

# *The* LIGHT *of the* DHAMMA

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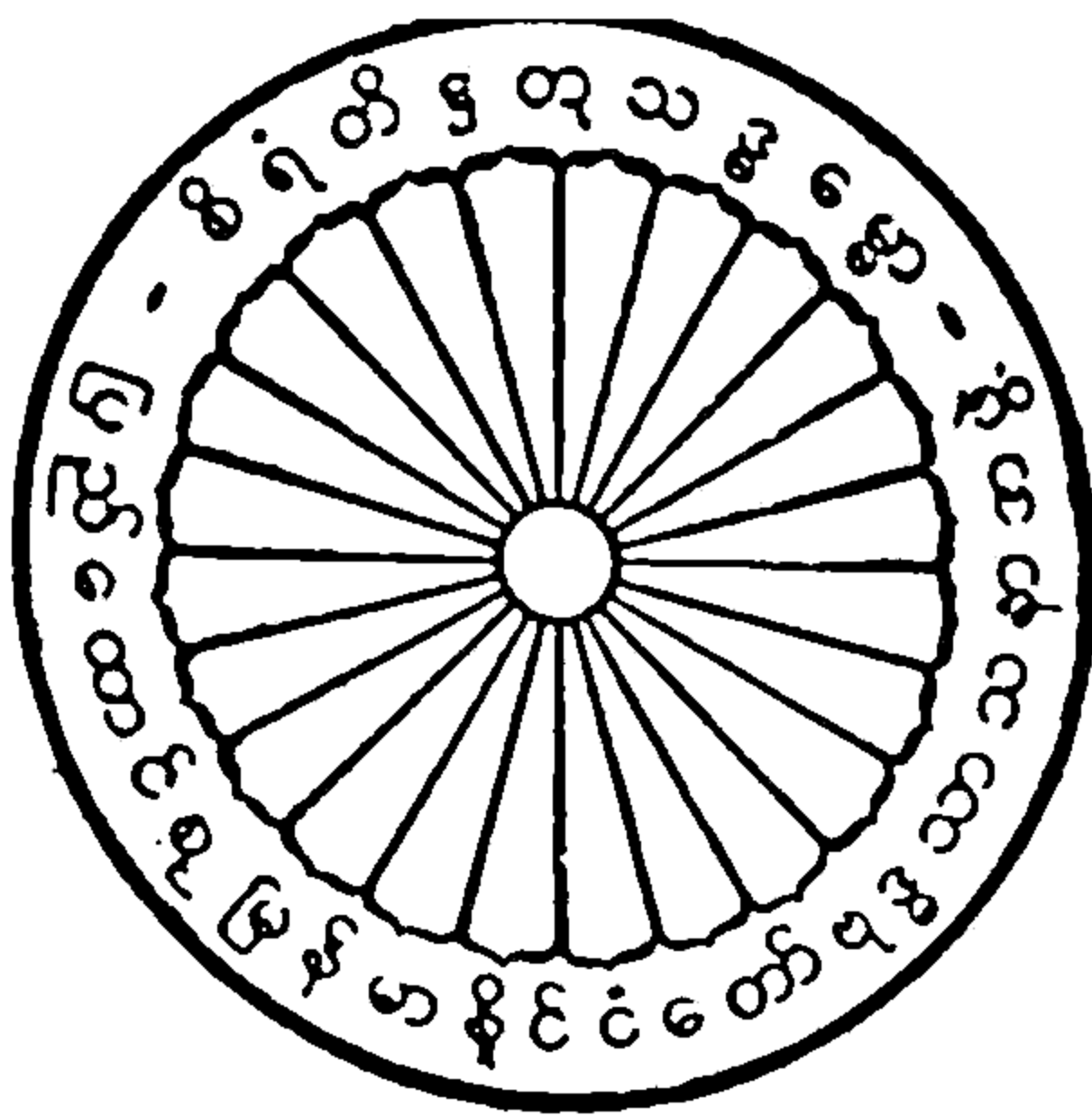
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## Message from Yathazeyon Sayadaw

Good people, please remember this message which is for your welfare and happiness.

There are clearly three great enemies tormenting and playing havoc with the lives of sentient beings in this world. Do not let them arise in you. You must resist them with all force.

Who are these three foes ? One of them is desire, craving for a pleasurable object ; another is anger leading to violence. The third is delusion which hides from us the true nature of things.

Just as bamboos and certain palm trees die as soon as they bear fruit, so that it may be said that these plants bear fruit to their own destruction ; in like manner do these three enemies cause damage and destruction to the very persons in whom they arise. You must therefore prevent their arising.

Remember that crimes of violence such as dacoity, murder and arson are directly traceable to these three enemies which are harboured by the perpetrators. Do not let them enter your heart.

The best armour to keep them far from you is to know, understand, regard and practise five essential precepts. You must therefore pay special attention to these very important five moral precepts.

Remember that as a stone thrown will surely drop to the ground by the law of gravitation the world situation also will

assuredly brighten up day by day to the same extent as more and more people pay regard to these five noble precepts ; and conversely it will deteriorate to the same extent as people begin to pay less and less regard to these five precepts. It is impossible for those persons who do not follow these five precepts to be successful in their attempts to attain to higher stages of the ecstasy of meditation and the path leading to Nibbāna.

It is therefore incumbent upon the Rulers of States and Territories to take urgent steps to propagate these five precepts :

Abstaining :

- (1) from killing any living being,
- (2) from stealing,
- (3) from unlawful sexual intercourse,
- (4) from lying,
- (5) from partaking of intoxicants.

May all beings be happy. May all people practise almsgiving which makes for universal peace. May they practise meditation so that they will ultimately attain to the bliss of Nibbāna which extinguishes the fires of Lobha (craving) Dosa (hatred) Moha (delusion) and transcends the pleasures of the thirty-one planes of existence. These are my constant thoughts and wishes for you.

Agga Mahā Paṇḍita  
U Kalyanabhivamsa,  
Patamagyaw and Ovadacariya  
Mahathera.

‘ Sateless are desires, full of torment and all despair : the very height of wretchedness ! ’ If, Mahanama, the noble disciple, wholly wise, thus rightly sees according to the truth ; and yet, apart from desires, apart from things evil, attains not to happiness or to aught better, then he certainly does not turn away from following after desires.

But when, Mahanama, the noble disciple, with true wisdom beholding things, even as they have come to be, perceives the insatiate nature of desires, their torment and despair, their utter wretchedness, and apart from desires and all things evil, finds happiness, finds something better ; then, verily, he follows no more after desires.

*Majjhima Nikaya Fourteenth Discourse.*



# Cula Kamma—Vibhanga Sutta

## Minor Discourse on the Classification of Kammās

(*Majjhima Nikāya*)

Translated by the Pāli Department of the University of Rangoon.

Thus I have heard—At one time the Bhagavā was residing at the Jetavana monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika. Then a young man named Subha, son of Todeyya approached where the Bhagavā was, and having approached he greeted him, and exchanged words of greeting and of courtesy. (Then) he sat down at one side, and sitting at one side the young man Subha, the son of Todeyya asked the Bhagavā “What is the cause and what is the reason, O Gotama for which among men and the beings who have been born as men there is found to be high or low status? For men are seen, O Gotama to suffer much from sickness or to be free from sickness, men are seen to be ugly or beautiful, men are seen of little power or possessing great power, men are seen devoid of wealth or possessing great wealth, men are seen born into low families or into high families, men are seen devoid of intelligence or possessed of great intelligence. What is the cause, what is the reason, O Gotama for which among men and the beings who have been born as men there is found high and low status?”

“Men have, O young man, Kamma as their very own, they are inheritors of Kamma, kamma is their matrix, kamma is their kith and kamma is their refuge. It is kamma that classifies men into this low or high state.”

“I cannot at all understand in detail the sense of what the Reverend Gotama has said briefly without having analysed their meaning *in extenso*. It would be well should the Reverend Gotama teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I can understand in detail the sense of what the Reverend Gotama has said briefly without having analysed their meaning *in extenso*.”

“Then, young man, listen and give good heed; I shall explain.” “Yes, Sir” said Subha the young man the son of Todeyya in agreement, and the Bhagavā spoke thus:

1 (a) “Here, O young man, some woman or man is a taker of life, fierce, with hands stained by blood, engaged in killing and beating, unendowed with mercy for living beings. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished, thus undertaken he is reborn, on the break-up of the body and after death, into a state of woe, of ill-plight, purgatory or hell.

If he is not reborn on the break-up of the body and after death, into a state of woe, of ill-plight, purgatory or hell, if he comes to be born as a man, wherever he may be reborn he becomes shortlived. This course, young man, namely that he is a taker of life, fierce, with hands stained by blood, engaged in killing and beating, unendowed with mercy for living beings, leads to shortness of life.

(b) Here, on the other hand, O young man, some woman or man gives up killing, totally refraining from taking life and abides laying down the rod, laying down the weapon, conscientious, endowed with mercy and sensitive to the weal of all living beings. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished thus undertaken, he is reborn on the break-up of the body, after death into a happy state, in a heavenly world.

If he is not reborn, on the break-up of the body, after death into a happy state in a heavenly world, if he comes to be born as a man, wherever he may be reborn, he becomes long-lived. This course, young man, namely that one gives up taking life, refrains from taking life and abides laying down the rod, laying down the weapon, conscientious, endowed with mercy for all living beings, leads to longevity.

2. (a) Here, O young man, some woman or man is by nature a tormentor of living beings with the hand, the clod, the stick or the weapon. As a result of the kamma thus accomplished and undertaken he is

reborn on the break-up of the body and after death into the state of woe, of ill-plight, purgatory or hell.

If he is not reborn on the break-up of the body and after death into the state of woe, of ill-plight, purgatory or hell, if he comes to be born as a man, wherever he may be reborn he suffers much from sickness. This course, young man, namely that one is by nature a tormentor of living beings with the hand, the clod, the stick or the weapon, leads to much sickness.

(b) Here, on the other hand, O young man, some woman or man is not by nature a tormentor of living beings with the hand, the clod, the stick or the weapon. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a happy state . . . . and becomes free from sickness.

This course, young man, namely that one is not by nature a tormentor of living beings with the hand . . . . the weapon, leads to freedom from sickness.

3. (a) Here, O young man, some woman or man is wrathful and very turbulent ; if blamed even a little he is enraged, irritated and upset and stubborn and gives vent to anger, ill-will and displeasure. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into the state of woe . . . . if he comes to be born as a man . . . . becomes ugly. This course, young man, namely that one becomes wrathful . . . . and gives vent to . . . . displeasure, leads to ugliness (of form).

(b) Here, on the other hand, O young man, some woman or man is not wrathful and not at all turbulent ; even if he is blamed much he is not enraged and irritated, upset and stubborn and does not give vent to anger, ill-will and displeasure. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a happy state . . . . if he comes to be born as a man . . . . becomes beautiful.

This course, O young man, namely that one is not wrathful . . . . does not give vent to . . . . displeasure, leads to beauty (of form).

4 (a) Here, O young man, some woman or man has an envious mind, is corrupted and cherishes envy towards others for the gain, honour, reverence, respect, salutation

and homage they receive. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into the state of woe . . . . if he comes to be born as a man . . . . gains no power. This course, young man, namely that one has an envious mind . . . . cherishes envy, leads not to power.

(b) Here, on the other hand, O young man, some woman or man has not an envious mind, is not corrupted and does not cherish envy towards others for the gain, honour, reverence, respect, salutation and homage they receive. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a happy state . . . . if he comes to be born as a man he . . . . gains great power.

This course, young man, namely that one has not an envious mind . . . . does not cherish envy leads to great power.

5 (a) Here, O young man, some woman or man is not a giver of food, drink, clothes, shoes, garlands, perfumes, cosmetics, beds, dwelling and lighting materials to monks and brahmins. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a state of woe . . . . if he comes to be born as a man . . . . he becomes poor.

This course, young man, namely that one is not a giver of food . . . . dwellings and lighting materials leads to poverty.

(b) Here, on the other hand, O young man, some woman or man is a giver of food and drink . . . . beds, dwelling and lighting materials. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a blissful state . . . . if he comes to be born as a man . . . . he becomes very rich. This course, young man, namely that one is a giver of . . . . beds, dwelling and lighting materials leads to great wealth.

6 (a) Here, O young man, some woman or man is proud, selfconceited, does not greet one who deserves to be greeted, does not rise up to receive one who deserves to be so received, does not offer a seat to one who deserves to be offered a seat, does not make way for one who deserves to be given way, does not honour one who deserves to be honoured, does not revere one who deserves to be revered, does not respect one who deserves to be respected, does not pay homage to one who deserves to be paid homage. As a result of that kamma, thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a

state of woe . . . . if he comes to be born as a man he takes birth into a low family.

This course, young man, namely that one is proud . . . . does not . . . . pay homage to one who deserves to be paid homage, leads to birth into a low family.

(b) Here, on the other hand, O young man, some woman or a man is not proud, not self-conceited, greets one who deserves to be greeted . . . . pays homage to one who deserves to be paid homage. As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a blissful state . . . . if he comes to be born as a man he takes birth into a high family. This course, young man, namely that one is not proud . . . . pays homage to one who deserves to be paid homage, leads to birth into a high family.

7 (a) Here, O young man, a woman or a man is not an interrogator, approaches not a monk or a brahmin asking "What, Reverend Sir, is right? What is wrong? What is blamable? What is blameless? What should be practised? What should not be practised? What being done tends to my harm and suffering for a long time, and what, on the other hand, being done tends to my welfare and happiness? As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a state of woe. . . . if he comes to be born as a man he becomes stupid.

This course, young man, namely that one is not an interrogator " . . . . tends to my welfare and happiness ?" leads to stupidity.

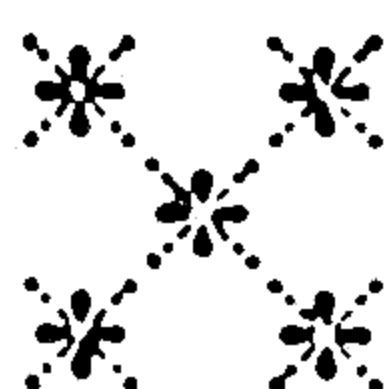
Here, on the other hand, O young man, some woman or man is an interrogator who approaches a monk or a brahmin asking "What, Reverend Sir, is right? . . . . tends to my welfare and happiness ?" As a result of that kamma thus accomplished . . . . he is reborn . . . . into a blissful state . . . . if he comes to be born as a man he becomes very wise.

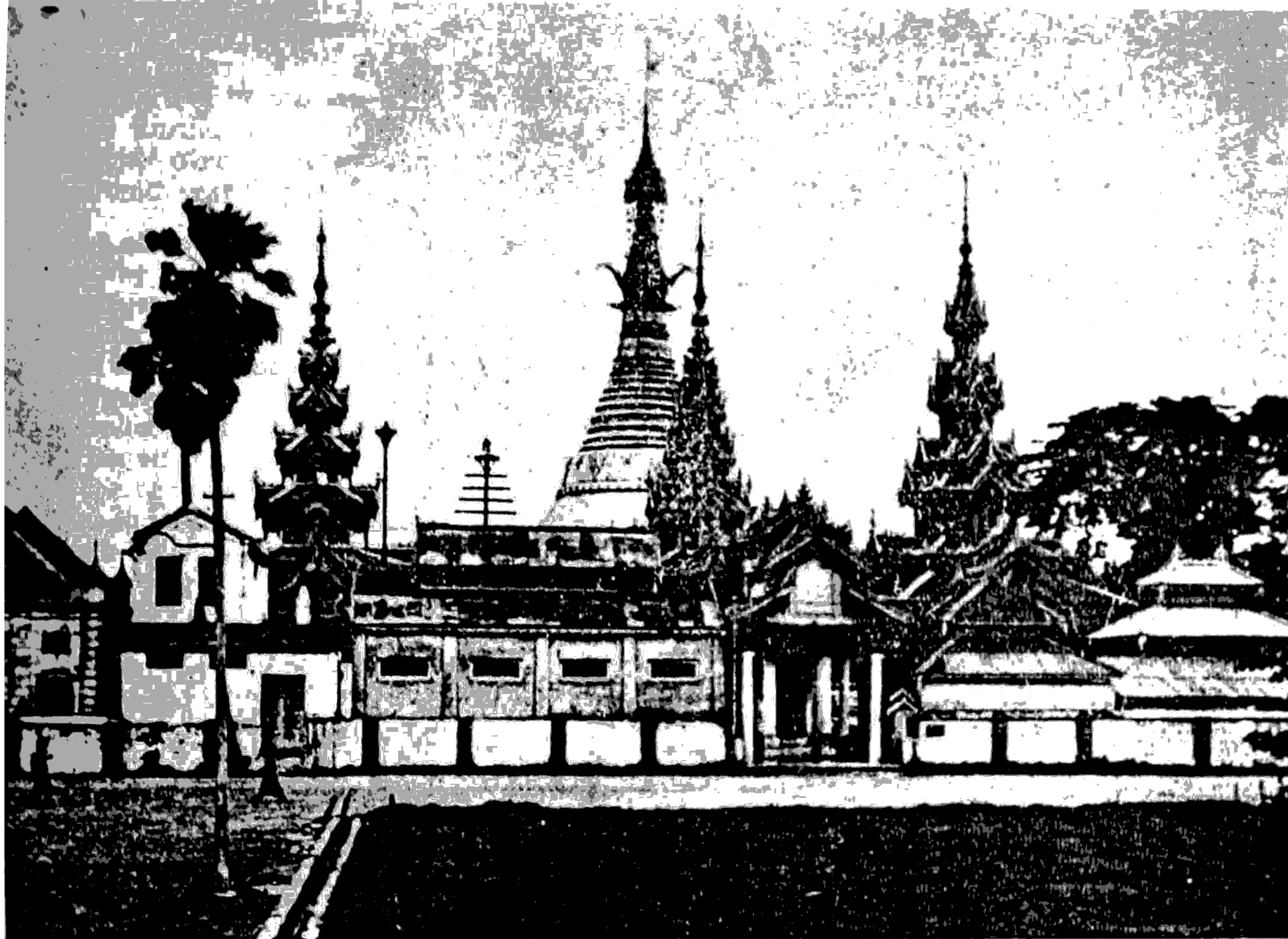
This course, young man, namely that one is an interrogator " . . . . tends to my welfare and happiness ?" leads to great wisdom.

Thus indeed, O young man, the course that tends to shortness of life brings about shortness of life, the course that tends to longevity brings about longevity, the course that tends to much sickness brings about much sickness, the course that tends to freedom from sickness brings about freedom from sickness, the course that tends to ugliness brings about ugliness, the course that tends to beauty brings about beauty, the course that tends to powerlessness brings about powerlessness, the course that tends to great power brings about great power, the course that tends to poverty brings about poverty, the course that tends to wealth brings about wealth, the course that tends to birth into a low family brings about birth into a low family, the course that tends to birth into a high family brings about birth into a high family, the course that tends to stupidity brings about stupidity and the course that tends to great knowledge brings about great knowledge.

Men have, O young man, kamma as their very own, they are inheritors of kamma, kamma is their kith and kamma is their refuge. It is kamma that classifies men into this low or high state.

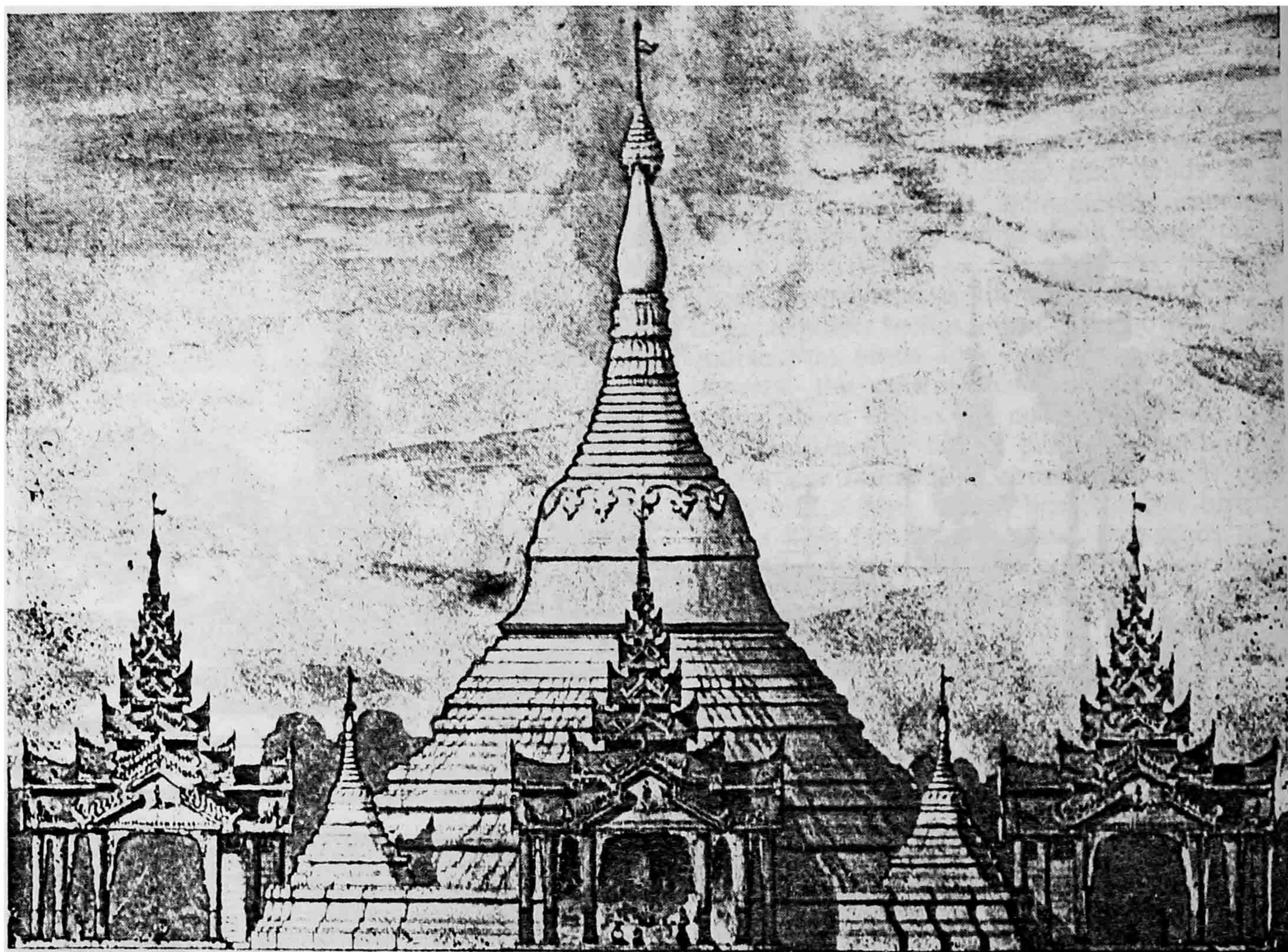
This being said, Subha the young man, the son of Todeyya said to the Bhagavā : "It is wonderful! O Gotama, it is wonderful! Just as, O Gotama, one should turn up that which is upside down or lay bare that which is concealed, or tell the way to the one who has lost his way or hold a lamp in the dark so that those who have eyes might see things ; even so, the Dhamma has been revealed to me in many ways by your Reverence Gotama. Such I take refuge in the Venerable Gotama, in the Dhamma and the Order of monks ; may the Venerable Gotama accept me as a lay disciple who has taken refuge from today onward as long as my life lasts.





The Botataung Pagoda, Rangoon, as it appeared in pre-war days before the disastrous bombing which reduced it to ruins.





Artist's conception of the Botataung Pagoda which is now rising from the ashes of the old.



# Shrines of Burma

## No. 2 The Botataung Pagoda

MAUNG OHN GHINE

Tradition says that the name "Botataung" is from "Bo" a military officer and "ta taung" one thousand and that it was on a hillock at this site that one thousand military officers of the king were drawn up as a guard of honour to welcome the landing in Burma of the relics of the Buddha brought over from India more than two thousand years ago.

An account from ancient histories of the building of the Pagoda states that the Buddhist king Sihadipa gave one of his ministers a sacred hair from the Buddha's head and two body relics and this minister, renowned for his goodness and faith, consulted a famous religious leader and, on his advice, chose the Botataung Mount on the bank of Rangoon River at a distance one thousand tars (7,000 cubits) in a South-Easterly direction from the Shwedagon Pagoda and there enshrined the sacred relics.

For over two thousand years the histories and traditions told that here, beneath this sacred edifice, was buried the sacred hair, the two body relics and an unspecified amount of treasure.

Burmese histories were always noted for a degree of truth and candour greater than that of some more modern histories in the newer countries, but after more than two thousand years have rolled by in this world, so demonstrably subject to Anicca (impermanence) it may be forgiven if memories cloud and men's minds grow doubtful.

There were those who in pre-war Burma were ready to doubt the real existence of the ancient relics and the accounts of the old histories.

It has been said that "Sometimes out of evil cometh forth good" and the old histories were to be vindicated by the trials and misfortunes of war.

The Botataung Pagoda was a famous land-mark on Rangoon's waterfront. Situated just below the long lines of jetties that serve this busy port whence rice,

petroleum, timber and mineral are shipped to the whole world, a most vulnerable spot in war, yet the Japanese air-raids on Rangoon in 1941-42 did no damage though bombs fell nearby and bullets rained death from the sky; but on the 8th of November, 1943 the R.A.F. bombed Rangoon's wharves and a whole "stick" of bombs straddled the ancient Botataung Pagoda, leaving where had stood one of Burma's oldest and most venerated fanes, a heartrending heap of twisted and blackened ruins.

As soon as the war ended a Rehabilitation Committee of leading citizens was formed to take steps to rebuild the Pagoda. Preliminary work was commenced and plans drawn up for the rebuilding.

The top-burden of the ruins was cleared away and then on the 4th of January, 1948 marking the day on which Burma regained her freedom and independence, the Rehabilitation Committee put in gold pegs as the first step towards actual re-erection of the Pagoda. A fitting ceremony was performed and the aid of all Forces and Beings was invoked and at 8-45 a.m. on this Independence day, a moment judged auspicious, five gold pegs were driven simultaneously into the ground. The centre gold peg was handled by Thado Thiri Thudhamma Sir U Thwin, the gold peg at the North-East Point by U Ba Thaw, Botataung Pagoda Trustee, the gold peg at the South-East point by Sir Mya Bu, Retired Chief Justice, the gold peg at the South-West point by U Po Byaw, Shwedagon Pagoda Trustee, and the gold peg at the North-West point by Thado Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union. These gold pegs were driven home simultaneously by these five gentlemen at the precise moment.

**Discovery of Rare Treasure.** After the driving in of the gold pegs the debris was cleared from the ground demarcated and bronze and silver images, coins and ornaments, some of which had been on display at the Pagoda at the time of the bombing, were recovered. Then a depth

of seven feet having been excavated in order to establish the foundations of the new Pagoda, further excavations were carried out for a relic chamber in the very centre of the site. At a depth of three feet an ancient and well-constructed chamber was uncovered, in size 20' x 20' and 6' in height gradually decreasing in size towards the top and appearing like a huge pot placed up-sided down to cover completely what lay inside.

In the very centre of this treasure vault was discovered a wonderful stone casket in the shape of a pagoda with a diameter of 23 ins. and 39 ins. high. Encircling this stone casket were figures of Nats (Minor Deities) carved out of laterite and evidently placed there to act as sentinels. The casket was immersed in mud as water had trickled into the vault during the many centuries it had been there.

With this pagoda-shaped stone casket within the relic chamber were found various kinds of treasures : precious stones, ornaments, jewellery, terra-cotta plaques and images of gold, silver, brass and stone. The total number of these images recovered from within and without the relic chamber was seven hundred. The terra cotta plaques, some of them in a fair state of preservation, depict Buddhist scenes.

**Image of Lord Buddha in Terra-Cotta.** One of the terra-cotta plaques excavated from the relic chamber bears an image of the Lord Buddha and though affected by age and moisture it is exceptionally important. On the reverse side are inscribed characters which are very close to the ancient Brahmani script which came from Southern India. It is a precious evidence of ancient times and has been deciphered by U Lu Pe Win, Superintendent Archaeology, Government of the Union of Burma, who points out that the initial word "e" from "evam vādi" shows that the script is in the manner of the ancient Mons. This is proof of the belief that the people who erected the Pagoda in ancient times were the Mons. The inscription is reproduced herein and the characters form the verse which summarises tersely the Buddha's Teaching as explained by Assaji (one of the five companions of Gotama in his strenuous ascetic practices, to whom after His Enlightenment He returned and first preached the Doctrine),

to Sariputta who in turn explained it to his friend Moggallana. These two thereupon perceived the Truth of the Buddha's Teaching, joined the Order and became the chief disciples. The English translation is: "The Tathāgata has explained the cause of all things which proceed from a cause and also the cessation thereof. This the Great Samana has taught." (Sariputta—Mahavagga, pubbujja Khanda, Moggallana vinaya pitaka).

**The Opening of the Stone Casket.** It was at once realised that the stone casket contained relics, but as this could not be opened up unceremoniously the pilgrims who flocked from all over Burma to see these discoveries had at first just to imagine the contents. The Rehabilitation Committee met on several occasions but could not take the responsibility of opening the casket. Then a meeting was called to which were invited 15 of the leading religious leaders (Mahā Theras). At this meeting, on the advice of these Bhikkhus, that as an act prompted by good motives and religious faith it would be quite meritorious to open the casket, it was unanimously decided to do this in the presence of the members of the Committee and the public. Great precautions were taken so as not to cause the slightest damage and actually the cone was removed from the stone salver on which it stood without any very great difficulty. When this cone or stone layer was removed there was found inside another stone layer of similar shape but with a brilliant gold coating and this was more representative of a pagoda in shape while its exquisite workmanship and brilliance inspired feelings of deep religious fervour in the crowd present. Some mud had penetrated even here and the sides of the base were covered with this and when it was washed and sifted precious stones and gold and jewellery were discovered round the base. This second stone casket was then removed and inside was found a small pagoda of pure gold standing on a silver salver or base and beside this golden pagoda was a carved stone image 4½ ins. high of very ancient workmanship.

When the gold Pagoda was lifted up, a tiny gold cylinder of ¾ ins. length with a diameter of 5/12 ins. was found and in this tiny cylinder were found two small body relics each the size of a mustard seed and a

**Sacred Hair of the Buddha.** This Hair was coiled round and fastened with a little acquer on which were traces of gold plaster.

**The New Pagoda.** The Sacred Body Relics and the Sacred Hair of the Buddha with all the images and other precious objects recovered from the ruins of the Pagoda have been temporarily stored in a shelter near the site of the Pagoda. Meanwhile the building of a new pagoda goes on apace. There had been a good deal of encroachment on the ancient Pagoda lands when Burma was taken by the British and these lands have been restored as glebe lands by the Government of the Union of Burma and the Pagoda site is now restored to 6½ acres. The new pagoda is of original design and in height 131 ft. 8 ins. on a base of 96 ft. × 96 ft. The pagoda is of reinforced concrete and is to be gilded and observers from abroad opine that this pagoda is a happy blend of the ancient and of the ultramodern and a really wonderful piece of architecture. The date of completion and crowning is yet to be determined but it will be before that great forthcoming

event in Buddhist history, the Sixth Great Buddhist Council which will be held in Burma from 1954.

Unlike many of the older shrines, the Pagoda is not a solid core but has a huge internal cavity and worshippers may enter.

Strength has not been sacrificed in the construction and the internal design is such that the odd nooks and corners, inseparable from an edifice of this shape, are being made the most of for artificial lighting and for guarded show cases in which to display the relics for public veneration. There is a well in the centre of the pagoda where was the ancient treasure chamber and this is to be kept open. An altar is to be erected in this well where the relics will rest so that they may be taken out on special occasions for worship.

The Botataung Pagoda is symbolic of the vitality and energy exhibited in the great Buddhist revival. Here from the ruins of the old culture is being salvaged all that was best of the ancient wisdom and displayed in modern manner to a modern world.

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## The Perfection of Giving

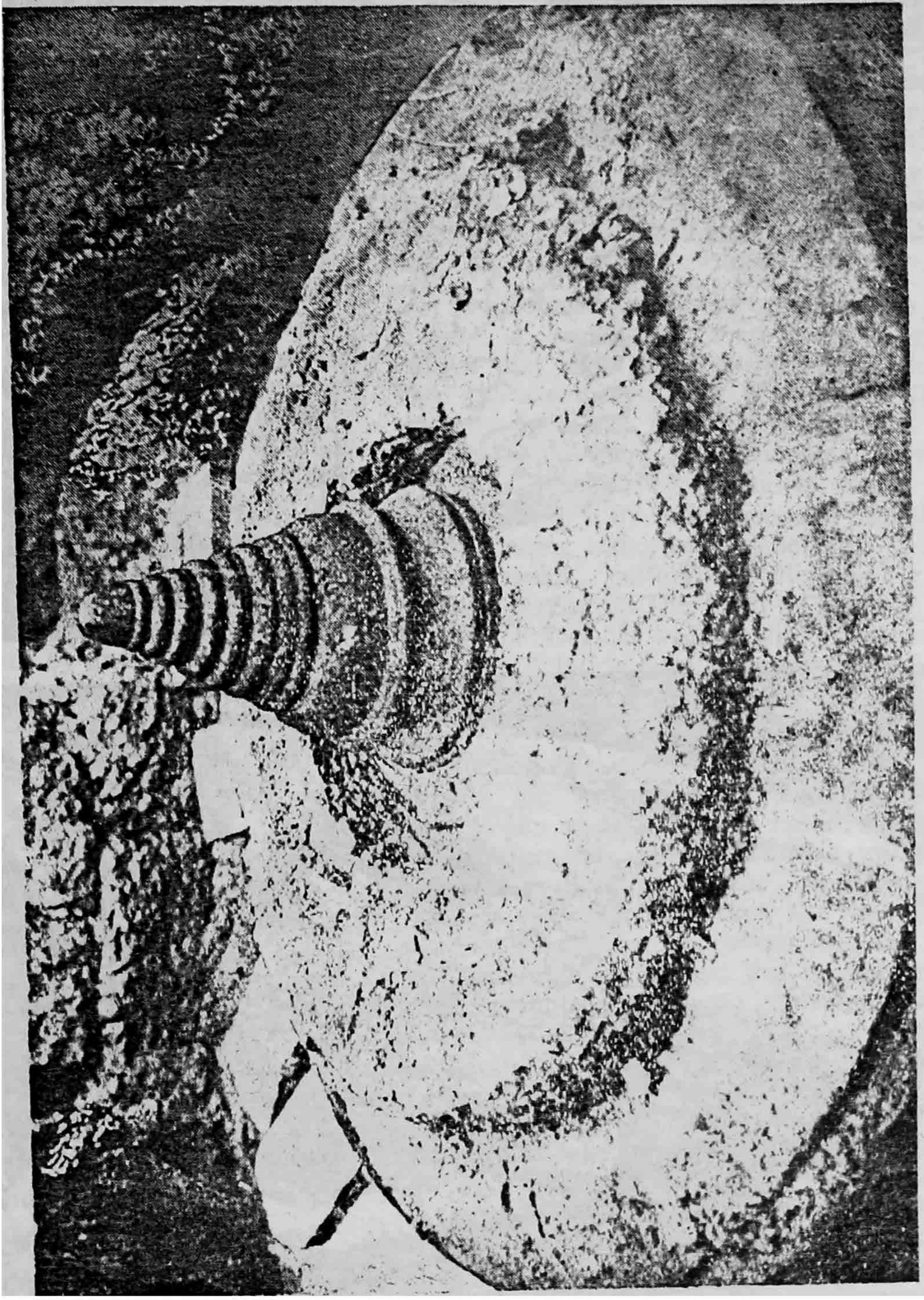
By *Bhikkhu Sangharakkhita*

Earth and air and sun and sea  
 All give their boundless life to me :  
 From the wounded earth there spring  
 Herbs for body's nourishing ;  
 From the circumambient air  
 Is drawn the breath of life men share ;  
 From the glorious sun there flow  
 Light and warmth to all below ;  
 From the green bosom of the main  
 Clouds suck the fertilizing rain.  
 Earth and air and sun and sea  
 All sacrifice themselves for me,  
 And each from its own being gives  
 To man the life whereby he lives.  
 Yea, and every thought sublime  
 Whose light has pierced the gloom of time  
 And leaps into my heart's recess  
 To fill with stars its nothingness,  
 Flamed from some vast sunlike soul  
 Whose love now helps us reach our goal.  
 Let praises ring from star to star  
 For them whose lives have made us  
     what we are !

Thou Utterly Awakened One  
 Whose Wisdom poured forth (as the sun  
 Sheds his bright beams voluminous)  
 So inexhaustibly on us,  
 And touched into the life divine  
 That lotus bud, this heart of mine,  
 Which else had slumbered ages long  
 Under the threefold flood of wrong ;  
 Thou by Whom, potent in Thy Word,

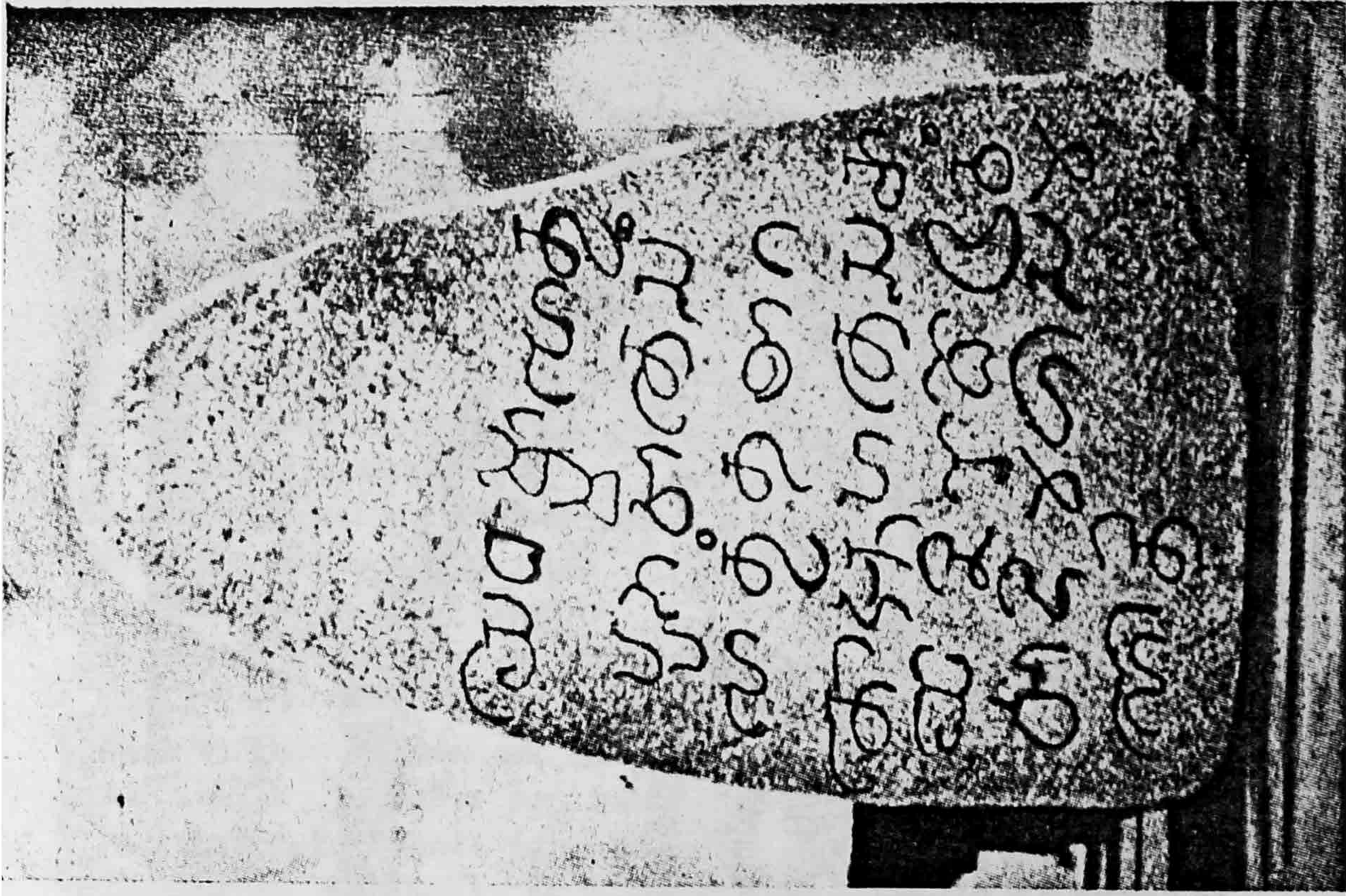
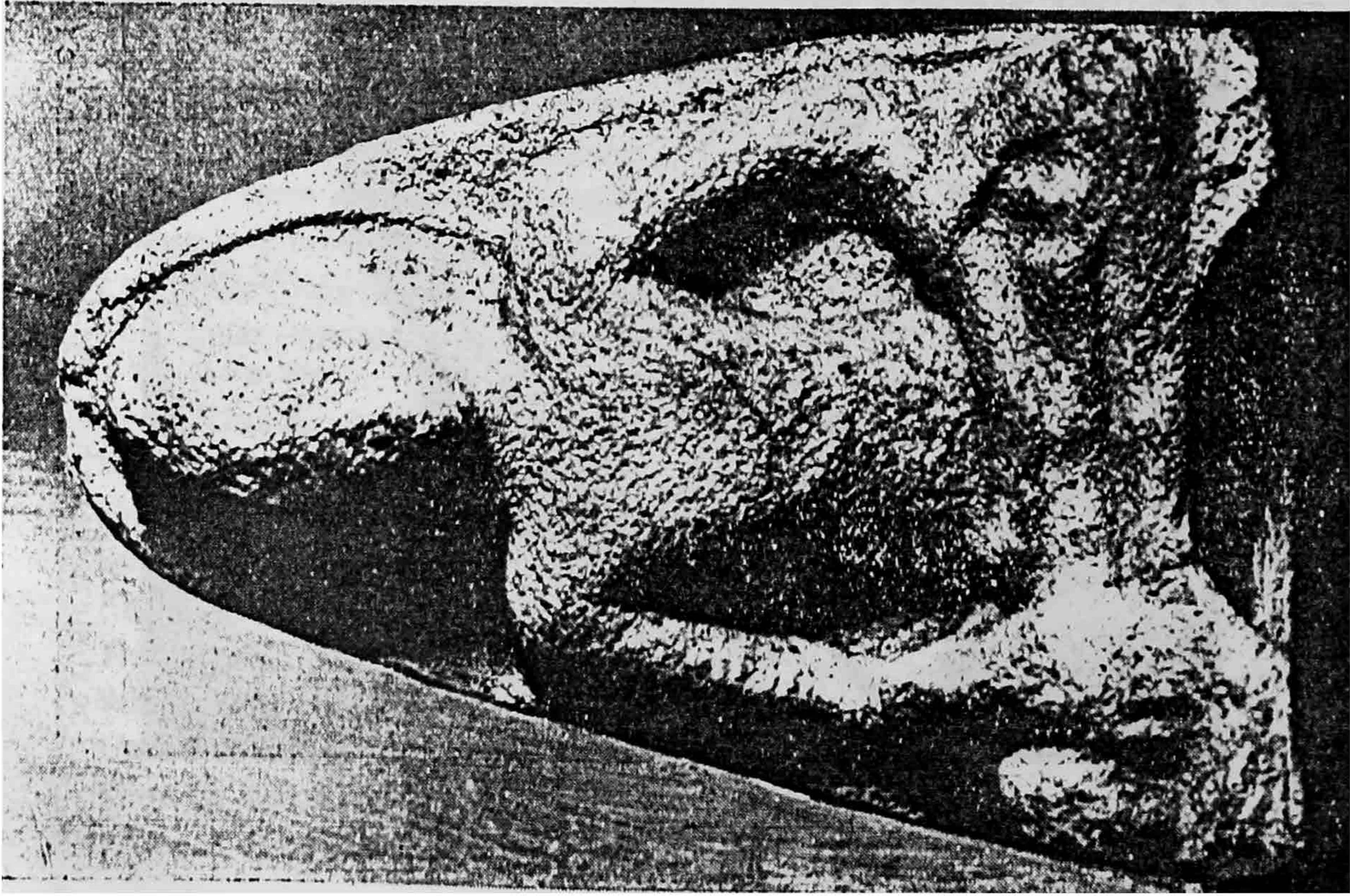
Daily my deepest heart is stirred  
 Into a sense of things unspoken  
 To which it has not yet awoken,  
 And puts perfections one by one  
 Forth petal-like in Thy Wisdom-Sun  
 By virtue of its radiant power,  
 Till full and perfect stands the flower  
 At some far day, in some far hour ;  
 Oh Thou to Whom I daily turn !  
 By that great love in which did burn  
 Thy life for other lives away—  
 Love beyond loftiest words to say—  
 Teach us in our lives to be  
 Flames of selfless love like Thee :  
 And, as we daily draw more near  
 Love's Very Heart, to see more clear  
 That we should be always living  
 In an ecstasy of giving.  
 Earth and air and sun and sea  
 All sacrifice their lives for me.  
 Countless millions in the past  
 Died that I might live at last.  
 Yea, and Thou, O Lord, didst give  
 Thy Truth that I might truly live.  
 To win that Truth, to cross Life's flood,  
 Wherein man sinks and dies,  
*More than the seas Thou gav'st Thy blood,*  
*More than the stars Thine eyes.*  
 How shall I not, with eyes to see,  
 For love of all Thy love for me,  
 Devote one life to following Thee ?





The stone casket which was discovered in the treasure chamber below the old Botataung Pagoda.





The terra-cotta plaque or votive table bearing the figure of the Buddha and, on the reverse side the inscription similar to ancient Brahmani. which was found in the ancient treasure chamber below the ruins of the bombed Botataung Pagoda.



# Ideas and Language

Anagarika P. Sugatananda

The communication of ideas calls into operation three factors: the idea as it exists in the mind that conceives it; the interpretation of it in the receiving mind and a system of mutually-understood verbal symbols by which to convey it from one to the other. Words are only an approximation to ideas, even between people sharing the same language; they are not the ideas themselves but only significations, and therefore, since each individual tends to put his own personal interpretation on many words, drawn from his own personal background of thoughts and associations, all ideas are liable to undergo some modification between the conceiver and the recipient. Especially is this the case when the ideas are abstract and deal with things outside the ordinary, shared concepts that form the universal basis of experience. People do not as a rule misunderstand one another when exchanging thoughts about chairs, tables and other elementary things—although this is not by any means unknown—but they are everywhere and at all times prone to put their own interpretation on ideas that range beyond these subjects. Every religious teacher in history has been misunderstood, by some at least of his followers: the Buddha Himself was no exception, despite the fact that one of the characteristics of Supreme Buddhahood is the possession of the faculty of teaching in its highest degree. Not only did many followers of other doctrines fail to understand the Buddha's Teaching, but some even among His own disciples, such as the Venerable Sati, who believed that *Viññāna* (Consciousness) is an element that survives from one birth to another, misunderstood the Teaching despite the extreme care and circumspection of the Teacher.

If this is the case between people using a common language with which both have been familiar since childhood and the words of which carry with them a generally accepted connotation, a language in current use, how much more frequently is it bound to occur when ideas have to be transplanted from one language to another. Considering that the users of the Pāli language, when Pāli was still a language of the people in

daily use, sometimes failed to understand one another, it is hardly surprising that in the process of translating from Pāli into languages that have an entirely different background of ideas, and no common stock of references to draw upon, many misconceptions should have arisen about the Dhamma. The very word "Dhamma" itself has no equivalent in English, and any English word offered in its place is at best only an unsatisfactory substitution.

It is axiomatic that every translation is in a sense a desecration, even between languages that share a common etymological base and a common stock of concepts. The adoption of words from other languages is a necessity in a living and developing tongue, and the specific contributions made to universal speech by various peoples provides an interesting index to national and racial characteristics, cultural peculiarities and mass-psychology. The habit of employing foreign phrases has become discredited as a literary affectation but it is certainly justified when the phrase or word has no counterpart outside the language it belongs to.

Experienced writers on Buddhism in English are well aware of the difficulties they are up against, and the failure of their predecessors, in any conscientious attempt to convey Buddhist ideas through the medium of a language that has no perfect equivalents for the words required by Buddhist philosophy, and this for the very good reason that it has no equivalent ideas to the Buddhist ones, and hence no means of denoting them. The English language in the world of ideas is impregnated with the Christian view of life and its terminology is radically unsuited to any kind of adaptation to Buddhist needs. Certain words, such as "soul", "spirit", "divinity", etc., part of the stock vocabulary of the mystic or metaphysical writer in English, are redundant, while for the key-terms of Buddhism English offers no counterparts. The word "Sankhāra", for instance, although its basic Pāli meaning is a very simple one—denoting the state of being compounded, gathered together—in its philosophical usage by the Buddha took on a significance altogether beyond the limits of its original and literal meaning;

it is a word that has to be understood *as the Buddha meant it to be understood*, and every dictionary definition becomes inadequate, if not misleading. All such words must be studied and interpreted in relation to the whole system of Buddhist thought : only thus can their meaning emerge in such a way that the word comes to symbolise for the reader the same thing that it symbolised for the Buddha and His immediate listeners. A much simpler word, “Kamma”, in its Sanskrit form, “Karma”, too loosely used by Theosophists and Western writers on Eastern mysticism, has been placed in danger of misinterpretation, in that it has come to stand for a kind of fatalistic predestination in many Western minds. Even among born Buddhists there are some who equate “Kamma” with the English word “luck”—a kind of mysterious power which predetermines events and situations. Actually, “Kamma” means volitional action, nothing more. But in the context of Buddhist thought it also carries the implication that all willed activity produces resultant effects, so that in one sense “Kamma” denotes an aspect of the causal law. “Kamma”, however, is cause, and cause alone ; to take it as embracing both the cause and the effect is to confuse the issue. Accurately defined, the process is “Kamma” (volitional action) plus “Vipāka” (resultant effect). At the same time, even to understand this simple word “Kamma” in all its implications it is necessary for the reader to have some knowledge of the different kinds of Kamma (the ethical connotation), the logical process by which the law of causality operates, the different degrees and conditions in which results manifest themselves, and to have some knowledge of the Buddhist law of Paṭicca-samuppāda or Dependent Origination.

Literally, “Paṭicca Samuppāda” means “arising by way of cause”, but neither this definition nor the one given above conveys anything in English on its own. The word or phrase used has in every case to be supplemented by the reader’s own knowledge. If he has the requisite knowledge it is quite immaterial whether Paṭicca-samuppāda is rendered “Dependent Origination”, “Causal Genesis” or “Arising by way of cause”, all of these attempts having been made by various writers. Similarly, if he has no knowledge whatever of the Buddhist mode of thought

in this connection, it makes not the slightest difference what English word or phrase is used in translation. The meaning of Paṭicca-samuppāda cannot be conveyed in a single phrase in any language ; even the Pāli words mean nothing but they carry a meaning—a very different thing—to those who are accustomed to using them in Pāli. They are, like all words, merely a symbol of the idea, not the idea itself.

Unfortunately, many Buddhist thinkers who themselves have never made any attempt to translate Buddhist terms into any other language, expect to find a ready-made phrase that will convey exactly what the words “Paṭicca-samuppāda” convey to them, not realising that the search is bound to be futile. Their interpretation of the meaning is an entirely subjective one, therefore any word-symbol that came through habit to be associated with the specific idea they have in mind would serve the purpose so far as they are concerned, while an unfamiliar one presents to their view only the defects inherent in all verbal approximations.

What then is the formula, the way out of the difficulty, for those who wish to express Buddhist concepts in English, French, German or any other tongue ? We have to fall back on the second factor with which this article began—that is, the co-operation of the reader, the contribution he himself has to make in understanding the ideas being offered to him. There is much to be said for the retention of the Pāli words and phrases, in that the serious student who genuinely desires to gain understanding of the Dhamma should be prepared to take a little trouble to acquaint himself with its essential key-words. In this he has at his disposal scholarly works such as the Buddhist Dictionary of Nyanatiloka Thera, or, if he wishes to go deeply into the subject, the Pāli-English Dictionary of the Pāli Text Society. At the same time, there is no reason why the casual reader should be discouraged by a formidable array of Pāli words where English ones are available. The present writer has always tried to use discrimination by employing English words where sufficiently expressive ones can be found, or where there is no subtle philosophical distinction to be considered, while retaining Pāli terms and phrases where the subject matter calls for a careful philosophical exposition. There are, for instance, contexts

in which the word "Rūpa" can be adequately rendered as "Form" or "Physical Body", since that is the aspect of "Rūpa" that is being discussed. But in other contexts these definitions would be a hopeless over-simplification because philosophically "Rūpa" means much more than they convey ; round the word is clustered a mass of Buddhist concepts concerning the nature of physical and other phenomena that have no correspondences in Western thought. It is easy for the pedant, disregarding the needs of the particular context in which the word is used, to criticise the rendering of "Rūpa" as "Form", but the fact is that the Buddha Himself used it with precisely that meaning expanded in many places, while giving it its philosophical meaning elsewhere. Aside from all other nuances of meaning and implication according to the context in which it is found, every Pāli word used in Buddhism has two characters. It has the character under which it is known in Sammuti-sacca (relative or conventional truth) and that referring to Paramattha-sacca (absolute truth or the highest philosophical sense). It must necessarily be understood in which sense the word is being used. This applies most emphatically to the much-misunderstood word "Attā", around which so many misconceptions have gathered and which has proved such a source of contention to Western scholars. "Attā" may be translated "Self" or "Soul", this being a case in which the choice lies between two English words and would be made according to the idea the writer wishes to convey.

BUT there is no "Self" or "Soul" in Buddhist thought, and when the Buddha said, "Attā hi attano nātho, ko hi nātho paro siyā, attanā 'va sudantena nātham labhati dullabham" He was using the word signifying "Self" in its conventional sense -- in other words, He was then teaching in terms of Sammuti-sacca. "Self" is the master of self ; who else could be the master ? Having trained oneself well one obtains the best master". We may be aware that there is no "self" in the highest, ultimate sense, but only a collocation of related phenomena, yet in ordinary speech we cannot avoid the use of the words "I", "me", "myself". Speech deals with relative and conditioned things ; we have no standard terms of reference in any language for the knowledge that transcends this level.

"Nibbāna", because it simply means the extinction of the fires of Lust, Hatred and Delusion—or, more comprehensively, all the elements of craving and hence of rebirth, does not therefore necessarily mean annihilation. It cannot in fact mean annihilation because properly understood there has never been any personality to annihilate. But because people in general, even among BUDDHISTS, have failed to realise that this is the only way in which the idea of the inexpressible could have been expressed without falsifying it by linking it with terms that only apply to conditioned and unreal phenomena, have taken this as being its meaning. Here again no definition serves any useful purpose, but may well serve to cloud and obscure the real meaning, which has to be understood with insight rather than be gained from words. In this instance even Pāli failed the Buddha ; He preferred silence, or at best a negative definition, to conveying a false idea to His listeners.

The subject could be carried forward through the next three or four issues of this magazine, by giving specific instances of words which can and cannot be rendered from Pāli into English together with the reasons therefor, but enough has been written to give the reader some knowledge of the difficulties that confront the writer. For teaching to bear fruit the learner must play his part ; the onus lies on the reader to try to understand, as much as on the writer to try to express. The writers who, through the medium of this magazine, conscientiously endeavour to spread knowledge of the Dhamma in English, do not ask any indulgence of their readers or their critics, who are certain to be plentiful. In the case of the latter they ask only that criticism should be constructive and given in a helpful spirit, and should be accompanied by an equally sincere effort to supply deficiencies, correct defects and offer better alternatives. It is not enough to say that Lobha, Dosa and Moha do not mean Lust, Hatred and Delusion : one who does not realise that these words convey only an approximation to the meaning of the Pāli terms would not be writing about the Dhamma. But the critic should ask himself, before he ventures to raise the voice of expostulation, whether the context in which the words are being used calls for any extended meaning or not, and should

remind himself that the Buddha was not always teaching Abhidhamma but sometimes found it helpful and beneficial to His hearers to speak quite simply, in terms of Sammuti-sacca. We, who are not Buddhas, or even Arahants, have more need than He

of the co-operation of those to whom we address ourselves if we are to achieve any success in the task of spreading knowledge of the Sublime Dhamma through the medium of an Internationally-understood language.

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# The Dhammapada Commentary

## The Story of Thera Cakkhupāla

Translated by the Pāli Department of the University of Rangoon

Salutation to the Bhagavā, the Arahā, the Supremely Perfect Buddha.

Having bowed at the feet of the Perfect Buddha possessed of glory who beheld the end of the world that is shrouded in the darkness of profound ignorance, he of shining occult powers, who lit the lamp of the good Law, and adoring the good Law and raising folded hands towards the Order, (let me begin).

The Master skilled in (the knowledge of) right and wrong conduct with reference to appropriate causes thereof, who had attained the state of superb Truth, with heart deeply moved by the force of Compassion taught the beautiful Dhammapada stanzas that verily augment the joy and delight of gods and men.

A subtle Commentary on it composed in the island of Tambapaṇṇī in the dialect of the island has been handed down but it does not tend to the benefit and prosperity of the rest of mankind. "May it perchance accomplish the welfare of the whole world" thus by the monk Kumārakassapa who signified the desire, who is restrained and of tranquil life, is steady of mind and desires the long life of the good Law was I respectfully requested.

Discarding that dialect with its prolix literary style and employing the pleasing language of the sacred Texts I shall expound only the words of the stanzas not expounded there, and the sense of the rest I shall tell in the other language (Pāli) bringing joy and delight that rest on reason and morality into the hearts of the intelligent.

### THE STORY OF THE THERA CAKKHUPĀLA.

Activities are preceded by will, will is the foremost of them; they consist of will. Should a person with a wicked will speak or act, suffering then follows him as the wheel (follows) the foot of the draught animal.

Where was this religious instruction spoken? At Sāvatti. Concerning whom? Concerning Thera Cakkhupāla.

It is said that at Sāvatti there lived a householder named Mahāsuvaṇṇa who was rich; he had great wealth and possessed many objects of enjoyment but he was childless. One day he went to the bathing ghat, took his bath and when returning saw on the way a large tree with spreading branches and thought "This tree must be possessed by a spirit of great power", and he caused the ground underneath to be cleared, the tree to be enclosed in a fence and sand to be scattered. (Then) he bedecked the tree by hoisting flags and banners and made the prayer—"On getting a son or a daughter I shall do you great honour", and went back.

Later, a child was conceived in the womb of his wife and he gave her the (ceremonial) protection of the embryo. On the expiry of ten (lunar) months she gave birth to a son. Because the merchant got the son on account of the tree tended by him, he gave the name Pāla to him. Later he got another son whom he named Cullapāla, and to the other he gave the name Mahāpāla. When they came of age he tied them with the bond of marriage.

At that time the Master who had set in motion the splendid wheel of the Dhamma travelled in due course, and while stopping at the great Jetavana monastery which Anāthapiṇḍika, the great banker had caused to be built by spending a fortune amounting to fifty four crores. He put people on the road to heaven and to liberation. The Tathāgata had lived only one rainy season in the monastery which his twice eighty thousand kinsmen—eighty thousand on his mother's side and eighty thousand on his father's side had caused to be constructed. He lived nineteen rainy seasons in the Jetavana monastery caused to be built by Anāthapiṇḍika and six rainy seasons in Pubbārāma which Visākhā had built expending wealth amounting to twenty seven-crores. Thus, because of the outstanding merit of the two families He lived twenty five rainy seasons close upon Sāvatti. Both Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā, the eminent female devotee, regularly went twice to wait



upon the Tathāgata, and when going, they never went empty-handed knowing that the young novices would cast a look at their hands ; when going before breakfast they had eatables, etc., carried, and after meal time the five medicaments and eight drinks. Besides, permanent seats for two thousand monks were laid in their residences. Of food, drink and medicaments, whatever any one wanted, to him was it provided as much as he desired.

Between them, Anāthapiṇḍika never for a single day asked the Master a question. It is reported that he did not ask a question thinking "The Tathāgata, the delicate Buddha, the tender prince that he was, would feel tired if He should preach me the Dhamma saying to Himself "This banker was a benefactor to me". Now as soon as he (the banker) sat down, the Master thought "This banker guards me where I need no guarding for during four Incalculables and a hundred thousand kappas in addition, did I shave my decked and dressed head, gouged out my eyes, and rending the heart muscle did I renounce my children and wife dear as life, fulfilling the Perfections, and these I fulfilled for the purpose of teaching others the Dhamma. This man guards me where I need no guarding", and straightway He gave a religious discourse.

At that time seven crores of men lived in Sāvattthi. Out of them five crore disciples by listening to the religious talk of the Master became regenerate : only two crores remained un-regenerate. Out of them, the regenerate disciples had only two things to do—before breakfast they gave gifts and after breakfast they went to listen to the Dhamma with perfumes, garlands, clothes, medicaments, drinks, etc., being carried.

Then one day Mahāpāla, seeing the regenerate disciples going to the monastery with perfumes, garlands, etc., in hand asked where those people were off to and learning that it was "to listen to the Dhamma", "I too might go", and he went bowed to the Master and squatted on the fringe of the assembly.

Now the Buddhas in preaching the Dhamma observe the supporting qualification for the refuges, the Precepts, Ordination, etc., and teach the Dhamma in accordance with one's predilection. Therefore, that day the Master observed his supporting qualification and preaching the

Dhamma spoke the graduated discourse, namely, discourse on charity, discourse on morality, discourse on heaven; and revealed the evil, the debasement and the misery of desires and advantage of the renunciation of desires. Hearing it the householder Mahāpāla thought, "neither sons and daughters nor wealth follow one going to the next world ; even the body does not go with oneself. Of what use is the family life to me ? I will renounce the world." At the end of the discourse he approached the Master and asked for ordination. Then the Master asked him "Have you no relation, whom it is proper to ask for permission ?" "I have a younger brother, Lord". "Then please take his permission". Hea greed and said, "Yes", bowed to the Master and went back home. He sent for his younger brother and said "Dear one, whatever wealth there is in this family, animate or in-animate, all that is your concern ; get on with it", "And what about you, Sir ?" "I shall renounce the world under the Master". "What do you say, brother ; when mother died, I got in you my mother, when father died, I got in you my father. There is great wealth in our house. It is possible to do deeds of merit while living in the house. Act not in this way." "Dear one, I have heard the religious teaching of the Master, and the Master preached the Dhamma blessed in the beginning, in the middle and at the end bringing the three exquisite and subtle Signs to bear upon it. That (the Dhamma) is not possible to fulfil while one lives in the house ; I will renounce the world, dear one". "Brother, you are yet young ; you may forsake the world in old age". "Dear one, an old Man's hands and feet do not obey him and are not under his control, not to speak of relatives. Such as I will not do as you say ; I will fulfill the vows of a monk".

(The hands and feet become decrepit and disobedient. How can one with impaired strength practice Dhamma ? I will forsake the world, dear one.)

Even though his brother was crying he went to the Master and asked for ordination, and having received the lower and higher ordinations he lived five rainy seasons under a teacher and a preceptor and having kept the Lent celebrated the Pavāraṇā festival. (Then) he approached the Master, bowed to him and asked "Lord, how many 'yokes' are there in this Religion ?".

"The Yoke of Learning and that of Insight—only two yokes, O monk". "Which, Lord, is the Yoke of Learning and which the Yoke of Insight?" "The learning of one or two Nikāyas or indeed of all the words of the Buddha forming the three Piṭakas according to one's understanding and bearing it in mind, discoursing on it and reciting it—this is called the Yoke of Learning. Winning of Arahatsip on the part of one of plain living, who delights (to live) in remote dwelling place, by developing insight by means of acts of perseverance and by establishing the sense of decay and decline in respect of the body—this is known as the Yoke of Insight.

"Lord, have renounced the world in old age; I shall be unable to manage the Yoke of Learning; I will, however, manage the Yoke of Insight; kindly tell me a subject for meditation."

Then the Master told him a subject for meditation leading to arahatsip. He bowed to the Master and searching for monks who might accompany him found sixty of them. He started with them and travelled along the road for twenty yojanas arriving at a big border village which he entered for alms along with the company. The people noticing that the monks observed religious practice were pleased at heart, spread seats and invited them to take their seats. And they served them with delicious food and asked whither the noble ones were going, and when it was said "to some comfortable place," the wise men (of the village) came to know that their Reverences were looking for a dwelling place for the rainy season, and they said, "Reverend Sirs, if the noble monks should stay here for these three months we may get settled in the Refuges and receive the Precepts". They too thought, "Depending on these families we shall find a way out of the round of existences." The people having secured their assent repaired the monastery and provided day-time accommodation and night-time accommodation. The monks used to go regularly into the village for alms. Then a physician approached them and made an offer saying "Reverend Sirs, Ill-health is sure to break out in a place inhabited by many. If it appears please inform me; I shall treat you." On the day of commencement of the rainy season the Elder addressed those monks and asked, "Brethren, in how many posture ways will you spend these

three months"? "In four, Reverend Sir," (standing, walking, sitting, lying down). "Is this proper, brothers? Must we not be earnest—we who have taken the subject of meditation from the living Buddha; the Buddhas can not surely be propitiated by a fraud—they can only be propitiated by a person of good intention; to one who is heedless the four states of woe are like one's own house: be earnest, brothers". "And you, Reverend Sir?" "I shall pass my time in three posture ways—my back I will not stretch." "Good, Reverend Sir, may you be earnest".

Then when the first month had elapsed, the Thera who allowed himself no sleep began to suffer from a disease of the eyes. Streams of tears like the streams of water from a leaking vessel, trickled from his eyes. (However) he devoted himself to his religious duties for the whole night and at dawn he entered his cell and sat down. When it was time to go round for alms, the monks went to the Thera and informed him that it was time to go for alms. (Thereupon) the Thera bade them take his bowl and robe saying, "Very well, take my bowl and robe," and he set out. The monks on seeing that tears were trickling from his eyes, asked, "Reverend Sir, What is the matter?" "My eyes are affected by the wind, Brethren." "Reverend Sir, has not the physician offered his services to us? We will inform him". "Very well, brethren".

They informed the physician and he prepared medicated oil and sent it to the Thera. The Thera applied the oil to his nose remaining seated as he was and entered the village for alms. The physician on seeing him said to him, "Reverend Sir, I have been informed that your eyes are affected by the wind." "Lay disciple, that is so." "Reverend Sir, did you put into your nose the medicated oil, which I prepared and sent you?" "Yes, lay disciple." "How do you feel now?" "The pain continues just the same, lay disciple." The physician thought, "I have sent him the oil which should have cured him with one application only. Why is it that he is not cured?" and he asked the Thera, "Reverend Sir, did you remain seated when you put the oil into your nose or were you lying down?" The Thera remained silent. Although he was asked again and again, he gave no answer. The physician thought, "I will go

to the monastery and have a look at the place where the Thera stays," and he let him go saying, "Very well Reverend Sir, you go on". (Then) he went to the monastery and looked at the Thera's place of residence. He saw only a place for walking and a place for sitting, and not seeing a place for lying down, he asked to the Thera, "Reverend Sir, did you remain seated when you put the oil into your nose or were you lying down?" The Elder kept silent. "Reverend Sir, act not in this way, the religious duties can be carried out only by looking after this body. You should apply the oil only when you are lying down". Thus he repeated his request time and again and the Thera said, "Go away, brother, I will make up my mind after consultation," and he sent him away.

The Thera had neither near nor distant relatives in that village. Whom should he consult? So he took counsel with his own wretched body, saying, "Brother Pālita, tell me, will you have consideration for your eyes or for the religion of the Buddha? In the round of existences whose beginning is inconceivable the times you have been stricken blind are beyond counting. Many hundreds of Buddhas, thousands of Buddhas have passed away. But out of them not a single Buddha could have determined this. Now, you have made up your mind saying, "I will not lie down during these three months of the rains". So whether those eyes of yours fail or perish, hold on to the law of the Buddha and not to your eyes", and he uttered the following stanzas in admonition to his own physical body.

("O Pālita, the eyes and the ears which have been cherished decay. So too the body and all that is connected with the body decay. Why are you negligent?

O Pālita, the eyes and the ears which have been cherished wear out. So too the body and all that is connected with this body wear out. Why are you negligent?

O Pālita, the eyes and the ears which have been cherished perish. So too the body and all that is connected with this body perish. Why are you negligent?")

Having thus admonished himself in the three stanzas he applied the oil to his nose, remaining seated as he was and entered the village for alms. On seeing him, the physician asked him "Reverend Sir, did you

put the oil in your nose?" "Yes, Lay disciple." "How are you feeling, Reverend Sir?" "The pain continues as before." "Were you seated or were you lying down, when you put the oil?" The Thera remained silent. Although the physician asked him again and again he uttered not a word. The physician said: From to-day onwards do not say "Such and such a person has prepared medicated oil for me", and I will not say," I have prepared oil for you"

Having been given up by the physician the Thera went to the monastery and said to himself, "Monk, though you have been given up by the physician, do not give up your posture way." (O Pālita, you have been refused treatment, you have been given up by the physician; you are a man marked by the king of Death. Why are you negligent?")

Having admonished himself in this stanza he went on with his ecclesiastical duties. Then at the end of the middle watch his eyesight and depravities were simultaneously destroyed. Having become a "dry-visioned" Arahāt he entered his cell and sat down. When it was time for alms-begging, the monks came and said, "It is now time for going round for alms, Reverend Sir". "Is it time, Brethren?" "Yes, Reverend Sir", "Well then, you go". "And what about you, Reverend Sir?" "Brethren, my eyes are sightless." They looked at his eyes and with their eyes filled with tears said, "Reverend Sir, do not worry, we will look after you", and comforted him. (Then) they performed major and minor duties that were to be done and entered the village for alms. The people not seeing the Thera asked them, "Reverend Sirs, where is our noble monk?" On hearing what had happened the people sent the Thera rice-gruel and taking food in person for him they went, bowed to him and staying about the feet of the Thera, wept. (Then) saying "Reverend Sir, we will look after you. Do not worry", they comforted him and went away. Thenceforth they sent rice-gruel and food regularly to the monastery.

The Thera constantly admonished the other sixty monks. They acted in accordance with his instruction and at the approach of the Pavāraṇā Day all of them became Arahats, endowed with analytical knowledge. When they had spent the Lent they were, however, desirous of seeing the Master and said to the Thera, "Reverend Sir, we desire



to see the Master". On hearing their words the Thera thought to himself, "I am weak, on the way there is a forest infested with ogres, if I were to go with them, all will be weary, and will not be able to obtain alms. I will make them go ahead." Then he said to them, "Brothers, you go ahead". "And you, Reverend Sir?" "I am weak; on the way there is a forest infested with ogres. If I were to go with you, you all would be tired out, you go ahead." "Reverend Sir, act not in this way, we will go only with you."

"Brethren, may this not be your pleasure, if you have such thoughts it will make me unhappy. If my younger brother should see you, he will enquire about me. Then you should tell him that I have lost my eyesight, and he will send someone to me. I will come with him. Pay respects, on my behalf, to the Possessor of Ten Powers; and to Eighty great Theras", saying these words he sent them away. They begged leave of the Elder and entered into the village. The people on seeing them provided them with seats and offered food for them. They asked "It appears that you are going away" "Yes, lay disciples, we desire to see the Master." "They repeatedly requested them to stay, and when they came to know of their determination to go, they followed them on their way, bewailed and turned back."

In course of time, they came to Jetavana monastery and on the Thera's behalf paid respects to the Master as well as to eighty great Theras. On the following day they went for alms into the street where the Thera's younger brother was living. The house-holder recognized them, provided them with seats, warmly received them and asked, "Where is my brother, the Thera?" They told him what had happened. Hearing their words he sat at the feet of the Elders weeping and asked them, "Reverend sir, what shall I do now?" "The Thera expects some person to come from here. When he goes there the Thera will come." "Reverend Sir, here is my nephew, by name Pālita, send him." "We cannot send him in this guise. The path is beset with dangers. We should send him after receiving him into the order." "Reverend sirs, send him after having done so". Then they received him into the Order, taught him for a period of a half month how to handle bowl and robes etc. and sent him after telling him the way. In due course, he

arrived at the village. Seeing at the gate of the village an old man, he asked, "Is there any forest monastery near about this village?" "Yes there is." "Who is in residence there?" "Reverend Sir, a Thera named Pālita." "Show me the way." "Who are you, Reverend sir?" "I am the Thera's nephew." Then he went to the monastery with him.

He paid respects to the Elder, and having, for half a month, done major and minor duties for the Thera, took proper care of the Thera and then he said to him, "Reverend Sir, my uncle the householder, desires that you come to him. Come, let us go." "Very well, take hold of my stick." He took hold of the tip of the stick and entered the village with the Thera. The people provided the Thera with a seat and said, "It appears, Reverend Sir, that you are leaving us." "Yes, lay disciples, I will go and pay respects to the Master." They requested him in all sorts of ways to remain but failing that they accompanied the Elder up to a certain distance of the journey and they let the Thera go and came back weeping.

The novice went with the Thera, holding the tip of the stick and he came to a forest village on the way named Kaṭṭhanagara near which the Thera formerly resided. When he came out of the village the novice heard the voice of a certain woman singing as she gathered firewood and he became attached to the voice.

(Indeed there is no other sound which thrills the whole body of a man like a woman's voice. For that reason it has been said by the Blessed One, "O monks, I do not know of any other sound which can entirely entrap a man's heart like the voice of a woman".)

The novice being enthralled by her voice let go of the tip of the stick and said to the Thera, "Wait then, Reverend Sir, I have something to carry out," and he went to her and when she saw him she stayed quiet. The novice committed moral transgression with her. The Elder thought to himself, "Just now I heard someone sing. The voice is of a woman. The novice has been away for quite a while. It must be that he has committed moral transgression." The novice after finishing his business came and said to the Thera, "Let us go, Reverend Sir." The Thera thereupon said to the novice, "Have you done any wrong?"

Though the Elder questioned him 'time and again he remained silent and uttered not a word. The Elder then said to him, "Such a sinful person has no business to hold the end of my staff."

The novice became filled with remorse and he took off his yellow robes, put on the layman's dress and said, "Reverend Sir, formerly I was a novice, but I have now become a layman. It was on account of the dangers of the journey and not through faith that I have embraced the religious life, come let us go." The Thera said, "A sinful householder and sinful monk are just the same. You have not been able to fulfil even the law of morality even when you were a novice. What good would you be able to do as a householder? Such an evil-doer like you has no business to hold the end of my staff."

"Reverend Sir, the road is beset with dangers of ogres and you are blind. How would you remain here?" Thereupon the Thera said, "Brother, don't worry. Even if I have to lie down here and die or even if I have to move about here and there, I will not go with you" and uttered the following stanzas :

"Now I have lost my eyesight, I have come upon a dangerous way, I will lie down rather than go (with you). There is no friendship with a fool."

(Now I have lost my eyesight, I have come upon a dangerous way, I will die rather than go (with you). There is no companionship with a fool.)

On hearing this the other was filled with remorse and said "I have committed a serious offence which is risky and improper" and stretching out his hands and weeping he ran into the forest and so went away.

Then the yellowish stone-throne of Sakka, the chief of gods, sixty yojanas in length, fifty yojanas in breadth, fifteen yojanas in thickness, of the colour of China rose, which rises and sinks as Sakka sits and stands up, by the power of the Thera's virtues, showed signs of heat. Sakka thought, "Who might be desiring to oust me from my seat?" and looking over the world with his celestial eyes saw the Thera. Therefore the Teachers of old have said :

The chief of gods, endowed with a thousand eyes, made clear his celestial vision (and saw) that Thera Pāla who abhorred evil purified his ways of living."

(The chief of gods, endowed with a thousand eyes, made clear his celestial

vision and saw that Thera Pāla, who held the law in reverence remained seated finding delight in the (Buddha's) religion.)

Then it occurred to Sakka thus, "If I should not go to this worthy Thera who abhors evil and holds the law in reverence my head will be split into seven pieces. I must go to him."

(The king of gods, endowed with a thousand eyes, holding glorious sovereignty over the Gods came in an instant and approached Cakkhupālathera.) So having approached he made a sound with his feet not far from the Thera. Then the Thera asked, "Who is that?" "I am a traveller, Reverend Sir." "Where are you going, lay disciple?" "To Sāvatti, Reverend Sir." "Go ahead, friend." "But, Reverend Sir, where will the noble monk go?" "I have to go there too." "Then let us go together, Reverend Sir." "Friend, I am weak; by keeping company with me you will be delayed." "I am not in a hurry; besides, if I go with the noble monk I can obtain one of the ten items of meritorious action. Let us go together, Reverend Sir."

The Thera thought, "He must be a good man" and said, "Then take hold of the end of my stick, lay disciple." Sakka did so and making the Earth grow shorter, brought him to Jetavana in the evening. Hearing sound of conch, drum etc. the Thera asked "Wherefrom is that sound?" "From Sāvatti, Reverend sir." "O lay disciple, before, when we went, we took a long time to go." "I know a short-cut, Reverend Sir." At that moment the Thera realised : "He is no human being, he must be a god."

(The thousand-eyed king of gods, the bearer of the glory of divine kingship, shortening that road, reached Sāvatti quickly.)

He conducted the Thera to the leaf-hut which was specially caused to be made for the Thera by the younger householder and made him sit on the couch and went to him in the guise of a dear friend and called, "Friend, Pāla." "What is it, friend." "Do you know of the arrival of the Thera?" "I don't know, but has the Thera come?" "Yes, friend, I am just coming from the monastery where I went and found the Thera seated in the leaf-hut caused to be built by you." So saying, he departed.

The householder also went to the monastery and seeing the Elder cried, sitting at his feet. "Forseeing this, Reverend Sir, I did not allow you to forsake the world"—he

said this and that. (Then) setting free two of his slave boys, he had them ordained under the Thera and gave them instruction saying, "Please wait upon the Thera by collecting rice gruel, food etc. from inside the village." The novices waited upon the Thera doing him all service.

Then, one day some foreigner monks thought, "We shall see the Master", came to Jetavana, bowed to the Master and saw the eighty great Elders. And going round the monastery they arrived at the dwelling place of the Thera Cakkhupāla and thought, "We shall see him too", and turned in that direction when it was evening. At that moment a big cloud rose. Thinking, "It is now evening and a cloud has risen; we will rather go and see him early in the morning", they turned back. It rained in the first watch but in the middle watch the rain stopped. The Thera, of resolute energy and practised as he was in cloister-walking went down to the cloister-walk in the last watch. At that time, however, numerous red beetles came up on the ground, drenched with the fresh shower of rain and they were crushed in large numbers by the Thera walking up and down. The residents did not sweep the place in time where the Thera was walking. The other monks thought, "We shall see the dwelling place of the Thera," arrived there, and finding insects on the walk enquired, "Who walked here?" "Our Master, Reverend sirs." They grumbled and said: "Look at the conduct of the monk. When he had his eyesight he did nothing except lie down and sleep, but now that he has lost his sight he takes it into his head to walk up and down with the result that he has killed so many insects. He thought of doing good but has done harm." Thereupon they went and informed the Tathāgata saying, "Lord, the Thera Cakkhupāla, who took it into his head to walk up and down has killed many insects." "Have you seen him killing them?" "We have not, Lord." "Just as you have not seen him (killing) so also he had not seen those living things. Those who are free from influxes can have no intention whatever of causing death, O monks." "Lord, since he possessed the supporting qualifications for Arahātship how is it that he has become blind?" "Under the influence of the kamma he had done, O monks." "Lord, what had he done?" "Then listen, O monks."

"In the past, when the King of Benares

was ruling, a certain physician wandered through villages and townships practising medicine. He met a woman of weak eyesight and asked, "What is wrong with you?" "I cannot see with my eyes." "I will treat you." "Please do, sir." "What will you give me?" "If you could make my eyes normal, I shall become your slave together with my children." "Very well," he said and dispensed a medicine. With a single application of the medicine her eyes became normal. The woman reflected, "I promised to become his slave together with my children but then he will not behave gently towards me; so I shall deceive him." When the physician came again and asked "How are you keeping, my good lady," she replied "Before, my eyes were aching a little, but now they are aching all the more." The physician said to himself, "This woman wants to deceive me and is unwilling to give me anything. I have no need of the fees to be paid by her. I will forthwith make her blind," and he went home and told the incident to his wife. She remained silent. He prepared a medicine, went to her and said "Good lady, please apply this ointment," and he made her apply it. Both her eyes went out like the flame of a lamp. That physician was Cakkhupāla.

"O monks, the deed of my son done at that time followed him from behind, for an evil deed follows an evil-doer as surely as the wheel follows the foot of the bullock that bears the yoke." Relating the story and showing its bearing, the King of Righteousness uttered the following verse, in the same way as a king stamps the royal order with the royal seal after the (sealing) clay has been applied:

"Activities are preceded by will; will is the foremost of them; they consist of will. Should a person with wicked will speak or act, suffering then follows him as the wheel (follows) the foot of the draught animal."

There, "mind" (mana—will) means the entire consciousness arranged under four planes and divided into consciousness of the moral kind, relating to the sphere of desire etc. In this sentence, however, that which obtains is the consciousness which is accompanied by displeasure and connected with rage and which was in the process of becoming fixed, definite and defined under the influence of the thought that had at that time arisen in the mind of that physician.

"Preceded by" (pubbaṅgama) means—endowed with that which went before.



“Activities” (Dhammā) means—there are four dhammas, namely, quality, religious discourse, the scripture and phenomenon (devoid of substance). Amongst them :

“Both righteousness and unrighteousness are not productive of the same effect. Unrighteousness leads to a hell while righteousness helps one to attain a happy state”.—this is Dhamma as quality. “O monks, I shall preach you the Dhamma that is lovely in the beginning—this is Dhamma as religious discourse”. “Here, O monks, some sons of the noble families learn the Dhamma, namely, the Sutta, Geyya, etc.—this is Dhamma as scriptural text.” “At that time, however, there are phenomena, there are aggregates”;—this is designated Dhamma as devoid of substance, this is also Dhamma as devoid of soul. Of these meanings, Dhamma as devoid of substance and of soul is meant here. By connotation it indicates the immaterial aggregates, namely, the aggregate of feeling, the aggregate of perception and the aggregate of mental concomitants—these are preceded by mind, of these verily mind is the precursor. But how, founded as it is on the same base and having the same object with these and arising neither before nor after but at the same moment, does it become the precursor? In the sense of being the cause of their appearance. Just as when many men banding together commit dacoity in a village, and other crimes and when it is asked, “Who is their precursor?” (the reply is) that person is called their precursor who is their agent due to whom they commit that crime—whether he is named Datta or Mitta. This is the sense in which it is to be understood. Thus, in the sense of the cause of appearance, mind is the precursor of these (states); therefore they are preceded by the mind; for, if the mind does not arise they are unable to arise; mind, on the other hand arises even when some of the mental states do not arise.

And on account of being the overlord mind is the foremost of them, thus “Will is the foremost of them”. Just as, among the thieves the chief of thieves etc., who are the overlords are the foremost in the same way also, mind is foremost of them—Thus it is said “Will is the foremost”. As however the various wares made of wood or other materials are known as consisting of wood or other materials etc., even so these states resulting from the mind are said to consist of mind.

“With wicked” (paduṭṭhena) means corrupted by the adventitious blemishes of covetousness, etc., for the normal mind is the subliminal consciousness. That is uncorrupted. Just as clear water when stained by blue and other outside colours is distinguished as blue water etc., and it does not become new water nor does it even remain the original clear water, so the mind corrupted by adventitious covetousness, etc., does not become a new mind nor does it even remain the old subliminal consciousness. Therefore said the Bhagavā : “Resplendent, O monks, is the mind and it becomes tarnished by adventitious stains”.

If with such a corrupt mind, “he speaks or acts”, he commits four kinds of vocal misdeeds by speaking and three kinds of physical misdeeds by acting, and while not speaking nor acting on account of that mind being corrupted by covetousness and other evils he accomplishes the three kinds of mental misdeeds. Thus, his ten avenues of immoral deeds are brought to consummation.

“Suffering then follows him” (tato naṃ dukkhaṃ anveti)—means as a result of those three kinds of misconduct suffering follows that person. As an effect of misconduct the resultant physical and mental suffering—body-based, or on even other—(mind) based as the case may be, follows that individual who goes to the four states of woe or takes birth among human beings.

Like this—“as the wheel (follows) the foot of the draught animal” means like the wheel (following) the foot of the bullock who is tied to the yoke, who bears the yoke. Just as he bearing (the yoke) for a day or two, for five or ten days, for a half month or a month is neither able to make it move back nor to throw it off, rather as he goes forward, the yoke weighs upon his neck, or as he goes backward, the wheel strikes against his thigh-flesh; obstructed in these two ways, the wheel follows his foot step by step.

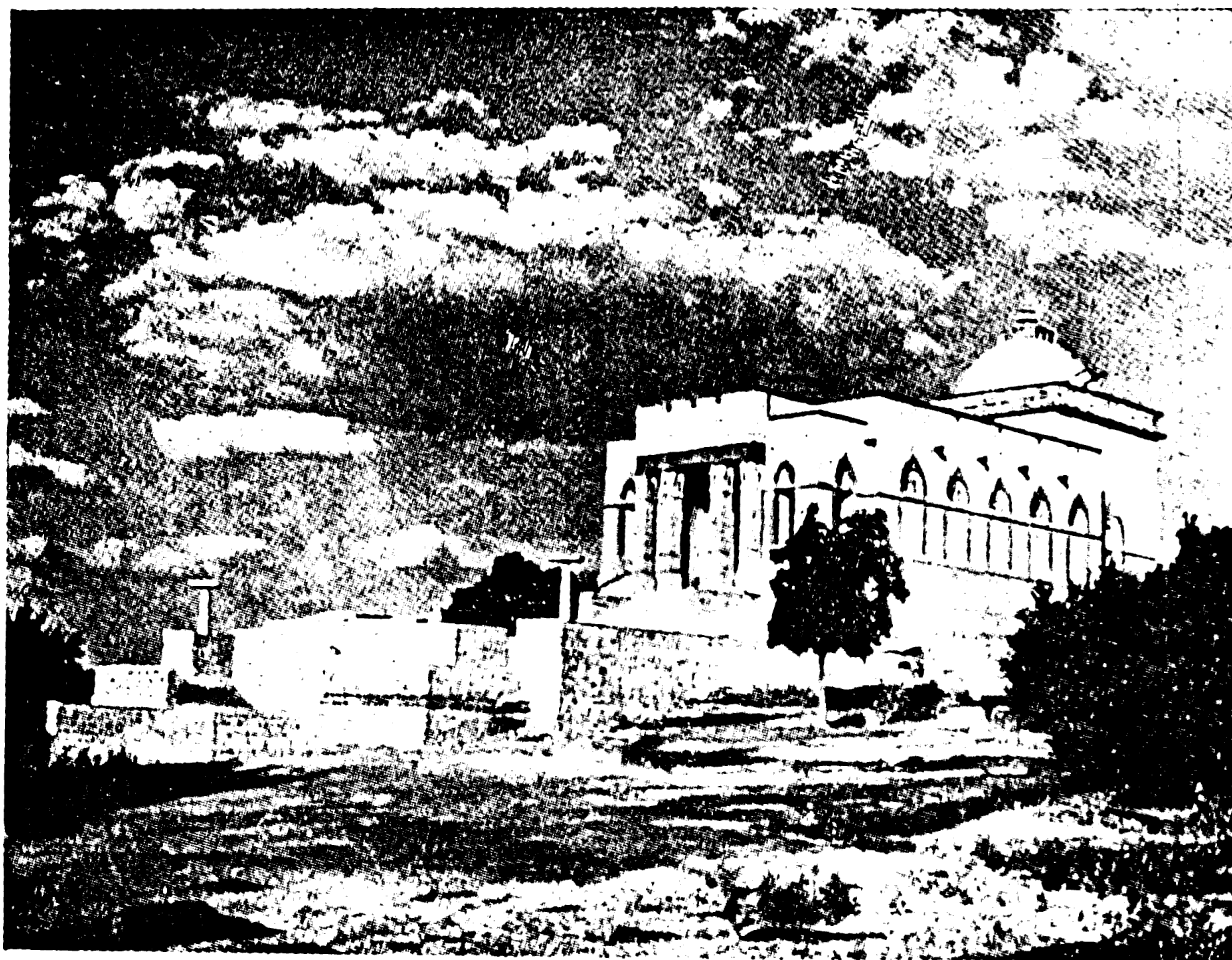
In the same way, physical as well as mental suffering rooted in misdeed pursues the person who with a corrupted mind accomplishes the three fold misdeed wheresoever he may be, whether in the hells or other states (of woe).

At the end of the verse, thirty thousand monks attained Arahatsip together with analytical knowledge, and the religious discourse also was successful and fruitful for the assembled gathering.

The Story of Thera Cakkhupāla (finished).

The ancient stupa at Sanchi wherein were discovered the sacred relics of  
Sariputta and Mahāmogallana.





The new Vihara (Temple) where the sacred relics of the two great Buddhist Arahans have now been enshrined.

## A New Approach

Speech delivered by the Hon'ble U Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma, at the International Buddhist Cultural Conference (on the occasion of the re-enshrinement of the Sacred relics of Sariputta and Mahamoggallana on the 29th November 1952 at Sanchi.)

Over 2,500 years ago, there was born a Prince in India. In his twenty-ninth year he renounced the pleasures of the palace including his wife and child. He was no other than the Buddha whose teachings brought to the fourth, that is the Arahāt, stage Sariputta and Moggallana, whose relics we are going to re-install in the new Vihara to-morrow. His teachings may briefly be described as follows :—

All beings without exception, whether they like it or not, will be reborn as beings of some kind immediately after their death. This process of life and death will go on forever in the great ocean of saṃsāra, the unending chain of existences. The categories in which they can be reborn will be roughly as beings of one of the following four realms of existence :—

- (1) Brahmas
- (2) Devas
- (3) Human beings
- (4) Such beings of lower order as animals.

This endless process of life and death is due mainly to lobha (greed), dosa (hate), moha (delusion), which are firmly rooted in them. Ordinarily speaking, human beings appear to be superior to such lower beings as animals, Devas to men, and Brahmas to Devas ; but in reality none of them is a desirable form of existence. The reason is because as soon as a being is reborn, whether as animal, man, Deva or Brahma, that particular being cannot, by any means, escape such attendant miseries as decay, sickness, death, separation from the beloved, association with disagreeable ones, etc.

What is the way of escape from these sorrowful conditions ? There is only one way and that is to prevent rebirth after death. This can be effected only by uprooting the defilements, namely, lobha, dosa and moha which are the main causes of rebirths to which sentient beings are subject.

And the only way to accomplish this is to cultivate the mind and develop it to a certain degree of concentration.

When one's mind is developed to that degree, one can attain the four stages of the Path called in Pali :—

- (1) Sotāpattī,
- (2) Sakadāgāmī,
- (3) Anāgāmī,
- (4) Arahāt.

The person who reaches the first stage of the Path has eradicated all traces of doubt as regards his ultimate destiny. The person who reaches the second stage of the Path is not different from the first except that his passions become perceptibly attenuated. The person who reaches the third stage of the Path has completely eliminated all hate, fear and carnal desires, but he has not yet got rid of his craving for life in higher realms of existence. The Arahāt who reaches the last stage of the Path has completely annihilated not only hate, fear and carnal desires but also all cravings and attachments. One who has attained this final stage is not reborn at all after his death.

The above is a brief outline of the fundamental law discovered by the Buddha. This law consists of two parts. The first part relates to what will happen after death and it is well-nigh impossible for ordinary mortals to prove it. The second part relates, however, to what can happen here in this life and can be proved. I would like to explain this second part a little.

A predominating characteristic of human mind is to doubt. Even the religion one professes does not escape his doubt. Let us for example take the case of a Buddhist. Let him be a most devout priest or layman. If he is asked, "Have you complete faith in the Buddhist religion which you profess ?", he will reply, if he is honest, "No, sometimes I have feelings of doubt". This is a reasonable statement for anyone who is sincere, and you cannot expect a different answer. Why ? Because to doubt is human. But in the case of the person who reaches the first stage of the Path, he has dispelled all feelings of doubt about the Buddha's law, because he has, so to speak, felt and realised in his inner mind what is said to be the end of all miseries.

The stage which is far superior to this stage is the third stage known as the Anagamī. I shall explain this a little. A person, however good-natured he may be, cannot be free from hate ; however brave he may be, cannot be free from fear. A good-natured person may be able at the utmost to control his hate and anger ; but he knows it himself that he has feelings of hate and anger in him. A brave person may be able at the utmost to control his fear. But he knows it himself that he still has feelings of fear in him. However, a person who reaches the third stage of the Path has only one main attachment left, and that is to be reborn in the higher realm of the Brahma world. He has no more. He has no more hate, fear, or carnal desire whatsoever. No one in the universe is capable of tempting him to give vent to fear, hate or carnal desire.

What is more astounding is the fourth and final stage. In the third stage there is still a craving to become a Brahma. But when one reaches the fourth stage and becomes an Arahat, he has annihilated, without any residue, not only hate, fear and carnal desire, but also all forms of desires. There is none in any part of the universe who is capable of tempting the one who reaches the fourth stage of the

Path, to hate, fear, or have carnal or any other desires and cravings.

These mental and spiritual transformations which take place in the first, second, third and fourth stages are not what will take place in a future existence, but are those which he who reaches one of these four stages realizes for himself in this very existence.

Nowadays when a person discovers formulas for making Penicillin, jet-plane, atomic bomb, etc., and announces them to the world, scientists make experiments with them. The people should not fail to make similar tests with the discovery made by the Buddha, which invites personal investigation. Let us not approach it as a religion. Let us approach it as a formula and way of life for annihilating doubt, hate, fear, carnal or any other desires and cravings. It is my sincere appeal to you that you all should make serious efforts to test this formula and way of life, in the same way as scientists would test any new scientific theory discovered by any of them.

Let me emphatically declare from here that we have in our land many persons who have tested it and reached these various stages of realization.

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## SACRED RELICS RE-ENSHRINED

The two chief disciples of the Buddha were Sariputta and Mahāmoggallāna. In the year 1851 C. E. General Cunningham discovered their relics enshrined in the relic chamber of a stupa at Sanchi in the state of Bhopal. The relics were taken to England where they were kept for almost 100 years in the Albert and Victoria Museum, London.

On the representations of the Maha Bodhi Society of India and other Buddhist Organisations, these relics were finally restored to India and placed in the care of the Maha Bodhi Society.

On November the 29th and 30th with great ceremony these sacred relics were taken again to Sanchi and re-enshrined by Premier Nehru amidst the chantings of hymns by yellow-robed Bhikkhus from many countries of South Asia and deafening cheers from nearly one hundred thousand

people representing almost every country in the world. The relics were taken in a mile-long procession of devotees chanting sacred verses, offering flowers and burning sweet-smelling incense. The relics were placed on a gold-embroidered cloth for two hours for worship by delegates from many countries who bowed in homage. The wife of the Burmese Prime Minister, Mrs. Nu, and the Maharajkumar of Sikkim, planted two saplings of the Bodhi tree, the *Ficus Religiosa*, named because it was under this tree that Gotama attained complete realisation over two thousand five hundred years ago.

Premier Nehru handed the relics to the chief Bhikkhu, offering incense and flowers, while bells rang, verses were chanted, conch shells were blown and the assembly chorused, "Peace to all beings, may good-will spread among mankind".



# The Elementary Principles of Buddhism

By ANAGARIKA P. SUGATANANDA

Scientific thought to-day is at so many points touching the fringe of philosophy and metaphysics that it seems inevitable that within the next few decades the barrier which has for so long held them apart, and in some sense in opposition, must be broken down. We have reached the stage when we can justly ask ourselves whether the scientific and the religious approach to life and its problems are as incompatible as we have been led to believe. Religion, we have been told, is founded on faith; science on reasoned investigation. But this is only partly true; the activities of the human mind are not so sharply demarcated as the generalisation would suggest.

To assert that scientific knowledge is solely obtained from objective study of phenomena or from inductive generalisations based directly on experience is to oversimplify a highly complex process of the mind in which free speculation also has a part. The major scientific developments originate from the untrammelled activity of the human mind. As an example we may take the case of Einstein and his General Theory of Relativity, one of the most revolutionary contributions to modern thought. On his own showing, Einstein started out with a free creation of thought, by choosing, on philosophical principles, those mathematical equations which possessed a quality called co-variance. From those equations he made a further selection by working on another philosophical principle; that nature is the realisation of the simplest conceivable mathematical ideas. On this theory he obtained ultimately a set of equations which he put forward as the general equations of the universe.

To complete the system thus founded a great deal more mathematical work was involved. He had to discover what observable consequences could be deduced from the equations, and finally he was able to predict certain definite phenomena which, according to his theory, ought to happen, such as the bending of light-rays by the sun. These were phenomena that could be, and had to be, tested by observation. But the point is that the checking by objective methods came in only at the last stage of the

process, not at its beginning. The General Theory of Relativity was, in its primary stage, a purely intellectual construction, in which observation and experiment played no part whatever. This has been emphasised by Einstein himself. "In a certain sense, therefore," he has declared, "I hold it true that pure thought can grasp reality".

This is precisely what Buddhism asserts, and has proclaimed over the past two thousand years. The many ways in which scientific thought, with its picture of a universe in an unstable condition of flux, approximates to the Buddhistic philosophical concept is too vast a field to be covered in one article; volumes would be needed to deal with it adequately. Properly understood, however, the entire system is comprehended in the three definitions, "Anicca, Dukkha and Anatta". Anicca is universal flux; Dukkha is universal instability; Anatta is the absence of essential reality in compounded phenomena and relative concepts.

It is clear that science is not entirely based on empirical observation, and that not all religions are founded on blind faith and unwarranted assumptions. Science has its element of assumption; religion has its share of objective investigation. There is a point where they must meet. That point is in the doctrine taught by the Tathāgata Buddha, which is a logical system, progressing from the recognition of subjective and objective facts to the realisation of that which lies beyond intellectual comprehension.

In India from the earliest times Philosophy; Religion and Science were closely interwoven, the distinctions we have made between them were unknown. In some schools of thought, it is true, this led to a great deal of confused theorising, and the difference between fact and imaginative speculation became obscured. Imaginations tended to run riot in mysticism, and what the Lord Buddha called "a jungle of theories"—theological, occult and some frankly materialistic—came into being.

Hence the Buddhistic insistence on discrimination which, established strongly by the Buddha Himself, remained ever after-

wards a distinguishing feature of Buddhism in contrast to the religions of blind, unquestioning faith. It is the unique feature of Buddhism, the liberty of individual thought and freedom of self-determination within the framework of a logical morality, that places it fundamentally in agreement with the scientific attitude to life as we understand it to-day.

Within the past half century scientific thought has travelled a long way. Those who believe that materialism is the last word in scientific belief are already very much behind the times. Philosophers and scientists of international repute are at last coming to grips with the as yet unknown factors of life ; they are not prepared to admit the dogmas of revealed religion, but they are no longer reluctant to acknowledge the existence of realms beyond the materialistic comprehension. In fact, many have declared the materialist viewpoint untenable in the light of modern physics. As a scientific theory materialism is dead ; it only survives as a political doctrine, in support of which genuine scientists are being forced to falsify and distort their discoveries in the effort to make them agree with an obsolete dogma of fifty years ago which has been adopted as a political religion.

In those parts of the world where scientific and religious thought alike are allowed full liberty, research bodies composed of doctors, physicists, biologists, psychologists and other specialised experts have been set up for the purpose of investigating telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, spiritualist manifestations and other classes of psychic phenomena. The results have been profoundly significant. The evidence for telepathy (thought-transference) is now so firmly established that it is being used as a recognised scientific explanation of other psychic activities, though its precise nature is not yet known. An instance of this occurred recently when a

scientist, one of a board set up for the investigation of spiritualism in England, reported that most of the phenomena by the "medium" in a trance state could be ascribed to telepathy, and that they were no proof of the persistence of an immortal spirit. For the Buddhist, the importance of this lies not in the denial of a surviving entity, which is in accordance with Buddhist teaching, but in the matter-of-fact acceptance by a scientist of an unknown mental power that functions independently of material media. Not only has telepathy been accepted thus, but experiments carried out in America have proved beyond dispute that the mind has the power of affecting the body, and even to a certain extent of controlling objects at a distance without any physical connection. These tests are carried out on selected subjects by means of cards and dice.\*

Clairvoyance, clairaudience and telepathy (the Dibba-cakkhu, Dibba-sota and Adesana-patihariya of Buddhism) are now so well attested as objective realities that they have been scientifically grouped together under the heading of Extra-sensory Perception (E.S.P.) and classified with other natural laws that are known to science but are as yet unexplained.

The materialistic scientist of fifty years ago refused to entertain belief in the existence of anything outside his own limited sphere of knowledge. The learned man of to-day is wiser ; he knows and admits how little he knows. But he is right in refusing to give up the methods of investigation that have served science in the past, for it is only by such methods that we can be sure we are not making ourselves subject to delusion. Because of this the only form of religious belief that will ever be acceptable to him is one that lays itself open to investigation in all its details ; that not only does not evade the questions of the intellect, but actively encourages them by inviting comparison

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A board formed for the investigation of psychic phenomena in London included Lord Amwell, Sir John Anderson, Mrs. Charlotte Haldane, Mr. L. A. G. Strong a distinguished London surgeon and a medical psychiatrist. Their findings have been published by Odhams Press Ltd. London.

Dr. C. I. M. Joad and Mr. J. B. Rhine have also investigated and reported on P. K. (Psycho-kinetic) E.S.P. and other branches of para-psychology. J. B. Rhine's verdict is that "Para-psychology has established itself as a new science to the extent of making a case for the occurrence of phenomena that are not physical in type. The materialistic view of man has been experimentally refuted".

A series of important experiments carried out at Duke University, U.S.A., confirmed this verdict. In England the work was carried further by the scientists Tyrrell, Carington, Soal, Goldney and Dr. Thouless of Cambridge University whose evidence and conclusions have been widely discussed in scientific circles.

with the highest knowledge to which we have access. It may yet be that the application of the scientific method to problems of religion will prove the greatest contribution of the west to mankind's spiritual progress.

Such a creed as I have described is Buddhism, the truth preached by the Lord Gotama Buddha twenty-five centuries ago, for it is pre-eminently the science of the mind. With this weapon of purity and knowledge we can cleave the darkness of ignorance that threatens to envelop the world, and can re-establish the law of righteousness. It is to the young people of this Buddhist land of Burma that we appeal for the preservation of religion, for in their hands lies the future. A new instrument and a new power have been placed in their grasp ; they are the heirs of a great body of scientific and technical knowledge which is theirs to use for good or ill. But let it be remembered that they are also the inheritors of a great and unchanging wisdom that far transcends any worldly knowledge, and it is only by the right understanding and application of this wisdom of the Dhamma that they can be guided and inspired to turn their other knowledge to good account. The future of mankind rests with Buddhism, for it is the Path of Purity which is also the Path of Peace, the only true and lasting peace for humanity. May its sublime light of understanding and universal benevolence irradiate the world, to bring happiness and liberation to all beings.

As we are dealing with elementary principles we should perhaps begin by defining what we mean by "Buddhism". Many Western writers have raised the query whether Buddhism really is a religion as they understand the term. They are perfectly justified in doing so, because in many ways the doctrine set forth by the Buddha is fundamentally different from the other religions of the world. Its closest affinity is with the more advanced form of Hinduism, known as Vedanta or Advaita, but even here the differences, when one probes beneath the surface, are many and radical.

To most people religion means belief in a body of dogmas which have to be taken on faith, such as belief in a supreme God, a Creator of the universe, certain doctrines concerning an immortal soul and its after-life, a personal saviour and prophets, and a hierarchy of spiritual beings such as angels

and archangels who are supposed to carry out the will of the supreme deity.

In Buddhism there is nothing of all this. The Devas, or spiritual beings, are not at all like the gods of other religions ; they are beings like ourselves, subject to the same law of cause and effect. They do not control the destiny of mankind ; they are not immortal. The creed taught by the Buddha does not ask us to accept belief in any supernatural agency or anything that cannot be tested by experience. That is why it is unique among religions, and the only form of religious teaching that can survive the critical examination of a scientific mind.

It began as a search for truth ; an arduous six-year mental and physical discipline voluntarily undertaken by the Prince Siddhattha, who gave up his royal rank and privileges in order to discover the cause of suffering and a way in which it could be brought to an end for the sake of all living beings. It has retained this essentially characteristic nature ; it is still a search for truth, conducted on strictly scientific principles, and one which has to be undertaken by each for himself, according to the rules of right thinking which the Fully Enlightened Buddha has laid down for our guidance.

When I say that the principles on which Buddhism is founded are scientific principles I mean that, unlike the other religions it does not begin with unfounded assumptions concerning any God or First Cause, and it does not claim to present the whole truth of the beginning and end of mankind's spiritual pilgrimage in the form of a "divine revelation". You know that a scientist, when he sets out to study any branch of knowledge and to carry it further than his predecessors, does not begin by setting up a dogma in anticipation of what he expects to find at the end of his researches. The most he does is to form a hypothesis, a theory, and to try to find out by practical experiments whether that theory is correct. If he discovers that the facts do not fit in with his theory, he unhesitatingly discards the theory in favour of a better one. He does not in any circumstances try to twist the facts to make them fit in with his theory, because he knows that if he did so he would never arrive at the truth. Scientific training teaches us that any theory we may hold can only be true if the facts which we are working

with—the data of our experience—confirm it in every respect.

This is the fundamental difference between most religious thought and scientific thought. The religious teacher begins with a dogma, which he has to prove at all costs, even going to the length of distorting facts, if he is to present this religion as truth or as anything that can pass as truth. This is the weakness of religion in the present century ; experience has proved so many of its theories, its “divinely revealed” dogmas, to be untrue. But the Lord Buddha did not do this. He was the only religious teacher who was truly scientific in his approach to the problems of existence and the ultimate truth that underlies them. He did not set up any dogmas, beliefs that have to be taken on trust, but, like any scientist of the present day, He Himself searched and discovered, and having done so He set forth the principles on which He had conducted His research, so that all who wished to do so could follow His method and come to know the final truth themselves.

It was because of this that the Buddha was able to make a statement that cannot be matched in the teachings of any other religious leader. Where all the others have said, “You must have absolute faith in me and in what I tell you,” the Lord Buddha said, “It is natural that doubt should arise in the mind. I tell you not to believe anything merely because it has been handed down by tradition, or because it has been said by some great personage in the past, or because it is commonly believed, or because others have told it to you, or even because I Myself have said it. But whatever you are asked to believe, ask yourself whether it is true in the light of your experience, whether it is in conformity with reason and good principles and whether it is conducive to the highest good and welfare of all beings, and only if it passes this test should you firmly believe it and act in accordance with it.”

There we have in a few words a complete statement of the scientific principle of reasoning, applied to the highest knowledge, given by Lord Buddha two thousand five hundred years ago. It is a definition of rationalism ; an assertion of the most tremendous and far-reaching significance, which the world

of religious thought as it is commonly understood has never, except in Buddhism, succeeded in putting into practice. The follower of the Buddha is invited to doubt, until such time as the basic facts of the doctrine have become self-evident to him and he is able to accept them through the clarifying of his own inner vision. One of the finest of all definitions of the Dhamma is that it is “Ehi passiko”—“That which invites everyone to come and see for himself.”

This, then, is what we mean by Buddhism. It is a system of thought, a methodical approach, based on analysis of all the factors of experience and objective and subjective knowledge. Its purpose is the attainment of that higher insight which enables us to penetrate the veil of ignorance or illusion and free ourselves from each and every fetter that binds us to the cycles of suffering we endure in the ceaseless round of Saṃsāra.

It took the Buddha six years to achieve His aim, but the history of personal Buddhahood goes further back than that ; it covers many existences from the time when the first aspiration was made. At present, however, we are only concerned with the facts of the Buddha's last life, as we find them recorded in the Pāli chronicles, because I wish to impress upon you the all-important fact that the Buddha started His search without any guidance from outside. He received no supernatural “revelations”, and never made any claim to be anything but a human personality, self-perfected and self-liberated. He began His great quest for Enlightenment from basic principles and known facts, in the true spirit of scientific enquiry, which proceeds always from the known to the unknown.

What, then, was His starting-point in this investigation of the nature of life ? It was the recognition of Suffering. By that we mean that the Buddha realised the great truth that all sentient beings are encompassed by various ills, both mental and physical. They are subject to disease, injury, mental unhappiness and finally death, and there is no escape from these conditions so long as there is individual existence of mind and body. It is this insistence on the actuality of Suffering and its universal nature that has caused many





The Prime Minister of Burma, Hon'ble U Nu, participating in the homage by lighting the lamp after the enshrinement in the new Vihara of the sacred relics of Sariputta and Mahāmogallana, at the historic ceremony held at Sanchi on November 30th, 1952.





The sacred relics of Sariputta and Mahāmogallana, the foremost disciples of the Buddha, being carried by the Hon'ble U Nu, in a procession to the new Vihara at Sanchi for enshrinement. Among others seen in the procession are The Prime Minister of India, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. S. P. Mookerjee, President of the Mahā Bodhi Society in India.

Western critics to label Buddhism "pessimistic". Seen in its true light there is no pessimism in this teaching ; it is pure realism. Anyone who seriously considers the nature of life and what Shakespeare calls "the ills that flesh is heir to", must admit that the great sum of pain by far exceeds the sum total of happiness among living creatures. Many philosophers in East and West have formed the same conclusion, but where the Lord Buddha found a way of release from this suffering they have offered no solution, and the religions of the world have only been able to give up this life in despair and tell mankind to fix their hopes on a doubtful heaven after death.

This is true pessimism, and it was this despairing outlook, common to all the supernatural religions, which prompted Marx's well-known dictum, "Religion is the opium of the people". Religion was offered to the people as an illusory compensation for the hopeless misery of their lives. They were told, in effect, not to hope for anything in this world but to pin their faith in a better world to come, which was promised them in return for their belief and obedience.

The Buddha, on the other hand, declared that His Dhamma produced happiness **here and now** ; He said that in this very life it is possible to achieve a state of bliss greater and more enduring than the bliss of heaven.

When a doctor is called to treat a sick patient his first task is to diagnose the nature of the disease. When he has done that, he discovers its cause, and knowledge of its cause tells him what treatment should be given. The method of the Buddha was precisely the same ; the great Physician diagnosed the disease, went on to discover its origin, and thus was able to prescribe treatment. There is an old saying, "Physician, heal thyself" and this is more often applied to those who profess to be healers of the spirit than to those who heal the flesh, because the so-called spiritual healers are notoriously inept when it becomes a matter of dealing with their own sources of mental misery. But here again the Buddha passed the test : He did heal Himself first of all, and it was only when He had successfully carried out His own cure that He attempted to heal others.

Having realised the first of the set of Four Noble Truths, the Truth of Suffering, or Dukkha—that is that birth is suffering ; and

that death, old age, disease, separation from objects of desire and being in contact with objects of dislike, all these things constitute forms of suffering—He proceeded logically to the cause of Suffering, and found it in Craving. Here again His analysis was rational and strictly scientific, in the sense that the truth of His conclusion can be tested and proved by anyone. The study of psychology has shown us how all our actions are motivated by some form of craving, some desire which we strive to realise, and which brings us unhappiness if we fail to achieve it. This same science, psychology, also tells us that craving is an essential condition of living organisms and that it can never be satisfied by any sensory experience, since as soon as one form of craving is satisfied another takes its place. The whole of life is a succession of states of desire, varying as to intensity and object, but all alike centred about the field of sensory perceptions and endlessly repeating the same cycle of cause and effect.

Another science, that of biological evolution, confirms this teaching that craving is the basis of life. We know that living beings are not created by any God or in any supernatural manner, but that they are the result of natural laws, the process of which can be traced. The entire process of evolution follows a pattern that is seemingly meaningless until we recognise that its motivating factor is Craving. The various species of living beings which have all evolved from a very simple single-cell animal, the amoeba, show how, over countless millions of years, more and more complicated organisms have come into being, each developing from earlier prototypes, and each reaching a higher degree of sensory perception than the ones preceding it. Behind all this complicated process the driving force is craving for increased sensory experience, which can only be obtained through improved faculties of mind and body.

The universe in which we live, and of which we are a part, is a universe governed by consistent natural laws, wherein nothing happens without a cause. Science teaches us not to expect anything to arise in it independently or by accident. So also does Buddhism. The law of evolution based upon craving gives us a clear indication of the unseen law that governs the arising and passing away of individual beings from life to life. That too is dominated by craving ;

it is the past actions rooted in craving that cause the birth of an individual and the same craving sustains his life from moment to moment throughout its natural duration. When he dies, the impulse of craving is carried on by the law of cause and effect, and with it the potential of his actions and mental tendencies, and these give rise to another birth, in whatever sphere of existence is most suitable for the manifestation of the particular tendencies he has developed. Wherever we look we find evidences of this law of cause and effect based upon volitional actions and predispositions, which is called in Buddhism "Kamma". The physical universe itself, when we examine it minutely and with sufficient knowledge, gives unmistakable proof that it is not only subject to this universal law but that it is in fact the outward and visible manifestation of it. Everywhere, present effects are the product of past causes.

It is a natural law that everything that exists must come to an end : nothing in the universe is stable and nothing is permanent. So the third stage of the investigation into the nature of life brings us to the realisation that suffering also can be brought to an end. This is the third of the Four Noble Truths, which is called "Dukkha nirodha"—the Cessation of Suffering. But there can be no cessation of suffering so long as there is personal existence ; that is to say, so long as there is the continual arising of mental and physical constituents (Nāma-rūpa) due to volitional activity motivated by craving the cycle of suffering must continue. Therefore the state in which there is no suffering consciousness must be entirely free from these constituents of personality ; it must be beyond all possibility of the arising of birth, disease, old age, decay and death which are inseparably connected with individual personality. That is why Nibbāna is called "Cessation" ; it is the ceasing of all these elements and the utter destruction of that which binds them together. When the Arahāt passes away at the end of his final existence the particular chain of causation that has connected his former births is broken because he has of his own intention put an end to craving, while he was still in the flesh.

As for the actual nature of Nibbāna, nothing can be said, for the obvious reason that it is a state utterly unlike anything the mind can conceive or that words can describe. Our language deals entirely with the

phenomena known to us through our senses, it is bounded and confined by this relative world of subject and object relationships and has no terms of reference for any state wherein these do not exist. That is why Lord Buddha refused to answer questions concerning the nature of Nibbāna ; no words could give a true picture of it. But this at least we know ; it is possible to attain it in this very life and to experience the complete bliss that comes from the absence of passion. Unlike the heavens that other religions ask us to believe are eternal, but which Buddhist philosophy shows cannot be anything but impermanent, the state of Nibbāna is not a vague promise that must wait until after death for its fulfilment, but an actuality that can be known in this very life. We are not asked to take it on trust—we are invited to seek and find it for ourselves.

Is there, then, no faith demanded in Buddhism ? Here again, the answer is different from that given by any other religious system. When a scientist embarks on a new field of exploration the only faith required of him is that he should have confidence in the method of reasoning and experiment followed by his teachers and predecessors. He must follow a tried and tested line of logical progression from known facts to unknown conclusions. It is only in this way that he can be certain of the validity of his discoveries. So it is with the follower of the Buddha ; he is asked to have Saddhā (faith) in the method given by the Buddha and the Arahats of former days, based upon the clear evidence of their attainment. This is essentially different from having faith in dogmatic assertions. Lord Buddha declared emphatically that each individual must seek out his own liberation : the Buddhas, the Teachers, can only show the way.

This brings us to the last of the Four Noble Truths which are the elementary principles of Buddhism: the Way that leads to Nibbāna, the Dukkha-nirodha-gāmini-patipadā. It is set forth in the Noble Eightfold Path, which is a comprehensive plan of living, in three divisions covering the internal and external factors that govern the progress of the individual from the first essential, which is that of holding Right views, to the last and highest, which is the attainment of Right Samādhi or contemplative insight. Much has been written on the subject of this profound and all-embracing pattern of



life laid down by the Supreme Buddha : philosophers have praised its deep psychological insight and moralists have extolled its lofty ethical teaching, the highest standard of spiritual life known to mankind. To embark upon anything like a systematic exposition of the Noble Eightfold Path would call for a series of articles at least. Personally, I believe it is better understood by private study and meditation, under the direction of a teacher, because many of its aspects require an understanding of things that cannot well be put into words. It carries us into realms of thought that transcend language and the common currency of ordinary human intercourse. As we are dealing with elementary principles, I shall only touch lightly on the first factor, that of Right Views.

How are we to start, how are we to get our thinking straight, in order to be certain that we are working on the right lines ? If we go wrong at the beginning, we can be certain that our later conclusions will also be wrong. We shall be like a man trying to find his way in a jungle with a faulty compass. The Buddha started from first principles, as we have seen ; He stripped away all erroneous views from His mind and got down to the bedrock facts of existence and made them His first premises.

The Buddha found that all phenomenal or compounded things are impermanent, that all are subject to suffering and that they are all, without exception, lacking in essential reality *Sabbe Sankhara anicca ; sabbe sankhara dukkha ; sabbe dhamma anatta*. To recognise this fact is the first necessity in getting our thought-processes oriented in the right direction to achieve our goal.

All compounded things are impermanent. There are two aspects to this universal truth. The first is the obvious aspect which we all know—the fact that everything, including the elements of our own personality, come into being and pass away again in accordance with the law of cause and effect. They depend upon previous conditions to bring them into existence. Where the question of living beings is concerned we find the process analysed in the formula of Dependent Origination (*Paticcasamuppāda*); it has its counterpart in the laws that control the arising and passing away of all phenomena, both material and immaterial. Nothing in the universe is stable ; nothing is everlasting. The other aspect of this law of impermanence

is the hidden side, which can only be discovered by insight. Every law of the universe has two sides : the aspect which is apparent to everybody through common experience and the aspect which is analogous to it but which can only be discerned by those of superior intellect. In this case, the obvious side of the law of decay and impermanence is like the eighth part of an iceberg that appears above the surface ; the greater and more important part of it is hidden from view under the water.

Nevertheless, we of the twentieth century have a certain advantage over our predecessors in this matter. We do not have to depend entirely upon the development of our insight to enable us to understand something of the hidden side of the law of impermanence because science is able to help us. The law of impermanence is a fundamental principle of science. Physics, the study of the nature of matter and material causes, tells us that all material objects are composed of atoms or electronic particles. They consist of neutrons and positrons in various combinations, all in a state of continual change. What appears to our superficial sight to be solid matter is in reality made up of these electronic particles in a condition of perpetual flux, arising and passing away with incredible rapidity, and in ceaseless movement. This exactly coincides with the philosophical teaching of Buddhism concerning the structure of the material universe, and the physical and mental components of our own personality conform to the same law. When we come to analyse the factors of a living being they resolve themselves into nothing more than the Five Khandha process ; that is, *Rūpa-kkhandha*, *Vedanā-kkhandha*, *Sañña-kkhandha*, *Sankhāra-kkhandha* and *Viññāna-kkhandha*. *Rūpa* stands for the material qualities, *Vedanā* for the different sensations, *Sañña* for the perceptions, *Sankhāra* for the mental tendencies arising from past Kamma while *Viññāna* signifies the various types of consciousness that arise in response to past and present conditions. This collection of “ aggregates ” embraces the whole of what we are able to discover in the analysis of personality, and all are subject to change from moment to moment.

Just as the modern physicist has discarded the old static conception of matter and views material phenomena as a causally-linked series of events in time and space rather than as solid and perduring objects, so we must

learn to regard human personality (puggala). From the moment of birth until death it is nothing more than a serial continuity of cause and effect, and it is this same serial continuity of Kamma that carries over to the next birth. There is no immortal soul or other entity to be found in the collection of aggregates that make up a living being ; hence it is said to be "Anattā"—without any trace of an enduring identity or "Self". This is the first point to be recognised by one who is in search of Right Views or correct understanding, and it is strictly in agreement with the science of physics and the latest psychological research. Buddhism is the only religion that does not demand belief in either a creator-god or an immortal soul. This fact may not seem to have any great significance to Buddhists, who are accustomed to the principles of their religion, but actually it is of the utmost importance to-day, because religion is being attacked by scientific materialism principally on the ground that there is no rational justification for the belief in Soul, yet it is on the strength of these and similar theories that most religions stand or fall. Because Buddhism is independent of such dogmas and teaches instead the universal law of cause and effect on scientific lines, it is the only form of religious belief that can meet the arguments of the sceptical materialist. It is not too much to say, as I myself believe, that the whole future of religious thought in the world rests with Buddhism.

The essence of Right Views is to understand when we speak of "self" we are speaking only in a conventional sense. In the ultimate sense there is nothing that can be called the "self"; there is only the process of arising and passing away of causally-conditioned elements, mental and physical. There is, as the Visuddhi Magga expresses it, "no performer of actions"; it is only the actions that carry on the illusion of personal identity from one thought-moment to another.

"Kammussa—" There is no doer of deeds; (only) empty phenomena roll on".

It is apparent, therefore, that the three Signs of Being, Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā, are in reality three aspects of the same truth. That which is impermanent must of necessity be subject to suffering ; its suffering is inherent in its arising and passing away. When we investigate more deeply still we come to recognise that all sensation (Vedanā) is only suffering in varying degrees. It is

also clear that everything that is impermanent, that is momentarily undergoing change and that does not preserve any real identity from one moment to another, must be Anattā. It cannot be said to have any self-identity or any enduring characteristic by which it may be known and distinguished. It is "suddhadhamma"—merely a succession of empty phenomena coming into existence and passing away in obedience to the causal law.

Precisely why is it essential to recognise the truth of Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā ? It is because, as we have seen, to destroy the cause of suffering we have to free ourselves from craving. Craving is rooted in false beliefs concerning the self and the desirability of enjoying material benefits and sensory pleasures. Right understanding consists in seeing clearly that these things can never bring permanent satisfaction because both they and the consciousness that experiences them are alike impermanent. This is the Buddhist answer to the materialistic philosophers who imagine that enduring happiness can be attained through the pursuit of material ends. The true, lasting happiness that nothing can disturb does not come from external things ; it cannot be found anywhere in the unstable, ever-changing conditions of life. It comes from within, from the weakening of attachment and craving which constitutes freedom and liberation of the mind.

This is not to say that we should cease from trying to improve worldly conditions. Far from it. Lord Buddha did not preach a doctrine of inactivity and negation. Everything we consciously strive to do for the welfare, both material and spiritual, of our fellow men, comes under the heading of Right Actions, and these right actions are an important part of our self-discipline. They bear good fruit both in this world and in the higher states, because they are performed in a spirit of unselfishness and benevolence. But we must bear constantly in mind that the type of happiness we give and receive by such means is only a relative happiness ; it can, at the best, only amount to an alleviation of some of the suffering and distress of the world of living beings. We must never be deluded into thinking that we can make a heaven on earth for mankind in general by material means. The truth of this is amply demonstrated by modern material progress. Science has

given us great powers ; we have control over the laws of nature to a far greater extent than humanity has ever had before, yet still we cannot entirely eliminate fear, pain, distress and danger from human life. "Decay is inherent in all compounded things, O Bhikkhus. Therefore I exhort you : strive diligently." Such were the final words of the Exalted Lord Buddha, the Supreme Teacher. We must see clearly where our true happiness is to be found, and never waver from the path that leads to it.

Finally, I would like to quote the words of Prof. Satkari Mookherjee in his learned treatise on the Buddhist philosophy of universal flux : "Lord Buddha was an intellectual giant and a rationalist above everything else. He exhorted His disciples to accept nothing on trust. 'Just as people test the purity of gold by burning it in fire, by cutting it and examining it on a touchstone, so exactly you should, O ye monks ! accept My words after subjecting them to a critical test and not out of reverence for me.' These words of the Buddha furnish the key to the true spirit of Buddhist philosophy throughout its career. And this freedom of thought encouraged by the Buddha was responsible for the schism in the Buddhist Church and for division of Buddhist philosophy into so many divergent schools. This should not be regarded as a matter of regret ; on the contrary ; we should read in it the signs of pulsating life".

Too often in the past, dogmatic and theistic religion has thrived on the suppression of free thought. Buddhism has never done so ; it has thrived solely on the intrinsic truth of its fundamental doctrines, which after all are the same throughout all the schools of Buddhist philosophy. Now,

the scientific reaction against religion has turned the wheel full circle, and the followers of materialism are trying to suppress freedom of religious thought. This is the great danger in which the world stands at the present moment. The Buddhist doctrine of Kamma required that each man shall be at liberty to work out his own destiny ; he is not, as some modern ideologies proclaim, the blind instrument of economic or political forces. He is a free agent, and his freedom must be protected, for in that way alone is true progress possible, both individually and collectively.

It has not been possible for me to do more than touch the fringe of some of the more important aspects of the elements of Buddhist philosophy. The subject is vast and comprehensive as the universe itself, and it is not confined to any one place or time, neither is it dependent upon externals of fashion in thought or outlook. A famous architect who was buried in a great cathedral of his own design had for epitaph : "If you would behold his monument, look around you." Similarly it may be said of Lord Buddha "If you wish for confirmation of the truth of His Teaching, look at the universe around you, and find its answer in the universe within". For it was He who said, "O Bhikkhus, within this fathom-long body, equipped with mind and mental faculties, I declare unto you is the world, the origin of the world and the cessation thereof."

"Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ,  
Kusalassa upasampadā  
Sacitta pariyo-dapanam—  
Evaṃ Buddhānasanaṃ".

"To put an end to evil, to fulfil all that is good, to purify the mind—this is the Teaching of the Buddhas."

Angered, Sariputta, is this Sunakkhatta, the foolish man ! And only of his anger has he said this thing. 'I will defame !' thinks to himself that foolish Sunakkhatta, and behold ! forthwith he speaks the praise of the Accomplished One. For, Sariputta, a commendation of the Accomplished One it is, when any one proclaims : 'The pith of the doctrine preached by the ascetic Gotama is this, that if only a man will think and ponder sufficiently, he will be led to the final ending of all sufferings. !

*Majjhima Nikaya Twelfth Discourse.*



## On the Way Back to Buddhism

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Twenty million Koli-Rajputs, descendants of the oldest Buddhist clans, descendants actually of the Buddha's own kith and kin are now, slowly at first but with quickening pace, finding their way back to the Noble Teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha Himself was the son of the ruling prince of the Sakya clan and his mother was from the contemporaneous Khattiya clan of the Koliyas.

The descendants of the once proud Koliya clan are now known as the Koli-Rajputs and in this brief article there is not room to mention their rise as one of the premier fighting races of India and their later downfall to a position of comparative poverty.

Through their many vicissitudes which parallel exactly the decline of Buddhism in India, they have still kept some of the knowledge of the ancient Wisdom and Truth imparted by the Buddha. The town of Ajmer is recognised as a centre of the Koliya people of to-day and here it is that Buddhism has always kept a footing and here it is that Buddhism is growing anew and spreading throughout India to the scattered Koliyas who cover the whole face of the continent. The majority of the Koliyas of India though they have still some spark of Buddhism and some memory of that wonderful Teaching have become known as Hindus while some few had become Christians due to the economic necessity imposed under an alien rule. Most of the Koliyas are engaged in agriculture in some form and most of them are desperately poor. They take readily, having a good sense of mechanics, to the factory and machine work that is a feature of the new industrial age of India. There are exceptions among them, naturally. Some few are wealthy landlords, owners of cloth mills, merchants and shop-keepers but the majority are living a hand-to-mouth existence. They are groping their way back to the light of the Noble Doctrine of the Buddha which was swept away from India by internal attacks and dissensions and the attacks of outside groups.

In the old scriptures the Koliyas are constantly mentioned and one obtains a very good picture of what their life was like in the more simple age of 2,500 years ago. They lived on the banks of the Rohini River using its waters for cultivation and living, in the main, a happy agricultural life. Even in those days scarcities and the desire of one side to get the better of another foreshadowed the downfall of even such a republican government as they had and the two great clans, the Sakyas and the Koliyas, mixed almost inextricably by intermarriage were at one time about to wage a bloody war for sole possession of the waters of the Rohini. It required the intervention of the Buddha Himself to stop this war and His exhortation and His admonition that blood is of more value than water to calm their rising feelings and to show them that unselfish sharing is better than the terrors of a war. On another occasion the Buddha taught the same lesson by sitting under a leafless tree on a hot day in the path of an attacking ruler. When this leader evinced surprise that the Buddha should sit under a tree which gave so little shade, the Buddha pointed out : "No other shade is so beneficial as the shade of the united community" and the ruler pondered on these words and gave up the attack. In the Maha Parinibbāna Sutta mention is made of the Koliyas as having special precedence in the matter of sharing the relics of the Buddha and the Koliyas obtaining these, erected stupas in commemoration of the pious memory of their Great Kinsman who had attained Enlightenment.

The Koliyas in medieval times had a record of many brave deeds. In British India days they possessed forty-two independent states.

They gradually lost much of their religious knowledge and it is only of late years that visits by learned bhikkhus such as Bhikkhu Dharma Rakkhita of Sarnath, Ven'ble J. Kashyap, Director of Nalanda Pāli Institute, Patna, Bhikkhu Veera Dharmavara of Thailand and others to Ajmer has

awakened the Koliyas to a knowledge of and a desire for their ancient heritage of Buddhism.

Ajmer is a beautiful town in the midst of Rajasthan surrounded by hills, with beautiful scenery, studded with many lakes. It is a noted holy place for Hindus and many thousands of pilgrims come each year especially in the month of November. There are many schools, colleges, hospitals and fine bazaars and a good railway station and the roads are in good order. In the heart of the town there are the central shops of the Western Railway where are manufactured engines, carriages and wagons and it is this that now gives most employment to the people of the district. In spite of the fact that many of them are poorly paid for long hours of work you will find them full of sympathy and love for suffering humanity and with many of the Buddhist virtues.

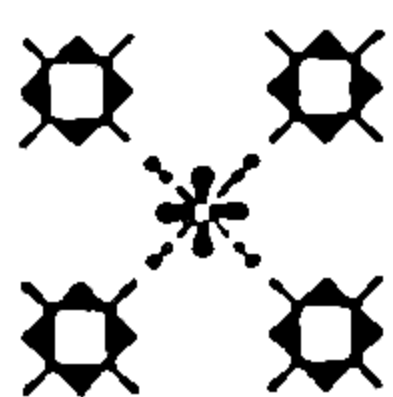
There are more than 20,000 Koliyas in Ajmer. A great deal is being done in education by Shree M. K. Nathu Singh ji Tanwar, Sahitya Prabhakar, Editor 'Koli-Rajput' Headmaster K.D.A.V. School Vice-President of Koliya Buddhist Association and President Y.M.B.A.

The dream of the Koliyas of Ajmer is to make this a centre to help the other aspiring Koliyas who everywhere are trying to regain and rekindle the knowledge of their Buddhist faith. The people of Ajmer are better able to do this since they have retained perhaps more of their original Buddhist beliefs and knowledge and since their economical situation is a little better than their brothers who are scattered throughout the rest of India. Unfortunately the people of Ajmer are also very poor

and though they have managed to purchase a plot of land in Pushkar, they have not yet been able to collect sufficient funds to build a Vihara and a residential college for teaching Buddhism. They are already running two schools, one for boys and one for girls, but as they have to be affiliated with a Vedic school they have not complete religious freedom and must teach certain Vedic Hindu principles in the period set apart for religious study.

Their organ "Koli-Rajput" in Hindi is edited by Shree M. K. Nathu Singh ji Tanwar, which conveys the Teachings of the Buddha to Koliyas all over their land. There are several Buddhist societies and they are doing all that they can to co-ordinate religious instructions.

Much help is required from the outside Buddhist world if these good Buddhists are to succeed in their desire of bringing all their people back to Buddhism. Financial help, educational help, sending of Buddhist missionaries and the provision of Buddhist literature will provide that assistance and encouragement from the well-advanced Buddhist countries and from distinguished Buddhist societies, that is necessary for a community placed as the Koliyas are now placed. Great thanks are due to many who have already begun to help, among them the Ven'ble J. Kashyap and Thado Maha Thray Sithu U Chan Htoon, Attorney-General, Burma, through the help of whom Koliya Putta Rahula Suman Chhawara, Secretary-General of all Buddhist societies in Ajmer, has been invited to Burma and is staying at the expense of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council for his studies to equip him for the work of helping his people on their journey back to Buddhism.





## In Quest of Truth

Thiri Pyanchi U AUNG THAN

By day shines the sun, by night gleams the moon,  
The Warrior shines in his armour, the Brahman shines in trance,  
But all the day and all the night the Buddha shines in splendour.

(*Dhammapada*, 387)

What is truth? It is the measuring of each thing by that standard with which it ought to be measured. Truth stands the test of Time.

The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha—the Teacher, the Teaching and the Taught—are related in close unity. The Blessed One declared that he who would know the Buddha must know his Teaching; but to know the Teaching he must live the Teaching. He must begin to tread the path that leads to Enlightenment; he must begin to know by experience some of the *Truth* known by the Buddha; he must begin an increasing relationship with the Buddha. The Blessed One said: “Even if a Bhikkhu should take up the edges of my robe and follow after me step by step, if he then becomes envious, with a keen passion for lusts, malevolent in thought, corrupt in his aspiration, heedless in thought, uncontrolled in his thoughts and feelings, then is he far from me, I from him. Why? Because, O Bhikkhus, that Bhikkhu does not know the Dhamma and not knowing the Dhamma he does not know me. But even if a Bhikkhu should dwell a hundred leagues away from me and be not envious, nor with keen passion for lusts, nor malevolent in thought; nor corrupt in his aspiration, but heedful, attentive and controlled, pure in thought and feeling, then is he near to me, and I to him. Why? Because, O Bhikkhus, that Bhikkhu knows the Dhamma, and knowing the Dhamma, he knows me.”

(*Iti-Vuttaka*.)

The Dhamma then is the true expression of the character of the Buddha. The secret of all genius lies in just this power to give true expression to what is greatest in us. How surpassingly true in the case of this Greatest Genius! As I meditate on the life of the Buddha the qualities which stand out most strikingly to me, apart from his wisdom, are his honesty, moral strength and compassion. Some may think of honesty as a homely virtue, not realizing how

intellectually limited we are in honesty, nor the possibilities of its development. It is the absolute requisite for a vision of truth; it is the making of ourselves true that we may see truly, only then can the truth come to us. Sincerity is but another word for honesty. When lacking this quality the idealist is carried away by his desire and imagination, which lead him to accepting something as that he does not honestly know. But the idealism of the Buddha is based on experience, on reality; its honesty is impeccable.

The strength is manifested in the Buddha's dauntless perseverance. It seems to me that these two qualities of honesty and moral strength linked with his great compassion are the qualities which most distinguish the Blessed One in his search for Truth and which finally led him to the great Enlightenment, though underlying these were all those qualities gained in many a former birth, of which previous to his Enlightenment the Buddha was not fully conscious, but which from his unconscious life sustained him to that goal.

Historical research is bringing remarkable verifications of the Pāli Canon. But there is also other than historical truth. The acceptance of history must always be based largely on faith; we cannot know in the sense in which we directly know psychological, ethical or philosophical truths. It is these latter truths which are the most important and most emphasised truths of the Pāli Canon, and which make of Buddhism a verifiable religion. According to the degree in which we realise these teachings of the Buddha we eliminate time and space and come as near to him as did the disciples of his own day. So rich are these scriptures with indications of the Buddha's character that one is overpowered by the vastness of the subject. Yet all Buddhist students must enter that field, and I give here some of the results of such study, offering them more as an artist would present notes or impressions than attempting a complete outline, but hoping that they may

be of help to some of my fellow-students. Proofs which history and archaeology contribute concerning the Buddha—gratifying as they are—have secondary importance to those verifications which come from our own psychological experience.

Born into the family of the King of Kapilavastu, Prince Siddhartha, who was to become the Enlightened One, received the best advantages which the world then had to offer. His father thought to prevent in the young prince the spirit of research, or any questioning of life, that would lead him to abandon his kingdom and go forth on that quest which prophecy had foretold he would make, thus the luxury with which he surrounded Prince Siddhartha would have stifled a weaker being. Part of the tragedy of the poor consists in their usual belief that happiness is to be found in material welfare, which not having, they pass their lives in craving to obtain, or in vain regrets. The tragedy of the rich, on the other hand, consists in not rising above their wealth, but in clinging to it, and in being imprisoned and stifled by it. Hence, happiness is not found in either case. Greed, whether to grasp or to hold, can only end in misery. The young Siddhartha was a dutiful son; not until he was twenty-nine years of age did he cease to live the life which his father required of him. And those experiences were of value to him. He knew at first hand how to value those joys of life, nor was anyone able to keep away from him the knowledge of sorrow. Also he knew at first hand that luxury was not conducive to happiness.

The sorrow which the Buddha felt was one of sympathy for the world, and this, with the great desire for enlightenment, led him, in the prime of his youth, to go forth in search of the way that leads beyond all ill. For this he left even wife and son, never to return to the home-life again. In doing so he evinced that honesty of character and energy which he possessed in so perfect a degree. He had looked the truth in the face, that life lived in sensuous enjoyment is a vicious circle. For all mankind he sought the way of release.

Now followed six years of search. His perseverance and suffering were the utmost man can endure. A lesser mind would have rested content with the partial truth which Alara Kalama and Uddaka

taught, and would have accepted their invitation to remain as a teacher of equal standing with them. But the honesty and perseverance of the Buddha would not permit him to do that. Tirelessly and fearlessly he continued his search. Students of his life should be familiar with the account contained in Majjhima-Nikāya, 36th discourse. Following the description of his study with those teachers is given that of his extreme asceticism, terrible for most of us to contemplate. Finally, he knew, and exclaimed regarding it: "That is the uttermost, beyond this one cannot go." Because he abandoned that way his fellow ascetics deserted the Buddha and held him in disfavour.

Buddhism is apparently represented in Western languages as being opposed to all desire. We must not understand desire here to be inclusive of aspiration. Evidently what is meant is all selfish, lower desire. Obviously it was aspiration, or the desire for truth, that mankind might profit thereby, which caused the Blessed One to forsake his home and prompted his years of search. What else but aspiration, to aid mankind, kept him in the world after his Enlightenment. The second stage of the Noble Eightfold Path is Right Desire or Aspiration (*Samma-Sankappa*). A misunderstanding, due perhaps to the difficulties of accurate translation, has followed from the statements regarding 'desire': the conception has apparently spread in the West that the Buddhist ideal is a passive, inactive one. A little reading of the Scriptures is necessary to remove such a misconception, where the Buddha is constantly found preaching the need of strenuous exertion and right aspiration. An examination of the *Abhidhamma* books would soon reveal the high moral value given to these qualities. *Viriya* (energy) has been considered nine times; viz., *Samma-ppadhāna* (right efforts) 4 and *Viriya Iddhipāda* (psychic power) 1 and *Viriya Indriya* (guiding faculty) 1 and *Viriya Bala* (force) 1 and *Viriya Bojjhanga* (factor of Enlightenment) 1 and *Samma Vāyamā* (right endeavour) 1 = 9. (Vol. I. *Abhidhamma Philosophy* by Bhikkhu Kashyap, 259).

Energy is one of the three factors discussed at length in a book on "Attainment of Success" by Shwehintha-tawya Sayadaw, Yandon. This higher desire, or aspiration which has in it no greed, is perhaps to be



found in the work of an artist or scientist when he is most truly such, forgetful of self, desiring only that beauty or truth be manifest 'For beauty is truth ; truth, beauty' says Keats.

The higher stage of Jhana, I presume to be free from aspiration, so great is Jhana in realization—but surely it is not reached without aspiration. Of great interest and beauty will be found the continuation of the Majjhima-Nikāya account, recording how the way to Enlightenment was finally revealed.

"Now not by this terrible asceticism could I attain the highest condition of man—distinction of knowing truly genuine knowledge."

"There is perhaps another way for Enlightenment." So saying, the Buddha took solid food, cooked rice. A description is given of his entering the four stages of Jhana and his attaining Enlightenment.

When thus he had attained to omniscience, and was the centre of such unparalleled glory and homage, and so many prodigies were happening about him, he breathed forth that solemn utterance :—

"Through birth and rebirth's endless round,

Seeking in vain, I hastened on,  
To find who framed this edifice.  
What misery!—birth incessantly!  
O builder! I've discovered thee!  
This fabric Thou shalt ne'er rebuild!  
Thy rafters all are broken now,  
And pointed roof demolished lies!  
This mind has Nibbāna reached,  
And seen the last of all desires!"

(*Dhammapada*, 153, 154.)

The account of the Buddha's thought at this very important time is continued in the Mahāvagga of the Vinaya Texts. The Mahāvagga begins : "At that time, the Blessed One was dwelling at Uruvela at the foot of the Bo-tree on the banks of the river Neranjarā, just after he had become Sam-buddha. And the Blessed Buddha sat uninterruptedly during seven days, enjoying the bliss of emancipation.

Then the Blessed One, during the first watch of the night, fixed his mind upon the Chain of Cause and Effect or Dependent Origination in direct and in reverse order.

'Because of ignorance, Kamma (will and associated action). Because of will and associated action, consciousness. Because of consciousness, mind and body. Because of mind and body, the sixfold organs of sense. Because of the sixfold organs of sense, contact. Because of contact, feeling. Because of feeling, craving. Because of craving, grasping. Because of grasping, becoming. Because of becoming, birth. Because of birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair. Such is the coming to pass of this entire body of misery. "From the ceasing of ignorance, Kamma (will and associated action) ceases, from the ceasing of will and associated action, mind and body cease. From the ceasing of mind and body, the sixfold organs of sense cease. From the ceasing of the sixfold organs of sense, contact ceases. From the ceasing of contact, feeling ceases. From the ceasing of feeling, craving ceases. From the ceasing of craving, grasping ceases. From the ceasing of grasping, becoming ceases. From the ceasing of becoming, birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this entire body of misery."

The Blessed One meditated on these profound truths during the three watches of the night. The importance of the Paticca-Samuppāda in Buddhist philosophy is indicated by its presence so soon in the thought of the Buddha after his Enlightenment. It is another expression of the Four Noble Truths viz :- Misery, Cause of Misery, Cessation of Misery and the Way leading to the Cessation of Misery. The deep meanings involved in this formula of Dependent Origination require more consideration than the scope of this note permits.

Then the Blessed One sat under the Ajapala (goat-herd's) banyan tree enjoying the bliss of emancipation for seven days, and again in the same way he passed seven days under the Mucalinda tree. And the Blessed One uttered this verse :—

"How blest the happy solitude  
Of him who hears and knows the truth!  
How blest is harmlessness towards all,  
And self-restraint towards living things!  
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' "

Similarly the Buddha passed seven days under the Rajāyatana tree, where he was offered honey cakes by Tapussa and Bhallika of Okkala, later Dagon, now Rangoon, capital of Burma, who came to pay him reverence. They addressed him with the words which, with the addition of refuge in the Sangha, were soon to be so oft repeated by every Buddhist.

“ We take our refuge, Lord, in the Blessed One and in the Dhamma; may the Blessed One receive us as disciples who from this day forth while our life lasts, have taken their refuge in him”.

Although for many lives he who became the Buddha had followed strenuously the path leading to Buddhahood, its actual attainment made of him a different being, not different in all ways, but the actual basis of his life by Enlightenment was changed. Psychologists tell us that we live because we desire to live. After his Enlightenment the Blessed One lived not because he desired life for himself. Life had brought to him its ultimate gifts in giving him Enlightenment. He the Awakened, the Victorious One, now could pass into Parinibbāna, but instead for forth-five years he patiently—nay with utmost happiness—remained in this world continuously wandering from place to place, teaching the Noble Way. Unlike other men the root of his life lay not in a personal desire for life, but the basis lay in *Compassion*. Compassion had governed his life previously. He had followed the ten stages of spiritual perfection, *Paramitas*, in his progress to Buddhahood. They comprise the practice and highest possible development of charity, morality, renunciation of pleasures, wisdom, energy, patient resignation, honesty, constancy, compassion and equanimity. The Rev. Ledi Sayadaw in his book “Uttama Purisa Dipani” gives an illustration of how all these ten noble perfections were involved in the acts of the embryo Buddha, who, in one of his former existences as a monkey, saved the life of a wicked Brahman, who had fallen down a precipice. The monkey brought him up the hill by carrying him on his back. While the monkey was resting his limbs by placing his head on the Brahman’s lap, the mischievous man, with an evil intent to take home with him the flesh of the monkey as a present for his wife, hit the monkey’s head with a huge stone. While blood was streaming from the head and pouring all over the body, the monkey went

to a distance from the man and said “ Oh! Are there such thankless people in this world as you are? Look, this place is full of wild beasts. Tarry not. I will guide you back to your village by jumping from tree to tree. Follow the track of the blood which drops from my head”. There is a consummation of all the virtues enumerated above in this noble example.

To return to the events under the Ajapala banyan tree, we find that the Blessed One was at first doubtful whether his message could be understood by men. Not yet did he exercise the power, as later in his life, of looking out over the world to find those in need of him. Instead we are told that a great being of the heavenly world visited the Buddha, petitioning him to teach the Way to men, saying: “ There are beings whose mental eyes are darkened by scarcely any dust: but if they do not hear the doctrine, they cannot attain salvation. These will understand the doctrine.” Then the Blessed One, “ with his eye of a Buddha full of compassion towards sentient beings, looked out over the world.” He saw “ beings whose mental eyes were covered by scarcely any dust, beings whose eyes were covered by much dust, beings sharp of sense, and blunt of sense, of good disposition and bad disposition, easy to instruct and difficult to instruct, some of them seeing the dangers of future life and of evil”. Then he exclaimed: “ Wide open is the door of the Immortal to all who have ears to hear; let them send forth *faith* to meet it. The Dhamma sweet and good I spoke not, Brahma, despairing of the weary task for men.”

The Dhamma of the Buddha is the Way to Truth and Enlightenment, and the texts would indicate that a form for that teaching following immediately the Enlightenment was, presumably, a part of that Enlightenment. Because he had that power to show the way he is of supreme importance to the world. The Buddha had that clarity of knowledge which makes Him a refuge for the thinker, and for the man who has had to face the difficulties of reality. The purely mystical and visionary do not thrive in that clarity. His Enlightenment was far above what we call an emotional experience and above vision. It must have been an experience of Wisdom and actual knowledge compared to which, what we experience by that name is mere opinion.



After seven weeks of meditation there, the Blessed One began his life as the Great Teacher. His first thought was to aid his former teachers, but psychically he became aware of their decease, then he knew by the same power that his five companions, who had practised asceticism with him were residing at the Deer Park of Isipatana. On the way thither he met one who exclaimed at his serenity and radiance, and questioned the Buddha regarding his teacher and doctrine. The Blessed One replied: "I have overcome all foes; I am all-wise; I am free from stains in every way; I have left everything; and have obtained emancipation by the destruction of desire. Having myself gained knowledge, whom should I call my master? I have no teacher: no one is equal to me; in the world of men and of gods no being is like me: I am the Holy One in this world; I am the highest teacher, I alone am the absolute Sambuddha. I have gained coolness (passionlessness) and have obtained Nibbāna. To found the kingdom of Truth I go to Benares. I will beat the drum of the Immortal in the darkness of the world."—"Like me are all Victorious Ones who have reached extinction of the Asavas (deadly floods); I have overcome all states of evil; therefore, Upaka, am I the Victorious One." But Upaka shakes his head and goes on his way.

Arrived at the Deer Park, the presence of the Buddha quickly overcomes the prejudice which had arisen in his former companions because of his desertion from their extreme asceticism. The Blessed One said to them: "If you walk in the way I show you, you will, ere long, have penetrated to the truth, having yourself known it face to face; and you will live in possession of the highest goal of the holy life." Soon follows the Buddha's discourse called "The First Sermon", "The Middle Path", "The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness", "The Setting in Motion of the Wheel of the Law". It was fitting that this should have been delivered to those who had strayed so far from the Middle Path. It was characteristic of the Buddha that he always spoke appropriately to the experience of his hearers. But this sermon was not only appropriate to a great mass of searchers for Truth in India of that day, but it is of universal application and of profound meaning for all time. It contained the doctrine of the Middle Way, the Four

Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. The Blessed One saw that Knowledge is the product of relations, that the extremes of asceticism, or sensuality dull our awareness of those relations, and leads to illusion. He asked for an alert, pure, honest mind in a healthy body; by such the truth is most likely to be seen without distortion. (*Mens sana in corpore sano*—A healthy mind in a healthy body.)

Next he talked to them on "Not having signs of the Self (or Ego)." The Blessed One denied that any part of ourselves which we know is unchangeable. In no religion has the idea of selflessness (substancelessness) been given such a foundation. Grasping of things for self is the illusion of illusions. Hatred and fear arise from the same illusion. Not to recognise that all in this world is transitory or impermanent (*anicca*), therefore without signs of self (*anatta*) is to be ignorant; this is ill or misery (*dukkha*). These are important principles of Buddhism. When this Ignorance (*Avijja*) decreases, Lust (*Lobha*) and Hatred (*Dosa*) diminish. With the extinction of greed, hate and ignorance, Nibbāna is realized.

So powerful and clear was the teaching as given by the Buddha himself that soon, accounts say, there were sixty Arahats in the world, including the five ascetics and important citizens of Benares, who had come to listen to the Blessed One. Then he sends forth his disciples to preach. "Released am I, O Bhikkhus, from fetters both human and divine. Ye also are free from fetters, both human and divine. Go ye, now, O Bhikkhus, and wander for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain and for the welfare of gods and men. Let no two of you go the same way. Preach, O Bhikkhus, the doctrine which is glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle, glorious at the end, in the spirit and in the letter; proclaim a consummate, perfect and pure life of holiness."

The next most important event is the Buddha's sojourn with the Jatilas, who were worshippers of fire. After allowing them to witness frequently his supernatural power, he preached to them "The Fire Sermon" in which he declares that "everything, O Bhikkhus, is burning." He

enumerates each of the six senses as "burning with the fires of lust, hatred and ignorance."

Buddha realized that the philosophical problem is largely one of Relations, while in this brief sermon on Burning preached by him 25 centuries ago, we find a precursor of the scientific knowledge that matter is in a continuous state of combustion. A few Western philosophers have seen that the cause of this burning lies in consciousness, lies in the greed which feeds the fire and is the fire. The entire body of Jātilas including their leaders became followers of the Blessed One. The growth of the Order and the spread of the Dhamma were now well established, and continued throughout the Buddha's lifetime (indeed for centuries after it, until its followers included a large proportion of the human race). The Pāli Scriptures and their translations contain many splendid accounts of sayings and actions of our Greatest Master during the time which follows the event quoted above. He denied himself to none, from the lowest to the kings and sages. Into his Order he democratically received men from all castes. Though he considered it unwise from some standpoints to admit women, rather than exclude any who would tread the path, he admitted them. During those years he was always distinguished as the Radiant, Happy One. They were strenuous years. Although he was the Enlightened One, the Buddha Supreme, he did not neglect to pass periods of each day in meditation, nor did he neglect his teaching to the people. Even at the very end of his life when Ananda wished to protect him from intrusion, he asked that a new-comer be admitted to his presence.

If we, his followers to-day fail to arrive at the blessings which the Dhamma holds

for us, it is entirely the fault of our weakness. There in the Scriptures is the truth he left for us, if we live accordingly we can never fail to verify it. But to talk or merely read about those truths is not to *live* them. Knowledge comes through experience, by contact, by relation, but how much is it enhanced when accompanied by meditation on that experience? How many of us are really seriously interested enough in this progress to rise even one hour earlier in the day for meditation, and of equal importance, to follow in action the truth which we see?

In the life of the Blessed One we find embodied our highest ideal. He asked for a perception of the Truth which he taught and which he lived; only as one who embodied that did he accept veneration. He was the embodiment of the Noble Eightfold Path. If we would come near to him in the profound true sense we must live the life he taught. Then we shall be able to attain the Bliss of Nibbāna.

"Few men reach that other shore. The great majority only run back and forth this side of the stream. But those who are devoted to truth, who in accordance with the well-proclaimed Doctrine strive only towards the one goal, shall reach that other shore, swimming across the raging river of death."

(*Dhammapada*, 85,86.)

"A man is not venerable merely because his hair is white. Whoso loves truth and does his duty, in whom dwell goodness, patience and self-control, who is steadfast and free from fault - such an one with reason may be called venerable."

(*Dhammapada*, 393).

Fulfilling the precepts of virtue, O monks, abide in the faithful observance of your Rule! Disciplined and subdued by observance of the Rule, be ye perfect in all your walks and ways! On your guard against the slightest fault, train yourselves in that training to which you have solemnly pledged yourselves!

Keeping the precepts of good, dwell, O monks, in the faithful observance of your Rule! Subdued and held in restraint by adherence to the Rule, be blameless in all your comings and goings, shrinking with dread from even the least defect, practising faithfully the Practice to which you have vowed yourselves!"

*Majjhima Nikaya Sixth Discourse*



# The Union Buddha Sasana Council's Activities

The Union Buddha Sāsana Council established in 1950 aimed, as pointed out by the Hon'ble Prime Minister U Nu, at the formation of a central organisation truly representative of all the Buddhists of Burma which would propagate the Dhamma in foreign lands and make secure the foundations of Buddhism in this land.

**Preparations for the Sixth Great Council.** The Council is making good progress in these aims. Since the passing away of the Lord Buddha there have been five Great Councils for examination and recension and translations of the Pāli Texts. The Sixth Great Buddhist Council is to be held in Burma in 1954. The Union Buddha Sāsana Council is making all preparations for this. It is envisaged that the cost will amount to over a million pounds sterling and quite a lot of this will be taken up in the erection of buildings near the Kaba-Aye (World Peace) Pagoda. These buildings are to consist of a big assembly hall with seating capacity for more than 3,000 persons, four hostels with accommodation for over 1,000 persons, a library, a refectory, administrative offices, a hospital and a huge printing works for which presses and materials are now arriving. Necessary "lay-outs" for these buildings have been made and work is proceeding apace to ensure their completion in time for the Great Buddhist Council in 1954.

The buildings will be of permanent nature and after the Council will be used as a Buddhist University.

To make preliminary arrangements for the Council, 200 prominent Mahātheras, leading scholars, from all parts of the Union of Burma met in Rangoon on 19th, 20th, and 21st November 1952 and accomplished quite a great deal in this preliminary conference.

Bhikkhus from all Theravāda countries (Thailand, Ceylon, Cambodia, Laos, and the Union of Burma) will participate. "Mahayana Buddhist" countries will also send observers. As well as arranging for buildings and accommodation the Union Buddha Sāsana Council is doing a great deal of preliminary work also.

In addition to this a great deal of support is being given to various centres throughout Burma engaged in Buddhist meditation.

**Examinations in Schools and Prisons.** Regular written examinations are being conducted in schools throughout the Union of Burma in the Abhidhamma Pitaka (Philosophical books of the Pāli Canon) and a great deal of very useful work has been undertaken in bringing to all the prisoners in the jails a knowledge of the Teachings of the Lord Buddha. Prisoners eagerly welcome the opportunity, a great many in all the prisons sitting for a regular annual examination, the passing of which entitles to remissions of sentences. A series of handbooks on Buddhism has been compiled by a committee headed by the Nyaungyan Sayadaw and the books themselves were written by Bhikkhu U Zanakabiwuntha for the lower, U Tint Shwe for the middle and Man-u Sayadaw for the higher standards. This course covers the Sutta Pitakas (Sermons of the Buddha) and Reverend Sayadaws act as teachers on regular visits to the various jails. Remissions gained by prisoners who successfully pass the examinations are 15 days for those who pass Part I; one month for those who pass Part II; two months for those who pass Part III and three months for those who pass Part IV. For those who pass all the four parts at one sitting a remission of sentence of four months is granted. These examinations were instituted by the Union Buddha Sāsana Council in October 1952.

A report from Thiri Pyanchi U Sein Maung, Chief Executive Officer of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council gives noteworthy results for these examinations held throughout the country from October the 18th to the 21st of this year.

From 27 jails 493 candidates appeared and 435 passed in Part I. The biggest number of candidates was returned from the following prisons:—Mandalay Model Jail 65, Insein Model Jail 50, and Myaungmya Jail 47. One hundred per cent successes were obtained by these jails: Rangoon 28, Prome 23, Katha 12, Yamethin 11, Myitkyina 10, Tavoy 10, Shwebo 10, Akyab 2 and Toungoo 2. 46 out of 47 candidates from Myaungmya and 46 out of 47 from Bassein prisons passed; 20 candidates scored the examination's possible 100 marks, 7 obtained less than 10 marks and 3 got

zeros. On the whole the standard of knowledge of the candidates is high and 88 per cent of the convicts who took the examination were successful.

In Part II, of 263 convicts who appeared from 18 jails, 149 passed. The convicts from Mandalay Model Jail appeared only in the Part I and no other part. 37 convicts from Bassein, 35 from Insein, 24 from Myaungmya sat for the examination. The biggest number of successes were from the following jails:—Thayetmyo 8 appeared 8 passed, Rangoon 23 out of 24 passed, and Bassein 31 out of 37 passed. 16 candidates appeared from Tharrawaddy Borstal Training School and none of them passed. 38 candidates secured less than 10 marks while 13 did not get a single mark. The questions were apparently a bit too stiff. Of the prisoners from other jails, 7 candidates obtained full 100 marks, and six of them were from Bassein jail. Instructors on the Handbook of Buddhism, Part II, should study it well and teach it properly to make the pupils grasp the meaning of the lessons. 56 of the convicts passed.

In Part III the questions were either too easy or else the candidates could answer them well. The highest percentage of passes was obtained in this part, as 150 out of 155 convicts who appeared from 15 jails passed. 25 from Bassein, 21 from Rangoon, 19 from Monywa and 14 from Myaungmya

took the examination and all of them passed. As a matter of fact, excepting Insein and Tharrawaddy Borstals all candidates appearing from other prisons passed though less than 10 in number in each case. 19 out of 22 from Insein and 16 out of 18 from Tharrawaddy Borstal passed. Though only 8 candidates secured full 100 marks, almost all the rest obtained between 70 and 98 marks. The standard of the answers in this part is rather high. 96 per cent passed.

In Part IV there were 122 convicts from 13 jails who appeared for the examination, 88 of them passed. From the following jails all the convicts who sat for this examination passed: 9 from Rangoon, 5 from Thayetmyo, 4 from Shwebo, 3 from Prome, 2 from Pegu and 1 from Maubin. The highest marks obtained was 95 and it was from Rangoon jail. One candidate obtained no mark at all. The standard of answers did not come up to the level of Part III, 72 per cent passed.

There were candidates who entered for all four parts, and 61 of them passed, 20 from Bassein Jail : 9 from Rangoon Jail : 8 from Monywa Jail : 6 from Myaungmya Jail : 5 from Insein Jail : 5 from Thayetmyo Jail : 4 from Shwebo Jail and 1 from Maubin Jail.

The jails which deserve special credit for the examination this year are as follows:—

		Bassein	Rangoon	Monywa	Myaungmya	Insein	Thayetmyo	Shwebo	Prome
Part I	Enrolled	38	28	29	47	50	10	10	23
	Passed	37	28	26	46	37	9	10	23
Part II	Enrolled	37	24	26	24	35	8	8	18
	Answered	31	23	15	12	11	8	6	15
Part III	Enrolled	25	21	19	14	22	5	6	3
	Answered	25	21	19	14	19	5	6	3
Part IV	Enrolled	25	9	12	13	16	5	4	3
	Answered	21	9	8	8	8	5	4	3



It will be realised that the high moral Teaching of Buddhism and the practical teaching of a "Way of Life"—added to the psychological effect on the prisoners of the feeling that they are not "forgotten men" and can aspire to become again worthy members of the community—will have far-reaching effects for the peaceful future of our country.

### Abhidhamma Examinations

Not the least important of the works of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council is the holding of religious examinations in the Abhidhamma throughout the Union of Burma. In this year the examinations were held on the 8th, 9th and 10th November at 88 examination centres and there was an enrolment of more than twenty thousand candidates of whom 16,229 sat for the examination.

There is no age limit for the examination and it is interesting, especially in view of the subject matter of the examination, that ages ranged from 9 years to 83 years old and that all from infants to octogenarians showed very great enthusiasm.

The Abhidhamma is one of the three "Pitakas" of the holy scriptures and is a rather complex ethico-philosophical teaching. As the Venerable Nyanaponika Thera points out in his English language publication "Abhidhamma Studies"; "The Abhidhamma is not a speculative but a descriptive philosophy" and he also points out that "the thorough analysis of all phenomena undertaken in the Abhidhamma, leaves no doubt what Nibbāna definitely is not. It is true that these ontological results of the Abhidhamma are "merely negative," but they represent certainly more substantial and consequential contributions to the ontological problem than the "positive" assertions of many metaphysical systems, indulging in unprovable or fallacious conceptual speculations."

The examination is divided into three parts and is open to all laymen and to Buddhist nuns. A candidate must secure at least 50% of the total marks allotted in order to pass.

Those who pass are allotted money prizes and a candidate who passes in all the three parts in the same year and obtains the

highest marks is awarded a special cash prize and a coveted gold medal. These examinations have only recently been instituted and it is expected that an increasing number of candidates will sit each year. The examinations are supervised by Government officers and stationery is supplied free by the Council which also makes arrangements for examination halls, seats and tables, etc. In quite a few places, with the help of local residents and religious associations, the candidates and the supervisors were also given meals. It is really encouraging to see such great co-operation in the deeper study of Buddhist religion in Burma.

### Result of Abhidhamma Examinations held by the Union Buddha Sasana Council in 1952 at 87 Centres of the Union.

#### ELEMENTARY STANDARD

10,007 candidates appeared and  
3,685 passed. 36.8 per cent.

#### *First in the whole Union :*

- (1) R.N. 351 Ma Khin Hla Thee,  
Kemendine Centre,  
Rangoon Town District,  
Pegu Division.
- (2) R.N. 636, Maung Ngwe Shan,  
Shwedaung Centre,  
Prome District,  
Pegu Division.
- (3) R.N. 640, U Hla Thoug,  
Shwedaung Centre,  
Prome District,  
Pegu Division.
- (4) R.N. 868, Maung Ko,  
Gangaw Centre,  
Pakokku District,  
Magwe Division.

#### *Second :*

- (1) R.N. 870, Maung Nyi Bu,  
Gangaw Centre,  
Pakokku District,  
Magwe Division.
- (2) R.N. 129, U Ohn Hlaing,  
Moulmein Centre,  
Amherst District,  
Tenasserim Division.

#### *Third :*

- (1) R.N. 579, Ko Ohn Hsin,  
Myingyan Centre,  
Myingyan District,  
Mandalay Division.

(2) R.N. 23, Ma San Yi,  
Taunggyi Centre,  
Southern Shan States.

(3) R.N. \* U Po Aung,  
Wakema Centre,  
Myaungmya District,  
Irrawaddy Division.

(4) R.N. 639, U Kyauk,  
Shwedaung Centre,  
Prome District,  
Pegu Division.

#### MIDDLE STANDARD.

1,822 candidates appeared and 766 passed.  
41.7 per cent.

##### *First :*

(1) R.N. 579, Ko Ohn Hsin,  
Myingyan Centre,  
Myingyan District,  
Mandalay Division.

##### *Second :*

(1) R.N. 61, Maung Tun Hlaing,  
Taungtha Centre,  
Myingyan District,  
Mandalay Division.

(2) R.N. 269, Saya Tin,  
Henzada Centre,  
Henzada District,  
Irrawaddy Division.

##### *Third :*

R.N. 41, Ma Tin Win,  
Henzada Centre,  
Henzada District,  
Irrawaddy Division.

#### HIGHER STANDARD.

859 candidates appeared and 555 passed.  
64.6 per cent.

##### *First :*

(1) R.N. 129, Maung Ohn Hlaing,  
Moulmein Centre,  
Amherst District,  
Tenasserim Division.

(2) R.N. 33, U Nyun,  
Insein Centre,  
Insein District,  
Pegu Division.

##### *Second :*

R.N. 36, Ma Khin Nyo,  
Shwebo Centre,  
Shwebo District,  
Sagaing Division.

##### *Third :*

(1) R.N. 636, Maung Ngwe Shan,  
Shwedaung Centre,  
Prome District,  
Pegu Division.

(2) R.N. 1501, U Nyan,  
Bogale Centre,  
Pyapon District,  
Irrawaddy Division.

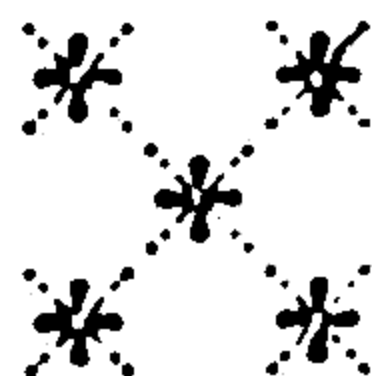
(3) R.N. 41, Maung Ba Tin,  
Kawlin Centre,  
Katha District,  
Sagaing Division.

359 candidates passed in all the three standards and amongst them R.N. 579, Maung Ohn Hsin of Myingyan Centre, Myingyan District, Mandalay Division stood first. He will be presented with a gold medal and a reward of K 300.

R.N. 129, U Ohn Hlaing of Moulmein Centre, Amherst District, Tenasserim Division and R.N. 870, Maung Nyi Bu of Gangaw Centre, Pakokku District, Magwe Division, stood second and third respectively.

25 prisoners from Bassein Jail appeared for Elementary Standard Examination and three passed.

Maung Ta Ni, a convicted prisoner from Myaungmya Jail passed in all the three standards and stood first in the list of candidates who passed the three classes in Myaungmya District.





## World Fellowship of Buddhists

The Second Conference held in Japan from 25th September to 13th October 1952

### AN OBSERVER'S ACCOUNT

Some 200 delegates representing Buddhists in twenty-five countries in Asia, Europe and the Americas, met at Tsukiji Honganji during September-October, a huge stone temple near the business centre of town, in the second Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. Their purpose: to promote friendship among world Buddhists, discuss the work of Buddhism in the coming two years, and celebrate the 1,400th anniversary of Buddhism in Japan.

Organized by 72-year-old Doctor Makoto Nagai, Japan's most famous Buddhist scholar, and instigator of the first World Buddhist Conference held in Ceylon in 1950, the Conference, first major international meeting to be held in Tokyo since the war, spent its first week listening to speeches, holding committee meetings and drafting resolutions. Then, before setting off to spend a fortnight touring Japanese shrines and cultural centres, the delegates voted unanimously to endorse a resolution—inspired by a Chinese delegate's account of Communist persecution of Buddhists in his home country—putting Buddhism on record against religious persecution and oppression wherever it occurs.

Other resolutions passed by the Conference called for the return of foreign "detainees" held overseas to their mother countries; clemency for war criminals; and exchange of information on all unre-patriated nationals by the countries concerned. Also recommended by the Conference: a cease-fire in Korea.

**The Delegates.** Even more colourful than the red, white, blue and yellow Buddhist flag, which flew over the Temple during the Tokyo sessions of the Conference, were the delegates themselves. Reverend Chang Chia Futokato, portly elder from Tibet, wore a yellow robe and a brown cap. Pert Miss Pitt Chin Hui, slim young President of the Singapore centre of the WFB had bobbed hair and a Chinese slit-skirt-dress. Among the Burmese delegates, wearing *gaung-boung* (head-dress), *aingyi* (jacket) and *paso* (skirt-like garment) was Burma's happily-named Minister of Religious Affairs

and National Planning U (pronounced oo) Win. Penang's World Fellowship of Buddhists Centre's President Khoo Soo Jin and Auditor Khoo Soo Ghee had black Chinese robes. Monks from Nepal, India and Vietnam wore loose yellow robes.

Biggest single delegation was composed of fifteen Ceylon Buddhists, headed by Gunapala Piyasena Malalasekera, Ceylon University Professor and President of the World Federation of Buddhists wearing white Singhalese dress. *En route* to California where he will teach Buddhism at universities, Dr. Malalasekera, who arrived the day before the Conference on the French liner "Marseillaise", brought with him a sacred Bodhi tree to be presented to the Japanese Buddhist League and planted in Japan and a bone relic, the size of a rice grain. "This genuine relic" said vigorous, learned Professor Malalasekera, "is the very one discovered by the British archaeologist, Dr. Cunningham, near the birthplace of Sakyamuni some seventy years ago. I hope it will be kept in some specially built structure, like the pagoda in Ceylon."

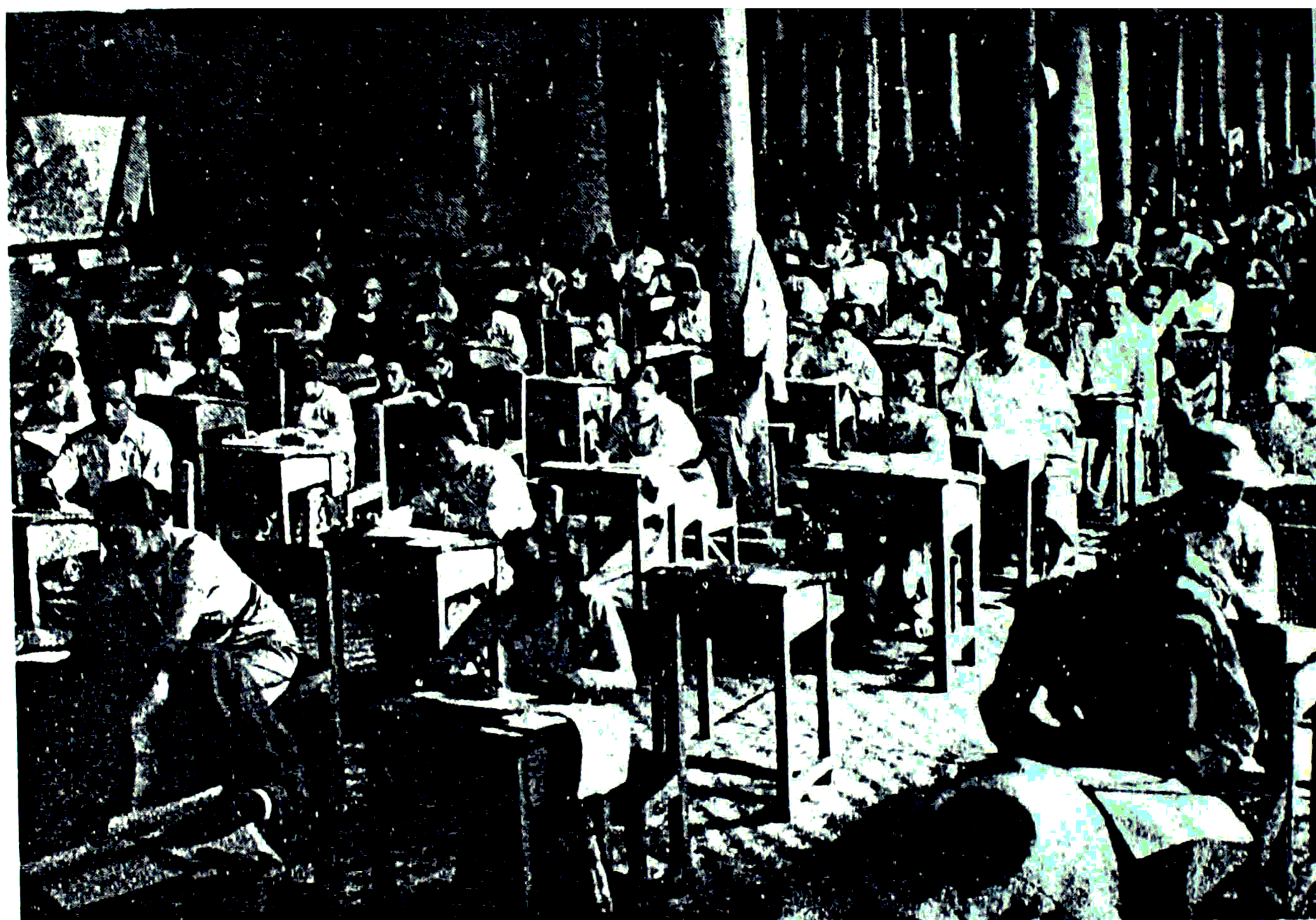
Among the other Buddhists aboard the "Marseillaise", which brought the biggest single contingent to the Conference, were Madame Suzanne Karpeles, founder of the Friends of Buddha in Paris; Dr. H. Klar, Austrian founder of the Buddhist Society of Vienna; Mr. Raja Hewavitarne, Ceylon's Minister of Commerce, who represented his country at the signing of the Japanese Peace Treaty in San Francisco; and forty-four others including four from Hong Kong, four from Cambodia, and three from Laos, four from Singapore and eight from Vietnam. Seven delegates from Thailand, nine from Formosa representing Free China and two from the Philippines arrived by air the next day.

Since booming overcrowded Tokyo's hotels were already packed to the rafters by tourists and traders and since the Buddhist visitors professed many assorted dietary and domiciliary peculiarities (some Buddhists do not eat meat, and some male



The delegates at the Plenary Session of the World Fellowship of Buddhists' Second Biennial Conference, held in Japan in October 1952.





Photograph shows entrants sitting for the Abhidhamma Examination in the town of Wakema, 120 miles from Rangoon.



Buddhist monks are forbidden to sleep in quarters which also house females, servants or otherwise), the conferees posed something of a housing problem. This was solved by billeting some in the temple itself, vacating maid-servants, and instructing their substitutes not to kill flies or mosquitoes if any buzzed in. Delegates' bills, and those of the Conference itself, were paid by voluntary contributions from Buddhists all over the world. While the Conference was going on, cheers greeted the announcements of \$500 sent from U.S. Buddhists, 30,000 yen from Brazilian Buddhists, 200,000 yen from Indian Buddhists and 37,750 yen from Ceylon Buddhists.

**Proceedings.** First item on the programme was a plenary session attended, in addition to the foreign delegates, by 491 Japanese delegates representing 46 Japanese Buddhist sects and some 3,000 indigenous monks. Observers included reporters from the world's press, Prince Mikasa and a Hollywood movie producer George Seitz Jr., in charge of shooting a documentary film of the meeting. Opening ceremonies started with the placement in the shrine of the Buddha's sacred relic presented to Japan by the Ceylonese. The shrine of the temple was opened while a highly trained choir of boys and girls sang the sonorous "Song of the Meeting", especially composed for the occasion. All participants joined their voices in TISARANA, an adoration to the Three Treasures (the Buddha, the Buddha's Teaching, and the Order of the Bhikkhus), led by the abbot of the Tsukiji Honganji. Then upon the closing of the screen door of the shrine, the seven chairmen of the conference were nominated: Dr. Malalasekera of Ceylon, Minister U Win of Burma, Minister Nilakamhaeng of Thailand in Japan, Rev. Chitoku Marikawa, President of Ryukoku University, Dr. Seiichiro Ono, Dr. Shoson Miyamoto and Dr. Jusshi Ito, former Minister of Information of Japan.

Under Presiding Chairman Ito, a President, Director-General and the Chairman of the Executive Board of the Tokyo Conference were nominated. President Takashina, venerable bishop of the Sodo Sect, Director Siiio, Zojoji bishop of the Jodo sect, and Dr. Nagai, the chairman of the Executive Board, thereupon read their opening addresses.

Honorary guest speakers included Ambassadors Murphy of the U.S. and Rauf of India as well as Japan's Prince Takahito Mikasa, the youngest brother of the Emperor of Japan who reminded the Conference of the importance of Buddhism message for the atomic age.

The remainder of the first day of the conference was spent in the readings of messages by 14 chief delegates, stating for the other participants the general aim of the meeting and portraying the various problems Buddhism is encountering their respective countries.

On the second day, another plenary session devoted the morning to hearing more reports of delegates. In the afternoon the session split up into three committees on Education and Propagation headed by Morikawa and Nakai of Japan and Somphong of Thailand; on Buddhist Thought headed by Dr. Malalasekera of Ceylon and Dr. Miyamoto of Japan; and the committee on Buddhism in Practice, headed by Minister U Win of Burma and Dr. Ono of Japan.

After three sessions, the three committees adopted resolutions to unify the world Buddhists' effort for world peace through their faith and principles; to promote Buddhist education through the establishment of more Buddhist schools and Buddhist lectures at universities all over the world; to compile hymnals and translation of the scriptures; to strengthen the WFB centres in various countries, and to hold their 1954 Conference in Rangoon.

During six days of conference, plenary sessions were held only on the first two days and the last day. On the three days between, delegates and observers had a busy schedule of committee sessions and receptions.

Messages and reports on Buddhism and Buddhists' activities in most of the twenty-five countries and districts were given by representing delegates. The participants listened to English spoken by Indian and Ceylonese and Burmese delegates; to Mandarin of those delegates from Philippines, Singapore, Penang, and China; to Annamese and to Japanese. The language difficulty, obstinate at best, was largely countered by the efforts of a score of interpreters.

At receptions by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Education at Akasaka Palace, delegates were disappointed when the ministers themselves failed to show up. Under-secretaries Shibuzawa and Kennoki deputized for them explaining that both ministers had been detained elsewhere by speaking engagements in Japan's hotly contested national election then at campaigning peak. On Sunday, the women members of the conference held an informal get-together, before a late afternoon memorial service for the war dead.

The last day of the conference started with a Plenary session at which President Malalasekera of the WFB nominated Minister U Win of Burma as his successor. Minister Win countered by proposing that, as the next conference is to be held in Burma in 1954, Dr. Malalasekera stay in his present position. Dr. Malalasekera agreed to do so and at the closing session of the whole conference thanked all comers for its success. The Japanese Buddhists' Council announced that the sacred relics would be placed in Hiroshima as the sanctuary of humanity. The delegates then repaired to Korakuen Stadium for a national rally at which 20,000 Japanese Buddhists gathered to welcome the delegates from abroad and to hear Minister of Justice Mimura, Vice Governor Haru and Masazumi Ando, one of the founders of the Liberal Party speak in eloquent greeting. As the darkness fell in the chilly autumn evening, fifty Japanese girl dancers in kimonos moved out into the brightly-lighted baseball diamond to execute an intricate pageant called "Lion in the Dawn." This the delegates loudly applauded, before they dispersed to continue their meeting in the form of a peaceful tour of Japan.

**Constitution of the WFB.** According to the Constitution of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, the following are the aims and objects of the Fellowship :

- (a) To promote among the members strict observance and practice of the teachings of the Buddha ;
- (b) To secure unity, solidarity and brotherhood amongst Buddhists ;
- (c) To propagate the sublime Doctrine of the Buddha ;

- (d) To organise and carry on activities in the field of social, educational, cultural and other humanitarian services ;
- (e) To work for securing peace and harmony amongst men and happiness for all beings and to collaborate with other organisations working for the same ends.

In order to achieve these aims and objects the following activities were specially recommended :

- (a) To establish Regional Centres in all countries where there are appreciable numbers of Buddhists or give recognition to any existing organisations as Regional Centres ;
- (b) To establish and maintain Dhammaduta Centres throughout the world for the purpose of disseminating the teachings of the Buddha, promoting and encouraging practice and observance of the teachings of the Buddha ;
- (c) To establish and maintain or assist in the establishment and maintenance of such institutions as may be necessary for the study and propagation of Buddhism ;
- (d) To stimulate and promote active practice and observance of the principles of Buddhism ;
- (e) To organise and maintain or assist in the organisation and maintenance of institutions for social, educational, cultural and other humanitarian services ;
- (f) To act as a directing and coordinating authority amongst international Dhammaduta Centres ;
- (g) To organise and promote exchange of missions, scholars and students between Buddhist countries.

Under Rule 10 of the Constitution, an Executive Council of 31 members was appointed to further the aims of the Fellowship and to carry out its activities to the fullest possible extent of the resources available.

According to the Constitution both the Executive Council and the Sub-Committees should consist of members from various

countries. This requirement, though extremely desirable in order to make these bodies representative, has, nevertheless, involved serious practical difficulties. The Fellowship has no funds from which travelling expenses can be paid for meetings, although accommodation and hospitality can always be easily arranged.

Most of the members are not sufficiently possessed of the goods of this world to be able to undertake long journeys. The result has been that at the first meeting of the Executive Council, it was decided by those present with the general concurrence of absent members as well, that the work of the Executive Council and of the Sub-Committees should be carried on mainly through correspondence. This has, naturally, meant a slowing-up in the progress of work, because no amount of correspondence can take the place of personal and direct discussion.

It was also agreed, fairly early in the career of the WFB, as a result of practical experience, that it would be inadvisable for the Executive Council or the Committee to attempt to initiate new ventures in countries where Buddhist activities already existed and that the more effective method would be to co-ordinate existing activities and organisations and to give such guidance as was feasible for their conduct and development.

It was further decided that, especially in the early formative years of the fellowship, the efforts of the executive Council should be concentrated on bringing about unity and solidarity among the Buddhists of the world. It was felt that this was the primary requisite for a forward advance in Buddhism. With this end in view, therefore, various steps were taken, of which the following are a few :

In pursuance of the resolution adopted at the Inaugural Conference it was decided that, without interfering at all with any celebrations connected with the life of the Buddha, which are already being held in different parts of the world, a special celebration should be held in the name of the Buddha, on the Full-Moon Day of the month of May, known in India, which is the land of the Buddha, as Vaisakha Purnami. This was henceforth to be called Buddha Day and to be celebrated as

such by Buddhists everywhere. The idea was first made known in March 1951 by circulation of letters and was without exception hailed with acclamation.

*The Message from the Union of Burma Sasana Council, on behalf of the Buddhists of Burma, to the Second General Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists held in Japan from the 25th of September to the 13th of October 1952.*

#### “GREETINGS :

On behalf of the people and all the Buddhist organisations of Burma, the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council wishes to convey the most cordial greetings and good wishes to our Buddhist brethren assembled from all quarters of the world on this auspicious occasion—the Second General Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. May our united efforts succeed in lighting a path of Truth and Love through the darkness that has enveloped this world, so that in the near future the Dhamma may shine serenely and radiantly in the hearts of all those “whose eyes are but lightly covered with the dust of Ignorance” in East and West alike.

Since the inaugural Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, held in 1950 in Ceylon, Burma has been moved to greater activity in making preparations and plans for the revival and propagation of Buddhism at home and abroad—inspired by the noble aims and high ideals formulated by the Conference to save humanity from impending doom and annihilation.

Burma is fortunate to be able to initiate and carry through so much work already, due to possession of three treasures, namely, (1) a devoted, earnest and learned Bhikkhu Sangha motivated by the sublime teachings of the Buddha, (2) a people traditionally devout and anxious to offer all in the service of Buddhism, and comprising many learned laymen, and (3) headed by a most devout and pious Prime Minister who has dedicated himself to Buddhism and humanity, a Buddhist Government determined to make available the glorious teachings of the Buddha to the whole world and to keep in motion the Wheel of the Law.



Burma has passed three very significant Acts of Parliament, The Vinicchayathāna Act of 1949, the Pāli University and Dhammacariya Act of 1950 and the Buddha Sāsana Act of 1950, and as the Hon'ble U Win, Minister for Religious Affairs, has stated "they are but heralding a series of religious legislation yet to come." The first of these acts has set up ecclesiastical Courts with the most learned Maha Therās elected by the Bhikkhu Sanghā. The second Act has established a Pāli University with many constituent Colleges throughout the country. The third Act instituted a Buddhist Central Organisation consisting of the representatives of the Bhikkhu Sangha, the people and the Government. This is the instrument through which we are working to translate those noble aims and high ideals into reality.

All this provides a firm basis for the forthcoming Chattha Sangayana which is to herald the glorious renaissance of the Buddha Sāsana. The Chattha Sangayana, the Great Buddhist Council will commence on the Full-Moon Day of May 1954 and coincide with the Third General Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, to which we look forward with the most joyous anticipation as we shall then be welcoming you as honoured guests and partners in this great undertaking.

We are all aware that the Sāsana is to-day gravely threatened by undesirable ideologies and power-cults, all of a materialistic nature. Let us not close our eyes to the fact that there has been a decline in the knowledge and practice of the Dhamma, even where it is still most flourishing. Our younger generation has been brought up under the influence of a technical and therefore materialistic system of education imported from outside sources. Many young people, not knowing the scientific truth of the Sublime Dhamma because they have had little opportunity or encouragement to study it, have been seduced by superficially attractive, but basically unsound, materialistic ideas. It is our most pressing duty to correct this unfortunate and dangerous trend by all means at our command. We must at once take vigorous steps to promote Buddhist education—to awaken our children to a

sense of the enduring worth and source of happiness that can be found nowhere but in following the Teaching of the Supreme Buddha. The need is urgent, and it must be given first priority ; if our Conference can succeed in putting the proper measures into operation to this end it will have achieved something of infinite value both to the world of to-day and to succeeding generations. A lot of jungle and waste ground must be cleared ; wrong views and concepts must be abolished and the Truth of the Dhamma re-stated in its pristine purity as it was given by the Buddha twenty-five centuries ago. We must encourage people to study Buddhism in the light of modern science, for where other faiths shun comparison with scientific knowledge it must be made known that Buddhism welcomes it. Everything that is true—even the merely relative truths of Science—help to shed light on the fundamental Buddhist Teachings of Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā. Modern knowledge must be applied to the understanding of the Four Noble Truths, and when this is done the Noble Eightfold Path to Nibbāna will shine clear, welcoming to every thoughtful man and woman who is now suffering disillusionment with the fickle rewards offered by worldly materialism.

Understanding of the Dhamma must begin, for those not born as Buddhists, with the intellectual approach ; their enquiring minds must be satisfied as only Buddhism can satisfy. After that comes Vipassanā—Insight. That is to say, the practical application of Buddhism as a means of transcending the Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā of Saṁsāra, knowing with the certainty of personal experience that all phenomenal conditions actually are impermanent, fraught with suffering and void of any essential reality. We, who consider ourselves followers of the Tathāgata, can dispense with the intellectual struggles that a non-Buddhist has to pass through in discarding Micchā-diṭṭhi ; we accept the Four Noble Truths and our feet are directed to the path of Sammādiṭṭhi, the first requisite of the Noble Eightfold Path. But that is not enough ; we must not be content with that. Unless we go further, and actually strive for Vipassanā, we shall

be indeed like those mentioned in the Dhammapada, who merely tend the cattle of others, and have no share in the fruits of the Ariyan Way. That is why, in Burma, we are doing everything possible to encourage the promotion of Vipassana also. And our message, therefore, to all Buddhists, is to urge them to apply themselves strenuously to this end. It would be of little value to try to set the world to rights unless our own vision and understanding of the world and all that constitutes it is sound and healthy. We, as Puthujjanas, are all diseased, suffering from the disease of Ignorance in varying degrees : let us therefore face up to the fact, and set about treating ourselves, under the guidance of the Incomparable Physician, the Buddha. If disease is contagious, so also is health ; one healthy man, firmly grounded in the Dhamma, with Right Understanding leading to Right Action, can make others healthy by the mere fact of being healthy himself. He becomes automatically an exemplar and an inspiration, and others, envying his serenity and freedom from suffering, will want to know how he has achieved it. Let us therefore begin our great task of promoting Buddhism by practising Vipassanā. Strengthened by that we can turn our attention to the pressing problems of our age with courage and the necessary detachment.

All these achievements of the past and the plans and preparations of the future are the outcome of the unprecedented and happy unity of purpose and harmony of action between the Bhikkhu Sangha and the Government and the people of Burma, inspite of all the troubles and tribulations following in the wake of her newly won independence. We have passed through dark days and there is still a long and difficult road ahead of us. But we can say, on behalf of the people of Burma, that it is the strength of the Dhamma that has borne us through countless tribulations, and we look to it with faith and supreme confidence to enable us, hand in hand with all our Buddhist brethren, as a Buddhist nation to lead our troubled and benighted world to peace, prosperity and happiness, and as individuals to bear us ultimately to the Further Shore, Nibbāna. May all beings through the entire cosmos share

the merits of our work for the promotion of the Sāsana, and may Peace be established in the world through the Grace of the Triple Gem of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.

CIRAM TITTHATU SADDHAMMO!  
MAY BUDDHA DHAMMA REIGN SUPREME  
FOREVER !

Thado Thiri Thudhamma Sir U THWIN  
*Chairman of the Union of Burma Buddha  
Sāsana Council.*

**Wise Words.** Possibly the major single effect of the Conference was to show the non-Buddhist outside world among other things that Buddhism, long regarded as an exclusively reflective, contemplative and passive religion, was quite capable, without losing any of its deep philosophic value, of becoming not only a major force for peace and against aggression, but a practical agent for alleviating South-East Asia's grave problems in the field of trade and economics. Some words of wisdom spoken by the Conferees :

Dr. Malalasekera, in his Presidential address : " We, Buddhists of this whole world, upholding Buddhist principles, positively oppose all violence. . . We here can only start the flow of a general current of harmony, but we must persevere until this current grows and surges into a mighty flood. . . Some there are who say that disarmament is vital for world peace. If by that they only mean the abolition of the weapons of war they are as wrong as those others who foolishly imagine that peace can be secured by building up ever bigger and better weapons of attack. These things will avail nothing till we learn to develop the heart that shall make it impossible for civilized men to resort to the arbitrament of wholesale carnage . . . It is you and I and not Governments that make peace. . . "

Hong Kong's Rev. In Shion of the Buddhist Institute: "Buddhist scriptures should be simplified so that anyone can understand them."

U Win, Burma's Minister of Religious Affairs and National Planning, "We hate all kinds of persecution, wherever it is. We want freedom of thought and action. Wherever these things are curtailed, in any country, it is our duty to protest."

Singapore's President Miss Pitt Chin Hui of the WFB centre : "If the peoples of the world understand the benefit of mutual assistance thoroughly, they will certainly love and help one another. Then there

will never be suffering or mutual destruction."

Philippine's Rev. Sin Kim of Manila's Seng Guan Temple: "All Buddhists have a common wish—to prevent the outbreak of another great war."

Again, moved by desire, men arm themselves with sword and buckler, quiver and bow, and each side in battle array, dash at one another ; and the arrows fly, and the javelins glance, and the swords flash. And they pierce each other with arrow and with javelin, and cleave one another's heads and swords ; and so come by death and deadly hurt. Or, taking sword and buckler, quiver and bow, they scale the newly-daubed ramparts, and arrows fly and javelins glance and swords flash. And they are pierced by arrow and by javelin, and boiling cow-dung is rained down upon them, and they are mangled in hosts, and heads are cloven with swords ; and so once more they come by death and deadly hurt. Such is the wretchedness of desire, the sum of suffering which here and now comes to be by reason of desire.

*Majjhima Nikaya Thirteenth Discourse.*

But Cunda, that one who himself is in the mire should pull out of the mire another sunk therein,—this, verily, is an unheard-of thing. But that one, himself clear of the slough should be able to lift out of the slough another foundered therein,—such a thing may well be. And that one who himself is not subdued, not disciplined, has not attained to the Extinction of Delusion, should cause others to become subdued, and disciplined, to attain to the Extinction of Delusion,—such a thing has never been known. But that one, himself controlled, trained delivered from delusion, should lead others to become controlled and trained, lead them to Deliverance from Delusion,—such a thing may very well be.

*Majjhima Nikaya Eighth Discourse.*



## A Visitor from England Practises Vipassana

ERIC GRAHAM HOWE

What is a Harley Street medical psychologist doing in Rangoon, practising Satipaṭṭhāna at the hermitage of the Buddha Sāsana Council in November 1952? The threads of cause are too numerous to disentangle, but some of them are these. Not least in importance, I think, has been the influence of a Burmese statue of the Buddha in my study at home, and another (Nepalese) on my consulting-room desk. I have been interested in Buddhism as long as I can remember. Not as a scholar, but simply because of its practical appeal in my work, which after all can be very simply stated as the "Cessation of Suffering". I liked the Lord Buddha's robust insistence upon "Save yourself, and believe no man's teaching until you have proved it by experience." The general approach by way of the negative also appealed to me, for in so many ways the truth, the higher truth, cannot be spoken, so it is best not to make the attempt. Finally, there was the concept of ANATTA, "not-self"—so needfully true is it that we should get rid of that "self", which is always getting in the way and obstructing it. Yet Buddhism is the only world religion which so bluntly and courageously puts its finger on the sorest spot—the "self".

So when it came about that I could take a holiday, there was no doubt what I would do, and roughly where I would go. Ceylon, India—and Burma perhaps? Anyway, I got my visa for Burma and on October 22nd arrived in Colombo, on my way to the Island Hermitage, Dodanduwa. Here I met Nyanaponika Thera and Soma Thera, both of whom have studied here and are enthusiastic exponents of Satipaṭṭhāna. They introduced me to the practices and also gave me their books on it to read. My mind was made up to come straight to Rangoon to continue my studies, and there on November 7th I arrived, to be most warmly welcomed by Sir U Thwin.

Installed in my little hut with its verandah on which to walk, I was on the first evening put through my "vows" or "precepts" by the Mahāsi Sayadaw in front of the statue of the Lord Buddha. Then came long days of concentration and meditation, with no food after 10-30 a.m. I must confess that the days did sometimes seem

to be unduly long. But I learnt that a tedious sense of time is none other than that ancient tedious enemy of self; and that when self goes, time goes also, leaving an infinitely extensive present "NOW", in which there is Samādhi for those who can penetrate it there.

After a fortnight of the practices, I would not like to say what benefit I have derived. It would not be possible for me to do so. But I think I can say something about what anyone might expect, if they faithfully and ardently proceeded on this way of experience. To put the less important gains first, improvement in memory and concentration is an obvious result of the practice of "mindfulness". Then there is the fact of experiencing oneself "in one piece", as it were, instead of torn to pieces and "all over the place". From this comes tranquility and peace of mind, with consequent increase of general efficiency. But I am sure more than that can be expected from these exercises in concentration. The "self" does get out of the light, until it disappears; and the light does shine more brightly and clearly in consequence. How far this process can go I would not like to say, but it can go very far indeed upon the road of insight and deliverance from suffering and delusion.

In conclusion, I would like to express my great sense of gratitude to Sir U Thwin and the Buddha Sāsana Council for their great kindness in welcoming me here, and giving me the inestimable privilege of training under the wise and experienced guidance of the Mahāsi Sayadaw. I hope that I may be able to take back with me from the East a gift from the people of Burma to the West which they sadly need in our distressed and suffering world—peace of mind. If this can be obtained by concentration, then that is what we need. And I hope I may be able to make the process palatable and effective for the Western mind and need, without losing its basic unity with the Truth and the Way of the Dhamma which has discovered and expounded it. As I have said before, I am no scholar and no Buddhist either. But I will do my best to be loyal to the faith which I so much admire and to which I owe so much.

## Why I Am a Buddhist

MAUNO NORDBERG

On the 26th October 1952, for the first time, a broadcast on Buddhism was sent over the Finnish State Radio. The talk was by Mr. Pentti Aalto, lecturer in Oriental languages at the Helsinki University. It was the first one of a series on non-Christian religions and is to be followed by others at short intervals. Previous to the talk, Mr. Mauno Nordberg, chairman of the Friends of Buddhism, was asked to declare why he is a Buddhist and he replied :

“Because the original doctrine of the Buddha is not a religion which requires from its followers a blind belief in unprovable dogmas. It lacks all the characteristics of the religions, from the story of creation to the sacraments, meditation replacing prayer. Prince Siddattha who then became a Buddha, was a man like you and me; he told his disciples not to blindly believe any authority, not even his own teachings, unless they could themselves ascertain their validity.

To my mind the core of the teaching is contained in 4 verses :

Cease doing evil,  
Do everything good,  
Cleanse thy heart,

This is the teaching of all the Buddhas.

I consider that the ethical teaching of the Buddha and his tolerance have no equals, as not a drop of human blood was ever shed when the teaching spread over the greater part of Asia thanks to its mild reasonableness. It is a message of peace if only suffering humanity would listen to it. And once it was listened to. The great Emperor Asoka of India applied Buddhist

principles to the administration of his vast empire, and during his reign and that of his followers India enjoyed peace for over half a millennium, a fact unknown in the blood-stained history of Europe. As teetotaler it is important to me that the Buddha proscribed the use and serving of alcoholic drinks. The law of Kamma and religion gave my life quite a new background. The three stigmata of life are—everything changes, even the mountains, life is full of suffering from birth to grave, and there is no unchanging, deathless “I” or soul in anything living. Man is only a ceaseless stream of physical and mental phenomena. On this point the doctrine of the Buddha which is a logical and coherent ethico-philosophical system, anticipated by 2,500 years the last findings of our youngest science, psychology. There can never be a conflict between the sciences and the doctrines of the Buddha. I have realized the four noble truths, the noble truth of suffering, the noble truth of the cause of suffering, the noble truth of the destruction of suffering and the truth of the noble eightfold path leading to the destruction of suffering, to Nibbana, even in this very life, open to each and everybody. The doctrine of the Buddha requires from me ever so much more effort than the religions based on grace and vicarious salvation, as it forces me to think. Man is alone responsible for his acts, he is the master of his fate, or, as it was later said in the Bible : “What man sows, that shall he also reap”, which is purely a Buddhist teaching.

These are, in short, the reasons why I am a Buddhist.

There are, Brahmin, many ascetics and Brahmins who hold : ‘Night is the same as day; day is the same as night!’ But this I call a dwelling in delusion on the part of those ascetics and Brahmins. I say: ‘Day is day; night is night.’

*Majjhima Nikaya Fourth Discourse.*

# Mankind's Enemy Number One

U HLA MAUNG (*Retd. Head-master*)

Buddhism was born two thousand five hundred years ago when life was not so divorced from Nature as it is now. People of those days were, no doubt, more superstitious but very much less weighted down than we are with so many burdens of advancing civilization and with so much undigested knowledge of the physical world and society. Their minds were also more on 'the other world'.

In the present setting of the world with all its complications and complexities, flooded with science, propaganda, books and literature, modern man has to break through these numerous and thick coatings to see the Truth as taught by the Buddha.

Presentation of the Buddha-Dhamma in the light and climate of modern thought is becoming more and more necessary, and indeed we ought to stimulate as much thinking and enquiry as possible. Buddhism has nothing to fear from open-minded and honest thinking. It is not embedded in mysteries but is open and clear as the day. We should encourage every inquirer to exercise his knowledge and imagination to arrive at a fair and proper conception of Buddhism. Of course, knowledge alone or loose and wandering thought will not help. Thinking must be conducted along right channels and knowledge must be developed till realisation is reached.

As a preliminary I should like to touch on what science or its methodology has done to change human behaviour and nature.

Since the Renaissance in Europe, the intellectual and moral assumptions which had guided men during long centuries have been turned upside down. To our gain or to our loss? An honest and sincerely thought-out answer is incumbent upon us. The general opinion is somewhat as follows: Intellectual vices had to become virtues and virtues vices. An attitude of doubt and criticism, that former vice, became the first virtue, but this virtue was whipped and ridden to death. The old and necessary basis of orderly society was soon condemned as an offence against Truth. The injunction became: "Think inductively and objectively and renounce cherished and familiar belief". It was no easy task for

men to fall into step with this demand which threatened to cut them adrift from secure anchorages. Many of these anchorages are gone because science claimed a monopoly of truth and invaded fields beyond its proper sphere.

There is a different method of dealing with animate and sentient material because it involves changing and obscure passions, prides, tempers and desires. The problems of society and individual human beings are bound up with emotions and mental complexes. Here science may be a help but not the sole physician.

How then shall we apply reason to society? Men have never been guided much by reason. This is why it is important to develop this faculty and keep its flame alight. The first use of reason is to protect and maintain our freedom which gives life value and to steer ourselves safely out of the morass of desires, conceits and vanities.

The great problem is: "Can human nature ever be changed?" There is no doubt human behaviour as distinct from human nature has been changed through widening knowledge down the centuries. We have greatly changed our modes of life along with our inventions and our discoveries in the fields of biology and medicine and other sciences. The United Nations is making a great deal of legitimate and praiseworthy noise about human rights. But racial discrimination and political and religious persecution have never entirely disappeared and are re-asserting themselves again. We know how, where and why.

So human behaviour has been changed for both good and bad through the help of objective thinking and science. How then can human nature be changed when human behaviour is so uncertain in its course? Human nature in the mass can hardly be changed. But the nature of selected and favoured individuals can be changed by their own efforts to see the Truth for themselves and by gradually changing the nature which they have inherited from a world process of evolution say a process somewhat similar to that envisaged by Darwin's theory. Those that are thus favoured are



neither few nor the special proteges of any god. They are those who are not perverse enough to despise moral development.

Ask yourself the question : " Did or did not the Buddha change his individual nature—the nature he was born with ? Was he not born a prince and did he not become a Buddha ? How ? By renunciation—the renunciation of " Self ". The Buddha did not attain Nibbāna with his human nature intact. He sublimated it.

The greatest enigma and force for evil in the world has been, is and will always be " Myself "—the spirit and conviction of " Self " in you, me and every one of us.

It has always been the Number One Accused in the intensifying tragedy of human life—a tragedy which rocks every individual life and a super tragedy which, in the name of God and of godlessness, in the name of reason and ultra-reason, thickly coated with passion and emotion, is represented by the great Cold War that has got humanity in its relentless, steel grip. The parties to this Cold War are bound hand and foot in the grasp of ' Force ' or ' Power '—whether to maintain an uneasy and often unhappy peace or to turn to war that will pulverize the world.

Who is the Number One Accused in this stark and staring tragedy ? The answer to this is the " Self "—the " Self " in religion, philosophy, science, materialism and other isms. Yes, " Self " in the name of God, in the name of godlessness, in the name of " My Reason " and " Your Reason " and so on.

We are in the hands of " Self " that leads all alike into the inescapable hands of " Force "; force to aggress or to resist. Whether for or against this influence or that influence, this factor or that factor, this brand or that brand of belief, policy or action, force to aggress or to resist is the only available choice.

Have we ever honestly asked " Do we own this ' Self ' ? Do we control it ? " The trouble is that when we come down to brass tacks, we don't seem to own and govern even our own breath. The inhaling and exhaling goes on tirelessly and ceaselessly independently of us while we are lost in the fevers of successive moments. We are mostly oblivious to that ceaseless respiratory pumping which is behind all our activities of brain and body. This failure or defect

is the most potent factor behind mankind's troubles. It is like owning and driving a car. The vehicle may take us over a steep drop with instant death, or it may take us to a beloved objective of the moment, but we do not control the inside or the complexes of the car.

So with what one fondly calls " Mine " in respect of people, possessions, parties, patriotisms with which our lives are closely bound. Have we ever as reasoning and rational beings tried to see the nexus and flimsy threads that make up this idea and conviction of " I and Mine " ?

If one has done so, well and good ; for one is then on the track of the Number One Accused responsible for one's own condition and responsible for the conditions of the system of civilization and national life to which one contributes.

In a careful analysis we find we own and govern nothing. The greater part of what we fondly call " Myself " is not owned or governed by us at all. It is always going its own way independently of us. Our breath itself proves it. The hairs on our head are capillaried. They function like trees on a hillock. Are they vestiges of primeval evolution of life through plant, amoeba and monkey to man ? They grey and decay. Do they pamper us ? Or do we have to do the pampering ? The biological constitution of our bodies proves it. Think of the myriads of cells in it. Think, too, of the numerous parasites.

Whatever little thing we may cling to as our own will, under honest and rigorous analysis, break down into a neutrality which is not you or me or him but some wonderful elemental—a wonderful elemental which subsists in its own right. It is the vaporous and could-like " I " that is responsible for much of the drama of human life—the drama of politics, economics nationalism and the hot and cold wars of individuals, groups, parties and world-blocks. So long as " I and Mine " stands fast, so long the Number One Enemy of mankind also stands fast and there will be clashes. So long will men snatch at precarious and evanescent happiness amidst the thick of evils.

Only by a disciplined and rigorous search for a " Permanent Self " does one find in what " Self " consists, that it is not " Permanent " and that there is an " Unconditioned " which is not self.

# Buddhism

By G. P. MĀLALASEKERA

*University of Ceylon, Ceylon; President, World Fellowship of Buddhists*

Buddhism is not merely a religion ; it is a whole movement ; it began as a movement, which carried within it germs of growth and potencies of development. It travelled over vast areas, spreading its influence over numerous races, absorbing fresh modes of thought, assuming immense varieties of form, and profoundly affecting the intellectual, moral and social cultures of many nations. It arose in India at a time of great intellectual ferment when speculations were rife about such things as the origin of the universe, of gods and of men, whether the world had a beginning in time or was eternal, what was the soul and what happened to it after death.

Some, who were groping for happiness and salvation, believed in the efficacy of prayer. Among them were some who prayed for material benefits while others prayed in more abstract mood: "Lead me from darkness to light, lead me from death to immortality." Yet others put their faith in personal austerities and self-mortification, extreme piety calling for extravagance of suffering: it was considered meritorious to feed on berries and roots, to eat but once in many days, to hang head downwards like a bat, to stand on one leg.

The Buddha called speculation vain and useless and ridiculed the idea of prayer. As for extreme austerity, no graver warnings are probably to be found in the whole range of religious literature than the Buddha's calm and penetrating analysis of the manifold dangers of the ascetic's pride. The people of the Buddha's day believed also in a supreme deity, the majestic Brahmā, described in such solemn terms as "the All-seeing, the Conqueror, the Creator and the Disposer, Father of all that was and are yet to be." Brahmā was also sometimes thought of as an abstract concept, the Brahman, the absolute, the eternal, all-pervading and all-transcending principle, to be found within the objects and changes of our common experience, within the heart of man, smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest. It was Brahmā, either in his own right, or as the active manifestation of the principle

of Brahmā, that ruled over the whole universe, from heaven to hell, always and everywhere, dispensing bliss and woe. He had no limitations whatsoever. It was assumed that all power was lodged in him ; man was simply the instrument of his will. All human actions had their cause in him. Thus, the saint and the criminal were alike the product of his agency. If that were so, said the Buddha, virtue deserved no reverence and vice no reprobation. To a god who is author alike of all suffering and of all sin, no one could pay the homage of adoring devotion or of humble love.

For the rule of Brahmā, Buddhism substituted the rule of the Law, the Law of Kamma. Kamma had been taught before the Buddha's time, by others also, by Yājñavalkya for example, but the Buddha gave it a new significance. He made it the fundamental axiom of existence, the regulative principle of the universe. It supplied the form in which every problem of human life here and hereafter was set and answered, providing explanations for all the diversities of beings and the varieties of condition in animal, man, demon, ghost or god. The vast variety of beings, in constant transit from one scene to another, between the extremes of heaven and hell, these, according to Buddhism, share a common life, under a common sovereignty, the rule of Kamma, invisible, impersonal, all-embracing. The animate world becomes incorporated in a universal moral order.

The Law of Kamma demands that life should constantly be renewed, in suffering or felicity, to requite its past. Thus follows, as corollary, the stern, inexorable law of impermanence, to which even the great Brahmā, if such there be, is subject. Over the whole sphere of existence there lies this constant doom. Nothing endures and, what is worse, the whole of life seems to be begun and ended in pain, full of wants that cannot be satisfied, of troubles that cannot be escaped. And, if all modes of being are subject to constant change, what becomes of the doctrine of an eternal self or soul ? The Buddha analysed the constituents of a human being, both mental and physical, and

declared that he could not find anything eternal about it anywhere, no equivalent of a soul which could pass at death from one grade of being to another, to rejoice in heaven or suffer in hell. The idea of separate, unchanging self or ego in each individual is regarded by the Buddha as the source of great error, engendering the feeling of separateness from other living beings, of self-gratification, antagonism and of desires which hinder spiritual progress.

These, then, are called the *Ti-lakkhaṇa* or Three Fundamental Characteristics of Buddhism; *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*. Briefly, they declare: There is no Being as such, but only becoming. The state of every individual is unstable, temporary, sure to pass away. Even in the lowest class of beings we find, in each individual, form and material qualities. In the higher classes, there is a continuously rising series of mental qualities also. It is the union of these that makes the individual. Everything or person or god is thus a putting together, a 'compound'. In each individual, without exception, the relation of its component parts is ever changing, is never the same for two consecutive moments. It follows that no sooner has separateness or individuality begun, disintegration begins also. There can be no individuality without a putting together, there can be no putting together without a becoming, there can be no becoming without a becoming different, there can be no becoming different without a dissolution, a passing-away, which sooner or later will inevitably be complete.

All these phenomena are, according to the Buddha, parts of a beginningless causal series. It is this doctrine of causality in the whole realm of existence that is the Buddha's greatest contribution to thought. "This being so" it declares, "that becomes; this not being so that does not become." For us, the great importance of the principle of causality is this: that, if the cause of *dukkha* or unhappiness could be found, the way of putting an end to this intrinsic infirmity of life, or becoming, could also be found. The cause of *dukkha*, according to the Buddha, is Ignorance, our congenital blindness to the true nature of the phenomenal world of which we are a part and to which, for so long as we do not realize its vanity, we are bound by our desires, our craving, our thirst, as if to a mirage. The

very notion of possession is a delusion, for it is the very nature of things, dear and attractive, that we must be bereaved of them. How, then, is it possible to have and hold them? Ignorance of these facts is the "original sin", because of which beings are born and continue in *samsāra*.

Life, in the Buddha's teaching, is a psycho-physical combustion, requiring the continued supply of physical and mental food or fuel, if its feverish heat is to be maintained. The fires are those of passion, ill-will and delusion. When these fires are quenched, there comes the inward peace of self-mastery, called *Nibbāna*. It is not an extinction or an annihilation, except the annihilation of passions, defects and all delusions. *Nibbāna* is not an extinction but, rather, a consummation and a fulfilment, where the work of self-perfection has been accomplished. It is the end of all Becoming and beyond all states of being, when all has been done that there was to be done, and the heavy burden of existence has been dropped. There is no more a return to any conditioned existence, in which one must be so or such. This end and *summum bonum* is attainable here and now, in this very life, or if that is not possible, hereafter. But the highest in Buddhism is not necessarily elsewhere, in another world, in some other sphere.

It is often asked what happens to a person who has attained *Nibbāna*? The answer is that, though annihilation is expressly denied, words are inadequate, in as much as their application is only to things that have beginnings and ends. Because of the limitations of logic, resort must be had to the *via negativa*, the negative way, even when referring to the most positive reality. Light can only be explained as the absence of darkness. We can say of *Nibbāna* that it is liberation; we can say also liberation from what but not what that absolute independence is. It is the arrest, the cessation of becoming. What this implies can only be illustrated by analogies, as that of "the way of a bird in the air, leaving no track". It is not merely the absence of happiness, it is also positive, ineffable bliss.

The way to this goal is primarily the eradication, root and branch, of the notion "I" and "mine". For all suffering is bound up with the concept "I am this,"



or "I am that" and to have laid down this burden is a beatitude than which there can be no greater. Of all the delusions that men are attached to, the greatest is that of their conviction of the constancy and reality of their "name and form," their self, and the most dangerous aspect of this belief, according to the Buddha is the identification of the self not with the body, which is patently inconstant, but with the invisible soul, of which the persistence throughout our life and even thereafter is assumed. It may be pointed out that modern psychology has also asserted in almost the same words that the concept or postulate of individuality is "the very mother of illusion" and that "any person would be infinitely happier if he would accept the loss of his individual self." To get rid of this belief in Self is not a mere matter of being unselfish, but one of a quite literal self-denial, of which unselfishness in the ethical sense is only a natural consequence and a symptom. The man who has conquered Self-love is the highest in the universe.

There is no Saviour in Buddhism, no vicarious Redeemer. Every man individually has to swelter at the task of his own salvation. The Buddha is only a good friend, a *kalyāna-mitta*, who can but lend a helping-hand. The way to be followed is a discipline, a training in self-control, a life of purification, especially from all those foul issues or fluxes by which one is contaminated—greed and ill-will, mistaken views, obstinacy and stubbornness, sloth and torpor. But the avoidance of all worldly attachment and of all incontinence is not enough. The procedure is by no means negative only; it is at the same time one of ethical and intellectual development, of fostering and the making become of desirable qualities which lead to the growth of the will and of understanding, of head and heart, of perfection of all sides of the personality. The root of suffering being Ignorance, all forces that promote Enlightenment should be encouraged, literature and art, music and drama. Hence the flowering of the Fine Arts in countries where Buddhism has flourished.

Great stress is laid on the necessity of contemplative practice, a willed and deliberate pervasion of the entire universe and an extension to all living beings, whatever and wherever, of feelings of love and

sympathy, tenderness and equanimity, the purification of the heart and the practice of perfect charity. These contemplations are attainments of degrees or stations of consciousness in a kind of hierarchy, beyond that in which the practitioner normally functions. The unified consummation reached on any one of these levels is called *samādhi*, equipoise or synthesis of mind. They are mystic experiences wherein the practitioner, if he is expert, can remain in or abandon any one of these stages and pass from one to another in either direction, at will. Each degree of this ladder has its respective advantages and disadvantages. They all come short of the final goal by the very fact of their relativity. Miraculous powers, such as those of passing through solid obstacles or travelling through the air, are associated with these practices but they are to be regarded as only incidental results not to be sought for their own sake nor to be publicly displayed.

The spiritual life must have its basis on ethical conduct, practical morals, but we are told, over and over again, that practical morality is of significance only as a means to an end and not as an end in itself. The aspirant to *Nibbāna* must master morality but not allow morality to get the better of him. The criterion of moral judgment is whether a particular action would or would not obstruct oneself or others in the attempt to win release from Samsaric evil into *Nibbāna*. An act is subjectively good or bad according as it promotes or obstructs spiritual progress; objectively according as it is beneficial or not to the similar progress of others. Buddhism considers as ethical only those acts which are volitional. Hence the necessity of eliminating the cardinal evils of lust, ill-will and infatuation, because they affect the nature of our volitions directly, while other actions, such as meat-eating or slander, affect the mind only indirectly. The ethics of Buddhism is prompted by one motive only, the need for release from *Samsāra*, the round of birth and death; Buddhist ethics is pre-eminently autonomous in character and relies on no external sanctions such as God or Church or State. Man is intrinsically a morally free agent, having within him the power to choose between alternative courses of action. But this choice is of no more use to one who has attained the goal than a

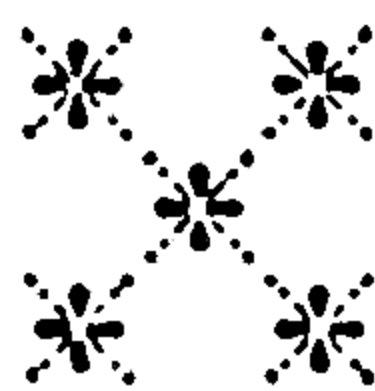
boat is of use to one who has crossed over. All attachment, whether to vice or virtue, is a barrier to the taking of the final step leading to Nibbāna. The one who has attained freedom is not contaminated by any of the contraries on which experience rests and between which ethical choices are made. He knows neither likes nor dislikes and is as little stained by virtue or by vice as the lotus-leaf which is not wetted by the water it grows in and rests upon.

Normally speaking, the Path to Nibbāna has to be trodden through many lives before the goal is reached. This introduces us to the difficult subject of rebirth in Buddhism. It should be categorically stated that Buddhism knows nothing of a reincarnation, in the accepted sense, as the rebirth of an identical soul in another body. It explicitly says that there is no being that passes over from one body to another, "as a man might leave one village and enter another." What takes place is the reintegration of consciousness under conditions determined by past actions which are to be regarded as those of the new consciousness in the sense of possession by inheritance. What is renewed is not an entity but a process ; what is transmitted and regenerated is aptly symbolized by the lighting of one fire from another. To speak of "I" and "Mine" and "Being" is merely a matter of convention, a pragmatic as distinct from absolute truth, the latter alone being really valid.

The Buddha's teaching is the Middle Way, avoiding both extremes, refusing to say, for example, of things, either that they are or are not, or whether, in the sequence of cause and effect, things are or are not the same.

The most interesting application of this principle is in respect of time : the durationless moment which separates past from future embracing the whole of my existence. It is no longer the same but another, as the flux of moments continues without a break. Eternity is not in time, but now ; this indivisible Now is the ever present opportunity, the gateway to deathlessness, to immortality which the Buddha threw open when, at the foot of the Bodhi tree at Gaya, 25 centuries ago, he started turning the Dhamma Cakka, the Wheel of the Law.

The Buddha declared His teaching to be eternal and timeless, in as much as it is true for all ages equally, and for all climes. Alone among the world's religions, it invites investigation, asking the seeker after truth to come and look at it, so that he may test it for himself. It is ehi-passika, the "come and see" Doctrine. It has no dogmas and no prohibitions. The Farer on the Way has to choose the path himself, uninfluenced by threats of punishment or promises of reward. The Way is for those whose wants are few and, largely, only for them. We are asked to abandon all our great possessions, material and mental goods, vices and virtues together, to follow the Buddha along a road which each one of us shall make for himself as he proceeds. It is open always for those who wish to tread it. There are no inhibitions, to hinder us, no sense of repentance or alienation from God, no share in another's guilt to darken our conscience, no burden of original sin or inherited corruption. It is the road that leads to Perfection, where there is neither birth nor death, no craving or thirst, but complete freedom and unalloyed happiness.



# Avijja

FRANCIS STORY,

*Director-in-Chief*

*Burma Buddhist World Mission*

Every man views life, not as it really is, but as a reflection in the distorting-mirror of his own temperament. Just as the astigmatic eye bends the light rays that enter it parallel to the axis of its aberration, producing a confused image on the retina, so we, by the peculiarities of our own mental processes, our prejudices and predilections, distort and misrepresent to ourselves the images of the external world, its events and situations. Some of the distortions are common to us all ; they constitute those basic and universal errors that in Buddhism are grouped under the generic term " Avijjā " or Nescience. But over and above these, each of us has individual errors of discernment which together go to make up our own personal psychic identity and mark us off from others to a greater or lesser extent. When these peculiarities are so pronounced that they result in a picture completely divorced from the mental picture seen by the majority, the subject is said to be mad. On the other hand, the man whose psychic refractive error is less than that of the majority, who sees things approximately nearer to their actual form than do his fellows, may also be considered mad at first. It is only later on, when a sufficient number of others, trained to see things more or less as he did, assent to his view, that he is acknowledged to have been a genius or a seer in advance of his time.

While the subject of modern psychopathology is the study of the personal peculiarities of the individual, taking as the norm the standard outlook of the majority (so far as it can be standardised) and measuring deviations therefrom, Buddhism takes this very " norm " itself as being a psychopathic condition. " Sabbe putthujjana ummattaka " — " all worldly-minded people are insane " — is an axiom of the Buddha Himself. Differences are of degree only : there is no basic difference in kind acknowledged by Buddhist philosophy.

What is the standard by which the so-called normal mind is to be judged, in order to assess the degree of its madness ?

In this we are not dealing with individual idiosyncrasies or with the extreme degrees of misapprehension, as is the psychiatrist, but with the fundamental defects of thought common to human beings of all races and periods, which are like the fundamental defects of the eye as an organ of vision. For just as the ammetropic eye is far from being a perfect optical instrument, so the mind also is by its nature a defective mirror of the external world from which it draws its data and on which it bases its interpretations of experience. As we shall see later on, the evidence for this can be drawn, not solely from Buddhist analysis, but also from the extent to which various philosophers have seen some aspects of truth, each according to the type of his psychic astigmatism and its lesser degree in some directions as compared with that of the majority. Just as the " norm " is taken from the average level of human mental qualities, so our idea of the highest standard of purely human wisdom must be taken from a symposium of opinions held by those whose perception has been above the average, and who thus have come nearer to an understanding of truth in its highest sense. This constitutes another " norm " which points, by general agreement on certain important issues, to the next higher stage, the realisation of truth as the Buddha experienced it.

" Avijjā ", a primary tenet of Buddhism, which may be compared to the Platonic concept associated with the word " Ignorance ", may also be defined, perhaps more expressively, as Primal Nescience ; that is, the condition which is an essential prerequisite for, and inseparable from, birth in any of the states of sentient existence ; the condition of not-knowing. It is described in Buddhism thus :

" Avijjā " is ignorance of the Three Signs of Being, Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā and of the Four Noble Truths, of which the first is the truth that all existence is Dukkha. The second Noble Truth points to the cause of Dukkha, which is Tanhā or Craving; the third is the truth of Nibbāna, the cessation



of Craving, and therefore also of Dukkha ; and the fourth is the Way, namely the Noble Eightfold Path, which leads to the cessation of Craving and Dukkha in Nibbāna. Avijjā is the root cause of all impure actions : in the words of Ven. Nyanatiloka Thera, “ as the two roots of evil, greed and hate are both again rooted in ignorance and all evil states of mind are inseparably bound up with it, ignorance is the most obstinate of the three roots of evil.” The Buddha said : “ Ignorance is the foulest stain of all,” and consequently it is given first place in the causal chain of Paticca-samuppāda (Dependent Origination).

So, in order to see things as they truly are—to get rid of Avijjā—it is necessary to realise that all compounded, phenomenal things are Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā ; they are impermanent, subject to suffering and devoid of selfhood or essential reality. Again, this point is made with categorical emphasis in the Buddhist doctrine of Vipallāsa. This word may be rendered “ hallucination ” or “ infatuation ”. It is of three kinds, each having four modes ; the kinds are, “ Sañña-vipallāsa ” (hallucination of perception); Citta-vipallāsa (hallucination of mind or consciousness) and Diṭṭhi-vipallāsa (hallucination of views). The four modes in which they appear correspond to the Three Signs of Being, Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā, plus another characteristic, Asubha, which means, for lack of a better word, unpleasantness. Under the influence of this hallucination, which for our present purpose may be considered as an aspect of Avijjā, we get Sañña-vipallāsa, in four modes, i.e., wrongly perceiving that which is Anicca Dukkha and Anattā, plus Asubha, as being permanent, associated with happiness real (possessing “ selfhood ”) and pleasant. Citta-vipallāsa means falsely cognising that which is Anicca, Dukkha, Anattā and Asubha as being permanent, associated with happiness, real (possessing “ selfhood ”) and pleasant; while Diṭṭhi-vipallāsa likewise means holding wrong beliefs (views) that things which are really Anicca, Dukkha, Anattā and Asubha have the opposite qualities. This is the erroneous state of mind, the fundamental infirmity, of all who have not actually entered the four stages of self-purification ; in these ascending stages the three forms

of Vipallāsa with their accompanying four modes are shed by degrees until the entire hallucination is destroyed and Avijjā itself comes to an end. This final goal is the state of Arahantship in which there remains no residuum of craving or attachment to the sensory desires that cause rebirth. At this point Nibbāna is attained.

Theistic religions readily admit the truth of impermanence, and to a limited extent the truth of the universality of suffering, with reference to this world. Life is brief and uncertain, it is a “ valley of tears ” and man is “ born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward.” But Buddhism goes further, and relentlessly pursuing the logic of its initial premise, asserts that all states of existence must necessarily be impermanent, changing from moment to moment in a perpetual flux of transition, and this must include the higher as well as the lower realms of existence. It follows that, being in this continual state of instability and insecurity they are also subject to suffering, and that the suffering is not a casual incident in the life-pattern, but an integral quality and characteristic.

The idea of temporal impermanence has overshadowed philosophical thought from the time of Heraclitus, who may have been influenced by Indian thought, as it seems almost certain that Pythagoras was. Heraclitus conceived all existence in terms of an ever-changing current of events—the river into which no one can step twice, because it is always a different river, though following a pattern that seems to give it form by which it can be identified from moment to moment. Plato, recognising the same truth, that phenomenal things change and that consequently there is always a state of becoming, but never one of absolute being, was forced to evolve his system of ideal forms, of which the phenomenal forms are only unreal shadows. The quest of philosophy has always been for the lasting, real and absolute, as distinct from the evanescent and therefore unreal. The idea of an absolute Beauty was conceived as a justification for belief in the beauty of form, which is ever changing and subject to varying standards according to time and place. Primitive religion itself was the outcome of man's longing to find something enduring and secure as a harbourage in the uncertainties and hazards of life.

Among modern thinkers, Bergson saw this characteristic of phenomena as clearly as any. He recognised the principle of change, but could find no "thing" that changes, for nothing can exist apart from its perceptible qualities, and since these are constantly changing we are left only with the process. There is change, but nothing that changes. A leaf is known by its qualities of shape, colour and texture; but when the greenness of the leaf turns to red, and from red to brown, while its shape alters and its texture withers, there is no single quality left of those by which we knew the original leaf. In the same way, a human being is incessantly changing from birth to death; his body and mind alike undergo transformation as he progresses from infancy to childhood, from childhood to maturity, and thence to old age and dissolution. Each individual cell of his body perishes and is replaced many times over, while his mental processes, as the pioneer psychologists discovered, change even more rapidly; so that one psychologist, Prof. James, had to admit that he could find no permanent, unchanging identity in the human psychic process. Where he expected to find it he came only on the process of flux and momentary transition. In brief, he had stumbled on the Buddhist truth of Anattā (no permanent "soul" or "self") by empirical knowledge of the process of Anicca. His train of reasoning was exactly that of Buddhism; where there is impermanence there can be no essential reality, and this is the view held (although inclined to be shirked because of its, to them, uncomfortable implications) by most modern thinkers. The "Self" or "attā" is a delusion which we derive from a misreading of the process. We see a self where there is nothing but a causal continuum of events linked together into an illusory identity by the faculty of recollection.

"Even during the period for which any living being is said to live and retain his identity - as a man, for example, is called the same man from boyhood to old age - he does not in fact retain the same attributes, although he is called the same person; he is always becoming a new being and undergoing a process of loss and reparation, which affects his hair, his flesh, his bones, his blood and his whole body. And not only his body, but his soul (Buddhism says "mind") as well. No

man's habits, opinions, desires, pleasures, pains and fears remain always the same; new ones come into existence and old ones disappear. When we use the word recollection we imply by using it that knowledge departs from us; forgetting is the departure of knowledge, and recollection, by implanting a new impression in the place of that which is lost, preserves it, and gives it a spurious appearance of uninterrupted identity." The voice is that of Socrates, in Plato's "Symposium"; the reasoning is, so far as it is carried, entirely Buddhist.

The Buddhist Three Signs of Being, therefore, are simply different expressions of the same truth; that whatever is impermanent must have the nature of suffering, and that whatever is impermanent and subject to suffering must of necessity be lacking in absolute reality. Its reality is only of a conventional and relative order; it exists only in relation to something else. This was another truth clearly discerned by Bergson, who showed that, since a thing can only be known by its qualities, and all qualities are comparative only - that is, we can only know greenness by its contrast with other colours; and shape, such as squareness, in relation to other shapes such as roundness - the absolute being of a "thing" will ever elude us. It cannot be isolated from other things and contemplated as a thing-in-itself. The inevitable conclusion is that there can be no "absolute being", but only the relative, ever-changing qualities by which we cognise what we call a "thing". Because of this, the truths of Buddhism are expressed in two modes: there is Sammuti sacca, or relative and conventional truth, and Paramattha sacca which denotes absolute truth, or the highest we can reach by recognising that all phenomenal things are illusory. When we talk of phenomenal things, giving them the names by which they are known to all, we are dealing with Sammuti sacca. So also when we speak of "I", "me" and "myself"; these are terms without which we cannot convey any ideas on the level of conventional truth; even the Buddha had to use them. But when we are dealing with Paramattha sacca we have to remember that these phenomenal things are only concepts; that they are made up (saṅkhāra) of elements, and are all characterised by Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā.

This brings us to a consideration of human personality, which requires a separate article to itself. It is sufficient here to introduce the reader to the Five Khandhas, or groups, of which a living, sentient being is composed. These are : Rupa (Form, or for our present purpose, physical body); Saññā (Perception); Vedanā (Sensation); Saṅkhāra (Aggregates or composite tendency-formations resulting from past actions) and Viññāna (Consciousness), the whole being collectively brought together under the term Namā-Rūpa, which signifies Mind and Body, in which form it appears as one of the Nidānas (links) in the chain of Dependent Origination. Each of these factors is merely phenomenal ; like the qualities dealt with above, they have no constancy, but in reality are nothing but a series of events, a causal continuum, a flux of becoming which never quite achieves the state of being. It cannot be too strongly emphasised at the start that Buddhism admits no exceptions to the rule of Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā throughout the realm of phenomenal existence. The Dhamma is a consistent whole, from any single part of which the rest can be reconstructed, if that part is understood thoroughly ; so intimately does each part correlate with every other part. For this reason, any attempts to add to or subtract from the whole can only result in throwing the entire machinery of Buddhist thought out of gear and producing a falsification of the Buddha's original doctrine. In view of the many misrepresentations of Buddhism, and misinterpretations from scholars who have either understood it imperfectly or who have wished to place their own interpretation on its teachings, this is the greatest danger against which the student has to be on his guard. The belief in a " Self " or soul-principle is the first delusion that has to be discarded on the path to wisdom ; at the same time it is the most clinging and insidious. Every other delusion centres about this one, as crystals form about a core, for it follows that if we entertain a delusion concerning our own being we must have delusions about everything else. " Sakkāya-diṭṭhi ", the belief in Selfhood, is placed first among the fetters (Samyojana) that have to be overcome, to attain Nibbāna.

Many more instances could be quoted of great non-Buddhist thinkers who have succeeded in gaining a certain amount of

Buddhist insight by the free exercise of their own intellect, and who have so far confirmed independently, the Buddhist view. Now what does science have to say on the subject of Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā ?

Most people to-day are familiar with the general principles of nuclear physics. All material substance is composed of atomic particles ; its appearance of solidity and substantiality is a delusion. Actually, matter is reducible to a process, that of the transformation of energy. It conforms perfectly to the Buddhist definition, being continually in a state of change, and this state of change is necessarily accompanied by a condition of unrest and unbalance, or dis-ease. There is Dukkha, therefore, in so-called inanimate substance, as we even realise the moment we cease to think of Dukkha merely in its perceived form (that of Suffering) and see it as a cosmic principle. This, together with the atomic constitution of matter, is clearly set forth in Buddhism : Dukkha exists, whether there is a perceiving agent or not. That is why, as in so many cases of translation from Pāli into English the word " suffering " is only adequate as a rendering of " Dukkha " when we are dealing with it on the level of conventional truth. Dukkha as a cosmic principle pervading all phenomenal things must be understood in the sense of Paramattha sacca. Dukkha means, in its fullest sense, the state of activity, tension, arising-and-passing-away unrest and unbalance which is characteristic of all phenomena, both material and immaterial. It is present in every millimetre of the physical universe and throughout all the realms of existence, including the insentient ones. Science, by enabling us to pierce some way through the delusion of material substance, helps greatly towards an understanding of the Buddhist meaning of Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā. It remains then only to apply the principle to the illusory self, and the basis of egoism is taken away. Under the influence of theistic religion man has been encouraged to think of himself, not as an integral part of the universe, sharing characteristics in common with all living beings and with the processes of nature, but as something distinct and separate, an immortal being with a special destiny. As a causal process he is, in a sense, immortal, but to



express it in this way is untrue because death itself is of the process. As a being, a "soul", he is not immortal in any sense. On the contrary, he is dying and being reborn every fraction of a second.

Comparing the universe as the physicist sees it with the idea of it that we receive through the senses, it is apparent that they are two entirely different things. Science so far has not found the level on which the two aspects can be reconciled. What we conceive to be solid is a mass of whirling particles, which themselves have no solidity but are simply manifestations of electronic energy. One unit of energy, or a bundle of units, itself does not retain the same identity from moment to moment; in the words of one noted scientist what we choose to call an atom is not the same atom from one moment to another; it can claim only to have a progressive, causal connection with the series of atoms that preceded it. Our senses deceive us at every point when we see form and colour, hear sound, smell odours, taste flavours and feel bodily contact. The things we perceive do not exist in the form they take to us, and the realm we live in is a misrepresentation, albeit common to us all, of the world of the physicist. This is the meaning of *Avijjā*; that we are hallucinated, but because the hallucination is "normal" (that most dangerous and misleading of words) we do not know the extent of our mutual infirmity. The scientist, who glimpses it, is troubled, because he does not know the answer. His position has been very ably summed up by Bertrand Russell in "Physics and Experience". Russell is driven to ask: if physics is true, how can we ever know it? He saw, quite rightly, that since we cannot any longer trust the evidence of our senses to be valid, how can we even be certain that the physicist's view is correct, or that it is the last revelation, because that too is merely empirical knowledge, drawn ultimately from these imperfect sources of sensory cognition.

Here is the dilemma in which the human mind, limited by *Avijjā*, finds itself. What is the way out of the impasse? Is there any hope that we shall ever know the facts?

In the third Noble Truth Buddhism asserts the actuality of *Nibbāna*, the extinction of ignorance and craving. But to understand *Nibbāna* we have to exhaust all the delusions

we hold concerning the world of phenomena. When at last we realise the unreality of this phenomenal world it becomes clear that anything which is complete in itself, permanent and free from suffering and unsatisfied desire, must be entirely unlike any state of things that we can possibly know, or infer from the world of our sense-perceptions. Desire, or craving, is the state of wanting to be something else, and so, like *Dukkha*, the state of agitation that accompanies it, it is inherent in all processes that are subject to change. Time, space and all associated concepts are only relative, and our own being cannot be detached from these, any more than a "thing" can be isolated and exist apart from its qualities. And it is precisely here that the chief misconception about *Nibbāna* has arisen; namely, that it is annihilation. But before proceeding further it must be explained that there are two forms of *Nibbāna*. The first is *Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna*, the *Nibbāna* attained in this very life, with all the qualities of mind-body still present, but with the actions made sterile through the quenching of desire. The second is *An-upādisesa Nibbāna*, the ultimate *Nibbāna* after the death of the Buddha or *Arahat*. It is the second with which we are dealing now.

To say that the *Nibbāna* after death is annihilation implies that there is something, a "self" or a being, to be annihilated. But we have already seen that this something, "Self" or being is, and always has been, nothing but a delusion. That which never really existed cannot survive, nor can it be annihilated. On the other hand, to call *Nibbāna* a "state" implies something that is in the state, and also conveys a wrong impression. The truth is that all terms based on relative concepts and we have no words in any language that are not so based are unsuitable for *Nibbāna*. It defies definition, and so the Buddha Himself left it undefined. Since all phenomenal things are unreal, we must conceive *Nibbāna* as being the only ~~true~~ reality, unchanging, secure from turmoil and unrest and "real" in a sense that is absolute, and quite different from any idea we can form of "reality". But it still contains no element of "self", and care must be taken not to confuse the idea of "reality" with that of a supramundane, apotheosised "Self". The Buddha was scrupulous to avoid all such

ideas, and so His Teaching appears to some to be negative and non-committal. But for those who understand, the negations contain in themselves a great, positive affirmation. The Buddha taught that Nibbāna can be experienced and understood but it cannot be explained. He therefore confined Himself to teaching the Way to experience it.

This brings us to the fourth Truth, the Noble Eightfold Path, the Way to self-deliverance. In this is laid down the system of self-discipline by which a man may educate himself to see things in their true light not merely with intellectual perception, but with the deepest realisation that re-orientates and transforms his entire consciousness—and to eradicate Ignorance. It is not in the scope of this article to describe the Ariya Atṭhangika Magga as a way of life ; the fullest treatment is necessary to do justice to it. For the present purpose it is sufficient to say that it extends from simple morality to the practice and perfection of the highest Insight through Samādhi. By Right Meditation it is possible to attain Nibbāna. This is the means by which Buddhism goes beyond the speculations of the most enlightened philosophers and the most exact of scientists, and shows how the psychopathic condition can be cured, when sanity takes the place of hallucination and the illusion of Avijjā is pierced. In meditation a new faculty is developed, called Vipassanā, which is above and liberated from the limitations of the intellect.

To sum up : The Buddhist explanation of Avijjā agrees with all that we can discover of the illusory nature of our world of sensations and ideas. The doctrine of Original Sin—the Christian attempt to account for human imperfections on the basis of myth—provides an interesting comparison, since it represents one of man's first and most primitive attempts to explain away a universally-acknowledged fact ; but Plato's theory of " Ignorance " comes much nearer the Buddhist truth, since at every point Christianity tends to substitute theology for philosophy. As to the origin of Avijjā, like Saṃsāra itself—the ceaseless round of birth and death—it has no origin, if by origin is meant a beginning in time. Time

itself is phenomenal, therefore illusory, and has no existence apart from " things " and relationships. Avijjā arises from moment to moment ; it did not come into existence at any particular time or place. It is co-existent with the cyclic universe, having, like it, a serial, dynamic continuum without any beginning or discoverable end. Because of this Ignorance, this false view of life based on erroneous perceptions, craving arises for the things of the senses and for personal survival to enjoy them. This leads to impurity of thought and action, and to the consequent carrying-forward of the life-impulse from birth to birth, with all its attendant miseries, in obedience to the universal law of cause and effect. If Buddhism insists upon the suffering, it is because in the collective experience of all living beings suffering predominates—a fact which has also been noticed by most clear-sighted thinkers. The Law of Causality gives good for good, as well as bad for bad ; but the illusion of pleasure merely contributes to and confirms the false idea that life as a sentient being is a desirable thing. It is one of the defence-mechanisms of the mind, familiar to psychologists, that causes us to remember the pleasant and suppress from recollection the painful experiences of the past. The human mind is so constructed ; and while its tendency to attach false values may be termed psychic astigmatism, this proneness to see only the pleasant may be called psychic myopia. Even to the experiences of one short life man exercises an unconscious selectivity, retaining the pleasurable and discarding the painful ; if we were able to see beyond this current life and take a backward survey before we are ready for the revelation, we should be overwhelmed by the miseries and horrors through which we have passed. We should be paralysed by fear for the future. It is Avijjā which prevents us from doing this ; but the perfected Arahāt who has overcome Avijjā and is free from craving and fear, can look back with untroubled gaze on the thorny path through which he has wound his painful way from aeon to aeon, through birth and rebirth, secure in the knowledge that, having reached the topmost height there can be no recall to the troubled ways of life for him.

Union of Burma Buddha  
Sasana Council  
Rangoon Burma.

The members of the annual meeting of the Buddhistische Gemeinde Deutschland which took place in Stuttgart on Septbr. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> as general representatives of the German Buddhist Dhamma acknowledging the generous donation of the Union of Burma Buddha Sasana Council charged the undersigned president to pray you to accept our warmest thanks for having sent us this benefit payment. I assure you that this gift shall be used to provide the four Buddhist libraries in Hamburg, Berlin, Stuttgart and Munich with books and scriptures to recreate the peaceful minds of all individuals in our country and to teach the Buddha Dhamma as the path of peace and tolerance for all living beings. Kindly accept our vote of thanks and our good wishes in mettacittena for the whole Burmese nation. Buddhistische Gem. Deutschland  
The president W. Keller, M.D.  
Munich Oct. 1952.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### “Buddhism Answers The Marxist Challenge”

FRANCIS STORY

Mr. Francis Story has a gift of penetrating to the root of the matter, of getting the facts and their undeniable implications and of coming to the undeniably right conclusions. Further he expresses these in a clear and admirable prose-style.

As a well-known Buddhist writer and lecturer he knows his subject thoroughly.

His latest publication, “Buddhism Answers the Marxist Challenge”, sums up the position in the whole world of conflicting ideologies lucidly and succinctly.

This book has been badly needed not only in Burma but in the whole world and shows, quite unmistakably, that Buddhism and Communism are antipathetic in essence and in practical application.

Here is a book that all who wish to be able to discuss the matter at all intelligibly must read from cover to cover.

Our copy is from the Craftsman Press Ltd., Singapore, and it is published by The Burmese Buddhist World-Mission, Rangoon, of which the author is founder and Director-in-Chief.

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### “The Indo-Asian Culture”

From the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, we have a copy (Vol. I, No. 1, July 1952) of this new quarterly which is excellently produced and very interesting and informative indeed.

The articles are nicely balanced and present a wide view of Indo-Asian Culture. We were particularly interested, naturally, in the article on “The Background of Buddhist Philosophy” by Prof. Dr. B. B. Bhattacharya, M.A., D.Phil.

The short article on “My Impressions of Burma” is interesting as an example of a cameo impression of a short visit written down long after the event. There is the usual “telescoping” of hasty observations making a quaint mixture of fact and fancy. However, the author means well and that, like charity, “covers a multitude of sins”.



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