be impregnable". Again 4. "It is beyond belief, but scientific proof shows that if it were possible to assemble atoms into a mass the size of an average marble such as children play with, the weight of the marble would be four hundred billion pounds"; and again 5 "Electrons circle round their nuclei with enormous velocity, and atoms and molecules themselves rush about with incredible speed. The speed of the molecules in the air for instance is about one thousand miles per hour". In these circumstances no movement can possibly be noticed by our senses even with the aid of the most powerful instruments, since these speeds occur within such a very limited space as is available within molecules of matter.

### Knowledge and Understanding

We have so far made a study and gained some knowledge of the vision according to reality showing that what is commonly referred to as a living being consists merely of mind and body or *nāma-rūpa*, and is void of an ego. We have merely attempted to acquire the theoretical knowledge required for gaining Purification of View, which is the first of the five stages towards the attainment of Understanding. But we are yet a long way, a very long way from the actual Understanding of Purification of View. The Buddha has spoken of *three grades of wisdom*: 1 by learning (*Sutamaya paññā*), by reasoning (*Cintāmaya paññā*), and thirdly by meditative development (*Bhāvanāmaya paññā*). This last grade is the one by which alone higher truths can be grasped, and to which alone the term Understanding or insight may correctly be applied. Understanding is a very precise form of realisation, and never a vague kind of mystic vision. Says the Buddha,<sup>2</sup> "The dhamma one has learnt and mastered *must be tested by intuitive wisdom, these things that are not so tested their meaning does not become clear*. Some foolish men master the

1. Vis. xxi. 3-4      2. Vis xi. 30.

3. and 4 What is Atomic Energy, by K. Mendelsohn

4. More Modern Wonders and How they work, by Captain Burr W. Leyson.

5. Vis xiv. 14.      6. M. Sutta. 22.



dhamma simply for the advantage of reproaching others, and for the advantage of gossiping, and they do not arrive at the goal for the sake of which they mastered the dhamma. They are like the man who catches a large snake by its tail or by its body, and not by its neck, and because of his wrong grasp is bitten by the snake", or they are like the "cowherd who counts others' kine, for they do not share in the blessings of a recluse".<sup>1</sup> Aldous Huxley illustrates clearly the difference between knowledge and understanding when he states,<sup>2</sup> "Understanding can only be talked about, and that very inadequately, it cannot be passed on, it can never be shared. There can of course be knowledge of such an understanding, and this knowledge may be passed on. But we must always remember that knowledge of understanding is not the same thing as understanding, which is the raw material of that knowledge. It is different from understanding as the doctor's prescription for penicillin is different from penicillin. Understanding is as rare as emeralds, and so is highly prized. The knowers would dearly love to be understanders; but either their stock of knowledge does not include the knowledge of what to do in order to be understanders, or else they know theoretically what they ought to do, but go on doing the opposite all the same. In either case they cherish the comforting delusion that knowledge, and above all pseudo-knowledge are understanding".

Our generation has undoubtedly grown rapidly in knowledge and in intelligence, but can we say that we have grown in Understanding? Is not this 'inner tangle', and this 'outer tangle' referred to in the opening paragraph of this essay of our own making? If we hope to disentangle this tangle are we prepared firstly to make a study of the basic teaching of the Buddha, and once we have begun to appreciate its fundamentals, perhaps at first with a few reservations, are we prepared to undertake the training, arduous and prolonged that is essential, in the words of Huxley, from being knowers to become understanders? Buddha the perfect physician for mental ills has given us the prescription, and it is left to us to have it dispensed by studying his teaching, and most important of all to start taking the medicine ourselves by putting his teaching

into practice. The illness is of a very serious nature although often showing little or no symptoms to the unwary and the thoughtless. It is 'infectious', deep rooted and extremely chronic. Moreover it is beset with many complications, and the patient is a danger to society.

The treatment is difficult, and is so prolonged that for the preponderating majority of us, for want of an adequate trial, it will have to be spread over many, many lifetimes before a cure can even be reasonably expected. However a beginning must be made sometime, and fortunately an amelioration of the symptoms may be noticeable shortly after one commences the treatment in proportion to the enthusiasm with which it is followed. This will infuse fresh enthusiasm and hope as to the final efficacy of the treatment. From the point of view of society however it is most fortunate that the benefits of the treatment are spectacular and immediate. It is as if the patient who is suffering from violent maniacal fits is calmed down within a few days of the commencement of the treatment, although a cure may be ever so remote; it is as if a patient with an infectious disease requiring prolonged treatment is rendered non-infectious from the very outset of the treatment. This aspect of the Buddha's teaching ought to make a firm appeal to all those who control the affairs of their community or their country, and should create an enthusiasm in the minds of those in a position to mould international relationships. For is there any doubt that it is the greed to satisfy the 'me' and the 'us', so deep rooted within us, and the ill-will resulting from any obstacles in our path in the attainment of that satisfaction, both of which are the result of ignorance that are the causes of all our entanglements—the jealousy and rivalry, the suspicion, fear and anxiety, and man's inhumanity to man, that we see all round us? What other cause is there for all this misery, for the obstacles to our economic and our spiritual development, and for the meanness and the degradation resulting from the exploitation of man by man? A knowledge of the Buddha's teaching, and much more even a far off glimpse of its understanding will convince those who hold the destiny of their country in their hands, that so long as they avoid the ugly features of greed, of lust for

1. Dhammapada 19.

2. "Adonis and the Alphabet, and other Essays", Aldous Huxley. Ch.2—Knowledge and Understanding.

power, and of exploitation of one nation by another, they may safely concede to nations, who wish to develop their nationhood along any lines, and through any stages of nationalism peculiar to their own genius the right to do so. *In this way the minds of national leaders may be infused with the ultimate ideal of a world brotherhood of nations.*

### Understanding The Practice

The conversion of knowledge into understanding and final deliverance rests on a systematic development and perfection to a minimum but definite extent of each of the seven Stages of Purification in successive steps. It is not possible to by-pass any of these stages. It will thus be seen that Purification of Morality is the first essential requisite, and Purification of Concentration the second before one can profitably embark on the five final stages of Purification of Understanding, which commences with the stage of Purification of View.

*Purification of Morality or Sīla-Visuddhi is*

“To refrain from all evil,  
To do good”.

“*Refraining from all evil*”, is not a mere negative and physical phenomenon of abstaining from wrong action and wrong speech. It is based on the internal restraint of a clearly conscious and guiding mind: and for the layman this consists in the abstention from bodily and vocal misconduct—unskill in action and speech.<sup>1</sup> The first includes killing or inflicting injury; acquisition either by stealth, fraud, threat, or violence; sexual misconduct; the use of intoxicant; and undesirable modes of livelihood; and the second consists of lying, harsh speech, slander and frivolous talk. In order ‘*to do good*’ one develops characteristics directly opposed to unskillful acts and speech already enumerated, for instance, the practice of lovingkindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), and liberality (*dāna*); the practice of restraint of the senses (*indriya-sāmvārasīla*) with constant mindfulness, selfpossession and detachment; the practice of truthfulness, of kind and helpful talk, and a golden silence where speech is not indicated; and the practice of the difficult art of rejoicing at the good fortune of others (*muditā*). By

‘refraining from evil’ one has the great reward amongst other things, in the Buddha’s own words, of freedom from remorse, of a sense of ease without alloy, and of tranquillity and facility to concentrate.<sup>2</sup> Besides these daily practices one practises from time to time for periods of one more days at a time and as frequently as possible *other rules of morality*<sup>3</sup> such as celibacy, abstention from all food after the hour of twelve noon, abstention from the enjoyment of dancing, music, shows and other amusements, and from the use of cosmetics, perfumes, garlands and adornments; and lastly abstention from the use of lofty and comfortable seats and couches. These periodic practices are meant to develop control over one’s sexual appetite, and the craving for food, and to lessen one’s inordinate craving for the fleeting pleasures of the senses. They further stimulate one’s enthusiasm for the more satisfying and stable enjoyment of voluntary renunciation and of detachment.

### Purification of Concentration

(*Citta-Visuddhi or Samādhi*)

This is the second of the seven stages of Purification. It is profitable unification of the mind on a single object, whereby the mind remains undistracted, unscattered, pure and tranquil—a preliminary condition absolutely necessary as a foundation either for developing insight, i.e. *Vipassanā* (Understanding); or for the acquisition of the various *Jhānas*. The latter are supersensual states of perfect mental Absorption, in which the fivefold sense activity has ceased, and where perfect unification of the mind is associated with various *Jhāna* Factors, which in the fourth or highest *Jhāna* of the *Rūpa* world consists of the finest *Jhāna* factor of Equanimity (*Upekkhā*) alone, unmixed with any of the less refined factors associated with the earlier *Jhānas*. This fourth *Jhāna* is also known as the *Pādaka* or Foundation *Jhāna*, as it is the foundation from which may be developed either the *Jhānas* of Formless existence (*Arūpa Jhānas*), or the Supernormal Powers or *Abhiññās*, e.g. various psychical powers:—the ability to read the minds of others, the remembrance of past lives, and the Divine Ear and the Divine Eye.

1. *Pañca Sīla* (the five precepts). 2. Ang. vol. V. ch. 1.

3. e.g. The eight precepts:—consisting of the five precepts, with the substitution of strict celibacy for abstention from sexual misconduct; and with the addition of the three abstentions mentioned as regards food, amusements, and comfortable seats.

It is left to one's own wish to decide the stage in mental concentration at which he would desire to begin developing Understanding (*Vipassanā*), for it is not essential for final deliverance to develop Mental Concentration (*Samādhi*) to the lofty heights mentioned above. On the other hand it must be clearly borne in mind that Mental Concentration can never be by-passed altogether, as some would have us believe, before one may profitably embark on meditative development of Understanding (*Vipassana-bhāvanā*). When one is able to prevent the attention from jumping from one thought to another, and to keep it steady on one line of thought, and when the strain of such concentration on a single line of thought no longer exists one is ready to embark on Meditative Development of Understanding. The *Visuddhi Magga* has summarised for us the instruction given by the Buddha in forty subjects for meditation for the Development Concentration, I giving us the choice of selecting one two or three subjects suited to our temperament, and to the circumstances and surroundings under which we are placed for carrying out the practice. No attempt is made in this essay to enumerate these, much less to describe them even briefly.

A good friend and teacher to guide one in the choice of a suitable subject for meditation, and to help one from time to time with advice and encouragement during the course of one's meditation is invaluable, but failing such a person, one may rely on a careful study of the written word. Next as to the choice of a suitable place for meditation; a room where one can lock oneself up for half an hour daily free from intrusion, and from noise is the most practicable. As for a suitable time for meditation, a brief half-hour, when one is not too tired either physically or mentally, and when the necessary privacy and freedom from noise is available should be chosen. Once such a time is chosen the practice of meditation should be carried out regularly every day at the same time, either reckoning by the clock, or relative to some other regular event of the day, say within a specified number minutes from waking up, or some specified period of time either before or after dinner. The aim of such regularity in the practice is the formation of a habit of meditation, a habit as regular as that of taking meals, for habit

regulates one's life. This calls for thought and rearrangement of the day's programme, which in turn means some inconvenience, which however is negligible in relation to the benefits to be gained from regular meditation. The formation of a habit of meditation will convert a practice that was at the beginning irksome, into one of pleasant anticipation and privilege. The duration of these practices will vary considerably on circumstances, and on the degree of one's enthusiasm. However for the layman living in a town under present-day conditions, and occupied in earning a living, a regular half-hour per day once or preferably twice daily is perhaps what ought to be aimed at, with longer periods at intermittent intervals. One cannot reasonably expect marked benefits from meditation undertaken for periods much shorter than half an hour; however regular ten minutes or even five minute periods are of benefit in the sense that it will ultimately infuse enthusiasm into the meditator sufficient to want him to extend the duration of his meditative practice. It is important to adopt a comfortable position to which one can without much difficulty get accustomed to, the essential point is to keep the spine erect so that one may not be fidgety, or away one's body. For a brief period just prior to sitting down for meditation one should forget all business interests, and personal likes and dislikes and prejudices. This is conveniently done either by a brief period of quiet reading from a portion of the dhamma, or of worship of the Buddha (*vandanā*). Lastly one has to cultivate patience and enthusiasm if one is not to be discouraged by one's lapses in not maintaining the regularity of one's meditative practice in the early stages.

#### **Bhāvanāmaya Paññā**

This connotes meditative development of Understanding. Purification of View as already mentioned, is the vision according to reality, that what is commonly referred to as a living being, consists merely of name and form or *nāma-rūpa*, and is void of an ego. The meditative development of this view may be done in one of several ways.

#### **Meditation on the Body**

Taking the body first, materiality may be discerned in one of several ways:—By way

of the 18 elements (Dhātu); by way of the 28 properties of materiality (Mahābhūta and Upādāya-rūpa); by way of the corporeal groups (Kalāpas); or lastly by way of the four Primary Elements (Mahābhūta). By way of the last mentioned one may discern materiality in his own person by meditation either with constituents of the body in brief, or with constituents by analysis in detail, taking each of the thirty two parts separately, one by one. 1

Meditation on the body, with constituents in brief is done in the following manner:—“In this body all parts whose predominant quality is that of hardness, or roughness are said to belong to the *earthy element*. Every such solid part of one’s body,—e.g. head hair, nails, teeth, or skin; flesh, sinews, bone, marrow, or mesentery; every solid organ such as kidney, liver, spleen, or brain; every hollow organ such as stomach, intestines, or the heart; and all the solid contents of hollow organs such as undigested food in the stomach, or excrement in the intestines—is made up of a multitude of groups or kalāpas of all the four primary elements or qualities coming together in a certain manner, and in varying proportions. The four primary elements are widely separated from each other by the element of space (ākāsa-dhātu), which makes it possible for the former to be in a continual state of movement, of change, and of activity; and which enables them (the primary elements) to function properly. In each solid part of one’s body the earthy element predominates, hence it appears as a stiffened solid. These groups of the earthy element are, on the one hand held together by the small quantity of the watery element present, ‘flowing out’ amongst these groups and binding them, whilst on the other hand they are prevented from collapsing by the quality of distension possessed by the airy element. Further these groups of the earthy element are maintained, matured, removed, and renewed by the fiery element. The earthy element present in the solid parts throughout one’s body is in its fundamental characteristics in no way different from the earthy element present in solids outside one’s body. Just as the solid element present in a tree, or a rock does not represent a living being, even so what is called hair, teeth, or bone or any other solid part of one’s body is a particular component of one’s body, without thought, morally

indeterminate, void, and not a living being”.

One next meditates, in a similar manner on all the fluid parts of one’s body thus:—“In this body all parts whose predominant quality is that of ‘flowing out’, and subsequently of ‘holding together’ the other qualities are said to belong to the *watery element*. Every such fluid portion of one’s body—e.g. bile, blood, oil of the joints, or other secretion; sweat, tears, spittle, urine or other excretion—is made up of a multitude of groups or kalāpas of all the four primary elements or qualities coming together in a certain manner, and in varying proportions. In every drop of fluid in one’s body the watery element predominates, hence it appears as a liquid having the quality of flowing out, or spreading out. The small quantity of the earthy element present gives the liquid the necessary foundation or ‘substance’. Each drop of liquid present in one’s body is prevented from collapsing by the quality of distension possessed by the airy element. Further each drop of fluid is secreted, maintained, altered, and matured by virtue of the fiery quality or element present. The *watery element present in each drop of fluid in one’s body is in no way different to the watery element present in liquids outside the body. Just as the watery element present in a pond, or well, or a river does not represent a living being, even so what is called bile, or blood, sweat or urine or any other liquid part of one’s body is a particular component of one’s body, without thought, morally indeterminate, void, and not a living being*”.

One next meditates on the ‘fiery’ and the ‘airy’ qualities in one’s body thus:—The *fiery quality* in one’s body has the function of warming (santāpana), of ageing (jīrāpana), of burning up or breaking down (pariḍayhana), and of digesting (pācaka). It maintains this body, keeps it warm, ensures its proper appearance, and prevents it from putrefying”.

“In this body all parts whose predominant quality is that of distending, and preventing from collapse; of motility, and of lightness belong to the *airy element*. Every such gaseous portion of one’s body—e.g. up or down going winds, wind both inside and outside hollow organs in the chest and in

the abdomen; wind in gaps and apertures such as the ears or the nostrils—is made up of a multitude of groups or kalāpas of all the four primary qualities coming together in a certain manner, and in varying proportions. In each gaseous portion of one's body the airy element predominates, hence it appears as a gas having the quality of distending, of motility and of lightness. The small portion of the earthy element present gives the gas the necessary foundation or 'substance'. These gases are held together by the watery quality present, and they are maintained, by the fiery quality. The airy quality present in the gases in one's body is in its fundamental characteristics in no way different to the airy element present in gases outside one's body. Just as the airy element present in the atmosphere does not represent a living being, even so what is called up or down going winds, or wind in the lungs or in the intestines, or any other part of one's body is a particular component of one's body, without thought, morally indeterminate, void, and not a living being".

One may profitably do the above meditation in stages, as it has to be done when the meditation is carried out in detail, were each of the thirty two parts of the body are taken up separately one by one. Firstly one learns by-heart the summary of the meditation as given above, or suitably modified; secondly there is the *Verbal Recitation*<sup>2</sup> of what has been learnt by-heart. "This shall be done even if one is a master of the Tipitaka, for the meditation subject only becomes evident to some through recitation". Thirdly when one is proficient in the verbal recitation, one should do the *Recitation Mentally*<sup>3</sup>. "Just as it was done verbally, for the mental recitation is a condition for the penetration of the characteristics primary elements". Fourthly when one becomes proficient in both the verbal and the mental recitation one commences the actual meditation itself.

Instead of doing the meditation in the above manner one may do it *in terms of recent atomic physics*. One may make one's own summary from the facts gathered from this essay, and from other sources. This summary should embody the following facts: That everything in the universe, including our own bodies is made up from one or a

combination of two or more of the 92 elements or atoms, in varying combinations. That these atoms themselves are complex in structure, and are made up of three elementary particles or building bricks) the protons, the neutrons, and the electrons. That of these the first two are placed within a central core or nucleus, and that the electrons are disposed at great distances from, and around the nucleus. That the size of these elementary particles in comparison to the space in which they are disposed is infinitesimally small. That the difference in the qualities displayed by different objects is a property not of the mass possessed by these minute elementary particles, but of the forces of attraction, and of repulsion between them. That these minute elementary particles are not static, but are constantly moving at incredible speeds. That the property called mass is simply concentrated energy. One would then conclude thus:—"The elementary particles, e.g. the protons, the neutrons, and the electrons present throughout one's body, are in no way different to the protons, neutrons, and electrons present in solid objects, liquids or gases outside one's body. Just as the protons, neutrons, and electrons present in solid objects, liquids or gases outside one's body do not represent a living being, even so the protons, the neutrons, and the electrons, present in one's body are without thought, morally indeterminate, void, and not a living being".

One meditates this way—either in terms of the four 'primary elements'; or in terms of the three elementary particles that go to form the atom—regularly, with enthusiasm, and with increasing confidence, for months, for years, or for a lifetime until one is 'quite sure of discerning materiality (rūpa), in one's body'. If and when one 'has thus become quite sure of discerning materiality in this way, and *not until then*, should one undertake the task of discerning immaterial states (nāma)'<sup>3</sup>.

#### Meditation on the Immaterial States

This meditation is based on the formula given in the paragraph on Immaterial States on page 27., and is carried out thus:—"The eye and a visual object constitute materiality (rūpa); the eye-consciousness which arises by their coming together constitutes mentality

1. Vis. viii. 49    2. Vis. viii. 57.  
3. Vis. xviii 23.

(nāma): besides the eye, the object that impinges on the eye, and the resulting eye-consciousness there is no 'being' or 'person', which are only terms of convenience. The ear and sound constitute materiality; the ear-consciousness which arises by their coming together constitute mentality: besides the ear, the sound, and the resulting ear-consciousness there is no 'being' or 'person', which are only terms of convenience". Similarly one carries out the meditation for the nose and odour, and the resulting nose-consciousness: for the tongue and taste, and the resulting tongue-consciousness; and for the body and tangible object, and the resulting body-consciousness. Further "through the mind-element (mano-dhātu), and mind-object (dhamma) there arises the mind-consciousness-element (mano-viññāna-dhātu): besides the mind-element, the mind-object, and the resulting mind-consciousness-element there is

no 'being' or 'person', which are only terms of convenience".

In addition to the above one runs one's mind through everything that has been described in the remaining portion of this section, on Immaterial States, through the section on Interdependence of Mind and Body, and through the section on Concepts of Compactness and Continuity.<sup>1</sup>

The above meditation undertaken for discerning the Immaterial States will have to be carried out with diligence, with enthusiasm, and with regularity, and for an ever increasing duration of time daily for years or for a lifetime until one gains Purity of View—that "Correct vision of mind and body, which after defining mind and body by these various methods has been established on the plane of non-confusion by overcoming the perception of a being, is what should be understood as "PURIFICATION OF VIEW",<sup>2</sup>

1. Pages 27-29.

2. Vis xviii. 37.

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# *Propagation Of Buddhism*

By

U Thein Nyun

## **Introduction**

At the present day the volume of Buddhist literature that is published is noticeably on the increase. All of them purport to propagate Buddhism i.e., to spread the knowledge of the universal and practical truths discovered by the Buddha. In most cases the purposes of the authors are well-intentioned. When it is intended for non-Buddhists some of the purposes are:—(1) to acquaint them with the Teaching of the Buddha so that sufficient interest will be aroused for them to want to know more about Buddhism (2) to show them that the Teaching of the Buddha is not a supernatural revelation but consists of universal truths discovered by Him, truths that exist for all time just as scientific truths that had to be discovered by scientists (3) to convince them that Buddhism is not a dogma or an ism, as its name implies, which is attributed to The Buddha (4) to invite them to test and verify the truths in Buddhism by providing practical procedures which have to be followed systematically. But when it is intended for traditional Buddhists some of the purposes are:—(1) to encourage them to make a deeper study of Buddhism (2) to persuade them to practise Buddhism (3) to enlighten them about the correct practices in Buddhism (4) to beseech them, especially the intelligentsia, to make the most of this grand opportunity when the Buddha's Teaching prevails, by seeking the eternal verities and becoming true, devout Buddhists.

## **Methods of Propagation**

There are three general methods of propagating Buddhism. One is that of promulgating the fact that Buddhism is the true religion. This is chiefly concerned with the praise of The Buddha and His Teaching. It is openly declared that Buddha is the Perfect, Omniscient, All-Enlightened One and, therefore that His Teaching is perfect and true. Vivid accounts describing the

life of the Buddha, His Greatness, Noble Qualities and Unimpeachable Conduct are given. With regard to the Teaching it is emphatically asserted that there is no such thing as a person, living being, self or soul, i.e., that they have no independent existence and, therefore, there is no need for a creator in Buddhism; that the abstract physical and mental phenomena, the bases which bring about the illusion of a person, living being, self or soul, are all craving-created; that when ignorance is entirely cast off and the true nature of world including oneself is realised, craving for subjective physical and mental phenomena is eradicated; that as a result such conditioned phenomena cease to manifest themselves and the Highest Bliss, the Eternal Peace, Immortality, the Absolute Truth, the Ultimate Reality, the common goal of religion, is achieved; that Buddhism is the only religion that shows the way, i.e., the Noble Eightfold Path, by which this goal, called Nibbāna, can be achieved. General statements are also made to the effect that Buddhism is the most tolerant religion; that it is the only religion that can bring about true peace in the world and others in a similar vein all testifying the fact that Buddhism is unique.

The second method is that of presenting the Buddhist Doctrine. This is chiefly concerned with the Discourses of The Buddha. The Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path, the Doctrine of Soullessness, Dependent Origination, Karma and Rebirth, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, the Seven Stages of Purity, the Four Sublime States and others are published separately or compiled as a text on Buddhism.

The third and last method is that of expounding Buddhism. This is chiefly concerned with the proper interpretation of the principles and practice of the Buddha's Teaching. The language employed is simple,

clear and devoid of pali terms so that it is readily understood. Here the emphasis is not placed on the Buddha and His Teaching but on the practices to realise the facts which are universally, eternally and practically true. These are meant for test and verification by those who are frank and impartial, i.e., those who adopt a scientific attitude of mind in their sincere search for truth. The line of argument taken is that these facts, which can be put to practical proof, are taught in Buddhism and, therefore, that Buddhism is true.

#### Discussion of the Methods

The first method will be appreciated only by Buddhists who have practically realised some of the truths of Buddhism. They will be filled with pride and elation on reading such literature. But it will not appeal to the intelligent, traditional Buddhists and non-Buddhists. For it is just advertising one's own religious teacher and his teaching. Others of different faiths also do the same. There will be no end to the intellectual arguments that will be put forward in defence of one's religion and no decision will be reached as to who is the true teacher. Moreover, it may be just a traditional belief or a personal prejudice. Thus it will be necessary, for getting the better of the argument, to disparage other religions either openly or insinuatingly. So the desired effect is never achieved.

In fact, it will have just the opposite effect, which is, to shy away the non-Buddhists especially those from the West. Traditionally, they belong to a different faith and they would not be convinced that Buddhism is the better religion by ostentations, comparisons and arguments. Moreover, they undoubtedly consider themselves for superior in every respect to those from the East, what with all the scientific and industrial achievements that are to their credit. What would be their reaction to this method of propagation? The people from the East are not so mentally developed as we are and therefore they must be credulous people in believing all that the Buddha taught. And not content with that they are trying to get round others to their beliefs. We are practical people and therefore we must have positive, practical proof before we can believe that Buddhism is the right religion.

In the second method, the Teaching is couched in unfamiliar language where

Buddhist technical terms or their inexact English equivalents are employed. The sentences can be understood but the ideas which they convey will not be fully grasped by those who have not made a serious study of Buddhist philosophy. There is no doubt that the facts will be taken to heart by pious Buddhists but it does not lead to action. As for non-Buddhists it will simply complicate matters because the topics are selected and presented piecemeal or, if they are compiled as a text, they are not systematised and correlated to bring out the underlying principles as a whole. This method of presenting Buddhism is similar to the presentation of a subject in highly technical language and which is intended only for those who are well-versed in that subject.

The third method is the most effective for non-Buddhists and the beginners in Buddhism. Here the facts are presented in popular language. It is the way an eminent scientist deals with his specialized field of study so as to arouse the interest of lay readers and encourage them to take up the study of the subject. It is also explicitly stated and shown that Buddhism is a scientific and practical philosophy. And the theories with regard to the practices are given and the practical procedures outlined for anyone to test and verify the facts. Thus Buddhism is not the sole prerogative of the followers of the Buddha. This can be compared to any scientific discovery, say, the Theory of Relativity. It is not meant to be tested only by followers of Einstein but by everyone. Of course, the scientist with the necessary qualifications will test the theory straight away. He will have no regard for the discoverer. And when he is practically convinced of the truth of the theory he will truly appreciate the scientific genius of Einstein. As for the layman he will take no heed of the theory because it all sounds so strange to him or else he will just laud Einstein because he finds all scientists doing so. Only when he makes a proper study of the related subjects and qualifies himself to test the theory that he will know how true it is. He will now come to realise the greatness of Einstein. So it is with the unfamiliar and unbelievable facts of Buddhism. The reader is warned that it is hardly sensible to discard them simply because, in his present state of knowledge, he cannot grasp and understand them and put them to the test of experiment.



He will be urged to make a deep study of Buddhism in order to attain proficiency for this purpose. Only then will he come to have unshakable confidence in the Buddha, the discoverer, and His Teaching. It will be pointed out that only those who know how to apply facts subjectively that take no account of personalities. They are the submissive ones who will acknowledge and accept the facts when they are found to be true. They dare to learn from practical mistakes in order to arrive at the truth and are to be differentiated from theorists who only make objective studies of facts and are always afraid of making mistakes.

The reader is reminded (1) that it is very difficult for the vast majority of people to grasp the essential principles of a subject by merely reading through a few text books. And especially when it deals with abstract phenomena which is the main concern of Buddhism; (2) that Buddhism cannot be properly understood by theoretical study alone as it is a practical subject. And the wisest course to adopt is to serve a long term of apprenticeship under someone who has a practical knowledge of the subject just as great scientists have done; (3) that frequent enquiry and discussion with the teacher are very essential for getting the right ideas of the practice as this consists in the correct observation of abstract, subjective phenomena. And so there is no way of physically demonstrating the practice to learn the procedure; (4) that it requires patient, persistent, persevering plodding through the successive stages of the practice to achieve some satisfying result. And in this manner confidence is gained and this acts as an incentive to continue the practice to completion; (5) that when the absolute philosophical truth is realised, Eternal Bliss is attained after death. And in this sense Buddhism is a religion but with this difference that one has to rely on oneself

alone for the practical realisation of this truth which brings its own supramundane reward. The Buddha only shows the practical way of arriving at this truth and cannot grant favours or bestow rewards.

### **The Qualified Propagator**

The qualified propagator of Buddhism is one who (1) possesses a good knowledge of the fundamental principles of science and philosophy (2) can distinguish theory from practice (3) knows how to apply facts to make them one's own (4) knows the difference between intellectual and practical reasoning (5) has made a serious and sincere study of Buddhism with particular reference to the practical aspect of it (6) has served terms of apprenticeship under several teachers of practical Buddhism (7) knows the systematic steps of the practice to achieve the goal in Buddhism (8) has made a practical study of his mind and its processes (9) knows the illusions about nouns, pronouns, persons, living beings, metaphysical I or self or soul (10) realises that the layers of illusion must be consecutively removed in order to be able to observe the true nature of the elemental bases which consist of abstract physical and mental phenomena (11) has achieved noteworthy results in practical Buddhism (12) has made comparative studies of Buddhist and western philosophies and found the deficiencies in the latter (13) can express his ideas simply and clearly (14) is not afraid of being belittled because philosophical terminology and bombastic language are not employed (15) aims to explain and not extol Buddhism (16) desires to share one's practical knowledge but not show off one's knowledge of Buddhism (17) can give modern, concrete analogies for application to abstract phenomena (18) can provide detailed instructions for carrying out the practices so that any one can test and verify the practical conclusions given in Buddhism.

## Sayadaw U Thittila's Seven-week Lecture Tour In Australia

An event unique in the history of New South Wales—indeed unique in the history of Australia—occurred on Sunday, 30th December 1962 when the Venerable Sayadaw U Thittila, Agga Mahā Paṇḍita of Burma opened a Buddhist Meditation Centre in the garden of 6-1/2 acres of land among the hills about 12 miles north of the capital city of Sydney. This was the first official Buddhist Meditation Centre to open in Australia, and the visit of the Sayadaw was the direct outcome of an invitation sent by the owners of the garden, Mr. and Mrs. L. Berkeley who were founding members of the Buddhist Society of New South Wales.

On Saturday, 29th December, at 10 a. m. began the visit to Australia of the Sayadaw so long awaited by the Buddhists of that country. One may say "long awaited" from many points of view. Having visited there twice before, the 1st visit in 1954 and the 2nd in 1956, the Sayadaw was well known to, and highly esteemed by, all the Buddhists there. When he arrived at the airport in Sydney he was met and greeted by a number of persons including Mr. and Mrs. Berkely, Mr. C. F. Knight, President of the Buddhist Federation of Australia, Mrs. N. Jackson, President of the Buddhist Society of New South Wales, some of its members and some friends of Buddhism. The Sayadaw was then driven to the beautiful and very peaceful home of Mr. and Mrs. Berkely, Morgan Rd., Belrose, Sydney, and there he stayed during his visit to that city. Both his host and hostess looked after him very well and treated him with respect and loving-kindness.

After having a rest for a day the Sayadaw began his activities by conducting the opening ceremony of the Meditation Centre at 3 p.m. Sunday, 30th December, when a large number of Buddhists and their well-wishers gathered there to attend the ceremony which was concluded with a short meditation on Loving-kindness (*Mettā*). In his opening speech the Sayadaw stressed the importance of meditation and explained the three stages on the grand highway to the Supreme Bliss

of Nibbāna (Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*) with special emphasis on concentration without which the development of wisdom is impossible.

Henceforth, lectures were given and meditation classes were conducted every day for a month, 7-7.45 a.m. being devoted to the Sayadaw's ministrations, i.e., conducting the Three Refuges and Five Precepts, and explaining the Four Sublime States (*Brahmavihāra*) which was followed by a group meditation on one of them each day alternately, 3-4 p.m. to lectures on the following subjects:- The Significance of Meditation, What is Mind?, Mental Development, How to overcome bad habits and form good habits, *Atta* and *Anatta*, The Law of Cause and Effect, Lessons taught by Kamma, Philosophy of Death, How Rebirth takes place, If there is no *Atta* what is it that is reborn? Remembrance of past existences, What is the Origin of Life?, Causes of Unhappiness, The Sources of Happiness, How to attain Happiness, What is Nibbāna and how to attain it?, Seven kinds of Purity and Seventeen Stages of Knowledge, etc., and 7-9 p.m. to an examination on the daily experiences of each meditator.

At 8 p.m. on Thursday, 14th January, the Sayadaw began his series of public lectures (apart from his regular lectures at the Meditation Centre) in the Oddfellow's Hall Sydney city, under the auspices of the Buddhist Society of New South Wales. He addressed a large and appreciative audience on "The Path to Happiness". The hall was packed to capacity. After the lecture he answered many questions, and the Society was more than gratified with the result. His second public lecture was delivered in the same hall on 24th January. This time he spoke on "Causes of Unhappiness". Twice as many people as at the first meeting were present. Once again many questions were asked and he answered them all, and everyone present

was very interested, not only in his lecture, but in the way he answered the questions put to him.

At the invitation of Mr. David Mc. Kay, President of the Dhamma Maṇḍala, Melbourne, the Sayadaw left Sydney for Melbourne at 7 a. m. on Saturday, 26th January. Mr. McKay himself very kindly took him there in his car via the Australian capital city, Canberra, about 4 hundred miles from Sydney to let him revisit the city where the Sayadaw delivered the three very interesting lectures during his previous visit. This time he stopped there only for the night as a guest of H. E. the Burmese Ambassador U Aung Shwe in his residence. Next morning at 6 Sayadaw continued his journey about four hundred miles to Melbourne where he arrived in the evening at about 7, and stayed there at 32 Queens Rd; where the Dhamma Maṇḍala holds all its meetings.

During his stay in Melbourne for eight days the Sayadaw delivered five public lectures of which three were at the Nurses' Memorial Centre at 8 p. m. on Tuesday, January 29; at 3 p. m. on Wednesday; January 30; at 8 p. m. on Friday, February 1, under the auspices of the Dhamma Maṇḍala on following subjects respectively: The Law of Cause and Effect (*Kamma*), Loving-kindness (*Mettā*) and How to attain happiness; one at the Buddhist Society of Victoria on "Practical aspect of Buddhism" at 7 p. m. on Thursday, 31st January; and the last one at the Theosophical Society at 7 p. m. on Sunday, 3rd. February, on "Causes of Unhappiness". All the lectures were very well attended and followed by many questions and answers. On Saturday, 2nd. February, the Sayadaw lunched with Burmese Colombo Plan Students and their Australian friends at their residence. There followed a lecture on "Action and Reaction". On Sunday, 3rd. February, he was the guest for lunch at the M.R.A. Headquarters where he gave a talk on "How to change one's lower nature into higher nature".

On Monday, 4th. February, after his breakfast Mr. Mc Kay took the Sayadaw by car to Melbourne airport where he was farewelled by the President and members of the Dhamma Maṇḍala and some of their friends. At 8 a. m. he left by air for

Brisbane to visit the Social Centre there organised by his old great friend, Mrs. J.B.S. Coats, a very well known social worker and organiser. He stayed there for three days, gave talks to the members of the Centre and had long discussions with the organiser on social problems and their solutions. On the 7th. of February he returned to Sydney by air.

At the invitation of the head of the Theosophical Community Centre, the Manor, Sydney, the Sayadaw stayed there for three days and gave talks on "Right Understanding, Loving-kindness and Right Meditation" which, of course, was the great highlight of his visit to Australia."

On 12th February at 8 p. m., an "at home" was held at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Berkeley and there was a gathering of Buddhist meditators, supporters and friends to say "bon voyage" to the Sayadaw. Many members and friends gathered at Sydney airport at 10 a. m. on Wednesday, 13th February, to see him safely abroad; his plane took off at 11 a. m.

During his seven weeks visit to Australia the Sayadaw delivered 37 public lectures, 7 group talks, had 32 private interviews with different people in all walks of life and answered many questions. Thus quite a lot of work has been accomplished and there is no doubt that his visit has created a great deal of interest in Buddhism. Thanks are due in no small measure to Mr. and Mrs. Berkeley whose generosity and tireless efforts have done to bring this about.

From the close observation made during the Sayadaw's seven weeks visit to Australia, two facts are outstanding to him. The first concerns the demand for Buddhism, the second the need for speed and improved means to cope with it. Much as individual efforts and groups have done in the past for the spreading of Buddhism continuous and co-ordinated action is essential if the present situation is to be even maintained. The whole proposition should be scientifically considered and appropriate modern methods applied. Obviously the first essential is the provision of a well organised Centre or Vihāra from which, and at which, the Buddha's Teaching can be propagated.

# INTERNATIONAL MEDITATION CENTRE

Founded by

The Vipassanā Association

Office of the Accountant General, Burma.

(Location: Inyamyaing, off University Avenue, Rangoon)

*(In response to requests from readers seeking more information about the International Meditation Centre, an aerial photographic of which we published in our last issue, we are pleased to furnish the following particulars about the Centre—Ed.)*

1. The International Meditation Centre is founded with the sole object of promoting the practice of Buddhist Meditation according to the teachings of the Lord Buddha.

2. It is open to members of the Association and also to foreigners who are really anxious to experience the "Nibbanic Peace Within."

3. Courses of training in practical Buddhist Meditation will be given in English and each candidate for the course must be prepared:

- (a) to submit himself wholly to the Guru and to pay the respects normally due from a disciple to a Teacher,
- (b) to observe strictly the eight Precepts (Uposatha Sila),
- (c) to remain within the precincts of the Centre for the entire period of the course.

4. The initial course will be for a period of 10 days which may be extended according to individual needs.

5. Individual development depends on one's own Pāramitā and his capability to fulfil the five Elements of Effort (Padhāniyaṅga), viz Faith, Health, Sincerity, Energy and Wisdom.

6. In practical work, every candidate will be required to follow strictly and diligently the three indisputable steps of Sila, Samādhi and Paññā of the Eightfold Noble Path or the seven stages of Purity (Satta Visuddhi).

7. It is the responsibility of the candidate to restrain himself properly to ensure that the eight Precepts (Uposatha Sila) are duly observed. With a view to promoting Sila,

he should further restrain the sense centres (Indria Samvara) by keeping himself alone, as far as practicable, in a cave or a secluded spot.

8. The Guru will arrange for the development of his power of concentration to one-pointedness (Citta Ekaggatā). For this purpose, the training to be given will be in accordance with the principles enunciated in the Ānāpāna Sati Sutta or the Visuddhi Magga Aṭṭhakathā as may be found suitable to the candidate.

(In this respect, the Guru is merely a Guide. The success in the development of the power of concentration to perfection (Sammā Samādhi) depends entirely on the right exertion (Sammā Vāyāma) and the right mindfulness (Samā sati) of the candidate concerned. The achievement of Appanā Samādhi (Attainment - Concentration) or Upacāra Samādhi (Neighbourhood - Concentration) is a reward which goes only to highly developed candidates).

9. When the candidates have developed sufficiently well in the power of concentration, they will be acquainted with the fundamental principles of Buddha - Dhamma closely connected with the practical lessons in Vipassanā which are to follow.

10. The course of training will then be changed to Vipassanā or Insight. This involves an examination of the inherent tendencies of all that exist within one's ownself. The candidate learns in course of time by personal experience, the nature of Anicca, Dukkha and Anatta as taught by the Buddha. May be, following a realisation of the Four

Noble Truths, he breaks through to a state beyond Suffering (Dukkha - Nirodha), enters the first stream of Sotāpanna, and enjoys the fruit (Phala) of his endeavours in the "Nibbanic Peace Within."

11. He who can enjoy this Nibbanic Peace Within, is an Ariya. He may enjoy it as and when he may like to do so. When in that state of Peace Within called "Phala, but for

the supermundane consciousness in relation to the Peace of Nibbāna, no feeling can be aroused through any of the sense - centres. At the same time, his body posture becomes tightened. In other words, he is in a state of perfect physical and mental ca'm, as in the case referred to by the Buddha in his dialogue with Pukkusa of Malla while halting at a place on His way to Kusināra for the Mahā-Parinibbāna.



## THE LIGHT OF BUDDHA

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**Union Buddha Sāsana Council's Scholarships for 1962-63 Awarded  
to University Students Who Gained the Highest Mark  
in Buddhistic Studies of University Examinations.**

To encourage the studies of Buddhism in the Universities, Union Buddha Sāsana Council's Scholarships for 1962-63 are awarded to the following 6 University Students (3 from University of Rangoon and 3 from University of Mandalay), who gained the highest mark in Buddhistic Studies of University Examinations in March 1962.

(1) *Mg Tin Win*, age 19, the second son of U Mg Kyin and Daw Tin, merchant, Laputta, Myaungmya Dist, passed the Matriculation Examination from State High School, Laputta in 1959-60, passed the I.A. (B) Examinations March 1962 gaining the highest mark in Buddhistic Studies. He continues his Buddhistic Studies as one of his subjects in B.A. (A) of the University of Rangoon.

(2) *Ma Khin Nyunt*, age 20, daughter of U Po Myint and Daw Shin, Taungtha, Myingyan District, passed the Matriculation Examination from State High School No. 2, Pakokku in 1961, passed the I.A. (A) Examinations of March 1962 gaining the highest mark in Buddhistic Studies. She continues her Buddhistic Studies as one of her subjects in I.A. (B) of the University of Rangoon.

(3) *Mg Myint Thein*, age 30, son of U Thaw and Daw Thein Nyunt, Primary Teacher Thintawyo, Minhla, passed the Matriculation Examination from State High School No. 2, Bassein in 1959, passed the B.A. (A) Examinations of March 1962 gaining the highest mark in Buddhistic

Studies. He continues his Buddhistic Studies as one of his subjects in B.A. (B) of the University of Rangoon.

(4) *Mg Kyaw Hlaing*, age 22, the 6th son of U Tha Aung and Daw Hla Yin, Nyaungbintha, Meiktila Dist, passed the Matriculation Examination from State High School No. 1, Meiktila, passed the I.A. (A) Examinations of 1961 gaining the highest mark in Buddhistic Studies, from the University of Mandalay; he has been awarded with a scholarship for 1961-62, worth K 720/, by Union Buddha Sāsana Council. He again passed the I.A. (B) Examinations of March 1962 gaining the highest mark in Buddhistic Studies. He continues his Buddhistic Studies as one of his subjects in B.A. (A) of the University of Mandalay.

(5) *Ma Nyunt Nyunt Than*, age 22, daughter of U Thant and Daw Si, Merchant, Mandalay, passed the Matriculation Examination from A.B.M. High School, Mandalay in 1958, passed B.A. (A) Examinations of March 1962 gaining the highest mark in Buddhistic Studies. She continues her Buddhistic Studies as one of her subjects in B.A. (B) of the University of Mandalay.

(6) *Mg Kyaw Pe*, passed the I.A. (A) Examinations of March 1962 gaining the highest mark in Buddhistic Studies. He continues his Buddhistic Studies as one of his subjects in I.A. (B) of the University of Mandalay.

# Looking Back and Looking Forward

By

Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy—Ceylon

It is an admirable custom in certain Buddhist countries to commemorate a loved relative who has died, by publishing a book or pamphlet on Buddhism for free distribution in the dead person's name. The merit of the *dharmā-dāna*, or Gift of the Truth, is then passed on to the deceased. It is the highest merit that can be offered.

This was the intention of a devout Buddhist gentleman of Kandy, the hill capital of Ceylon, when he undertook to print an edition of a small work on Buddhism in English, in memory of a near relative. While the booklet was still in the press the idea occurred to him to start a series of the such publications—small books, paper-covered, on various aspects of Buddhism, in English, and chiefly for distribution abroad. He discussed the project with a friend, a senior teacher, and a Buddhist monk living in the neighbourhood of Kandy, and they received the suggestion with enthusiasm. Knowing that there was a great desire for knowledge of Buddhist teachings among an increasing number of thoughtful people all over the world, they foresaw great possibilities in the idea. A wider reading public could be reached by a steady stream of small booklets than through the medium of full-sized publications. At the same time, various aspects of Buddhist thought could be dealt with by different writers, thus offering continual variety and an appeal to all types of readers.

On the practical side, the originator of the plan felt confident that he could get the support of a number of friends, each of whom would subscribe for a single issue at least of the booklets. In that way the initial costs of printing could be met.

on this basis, and with no further formalities, the new project was launched. The three constituted themselves an informal society, with the Monk as honorary Secretary, the original sponsor as honorary Treasurer

and his friend as honorary Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer. It was agreed that they did not wish to be encumbered with constitutions, committees and all the troublesome machinery that so often suffocates a young society at the very start. They were content to begin in a modest way and to trust that further helpers would come along as the work showed its value.

They did not even wait to obtain office premises. The Buddhist Publication Society was born, and for the first three years of its life grew up, in an overcrowded little room in a hermitage set in the thickly-wooded hills of Kandy. Nothing more different from a modern publishing office, with staff and equipment, could be imagined. Here was just a book-lined room lit at night by an oil lamp, containing nothing in the way of office appurtenances beyond a typewriter, a table for writing and some shelves which soon became unexpectedly stacked with office files. All around, the quiet of the forest, broken only by the shrilling of cicadas and the occasional note of a bird.

The first booklet published was the one already in the press, 'The Seven Factors of Enlightenment.' A second was chosen and printed, and the two sent out together as the first of the series titled *THE WHEEL*. With them went a smaller tract, 'An Outline of Buddhism'; this was the first of the sister series, *BODHI LEAVES*, intended to contain popular introductions to Buddhism and short essays.

It was a very unpretentious beginning. A thousand copies were printed of the two *WHEEL* booklets, and 5000 of the first *BODHI LEAVES*. These were dispatched in January 1958 to altogether two hundred addresses in Ceylon and abroad. But to get them out was no easy matter. Lists of addresses were compiled, classified, typed and even pasted on the envelopes by the Secretary, while the larger parcels were

packed by the servant boy of the Hermitage. Then, and for a long time thereafter, the Secretary and Assistant Secretary had no help in the Society's work. Transport was a recurring problem. Sometimes a car was available for conveyance between the Hermitage and the town, but a great deal of the time was spent by the Assistant Secretary in going backward and forward on foot, negotiating two steep hills between the Hermitage and his home. For the Secretary, a long walk from the Hermitage to the printer's office was a regular feature of his routine.

More and more addresses were added to the mailing list, and for the third issue the number of copies printed was increased to three thousand for the *WHEEL*. The response to the first issues had been highly encouraging. Many letters began to arrive from Buddhist societies and from individuals abroad who had received the booklets. Dealing with this mail involved more work, and the do-it-yourself policy was strained to the utmost; but still it was carried on cheerfully without any additional clerical staff. In the first year seven issues of *THE WHEEL* and four of *BODHI LEAVES* were published in this way.

So rapidly did the field of distribution expand that at the end of the first year the publications were being sent to 470 foreign addresses, covering no less than fifty-five countries. Of these addresses, some were of Buddhist associations, some of individual Buddhists and others of people interested in Buddhism. All of them showed a keen desire to obtain authentic Buddhist literature, and many were the expressions of appreciation that came from grateful readers.

From the start the publications were generally distributed free of any charge, even postage being met by the Society. With the increase of the quantities printed it was, however, found no longer practicable to finance the publications entirely through single donors. The new need was met by introducing Associate Membership, together with the annual subscription scheme.

Membership in Ceylon was recruited chiefly by the efforts of the Assistant Secretary, who was indefatigable in making personal contacts with prospective subscribers and contributors, many of whom, since the Society was then small and unknown, would

have been unlikely to respond to written appeals. In addition to this he shared the task of visiting the printers and helped with the editorial work at the Hermitage. Thus his days were filled, and his nights scarcely less so, for he often worked late into the night doing the accounts, writing up the ledgers of the Society, and preparing the monthly and yearly statements. It was only by such devoted and untiring work that the Society was able to maintain and steadily expand its activity throughout that arduous period of its maturing.

There came a period when donations slackened, but the BPS continued on its way undaunted. That phase passed, and since then there have always been sufficient funds available for the programme immediately in hand. Apart from the support received from members and contributors, the consolidated position of the Society today is largely due to the fact that towards the end of 1958 the Society received a generous grant from the Department to Cultural Affairs, and since then this Ceylon Government subsidy has been received regularly. The official support was doubly welcome, in that it showed appreciation of the Society's work and the quality of literature it has produced, and because it testifies to the fact that the BPS booklets are not only helpful to readers abroad but are of great service to those in Ceylon whose education has been mainly in English. Owing to the predominance in former days of English education there are many people in Ceylon who find it actually easier to study Buddhism in the English language than in their mother-tongue. It is a fact that the small BPS booklets, handy to carry and easy to pass around, have done much to foster the reading habit among people who would hesitate to tackle a large book devoted to a serious subject such as religion or philosophy.

The regular grant from the Cultural Affairs Department has enabled the Society not only to increase its output to a significant extent, but also to do a certain amount of planning ahead. *THE WHEEL* series was increased to 5,000 copies per issue, thereby allowing a margin of reserve stock to be kept, so that requests, which are frequently received, for past issues can be met.

\* \* \* \*



As time went on donations, some of them very generous ones, began to be received from Ceylon and several foreign countries. The assistance thus rendered would doubtless have been greater but for the fact that the Society's well-wishers in a number of countries in East and West are prevented from sending donations by the restrictions placed on foreign exchange.

As the Society's clerical work mounted up to unmanageable proportions, voluntary helpers came forward and offered their assistance. They included some Government servants and municipal employees, who gave their help in clerical work during their leisure hours, and also formed groups of subscribers in their departments. A bank employee helped with the Society's accounts, whilst individual volunteers rendered other welcome assistance whenever they could. Among the latter, one in particular deserves special mention. He is retired Government servant who offered his full-time services to the Society in May 1960, and for this purpose moved from Colombo to Kandy where, as no proper accommodation could then be offered to him, he was content to 'camp' at the Forest Hermitage. It is thanks to him, and to others who have sacrificed their time and personal convenience to help the work, that the Society has borne the strain of its rapid expansion with so little overhead expenditure. All the same, the volume of work always kept well ahead of the available assistance, a condition which still prevails today.

One great handicap from the beginning was the distance between the Hermitage and the centres of activity in the town, together with the fact that there was no telephonic communication. All contacts with printers and others had to be made by letter or personal visit—a time-consuming and energy-wasting procedure. Mail was taken to the post office by cycle; a formidable task on mailing days, with some 1300 packages to be dealt with. Nevertheless, things were carried on in this way, with the work continually increasing, until February 1961, when at last an office was obtained nearer to town, on the drive by the lovely Kandy Lake, half-a-mile away from the Temple of the Sacred Tooth. So far as accessibility and communication was concerned this was a great step forward, but with the rapidly-growing clerical requirements,

combined with the fact that the stock of publications is being added to monthly, there is still a great need for more accommodation. Storage space and working space are still uncomfortably restricted.

\* \* \* \*

Now, midway through the fourth years of its existence, the position of the BPS is eloquent testimony to its achievements. It supplies regular Buddhist publications to over 1,800 addresses in fifty-nine countries ranging from Scandinavia to Italy in Europe. North to South America, Africa (including Ghana, Nigeria and Soudan), Israel, Australia, the Buddhist countries of Asia and the centres of recent Buddhist revival, India and Indonesia. Up to October 1961 a total of 320,000 booklets have been printed. It is particularly gratifying to note that the Society's publications penetrate to countries where Buddhist literature is scarce and difficult to come by, as in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Spain. The letters received from these countries tell of the sad dearth of books on Buddhism, and the thirst for knowledge of the Dhamma that many of the people feel. Owing to the limited knowledge of English, distribution of the books in these countries is restricted to a few persons, but translations are often made of the Society's publications, in whole or in part, and in this way they reach a fairly wide reading public. Such translations are often printed in Buddhist magazines. It is also quite common for English-language periodicals in other countries to reprint entire BPS publications in their pages.

This is due, more than anything, to the high standard that has been set and maintained in the published material. Buddhist teachings now command a wider audience than ever before, and the standards by which their presentation is judged are exacting; they have to bear comparison, with the best philosophical writings of the West. There is abundant proof that the BPS publications satisfy the requirements of the modern mind. Not all the readers who write to the Society are Buddhists; a number of adherents of other religions have written expressing their appreciation of the Buddhist doctrines which the booklets have made known to them for the first time. Besides ordinary people, scholars and even scientists in the West have written on the subject of Buddhist doctrines which in the BPS publications they have

found presented in a manner to command their interest and respect.\* Nearer home, the Education Department of the Government of Ceylon purchases regularly a quantity of *THE WHEEL* publications for school libraries—a very gratifying proof of the service the Society is rendering to the country of its birth. It has been found that the booklets are very valuable to teachers and students alike.

In response to suggestion from many readers a series of booklets in Sinhala language, the *DAMSAK* (Pāli, *Dhammacakka*) series, was inaugurated in 1960, and has met with a friendly reception. They have earned much praise both from the clerical and lay readers. Up to September 1961, seven titles have been printed in that series, totalling 30,000 copies.

Regular supplies of the B. P. S. Publications are offered to the Hospital Welfare Service and 'Buddhist Mission to Sea and Air Travellers' in Colombo. According to reports received from the monks in charge of the Hospital Service in the metropolis, the Society's English and Sinhalese publications are greatly appreciated by the patients: The demand on this service is rapidly increasing.

In London, a devoted friend of the Society has at her own expense inserted advertisements in English newspapers and magazines, offering in the name of the Buddhist publication Society to send free copies of the publications on request. The Society supplies the books for mailing them to enquirers at this lady's expense. The response to this venture has been highly encouraging and it has brought several interesting contacts.

This brief backward glance would not be complete if it did not take in some aspects of the material the Society has already offered to readers. A survey of the titles shows the range of subjects the booklets have already covered. The first 35 issues of *THE WHEEL* comprise over 1,000 pages—a considerable volume of high-class writing on Buddhism. From the outset it has been the Society's aim to give authoritative information embodying the fundamental and original teachings of the Buddha, together with reliable translations of actual texts. The general tone has been set by that little classic, now published once more by the BPS. *The*

*Word of the Buddha*, by the Ven. Nyanatiloka Mahāthera, wherein is found a statement of the authentic doctrine taught by Gotama Buddha, a formulation acceptable to all who follow the Dhamma. For the first, the booklets are an attempt to present Buddhism in the framework of contemporary thought, and to interpret man to himself in the light of a wisdom that is lacking in this materialistic age. As the Society's correspondence testifies, the publications are serving this purpose for an ever-growing number of people in all parts of the world.

It is here that we see the true value of Buddhist teachings in the world today. The BPS booklets are being used more and more in group study by Buddhists who are cut off from large-scale Buddhist activities. Wherever there is a small nucleus of Buddhists, ardently pursuing knowledge of the Dhamma, there the BPS publications are found. Large and well-organised Buddhist associations find the booklets valuable not only for group and individual study but also for introducing the Dhamma to non-Buddhists. In this way the BPS is helping to create a climate of thought in which Buddhist ideas and ideals can take root. The spread of Buddhism in the West has shown over and over again how a whole life can be transformed by a single book on the Dhamma, perhaps given by a friend, perhaps picked up in an idle moment. Every booklet that goes forth from the quiet Hermitage in the heart of the Kandy hills contains immeasurable potentialities. To one it may carry intellectual satisfaction—the answer to questions that have perplexed and disturbed him, and for which his own religion could furnish no answers. To another it may bring courage and incentive to live the good life. To yet another it may be nothing less than salvation from complete despair. So great is the power of the printed word in human life—so great the power of the Dhamma in one small book.

For the workers of the BPS during those early, difficult days it was that which made it all worth while. It made worth while the planning and contriving, the long hours at the typewriter, the eyes strained from proof-reading in the dim light of an oil lamp, the ache in the not-so-young legs from the stiff climb into the Kandyan heights, the fingers

\* A few representative extracts from readers' and subscribers' letters have now been printed for free distribution, in a separate booklet, 'What Our Readers Say'.

sticky with office paste...They were making their Gift of Dhamma to the world.

Few of the readers who received and enjoyed the first publications could have guessed the conditions in which they came into existence, or the labour of their birth. Many must have thought that 'Forest Hermitage' was just a picturesque name, perhaps for some urban residence—or, at the least, a well-appointed monastery in which the Secretary did his editorial work surrounded by servants, with the publishing office somewhere adjacent. But the small, shuttered room of the Buddhist monk is still the heart and nerve-centre of what, from humble beginnings has grown into something like an institution.

And now the Buddhist Publication Society faces the future with high hopes. What has been done so far is little compared with possibilities that lie ahead. The field for Buddhist work lies not only in the West but very close to hand, for example in India. Though the pressing need there is for literature in the vernaculars, there are many thousands of new converts to Buddhism in the subcontinent who are conversant with English yet still lack proper instruction in the Dhamma. But despite the language obstacle, BPS publications are being used there with success. They are being rendered into the vernaculars and taken as the basis of lectures and study courses, and to provide material for original writing in the indigenous languages. Here alone there is enormous scope for progress and development.

In the Western countries the need is for more organised distribution of the booklets through large booksellers; but this of course calls for more clerical staff and a greater number of qualified office works. Given the staff, there is no doubt whatever that a successful campaign could be planned and carried out from the headquarters in Kandy. Booksellers in England and America, to mention only two countries, are quite prepared to give their co-operation, but unless large quantities of books can be dealt with systematically, it is pointless to embark on any ambitious programme. Nevertheless, it remains a distinct possibility for the future, and one that only awaits the opportunity. The two prime requisites are suitable office accommodation and equipment, and paid personnel to deal with the complex routine of book-keeping, correspondence, mailing and the numerous other functions of a publishing

organisation. With these facilities another side of the work could be developed as well—that is, the systematic distribution of BPS literature to public libraries and other suitable institutions all over the world. From that it would be only a step for the booklets to find their way to reading-rooms, youth clubs and other places where miscellaneous reading matter is available to the general public. In this way a new and hitherto untouched class of readers would be contacted, with who knows what stimulating results?

There has already been evidence that advertisements in the press, particularly in publications that cater for an intelligent readership, produce an encouraging response. Advertising, however, is costly, and at present the BPS relies on its well-wishers to take the initiative in this direction. The results achieved by the lady in London already mentioned, have shown what can be done by judicious advertising. Perhaps others in the future will come forward with similar offers of help.

Many other ideas come to mind for development in the days ahead. It is hoped that in time to come the Society may be in a position to sponsor the publication of full-sized books. This would be a logical, and most fruitful, extension of the work already being done. Whenever the necessary funds become available it will be a priority item in the Society's planning.

The numbers of translations into foreign languages that have been made of the BPS literature suggests another promising line of development, which is for the Society itself to duplicate pamphlets and booklets in various languages and scripts, from stencils supplied by the foreign Buddhist societies concerned. A service of this kind would be of inestimable benefit, particularly to small groups of Buddhists in countries where circumstances are unfavourable to the propagation of Buddhist teachings, or where the financial and other resources of the Buddhists are scanty. A good duplicating machine is all that would be required to start such a service on a modest scale; the foreign Buddhist Societies would provide the translations and no doubt many of them would also contribute towards the cost of paper and other expenses.

But the most interesting possibility of development is one that lies outside the

printed page. Recently the idea occurred to some members of the BPS to start a circulating library of tape-recorded lectures on Buddhism, sermons, Scripture-reciting by Bhikkhus (Pirith), debates and other recordable Buddhist activities. These recordings—made in Ceylon on tapes provided by Buddhist associations abroad, could be air-mailed back to them, and from there circulated to other organisations having standard tape-recording machines, and finally back to the BPS for transmission elsewhere. When it is remembered that many Buddhists abroad have never heard the Pāli scriptures recited by Bhikkhus in concert, and that many would welcome the sound of Pirith at their meetings, the fascinating possibilities of this scheme become at once apparent. It would enable Buddhists abroad to hear sermons by celebrated Monks, listen to stimulating lectures and discussions and to take part in Buddhist ceremonies as though they were actually present at them. For young people in particular the interest would be increased a hundredfold. And indeed who, having read something that appealed to him very greatly, would not welcome the chance to hear the voice of the author himself? There is without question a great future open to the propagation of Buddhism through recordings, and the BPS is in a unique position to institute such a service. The only thing lacking is a tape-recorder. If a suitable instrument can be obtained recordings can be made straight away. Of all the contemplated schemes, this would be the simplest to put into operation. It requires no elaborate organising, and no extra staff. Wherever a Buddhist sermon or lecture is being given, there a recording can be made. In that way, something that is quite common in every Buddhist country could be transported to Buddhists in remote places who would hail it as a great rarity. We might well paraphrase a famous saying

and ask, 'Why should Māra have all the best inventions?' Incidentally, it is worth remembering that in Ceylon there are monks who can preach in Hindi and several other Indian languages, besides English, whilst others can give discourses in German and other important European languages. The tape recorder is the best way to make use of all this talent in the service of Buddhism.

So the Buddhist Publication Society, three and half years old, looks forward to a future rich in unexplored possibilities. It is a society with courage and imagination—both essentials for the propagation of Buddhism in the modern world. You who read this are invited to take a share in its work. No matter how small the part you may be able to play, your help and co-operation will be welcomed. If what you have just read has given you any ideas of ways in which you can help to forward the Society's plans, please write to the Secretary, Buddhist Publication Society, Forest Hermitage, Kandy.

The past success of the Society has been in large measure due to the active support of its Members, Associate Members and Subscribers who have helped in various ways, such as by introducing the BPS booklets to others. Increased membership means more funds with which to plan ahead. Already the BPS has grown to adult stature, if measured by the amount of work it has put out in the 62 booklets and over 300,000 copies. If it is to expand at a similar rate in the future the extra facilities in the way of accommodation, staff and equipment must be forthcoming. The ideas are there, and the will to carry them out. The rest depends upon the goodwill of those who believe in the value of the Society's work, and wish to see its influence as a medium of disseminating the Buddha's Teaching spread over an ever-widening field in the days ahead.