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The LIGHT
of the
DHAMMA

VOL. II

No. 2

2497 B.E.

April 1954 C.E.



THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA

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Dhammapada Commentary (Translated by Pāli Dept, University of Rangoon)



Ven. Nārada Mahā Thera, Vajirarama, Bambalapitiya, Colombo, Ceylon, is one of the best known Buddhist authors and writers. He is widely travelled in all Buddhist countries where he has done excellent work in binding together the Buddhists of Asia. He is at present in England in connection with the founding of a Buddhist Vihāra in London.

AN OUTLINE OF BUDDHISM

NĀRADA THERA

On the full moon day of May, in the year 623 B.C. there was born at Kapilavatthu, on the borders of Nepal, a Sakyan Prince named Siddhattha Gotama, who was destined to be the greatest moral teacher in the world.

At sixteen he married and had a son named Rahula. For thirteen years after his happy marriage he led a luxurious life, but his contemplative nature and boundless compassion did not permit him to enjoy the fleeting material pleasures of the Royal household. He knew no woe, but he felt deep pity for sorrowing humanity. Amidst comfort and prosperity he realized the universality of sorrow. The palace with all its worldly allurements was no longer a congenial place for the intellectual prince. Time was ripe for him to depart. Realizing the worthlessness of sensual enjoyments, highly prized by ordinary men, and the value of renunciation in which the wise seek delight, in his 29th year he renounced all worldly pleasures, and donning the simple yellow garb of an ascetic, alone, penniless, wandered forth in search of Truth and Peace.

He sought the advice of the distinguished teachers of the day, but he could not achieve his desired object from outside sources. The painful austerities which he practised proved absolutely futile. Circumstances compelled him to think for himself and seek within. He sought, he thought and ultimately he realized the Truth which he had not heard before. Illumination came from within, and light arose in things which he had never seen before.

After a superhuman struggle of six strenuous years, unaided and unguided by any supernatural agency, but solely relying on his own efforts and wisdom, he eradicated all defilements, ended the process of grasping, and realizing things as they truly are, by his own intuitive knowledge, became a Buddha — an Enlightened One, in his 35th year.

As the perfect embodiment of all the virtues He preached, endowed with deep wisdom commensurate with his boundless compassion, He worked incessantly for years for the good and happiness of all, dominated by no personal motive, and passed away in His 80th year leaving no successor but exhorting the disciples to regard His doctrine and discipline as their teacher.

His iron will, profound wisdom, universal lore, boundless compassion, selfless service, great renunciation, perfect purity, unique personal life, the exemplary methods employed to propagate the teaching, and his final success - all these factors have compelled mankind to hail the Buddha as the greatest moral teacher that ever lived on earth.

The ethico-philosophical system expounded by the Buddha, is called the Dhamma and is popularly known as Buddhism.

Strictly speaking, Buddhism is not a religion as it is not a system of faith and worship owing any allegiance to a supernatural God.

Here blind faith is dethroned and is substituted by confidence based on knowledge. Although a Buddhist seeks refuge in the Buddha as his

incomparable moral guide and teacher, he makes no self-surrender. A Buddhist is neither a slave to a book nor to any individual. Without sacrificing his freedom of thought he exercises his own freewill and develops his wisdom even to the extent of becoming a Buddha himself, for all are potential Buddhas. Naturally Buddhist followers quote the Buddha as their authority, but the Buddha Himself discarded all authority. Immediate self-realization is the sole criterion of truth in Buddhism. Its keynote is rational understanding.

Though such external forms of homage as the offering of flowers and so forth are prevalent amongst Buddhists, the Buddha is not worshipped as a God. The Buddha was no doubt highly venerated in His own time, but He never arrogated to Himself divinity. He was a man, an extraordinary man (*Acchariya Manussa*). Nevertheless, it should be remarked that there was no moral teacher “ever so godless as the Buddha yet none so god-like.”

What the Buddha expects from disciples is not so much obeisance as the actual observance of His teaching. “He honours me best who practises my teaching best”, is His admonition.

Furthermore, prayers that “seek for objects of earthly ambitions and that inflame the sense of self” are foreign to Buddhism. On the contrary great emphasis is laid on mental trainings that tend to self-discipline, self-control, self-purification and self-enlightenment.

There is no God Creator to be obeyed and feared by a Buddhist. Instead of placing an unseen almighty God over man, the Buddha has raised the worth of mankind. Buddhism teaches that man can gain salvation by self-exertion without depending on God or mediating priests. It expounds no dogmas that one must blindly believe,

no creeds that one must accept on good faith without reasoning, no superstitious rites or ceremonies in order to enter the fold, no meaningless sacrifices of penances for one’s purification.

If as Karl Marx says “Religion is the soul of soulless conditions, the heart of a heartless world, the opium of the people”, certainly then Buddhism is not such a religion.

If by religion is meant a system of deliverance from the ills of life, then Buddhism is a religion of religions.

The foundations of Buddhism are the Four Noble Truths which are associated with the so-called being. The Buddha states: - “In this very fathom long body alone with its perceptions and thoughts, do I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the Path leading to the cessation of the world.” This interesting passage refers to the Four Noble Truths which the Buddha Himself discovered by his own intuitive knowledge. Whether Buddhas arise or not they exist and it is a Buddha that reveals them to the deluded world. For the knowledge of these truths which do not and cannot change with time, the Buddha was not indebted to any one as He himself said they were unheard of before. Hence there is no justification in the statement that Buddhism is a natural outgrowth of Hinduism, although it is true that there are some fundamental doctrines common to both systems.

The First Truth deals with the existence of *Dukkha*, which, for need of a better English equivalent, is inappropriately rendered by suffering or sorrow.

All are subject to birth, and consequently to decay, disease, and death. No one is exempt from these four inevitable causes of suffering. Impeded

volition is also suffering. In brief this body itself is a cause of suffering.

This First Truth of suffering which is concerned with the constituents of this so called being and the different phases of life is to be carefully analysed, scrutinized, and examined. This examination leads to a proper understanding of oneself as one really is.

The cause of this suffering is Craving or Attachment; which is the Second Noble Truth. This craving is a powerful invisible mental force latent in us all and is the cause of all divergent, multifarious phenomena and noumena. This truth indirectly deals with the past, present and future births.

Rational understanding of the First Truth leads to the eradication of this Craving; the Second Truth which deals with the psychological attitude of the ordinary man towards the external objects of sense.

This gross and subtle craving which leads to repeated births and deaths and which is the cause of all ills of life is such a potential force that one has to summon eight equally powerful forces (Eightfold Path) to overcome this one single foe.

The Third Noble Truth is the complete cessation of suffering which is achieved by the total eradication of all forms of craving. It is Nibbāna which can be attained in this life itself. This Third Truth, though dependent on oneself, is beyond logical reasoning (*atakkā vacara*) and is supramundane unlike the first two which are mundane. It is purely a self-realization - a Dhamma to be comprehended by the mental eye by complete renunciation, not merely by renouncing external objects but actually by renouncing internal attachment to the external world. It should be noted that the mere

cessation of suffering or the mere destruction of craving is not Nibbāna. If so, it would be tantamount to annihilation. Nibbāna is a positive unconditioned state. In Nibbāna nothing is eternalized nor is anything annihilated because Buddhism denies the existence of a permanent soul or Atma. Referring to Nibbāna the Buddha states: "There is an unborn (*ajāta*), unoriginated (*abhūta*), unmade (*akata*) and non-conditioned (*asankhata*). If there were not this unborn, unoriginated, unmade, and non-conditioned, an escape to one who is born, originated, made, and conditioned, would not be possible here"

This Third Truth has to be realized by developing the Noble Eightfold Path which is the fourth Noble Truth. This is the Via Media – Golden Mean – (*Majjhima Paṭipadā*). It consists of right understanding, thoughts, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and one-pointedness. These are the powerful moral mental forces that are summoned to attack one latent evil force – craving. This Middle Path, which constitutes Morality (*silā*), concentration, (*samādhi*), and insight (*paññā*), is embodied in the following beautiful verse:

"To cease from all evil,

To do what is good,

To cleanse one's mind:

This is the advice of all the Buddhas."

The first three Truths deal with the philosophy of the Buddha's Teaching, and the fourth with the practice in accordance with that philosophy.

Buddhism as such is neither an ordinary philosophy which deals with theorisings irrelevant to one's Deliverance from suffering and death, nor an ordinary ethical system which, though essential, is only the ABC of

Buddhism. The Buddha Dhamma is an ethico-philosophical system which is founded on the bedrock of facts that can be tested and verified by personal experience. Buddhism is therefore rational and practical devoid of esoteric doctrines, coercion, persecution or fanaticism. To its unique credit it should be said that during its peaceful march of 2500 years no drop of blood was shed in the name of the Buddha, and no conversion has ever been made either by force or by any repulsive methods.

Buddhism is saturated with this spirit of complete tolerance which is extended to men, women and all living beings.

It was the Buddha who for the first time in the known history of the world attempted to abolish slavery. It was He who vehemently protested against the caste-system that blocked the progress of mankind, and granted equal privileges to all. Irrespective of caste, colour, or rank. He established for both deserting men and women a celibate Order which was “democratic in constitution and communistic in distribution.” It was also the Buddha who raised the status of women and brought them to the realization of their importance in society. It was also the Buddha who banned the sacrifice of dumb animals and admonished His followers to extend their *Mettā* or loving-kindness to all living beings. It is this Buddhist *Mettā* that attempts to break all the barriers which promote separatism. To a Buddhist there is no far or near, no enemy or foreigner, no renegade or untouchable since universal love, realized through understanding has established the brotherhood of all living beings. A real Buddhist is a citizen of the world.

Buddhism is therefore unique mainly owing to its rationality,

practicality, efficacy and universality. It is the noblest of all unifying influences and the only lever that can uplift the world.

In addition to the four Noble Truths, the quintessence of Buddhism, the evidentially verifiable doctrines of Kamma and Rebirth form two inter-related, fundamental tenants of Buddhism. These two beliefs were prevalent in India before the advent of the Buddha but it was He who explained and formulated them in the completeness we have them today.

Kamma is the law of moral causation.

In its ultimate sense Kamma means moral and immoral volition (*Kusala akusala cetanā*). It embraces both past and present actions. Hence, in one sense, we are the result of what we were; we will be the result of what we are. In another sense, it should be added, we are not totally the result of what we were; we will not absolutely be the result of what we are. The present no doubt is the offspring of the past and is the parent of the future but the present is not always a true index of either the past or the future, for so intricate is the law of Kamma. As we sow, we reap in this life or in a future birth. What we reap today is what we have sown either in the past or in the present.

Kamma is a law in itself which operates in its own field without the intervention of an external, independent ruling agency. This law of Kamma explains the problem of suffering, the mystery of fate and pre-destination of mere religion, infant prodigies, and above all the inequality of mankind.

Rebirth is the corollary of Kamma. The *Bodhisatta* ideal and the correlative doctrine of freedom to attain utter perfection are based on this belief in

rebirth. It is Kamma that conditions rebirth. Past Kamma conditions the present birth, and present Kamma in combination with past Kamma conditions the future. The actuality of the present needs no proofs as it is self-evident. That of the past is based on memory and report, and that of the future on forethought and inference.

The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth should be differentiated from the theory of reincarnation and transmigration of other systems, because Buddhism denies the existence of a transmigrating permanent soul, created by God, or emanating from a *Paramatma*.

Buddhism resolves the living being into mind and matter (*Nāma* and *Rūpa*), which are in a state of constant flux. The whole process of these psycho-physical phenomena which are constantly becoming and passing away, is at times, in conventional term called the self or *Attā* by the Buddha: but it is a process, and not an identity that is thus termed.

Buddhism does not totally deny the existence of a personality in an empirical sense. It denies, in an ultimate sense, an identical being of a permanent

entity, but it does not deny a continuity in process. The Buddhist, philosophical term for an individual is *santati*, -that is, flux or continuity. This uninterrupted flux or continuity of psycho-physical phenomena, conditioned by Kamma, having no perceptible source in the beginningless past nor an end to its continuation in the future except by the Noble Eightfold Path, is the Buddhist substitute for the permanent ego or eternal soul in other religious systems.

As T. H. Huxley states "Buddhism is a system which knows no God in the Western senses, which denies a soul to man, which counts the belief in immortality a blunder, which refuses any efficacy to prayer and sacrifice, which bids men to look to nothing but their own efforts for salvation, which in its original purity knew nothing of vows of obedience and never sought the aid of the secular arm: yet spread over a considerable moiety of the world with marvelous rapidity -and is still the dominant creed of a large fraction of mankind."

May all be well and happy.

* * *

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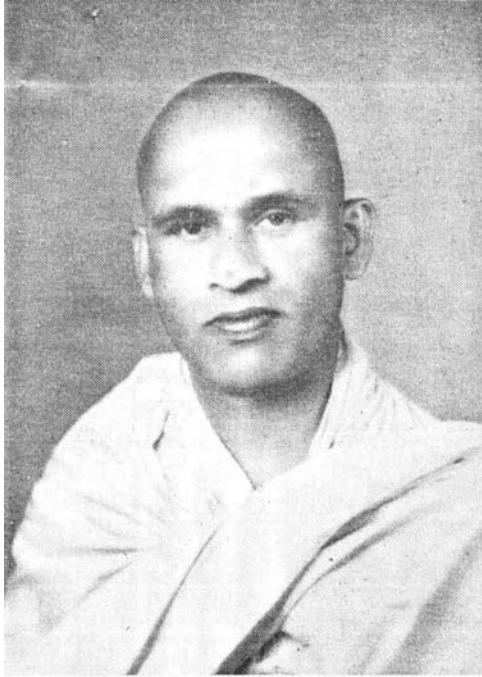
At the helm of a meteor
 Plunging in space
 Resistance piles up
 Stark concentration.
 Then with explosion
 The barrier is broken -
 Sound streams behind -
 Man flies into silence.

This is material
 This is activist,
 Born of the passive
 Desire for forgetfulness.

At the helm of the Self
 Steadily rising
 In spite of resistance
 Stark concentration.
 Quiet and quieter
 All barriers are broken -
 lusts are no more -
 Man soars into Silence.

This is not material
 Though it is activist,
 Born of the active
 Desire for Salvation.

OHN GHINE



Bhikkhu B. Jinananda Thera. He is a Sinhalese Bhikkhu well versed in Pāli literature. A few years ago he went over to Madras to propagate the Buddha-Dhamma there.

PĀṬALIPUTTA

BY VEN. B. JINANANDA THERO

Director, Maha Bodhi Society, Madras Centre.

Pāṭaliputta is a great name in the history of India. It was the capital of the first historical empire in India which was ruled over by Chandragupta, the Moriya King the liberator of India who drove back the Greeks and freed India from foreign domination.

Chandragupta ascended the throne in B.C. 300 and during the period of twenty-four years that he ruled, he extended his sway over the whole of northern India, as far as the Narbada River. During his rule his capital Pāṭaliputta, grew into a great city. Megasthenes, who was sent as an ambassador to the court of Chandragupta, by the Greek Satrap Seleukos, writing about the magnificence of this city, says "Pāṭaliputta is a magnificent city, worthy to be the capital of a great empire. This capital is defended by a massive timber palisade, with sixty-four gates and five hundred and seventy towers and a moat outside. The royal camp contains 400,000 persons and the state army includes 600,000 infantry, 300,000 cavalry, 9,000 elephants and a multitude of chariots. Not only the King but his courtesans as well are carried in palanquins of gold.

Chandragupta was succeeded by his son, Bindusara, who kept intact the great empire his father had won and bequeathed it unimpaired to his son Asoka. Asoka ascended the throne in the year B.C. 264 and held it for about forty years. He conquered new countries and extended still further the empire that was founded by his grandfather. It goes without saying that together with the

expansion of his empire, Asoka contributed to the further growth of his capital and considerably added to the pomp and wealth of this Imperial city, Pāṭaliputta. But the real greatness that this city attained lies not so much in its pomp and material wealth but in the spiritual wealth with which Asoka adorned it.

Asoka was a great and true disciple of the Exalted Buddha. There is no parallel in Buddhist history to the whole-hearted devotion with which he served the Dhamma. That he held during his reign, the Third Buddhist council in Pāṭaliputta, is enough to prove the magnitude of the zeal with which he served the cause of Buddhism.

The First Council was held soon after the death of the Buddha by the chief disciples of the Exalted One. The Second Council was held one hundred years later. Two hundred and thirty-six years after the death of the Buddha and eighteen years after the coronation of Asoka. This great king held in his capital, Pāṭaliputta, the Third Council to examine and confirm the Buddhist canon on the lines the first two councils had done. A thousand orthodox bhikkhus of holy character were selected to form this Council. The Council recited and verified the whole body of the scripture and after a session lasting nine months they completed their task and dispersed. History bears testimony also, in the form of Rock Edicts, viharas and stupas that have been discovered in modern times, not only in different parts of India but in several distant countries beyond the borders of India, to the great missionary work Asoka did during his

lifetime. Just as he sent his son, Mahinda, and his daughter, Sanghamitta, for the spread of Dhamma to Ceylon, he sent also learned Bhikkhus not only to different parts of India but even to such distant countries as Syria in Western Asia, Macedonia in Eastern Europe, Egypt and North Africa, to teach the people there the Doctrine of the Buddha and built viharas, stupas and hospitals in all these distant parts of the world.

One can well imagine, during the reign of this great king who was so amazingly enterprising in spreading the light of the Dhamma even in the distant countries of three different continents to what glory his own capital Pāṭaliputta must have risen, as a religious metropolis of Buddhism and how it must have been gem-like, studded with magnificent religious monuments. Unfortunately, some time after the death of Asoka, however, this great city met with destruction and was buried underground. The Chinese Pilgrim Hiuen Tsiang, who came to India in the seventh century, says that he saw only

the ruins of this great city. But although even Hiuen Tsiang, so far back as the seventh century, could not catch a glimpse of the glory that was Pāṭaliputta, we in modern times are able to do so. For the gratifying news has been published that the Archaeological Department of India by their recent excavation work at Patna, which is the modern name for the old Pāṭaliputta, have brought to light important finds which are likely to lead us to more knowledge of the cultural and aesthetic history of Pāṭaliputta, the imperial capital of India. The most important among these finds is a Buddhist Monastery that has been unearthed. A seal found in this monastery bears the inscription “Arogya Vihāra – Bhikkhu-Sangassa”, which clearly shows that this monastery was in those golden days a sort of sanatorium meant for bhikkhus.

Let us hope that this work of excavation at Patna, which is still in progress, will throw a further light on the spiritual and architectural achievements of that noble Asoka the Great, in the old city’ of Pāṭaliputta.

“You may find two Almsmen maintaining divergent views on the Abhidhamma. In the first case, if you find the two differing both as to the meaning and as to the letter, first send for the Almsman to the one action whom you deem the more amenable and tell him what is the rightful view on the points at issue, bidding him not to stir up strife. Next send for the Almsman of the opposing faction whom you deem the more amenable and tell him what is the rightful view on the points at issue, begging him not to stir up strife. Thereby what is erroneously held is to be recognised as erroneous; and the Doctrine and Rule are to be duly set forth accordingly. Proceed likewise if the divergence is confined either to the meaning or to the letter, or if there be really no divergence at all but real agreement between both sides on both aspects. Thereby what is erroneously held is to be recognized as erroneous, where it is erroneous; and what is correctly held is to be recognized as being correct, where it is correct; and the Doctrine and Rule are to be duly set forth, with these recognitions.”

Kinti Sutta

THE NOBLE EIGHT-FOLD PATH OF ENLIGHTENMENT

DR. LUANG SURIYABONGS M. D.

Had the Buddha only taught the Noble Truth of Suffering, its origin and its cessation, the world would look very dark indeed, and even death would be no escape from suffering, as we have to be reborn according to the Kamma we created for ourselves. The Knowledge of the first three Noble Truths would only make us feel more unhappy than ever before. But the Buddha in his Enlightenment discovered the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering, to the deliverance from the Circle of Rebirth to the attainment of Nibbāna. he not only discovered the Eight-fold Path but actually experienced it by himself and then taught it to mankind. The Eight-fold Path is based upon the Law of Kamma and upon the Law of Impermanence, Painfulness, and Non-Self of individual life and of all the universe. It is the absolute truth and the only way to Salvation. All roads may lead to Rome, but the Eight Fold Path is the only way that leads to Nibbāna.

It is a path of cognition of the true facts of life, a practical method of training the mind “by gradual onsetting, gradual progress, gradual ascension” to full knowledge of the Absolute Truth, to highest wisdom, eternal peace — Nibbāna (Majjhīma-Nikāya). Whereas in mere religions “life is all” or “love is all.” in Buddhism “mind is all”. In Buddhism the mind is the sixth sense which controls the other five senses. In philosophy the mind is regarded by many as all important, while others hold that matter is all. In science, the mind is the thinking part of the brain which associates all sense-impressions, registers and stores them up for later reference; and all our reactions to these sense impressions are communicated by the mind to the outside world. Thus, in

science as well as in Buddhism the mind is the all important organ which causes us to act and react. It is the most important part of our individuality which can be trained for good or for bad. Therefore, the Buddha said:

Nothing know I, ye Monks, that without exercise would be more inflexible than the mind.”

Nothing know I, ye Monks, that by being exercised would be more flexible than the mind.”

Nothing know I, ye Monks, that without being exercised leads to such distress as the mind.”

Nothing know I, ye Monks, that by being exercised leads to such prosperity as the mind.”

Nothing know I, ye Monks, that without exercise, without being developed, generates such suffering as the mind.”

Nothing know I, ye Monks, that by being exercised, and developed, generates such bliss as the mind.”

— (Majjhīma-Nikāya.)

It is this gradual exercise and development of the mind which the Buddha taught in his Eight-fold Path of Enlightenment. The Eight-fold Path consists of eight paths each of which leads to the next following Path and when practised together constitute the Middle Path to Enlightenment, to supreme wisdom, to the deliverance from all Suffering and, Rebirth — to Nibbāna. The eight paths are:

1. **Right Understanding** (*Sammā Dīṭṭhi*): It is the first path and means to acquire right understanding of the Buddha-Dhamma, namely to know the

Four Noble Truths, the Attachment to the Five Aggregates of Existence, the Law of Kamma and Rebirth, the Holy Eightfold Path and Nibbāna, which are the five fundamental Teachings of the Buddha discovered by him and which cannot be found in any other teaching.

In the usual way we receive our Knowledge by listening to Sermons preached by the Holy Brotherhood on Fast Days and on any other occasions where monks are invited to deliver a Sermon. We also derive our knowledge by reading the text of the Scriptures which contain the Buddha's own words or by studying books written on the subject of Buddhism. Unfortunately, however, there are not many translations as yet available in our own language (Thai) of the Teachings of the Buddha as told by himself. Furthermore, the sermons delivered by our monks explaining the Buddha-Dhamma are often intermingled with so many Pāli words that those who have not studied the Pāli language or have not become used to the technical terms used in Buddhism do not profit from the sermon as they might since they cannot understand what it is all about. Being a Buddhist country we should make an all out effort to translate the Scriptures into our own language and we should all regard it as our holy duty to spread the Buddha-Dhamma and bring it within easy reach of all for the spiritual welfare of mankind.

2. Right Mindedness (Sammā-Sankappa): It means first of all to be absolutely clear in our mind as to the aims of the Buddha-Dhamma and of its final goal, namely to purify the heart of all Kilesa (mental defilements), to destroy evil, to prevent evil, to do good and to maintain it for the sole purpose of attaining to our Salvation from all suffering and rebirth, that is to Nibbāna. Once we have made that clear in our

mind we must make the right resolution to act and live in such a way that we may achieve the goal, however far away it may seem to us. We must ever be on our guard not to do anything which might hinder this achievement. We must train our minds by the practice of self-restraint and self-control gradually until our minds become free from sensuality free from ill-will and free from cruelty. This is Right Mindedness.

3. Right Speech (Sammā Vācā): Having gained the right understanding of the Dhamma and having made the Right resolution, Right speech becomes the natural consequence of the first two Paths. Having attained Right Mindedness we cannot but express our mental purity in any other way than by Right Speech which is the third Path and means to abstain from lying, slandering, using harsh language, and vain talk.

4. Right Action (Sammā Kammanta): This is to abstain from killing any sentient being, from stealing and from wrong sexual intercourse. Right action is the logical consequence of our Right Mindedness and of Right Speech. To be truthful to one's firm resolve and to one's given word we must act rightly.

5. Right Livelihood (Sammā Ajīva): This is to renounce wrong ways of living. Therefore, the following trades are forbidden: the selling of arms, selling live animals, meat, intoxicants and poison. In our modern times it is hard to avoid such trades, but as long as science has not yet found the means of producing proteins and other foodstuffs in sufficiently large quantities which would make it unnecessary to live on animals, fish and fowl, those who trade in these things will have to bear the consequences of their bad Kamma.

6. Right Effort (Sammā Vāyāma): Even the most determined resolution

and right-livelihood would sooner or later fail if we did not make the Right Efforts to keep on doing right things. The Buddha not only taught us to make the right effort but he showed us how to destroy evil and to avoid evil to do good and to maintain it, but we should do good not only for our own sake, but out of loving kindness and compassion we should seek to do good for others too, for all sentient beings. Therefore, for the Buddhist of today, it is his holy duty to give service to others and to spread the Buddha-Dhamma for the good of all mankind.

The Buddha stressed more than anything else the importance of making the Right Effort. Contrary to the practice of the Brahmins who kept their wisdom for themselves and for the benefit of their own caste, the Buddha was the first great Teacher to proclaim his Teachings to the world at large. The Buddha made no distinction; he taught and received men of all ranks into his Order. He sent forth his monks to proclaim the Dhamma with the following exhortation:

“Go ye, oh Bhikkhus, and wander forth for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of Compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain, for the welfare of gods and men. Proclaim, O Bhikkhus, the Dhamma Glorious, preach ye a life of holiness, perfect and pure.”

Let us therefore awaken from our lethargy and do something really good, let us help spread the Buddha-Dhamma and bring it within easy reach of all.

7. Right Attentiveness (Sammā Sati): This consists of meditation and contemplation of our own selves, namely of our body organs and of the Five Aggregates of Existence as being “impermanent, miserable, and void of self”. We then meditate upon the whole

Buddha-Dhamma. By continued meditation upon those objects we exercise the mind to such a degree of concentration that we gradually gain insight into the true facts of life and become more and more convinced of the Absolute Truth, namely:

- 1) that Ignorance is the cause of all life (Saṅkhāra) because it causes the Three-fold Craving to arise, namely Sexual Desire, the Desire to be and to possess, and the Desire not to be nor to possess whatever one dislikes (Kama Taṇhā — Bhava Taṇhā — Vibhava Taṇhā).
- (2) that Taṇhā is the cause of our Attachment to the Five Aggregates of Existence which we falsely believe to be the very essence of our individuality. It is also the cause of Rebirth because the desire to live is so great that our Kamma at the moment of death grasps a new being and thus perpetuates the Circle of Rebirth.
- (3) That we are but the sum of our previous and present Kamma and have made ourselves what we are now and will determine our future existence and the state into which we shall be reborn.
- (4) That all things in this world are things compounded (Saṅkhāra) and are impermanent — miserable — and void of self.
- (5) That the only way to escape from this world of Impermanence and Suffering and from the Circle of Rebirth is to purify the mind from all defilements (Kilesa) and from all attachment to the Five Aggregates of Existence, to avoid evil, and to do good. Having destroyed Kilesa and Kamma itself we attain to NIBBĀNA.

Right Attentiveness (Sammā Sati) is only a preliminary step to Full Concentration; it consists of continued meditation and concentration of mind in order to gain insight and to become gradually convinced of the Absolute Truth.

8. Right Concentration (Sammā Samādhi): This is a state of mind where all Seven Paths are present, which means that we have progressed along the Middle Path of Enlightenment and have developed the mind to such an extent that having attained to Full Concentration of mind, we now turn away from wrong speech, wrong action and wrong ways of living. In the Buddha's own words Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Living mean "What turns aft; turns away, turns aside, averts from the four kinds of evil talk, the three kinds of evil actions, and a wrong mode of life." (*Majjhīma Nikāya* - 117th Sutta, *Cattarisaka Suttam*). Right concentration can also be said to be a state of mind which is accompanied by various states of Bliss, the JHĀNAS, and occurs only temporarily during meditation.

Thus the Middle Path of Enlightenment reveals itself as a gradual perfection of the mind to highest Wisdom and Insight of the true facts of life.

In the first Path we gain Knowledge and Understanding of the Dhamma. In the second Path we make the Right Resolution to attain to the final goal which is Nibbāna, and we already are walking along the Eight-fold Path by

beginning to free the mind of Sensuality, Ill-will and Cruelty. Having made the Right Resolution and purified our mind we continue along the Path by attaining to Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood. In the sixth Path we make the Right Effort to maintain the good we have done and to avoid all evil. In the seventh Path we have progressed to such an extent that by the practice of meditation we gain more insight and become more and more convinced of the Absolute Truth of the Dhamma. And in the eighth Path we have reached such perfection of mind that we actually turn away from Wrong Speech, Wrong Action and Wrong Ways of living.

Unlike religions which are based upon faith alone, in Buddhism "mind is all." It is only the well trained mind, the mind developed to its highest capacity to wisdom and intuitive insight which can realise its own Salvation from all Suffering and Rebirth by following the Noble Middle Path of Enlightenment discovered and experienced by the Buddha. And only one who is himself free, from the mire, can pull others out of the mire.

It is precisely for having discovered the Eight-fold Path that the Buddha has been praised by his Disciples as The Discoverer of the Undiscovered Path, the Creator of the Uncreated Path, the Explainer of the Unexplained Path, the Knower of the Path, the Acquainted with the Path, the Expert us the Path." (*Majjhīma Nikāya*. 108th Sutta, *Gopakamoggallana Suttam*)

THE MEANING OF LIFE

NĀRADA MAHĀ THERA

“This body so full of flesh and blood I bear,

Just for the world’s good and welfare.”

Sri Sanghabodhi.

WHO? WHENCE? WHITHER?

WHY? WHAT? are some important problems that affect all humanity.

Who is man? is our first question.

Let us proceed with what is self-evident and perceptible to all.

Man possesses a body which is seen either by our senses or by means of apparatus. This material body consists of forces and qualities which are in a state of constant flux.

Scientists find it difficult to define what matter is. Certain philosophers define matter as that in which proceed the changes called motion, and motions are those changes which proceed in matter.”

The Pāli term for matter is *Rūpa*. It is explained as that which changes or disintegrates. That which manifests itself is also another explanation.

There are four fundamental units of matter. They are *Paṭhavī*, *Āpo*, *Tejo* and *Vāyo*.

Paṭhavī means the element of extension, the substratum of matter. Without it, objects cannot occupy space. The qualities of hardness and softness, which are purely relative, are two conditions of this element. This element of extension is present in earth, water, fire, and air. For instance, the water above is supported by water below. It is this element of extension in conjunction

with the element of motion (*Vāyo*) that produces the upward pressure.

Āpo is the element of cohesion. Unlike *Paṭhavī* it is intangible. It is this element which coheres the scattered atoms of matter and gives as the idea of body.

Tejo is the element of heat. Cold is also a form of *Tejo*. Both heat and cold are included in *Tejo* because they possess the power of maturing bodies, or in other words, the vitalizing energy. Preservation and decay are due to this element.

Vāyo is the element of motion. The movements are caused by this element. Motion is regarded as the force or the generator of heat. Both motion and heat in the material realm correspond respectively to consciousness and Kamma in the mental.

These four powerful forces are inseparable and inter-related; but one element may preponderate over another, as, for instance, the element of extension preponderates in earth; cohesion, in water; heat, in fire; and motion, in air.

Thus, matter consists of forces and qualities which constantly change, not remaining for two consecutive moments the same.

At the moment of birth, scientists tell us that man inherits from his parents an infinitesimally minute cell 1/120th of an inch across. “In the course of nine months this speck grows to a living bulk 15,000 million times greater than it was at outset.” This tiny cell is the physical foundation of man.

Sex is also determined at the very conception.

Combined with matter there is another important factor in this complex machinery of man. It is the mind. As such it pleases some learned writers to say that man is not Mind plus Body, but is a Mind-Body. Scientists tell us that life emerges from matter and mind from life. But it does not give us a satisfactory explanation with regard to the development of the mind.

Unlike the material body, immaterial mind is invisible, but it could be sensed directly. An old couplet runs:

“What is mind? No matter.

What is matter? Never mind.”

We are aware of thoughts, feelings, and so forth by direct sensation, and we infer their existence in others by analogy.

There are several Pāli terms for mind, *Mano*, *Citta*, *Vīññāna* are the most noteworthy of them. Compare the term *man*, to think, with the English word ‘man’ and the Pāli word *Manussa* which means he who has an uprising consciousness.

In Buddhism no distinction is made between mind and consciousness. Both are used as synonymous terms. Mind may be defined as simply the awareness of an object since there is no agent or a soul that directs all activities. It consists of fleeting mental states which constantly arise and perish with lightning rapidity. With birth for its source and death for its mouth it persistently flows on like a river receiving from the tributary streams of sense, constant accretions to its flood. Each momentary consciousness of this ever-changing life-stream, on passing away, transmits its whole energy, all the indelibly recorded impressions to its

successor. Every fresh consciousness, therefore, consists of the potentialities of its predecessors and something more. As all impressions are indelibly recorded in this ever-changing palimpsest-like mind, and as all potentialities are transmitted from life to life, irrespective of temporary physical disintegrations, reminiscence of past births or past incidents becomes a possibility. If memory depends solely on brain cells, it becomes an impossibility.

Like electricity, mind is both a constructive and destructive powerful force. It is like a double-edged weapon that can equally be used either for good or evil. One single thought that arises in this invisible mind can even save or destroy the world. One such thought can either populate or depopulate a whole country.

Ouspensky writes: —“Concerning the latent energy contained in the phenomena of consciousness, *i.e.*, in thoughts, feelings, desires, we discover that its potentiality is even more immeasurable, more boundless. From personal experience, from observation, from history, we know that ideas, feelings, desires manifesting themselves, can liberate enormous quantities of energy and create infinite series of phenomena. An idea can act for centuries and millenniums and only grow and deepen, evoking ever-new series of phenomena, liberating ever-fresh energy. We know that thoughts continue to live and act when even the very name of the man who created them has been converted into a myth, like the names of founders of ancient religions, the creators of the immortal works of antiquity --- heroes, leaders, and prophets. Their words are repeated by innumerable lips, their ideas are studied and commented upon.

“Undoubtedly each thought of a poet contains enormous potential force, like the power confined in a piece of coal or in a living cell, but infinitely more subtle, imponderable and potent.”

Observe, for instance, the potential force that lies in the following significant words of the Buddha:

Mano pubbaṅgamā dhammā
Mano seṭṭhā manomayā

“Mind foreruns all mental states, mind is chief, and mind-made are they.”

Mind or consciousness arises at the very moment of conception. Consciousness is therefore present in the foetus. This initial consciousness, technically known as rebirth consciousness or rethinking consciousness (*Paṭisandhi vīññāna*) is conditioned by past kamma of the person concerned. The subtle mental and intellectual differences that exist amongst mankind are due to this Kamma-conditioned consciousness, the second factor of the man.

To complete the trio that constitutes man there is a third factor, the phenomenon of life that vitalises both mind and matter. Due to the presence of life, reproduction becomes possible. Life manifests itself both in physical and mental phenomena. In Pāli the two forms of life are termed *Nāmajīvitindriya* and *Rūpajīvitindriya* —psychic and physical life.

Matter, mind, and life are therefore the three distinct factors that constitute man. With their combination a powerful force known as man, with inconceivable possibilities, comes into being. He becomes his own creator and destroyer. He creates his own heaven and hell. In him are found a rubbish heap of evil and a storehouse of virtue. In him are found the worm, the brute, the man, the superman, the Deva, the Brahma. He

may either be a blessing or a curse to himself and others. In fact the man is a world by himself.

Whence? is our second question.

How did man originate?

Either there must be a beginning or there cannot be a beginning for man. Those who belong to the first school posit a first cause, whether as cosmic force or as an Almighty being. Those who belong to the second school deny a first cause for, in common experience, the cause ever becomes the effect and the effect becomes the cause. In a circle of cause and effect a first cause is inconceivable. According to the former, life has had a beginning whilst according to the latter it is beginningless. In the opinion of some the conception of a first cause is as ridiculous as a round triangle.

According to the scientific point of view, man is the direct product of the sperm and ovum cells provided by his parents. Scientists while asserting ‘*Omne vivum ex vivo*’ “all life from life,” maintain that mind and life evolved from the lifeless.

Dealing with Cosmic Purpose, Bertrand Russell states three kinds of views — theistic, pantheistic, and, ‘emergent’. “The first,” he writes, “holds that God created the world and decreed the laws of nature because he foresaw that in time some good would be evolved. In this view the purpose exists consciously in the mind of the Creator, who remains external to His Creation.

In the pantheistic form, God is not external to the universe, but is merely the universe considered as a whole. There cannot, therefore, be an act of creation, but there is a kind of creative force in the universe which causes it to develop according to a plan which this

creative force may be said to have had in mind throughout the process.

In the 'emergent' form, the purpose is more blind. At an earlier stage, nothing in the universe foresees a later stage, but a kind of blind impulsion heads to those changes which bring more developed forms into existence, so that, in some rather obscure sense, the end is implicit in the beginning.

We offer no comments. These are merely the views of different religionists and great thinkers.

Whether there is a cosmic purpose or not a question arises as to the usefulness of the tapeworm, snakes, mosquitoes and so forth, and for the existence of rabies and hydrophobia. How does one account for the problem of evil? Are earthquakes, floods, pestilences, and wars designed?

Expressing his own view about Cosmic Purpose, Russell boldly declares: - "Why, in any case, this glorification of man? How about lions and tigers? They destroy fewer animal or human lives than we do, and they are much more beautiful than we are. How about ants? They manage the Corporate State much better than any Fascist. Would not a world of nightingales, and larks and deer be better than our human world of cruelty and injustice and war? The believers in cosmic purpose make much of our supposed intelligence, but their writings make one doubt it. If I were granted omnipotence, and millions of years to experiment in, I should not think Man much to boast of as the final result of all my efforts."

Now, from the scientific point of view, man is absolutely parent-born. As such life precedes life. With regard to the origin of the first protoplasm of life, or 'colloid' (whichever we please to call it), scientists plead ignorance.

Man is born from the matrix of action (*kammayoni*). Parents merely provide man with a material layer. As such, being precedes being. At the moment of conception, it is Kamma that conditions the initial consciousness that vitalises the foetus. It is this invisible Kammic energy generated from the past births that produces mental phenomena and the phenomenon of life in an already extant physical phenomenon, to complete the trio that constitutes man.

Dealing with the conception of beings, the Buddha states:

"Where three are found in combination, there a germ of life is planted. If mother and father come together, but it is not the mother's period, and the 'being-to-be-born' (*gandhabba*) is not present then no germ of life is planted. If mother and father come together, and it is the mother's period, but the 'being-to-be-born' is not present then again no germ of life is planted. If mother and father come together, and it is the mother's period, and 'being-to-be-born' is also present, then, by the combination of these three, a germ of life is there planted."

Here *gandhabba* (*gantabba*) refers to a suitable being ready to be born in that particular womb. This term is used only in this particular connection, and must not be mistaken for a permanent soul.

For a being to be born here, a being must die somewhere. The birth of a being corresponds to the death of a being in past life; just as in conventional terms, the rising of the sun in one place means the setting of the sun in another place.

The Buddha states — "a first beginning of beings who, obstructed by ignorance and fettered by craving,

wander and fare on, is not to be perceived.”

This life-stream flows *ad infinitum* as long as it is fed by the muddy waters of ignorance and craving. When these two are completely cut off, then only does this life-stream cease to flow: rebirths end as in the case of Buddhas and Arahats. An ultimate beginning of this life-stream cannot be determined, as a stage cannot be perceived when this life force was not fraught with ignorance and craving.

The Buddha has here referred merely to the beginning of the life-stream of living beings. It is left to scientists to speculate as to the origin and the evolution of the universe.

Whither? is our third question.

Where goes man?

According to ancient materialism, which in Pāli and Sanskrit is known as *loka-yata*, man is annihilated after death, leaving behind him any force generated by him. Man is composed of four elements. When man dies the earthy element returns and relapses into the earth, the watery element returns into the water, the fiery element returns into the fire, the airy element returns into the air, the senses pass into space. Wise and fools alike, when the body dissolves, are cut off, perish, do not exist any longer.” There is no other world. Death is the end of all. This present world alone is real. The so-called eternal heaven and hell are the inventions of impostors.

Materialists believe only in what is cognizable by the senses. As such matter alone is real. The ultimate principles are the four elements – earth, water, fire, and air. The self-conscious life mysteriously springs forth from them, just as the genie makes his appearance when Aladdin rubs his lamp. The brain

secretes thought just as liver secretes bile.

In the view of those materialists the belief in the other world is a sign of mendaciousness, feminism, weakness, cowardice and dishonesty.”

According to certain religious systems there is no past for man. The present is only a preparation for two eternities of heaven and hell. Whether they are viewed as places or states man has, for his future, endless felicity in heaven or endless suffering in hell. Man is therefore not annihilated after death, but his essence goes to eternity.

Those religionists who believe in a past and present do not state that man is annihilated after death. Nor do they say that man is eternalized after death. They believe in an endless series of past and future births, in their opinion the life stream of man flows *ad infinitum* as long as it is propelled by the force of Kamma, one’s actions. In due course the essence of man may be reabsorbed in the Ultimate Reality (*Paramatma*) from which his soul emanated.

Buddhism believes in the present. With the present as the basis it argues the past and future. Just as an electric light is the outward manifestation of invisible electric energy even so man is merely the outward manifestation of an invisible energy known as Kamma. The bulb may break and the light may be extinguished, but the current remains and the light may be reproduced in another bulb. In the same way the Kammic force remains undisturbed by the disintegration of the physical body, and the passing away of the present consciousness leads to the arising of a fresh one in another birth. Here the electric current is like the Kammic force, and the bulb may be compared to the egg cell provided by the parents.

Past Kamma conditions the present birth; and present Kamma, in combination with past Kamma, conditions the future. The present is the offspring of the past, and becomes in turn the parent of the future.

Death is therefore not the complete annihilation of man, for though that particular life span has ended, the force which hitherto actuated it is not destroyed.

After death the life-flux of man continues ad infinitum as long as it is fed by the waters of ignorance and craving. In conventional terms man need not necessarily be reborn as a man. He may be reborn as a man or as an animal, an invisible *Peta*, *Deva* or *Brahma*, according to his Kamma. Moreover, earth is not the only place in which a person will seek rebirth. He may be born in other habitable planes as well. There are about 1,000,000 planetary systems in the Milky Way in which life in some form may exist.

If man wishes to put an end to this repeated series of births, he can do so as the Buddhas and *Arahats* have done by realizing *Nibbāna*, the complete cessation of all forms of craving.

Where does man go? He can go wherever he wills if he is fit for it. If he does not will and leaves his path to be prepared by the course of events, he will go to the place he fully deserves.

Why? is our last question.

Why is man? Is there a purpose in life?

This is rather a controversial question.

What is the materialistic point of view?

As materialists confine themselves purely to sense-data and the present

material welfare ignoring all spiritual values, they hold a view diametrically opposite to that of moralists. In their opinion there is no purposer, hence there cannot be a purpose.

“Who colours wonderfully the peacocks, or makes the cuckoos coo so well?” This is one of the chief arguments of the materialists to attribute everything to the natural order of things.

“Eat, drink and be merry, for death comes to all, closing our lives,” appears to be the ethical ideal of their system. In their opinion as, Radhakrishna writes, “Virtue is a delusion and enjoyment is the only reality. Life is the end of life. Religion is a foolish aberration, a mental disease. There was distrust of everything good, high, pure and compassionate. The theory stands for sensualism and selfishness and the gross affirmation of the loud will. There is no need to control passion and instinct, since they are nature’s legacy to men.”

Sarvadarsana Sangraha says:

“While life is yours, live joyously

Noise can escape Death’s searching eye;

When once this frame of ours they burn,

How shall it e’er again return?”

“While life remains let a man live happily, let him feed on ghee even though he runs in debt.”

Now let its turn towards science to get a solution to the question why.

Sir. J. Arthur Thomson maintains that science is incomplete because it cannot answer the question why.

Now, how does Buddhism answer the question why.

Buddhism denies the existence of a God-Creator. As such from a Buddhist

point of view there cannot be a foreordained purpose. Nor does Buddhism advocate fatalism, determinism, or pre-destination which controls man's future independent of his free actions. In such a case freewill becomes an absolute farce and life becomes purely mechanistic. To a certain extent man's actions are more or less mechanistic, being influenced by his own doings, upbringing, environment and so forth, but man can exercise his freewill. A person, for instance, falling from a cliff will be attracted to the ground just as an inanimate stone would. In this case he cannot use his freewill although he has a mind unlike the stone. If he were to climb a cliff, he could certainly use his freewill and act as he likes. A stone, on the contrary, is not free to do so of its own accord. Man has the power to choose between right and wrong, good and bad. Man can either be hostile or friendly to himself and others. It all depends on his mind and its development.

Although there is no specific purpose in man's existence, yet man is free to have some purpose in life.

What therefore is the meaning of life?

The meaning of life lies in Supreme Enlightenment (*Sambodhi*) i.e. understanding oneself as one really is. This is achieved through Sublime Conduct, (*Sīla*) Mental Culture, (*Samādhi*) and penetrative insight (*Bhāvanā*) or in other words through service and perfection. In service are included love, compassion, and renunciation which prompt man to be of service to others. Perfection embraces absolute purity and absolute wisdom.

The Buddha, the flower of humanity, was an embodiment of service and perfection. Buddhahood is latent in us all.

Serve to be perfect; be perfect to serve.

LIFE

“As when huge mountain crags,
piercing the sky,
Advance in avalanches on all sides,
Crushing the plains east, west, north
and south,
So age and death come rolling over
all.

Noble and brahmin, commoner and
serf,

None can evade, or play the truant
here.

Th'impending doom o'erwhelmeth
one and all.

Here is no place for strife with
elephants,

Or chariots of war, or infantry,

Nay, nor for war of woven spell or
curse,

Nor may finance avail to win the day.

Wherefore let him that hath
intelligence

And strength of mind, to his own
good attend,

In Buddha, Norm, and Order place
his trust.

Who doeth right in deed and word
and thought

Here winneth praise, and bliss in life
to come.” -*Kindred Sayings Vol. I. p. 127*

“Sons are no shelter, nor father, nor
any kinsfolk.

Overtaken by death, for thee blood
bond is no refuge.

Discerning this truth, the wise man,
well ordered by virtue,

Swiftly makes clear the road leading
to *Nibbāna*.” -*Psalm of the Sisters*

Now, it is impossible for a man who is bogged, himself to extricate another who is bogged too; but it is possible for a man who is himself not bogged, to extricate another who is. It is impossible for a man who is himself not broken-in, schooled and emancipated to break-in, school and emancipate another. But the converse is possible.

Sallekha-Sutta.

* * *

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* * *

“Take the case, Ānanda, of the disciple of the Noble who reflects that all these pleasures of sense, here or hereafter - with all perceptions of them, all Form, here or hereafter, with all perceptions of Form, all perceptions of Permanence, of the Realm of Naught, and of Neither Perception-nor-Non-Perception, all mean mere Individuality, whereas one thing only is Deathless, to wit, the heart’s Deliverance, which knows no sustentation.”

Ānanda Sappāva Sutta

SHRINES OF BURMA, No. 6.

THE PAGODAS OF PAGĀN.

U OHN GHINE

Some 300 miles north of Rangoon in a half-forgotten yet quite accessible part of Burma is a wonderland of architecture, history, ethnology and romance.

Here, nine years before William the Conqueror invaded England, ruled King Anoratha who at that time had obtained a full set of the Buddhist Scriptures, and this began an intensity of pagoda-building that was to last for two hundred years until as a “tyrannous breathing of the north” the Tartar invaders sacked the city of Pagān.

Tradition says that in the course of centuries there have been many thousands of pagodas constructed at Pagān: certainly one may yet see hundreds of ruins and many still, well preserved in that dry climate, expressing their ancient glory.

In our Vol. 1, No. 4 is a compelling article: “Pagān” by Dr. Frank Tracer of TCA Washington; and we make no apology for reproducing the impression gained by another American, John Brohm of Cornell University.

“There is a great deal to tell about my travels, more than anyone can pack into one of these miserable air letters. For what space there is, however, I should tell you that seeing Pagān from the Irrawaddy was one of the really great experiences of my life, and at the same time one of the most frustrating ones. I don’t mean to be critical of modern Burma, for I know what forces have made it the country that it is, but I must say that for me Pagān was the one great inspiration I have taken away with me this time. The fact that a monument of such magnitude remains relatively

unknown in the western world—compared, for example, to other such monuments as Angkor or Borobudur—is a tragedy of the first order. This should not continue to be, for Pagān is a symbol which gives Burma a dignity and stature far beyond the power of contemporary words and deeds. If the present Burmese government is searching for themes about which to spin a web of nationalistic overtones, they are inexcusably ignorant of both method and fact if they don’t use Pagān to the hilt. Impressive? It staggers the imagination. Beautiful? I don’t mind exposing my emotions by saying that Ānanda literally brought tears to my eyes. Inspiring? No one could behold such architecture without giving thanks that an exe genius had been given the vehicle for impression. I hope that the day will come when I can visit that place properly and when such beauty will have a nobler fate than to be neglected and desecrated as at present.”

In addition to the Ānanda Pagoda there is the Thapyinnyu, referred to by Dr. Trager in equally moving terms, there is the unusual “Bu” Pagoda of which none can remember the builder, and the Shway See Khon which was begun by King Anoratha and finished by his son King Kyansittha.

Then there is, among the others we illustrate, the Maha Bodhi built after the style of the one erected by the great Emperor Asoka at Bodh Gaya.

The kings and the people who reared these inspired monuments of a deep and moving devotion to the Teaching of the Buddha, have long passed away and the pagodas themselves, subject to the universal law

of Anicca (Impermanence) are, many of them, in ruins. But the blood of those kings and that people and their spirit are still in present-day Burma and the same deep devotion to the Buddha dhamma moves the people today.

However, in this changed age, one finds also a practical end in view. Today's centre is Rangoon and today's building is of the now completed Kabā Aye, World Peace Pagoda, and the buildings round it. These great buildings are for the purpose of housing the great International Buddhist Council, sixth since the *Mahāparinibbāna* of the Buddha.

For this Council Burma is to be the host. After the Council which ends in 2500 B.E. (1956 C.F.) the buildings are to serve as a Buddhist university, a centre of learning and of culture.

And I think those ancient kings and the people from whom modern democratic Burmans are descended will, if they can remember and compare the past and the present, approve and exclaim "*Sādhū Sādhū Sādhū!*" for Burma today is modern Burma because of the pagodas of ancient Pagān.

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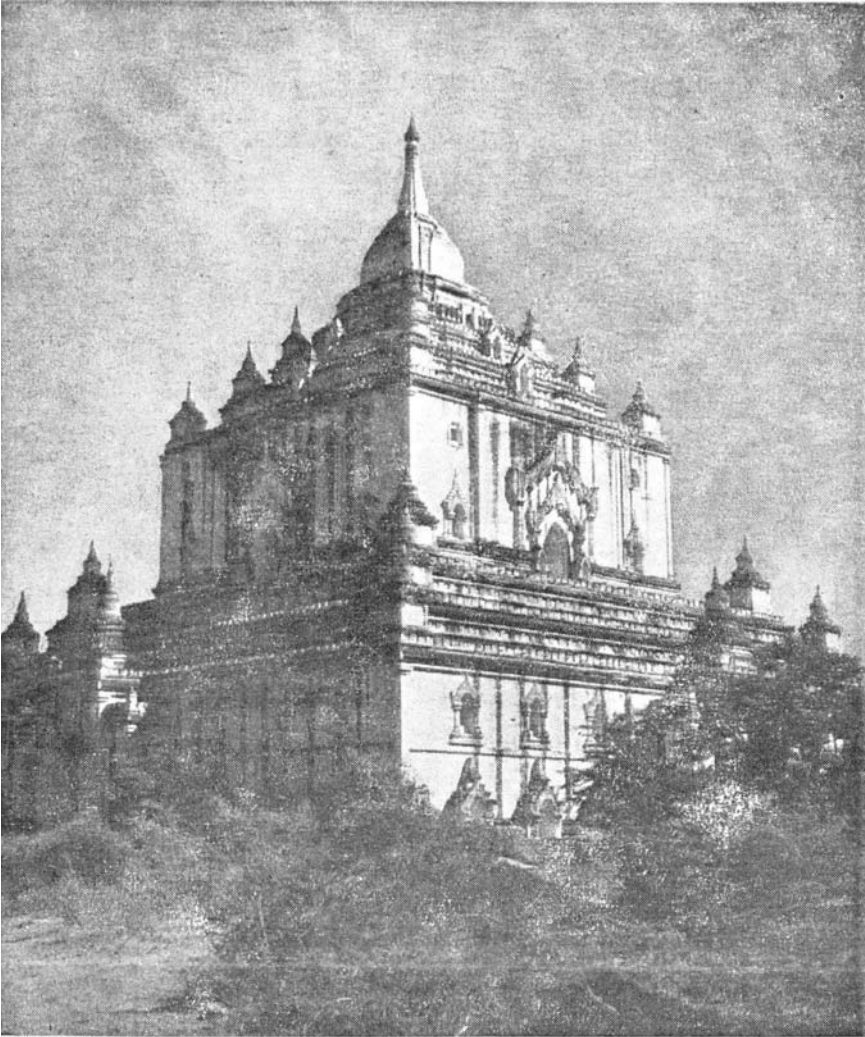
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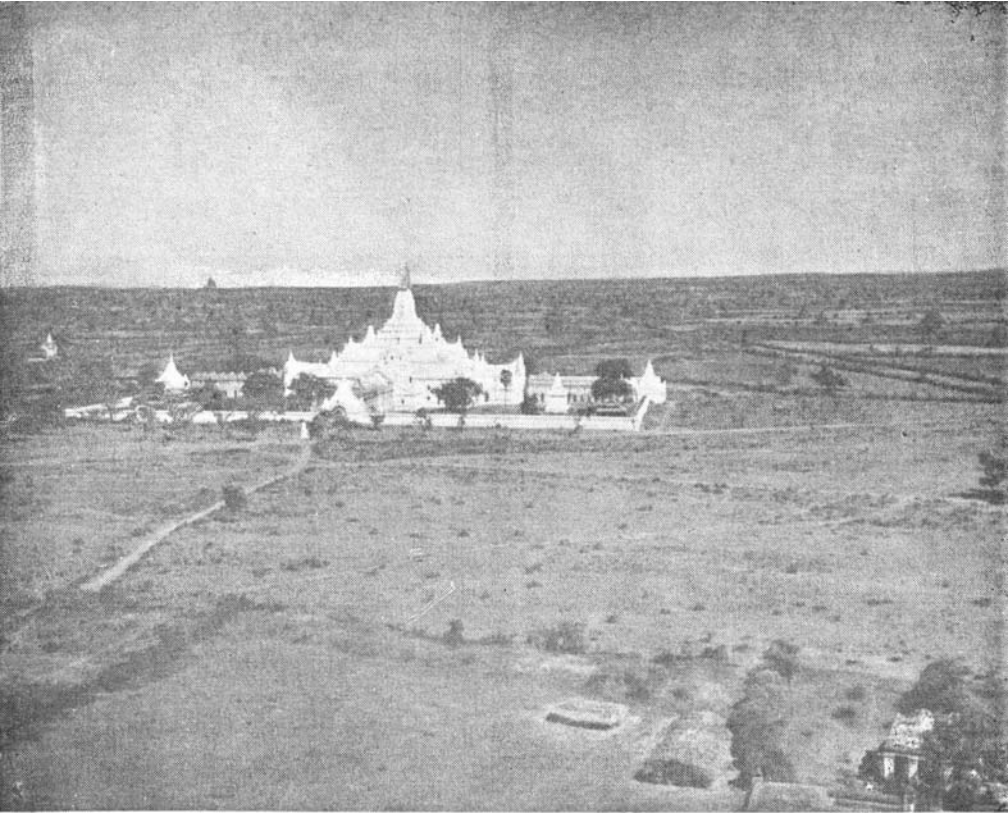
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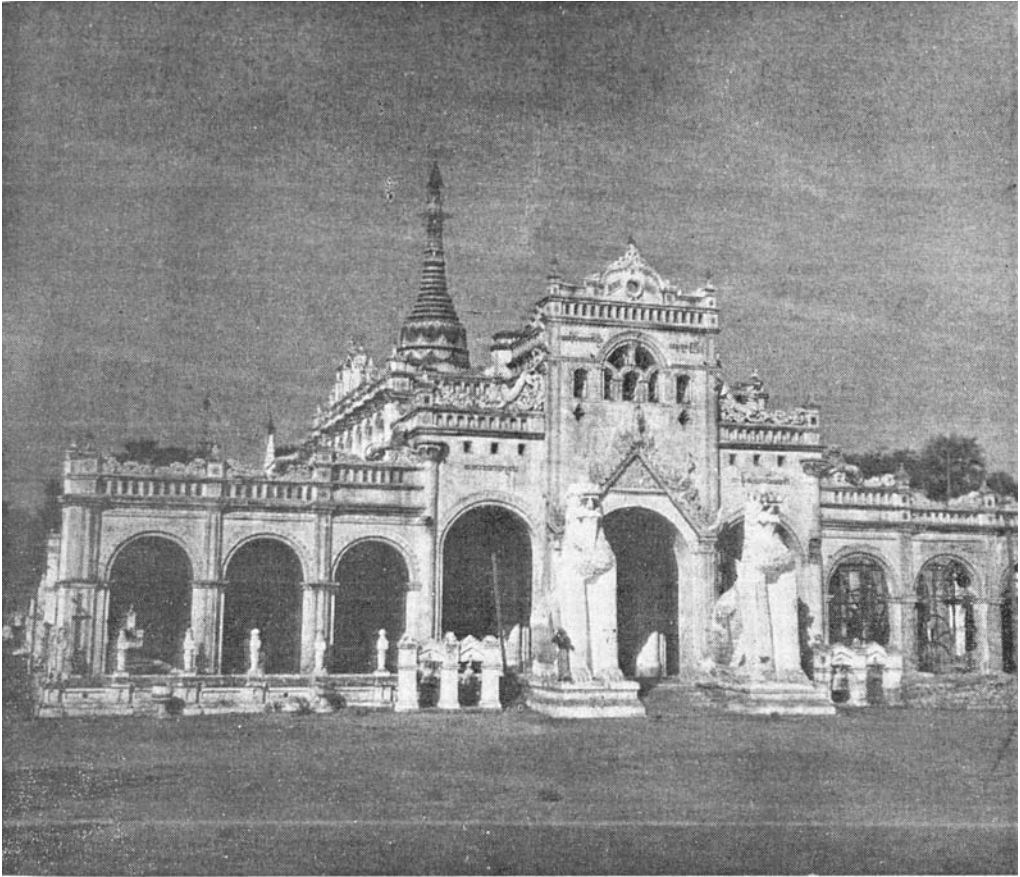
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Thapyinnyu Pagoda was built in 1689 B.E. by King Alaungsithu at Pagan, after the model of temples in Northern India, and has five storeys. The building is a combination of a stupa and a vihara. Inscriptions on the walls record its history.



The Ananda Pagoda at Pagān was built by King Kyansittha in 1635 B.E. It contains sculptures of exquisite workmanship, representing scenes from the life story of the Supreme Buddha. Its plan and architecture are unique in Burma.



Phaung-daw-oo Pagoda at Pakokku. (across the river from Pagān) It was built by King Alaungsithu during his visit to Pakokku.



Maha Bodhi Pagoda built by King Htilo-minlo in 1775 B.E. after the model of Bodh Gaya Temple in India.



Gaw-daw-palin Pagoda at Pagān, built by King Narapatisithu
about 1750 B. E.



A ruined pagoda of Pagān. Built by an ancient King of Pagān and has some relation to Mōn art and culture.



“Bū” Pagoda at Pagān built by one of the Pagān Kings.



Shway See Khōn Pagoda at Pagān. Built by King Anōratha in 1059 C. E. 2 years after the Tipiṭaka brought by him from Thaton was first written in Burmese characters. The Pagoda was left unfinished by him, and was completed by King Kyansittha. It was built in commemoration of the wholesome volitional actions done by King Anōratha during his reign.

THE EGOLESSNESS OF ALL EXISTENCE

(ANATTĀ)

Extract from Saṃyutta-Nikāya translated and explained
 NYANATILOKA MAHATHERA

S. V. 10

When certain things we find combined

We speak of 'chariot', speak of 'car'

Just so, when all five groups* appear,

We use the designation 'man'.

*Khandha, *i.e.* the 5 'Groups of Existence' embracing all the phenomena of existence whatever, namely: Corporeality, Feeling, Perception, Mental Formations, and Consciousness.

T'is naught but woe that does arise,
 And that exists, and passes off.
 Nothing but suffering appears.
 Nothing but woe that vanishes.

Vis. XVIII: "Whenever the different parts, as axle, wheels, frame, pole etc., are in a certain manner combined, we use the 'conventional' (*vohāra*) designation 'chariot'. But when examining one part after the other, we can in the 'ultimate sense' (*paramattha*) not discover any independently existing unity called 'chariot'. Just so is it with the 5 groups of existence (*khandha*). For as soon as they appear, one uses the conventional designation 'living being', or 'Ego' (*attā*), or 'I', or 'self' etc. In the 'highest sense', however, one cannot discover 'being' which could form the foundation for such conceptions as 'I am' and 'I'. Hence in the ultimate sense there exist only mental and physical phenomena."

S. XII. 12

'Through Sense-Impression (*Phassa*) conditioned is Feeling (*vedanā*)' –thus it is said in the formula of Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*: B. Dict.) But who, Venerable One, is it that feels? That somebody feels, I do not teach . . . If, however, the question would be put thus: 'Through what conditioned, does Feeling arise etc.?' then the right answer would be 'Through Sense-Impression is Feeling conditioned ... through Feeling; Craving ... through Craving; Clinging, etc.'

S. XII. 35

But what are Old Age and Death, and to whom do they belong? I do not teach that there is one thing called Old Age and Death, and that there is someone to whom they belong. If the view exists that Life (*jīva*; life principle, soul, etc.) is identical with the Body, in this case there can be no holy life. And if the view exists that Life is one thing, but Body another thing, also in this case there is no holy life possible. Avoiding both these extremes (*i.e.* complete Identity and complete Otherness), the Perfect One has taught the doctrine that lies in the middle, namely: 'Through Rebirth conditioned are Old Age and Death ... through the (karmical) Process of Becoming: Rebirth ... through Attachment: the Process of Becoming ... through Craving: Attachment ... through Feeling: Craving ... etc.'

Vis. XVII quotes:

“From woe and sorrow springs
delusive thinking.

No first beginning of existence can
be seen.

No doer can be found, nor one that
reaps the fruits.

And twelve-fold empty is the cycle
of rebirth,

And steadily the wheel of life rolls
on and on.”

S. XII. 61

Better it would be to consider the
Body as the ‘Ego’, rather than the Mind.
And why? Because this body might
continue for 10, 20, 30, 40 or 50 years
even for 100 years and longer. That,
however, which is called ‘mind,
consciousness, thinking’, that rises
continuously by day and by night as one
thing, and as something different again
it vanishes. Now, the learned and noble
disciple considers thoroughly the
‘Dependent Origination’ (*paṭicca
samupāda*: B. Dict.): If this is, then that
becomes. Through the arising of this,
that comes to arise through the
extinction of this, that becomes
extinguished, namely: Through
Ignorance conditioned arise the Kamma-
formations, through the Kamma-
formations: Consciousness (in next life),
through Consciousness: Corporeality
and Mind ... through the extinction of
Ignorance, the Kamma-formations
become extinguished; through the
extinction of the Kamma-formations:
Consciousness ... etc.’

S. XXII. 9-11

Corporeality ... Feeling ...
Perception ... Mental Formations ... and
Consciousness are impermanent
(*anicca*) ... woeful (*dukkha*) ... egoless
(*anattā*), be they of the past or the
future, not to mention the present. Thus
understanding, the learned and noble

disciple does no longer cling to things
past, and he enters the path leading to
the turning away there from, to
detachment and extinction.

S. XXII 18-20

The 5 Groups of Existence are
impermanent, woeful and egoless
(*anattā*). And also the foundation and
condition for the arising of these groups
of existence are impermanent, woeful
and egoless. For how could that which
has arisen through something
impermanent, woeful and egoless as its
root, ever be itself permanent, joyful and
an Ego?

S. XXI. 47

All those ascetics and priests, who
again and again in manifold ways
believe in an ‘Ego’ (*attā*), they all do so
with regard to the 5 groups of existence,
or to one of them, namely:

There the ignorant worldling ...
considers one of the 5 groups as the
Ego, or he considers the Ego as the
owner of that group, or that group as
included within the Ego, or the Ego as
included within that group.

S. XXI. 81

Now somebody holds the view:
This is my ‘Ego’ (*attā*), this is the
world. After death ‘I’ shall remain
permanent, steady, eternal, and not be
subject to any change.

What concerns this ‘Eternity-View’
(*sassata-ditṭhi*), it forms one Kamma-
formation (*saṅkhara*)*. But through
what is this Kamma-formation
conditioned?

* This is the 2nd link in the formula
of the Dependent Origination (*paṭicca
samupāda*: B. Dict.), here the
unwholesome volitional action (*Kamma*:
B. Dict.), accompanied by Wrong Views
and Ignorance.

Now, what concerns that Craving which has arisen in the ignorant Worldling, while being impressed by a feeling conditioned through an infatuated sense-impression, it is through this Craving (*tanhā*) arisen hereby that the Kamma-formation has arisen. Hence that Kamma-formation is impermanent, created, and has conditionally arisen. In one who thus understands, thus sees, the immediate Extinction of Biases takes place. Again, someone holds the view: “May ‘I’ not be! May there nothing belong to me! ‘I’ shall not be! Nothing will belong to me!” What concerns this ‘Annihilation View’ (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*), also this forms a Kamma-formation ... is impermanent, created and conditionally arisen. In one who thus understands, thus sees, the immediate Extinction of Biases takes place.

S. XXII. 85

To the monk Yamaka, once the following evil view had arisen: “Thus do I understand the Doctrine shown by the Blessed One that the one in whom all Biases have vanished, at the dissolution of the body, after death, will become annihilated and will no longer remain after death.”

(Sāriputta): “What do you think, Brother Yamaka: are Corporeality ... Feeling ... Perception ... Mental Formations ... or ... Consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, Venerable Sir.”

Now do you consider Corporeality etc. as the Perfect One?”

No, Venerable Sir.”

“Or do you consider the Perfect One as contained therein.?”

No, Venerable Sir”

“Or do you consider all these groups combined as the Perfect One?”

No, Venerable Sir.”

“Or do you think that the Perfect one is without Corporeality or without Feeling, without Perception, without Mental Formations, without Consciousness?”

No, Venerable Sir.”

Now, since you cannot, even during lifetime, make out the Perfect One according to truth and reality, now can you rightly maintain that the Perfect One will, at the dissolution of the body, become annihilated and no longer continue after death? Should somebody ask me, what will become of the Holy One, I should answer thus: ‘Corporeality, Feeling, Perception, Mental Formations, and Consciousness are impermanent (*anicca*); and what is impermanent, that is woeful; and what is woeful, that will become extinguished and annihilated.’”

Hence, it is only these 5 Groups of phenomena embracing all existence whatever, which are here to be considered, while the designations ‘Perfect One’, I, Ego, Self, Person, Man, animal, etc., are merely ‘conventional’ (*vohāra*) terms, not referring to any, real entities. And the so-called pure ‘Ego’ is merely a metaphysical fiction or hypothesis.

To this theme we find numerous further texts in S. XLJV.

S. XXII. 89

‘Five Groups of Existence liable to Attachment’ (*upādāna-kkhandha*) have been taught by the Blessed One, viz. Corporeality, Feeling, Perception, Mental Formations, Consciousness.

With regard to these 5 groups I do not find any ‘Ego’ (*attā*), or something

‘belonging to an Ego’ (*attaniya*), but still I am not a Holy One, not yet freed from biases. Also concerning these groups of existence liable to attachment, I am no longer subject to the thoughts of ‘I am’ or ‘This I am’.

S. XXII. 90

The world, as a rule, is fettered by attachment and clinging to things, and is firmly adhering to them. But the learned and noble disciple does no longer attach himself, cling and firmly adhere and incline to the thought: ‘I have an Ego’ (*attā*); and he knows: ‘Merely woe is it that arises, merely woe that vanishes’.

S. XXII. 95

Suppose a man who is not blind were to behold the many bubbles on the Ganges, as they are driving along; and he should watch them, and carefully examine them. After carefully examining them, they will appear to him empty, unreal and unsubstantial. In exactly the same way does the monk behold all corporeal phenomena, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and states of consciousness, whether past, present or future one’s own or external, gross or subtle, lofty or low, far or near. And he watches them, and examines them carefully; and after carefully examining them, they appear to him empty, unreal and unsubstantial.

The body’s like a mass of foam,
The feeling like a water bubble,
Perception like a void mirage,
Formations like a plantain tree,
And consciousness like jugglery.

S. XXII. 96

There is no corporeality, no feeling, no perception, no mental formations, no consciousness that is permanent, enduring and lasting, and that, not subject to any change, will eternally remain the same. If there existed such an

Ego (*attā*) that is permanent, enduring and lasting and not subject to any change, then there would be found no holy life leading to right extinction of suffering.

S. XXII. 102

Once the contemplation of impermanency has been developed and brought to full growth, then it comes to the end of all craving for sensuous existence, to the end of all craving for fine-material existence, to the end of all craving for existence, to the cessation and rooting out of all ‘Conceit of I am’.

Only on reaching perfect Holiness all ‘Conceit of I am’ (*asmi-māna*) will forever disappear’.

S. XXII. 117

The learned and noble disciple does not consider corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations or consciousness as the Ego (*attā*); nor does he consider the Ego as the owner of one of these groups, nor this group as included within the Ego, nor the Ego as included within this group. Of such a learned and noble disciple it is said that he is no longer fettered by any group of existence, own or external.

Thus I say:

S. XXII. 122

... It is possible that a virtuous man, while contemplating the 5 groups of existence as impermanent, woeful ... empty, egoless, that he may realize the fruit of Stream-entrance ...

S. XXII. 147

The noble disciple who, out of faith, has gone forth from home to the homeless life, has with regard to the 5 groups of existence to fulfill the task of living in contemplation of their impermanency, woefulness, and egolessness (*anattā*). And while

penetrating these things, he becomes freed there from, freed from rebirth, old age and death, from sorrow, lamentation, grief and despair, becomes freed from suffering: thus I say:

S. XXII. 151

“What must there be, and conditioned through what, may such views arise, as: “This is my Ego (*attā*), this the world. After death I shall continue, be everlasting, eternal, not subject to any change.”

“The 5 groups of existence must be there ... that such views may arise.”
“What do you think: Are these 5 groups permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, Venerable Sir.”

“But what is impermanent, is that joyful or woeful?”

“Woeful, Venerable Sir.”

“But on that which is impermanent, woeful and subject to change, may there be, based thereon, arise such views as: ‘This is my Ego, this the world. After death I shall continue, be everlasting, eternal, not subject to any change?’ ”

In S. XXII. 47 it was in a more general way stated that any kind of Ego-Illusion is necessarily based upon the 5 groups of existence. Here, however, the same is said with special reference to the ‘Eternity-Views.’

S. XXXV. 6

The visible objects are egoless (*anattā*): sounds, odours, tastes, bodily impressions and mind-objects are egoless. But of that which is egoless, there one has, according to reality and true wisdom, to understand thus: ‘That am I not, that does not belong to me, that is not my Ego’ ...

S. XXXV. 23

What is the Totality of things (*asbham*)? Eye and visible objects, ear and sounds, tongue and tastes, body and bodily impressions, mind and mind-objects: these are called the totality of things.

S. XXXV. 45-49

All things are egoless (*anattā*). All things one has to comprehend fully (1st truth), all things one has to overcome (2nd truth), all things one has to realize (3rd truth) ...

S. XXXV. 85

It is said that the world is empty (*suññā*). But why does one call the world empty.

Because the world is empty of an ‘Ego’ (*attā*) and of something ‘belonging to an Ego’ (*attaniya*), therefore the world is called empty. But which are the things that are empty of an Ego? Empty of an Ego are called eye and visible objects, ear and sounds, nose and odours, tongue and tastes, body and bodily impressions, mind and mind-objects.

S. XXXV. 90

One should not imagine (*na maññeyya*) oneself as being ‘identical with the Eye’ (*cakkhum*: Acc.), should not imagine oneself as being included ‘within the eye’ (*cakkhusmiṃ* Loc.), should not imagine oneself as being outside the eye (*cakkhuto*: Abl.), should not imagine oneself: ‘The eye belongs to me’ (*cakkhum me’ti*).

One should not imagine oneself as being identical with the Visible Objects (*rūpe*: Acc.) should not imagine oneself as being included ‘within the visible objects’ (*rūpesu*: Loc), should not imagine oneself as being ‘outside the visible objects’ (*rūpato*: Abl.), should

not imagine: 'The visible objects belong to me' (*rūpāni me'ti*).

One should not imagine oneself as being 'identical with Eye-Consciousness', should not imagine oneself as being included 'within eye-consciousness', should not imagine oneself as being outside of eye-consciousness, should not imagine: 'The eye-consciousness belongs to me' ...

One should not imagine oneself as being identical with the totality of things ...

Thus, not imagining any more, the wise disciple clings no more to anything in the world. Clinging no more to anything, he trembles no more. Trembling no more, he reaches in his own person the extinction of all vanity: 'Exhausted is rebirth, lived the Holy Life and no further existence have I to expect': thus he knows.

The same exposition is given in S.XXXV. 31f, and is called there 'The suitable path to the rooting out of all imagination' (*sabbamannitasamugghāta sāppāya*): further also in Mil, under the name of 'Exposition of the Foundation of All Things' (*sabba dhamma mūla pariyāya*). Already in the Brhad-āraṇyaka-Upanishad are found quite identical expositions as those of our ground scheme, given however in a positive form as expression of the Brahmanic Atma doctrines hinted at in M.1 and then rejected one after the other.

Neumann, Lorenzo, Silacara, Chalmers and others could not make out anything of this so highly important Sutta of M. so that the meaning of this so profound text had to remain inaccessible to them.

S. XXXV. 141

Consciousness (mind) is egoless (*anattā*). Also the foundation and the condition to the arising of consciousness, also these are egoless. For, how could it be possible that consciousness having arisen through something which is egoless, could ever be Ego?

S. XXXV. 163

Whoso understands and contemplates the mind as egoless (*anattā*), in him the Ego-View (*attānudiṭṭhi*) disappears. Whoso understands and contemplates the Mind-Objects as egoless ... mind-consciousness as egoless ... mind-impression as egoless ... and the agreeable and disagreeable and indifferent feeling conditioned through mind-impression as egoless (*anattā*), in him the Ego-View (*attānudiṭṭhi*) disappears ...

S. XXXV. 193

Just as this body has in various ways been revealed, disclosed and explained as egoless (*anattā*) in exactly the same way one should explain also mind as egoless ...

S. XXXV. 197

'Empty village' is a name for the six sense organs. Thus, whenever ill experienced, learned and wise man examines the six sense organs, as eye, ear, nose, tongue, body or mind-organ, then all these things appear to him as delusive, empty and deceitful ...

S. XXXV. 207

'I am' is a delusion. 'This I am' is a delusion. 'I shall be' is a delusion. 'I shall not be' is a delusion. 'Corporeal shall I be' is a delusion. 'Uncorporeal shall I be' is a delusion. 'Endowed with perception shall I be' is a delusion.

‘Without perception shall I be’ is a delusion. ‘Neither with nor without perception shall I be’ is a delusion. Delusion is a sickness, an ulcer, a thorn!

S. XLI. 7

What is the mind-deliverance of Emptiness (*suññatā*)? There the monk repairs to the forest, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty hut. And he contemplates this: ‘Empty is all this of an Ego (*attā*), or of anything belonging to an Ego’ (*attaniya*) ...

S. XLVI. 72f

If one develops the contemplation of Impermanency, the contemplation of Woefulness due to Impermanency, the contemplation of Egolessness (*anattā*) due to Woefulness, then all these

contemplations are leading to high blessing ...

S. LVI. 8

Do not think such evil, unwholesome thoughts as ‘Life and Body are identical’: or ‘Life is one thing, but another is the Body’ or ‘Does the Perfect One live after death or not?’ ... And why should one not think such thoughts? Because such thoughts are not wholesome, do not belong to the genuine holy life, do not lead to the turning away and detachment, not to extinction, appeasement, enlightenment, and *Nibbāna*.

“Your misdeeds were not committed by your parents, or by your brothers and sisters, or by your friends or kinsfolk, or by recluses and Brahmins, or by the gods; they were committed by none but yourself; and it is you yourself who will reap the fruits thereof.”

Devadūta-Sutta

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Returning to Burma he practised here and has always been known as a staunch upholder of Buddhism. He has been a member of the Shway Dagōn Pagoda Trust for nearly forty years and is Vice-President of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council.

BUDDHIST COUNTRIES AND BODH GAYA

In Vol: II, No. 1, we published the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 and pointed out that there was an urgent need for Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, Laos and Thailand, the predominantly Buddhist countries which are the traditional guardians of the Pāli Canon, to be strongly represented on the Advisory Board for which provision is made in the Act. That this is really a pressing need is evidenced by the report of the Chief Justice of the Union of Burma (who is also the Vice-President of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council) who, on a recent pilgrimage to the holy places of Buddhism, made a thorough investigation of conditions at Buddhism's most hallowed spot.

Report on the Situation of the Bodh Gaya Temple.

by

Thado Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union of Burma, and Vice-President of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council, Rangoon.

(Translated from Burmese.)

1. Introduction

Accompanied by my wife Daw Saw Tin and by U Ba Thaung, Registrar of the Supreme Court, I left Calcutta on the night of the 18th December 1953, reaching Gaya the next day where we were greeted by H. E. Maha Thray Sithu U Kyin, Burmese Ambassador in India, the District Magistrate of Gaya, the Additional Collector of Gaya, Police Officials and High Court Advocates of Gaya.

Although the District Magistrate of Gaya should be the *ex-officio* Chairman of the Committee, under Section 3(3) of Bihar Act XVII of 1949 (The Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949), he being a non-Hindu, and the Act specifying a Hindu, the Provincial Government nominated the Additional Collector of Gaya as the Chairman of the Committee.

Thanks to H. E. U Kyin, an arrangement had been made for an informal meeting at the Inspection Bungalow where we stayed temporarily. The District Magistrate of Gaya, the Additional Collector of Gaya, who is the Chairman of the Committee, and Bhikkhu Jagadish Kashyap, who is a member of the Committee, assembled at

our bungalow and we discussed various matters relating to the Bodh Gaya Temple.

2. Properties not yet entrusted to the Committee

In the course of our discussion it was revealed that the following properties on the Temple land have been excluded from those handed over to the Committee by the Mahanth:

- (1) Three ossuaries of the Mahanth.
- (2) Panca Pandava Temple.
- (3) Annapura Temple, where the idol of Latchmi is kept.
- (4) A pit measuring 3 feet by 3 feet, known as "Hawankund."

The three Ossuaries, Panca Pandava Temple and Latchmi Image Shed are lying to the north and east of the path leading to the eastern entrance of the Bodh Gaya Temple. The Ossuaries of the Mahanths were erected at a later period and it is to be regretted that all these are in the precincts of the Bodh Gaya Temple and that the same have been excluded from the properties handed over by the Mahanth to the Committee. Although the exclusion of

these Ossuaries is not of much concern, the exclusion of Panca Pandava Temple and Latchmi Image Shed from the properties to be entrusted to the Committee is a matter of some concern. In fact, they are Buddhist images and not those of Hindus as claimed by the Mahanths.

Just outside the temple compound and divided by a footpath, there lies a brick Rest House donated by the late King Thibaw of Burma and I was informed that this also has been excluded. When I visited this place previously I found that it was used as a Free Dispensary; but as the Mahanth has now rented it out it has become an office headquarters.

Not only that: the Burmese Rest House situated to the East of Mahā Cetiya and built by Burma's pious King ...

(7) To paint yellow the whole of the Cetiya except the pinnacle but in order to make the images and mosaic work prominent these should have backgrounds in a different shade.

The Chairman and the members of the Committee accepted my proposals, and they promised that they would place these matters before the Committee meeting, which they understand is to be convened in January 1954 and also that if my proposals be accepted by the Committee, they would send the estimates of all these to me.

I gave the above proposals to the Committee so that when the Buddhists come to realise that Buddhists have a voice in the Bodh Gaya Temple affairs, many philanthropic donors would come forward readily. Even now, I am given to understand that a certain donor from Burma intends to offer an electric installation at the Temple's precincts at a cost of one and a half lakhs of rupees.

In that case, he would be a rival to another Ceylonese lady donor who first promised to donate Rs. 10,000 towards the same. Also there appears a Burmese donor who is going to stand an expenditure from Rs. 20,000 to 50,000 on the repairs of Ratanaghara.

5. To give place to the Union Buddha Sāsana Council

Occasion now arises to include the following in my report:

The Union Buddha Sāsana Council intends to negotiate with the Provincial Government of Bihar and the Temple Committee and, in order that the Bihar Government or the Bodh Gaya Temple Committee may give due consideration to the Union Buddha Sāsana Council, the intending donors from Burma should consult the Council and make their respective donations through the Council, which would also make all the necessary arrangements for them.

6. Draft bye-laws of the Committee

Under Section 17 of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949, the Committee with the previous sanction of the Provincial Government may, from time to time, make bye-laws to carry out the purposes of this Act. Ven. Bhikkhu Jagadish Kashyap has drawn up a draft of the bye-laws to be submitted to the Committee. He has given me a copy of the same and I am now studying it.

7. Changes to be made in the personnel of the Committee

The Committee has sat only once. When I enquired about the delay in convening another meeting, The District Magistrate of Gaya and the Chairman of the present Committee told me that one of the Committee members who is a resident of Gaya has become a member of the Legislative Assembly and is now practising law at New Delhi. Moreover,

some members are out of the district of Gaya, but that arrangements are now being made for substitutes.

8. Hindu idols inside the main shrine

After the meeting, I gave the following additional suggestion to the Committee.

The Hindu idols now standing on both sides of the Buddha image inside the main tower should be removed to the relevant Hindu Temples.

In this connection I should like to say that our Hindu friends should realise the following fact:

The reason why the management of the Bodh Gaya Temple has been handed over to the Committee comprising Hindus as well as Buddhists is that the Mahanth and his predecessors had managed the affairs of the Temple for a very long time, and that the Hindus regard the Buddha as The incarnation of their God Vishnu and thus pay their respects to Him. Though the Hindus can worship the Buddha as one of their Hindu Gods, The Temple is not the place of worship for any other Hindu God.

Only when the members of the Committee and the Hindus see the above facts in their proper perspective can the Buddhists and the Hindus go hand in hand in managing the affairs of the Temple and in visiting the Temple for the purpose of paying homage to the Buddha. If the Hindus desire to keep other Hindu idols in the Temple on the pretext that they are allowed to pay homage to the Buddha as one of their Gods, it would be against the aims and objects of the Act. The Committee of management as well as the pilgrims will be dissatisfied.

9. The Buddha Images within the Mahanth Compound

On the evening of the day on which the meeting was held we visited the Mahanth's monastery where the Mahanth and his followers gave us a cordial welcome. One of his followers then showed us all the buildings within the compound. When we arrived at a compound where the caves of the Hindu God Shiva stand, I noticed two Buddha Images lying on the outside cemented wallings of the caves. Each of these images is about 30 inches high. Of these one is of emerald colour and is a bit damaged at the base. The remaining one looks very beautiful and graceful and is like the one we find in Kyaik-maraw near Moulmein. The very fact that these images are lying on the outside of the caves and exposed to wind and weather shows that The Mahanth does not look after them properly.

I have advised the people there to get them back from the Mahanth either by way of gift or purchase and keep them in the main Temple.

10. My suggestions to the Maha Bodhi Society

Some news reporters from Gaya were present at our meeting at Bodh Gaya and my suggestions appeared in some of the papers.

I had also mentioned a summary of my suggestions at a Tea Party given to me by the Gaya Bar on the 21st. December 1953.

Also at a Party given in my Honour by the Maha Bodhi Society of Calcutta in their premises on the 5th January I also mentioned all the suggestions I gave at Bodh Gaya.

The reason why I did so is that the Maha Bodhi Society has taken great interest in the Bodh Gaya Temple affairs

and Shri Devapriya Valisinha, General Secretary of Maha Bodhi Society of India, is also a member of The Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee. He was pleased with my proposals and promised to place these matters before the next Committee meeting.

11. New Burmese Rest House (Monastery) at Bodh Gaya

The rest houses for the pilgrims near the Bodh Gaya Temple are:

Bodh Gaya Dak Bungalow, Maha Bodhi Rest House, Bodh Gaya Chinese Temple and Rest House, Birla Dharmasala and Burmese Monastery.

The Burmese Monastery stands at a distance from The Bodh Gaya Temple and was built by Burmese donors on the land now occupied by the Burmese leader — Bagyi Ba Pe. This building is

two-storeyed and the upper flat has not yet been completed. The presiding Thera told me that a certain donor desires to send a donation of Rs. 50,000 to him but the Pakistan Government has not yet allowed him to do so.

On my return to Rangoon I referred the matter to Bagyi Ba Pe. He told me that he is going to extend the building and that arrangements for the same have been made in consultation with U Tin, a civil engineer. I believe that very soon we shall see a very grand building on this land, to the pride and honour of the Union of Burma.

The present presiding Bhikkhu is Ven. U Ottama, who has 30 Vassas to his credit. He has been in India for the last 18 years, the last five in this monastery.

“I premise that there must be knowledge of what wrong conduct is, how it arises, how it is ended without leaving a vestige behind, and how a man walks so as to end it. There must be the like knowledge of right conduct and of wrong and right thoughts.

In what now does wrong conduct consist? —In wrong actions, wrong speech, and an evil mode of livelihood. —How do these arise? From the heart, is the answer. —What is the heart? The heart is manifold, complex, and diverse, tainted by emotions (Sacitta), passion, ill-will, and density. —What becomes of wrong conduct when it ceases without leaving a vestige behind? Why, when an Almsman, discarding wrong behaviour — of body —or of speech — or of mind — develops the corresponding right behaviour, and similarly discards a wicked mode of livelihood for the right mode. —How does he walk to end wrong conduct? When he brings will to bear, puts forth endeavour and energy, struggles and strives heartily (i) to stop the rise of evil and wrong states of consciousness which have not yet arisen. (ii) to discard those when have already arisen. (iii) to breed right states not yet existing, and (iv) to establish, clarify, multiply, enlarge, develop, and to perfect existing good states.

Somaṇa-Maṇḍikā-Sutta.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHANGE

PIYADASSI THERA

Homage to the Blessed One. The Exalted One, the All-Enlightened One!

Change or impermanence is the essential characteristic of all phenomenal existence. We cannot say of anything, animate or inanimate, 'this is lasting'; for even while we are saying it, it would be undergoing change. All is fleeting: the flower's beauty, the bird's melody and a sunset's glory.

"Suppose yourself gazing on a gorgeous sunset. The whole western heavens are glowing with roseate hues but you are aware that within half an hour all these glorious tints will have faded away into a dull ashen grey. You see them even now melting away before your eyes, although your eyes cannot place before you the conclusion which your reason draws. And what conclusion is that? That conclusion is that you never, even for the shortest time that can be named or conceived, see any abiding colour, any colour which truly *is*. Within the millionth part of a second the whole glory of the painted heavens has undergone an incalculable series of mutations. One shade is supplanted by another with a rapidity which sets all measurements at defiance, but because the process is one to which no measurement applies—reason refuses to lay an arrestment on any period of the passing scene, or to declare that it is, because in the very act of being it is not it has given place to something else. It is a series of fleeting colours, no one of which is, because each of them continually vanishes in another."

History has proved again and again, and will continue to prove, that nothing in this world is lasting. Nations and

civilizations rise, flourish and die away as waves upon the ocean, yielding place to new, and thus the scrolls of time record the passing pageant, the baseless vision, and the fading flow that is human history.

All component things, all things which arise as the effect of a cause, and which as cause give rise to an effect, can be crystallised in the single word ANICCA — Impermanence. All tones, therefore, are just variations struck on the chord which is made up of Impermanence, Suffering and Soullessness — *Anicca, Dukkha and Anattā*.

Camouflaged, these three characteristics of life prevail forever in this world until a Fully Enlightened One, — a Sammā-Sam-Buddha, reveals their true nature. It is to proclaim these truths that the Buddhas appear.

"This is the sum, the quintessence of their teaching and in it all there is no word about redemption. But as the sea is compassed by the land and the land by the sea, so in the teaching of the Exalted One, do Sorrow and Salvation mutually encompass one another. And as one who maps out all the outlines of all the lands on the surface of the earth, with that same operation supplies the boundaries of all the seas, so the Buddha in giving these three laws of *transiency, sorrow and non-I*, at one and the same time along with them, gives salvation." (Paul Dahlke)

The Buddha is known as the *Vibhajjavādā*, the Teacher of the Doctrine of Analysis. He, verily, is the supreme analytic philosopher. Here 'analytic philosopher' means one who

states a thing after resolving it into its various qualities, putting the qualities in proper order, making everything plain. The analytical philosopher has the character of one who states a thing after going into its details he does not state things unitarily, that is, regarding all things in the lump, but after dividing up things according to their outstanding features, having made all matters distinct, so that false opinions and doubts vanish, and conventional and highest truth (*Sammuti* and *Paramattha Sacca*) can be understood unmixed. An upholder of the analytic method is the Master, because He approaches not the extremes of eternalism and nihilism (*Sassata* and *Uccheda*), but teaches the Middle Way of Dependent Origination (*Paṭicca samuppāda*).

As an anatomist resolves a limb into tissues and tissues into cells, the Buddha analyses all component things into their fundamental elements.

The so-called being is composed of mind and matter or the five aggregates, namely: *Rūpa*, *Vedanā*., *Saññā*, *Saṅkhāra*, and *Viññāna*; body (matter), feeling, perception, volitional activities (formations) and consciousness. The elements of this ever changing, interrelated conflux of mind and body (*Nāma-Rūpa-Santati*) when separated from each other, lose something of their potency with the result that they are unable to function indefinitely.

On close analysis it becomes clear that *Nāma* or mind is nothing but a complex-compound of fleeting mental states. It is dynamic, and never static. *Rūpa* or matter, on the other hand, is merely a manifestation of forces and qualities; in other words, a constant vibration of elements. These forces and qualities which are known as *Paramatthas* or *Rūpa Dhātu*, are termed *Paṭhavī*, *Āpo*, *Tejo*, and *Vāyo*. But they

are not earth, water, fire and air as conceived by some of the old Greek thinkers. *Paṭhavī*, in brief, is the element of extension; *Āpo* is the element of cohesion; *Tejo* is the element of temperature with the faculty of preservation; and *Vāyo* is the element of motion with the faculty of displacement (*Calana Lakkhaṇa*).

Both mind and matter are void of an unchanging, undying soul or ego or personality. There are the six *indriyas* — six sense doors or sense organs — namely: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind; there are the six *ārammanas* — six sense objects or sensibilia, — namely: form, sound, odour, taste, contact and ideas; there is a functional interdependence or relationship between the six sense organs and sense objects, and there is no agent, no soul whatsoever.

As Dr. Paul Dahlke, the late German Buddhist leader, says: “The so-called being is like a flash of lightning that is resolved into a succession of sparks that follow upon one another with such rapidity that the human retina cannot perceive them separately nor can the uninstructed conceive of such succession of separate sparks.”

All component things, animate or inanimate, human or divine, pass through the inconceivably rapid moments of *Uppāda*, *Thiti* and *Bhanga*, or of arising, reaching a peak, and ceasing, just as a river in flood sweeps to a climax and ebbs away. The whole universe is constantly changing, not remaining the same for two consecutive moments.

Heracleitus, the Greek Philosopher, who was born just a few years after the passing away of the Buddha, taught the philosophy of change, and one wonders if that teaching was transmitted to him from India. “There is no static being,”

says Heraclitus, no unchanging substratum. Change, movement, is Lord of the Universe. Everything is in a state of becoming, of continual flux (*Panta Rhei*). “Further,” says Heraclitus, “You cannot step twice into the same river, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you.” A Buddhist who has grasped the essential of the Buddha Dhamma, goes a step further, and says: “The same man cannot step twice into the same river.” For the so-called man, who is only a conflux of mind and body, is also undergoing rapid change.

We are born as the effect of many a past cause. From the moment of birth we begin to grow: “At first the infant mewling and puking in his nurse’s arms”, then by stages we reach the full bloom of youth — youth which is so sweet, but as fleeting and evanescent as the roses in summer time. Finally old age creeps on. Being in the stages of decay, our senses fail us at a time when they are needed most. “Last scene of all, that ends this strange eventful history is second childishness and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.” And when the inevitable hour strikes its knell, we end this final scene and pass away.

Birth precedes death, and death on the other hand precedes birth. Birth is conditioned by our own actions both wholesome and unwholesome, *kusala* and *akusala*; and action or Kamma is conditioned by *tanhā*, or craving or thirst for life, and craving is the result of not understanding the real nature of things.

In other words, not understanding the Four Noble Truths and the universal fact of Dependent Origination” — *Paṭicca Samuppāda* — which teaches, “this being, that becomes.”

Life is but a lamp that burns as long as it is sustained by the oil of craving.

And, as cattle wander in search of fresh pastures, beings lured by craving, go from birth to birth constantly searching for fuel with which the life flame may be sustained, and just as long as one does not root out desire, so long is one mentally fettered like a sucking calf to its mother. Yet there is no personal identity a self or a soul that passes into the next life.

As Bhikkhu Kassapa wrote: “Certain conditions bring about certain effects. This is sure. It is all a passing show of phenomena. There is no real rest in the cosmos, however much the weary may crave for rest. A relative rest is possible, but not an absolute rest. Nothing cosmic is still; it is all in a whirl. The desired is not there when the outstretched hand would grasp it, or, being there, and grasped, it vanishes like a flake of snow. No cosmic ideal escapes this inexorable unceasing change. Happiness there is; but it is passing delusion. The seeing eye sees its passing with its rising.”

Who can say with certainty that one will live to see the morrow? All meetings end in partings, while life ends in death. And we, in this mysterious universe, live, love and laugh; and, ‘it is easy enough to be pleasant when life flows along like a song.’ Yet, ‘when sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions’, and then, the whole world appears to be one picture of pain. Still, the man who views life with a detached outlook, who sees things in their proper perspective, whose cultural training urges him to be calm and unperturbed under all life’s vicissitudes, who could ‘smile when everything goes dead wrong’, — he, indeed, is man worthwhile.

The world in which we have taken our temporary abode is like unto a large lotus out of which we all, men and

women, gather honey with strenuous struggle. We build up wishful hopes and plan for the morrow. But one day, sudden perhaps, and unexpected there comes the inevitable hour when Death tears up our lives and brings our hopes to naught.

Now when a person is able to see the universality of impermanence (*Anicca*) he ascends to that summit of vision expressed in the Dhammapada (verse 28): “The wise one that casts away wantonness by heedfulness climbing up the heights of wisdom, sorrowless surveys the ignorant sorrowing folk, as a mountaineer the groundlings.” This is the standpoint of the Arahāt, the Perfect One, whose clarity of vision, whose depth of insight penetrates into the deepest recesses of life and cognizes the true nature that underlies all appearance. He indeed is the true philosopher, the true scientist who has grasped the meaning of change in the fullest sense and has transmuted that understanding into the realization of the deepest truth possible to humans — the truth of overcoming fully the instability of sentient existence through the conquest of the firm ground of the realm of *Nibbāna*.. No more can he be swept off his feet by the glamour of things ephemeral. No more can he be confused by the terrible and the awful. No more is it possible for him to have a clouded view of phenomena for he has transcended all capacity for error through the perfect immunity which intuitional knowledge, *Vipassanā Ñāṇa*, alone can give.

To attain this high state of liberation, the Buddha points out the sublime path of understanding to humanity groaning under the whip of Kamma: but people still cling on to the by-paths that lead deeper and deeper into the morass of suffering. That is because of precious habits that have

woven themselves into the texture of their being while aimlessly and endlessly wandering through the jungles of samsaric life. It is very difficult to turn ourselves away from customary haunts and grooves of life, from the accustomed modes of conduct, thought and action. But if one wants to conquer the burdensome cares of worldly life, to escape the toils of *samsāra* and reach perfection, one has to turn away from things seemingly dear, comfortable and congenial.

The people of the world mark the changing nature of life. Although they see it, they do not keep it in mind and act with dispassionate discernment. Though change again and again speaks to them and makes them unhappy, they continue their mad career of whirling along the wheel of existence and are twisted and torn between the spokes of agony. An illuminating illustration is that of the scientist. The scientist is a man who accepts impermanence as the salient feature of existence. Although he knows it all very clearly he cannot rid himself of the fascination and thrill which change has for men in general.

After all, a scientist or a common man, if he has not understood the importance of conduct, the urgency for wholesome endeavor, the necessity for the application of knowledge to life, is, so far as the doctrine of the Buddha is concerned, quite an immature person, a raw recruit who has yet to negotiate more hurdles before he wins the race of life and the immortal prize of *Nibbāna*.

To a Buddhist the primary concern of life is not mere speculation, or vain voyages into the imaginary regions of high fantasy, but the gaining of true happiness and freedom from all ill. To him true knowledge depends on the central question: “Is this learning according to actuality? Is it a thing that

can be of use to us in the conquest of real and everlasting bliss?"

To the scientist, knowledge is something that ties him more and more to this tyre of tears, this nave of nothingness which men call life. Therefore, that knowledge is not saving knowledge, it is not knowledge which in makes him turn away from, makes him weary of, the world and all it holds. Thus we see that although today change is understood and made a central principle in the understanding of the world, it does not mean that the scientists have grown sick of the world, but it means that this very change represents to them the imaginary and illusionary possibility of changing the world for the better without breaking away from it. They cherish the belief that it is possible to discover a way of happiness in this very change, a centre of security within this circle of impermanence. They imagine, although this world is uncertain, they can make it

certain and give it the basis of solidity for all practical purposes, and so the unrelenting struggle for betterment and progress goes on with undiminished vigour and futile enthusiasm. But really this thing they are trying to make better, is so subject to change at all points on its circumference and radī, that it is not capable of being made sorrow-free at all.

Our life is so dark with decay, so smothered with death, so bound with change, and these qualities are so instinctive to it — even as greenishness is to grass and bitterness to quinine — that not all the magic and witchery of science can ever transform it. The immortal splendour of an eternal sunlight awaits only those who can use the light of understanding and the culture of conduct to illuminate and guard their path through life's tunnel of darkness and dismay.

May all be well and happy!

"The way, Cunda. to get quite and rid of those false views and of the domains in which they arise and crop up and obtain, is by seeing with right comprehension that there is no 'mine' no 'this is I' no 'this is myself'."

Sallekha- Sutta.

"I say it is the development of the will which is so efficacious for right states of consciousness, not to speak of act and speech."

Sallekha-Sutta

"Well then, Almsmen, you must school yourselves in the higher lore which I have taught you, to wit the four Themes (sati-paṭṭhāna), the four Bases of psychic power (iddhi-pada), the fivefold Sphere of sense (indriya), the five Forces (bala), the seven Factors of Enlightenment (bojjhanga) and the Noble Eightfold Path. In this higher lore you must school yourselves in unity and harmony without strife."

Kinti-Sutta

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THE SANDESAKATHA

(A Nineteenth Century Letter in Pāli sent to the Burmese Court from Ceylon)

DEVAPRASAD GUHA

University of Rangoon

The Sandesakathā, as the name suggests, is a message in Pāli sent to the Court of King Mindon of Burma C.E. 1852-72 from Ceylon by a group of ten Buddhist laymen. The manuscript of the text, written in Burmese characters on both sides of seven palm leaves, has been obtained from the collection of the Bernard Free Library, Rangoon. It bears the accession No. 1308 and the leaves are marked from *ka* to *ke*, each side containing an average of nine lines. At the top of the manuscript it is recorded in Burmese language that the letter was written on paper and was sent on Wednesday, the first waning day of Tazaungmon (November) in the year Sakkarāj 1220, Sāsana era 2401 (1858 C.E.) to Thandawzin Mine Khine Myoza by ten Ceylonese gentlemen of whom the chief was Koññialisa-da-Posaka (Cornelius de Fonseka). It was sent through three Burmese gentlemen Nga Myat Hmwe, Nga Aung Tun and Zwa Nit (the last one appears to have been of Portuguese origin) who apparently had been to Ceylon at that time. The text is followed by a translation in Burmese, written on sixteen palm leaves probably made for King Mindon for whom the letter was actually meant. From its colophon it is evident that the text was translated by Mine Khine Myoza himself and that the translation work was finished on the full moon day of Nayon (May-June), Sakkarāj 1221, *i.e.* 1859 C.E.

Before proceeding with the discussion of the text a few words about Mine Khine Myoza may not be out of place. From our text it is evident that his

appellation was Siri Jeyyasūra who was the chief officer of Mine Khine, a township in the Shan States of Burma. According to the Burmese records his name was U Yan who was born on Monday, the 5th waning day of Wazo (June-July), Sakkarāj 1171, *i.e.* 1809 C.E. in the Thamaing Yin village of Salin township of Burma. His parents were U Kyaw Zan E arid Ma Lon Lay. As a Buddhist following the prevailing custom of the country, he spent sometime as a novice in a Buddhist monastery when his name was Shin Kelāsava. During the period of two years he spent in the monastery he attained proficiency in the Buddhist lore and on his return to the worldly life he served in various capacities the Burmese kings Tharrawaddy (1837-46 C.E.), Pagān (A.d.1846-52), Mindon (1852-78) and Thibaw (1878-85). He was a profound scholar in Pāli who gained mastery not only over the three Piṭakas but also over the commentaries, sub-commentaries and allied compositions. He was also an author of very great repute who wrote a number of works in Burmese and some also in Pāli besides translating into Burmese a number of Pāli texts. His monumental work was the Piṭakathamaing which is a descriptive catalogue of the books in the royal collection at Mandalay. He lived a long life of 72 years and breathed his last on Thursday, the second waning day of Wazo in the year Sakkarāj 1243, *i.e.* C.E. 1881.

Coming back to the text itself we propose to give below a brief summary of its contents.

The letter was sent by some Sinhalese gentlemen to Siri Jeyyasūra, the chief of the Mine Khine township, with a request to have the letter placed before the king Siripavara-vijayāntayasa-pañḍita-mahādhamma-rājadhīrāja (royal title of King Mindon of Burma) who had his capital in the town of Ratanapuṇṇa (modern Mandalay). At the very outset the beauty, excellence and richness of the capital city has been very elaborately described in Classical Pāli which reminds the reader of the description of the city of Sāgala given in the introduction of the Milindapañhā. The appeal was made by a group of ten leading Buddhist lay devotees, the foremost amongst whom were Koṇṇalisa-da-Posaka, Abhayasekara and Guṇaratana, who represented the Buddhist laity of Vassakaḍava, a big township near the Kaṇhagaṅgā, six gāvutas to the south of the city of Kolambaka in the island of Laṅkā. The Christian missionaries are described as having established academic and religious institutions (the latter known in Sinhalese by the name of Pāli), a fact which caused grave anxiety in the minds of the devout Buddhists of the island. Thus, being very much worried for the rapid growth of Christianity in the island these lay devotees intended to establish (in the same line with the Christians to counteract their missionary propaganda) a Saṅgharāma at Vassakaḍava¹ having cetiya, patimāghara, dhammasālā, uposathagāra and so on. As a matter of fact they started erecting the dhammasālā as the first step to work out the programme five years before they sent the appeal to the Burmese monarch.

But their attempt did not meet with any success owing to the financial difficulty on the part of the organizers, owing to the absence of Sinhalese kings and gentry devoted to the Buddhist faith and also because of the absence of any other means for the continuance of their work. Helpless as they were, this Buddhist laity sent an appeal to the Burmese monarch Mindon, whose fame was spread far and wide for his munificence for the cause of Buddhism, for some financial help to finish the construction work of this religious edifice. This assistance on the part of the King, in the view of these lay devotees, would not only help to put a stop to the spread of Christianity and recoup the loss incurred by Buddhism in the island but would also enhance his glory and merit.

What we get above is the record of a gloomy condition of Buddhism prevailing in Ceylon in the later half of the 19th century. History tells us that from the 16th century onwards the native kings of Ceylon started quarrelling amongst themselves for political supremacy and as a result there was virtually no single king ruling over the entire island. At this time foreign traders like the Arabs, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English came one after another to this beautiful land to exploit her rich resources. The boats of these greedy merchants, attracted by her indigenous treasures, started touching the shores on their way to the Straits and the Far East. The native kings, excepting the rulers of the Kandyan region, instead of opposing them welcomed these foreigners to gain political advantage over their rivals. Thus, the merchants got a footing in the island. But they did not remain content with their business transactions alone. Gradually they went on introducing their own religious faiths amongst the people. As a result Islam and Christianity, particularly the latter,

¹ Identified with modern Waskaduwa, a coastal township in the Kalutara district in Ceylon, some 22 miles to the south of Colombo on the Colombo-Galle Road.

gained a strong foothold all over Ceylon excepting the Kandyan region.

The Portuguese were followed by the Dutch in the 17th century and the Dutch by the English in the 19th. These European merchants, all professing Christianity, exploited the advantage of the internal disorder and took a firm hold over the greater part of Ceylon. Once established in the island, they started preaching their own religious faith amongst the people. At the outset they were very cautious. They established institutions to impart education and practical training to the people. Those who received this education and training from the foreign merchants, now the rulers, naturally got more favours from the rulers than the others who did not get this type of education. Thus getting a section of the people to their side, the Christian rulers began importing missionaries to carry on propaganda work amongst the natives. Gradually churches grew up, convents were established and the people who received education in these convents began to imbibe Christian ideas with the result that many of them were ultimately converted. This move of the Christian rulers was definitely prejudicial to the cause of Buddhism, the religion of most of the people of the land, and every devout Buddhist started feeling very much concerned, though at the time they were absolutely helpless in the matter. Naturally there was very little opposition at the beginning but gradually the orthodox section of the people mobilised strength and started protesting against the action of the Christians. The position of Buddhism was very precarious during the Portuguese times. But there came a revival in the 18th century when Vālivita Saraṇāṅkara, a Buddhist monk residing in the independent Kandyan kingdom, took up the cause of the

religion and in an open controversy the Christian preachers were put to shame by him and their sinister motive became exposed. It gave a rude shock to the Christian missionaries and at the same time Buddhism received a fresh impetus. At first the action of Thera Saraṇāṅkara had its effect only within the Kandyan kingdom. But gradually it spread to the maritime provinces and there was a revival of Buddhistic studies in the monasteries. The people who were educated in the Buddhist centres of learning and others who were trained in Government and Missionary schools started meeting one another in open controversy through the press and the public platform. The Buddhist monks, however, did not stop there by holding controversial discussions alone. They took lessons from the Christian preachers and followed their mode of preaching for propagating Buddhism. With the help of the rich devout laity they started publishing religious tracts and formed societies for the propagation of the Teaching. In the sixties of the 19th century a Buddhist Vernacular school was established at Dodanduwa in the southwest coast of Ceylon on the same line with the Christian Missionary schools. Our text also speaks of the intention of the laity of Waskaduwa for the establishment of such an institution. But unlike the people of Dodanduwa they could not get the help of the rich people of the locality where Christianity, probably its Protestant form, had a very important stronghold. Moreover, being so very close to Colombo where the English had already established themselves firmly, the Buddhists of Waskaduwa could not fulfill their pious wish. So they stretched their vision beyond the Bay and made an earnest appeal to King Mindon for financial help. It may be mentioned here that in this connection they referred to

the previous dispatch of missionaries from Ceylon to Burma.

Nothing can definitely be said as to what help Mindon extended to the laity of Waskaduwa. Of course, nothing can be expected either from our text. But from the colophon of its translation it appears that a reply was sent by the king. Unfortunately, however, the text containing the reply has not yet been traced. It may be pointed out here that there were many such Sandesakātās exchanged between Burma and Ceylon. One such text has already been published by Prof. Minayeri in the *Journal of the Pāli Text Society*, 1885, pp. 17-28. The author of the present paper has also found a number of such texts in Burmese characters in Rangoon.

Ven. A. P. Buddhadatta Mahāthera of Ambalangoda, Ceylon, has very kindly informed the author that here is quite a large number of such Pāli Mss. in Ceylon. It is again quite possible that similar texts would be found also in Siam and Cambodia. It is high time that the scholarly world should seriously take the matter in hand and extend all help to collect all these records which can really be the valuable treasures of the national archives of the countries concerned.²

² Paper read at the Seventeenth All-India Oriental Conference, Ahmedabad, 1953

“I say it is the development of the will which is so efficacious for right states of consciousness, not to speak of act and speech.”

Sallekha-Sutta



“Well then, Almsmen, you must school yourselves in the higher lore which I have taught you, to wit the four Themes (*sati-paṭṭhāna*), the four Bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pada*), the fivefold Sphere of sense (*indriya*), the five Forces (*bala*), the seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhanga*) and the Noble Eightfold Path. In this higher lore you must school yourselves in unity and harmony without strife.”

Kinti-Sutta

IS DHAMMA A RELIGION?

BY REV. JACK AUSTIN

Editor of "The Western Buddhist"

I read Mr. Mauno Nordberg's remarks under the above heading with sympathy since I know well the difficulties under which the Dhamma has to be presented to the Western peoples.

It is true that, amongst the few Westerners who have so far shewn an interest in Buddhism there are those who have reacted rather strongly against Christianity and all things Christian. They are looking for a complete change; so that they attach themselves to those aspects of the Dhamma which least resemble Christianity. But I suggest that it is unwise to judge the possible reactions of the greater number of people merely by the attitude displayed by this minority in a minority religious movement. Most Westerners are apathetic towards religion generally, rather than violently hostile to Christianity and it is very doubtful if they share the peculiar feelings of the Freethinkers to whom Mr. Nordberg alludes. Freethinkers are in the forefront of those whose particular viewpoint is shaped by a dislike of accepted religion, generally Christianity in the West, of course. It is not likely that their ranks harbour many potential Buddhists, and experience shews that, despite efforts made by such people as Mr. Jackson of London over a long period, few Freethinkers take the step of declaring themselves followers of The Buddha.

It is often the tendency of Buddhists in the West, being themselves a small group, to attempt to attach themselves to other small groups with some similar interests, or with some possible points of agreement. This is a

natural inclination on the part of people who feel rather isolated because of their unusual beliefs and who want a little company on their way. But it can be dangerous, since it often results in the Dhamma being watered down to a vague and general ethical teaching with a spice of original flavouring to give it a distinction. Witness what has happened to a movement originally planned by Buddhists —the Theosophical Society, — which has incorporated ideas actually counter to the essential *anattā* doctrine.

If Buddhism is to become a live force in the West, it is necessary to appeal to those who seek a religion in which they can believe without doing violence to their common sense and their critical faculty. It is amongst people who are open-minded, and capable of forming judgments free from old prejudices, that we need to look, rather than amongst those who are blinded by wrong implications in particular terms. Almost everyone regards Buddhism as one of the great world religions, and there seems little point in trying to sweep back the sea of general opinion, since such great effort would produce so little result — if indeed any worthwhile result at all. No really intelligent person — and unintelligent people are unlikely to be interested in the matter very deeply anyhow — no ordinary sensible Westerner, will necessarily associate the beliefs of one religion with those of a different one. Such muddled thinkers would be pretty useless in the ranks of Buddhism even if they found themselves therein.

What, after all, is religion? Bhikkhu Nyanasatta, in the full work

“Practical Buddhism”, a selection from which appears in the same issue of “The Light of the Dhamma”, opens his first chapter by emphatically defending the use of the word religion. As he points out there, religion is a body of moral and philosophical teachings, and ... living in accordance with the professed creed”. The word is not limited to the Christian conception any more than it is limited to any other. There is a tendency amongst some apologists to limit the Dhamma itself to their own understanding of it, when, in fact, the Dhamma is much more than a religion, a philosophy, a way of life, or an explanation of the meaning of life. It is all these and also something far greater, for it is designed to appeal to, and to help, all manner of men towards the self-realisation of full Enlightenment. Let us not try to belittle

the greatness of the Teaching by asserting that any one aspect of it is the whole, but, rather, offer it as a whole – and let those who wish to pursue one of its many paths do so within its ample fold.

The Buddha himself did not fear to use accepted words as well as accepted customs of his day, being wise enough to give new meanings to familiar things rather than startle his followers with unnecessary novelties. Let us not fear to use terms commonly used and quite clearly understood by all those with normal intelligence. Let us take accepted things too, and use them to make the Dhamma live in our daily lives, and shine forth thus in all our words and deeds.

Editors Note:

Mr. Austin’s contribution is well reasoned and what he has to say is quite valid. Nevertheless there are many to whom the word “Religion” gives a concept, vague and unformulated often, but all the more clinging for that, based on early childhood impressions, of aversion and repugnance for that which has been presented to them as “Religion”. Take the definition, for instance, from a very popular English Dictionary, one of those books for “the million”. The definition runs: “The belief in a supernatural power or powers, belief in a god or gods, esp. such belief as entails acts of worship on the part of the believer; a developed system of philosophical, theological and ethical opinions, tenets and theories depending ultimately and essentially upon a belief in a deity or deities, and the necessity of worshipping that deity or those deities; the Christian religion ...

Buddhism is NOT in this definition, a religion.

Since the “Doctrine” or the “Teaching” is much more descriptive of Buddhism, and there are many occasions on which though “religion” is used it would be better to say, merely, “Buddhism”, there arise few necessities to strain words in omitting “religion”.

When we refer to “Buddhism” as a “religion” it is usually necessary to clarify our terms, by saying “it is not that sort of religion”. In other words we have to say, “It is the same only different”. Better dodge the word “religion” altogether.

Because when we use the word “religion” we find other religious words creeping in, such as “priest”.

Now the same dictionary, and it is one used by a great many good, simple people, defines priest as: “One whose office is to perform sacred rites and act

as intermediary between the people and God ...” And, partly because ignorant translators have rather hazily used the old Christian terms, and those people who should know better, perhaps just as lazily continue to use them after reading Buddhism in translation by Christians, we find the un-Buddhist, indeed anti-Buddhist “Priest” and “High-priest” used to express “Bhikkhu” and Mahāthera”.

It isn’t only the fanatic rationalists who, as Mr. Austin rightly points out, wouldn’t be able to accept a new idea, who are kept away by the loose use of Christian terms. It is that great and growing body of young seekers who turn away in disgust from “just another joss” or from “secret doctrines” when, were these things absent, they would be encouraged to investigate Buddhism and investigating, see the truth.

“Of little concern, Ānanda, are quarrels respecting rigours of regimen or of the Code; it is possible quarrels in the Confraternity about the Path or the course of training which really matter.”

Sāmagāma-Sutta.

PALI TEXT SOCIETY

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being a Concordance in Pāli to the three Baskets of Buddhist Scriptures
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Listed by F. L. WOODWARD and others., arranged and edited by E. M.
HARE.
Part 1, fasc. 1. pp. vi. 58, paper covers, London, 1952. £1-10-0
2. THERAGATHA COMMENTARY, VOL. II
Edited by F. L. WOODWARD, boards, PTS. 1952. £2- 5-0

Reprints:

1. PALI-ENGLISH DICTIONARY,
Rhys Davids & Stede, 8 parts, sewn, London, 1952. Complete £6-10-0

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30, Dawson Place, London W. 2

BOOK REVIEW

“Satipaṭṭhāna – The Heart of Buddhist Meditation”, by Nyanaponika Thera, The Word of the Buddha Publishing Committee, 139 High Level Road, Nugegoda, Colombo, Ceylon. Paper Rs. 2.50, Cloth Rs. 3.50.

Buddhism is many things, but above all it is common sense. Even in what some would call its “mystical” facet, it teaches clearly and simply a practical road to Salvation. Unfortunately, to the West, Buddhism has been interpreted too often by those, sincere and zealous enough, some of them, who have not known a great deal of their subject and have not had that leaven of simple common sense that would enable them to interpret Buddhism correctly. Consequently the most arrant nonsense of “Secret doctrines” and “hidden traditions” is put forth as Buddhism and this attracts those poor unbalanced folk whose profound hunger for the supernatural coupled with some dim realisation of the inadequacy of the theistic faiths sends them out in a “pursuit of the exotic.”

At the other extreme the earnest seeker in the West is likely to come up against the mere scholar, the man who will eagerly grub up the roots of a word in Pāli and find some word in a European language with a meaning akin to that and then will triumphantly bring forth a “scholarly translation” that bears as much resemblance to the spirit of Buddhism as does a heap of sawdust to a fruiting tree.

HERE IS A BOOK THAT HAS BEEN BADLY NEEDED.

What a pleasure it is to have at last a book that sets forth the “Heart of Buddhist Meditation” in a simple, clear, concise and practical manner as befits its great subject.

It is scholarly and it is living and it is all that is needed *from outside oneself* to attain to that “Higher knowledge, to freedom, to *Nibbāna*.” The Buddha taught to *all* men who have the character to follow

His Teaching, all the Truth “holding nothing back.” Here is that Teaching which the Buddha called “The only way”. For the man who does not want to “stop and play games at the foot of the hill” or to learn “the secrets of power” in order to show, to his own full-fed but still somewhat starved and indeed insatiable ego, what a great man he can be to the man, that is, who is sincere and earnest in his desire for Salvation, here is the Buddha’s “Only way.”

It will be a help also to the mere scholar, because it will show him if he will but practise, the real meaning of Buddhism and the vitality of action behind the obscuring curtain of words.

As the learned author says in his “Introduction”: “In *Satipaṭṭhāna* lives the creative power as well as the timeless and universal appeal of a true doctrine of Enlightenment. It has the depth and the breadth, the simplicity and the profundity for providing the foundation and the framework to a living DHAMMA FOR ALL, or, at least, for that vast, and still growing, section of humanity that is no longer susceptible to religious or pseudo-religious sedatives, and yet feel, in their lives and minds, the urgency of fundamental problems of a non-material kind calling for solution that neither science nor the religions of faith can give.”

The “profound simplicity”, a simplicity that has taught little children and those harder to teach, the “learned scholars”, is well stressed by the author:

“Satipaṭṭhāna restores simplicity and naturalness to a world that grows

more and more complicated, problematic and reliant on artificial devices. It teaches these virtues of simplicity and naturalness first for the sake of their own inherent merits, but also for easing the task of spiritual self-help.

Certainly this world of ours is complex in its very nature, but it need not grow infinitely in its complexity, and it need not at all be as complicated and perplexing as the unskillfulness, ignorance, unrestrained passion and greed of men have made it. All these qualities making for increasing complication of life can be effectively countered by the Method of Right Mindfulness.

Satipaṭṭhāna teaches man how to cope with all this confusing complexity of his life and its problems: in the first instance, by endowing him with *adaptability* and pliancy of mind, with quickness of apt response in changing situations, with the skillfulness in applying the right means (*i.e.* Clear Comprehension of Suitability). As to the irreducible minimum of life's complexity. That too may, to a reasonable extent, well be mastered with the help of Right Mindfulness. It teaches, for that purpose: how to keep one's affairs, both worldly and ethical, tidy, and without arrears and debts how to use and to keep the reins of control; how to co-ordinate the numerous facts of life, and how to subordinate them to a strong and noble purpose.

As to the complications *capable* of reduction, *Satipaṭṭhāna* holds up the ideal of *simplicity of wants*. To stress this ideal today is most urgent in view of the dangerous modern tendency artificially to create, to propagandize, and condition for, ever-new wants. The results of that tendency as appearing in social and economic life, belong to the secondary causes of war, while the root of that tendency, *i.e.* Greed, is one of its primary causes. It is imperative for the material and

spiritual welfare of humanity to check that development. And as to our particular subject, spiritual self-help, – how can man's mind become self-reliant if it keeps on surrendering itself to that endless weary toil for continuously increasing imaginary needs entailing a growing dependency on others? Simplicity of life should be cultivated for the sake of its own inherent beauty as well as for the sake of the freedom it bestows."

Something of the method, which the author gives in as full detail as is possible to give is apparent from his paragraph quoted below, on "The value of Bare Attention for Knowing the Mind".

"Mind is the element in and through which we live, yet it is what is most elusive and mysterious. Bare Attention, however, by first attending patiently to the basic facts of the mental process, is capable of shedding light on mind's mysterious darkness, and of obtaining a firm hold on its elusive flow. The systematic practice of Mindfulness, starting with Bare Attention, will furnish all that knowledge about the mind which is essential for practical purposes, *i.e.* for the mastery, the development and the final liberation of mind. But even beyond that intrinsically practical scope of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* method: when once clear awareness and comprehension have been firmly established in a limited, but vital, sector of the mind's expanse, the light will gradually and naturally spread, and will reach even distant and obscure corners of the mind's realm which were hitherto inaccessible. This will mainly be due to the fact that the instrument of that search for knowledge will have undergone a radical change: the searching mind itself will have gained in lucidity and penetrative strength."

“... Owing to a rash or habitual limiting, labeling, misjudging and mishandling of things, important sources of knowledge often remain closed. Western humanity, in particular, will have to learn from the East to keep the mind longer and more frequently in a receptive, but keenly observing, state – a mental attitude which is cultivated by the scientist and the research worker, but should increasingly become common property. This attitude of Bare Attention will, by persistent practice, prove to be a rich source of knowledge and inspiration.”

Paying a great tribute to Burma's revered Venerable U Sobhana Mahāthera (Mahāsi Sayadaw) of the International Meditation Monastery, Rangoon, the author has a section on what he calls: “The New Burman *Satipaṭṭhāna* Method”.

Here is a book that sets forth the essentials of the Buddhist asceticism in simple and easily understandable fashion. It will still be necessary for most people to have a “Meditation Master” but here is set forth the Practice as it has never before been set forth in English.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

INDO-ASIAN CULTURE

Published quarterly by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Hyderabad House, New Delhi. India, our congratulations go to the Editor and the Council for a highly interesting and instructive journal.

Latest issue is January 1954 and there is a finely-illustrated article on The Ajanta Caves by the learned Dr. Ganguli.

Another article most interesting to us is the “Vinaya and the Abhidhamma Piṭakas of the Pāli Canon” by Dr. Nalinaksha Dutt, which shows careful research and the bringing of deep thought to the task.

The only small point to which we could take exception is the curious use of “Buddha” as though it were a name instead of a title. The use of “Buddha” instead of the correct, “The Buddha” can be very confusing to Western readers particularly.

Among the other interesting articles is one by a Jesuit, the Rev. D'Souza, which points out quite clearly how the “characteristic features of Buddhism became for ever part of the Hindu tradition.” In thus showing how Hinduism has been influenced by Buddhism, the Rev. father gives a pointer as to how Christianity also has been benefited by incorporation of some of the gentleness towards all living things first inculcated by Buddhism. We need to-day writers like this to take the process a step farther and to introduce to the faiths of blind belief the timeless Doctrine of Reason and Gentleness and Salvation that is Buddhism.

Foreign subscription to “Indo-Asian Culture” is 8 shillings per annum.

“THE GOLDEN LOTUS”

We are always pleased to receive this American Magazine of Buddhism, and our last copy is dated November 1953. Sea-mail takes some three months between U.S.A. and Burma.

The issue under review has an excellent short article on “Ill-will” which ends “The Will is the one sword that can destroy this fetter.” In Sabbāsaṃvāsa-Sutta the Buddha taught that certain “Cankers” are to be removed by will, among them that of ill-will and in the Sallekha Sutta (also from the Majjhima Nikāya) says: “I say it is the development of the will which is so efficacious for right states of consciousness, not to speak of act and speech.

It is pleasing to read such an article as the one “Ill-will” so purely Buddhist and putting the Teaching in simple and plain fashion.

To us here the article by Margaret Geiger “H.P. Blavatsky on Buddhism” reads rather strangely. There seems a hiatus of logic or perhaps the point is not made clearly. In writing of Madame Blavatsky the authoress says she points out that the natural activity of western minds have something to contribute toward arousing the eastern mind from its passivity and torpor (A throttling priestcraft has distorted the interpretation of scriptures and withheld truths felt improper for the masses.)” Later on she quotes Madame Blavatsky directly:

“... The schools of the Northern Buddhist Church, established in those countries to which his initiated Arahats retired after the Master’s death, teach all that is now called Theosophical doctrines, because they form part of the knowledge of the initiates – thus proving how the truth has been sacrificed to the dead-letter by the too zealous orthodoxy of Southern Buddhism.”

If Madame Blavatsky were alive today she might like to rewrite what she’d said about “eastern passivity and torpor.” Especially if she saw the hive of activity in the East and, too often, the playing with mere dead-end materialism by too many in the modern West.

However, the point at issue is the “withholding of truths” of which the “Southern” Theravāda Buddhists certainly have not been guilty since if anything can be said to be their password it is the “Ehi passiko” “Come and see” of the Buddha.

The “throttling priestcraft” has existed among certain non-Theravāda sects who have whispered of an “esoteric tradition.”

The quotation from Madame Blavatsky blames the Theravādins for their insistence on orthodoxy, on the teaching of all of the Buddha Doctrine of the “open hand of the Teacher with nothing held back.”

The Buddha had said, in a Sutta and giving a parable that is a favourite among Theravādins “The Parable of the Simsapa Leaves,” that he had taught ALL THE TRUTHS NECESSARY FOR THE HIGHER KNOWLEDGE, FOR SALVATION and this the Theravādins are actively propagating to all who care to listen, without respect of colour, creed or birth.

Madame Blavatsky’s theory that the Arahats (and in the absence of anything to the contrary this is naturally taken to mean all the Arahats), “retired” to any particular country is scarcely tenable when not only the Pāli Canon but a widespread tradition, if that were needed in addition, agrees that the Arahats were sent out to preach the Doctrine Sublime to all men.

Madame Blavatsky, however, had a remarkably fine mind and it is a pity that in her day there was so little of the Pāli Canon available in translation and that the translations into European languages at that time were so poor in many cases.

The “Golden Lotus” is advertised in this issue, so we have no need to give here the particulars intending subscribers will want.

GLOSSARY

FOR VOL. II—No. 2.

A

Acchariya	wonderful; strange; marvelous
Akata	not made; natural
Akiñcaññā-yatana	sphere of unbounded space
Aloka	light
Asmi-māna	pride of self; egotism
Atakkā vacara	beyond hair-splitting reasoning; sophistry
Attaniya	belonging to the soul; of the nature of soul
āvajjina citta	‘advertence’ of the mind towards the object, <i>i.e.</i> the first stage in process of consciousness

C

Cakkhu	eye
Cetiya	cairn; pagoda

D

Dhammasālā	preaching hall
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H

Hadaya	heart
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J

Jarā old	age; decay
Jivhā	tongue

K

Koṭṭen millions	
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L

Lokāyata	what pertains to the ordinary view, common or popular philosophy
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M

Majjhima Paṭṭapadā	middle path; middle way
Manasikāra	‘mental advertence’ in the sense of avajjana (above)

Mano	mind
Mannita	mind-made
Manussa	man
Mayā	made of
Mūla	root

P

Pariyāya	arrangement; disposition Vol 1, No. 1
Phassa	touch, contact
Pubbangamā	going before; preceding

S

Sabba; sabbe	all
Sakkarāj	era
Samugghāta	uprooting; abolishing
Sandesakathā	messages
Santati	continuity
Sappāya	fit; suitable
Sassata-dīṭṭhi	eternalist theory
Suñña	zero; void

T

Thaddha	hard; rigid; firm
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U

Upādāna-kkhandha	the five groups of existence which form the objects of clinging
Uposathagāra	the hall in the monastery in which Pāṭmakkha is recited

V

Vikāra	change; alteration
Viññatti	making known; bodily or verbal expression
Vohāra	common use of language; conventional language

Y

Yoniso manasikāra	fixing one’s attention with a purpose or thoroughly wise consideration
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