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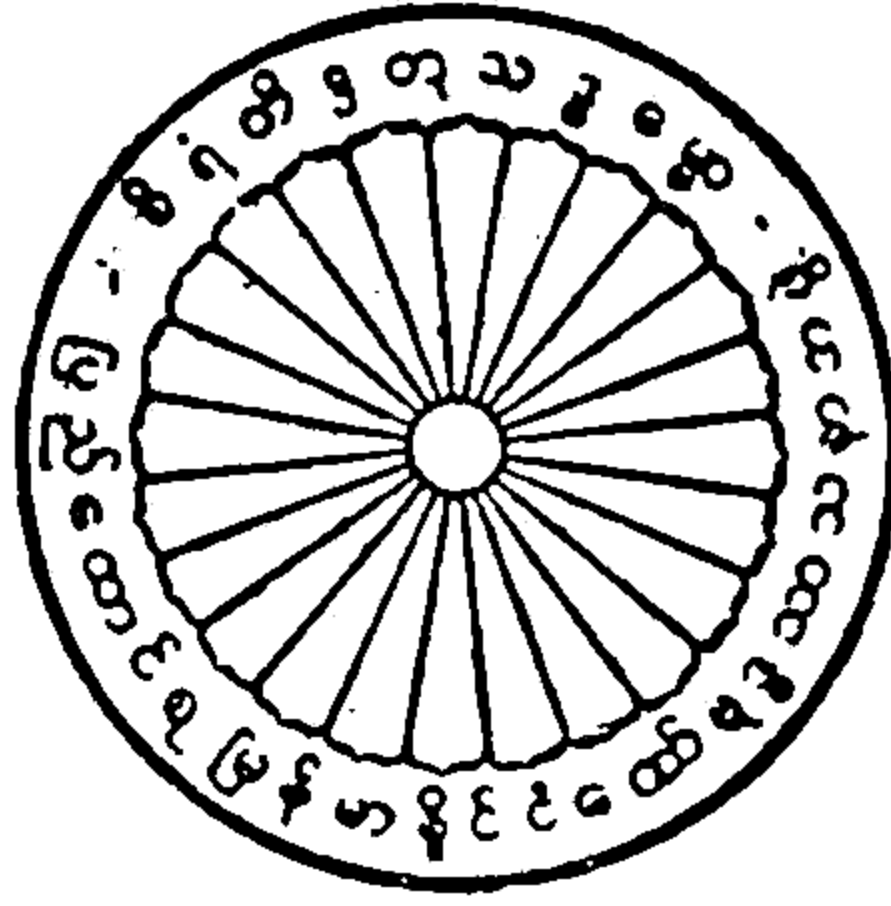
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THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA

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THE EDITOR,
"THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA"
Union Buddha Sāsana Council,
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NIYĀMA-DĪPANĪ OR MANUAL OF COSMIC ORDER

By Mahāthera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt.

[Translated from the Pāli by Beni M. Barua, D. Litt., M.A., and revised and edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A. and re-edited by the English Editorial Department, Union Buddha Sāsana Council, who have incorporated in the body of the text (in this instalment) the Residuum translated by Ven. U Nyāna, Patamagyaw.]

IV

OF THINGS NOT WITHIN THE RANGE OF THOUGHT (*Acinteyyāni*)

These we hold to be four in number, the range of a Buddha, the range of *iddhi*, or supernormal power, the nature of the result of action (*kamma*), the origin and reality of the world.

As it is said in the texts : ‘There are four things which are not within the range of thought, which should not be thought about, thinking upon which tends to unhinge the mind and injure the system, namely, the range of a Buddha, the Jhāna-range of one in Jhāna for mystic rapture, the result of *kamma* and thinking of the world.’ *

Here ‘things not within the range of thought’ means ‘which cannot be thought about by average folk ; things that lie beyond their intellectual ability, and with which it is therefore not meet they should occupy their thoughts.’ By ‘thinking upon which’ we mean endeavouring strenuously to grasp, with the determination : ‘Whether I am far removed from, or stand near to the matters belonging to Ariyans, to saintly persons, I will realise these for and by myself, solely by my own intellectual insight.’ ‘To unhinge the mind’—to bring about loss of mental balance. ‘Injure’—to cause mental misery. ‘Jhāna-range’ we have called ‘range of *iddhi*.’

The range of a Buddha

These are the fourfold assurance, the six modes of super-intellect and the ten powers. The only adequate criterion of these attainments is the insight of a Buddha himself, not that of eminent followers, or of other beings human or celestial fit to rank beside them. As to the nature of those powers they should be studied in the testimony of the Buddhas. In so doing a disciple can fulfil his duty; otherwise his efforts are but misdirected,

and would tend to his ruin; or, as it is said, ‘unhinge the mind and injure the system.’

This would hold true for other inquirers, intelligent yet not adherents.

If this criterion be admitted, the further question arises : ‘How can one who is a Buddha, *i.e.*, “Awakened”, Enlightened, Omniscient—be known to be such ?’ The reply is : ‘By the vastness of His intellect : in other words, by omniscience.’ But how can omniscience be known ? By the contents of His teaching. And by His teaching (in the case of the Buddha Gotama) we mean the eighty-four thousand *dhammas* constituting the body of His doctrine.** It is by the possession of this intellectual superiority (*buddhi-mahatta*) that a person becomes “Buddha”; it is not only by possessing supernormal gifts as such that he can attain to a state of perfection. A Buddha of a truth becomes a true saviour of multitudes in virtue of His greatness in merit, in morals, in power of concentration, in supernormal power, in intellectual endowment—in all of these qualities.

If it be insisted on the contrary that it is by virtue of mere supernormal faculties that a Buddha becomes a true saviour, our contention is that should a man, himself blinded by the supernormal faculty in matters which can only be illumined by intellect, right understanding, try to save many, it would do many foolish people great harm. Indeed, in the absence of genuine intellect, the supernormal faculty, whether small or great, serves as an instrument by which to practise the art of cunning, crafty talk and deception. Those who attach weight to supernormal faculty as such are as children, while those who attach weight to intellect are wise indeed. This truth is brought out in the section called “Sīla”, of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, in the Kevaṭṭa-sutta.***

Here one might object by saying that, for that matter, superiority of intellect should

* Aṅguttara-Nikāya, iv., “Apaṇṇakavagga” (vol. ii., p. 80)

** See Psalms of the Brethren, Ānanda’s verses, verse 1024.

*** Dialogues of the Buddha, i., 276 f.

be the same as superiority as to supernormal faculty. If so, our reply to him would be that should a being be capable of doing all possible good to the world by virtue of his superiority as to supernormal faculty, it would follow from this that, in his case, there is no duty to carry out in the moral kingdom, by virtue of his capacity for teaching. If so, it would further follow that in his case there is also no duty to perform by virtue of his superior intellect. If this is so, it should further be inferred that, in his religion, the functions of teaching and of intellect are far to seek.

Concerning this statement, that by virtue of his superiority in supernormal faculty a man is capable of doing all possible good to the world—‘is capable’ means of course a public, well-attested capacity, visible at any time no less than moon or sun in the sky. Otherwise the foolish person who draws conclusions from the loud-voiced professions of impostors gaining their living by such cunning and crafty talk, will in the end find himself sprawling in empty space under the delusion that he is on broad earth. But superiority of intellect can be absolutely relied upon, and he who, in great and profound matters, does not seek it is foolish both by nature and in the eyes of the world.

The range of iddhi

By *iddhi* we understand supernormal faculties developed by special exercises. In ancient days, when life was long, recluses and brahmans outside the pale of Buddhism reckoned five kinds :— (i.) supernormal will-power (*iddhividhābhinnā*) ; (ii.) hyperaesthesia of sight; (iii.) hyperaesthesia of hearing; (iv.) discerning the thought of another (thought-reading, telepathy); (v.) hypermnesia, or reminiscence of one’s own past history. These five, together with the insight known as the conviction of one’s self being free from the four “intoxicants” (*āsava-kkhaṇḍa*), are recognised among the disciples of the Buddha as six kinds of supernormal faculties as such.

By supernormal powers of will, recluses and brahmans claimed to go to the worlds of gods and Brahmās above, to the infernal regions below, and even beyond the limit of the farthest zone of the world-systems.

By supernormal powers of sight and hearing they, standing here, could see objects and hear sounds there, at distant places.

By supernormal powers of thought they could read thoughts, and by supernormal powers of hypermnesia they could recollect events that happened in the past, many hundreds of births ago, even many periods of envelopment and development of the world system.

While going above, below or about, they thus began to observe : ‘In travelling in this manner, in a single moment we have measured so many leagues.’ In so doing various configurations and many leagues in the systems of the world, in the course of a cosmic epoch would become visible. Having realised through this the perniciousness of sensual desires, they renounced the world, became dwellers in the woods, practised meanwhile such things as meditation on the nature of material things and cultivation of the divine Brahma-life—of good-will, compassion, appreciation and equanimity—by which a man can attain to the Brahma-world, and mastered five supernormal powers. From that time on they had nothing further to do for themselves. At this stage they, while living in this world, sought for many hundreds, many thousands, many hundreds of thousands of years to do good to the world. In so doing there would be revealed to them very many kinds of various arts and sciences.

As to these recluses and Brahmans we are told in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* * : ‘There are some recluses and Brahmans who theorise with regard to what was before the aeons of time, and who speculate on what will be after the aeons of time, etc.’ ** From this we can see that their speculations did not come into the range of their fivefold *iddhi*. Hence as to a matter within the range of their *iddhi* their knowledge, and not that of average men was to be regarded as the true measure. And it was the business of the latter to learn to comprehend those points as they were given by those recluses and Brahmans. As it is said in the *Dasavatthuka-sammādiṭṭhi* : *** ‘There are in the world recluses and Brahmans who, being in the right path, having made progress by right methods, have discerned and realised the nature of this

* Dialogues of the Buddha, i., No. 1

** Ibid., p. 52

*** A tenfold exposition of *Sammādiṭṭhi* “right view”, in the “*Mahā-cattārīsaka Sutta*,” *Majjhima-Nikāya*, No. 117.

world as well as of the world beyond, and declare what they know.'

Here one might say: 'I do not believe that there are recluses and Brahmans who have possessed such great supernormal powers. Why? Because now for certain no such men are ever to be seen or heard of in the world.'

You are right in saying, 'now for certain no such men are ever to be seen.' The reason is that now you are born too late, and in the closing part of a period of decadence. This is also true that you say: 'no such men are to be heard of.' The reason is that you are born rather too late in a non-Noble land, far removed from religions and texts coming down in unbroken succession from the beginning of an aeon. But you should investigate the matter thus: In former days this world was exceedingly rich in all respects; men lived to a very great age, even past reckoning was one span of life. What then might not this world of men have been like in those days? To what can we of today liken the saints and recluses of those times?*

The nature of the result of action (kamma)

This is of two kinds: that which takes effect in the life-experience of an individual, and that which comes about afterwards in a life beyond. Here "result" is that which matures, that is to say, bears fruit, secures a distinct end. For instance when a man, having earned a *kaṭṭapaṇa* (old Indian coin) by some job he has done, enjoys thereby things that he desires, it is then, and then only that his work secures a distinct end, that is, reaches the object sought by the labourer. In the same way is the point in question to be viewed. Carried once into effect an action** runs its course as such, and as long as it does not mature, so long it cannot be said to have reached its distinct end. Its sequence may run through hundreds of thousands of periods. Thus does a powerful *kamma* of immoral nature secure its distinct end in states of woe, and thus does a powerful *kamma* of moral nature become effective in lives of bliss.

Again, the result of *kamma* is taken to be twofold: as *drifting*, affecting the individual, and as *overflowing*, affecting others. Of these the former implies prosperity, or adversity experienced by a man in this or that existence as an individual being, in consequence of his meritorious or demeritorious deeds. Under this aspect the result of *kamma* affects the doer of the deed only. But in his existence as an individual being, owing to the heat and power of his *kamma* promoting his happiness, or causing him misery, there arise conditions of prosperity, or adversity, with respect to persons other than himself. This is called the overflow of the result of *kamma*. Under this aspect the result of his *kamma* is shared by others.

The drifting course of the result of *kamma* may be illustrated by the prosperity of King Mahāsudassana's life in the Mahāsudassana-sutta ***. Moreover, owing to the power of the meritorious deeds of the king, various conditions of prosperity in the lives of other persons arose, some together with his own condition, some coming from this or that source. This may be taken as an illustration of the overflowing course of the result of *kamma*. It may even promote the happiness of the inhabitants of other continents. ****

As regards evil deeds, the story in which the whole kingdom was ruined in consequence of the overflowing course of King Nālikera's act, persecuting five hundred sages, ***** and such other stories may be related.

Again, it is written: 'A person, Bhikkhus, may be so born as to promote the well-being of many men, the happiness of many men, the interests of many men, the well-being and happiness of many gods and men. A person, Bhikkhus, may be so born as to increase the ill of many men, the misery of many men, the ruin of many men, the ill and misery of many gods and men.' *****

It not only affects beings, animals as well as men, but it also permeates the realm of space, and the whole organic world. Thus we read in our texts:—

* This is not to say that such men do not exist in the world today. They can and do exist. Not only that, the possibility exists for *you*, to reach the Spheres of Attainment; and realisation for yourself is, after all, the only valid thing.

** Readers should note that *kamma* means literally action, act, deed. Thus "job" is literally *hattha kamma*, hand-action, manual-labour.

*** Dialogues of the Buddha, ii. No. xvii., Buddhist Suttas (Sacred Books of the East).

**** *Dīpa*. This may conceivably mean "worlds".

***** *Jātaka* (transl.) v., pp. 72, 76.

***** *Aṅguttara*, i., p. 33

‘It is the rule, Bhikkhus, that when the Bodhisatta having fallen from the Tusita-heaven enters his mother’s womb, then there appears throughout this world including the celestial worlds, an infinitely splendid radiance surpassing in splendour the divine radiance of gods, and then the ten thousand world-systems tremble, shake and quake.’* Such is the overflowing result of a Bodhisat’s acts of fulfilling many perfections.

When men become exceedingly sinful in thought and deed, all the overflowing course of their *kamma* rushes from this extensive earth up to the orbits of moon, sun and stars, agonising even the whole realm of space, and the whole organic world of trees, etc; undermining by degrees the cause of prosperity and strengthening that of adversity. It is then that the life-span, beauty and health of men, inhabiting and living in both of these worlds, undergo diminution.

Nowadays men and trees appear exceedingly small. But we are told, in the *Buddhavamsa*, that, in the days of longevity, the body of a Buddha was eighty cubits in length, while according to the Sixth Book of the *Āṅguttara* the height was ninety cubits. The *Dhammikavagga*** tells us that in ancient times the King Korabya of the Kingdom of the Kurus had a banyan tree, named Suppa-tiṭṭha, twelve leagues in circumference, its fruits of the size of big rice-jars....

When men become virtuous in thought and deed, it has been similarly declared how the life-span of men goes on increasing. The whole of the *Aggañña* and *Cakkavatti-suttas* should be referred to in this connection.*** Again, in the *Pattakammavagga*, of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*,**** we are told: ‘At the time, Bhikkhus, when kings and their sons become unrighteous, unrighteous become also the Brahmans and house-holders, and the people who live in suburbs and countries. Then the moon, sun, stars and planets move irregularly. At the time, Bhikkhus, when kings and their sons become righteous,

righteous become also the Brahmans and householders, etc. Then do moon, sun, stars and planets move regularly.’ This is the overflowing consequence of the collective *kamma* of men. Such a consequence affects even the whole realm of space and the whole organic world.

It must be borne in mind that here by ‘result of *kamma*’ is meant something ‘born of the result of *kamma*’—for instance, the supernormal faculties, included under the category of things not within the range of thought, became possible through the *kamma* of past lives.

The faculties as such are of many kinds; each realm of beings having its own supernormal powers.

As regards the supernormal powers of the Brahma-gods we are informed, in the *San-khārupapatti-sutta*,***** of the presence of one thousand to ten thousand Brahmās : that of these, one thousand Brahmās permeate one thousand world-systems with their radiance, two thousand Brahmās permeate two thousand world-systems, and so on. These are the Mahābrahmās living on the plane of the first stage of Jhāna-rapture. Now the gods and men who live beneath this plane imagine and recognise this or that Mahābrahmā to be the maker of the whole world, the lord of the whole world, omnipresent, immutable, eternal saviour of the world. It is said in the *Mūla-pariyāya*,***** the first sutta of the *Majjhīma-nikāya*: ‘He (*i.e.*, an ordinary thinker who is not familiar with the Ariyan mode of thinking) apprehends Brahmā***** as Brahmā. Having apprehended Brahmā as Brahmā, he fancies him to be the Brahmā, conceives attributes in the Brahmā, fancies that the world is from the Brahmā, imagines that the Brahmā, is his, and extols the Brahmā as such. What is the cause of it?, I say, it is because this matter is not truly understood by him.’

Here the meaning of ‘apprehends Brahmā as Brahmā’ is: he apprehends the god just as people commonly do in ordinary speech. And the phrase ‘he fancies him to be the Brahmā’ implies that he imagines him (*a*)

* Dialogues, ii., 9.

** *Āṅguttara*. iii., 369.

*** *Dīgha-Nikāya*, iii., Nos. xxvi., xxvii.

**** Vol. ii, p. 74. f.

***** *Majjhīma-Nikāya*, vol. iii., No. 120.

***** *Majjhīma-Nikāya*, first Sutta, called “*Mūla-pariyāya*”, in the first fifty suttas called collectively *Mūlapaṇṇāsa*, or “*Root-fifty*”.

***** That long-lived being worshipped under many names as “The Creator” “Lord God Almighty” etc.

according to his unregenerate desires, thinking : ' Lo ! this Great Brahmā in all his beauty ! ' (b) according to his fancies as to values (*māna*), thinking : ' He is the supreme, the most high in the world ; ' (c) according to his speculative opinions, thinking : ' He is the unchangeable, immutable eternal, stable and enduring, for ever. '

The expression 'he conceives attributes in the Brahmā' implies that he conceives such and such light, such and such splendour, such and such supernatural powers in him. The expression 'he fancies that the world is from the Brahmā' signifies that he thinks that this world is born of, *i.e.*, emanates from, this Brahmā, comes into existence only in relation to him. The expression 'imagines that the Brahmā is his' implies that he considers the Brahmā to be our master, lord, and refuge. 'Extols the Brahmā as such' means that he praises him by saying, 'Ah ! how majestic is he ! Ah ! how powerful is he ! ' The expression 'Because this matter is not truly understood by him' means that it is not discerned by the threefold mode of discerning: In the first place he does not investigate it in the light of such an axiom of knowledge as the Brahmā as such does not exist, the only existing things are the psychical and physical facts and conditions classed as 'name-and-form'. In the second place he does not investigate the matter by the light of higher reason, which judges the psychical and physical facts and conditions as such are by nature impermanent, involve ills, and are accordingly not of the nature of soul or deity.

And in the third place he does not investigate the matter by the light of a felt necessity of abandoning, once for all, craving, imagined values, and false speculation which are rooted in erroneous apperception. These were indicated above in connection with our explanation of the expressions 'He apprehends,' 'He fancies,' 'He extols.' This lack of knowledge, indeed, is the cause of his apprehending and imagining and praising after this sort.

As regards the remaining faculties, such as those which are peculiar to the gods, etc. they are made manifest in the Deva, Sakka, Brahmā, Yakkha, Nāga, Supaṇṇa, and Lakkhaṇa Samyuttas (in the *Samyutta-nikāya*), as well as in the *Peta-vatthu* and other texts.

These faculties are not seldom found among men. But common people do not know and see them, although they are lodged in their own bodies. The recluses and Brahmans of great supernormal power in the past, or those who cultivate occult lore, alone know and see them. Those supernormal faculties, born of the result of *kamma*, are outside the mental range of average folks and should not be studied.

Nevertheless these faculties are really common, speaking generally, to all beings. For all beings, during their continual journey in this endless series of lives, may travel from the nethermost purgatories to the topmost scale of existence, through all those that are intermediate. They may attain then to the state of gods, to that of Sakka, Brahmās, Mahābrahmās, and so on. Again from this highest scale they may be reborn into the states of woe. He who is today the King of Gods, or a Brahmā, * endowed with majestic powers, may become tomorrow a dog or a hog, and so on in rotation.

Other results of *kamma* not within the range of thought are such as come into effect among infra-human beings. Besides, in the bodies of men and of the brute creation there are physical conditions of the sense-faculties, resulting from past *kammās*. These, too, are of a nature not within the range of thought. For when in the case of a dead body, or a dead organ of sense, a man thinks 'I will bring it to life again ! ' he only runs the risk of losing his reason, or of ruining his health by his thoughts and efforts. And why ? Because he is striving against the inexorable working of another's past deeds.

In the Mahāvagga-Samyutta, in the section dealing with the Four Truths, the ten speculative views, maintaining that the world is eternal, that it is not eternal, and so forth, are called technically "world-thought" (*loka-cintā*). But here we are using the term in a more comprehensive sense for all world-lore to be found in ancient texts under various names, for cosmologies conceived by the recluses and Brahmans of supernormal powers, by their pupils and pupils of pupils, or by Atthaka, Vāmaka, and such other recluses and Brahmans. The Vedāngas, for instance, are said to be derived from, and dependent upon, the contents of the three Vedas of the Tri-Veda Brahmans. The sciences mean medical science. The mantras

denote spells for conquering the earth, winning wealth etc., "World-thought" is also applied to the Manikā and Gandhārī-cults, mentioned in the Kevaṭṭasutta. The Manikā-cult is like the 'supernormal thought called discerning the thought of another,' a telepathic device. And the Gandhārī-cult is like the 'supernormal powers of will,' a device for executing various feats of supernormal character, such as floating through the air, etc. The latter is manifold, viz., root-cult, incantatory, numerical, and metallic. The root-cult is that which is rendered effective through medicinal roots; the incantatory cult is that which is brought into play through formulas of spells; the numerical cult is that which is brought into play through eight and nine series of numbers; and the metallic cult is that which is brought into play by means of metals like iron and mercury. And in the *Patisambhidāmagga* we read: 'What are the feats of magic? A magician having recited his spells exhibits an elephant, a horse, a chariot, infantry, and various arrays of the army in the sky, in the firmament.' In the Upāli-sutta of the Majjhīma-paṇṇāsa we read; 'What do you think, householder? Is a recluse or a Brahman, who is endowed with supernormal faculty and has obtained mastery over will, able to reduce Nālandā to ashes by a single curse? He is able, venerable sir.'*

Here the clause 'who is endowed with supernormal faculty' means one who is said to be gifted with synergic *iddhi* applied to thought about the external world.

Among the four matters not within the range of thought, the powers of a Buddha stand highest in rank, *iddhi* proper comes next, and the supernormal faculties born of the result of *kamma* come last. This being the case, those who are in the higher worlds gifted with supernormal faculties born of the result of *kamma*, whether they are kings of gods or Mahābrahmās recognised as the supreme rulers of the world, become in the world of men attendants to Buddhas or their disciples, possessing majestic powers of intellect and will. And the same is the case with those recluses and Brahmans who are outside our religion, but have reached the climax of the supernormal faculties of gods in the higher world. Why? Because those faculties which result from *kamma* obtain among the beings of lower order. And

secondly because they are equipped with the moral, reflective, and intellectual qualities that are extant amongst us.

Among witchcrafts concerned with mundane thoughts, those who attained to success were called Vijjandharas. The gods of lower orders and all demons and goblins served as messengers to the Vijjandharas. There were formulas of incantation and spells which were very powerful. They served to crush those gods, demons, goblins, etc.

Men who have supernormal gifts are seen sometimes in our own country (Burma). They repair to a forest, and having handled regularly the occult formulas and prepared themselves for days and nights, and achieved success, many begin to tour in villages and districts. Wherever they go, they provide instantaneous relief to those who are ill and come to them for help. They also exhibit many other feats of wonderful magic, and account for this or that fateful event in the life of men. But the rulers prohibit these occult practices, fearing lest they might give rise to violent commotions in the country.

EXPOSITIONS

V.

OF THE THREE WORLDS.

Here we expound our system of the world under three headings.

- (1) Physical Universe,
- (2) Things, and
- (3) Being (*i.e.*, Person).

(1) By Physical Universe is meant the world conceived in spatial relation (*okāsa-loka*),—as something in which things and beings have their existence. Thus heaven is the physical universe as regards celestial beings, earth is the physical universe as regards men, brutes, and things in general; and purgatory is the physical universe as regards infernal beings. It comprises the great earth, the great ocean, the circumjacent mountains,** Mount Sineru in the centre, round which seven successive ranges of mountains intervened by the seven successive oceans of intense cold, the four great islands, many other smaller ones, and the six abodes of Devas, and the twenty abodes of Brahmās in vertical positions. Such is termed one Spatial Universe or a Circular

* Majjhīma-Nikāya, i., 377

** Cakkavāla pabbata which forms the boundary of this world-system, is situated circumlittorally in the extreme part of this universe, and it is said that the height is 82000 leagues.

World-System (*Cakkavāḷa*). There are many other smaller world-systems innumerable in number in all the eight directions of the present one.

We also find in the *Tika-Aṅguttara* at the *Ānanda-vagga*, the three kinds of World-System, namely : (1) Small-thousand-world-system (*Cūḷasahassi*) which comprises one thousand *Cakkavāḷas*, (2) Medium-thousand-world-system (*Majjhīmasahassi*) which comprises one million *Cakkavāḷas*, (3) Great-thousand-world-system (*Mahāsahassi*) which comprises one billion *Cakkavāḷas*.

There are also three other kinds of world-system, (1) Ten-thousand-world system which is called the Realm of Existence (*jātikhetta*) and it means the Realm in which the Buddhas appear and all the Devas and Brahmās therein form the audience of the Buddhas, (2) Great-thousand-world-system which is called the Realm of Influence (*Ānākhetta*) and it means the Realm where the influence of the *Parittas** and the Buddhas pervade, and all the Devas and Brahmās therein accept it, (3) Infinite-world-system which is called the Realm of Object (*Viśayakhetta*) and it means the one which serves as the object of the Knowledge of the Buddhas.

There are three others also, (1) Sensual Plane (*Kāmadhātu*), (2) Material Plane (*Rūpadhātu*), (3) Immaterial Plane (*Arūpadhātu*). The first comprises eleven Realms of *Kāma*, the second sixteen of *Rūpa*, and the third four of *Arūpa*.

Four Stages are also expounded, (1) Sensual stage (*Kāma-bhūmi*), (2) Material-stage (*Rūpa-bhūmi*), (3) Immaterial-stage (*Arūpa-bhūmi*), (4) Transcendental-stage (*Lokuttara-bhūmi*). The first three respectively comprise the Realms of *Kāma*, *Rūpa*, and *Arūpa*; and the last comprises the four Noble Paths, the four Noble Fruits and Nibbāna, the Unconditioned.

(2) The term 'Thing' is used in the sense of conditioned things in general (*saṅkhāraloka*). Things in this sense include plants: trees, creepers, bushes, shrubs, etc; metals, such as gold, silver, etc.; in short, all the natural sources we draw from and enjoy; the objects fashioned therefrom by men, such as houses, chariots, carriages, etc.; and lastly, the things of intellectual creation, e.g.,

categories such as aggregates, senses, objects, etc.

(3) By beings (*satta*) or persons (*puggala*) we understand creatures generally:—infernal beings, animals, spirits, demons, men, gods and Brahmās. There are beings terrestrial, aquatic, and aerial, oviparous, viviparous, moisture-sprung, and beings reborn without earthly parentage; beings without feet, bipeds, quadrupeds, and beings with many feet, beings with form and beings without form, beings having perception and beings having no perception and beings having neither-perception-nor-non-perception. The world of Space and the world of Creatures are both included among the world of Things. But the things when classified distinctly and separately under the names of Realm and Creature have special names assigned to them, such as the 'World of Space', and the 'World of Creatures'.

We shall now explain the mode of existence (*saṅghiti*) in the physical universe. According to our theory, earth rests on water beneath it, water rests on air, and air rests on open space (*ajāṭākāsa*). This open space is infinite below and on all sides. It is filled with air without motion, which supports the great volume of air (atmosphere) above it; this supports in its turn the great volume of water; and that supports this great earth. It is said in the text: 'This great earth, Ānanda, is established on water, water is established on air, air on space. A time comes, Ānanda, when a mighty wind blows. This blowing causes commotion in the waters, and the waters being in commotion cause the earth to quake' (*Dīgha-Nikāya ii.*, 107; *Dialogues ii.*, 114).

Next we deal with the coming into being and the ceasing to be of the physical universe. The co-inherent quality of heat is the cause of birth, decay, and death of the physical universe, the cause of its origination and cessation. As it is said in the Pāli: 'What is the element of heat? It is that which heats, that which causes things to decay, that which consumes, and that through which things reach an entire change.' (*Majjhīma-Nikāya i.*, 188, 422). Accordingly it is the co-inherent heat which is ever causing co-existent things to burn, to decay, consuming them, changing them, and making them pass from one condition into another. The cold-

* *Parittas* are the verses especially compiled for the promotion of protection and general prosperity, such as *Ratana-Sutta-Paritta*, *Mettā-Sutta-Paritta*, etc.

therm (*sīta-tejo*) also determines the same effects in these matters. And it is now not necessary to say anything of the hot-therm (*uṇha-tejo*). It is quite clear.

As it is said in the *Dhammasaṅgani* in the chapter of Matter: 'That which is the growth of sense spheres is the development of matter, and that which is the development of matter is the continuum of the same.' Birth may be classified into four divisions, birth, growth, development and continuum. Of these, birth means the first appearance of the conditioned things. Growth means the first start of development of appearing things. Development means the gradual extension of the developing things. Continuum * means the continuance of the developed and accumulated things. That is to say things continue in such quantity as they have developed and they neither increase nor decrease. After that, these matters, together with the element of fermenting heat (*jīraṇa-tejo*) which causes the coexistent things to decay, gradually diminish at the stage of decay and disappear away at the final stage of death.

The world is considered by us as a system or order in which everything happens according to the laws of causality **. Because the great earth is being all the time heated, burnt, decayed, and matured by the twofold coexistent heat [I have elsewhere rendered it as cold-therm (*sīta-tejo*) and hot-therm (*uṇha-tejo*),] it cannot overcome the six stages, i.e., birth, growth, development, continuum, decay, and death. So with the Mount Sineru, the circumjacent mountains, etc. Therefore in the Developed Epoch, all the earth, mountains etc. that come into being and appearance pass gradually from the beginning through the four stages, i.e. birth, growth, development and continuum. That is to say, they rise, grow, develop and continue for a long time till at last they arrive at the stage of decay in which the influence of all the heat will overrule all others. From that time onwards all the unessential things among them will at first be destroyed and the essential ones alone will remain. Then even the essentials will be consumed in the long run of process and only the more essential will remain. Thus continuing for an indefinite time, everything will at last arrive at the most extreme point of degree at which combustion may

easily take place like gun powder, the munition of the king's army, which is apt to combust at the sudden contact with a spark of fire. Then this Developed Epoch will be destroyed by the action of fire in the manner said in the Satta Sūriya Suttanta. There it is said : 'Just as, bhikkhus, there is no trace of ash nor of carbon perceptible, after the butter or the oil is burnt up, so also there, bhikkhus, will no trace of ash nor of carbon be discernible after the earth and Sineru, the king of mountains, have been burnt up. Thus, bhikkhus, all the conditioned things are inconsistent and unstable. It is advisable, bhikkhus, to be disgusted with all the conditioned things, it is expedient to detach them, and it is suitable to break free of them. Here, who would know, who would believe that this great earth and Sineru, the king of mountains will be burnt up, will be destroyed, will relapse into void, except those who have realised *Nibbāna* ?'

It is said that the flames of the burning fire reach as far as the realms of Brahmā. This world-destructive fire burns up everything that exists between the mass of water below and the first realm of *Jhāna* above, without leaving a single atom of things behind. When the rock-earth (*sela-pathavī*) is burnt up there in its place only remain the caloric energies (*utu-dhātuyo*) which will again become the germinal status of the rock-earth. Similarly when the dust-earth (*paṃsu-pathavī*) is burnt up there also remain the caloric energies which will again become the germinal status of the dust-earth. So the caloric energies which are the remaining dynamics of fire fill up the whole sphere. And the fire itself is entirely extinguished away. It is the Enveloping Epoch. And the one that continues in an enveloping state as has been just explained, is called the Enveloped Epoch. The duration of each of these Epochs is equal to that of sixty four Included Eras (*antara-kappa*). What has been now said is the exposition of the twofold Enveloping Epochs.

In the second epoch, these caloric energies are carried about by the excessively cold atmosphere and they remain in such condition as they have been. But when they arrive at the matured, proficient, and adaptable state for re-action, that is to say become hot, then they transform into rolling clouds laying in great heaps and volumes. After

* It is better known as "inertia" in Physics.

** Dhammatā, i.e., dhamma-niyāmo. The Manoratha-pūraṇi (Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Aṅguttara-Nikāya) explains the latter term.

that they transform again into great epoch-reinstating rains and pour down all over the places where fire had burnt up in the Enveloping Epoch. The rain-drops coming into contact with very cool air, generally form into masses. And the water thus conglomerated slides into the infinite space as long as the air which is going to support the universe is not strong enough to do so. But as soon as the air below is capable to do so, it at once checks the fall of water and supports it. All the rain-water becomes implemental in the establishment of the new epoch. That is to say they form into constituents of the universe such as rock, dust, water, etc. All these things occur according to the laws of caloric process (*utu-niyāma*) and are not created by any World-Lord. During the establishment of the constituents of the universe, the natural phenomenal process (*dhamma-niyāma*) plays an important part. By natural phenomenal process we mean the proportionate and disproportionate procedures (*sama-dhāraṇa*) and (*visama-dhāraṇa*) of the elements of extension, etc. And again proportionate procedure should be understood as the natural process and disproportionate procedure as the unnatural process. Hence when the natural process goes on, the proportionate procedure takes place, and if the unnatural cause happens, the procedure becomes disproportional. Among the forms also, roundness is the natural form. Therefore through the proportionate procedure of elements, all the constituents of the universe establish in the round-about shape as if they were manufactured from machines. The great earth, the great ocean, the circumjacent mountains, Sineru, the central mountain, the glacial oceans (*sīta-samuddā*) and *sītantarika* (glaciers in the hollows of mountains) and the circular ranges (*paribhanda-pabbata*) all establish in the round-about shapes. It is the contribution of natural phenomenal process.

Here indeed something should be said of the proportionate and disproportionate procedures of elements. Of the forms, the height of a person is said to be proportional when it is equal to his own span just as a proportionate banyan tree whose height is equal to the diameter of its circumference, otherwise it is said to be disproportional. In short, the repletion of 32 marks of an eminent person (*mahā-purisa-lakkhaṇa*) is proportional and their deficiency is disproportional. Good-mindedness is propor-

tional while evil-mindedness is disproportional. Of the forms other than those of living beings as trees, etc., the symmetry of some of the banyan trees is proportional and the reverse should be understood in the other way. It is also the same way with all the trees, stems, branches, small branches, sprouts, leaves and fruits. In fact, all the infinite varieties of forms, etc. which appear in the world owe their causes entirely to the variation of elements. To have a full understanding of these procedures is within the province of the knowledge of infinite and various elements, of the Omniscient Ones. Those who do not know the various functions of elements look for the World-Lords. In fact there are no other World-Lords but elements and the word 'World-Lord' is merely the outcome of their fancy.

Now to return to our subject, among the caloric germs, some densely accumulated ones become rolls of cloud, other finely accumulated ones become volumes of water in their respective places. And through the influence of kamma of all creatures, there at the inception of the universe appear uninhabited abodes and celestial mansions for both men and devas, and also lunar mansions, such as the mansions of the Moon and Sun. In the higher abodes of devas and in the first Jhāna planes there also appear uninhabited abodes and mansions for devas and Brahmās.

Here, the word "*Suññāni*" means having no owners, and the owners only come down from the higher planes of Brahmās after they have spent their life-terms there, and they occupy abodes earned by their past deeds. It is said in the Text : 'In such period, bhikkhus, and for such immeasurable length of time, the world develops. And while it is developing, uninhabited mansions for Brahmās are established'.

Here also one should not display wonder how all these abodes and mansions come into existence from the caloric germs through the influence of kamma of the creatures. Among the three worlds, the world of beings is predominant and superior to the other two which are merely subservient to the former. This great earth forms itself for the sake of the creatures, so also Mount Sineru, etc. and therefore it is not necessary to expound why and how those mansions are established. Mind and its

qualities (*citta-cetasika*) known as norm which belongs only to the world of beings, are termed mental elements. They are very powerful, 'luminous and thrilling' and the fourfold unknowable springs out from them.

And at the time when men's life-span falls to a decad the influences of the good deeds done by the people who are frightened at the outbreak of the world-destroying wars, pervade the whole world and raise the life-span again to the innumerable age.

In the passage "Through the influence of kamma of all the creatures," by "kamma" it includes all the good deeds performed during the whole enveloping Epoch in order to reach the higher planes by all the creatures who are frightened at the destruction of the world, and also all those good deeds performed during the two innumerable kappas by those who are reborn in the Brahmā planes. Therefore one should not think as to how the formation and establishment of those abodes and mansions are brought about.*

These celestial mansions are made of, and decorated with, all kinds of gems but they are as light as the bodies of the celestial beings (*opapātika-satta*) and situated on the motionless air like the heaps of cloud in the sky. The mansions of the Moon and Sun and some other lunar mansions, however, move about. How? There are two currents of wind in the sky. The one from Mount Sineru and its surrounding mountains blows out and the other from the circumjacent mountains blows in. These two currents of wind, coming into contact, form a great whirlwind and turn incessantly round Mount Sineru very swiftly, keeping it on the right. The lunar mansions are seen moving about as they are carried away by these encircling winds.** Some of them are light and some are lighter. Therefore slowness and swiftness of their movements are observed. The force of the two currents are proportional at one time

and disproportional at another, and so we observe the different courses in which the mansions are carried away backward and forward by the encircling winds. Some of the planets and mansions of the celestial devas situated below the course of the wind do not move. What has been spoken of is the developing epoch.

From the appearance of the sun and moon to the beginning of the enveloping epoch is the fourth incalculable developed epoch and its duration may be calculated as equal to that of the sixty-four included eras. So much for the exposition on the two constructive epochs.

In this fourth developed epoch of the four incalculable ones, the greater is the vastness of the world-stuffs, the more will be the violence of the world-destructive-fire in the first enveloping epoch. And the greater is the violence of the world-destructive-fire, the more will be the immensity of caloric-stuffs in the second enveloped epoch. And the more is the immensity of the caloric-stuffs, the greater will be the voluminousness of rain-water in the third developing epoch. Again the more is the voluminousness of rain-water, the greater will be the vastness of the world-stuffs in the fourth developed epoch. Indeed it goes on for ever in the same manner.

Without a known beginning, and without end, the world or physical universe continues the same whether World-Lords appear or not. Not made, not created by any such, not even a hundred, not even a thousand, not even a hundred thousand World-Lords would be able to remove it. By the law of heat, by the law of natural causation, the order of the physical universe is maintained.

The Organic World of Things. By this are implied trees, etc. The vegetable life is broadly distinguished into seedlings and growing plants. Here "*bījagoma*" is the collective term of all the trees which are in the stage of seedlings, and "*bhūtagāma*" is the collective term of all the trees which have passed the stage of seedlings and arrived at the fully grown stage. Just as we have said

* Ledi Sayadaw here intends to indicate the reinstatement of the developing Epoch or the reorganization of the new world with abodes of men and marvellous mansions for devas, by two causes, i.e., material cause and efficient cause. By the former he means the material or stuff out of which the world or the world of things organised. That is the primitive matter known as caloric germs or utu. And by the latter he means the force or agent through which the material phenomena are put together in various and marvellous shapes, forms, and sizes. That is the mental force known as action or will or kamma. For instance, in the case of a house, the wood, iron and bricks of which it is built up are the material cause; and the carpenter who designs and builds it, is the efficient cause. Now the wood, etc. are comparable to utu the material cause of which the world is constituted; and the carpenter is comparable to the mental force, the efficient cause by which it is designed. Tr.

** The expanding Universe.

in the exposition of Psychological Order that, on account of the diversity of thoughts of the creatures, perception is diverse ; on account of the diversity of perception, kamma is diverse ; on account of the diversity of kamma, the genus of the animal kingdom is diverse ; and so it may also be maintained here that, on account of the diversities of thoughts perceptions and kammās of the creatures, the species of the seedlings are diverse ; and on account of the diversity of the species of the seedlings, the species of all the plants and trees are diverse. In the case of animals, the actual result (*mukhya-phala*) is predominant, but here in the case of seedlings and plants the complementary result (*nisanda-phala*) is predominant.

The term seed or germ (*bīja*), in its ordinary popular sense, implies various seeds—roots, and the rest—as described before. In the higher sense, however, seed or germ is to be regarded as a form of heat—caloric energy (*utu*). If this is so, a mango-stone, which, in the former sense, is called a seed-proper, cannot, in the latter sense, constitute the whole seed. For in that one mango-stone there are these eight component elements (qualities primary and secondary): extension, cohesion, heat, motion, colour, odour, taste, and nutrition. Of these, heat carries out the germinating function. Hence it alone is radically entitled to the name of seed or germ. The remaining seven elements are complementary to heat ; they do not directly perform the germinating function.

Moreover, the form of heat (or caloric energy—*utu*) which is specified above as seed or germ, is the same heat or energy in kind as that which is considered to be the germinating factor of the universe of a given period of time—an aeon. The germinal energy of seed could not bring its germinating function into play at the enveloping and enveloped epoch as it does not get any stimulus, but at the developed epoch it gets stimulus from earth and water and brings forth its germinating function. Therefore, just as there are only asexual people of apparitional rebirth so long as there is no sex distinction among the world of men, so also there are no species of seedlings and plants so long as the five kinds of seeds do not appear, but they remain latent in the state of mere germs in the earth and water. And afterwards jambu-trees

germinate from jambu-germs, mango-trees from mango-germs, and so on. But first of all there appears flavorsome earth (*rasa-pathavī*) spreading all over the surface of water. At that time the volumes of rain which fall down from the realm of Brahmā, first of all form themselves into rock-earth, Mount Sineru, surrounding mountains, circumjacent Mountains, and Himalayan Mountains, the other places are covered with water. And then, after a lapse of very long time, the flavorsome earth becomes hard, coarse and in-esculent. Then over this there forms a layer of earth (*bhūmi-papaṭika*). So it is said, ‘when the flavorsome earth disappears, a layer of earth deposits itself’. This is the inception of earth. Ere long this layer of earth becomes hard and coarse and unsuitable for eating. Then from among the germs of seedlings and plants, sweet creepers (*padālatā*), rice, and paddy plants germinate. After that many different species of grass, trees, creepers, and shrubs are propagated from the germs. Later, when time passes on and evil thoughts and bad behaviour increase, the essence, the sap, the taste and the nutritive properties in the trees dry up and vanish one after another. At that time the elements of germs conglomerate in their respective species. Thus the root-germs conglomerate in roots, and so on. From that time onwards, those trees which germinate from roots, grow only from roots and so with the rest. The functioning of the Caloric Order, Germinal Order, and Natural Phenomenal Order by way of proportional and disproportional, upon the trees, etc., have been already mentioned in the foregoing pages. Here ends the exposition on the world of things.

The World of Beings (*satta-loka*). To understand the nature of life * of a *satta*—a being, person, individual—is an exceedingly deep and difficult task. It lies at the basis, at the bottom of all philosophical speculations. We shall approach it from the two standards of truth : the conventional (*sammuti*) and the philosophic (*paramattha*). **

By “a being” conventional usage understands a *nāma-rūpa*—a compound organism—mental (*nāma*) and physical (*rūpa*). By this it means a certain appearance (*saṅghāna*) and a certain continuum (*santāna*), which it

* “Nature and life” : in the author’s original Pāli ‘pavatti’ ; a staple term in the dynamic philosophy of Buddhism, meaning on-rolling, or procedure.

** See Section II., “Of the Two Standards of Truth” p. 6 of vol. IV, No. 1.

terms a being or person or individual.* Philosophic usage sees in "a being" a mental and material phenomenon or datum (*nāma-rūpa-dhamma*). For it the appearance and continuum are just a mental construction and its verbal expression.** But the phenomena of mind and matter, out of which beings are constructed, are the data or subject-matter (*dhamma*) of philosophy. As if man having dug out clay should reduce it to powder, and by kneading that with water should make a jar. Jar, in that case, is the name given to the physical structure of the thing in question, while the powder or clay is the material or substance. This physical structure called jar appears only at the time when the potter shapes it in this particular fashion. When the jar is smashed to pieces, the structure to which the name "jar," was given disappears, while the powder or clay as material remains. Here the physical structure of the jar is comparable to the organic form of a being, the name "jar" to the name "being", or "person", the powdered clay, to the phenomena of mind, matter.

By "continuum", or continuity in time, is generally understood the continued life of a being passing from one form of existence into another. But since this being is a mere concept of our mind, we cannot ascribe to the mental fiction the modes of physical origination and cessation. On the other hand, mind and matter, as real facts, can be conceived as springing into existence, and undergoing dissolution.

A being is said, from the conventional standpoint, to be born, to decay, to die, to fall from one state of existence and to be reborn into another. Taken in this sense, a being is born, during his whole life-term, just once at the time of birth and dies once for all at the time of death. Mind and matter, on the contrary, come to birth, undergo decay, die and break down many hundreds of thousands of times, even in one day. Thus it should be explained. And it should also be clearly explained in the same manner according to the intellect and observation of others with regard to their own birth, decay and fall.

And just as conventional usage affirms that there is infinite space in the universe,

so does philosophy maintain that space has no real existence. But this "exists" of the one standard, "does not exist" of the other, present no genuine mutual antagonism. How is this? Because each statement is from a different standpoint.

Similarly by "a being" is implied some sort of individual consciousness and intelligence. That this exists and persists in transmigrating:- this is admitted as a truth from the conventional point of view. In Abhidhamma-knowledge, or philosophical truth, however, such a being is not recognized, does not exist. Only mental and material phenomena exist. And they do not persist in a series of transmigrations. They are perpetually dissolving, now here, now there. Yet here again between the "exist" and the "does not exist" there is no real antagonism. How is this? Because of the distinction drawn between a being (conventional view) and a phenomenal compound of mind and matter (philosophical view).

If by adhering to the belief that a being persists in transmigration, we hold that mind and matter do the same, then this is eternalist error (*sassatadiṭṭhi*). And if by adhering to the belief that mind and matter do not persist in transmigration, but break up and dissolve, now here, now there, we come to hold that a being does the same, this is the annihilationist error (*ucchedadiṭṭhi****). To maintain the eternalist view is to shut the gate of Nibbāna. How so? Because if mind and matter transmigrate, then it is to be inferred that transmigration itself is eternal. And to maintain the annihilationist view is to shut the gate of heaven. How so? Because the working out of Kamma is thereby suspended. Moreover both of those views maintain that the living personality is a soul. And since the soul-theory is at the root of all false opinions, we shall find ourselves lodged at that root. Wherefore, avoiding those two extreme views, and adopting the distinction in standpoints described above, let us stand holding open every gateway to heaven and to the final Release.

Of these two Truths, the coming into being of all beings should be spoken of by way of conventional truth. While the universe is developing, and after the empty mansions

* Satta, etymologically, is "being". When animals are included, the more usual term is *pāna* or *bhūta*.

** *paññatti* means both concept and term. See U Shwe Zan Aung in *Compendium of Philosophy*.

*** See "Brahmajāla-Sutta" translated by the English Editorial Department, vol. III, No. 2 of *The Light of the Dhamma*.

in the world of Brahmā (i.e. the first realm of Brahmā) and in the six abodes of Devas are established, beings generally from the realm of *Ābhassara* come down to be reborn in these places. Here some one would say, 'Why are they generally reborn in the lower stages? As they have been there in the *Ābhassara* Brahma-Loka for so long is it not convenient to them to cultivate higher *Jhānas* and ascend generally the higher realms of Brahmā?' Thus it should be replied:

In the *Samacitta-Sutta*, *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, vol. II, it is said that there are two kinds of beings, namely, a being with internal fetters, and a being with external fetters. Here the internal fetters are five in number: delusion of self (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), adhesion to the efficacy of rites and ceremonies (*silabbataparāmāsa*), sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*), and ill feeling (*vyāpāda*). They are also called downward-tending-fetters (*orambhāgiya*). The external fetters are also five in number: desire to be reborn in the *Rūpaloka* (*rūparāga*), desire to be reborn in the *Arūpaloka* (*arūparāga*), pride (*māna*), quivering of thought (*uddhacca*), and nescience (*avijjā*). These are also called upward-tending-fetters (*uddhambhāgiya*). Here "internal" means the *Kāmaloka*, and "external" means the *Brahmaloka*. Why are they so called? It is because nearly all the beings are reborn in the *Kāmaloka* and very seldom do beings take rebirth in the *Brahmaloka*. And where there rebirth is most there lust for various objects is in great swarms. Therefore *Kāmaloka* is called "internal" of

all the ordinary folks. *Brahmaloka* should be understood in the opposite way. In fact, all these beings are pleased with, gratified upon, and delighted in, the pleasurable things which are full to the brim in the *Kāmaloka*, while there are none at all in the *Brahmaloka*. Why do they all get to the *Brahmaloka*? Because there is no abode at all below that when the world is destroyed. However, through the agitation of the downward-tending-fetters which have not yet been shattered, the beings in the *Brahmaloka* are always inclining to be back to *Kāmaloka*. For instance, when a town is disturbed and attacked, the people of the town take refuge in a big forest and stay there till peace is restored. Now the big forest is a very pleasant place, without any danger, and full of shade and water. But the people are always inclining to return to their town and they are not one moment happy however pleasant be the forest. Thus should be understood here also. Therefore the beings in the *Brahmaloka* descend generally to the *Kāmaloka* when the world re-establishes. When they are reborn as men in the *Kāmaloka* their rebirth is at first apparitional. They are like the Brahmās. Everything is fulfilled at the instance of their wishes. They live at first upon jhānic interest (*jhānapīti*). Their bodies are luminous and brilliant. They live and walk in the sky. Their life-span is an incalculable one. And the rest, such as the decreasing and increasing of their life-span etc. should be understood as is said in the *Aggañña* and *Cakkavatti* suttas.

(To be continued)



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THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

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

By Nyanaponika Thera

Part III

Stopping and Slowing Down

(Continued from previous issue)

Spontaneity

An acquired or strengthened habit of pausing mindfully before acting will not exclude or paralyze spontaneity of response where it is beneficial. On the contrary, the pausing, the stopping and the keeping still for Bare Attention will, through training, become quite spontaneous themselves. They will grow into a "selective mechanism" of the mind that, with an increasing reliability and swiftness of response, will prevent the upsurge of evil or unwise impulses which may have been intellectually realised by us as unwholesome, but, by their own powerful spontaneity, still continue to defeat our better knowledge and nobler intention. The practice of mindful pausing serves, therefore, to replace unwholesome spontaneity or habits, by wholesome ones.

Just as certain reflex movements are an automatically operating protection of the body, similarly a spontaneously working spiritual and moral self-protection will be a vital function of the mind. A person of average moral standard will instinctively shrink from theft or murder, without any long reflection. With the help of the method of Bare Attention, the range of such spontaneously functioning moral brakes can be greatly extended and ethical sensitivity heightened. Also false thought-habits can be broken in the same way and replaced by correct ones.

In an untrained mind, noble tendencies or right thoughts often succumb to the spontaneous outbreak of passions or prejudices, or they can assert themselves only with difficulty, after a struggle of motives. But if the spontaneity of the Unwholesome is checked or greatly reduced, as described above, our good impulses and wise reflections will have greater scope and they will be able to express themselves freely and spontaneously.

Their spontaneous flow will give greater confidence in the power of good within us and will carry more conviction for others. That spontaneity of the good will not be of an erratic nature, but will have deep and firm roots in previous methodical training. Here appears a way by which the "premeditated good" (*sasaṅkhārika-kusala*) may be transformed into "spontaneously arising good thought" (*asaṅkhārika-kusala-citta*) which, if combined with knowledge, takes the first place in the scale of ethical values, according to the psychology of the Abhidhamma. Hereby we shall get practical understanding of a saying in *The Secret of the Golden Flower* : * 'If one attains intentionally to an unintentional state, one has comprehension'. This saying just invites a paraphrase in Pāli terms: *Sasaṅkhārena asaṅkhārikam pattabban*, 'By premeditated intentional effort spontaneity can be won.'

If the numerous aids to mental growth and liberation, found in the Buddha's teachings, are wisely utilized, there is actually nothing that can finally withstand the non-coercive power of the Satipaṭṭhāna Method ; and this method starts with the simple but in its effects far-reaching practice of learning to pause and stop for Bare Attention.

Slowing-down

Against the impetuosity, rashness and heedlessness of the untrained mind, practice of Pausing and Stopping sets a deliberate slowing-down. The demands of modern life, however, make it impracticable to introduce such a slowing-down of functions into the routine of the average working-day. But as an antidote against the harmful consequences of the hectic speed of modern life, it is all the more important to cultivate that practice in one's leisure hours and especially in periods of strict Satipaṭṭhāna practice. It will give

* A treatise of Chinese Mahāyana, strongly influenced by Taoism.

also the worldly benefits of greater calm, efficiency and skill in one's daily round of work.

For the purposes of meditative development, Slowing-down will be an effective training in heedfulness, sense-control and concentration. But apart from that, it has also more specific significance for meditative practice. In the commentary to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, for instance, it is told how the slowing-down of movements may help in *regaining lost concentration* on a chosen object. A monk, so we read, had bent his arm quickly without remembering his subject of meditation, as his rule of practice demanded. On becoming aware of that omission, he took his arm back to its previous position, and repeated the movement mindfully. The subject of meditation referred to was probably 'clearly comprehending action' (*sampajāna-kāra*), and especially the one mentioned in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta as follows: 'In bending and stretching he acts with clear comprehension' (*Sammiñjite pasārite sampa jānakāri hoti*).

The slowing-down of certain bodily movements during strict meditative training is also of great help in gaining *Insight-knowledge* (*Vipassanā-ñāṇa*) by one's own experience, and especially the direct awareness of change (*anicca*) and impersonality (*anattā*). It is, to a great extent, the rapidity of movement that strengthens the illusion of unity, identity and substantiality of what is actually a complex and evanescent process. Therefore, in the strict practice of Satipaṭṭhāna, the slowing-down of walking or bending and stretching and thereby discerning the several phases of each movement, is an exercise very helpful for direct insight into the three characteristics of all phenomena. It will become an impression of increasing force and significance for the meditator, to notice clearly how each partial phase of the process observed arises and ceases by itself, and nothing of it "goes over" or "transmigrates" to the next phase.

Also the average rhythm of our every-day actions, speech and thoughts will become more quiet and peaceful under the influence of that practice. Slowing-down the hurried rhythm of life means that thoughts, feelings and perceptions will be able to complete the entire length of their natural life-time. Full awareness will extend up to their end-phase: to their last gentle vibrations and reverberations. Too often that end-phase is cut off

by an impatient grasping at new impressions, or by hurrying on to the next stage of a line of thought before the earlier one has been clearly comprehended. This is one of the main reasons for the disorderly state of average consciousness which is burdened by a vast amount of indistinct or fragmentary perceptions, of stunned emotions and unfinished or undigested ideas. Slowing-down will prove an effective device for recovering the fulness and clarity of consciousness. A fitting simile, and at the same time an actual example of it, is the procedure in the practice of Mindfulness on Breathing (*ānāpānasati*) where mindfulness has likewise to cover the whole extent of the breath, its beginning, middle and end. This is what is meant by the passage of the Discourse, saying "Experiencing the *whole* (breath-) body, I shall breathe in and out". Similarly, the entire "breath", or rhythm of our life will become deeper and fuller, if, through slowing-down, we get used to sustained attention.

The habit of prematurely cutting off processes of thought, or slurring over them, has assumed serious proportions in the man of modern city civilization. His restlessness clamours for ever new stimuli, in an ever increasing speed of succession, having its counterpart in the increasing speed of our means of locomotion. This rapid bombardment of impressions will gradually blunt man's sensitivity, and consequently the new stimuli will have to be still more loud, coarse and variegated—a process which, if not checked, can only end in disaster. This state of affairs also explains the decrease of finer aesthetic susceptibility and the growing incapacity of genuine natural joy. The place of both is taken by a hectic, short-breathed excitement which does not leave any true aesthetic or emotional satisfaction. "Shallow mental breath" is to a great extent responsible for the growing superficiality and coarseness of "civilised man" and for the frightening spread of nervous disorders in the West. It may well become the start of a general deterioration of human consciousness in its qualitative level, its range and its strength. This danger threatens all those, in the East as well as in the West, whom impact of technical civilization finds without an adequate spiritual protection. Satipaṭṭhāna can make an important contribution to remedying that situation, in the way we have indicated here briefly. Thus, also from the worldly point of view, the method will prove beneficial.

Here, however, we are chiefly concerned with the psychological aspects and with their significance for meditative development. Sustained attention, being helped by Slowing-down, will affect the quality of consciousness mainly in three ways : (a) the intensity of consciousness, (b) the clarity of the object's characteristic features, and (c) it will reveal the object's "relatedness".

(a) An object of *sustained* attention will exert a particularly strong and long-lasting impact on the mind, not only throughout the thought-series immediately following the respective perception, but its influence may also extend far into the future. It is that causal efficacy which is the measure of the *intensity of consciousness*.

(b) The first impression conveyed by any new sense-object or idea will be what is most striking in it, subjectively or objectively, and it will dominate the mind up to the culminating point of the impact. But there are sure to be other aspects, characteristics or functions of the respective object which may not be obvious or are less interesting to the cognizing subject, but which are no less, or even more, important. There will also be cases where the first impression is entirely deceptive. Only if attention is sustained beyond that first impact, will the respective object reveal itself more fully. It is only at the downward course of the first perceptual wave (its end-phase), when the prejudicing force of the first impact lessens, that the object will yield a wider selection of detail, an all-round picture of itself. It is, therefore, only by sustained attention that a greater *clarity of an object's characteristic features* can be obtained.

(c) Among the characteristic features of a physical or mental object there is one class which is often overlooked by hasty or superficial attention, and therefore we list it here separately: it is the *relatedness* of the object, extending to its past (origin, causes, reasons, logical precedents, etc.), its present manifestation (environment, "background", presently active influences, etc.). An event cannot be said to be fully characterized, if it is viewed in artificial isolation. It must be seen as a part of a wider pattern, in its conditioned and conditioning nature ; and this can be done only with the help of sustained attention.

The influence of slowing-down and sustained attention on subconsciousness, memory and intuition

It need hardly be pointed out how important all these three aforementioned points are for "seeing things according to reality", in other words, for the development of Insight (*vipassanā*). Their *direct* influence is obvious, but there is also an *indirect one* which is no less powerful and important. Those three results of sustained attention, achieved with the help of Slowing-down, are also instrumental in influencing the quality and nature of *subconsciousness, memory and intuition* which, on their part, will again be aiding, nourishing and consolidating the progress of liberating Insight. Insight aided by them will be like the mountain lake (of the canonical simile) that is fed not only from without, by the rains, but also by springs welling up within its own depth. Similarly, Insight will be nourished not only through external experience, but also from the "subterraneous", i.e. subliminal resources of the mind: by memories, other subconscious material, and by the strengthened faculty of intuition. Meditative results of an Insight that has such deep roots will not be lost easily, even with unliberated worldlings (*puthujjana*) who are subject to relapse.

1. If perceptions or thoughts which have been objects of sustained attention, sink into *subconsciousness*, they will occupy there a special position by reason of their stronger impact on the mind and the greater distinctness of their characteristic features. As to the first reason : it will certainly not remain without any effect upon the constitution of subconsciousness, if the end-phase of a moment of consciousness or of a cognitive series, being immediately followed by subconsciousness, is not weak but of a strength equal to that of the preceding phases. As for the second reason: if an impression or idea, marked by numerous and distinct characteristics, sinks into subconsciousness, it will not so easily be absorbed into the vagueness of other subconscious contents or dragged into false subconscious associations with superficial similarities or passionate biases. And also the last of the aforementioned three facts—the correct comprehension of the object's "relatedness"—will have similar effects: there will be a greater resistance against a merging with inadequate subconscious material. If perceptions or thoughts of that level of intensity and clarity

sink into subconsciousness, they will be more “articulate” and more “accessible” than contents of subconsciousness originating from hazy or “stunned” impressions; they will be more easily “convertible” into full consciousness, and less unaccountable in their hidden effects upon it. If, through a generally higher level of mindfulness, the number of such “matured” impressions increases in the mind, it seems quite possible that a subtle change in the structure of subconsciousness can be achieved in that way.

2. It will be evident from our earlier remarks that those impressions which we have called “matured” or “more easily accessible and convertible”, will lend themselves more easily and more correctly to recollection. More easily: because of their greater intensity; more correctly: because of their clearly marked features which will give them a fair degree of protection against being distorted by false associative images or ideas. If, in addition, they are remembered in their “context” and “relatedness”, it will work both ways, for easier and more correct recollection. In that way, *Sati* in its meaning and function of Mindfulness, will help to strengthen *Sati* in its meaning and function of *Memory*.

3. From that very influence on subconsciousness and memory also a deepening and strengthening of the faculty of intuition will naturally follow, and particularly of intuitive insight which concerns us here chiefly. Intuition is not “a gift from the unknown”, but, as any other mental faculty, it arises out of specific conditions which, in this case, are primarily the latent memories of perceptions and thoughts “stored” in the subconscious. It is obvious that memories which have the aforementioned qualities of greater intensity, clarity and richness of distinctive marks, and thereby of greater accessibility, will provide the most fertile soil for the growth of intuition. Here too the preserved “relatedness” of the respective impressions will contribute much. Recollections of that type will have a more organic character than memories of bare or vague, isolated facts, and they will the easier fall into new patterns of meanings and significance. These more “articulate” memory-images will be a strong stimulation and aid for the intuitive faculty. Silently and in the hidden depths of the subliminal mental processes, the work of collecting and organizing the subconscious material of experience and knowledge goes

on until it is ripe to emerge as, what we call an *intuition*. The breaking-through of that intuition is sometimes occasioned by quite ordinary happenings which, however, may have a strong evocative power, if, in previous occurrence, they had been made objects of sustained attention. Slowing-down and pausing for Bare Attention will discover the depth-dimension of the simple things of every day, and will thus provide potential stimuli for the intuitive faculty. This applies also to the intuitive penetration (*pañivedha*) of the four Noble Truths that culminates in Holiness (*arahatta*). Many instances are recorded of monks where the flash of intuitive penetration did not strike them when they were engaged in the meditative practice of insight proper, but on quite different occasions: when stumbling, when seeing a forest fire, a fata-morgana, a lump of froth in a river, etc.

We have met here another confirmation of that seemingly paradoxical saying that ‘intentionally, an unintentional state may be won’. Spontaneity of intuitive insight may be won, or at least aided, by deliberately turning the full light of mindfulness even on the smallest events and actions of every-day life.

Sustained attention not only provides the nourishing soil of the *growth* of intuition, it also makes possible the fuller utilization and even repetition of the intuitive moment. Men of inspiration in various fields of creative activity have often related and deplored their common experience that the flash of intuition strikes so suddenly and vanishes so quickly that frequently the slow response of the mind scarcely catches the last glimpse of it. But if the mind has been trained in observant Pausing, in Slowing-down and sustained attention, and if—as indicated above—also the subconsciousness has been influenced by it, then the intuitive moment, too, might gain that fuller, slower and stronger rhythm. This being the case, its impact will be strong and clear enough for making full use of that flash of intuitive insight. It might even be possible to lead its fading vibrations upward again to a new culmination, similar to the rhythmic repetition of a melody rising again, in harmonious development, out of the last notes of its first appearance.

The full utilization of a single moment of intuitive insight might be of decisive importance for one’s progress toward full realiza-

tion. If one's mental grip is too weak and those elusive moments of intuitive insight are allowed to slip away without being utilized fully for the work of liberation, then it might well happen that they will not recur before many years have passed, or perhaps not at all during the present life. Skill in sustained attention, however, will allow the full use of opportunities, and slowing-down and pausing during meditative practice, is an important aid in acquiring that skill.

Through our now concluded treatment of Pausing, Stopping and Slowing-down, one of the traditional definitions of Mindfulness

found in the Pāli Scriptures will have become more intelligible in its far-reaching implications: that is its function of *anapilāpanatā*, meaning literally, 'not floating (or slipping) away', 'like pumpkin-pots on the surface of water', add the commentators; and they continue: 'Mindfulness enters deeply into its object', instead of hurrying over its surface only. Therefore "non-superficiality" will be an appropriate rendering of the above Pāli term, and a befitting characterization of Mindfulness.

End of Part III.



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MAJJHIMA-NIKĀYA, UPARIPANṆĀSA, ANUPADA VAGGA, ĀNĀPĀNASSATI SUTTA

(*Translated by the Editors of 'The Light of the Dhamma'*)

Thus I have heard. On one occasion the Bhagavā was staying with many of His distinguished disciples : Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Mahā Kassapa, Mahā Kaccāyana, Mahā Koṭṭhila, Mahā Kappina, Mahā Cunda, Anuruddha, Revata, Ānanda and many other distinguished monks in Pubbārāma, the monastery offered by Visākhā.

At that time the senior monks gave instructions on the Dhamma to the junior monks ; some gave instructions to ten, some to twenty, some to thirty and some to forty junior monks. When the junior monks heard the instructions given to them by the senior monks, they understood the knowledge pertaining to Tranquillity and Insight, which arose in their minds after they had established themselves in morality.

Then, on the night of the termination of the Vassa, the full moon day, the fifteenth day of the month, the Bhagavā surrounded by many monks sat in the open air. Then the Bhagavā looked round at the monks, who kept silent, and said : 'O monks, you are bent on this practice to the Dhamma, you have resolved to perform this practice. You should strive more energetically, so that you may reach the Fruition of Holiness which you have not yet attained, and realise the Fruition of Holiness which you have not yet realised. I shall remain at Sāvattī till the full moon day of the month of Kattika, the end of the four months in which the water-lily blossoms.'

The monks living in the neighbouring rural areas heard that the Bhagavā would remain at Sāvattī till the full moon day of Kattika and came to Sāvattī to pay their respects to the Bhagavā. The senior monks gave intensive training to the junior monks. Some gave training to ten, some to twenty, some to thirty, and some to forty junior monks. When the junior monks received training from their teachers, they understood the knowledge pertaining to Tranquillity and Insight which arose in their minds after they had established themselves in morality.

On the night of the full moon day of the month of Kattika, the end of the four months

in which the white water-lily blossoms, the Bhagavā surrounded by the monks sat in the open air. Then, looking round at the monks, who kept silent, the Bhagavā said : 'O monks, this assembly is devoid of pithless stuff; this assembly being devoid of pithless stuff is purified and is full of essence. O monks, all these monks here are of such nature. Such monks are worthy of offerings, worthy of receiving hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of being honoured with raised hands, are unsurpassed fields for gaining merit. Presenting small gifts to such an assembly is advantageous; presenting greater gifts to such an assembly is more advantageous. O monks, it is very difficult for people to pay homage adequately to such an assembly.

'O monks, among those present here there are Arahats who have eradicated all defilements ; who have reached perfection ; who have laid down their burdens; who are no longer fettered by any tie to any form of existence ; and who have been liberated by their wisdom.

'O monks, among those present here there are Anāgāmins who, having overcome the five lower fetters reappear as spontaneously manifesting beings in the Suddhāvāsa Brahma-plane (Abode of Purity) and without returning from that plane will reach Nibbāna.

'O monks, among those present here there are Sakadāgāmins who, having destroyed the three lower fetters, have overcome the fetters of Sensuous Craving and Ill-will in their grosser form, and will return only once to this sensuous world.

'O monks, among those present here there are Sotāpannas who, after overcoming the three fetters of Personality-belief, Sceptical Doubt and Attachment to rites and ritual, have entered the stream to Nibbāna, are firmly established and destined to full enlightenment.

'O monks, among those present here there are those who practise the four Applications of Mindfulness *; those who practise the four Right Efforts** ; those who practise

* Contemplation of Body, of Feeling, of Mind and of Mental Objects.

** The efforts to avoid unwholesome states, as yet unarisen as evil thoughts, etc ; to overcome unwholesome states that have arisen ; to develop wholesome states, as yet unarisen such as the seven Factors of Enlightenment ; and to maintain the wholesome states that have arisen.

the four Roads to Power*; those who practise the five Spiritual Faculties**; those who practise the five Mental Powers***; those who practise the seven Links of Enlightenment****; and those who practise the Eightfold Noble Path. *****

‘O monks, among those present here there are those who practise *mettābhāvanā* (development of all-embracing loving-kindness); those who practise *karuṇā-bhāvanā* (development of compassion); those who practise *muditābhāvanā* (development of altruistic joy); those who practise *upekkhā-bhāvanā* (development of equanimity); those who practise *asubhakkammaṭṭhāna* (reflections on the loathsomeness of the body); and those who practise *anicca-saññā* (contemplation of impermanence).

‘O monks, among those present here there are those who practise *ānāpānassati* (watching over in-and-out-breathing).

‘Contemplation of in-and-out-breathing, O monks, developed and frequently practised, brings high reward and advantages. And how so ?

‘There the monk retires to a forest, to the foot of a tree, or to a solitary place, seats himself crosslegged, body erect, attentiveness fixed before him. Attentively he breathes in, attentively he breathes out.

‘While breathing in a long inhalation he knows : “I breathe in a long inhalation” ; while breathing out a long exhalation he knows : “I breathe out a long exhalation.”

‘While breathing in a short inhalation he knows : “I breathe in a short inhalation” ; while breathing out a short exhalation he knows : “I breathe out a short exhalation.”

“Being clearly sensible of the whole body***** I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Being clearly sensible of the whole body I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Calming the bodily activities I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Calming the bodily activities I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Sensible of rapture I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Sensible of rapture I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Sensible of joy I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Sensible of joy I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Sensible of the mental activities I breathe in”: thus he trains himself, “Sensible of the mental activities I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Calming the mental activities I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Calming the mental activities I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Being clearly sensible of the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Being clearly sensible of the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Composing the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Composing the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Concentrating the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Concentrating the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Freeing the mind I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Freeing the mind I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Reflecting on Impermanence I breathe in”: thus he trains himself, “Reflecting on Impermanence I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Reflecting on Detachment I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Reflecting on Detachment I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

* Concentration of Determination, of Energy, of Consciousness and of Investigation.

** Faith (Confidence in the Buddha and His Teaching), Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom.

*** Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom.

**** Mindfulness, Investigation of the Dhamma, Energy, Rapture, Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity.

***** Right Understanding, Right Thoughts, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

These 37 things are the “Bodhipakkhiya-dhammā” (Things pertaining to Enlightenment.) It may be noted that Mindfulness considered in its different aspects, can be a spiritual faculty, a mental power and a link of Enlightenment, and others have both aspects of “Roads to Power” and “Spiritual Faculties”.

***** Sabbakāya (according to Buddhaghosa’s Commentary ‘the whole body of the breath’).

“Reflecting on the Extinction of Biases* I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Reflecting on the extinction of biases I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

“Reflecting on Renunciation I breathe in”: thus he trains himself; “Reflecting on renunciation I breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

‘Thus, O monks, developed and frequently practised, contemplation of in-and-out-breathing brings high reward and great advantage.

‘But how, O monks, does the contemplation of in-and-out-breathing, developed and frequently practised, bring the four Applications of Mindfulness to full perfection ?

‘Whenever the monk is mindful in taking a long breath or in taking a short breath, or is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst being sensible of the body, or is calming down the bodily activities—, at such a time the monk is dwelling in “Contemplation of the Body”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, subduing worldly greed and grief. Inhalation and exhalation, indeed, I declare as a phenomenon amongst the phenomena of the body.

Whenever the monk is training himself to inhale and exhale whilst being sensible of rapture, or joy, or the mental activities, or whilst calming down the mental activities—at such a time he is dwelling in “Contemplation of Sensation”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief. The sensation experienced in respiration, indeed, I declare as one of the sensations (feelings) amongst the other **sensations (feelings) of the mind.

Whenever the monk is training himself to inhale and exhale whilst being sensible of the mind, or whilst composing the mind, or whilst concentrating the mind, or whilst setting the mind free—at such a time he is dwelling in “Contemplation of the Mind”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief. Without mindfulness and clear comprehension, indeed, there is no attention to in-and-out-breathing, I say.

Whenever the monk is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst contemplating Imper-

manence, or Detachment, or Extinction, or Renunciation—at such a time he is dwelling in “Contemplation of the Mental Objects”, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief.

Contemplation of in-and-out-breathing, thus developed and frequently practised, brings the four Applications of Mindfulness to full perfection.

But how do the four Applications of Mindfulness, developed and frequently practised, bring the seven Links of Enlightenment to full perfection ?

Whenever the monk is dwelling in contemplation of Body, Sensation, Mind and Mental Objects, full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief—, at such a time his mindfulness is undisturbed; and whenever his mindfulness is present and undisturbed, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Mindfulness”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst dwelling with attentive mind, he wisely investigates, examines and considers the dhamma, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment ‘Investigation of the Dhamma’, and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst investigating, examining and considering the dhamma, his energy is firm and unshaken—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Energy”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, in him, whilst firm in energy, arises rapture free from sensuous desires—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Rapture”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst enraptured in mind, his mind and body become tranquil—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Tranquillity”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever, whilst tranquillised in mind and body and happy, his mind becomes concen-

* The four kinds of Biases are:—Sensuous Bias, Bias for Existence, Bias of Wrong Views and Bias of Ignorance.

** Vedanā.

trated—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Concentration”; and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

Whenever he looks on his mind with complete indifference, thus concentrated—, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Link of Enlightenment “Equanimity”, and thus this link of enlightenment reaches full perfection.

The four Applications of Mindfulness thus developed and frequently practised, bring the seven Links of Enlightenment to full perfection.

But how do the seven Links of Enlightenment, developed and frequently practised, bring wisdom and deliverance to full perfection ?

There the monk develops the links of enlightenment, bent on seclusion, detachment, and extinction of biases, and leading to renunciation.

The seven Links of Enlightenment, thus developed and frequently practised, bring wisdom and deliverance to full perfection.

Thus spoke the Bhagavā: being glad those brethren rejoiced at the words of the Bhagavā.



“Just as, brethren, in the autumn season, when the sky is opened up and cleared of clouds, the sun, leaping up into the firmament, drives away all darkness from the heavens, and shines and burns and flashes forth; even so, brethren, the perceiving of impermanence, if practised and enlarged, wears out all sensual lust, wears out all lust for body, all desire for rebirth, all ignorance, wears out, tears out all conceit of ‘I am’.

And in what way, brethren, does it wear them out ?

It is by seeing: ‘Such is body: such is the arising of body: such is the ceasing of body. Such is feeling, perception, the activities, such is consciousness, its arising and its ceasing.’

Even thus practised and enlarged, brethren, does the perceiving of impermanence wear out all sensual lust, all lust for body, all desire for rebirth, all ignorance, wears out, tears out all conceit of ‘I am’.”

—Samyutta-Nikāya, XXii, Sec. 102.

BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF MIND OR CONSCIOUSNESS (CITTA)

Bhadanta Nārada Mahāthera

Mind or consciousness, the essence of the so-called being, plays the most important part in the complex machinery of man. It is mind that either defiles or purifies one. Mind in fact is both the bitterest enemy and the greatest friend of "oneself".

In the Dhammapada we learn :

'What harm a foe may do to a foe, or a hater to a hater,— an ill-directed mind can do one still greater harm.' (S.42)

'What good neither mother nor father, nor any other relative can do,— a well-directed mind does, and thereby elevates one.' (S.43)

'Mind foreruns deeds, — mind is chief, and mind-made are they. If, therefore, one speaks or acts with a wicked mind, — pain pursues one, even as the wheel follows the draught ox.' (S.1)

'Mind foreruns deeds, — mind is chief, and mind-made are they. If, therefore, one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness follows one, even as one's shadow.' (S.2)

And in the Saṃyutta Nikāya :

'By mind the world is led, by mind is drawn :

And all men own the sovereignty of mind.'

'This mind, monks, is luminous, but it is defiled by taints that come from without. But this the uneducated manyfolk understands not as it really is. Wherefore for the uneducated manyfolk there is no cultivation of the mind, I declare.

That mind, monks, is luminous, but it is cleansed of taints that come from without. This the educated noble disciple understands as it really is. Wherefore for the educated noble disciple there is cultivation of the mind, I declare.'

The complete purification of the mind is the ultimate aim of Buddhism. "*Cittam vimucci me*" — my mind is delivered — was the paean of joy uttered by all Arahats.

It is from this ethical point of view that Buddhists interest themselves in the study of mind or consciousness, and not from a psy-

chological point of view. Buddhism, it may be mentioned, teaches a psychology without a psyche.

The Pāli terms applied to mind or consciousness are *Citta*, *Ceta*, *Mana Mānasa*, *Nāma*, *Viññāṇa*, and so forth. They are used as synonymous terms.

Citta is derived from *Citi*, to think. The traditional interpretation of the term is that which is aware of an object (*cinteti* or *vijānāti*)*. Actually it is not that which thinks of an object as the term implies. If it could be said 'it thinks' as one says in English 'it rains', it would be more in consonance with the Buddha's teaching. From an ultimate point of view *Citta* may be defined as the awareness of an object, since Buddhism denies a subjective agent like a soul. No distinction is made between mind and consciousness which are used as equivalents for Pāli "*Citta*".

The term *Citta* is usually employed in Buddhist philosophy to denote different classes of consciousness. In isolated cases, in the ordinary sense of mind, both *Citta* and *Mana* (derived from *man*, to think) are frequently used without any distinction.

Nāma means that which turns towards an object. This term is used in connection with two constituent parts of the so-called being—mind and matter (*Nāma-Rūpa*).

Viññāṇa, derived from *vi* : + *ñā*, to know, frequently occurs both in the Abhidhamma and Sutta Piṭakas, and it should be understood in accordance with the context.

Whilst referring to the five 'Groups' (*pañcakkhandha*), the five aspects in which the Buddha has summed up all the physical and mental phenomena of existence, and which appear to the ignorant man as his Ego, or personality, *Nāma* is substituted by *Viññāṇa* to denote consciousness. Here the prefix 'vi' has no special meaning. It does not connote superiority of *Ñāṇa*. In the *Paṭicca Sammupāda*, *Viññāṇa*, which is conditioned by moral and immoral activities (*saṅkhāra paccayā viññāṇam*), is to be understood as the rebirth-consciousness one experiences at the moment of conception (*paṭisandhi viññāṇa*).

* *Cinteti* : be aware (of feelings) ; *vijānāti* : becomes aware of.

In the Abhidhamma, *Viññāṇa* is also used in connection with the five kinds of sense-door* consciousness (*dvipaṇca viññāṇa*), and in one isolated case, *Mano-viññāṇa* is applied to denote a particular class of consciousness. In some places in the Sutta Piṭaka it is stated 'whatever suffering that arises is conditioned by *viññāṇa*; with its cessation suffering ceases.'

In the Abhidhamma there are mentioned 89 types of consciousness. Of them 81 are mundane (*lokiya*) and 8 are supra-mundane (*lokuttara*). The mental object of the latter is Nibbāna.

Consciousness is divided into four classes with respect to its nature.

They are as follows :—

1. Immoral types of consciousness which are associated with attachment (*lobha*), aversion or illwill (*paṭigha*) and ignorance (*moha*).
2. Moral types of consciousness which are associated with non-attachment (*alobha*), goodwill (*adosa*), and wisdom (*amoha*).
The immoral are regarded as unwholesome as they produce undesirable effects (*aniṭṭha vipāka*), the moral as wholesome since they produce desirable effects (*iṭṭha vipāka*). Both immoral and moral types of consciousness constitute what, in Pāli, are known as Kamma.
3. Those types of consciousness that arise as the inevitable results of these moral and immoral types of consciousness are called resultant types of consciousness (*Vipāka*).

As a seed sown on fertile soil germinates and fructifies sooner or later, according to its own intrinsic nature, even so moral and immoral types of consciousness produce their desirable and undesirable effects here or hereafter.

4. The fourth type of consciousness is called *Kiriya* which, for want of a better term, is rendered 'inoperative' or 'ineffective.' As the actions of Buddhas and Arahats lack reproductive power, it is such types of consciousness they experience when any moral deed is done by them. This last type is called *Kiriya*, literally deed or action, because it is causally ineffective.

Here *Kiriya* is used in the sense of resultless action *i.e.* producing no result to the doer.

Each consciousness a person experiences performs a definite function. Certain types of consciousness perform several functions, under different circumstances, in various capacities. There are fourteen specific functions performed by them all.

Paṭisandhi Citta.

Every living being at the very moment of conception experiences a consciousness which in combination with the sperm and ovum cells provided by the parents, tends to form the foetus. This potential initial consciousness is conditioned by the past Kammic force of that particular person. It also inherits the accumulated impressions, characteristics and so forth of that particular life-flux just as the infinitesimally small cell, about 1/120th part of an inch across, inherits more or less the physical characteristics of its parents and its ancestors. This consciousness which links the past with the present is regarded as the source of the present life stream. In the course of one particular life there is only one relinking consciousness. It is also called rebirth consciousness (*paṭisandhi citta*).

Buddhism does not state that mind is evolved from matter or that matter is evolved from mind. Nor does Buddhism make any dogmatic statement with regard to the ultimate origin of mind or matter. With the present as the basis Buddhism argues the past and future mainly with the object of discovering the cause or causes that condition this ever-recurring cycle of birth and death.

There are two other types of consciousness similar to this relinking consciousness, though functionally they differ. They are so treated because the mental contents and the objects of these three are identical.

One of them is called *Bhavaṅga* and the other *Cuti*.

Bhavaṅga (*Bhava—āṅga*) means factor of life, or indispensable cause or condition of existence.

When a person is fast asleep and is in a dreamless state, he experiences a kind of consciousness which is more passive than active. It is similar to the consciousness one experiences at the moment of conception and at the final moment of death. The Buddhist philosophical term for this type of consciousness is *Bhavaṅga*. Arising and perishing

* Five kinds of sense-doors are :— the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the body.

every moment, it flows on like a stream, not remaining for two consecutive moments the same.

We experience this class of consciousness not only in a dreamless state but also in our waking state. In the course of our life we experience *Bhavaṅga* thought-moments more than any other types of consciousness. Hence *Bhavaṅga* is an indispensable condition of life.

Some scholars identify *Bhavaṅga* with sub-consciousness. According to the Dictionary of Philosophy sub-consciousness is 'a compartment of the mind alleged by certain psychologists and philosophers to exist below the threshold of consciousness.' In the opinion of Western philosophers sub-consciousness and consciousness co-exist. But Buddhist philosophy says no two types of consciousness co-exist. Nor is *Bhavaṅga* a sub-plane. It does not correspond to F.W. Myer's 'subliminal consciousness' either. There does not seem to be any place for *Bhavaṅga* in Western Philosophy. Perhaps we may be using these philosophical terms with different meanings.

Bhavaṅga is so called because it is an essential condition for continued subjective existence.

Radhakrishnan writes : 'Bhavaṅga is sub-conscious existence, or more accurately existence free from waking consciousness. *Bhavaṅga* is subconscious existence when subjectively viewed, though objectively it is sometimes taken to mean *Nibbāna*.'

This certainly is not Buddhist. *Bhavaṅga* occurs in the waking consciousness, too, immediately after a thought process, and is never identified with *Nibbāna*. Life continuum has been suggested as the closest English equivalent for *Bhavaṅga*.

Cuti or Decease Consciousness.

As *Paṭisandhi* or rebirth consciousness is the initial thought-moment of life, so is *Cuti* the final thought-moment. They are the entrance and exit of one particular life stream. *Cuti* functions as a mere passing away from life.

Death occurs immediately on the *Cuti* consciousness. Though with death the physical body disintegrates and consciousness temporarily ceases, yet the life stream is not annihilated as the Kammic force that propels it remains. Death is only a prelude to birth. *Javana*.

Another type of consciousness that should be clearly understood is the *Javana* conscious-

ness. Ordinarily the term *Javana* is employed in the sense of swift. *Javana hamsa*, for example, means swift swan ; *Javana paññā* means swift wisdom. In Buddhist philosophy it is used in a purely technical sense.

Here *Javana* means running. It is so called because in the course of a thought-process it runs consecutively for seven thought moments, or five with an identical object. The mental states occurring in all these thought moments are similar, but the potential force differs.

This *Javana* stage is the most important from an ethical point of view. It is at this psychological stage that good or evil is actually done. Irrespective of the desirability or the undesirability of the object presented to the mind it is possible for one to make the *Javana* process moral or immoral. If for, instance, one meets an enemy, a thought of hatred will arise automatically. An understanding person, might, on the contrary, harbour a thought of love towards him. This is the reason why the Buddha states in the *Dhammapada* :—

' By self is evil done,
By self is one defiled,
By self is evil not done,
By self is one purified.
Both defilement and purity depend on
oneself,
No one is purified by another.'

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It is an admitted fact that environment, circumstances, habitual tendencies and so forth condition our thoughts. On such occasions freewill is subordinated to the mechanistic course of events. There is also the possibility to overcome those external forces and produce moral and immoral thoughts exercising our own freewill.

A foreign element may be instrumental, but we ourselves are directly responsible for our actions. We create our own heavens. We create our own hells.

It is extremely difficult to suggest a suitable rendering for *Javana*.

Apperception is suggested by some. Impulse is suggested as an alternate rendering, which seems to be less satisfactory than apperception. It is best to retain the Pāli term.

Buddhist philosophy shows that there is no moment when we do not ordinarily ex-

perience a particular kind of consciousness, hanging on to some object — whether physical or mental. The time limit of such a consciousness is termed one thought-moment. Each thought-moment is followed by another. Time is thus the *sine qua non* of the succession of mental states. The rapidity of the succession of such thought-moments is hardly conceivable to human knowledge.

Each unit of consciousness consists of three minor instants (*khaṇas*). They are arising or genesis (*uppāda*), static or development (*ṭhīti*) and cessation or dissolution (*bhaṅga*).

Immediately after the cessation stage of a thought-moment there occurs the genesis stage of the subsequent thought-moment. Each momentary consciousness of this ever-changing life-process, on passing away, transmits its whole energy, all the indelibly recorded impressions to the successor. Each fresh consciousness thus consists of the potentialities of its predecessors and something more.

There is therefore a continuous flow of consciousness like a stream without any interruption. The subsequent thought-moment is neither absolutely the same as its predecessor — since its composition is not identical — nor entirely different — being the same stream of life. There is no identical being, but there is a continuity in process.

It must not be understood that consciousness is chopped up in bits and joined together like a train or a chain. But on the contrary, 'it constantly flows on like a river receiving, from the tributary streams of sense, constant accretions to its flood and ever dispensing to the world around it the thought stuff it has gathered up by the way. It has birth for its source and death for its mouth.'

Here we find a juxtaposition of fleeting states of consciousness but not a superposition of such states as some appear to believe. No state once gone ever recurs; none is absolutely identical with what goes before. These states constantly change, not remaining for two consecutive moments the same. Worldlings, veiled by the web of illusion, mistake this apparent continuity to be something eternal and go to the extent of introducing an unchanging soul (the supposed doer and observer of all actions) to this ever changing consciousness.

Though consciousness is a unit in itself it consists of fleeting mental states. There are

52 such mental concomitants that arise in different types of consciousness in varying degrees.

One of them is feeling (*vedanā*); another is perception (*saññā*). The remaining 50 are collectively called volitional activities (*saṅk-hārā*), a rendering which does not exactly convey the meaning of the Pāli term. Of them volition or *cetanā* is the most important mental factor.

Feeling is a more appropriate rendering for *vedanā* than sensation. It is an essential property of every consciousness and it may be pleasurable, painful or neutral.

Feeling is like a master who enjoys a dish prepared by a cook. It is feeling that experiences the desirable or undesirable fruits of an action done in this or a previous birth. Apart from this mental state there is no permanent soul or any other agent to experience the result of the action.

'Kammasa kārako natthi vipākassa ca vedako

Suddhadhammā pavattanti evetaṃ samma dassanaṃ.'

'No doer is there who does the deed,
Nor is there one who eats the fruit;
Constituent parts alone exist;
This verily is the right view.'

Visuddhi Magga.

Strictly speaking, there is no actor apart from action, no perceiver apart from perception, or, in other words, no conscious subject behind consciousness.

Professor James is quite Buddhistic when he says — 'Thoughts themselves are the thinkers.'

It should be understood that the bliss of Nibbāna is not associated with any kind of feeling. In conventional terms the Buddha says — *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ* — Nibbāna is the highest bliss. It is bliss supreme because it is not a kind of happiness that is experienced by the senses. It is a positive blissful state of relief. It is not the enjoyment of any pleasurable object.

In the Majjhīma Nikāya the Buddha says: 'The Exalted One does not recognize bliss because of a pleasurable sensation; but where-soever bliss is attained, there and there only does the Accomplished One recognize bliss.'

Saññā, the second factor, means simply sense-perception. It is *Saññā* that enables one to recognize an object that has once been

perceived by the mind. It should be understood that perception is not used here in the sense employed by early modern philosophers such as Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz.

Memory is due to this perception.

Cetanā or volition is the most important of all *saṅkhāras* or volitional activities.

Both *cetanā* and *citta* are derived from the same root *citi*, to think. In the case of *citta*, mind or consciousness, the root assumes the meaning of discernment (*viñāṇa*), whilst in *cetanā* it is used in the sense of co-ordination (*abhisandhāna*) and accumulation (*āyūhana*).

Cetanā is that which co-ordinates the mental states associated with itself on the object of consciousness. Like a chief disciple, or like a foreman carpenter who fulfils his duties and regulates the work of others as well, so does *cetanā* fulfil its own function and regulate the function of other concomitants associated with itself.

Cetanā plays a prominent part in all moral and immoral actions. The most significant mental state in the mundane (*lokiya*) consciousness is this *cetanā*, whilst that in the supramundane (*lokuttara*) is *paññā*, wisdom or insight. Mundane thoughts tend to accumulate *kamma*. Supramundane thoughts, on the contrary, tend to eradicate *kamma*. Hence *cetanā* in the supramundane consciousness does not constitute *kamma*.

It is this *cetanā* that is alluded to as *saṅkhāra* and *kammabhava* in the *paṭicca samuppāda*. Whilst dealing with the Five 'Groups', *saṅkharakkhandha* (mental formations) is used to denote the fifty mental states excluding feeling, and perception, with volition as the foremost.

From a psychological point of view, volition determines the activities of the mental states associated with it. From an ethical point of view, it determines their inevitable consequences. Hence where there is no volition there is no *kamma*.

Of the fifty-two mental states, seven are common to all types of consciousness. The first in order is *phassa* or contact.

For any sense-impression to occur, three factors are essential, namely — consciousness, receptive sense, and the object. For instance, one perceives an object with the consciousness through the eye as its instrument. It is still more correct to say that perception is a combination of these three factors.

When an object presents itself to the consciousness through one of the six senses there arises the mental state—contact. It should not be understood that mere collision is contact (*na sangatimatto eva phasso*).

Like a pillar which acts as a strong support to the rest of the structure, even so is contact to the co-existent mental states.

Feeling is the second, perception, the third, and volition, the fourth.

Ekaggatā or one-pointedness is the fifth mental state. It is concentration on one object or focusing the mind on one object. It is compared to a steady lamp-flame in a windless place ; to a firmly fixed pillar that cannot be shaken by the wind ; to water that binds together several substances to form one compound. That mental state tends to prevent its co-adjuncts from dissipation.

This one-pointedness is one of the five *Jhāna* factors. When it is developed and cultivated it is designated '*samādhi*'. 'It is the germ of all attentive, selected, focused, or concentrated consciousness.'

Jīvitindriya or psychic life is the sixth mental state. *Jīvita* means life and *indriya*, controlling faculty or principle. It is called *jīvita* because it sustains its co-associates. Although volition determines the activities of mental states it is *jīvitindriya* that vitalizes volition and other concomitants. As lotuses are sustained by water, an infant is sustained by a nurse, so are mental states sustained by *jīvitindriya*.

Death is regarded as the destruction of this psychic life. Immediately after, due to the power of *Kamma*, another psychic life arises in the subsequent life at the moment of conception.

The seventh universal mental state is *manasikāra* or attention. The literal meaning of the term is 'making in the mind.' Turning the mind towards the object is the chief characteristic of *manasikāra*. It is like the rudder of a ship, which is indispensable to take her directly to her destination. Mind without *manasikāra* is like a rudderless ship. *Manasikāra* is also compared to a charioteer with close attention on two well-trained horses (mind and object) as regards their rhythmical movements.

Attention is the closest equivalent to *manasikāra*, although the Pāli term does not

fully connote the meaning attached to the English word from a strictly philosophical point of view. As a mental state it is mere spontaneous attention. In *manasikāra*, as in attention, there is no peculiar vividness or clarity. To perception may be attributed this vividness to some extent.

Manasikāra is an aid to memory as it is common to all types of consciousness.

This stream of consciousness 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 the stream of consciousness cease to flow. An ultimate beginning of this stream of consciousness cannot be determined, as a stage cannot be perceived when this life-force was not fraught with ignorance and craving.

This uninterrupted flux or continuity of or consciousness, conditioned by *Kamma* has no perceptible source in the beginningless past nor an end to its continuation in the future, except by the Noble Eightfold Path. There is no permanent ego or eternal soul as postulated in some religious systems.

THE SEAT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

It is clear that the Buddha has not definitely assigned a specific basis for consciousness as He has done with the other senses. It was the cardiac theory that prevailed in His time, and this was evidently supported by the Upanishads. The Buddha could have adopted this popular theory, but He did not commit Himself. In the *Paṭṭhāna*, the Book of Relations, the Buddha refers to the basis of consciousness in such indirect terms as “*yam rūpam nissāya*,” depending on that material thing. What that material thing was, the Buddha did not positively assert. But according to the views of commentators like venerable Buddhaghosa and Anuruddha the seat of consciousness is the heart (*hadaya-vatthu*). One wonders whether one is justified in presenting the cardiac theory as Buddhist when the Buddha Himself neither rejected nor accepted this popular theory.

NOTE :

The purely mechanical side is, of course, the brain, but that is merely a tool, the most complex machine-tool imaginable. It is this tool that “mind” uses and one should not with “blind disbelief” reject the cardiac theory on purely material evidence, since none really exists.

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THE EARNEST WISH

Ohn Ghine

Much confusion is caused in the minds of some Westerners when in their Buddhist reading or in conversation with Buddhists of Asia they come across terms which express, for them, concepts they cling to as part of their theist outlook or, on the other hand, have recently discarded as 'mere superstition'. There is much talking at cross purposes in this. The Asian whose mother tongue is not English means something slightly different to the concept he evokes when he speaks of 'priests' and 'prayer' and 'religion' for instance. There is no excuse really for using the word 'priest' since a priest is an intermediary between a supposed God or Angel and man, and there can be nothing in Buddhism even approximating that spiritual brokerage whereby a man buys or barter his way to 'Heaven'.

But in the use of 'prayer' there is often a misunderstanding on the part of the Westerner who is blinded by his concept of 'prayer' as a theist instrument and is not always aware of the subtle nuances of meaning of the word. To a theist or an ex-theist, 'prayer' is associated with an earnest request or petition to a supposed supernatural Being, able and, given the right mood and the right supplication and, sometimes, the right sacrifice, willing to grant a boon or avert a threatened danger.

When a non-Buddhist is told that there is no 'God' in Buddhism, or anywhere else, in the sense of an all-powerful Creator, and that all the responsibility for one's actions can not be bartered for submissiveness, he says: 'But Buddhists do pray, I've heard them say they pray and I've read of them praying: to whom, then, do they pray?', he is somewhat puzzled if he receives the reply that if Buddhists pray (as some, it must be admitted, sometimes do) they pray to themselves as the theists do; but the Buddhists usually know that their prayers are really addressed to themselves and not to a postulated 'God' projected forth from their personalities as something separate and distinct, and changeless. They know that anything they can contact is in continual change and subject to the same disadvantages thereby as they themselves are.

So the meaning of 'prayer' is important. For prayer is merely an earnest wish that is usually but not necessarily addressed to one

who has, it is supposed, the ability to make that wish come true. The word is from the Latin 'precarius', 'obtained by prayer' and the Romans were realist enough to use the same word (our modern 'precarious') for 'doubtful', and they derived the word from 'precor' meaning both 'to entreat' and 'to wish for', just as our Pāli word *pattheti* has both these meanings.

And in Buddhism it is as an 'Earnest Wish' that we most often use the word 'Prayer'. Even then we could perhaps be a little more positive and term it, as it often has been termed, 'An Act of Truth'.

One often finds in the old Scriptures the 'Act of Truth' and this Act of Truth is remarkably potent. It has died out in the world to a great extent with the dying out of the resolute courage that is necessary for the telling of truth and for making a vow that one must keep at all costs; and with the partial dying out of the courage necessary for shouldering one's own burdens and responsibilities, the Act of Truth has degenerated into slavish prayers or petitions to supposed Divine Beings for 'ever-present help in time of trouble'.

A very beautiful instance of the Act of Truth is given in the Majjhīma Nikāya where the former bandit-murderer, Angulimāla, desires to help a devout woman lay-disciple in difficult and dangerous childbirth. The Buddha tells him to recite *parittas* (help-giving stanzas) after making the Act of Truth: 'Earnestly wishing by the virtue of the fact that I have not in my whole life harmed anybody by word, thought or deed, that the devout laywoman may come safely through her ordeal.' Taken aback, Angulimāla pointed out the murders he had committed in the past. Then the Buddha told him to make an Act of Truth that never since he had been reborn by entering the Noble Order and changing himself by gaining the stages of the Path, had he harmed any being. This joyfully done, Angulimāla's efforts were successful.

To the old-fashioned 'materialist' this and other Acts of Truth, earnest wishes based on and made the more earnest by an appeal to Truth itself, may sound fanciful and superstitious; yet that will only prove him really vulnerable to the epithet 'old-fashioned', since the painstaking team of scientists in the

Parapsychology Department of Duke University in U.S.A. (to mention only one band of workers in this field) has had results that at least go a very long way towards proving the truth of psychokinesis, the action of 'mind' on 'matter' at a distance.

But even apart from psychokinesis there are normal psychological values that come into play and a rather amusing instance in real life and on a somewhat mundane plane is worth relating if only to show the interaction of these several factors.

The story was told me by one of the younger actors in the comedy and as he has since died at a ripe age the telling can harm no-one.

In the latter half of the last century there lived in Rangoon a poor and uneducated Chinese who earned a meagre living by plying a sampan on the swift-flowing Rangoon river, struggling with goods or passengers to manipulate his sweep and steer his frail craft for the few small coins that served but to keep him alive.

He had ambition, courage, initiative, a strong will and a good physique but could not make enough, though he worked long hours at his arduous occupation, to raise himself above subsistence level and gain even a small capital to carry on trade on his own account though he felt certain he could make his fortune at it.

He had often noticed a fine brick building not far from the foreshore which, though not large by some standards, was, to his vision, a palace, and he was one day inspired to walk round the building, to gaze longingly at it and take it all in with his eye and to make the earnest wish : 'May I, as I am sincere and hard-working, some day be the sole owner of this building and may my fortune grow as long as I own it.' He confided this to some of his few friends who were inclined to jeer at 'the future millionaire'. One day, taking a brief rest against some bales of goods piled on the jetty, he pondered his fate and his position and came closer than he had ever been to complete discouragement and defeat. He was following an occupation that killed men young, and he was nearing middle age.

He made the earnest wish : 'By my sincerity and hard work, if my future is ever to change may it change now, before it is too late.' In that moment of exaltation, his sharpened hearing and attention took in what had been just the drone of voices coming from the other side of the bales of goods. An itinerant fortune-teller was consoling a customer, a com-

fortably-off Burmese widow : 'You need not despair, madam, although your daughter is not as beautiful or as young as some, she is sure to obtain a good husband who will be kind to her and who will make your small fortune into a great one, though he may be poor to start with.' The poor boatman immediately walked round the pile of goods and exclaimed to the astonished trio : 'Indeed the fortune-teller is a wise man and speaks truth. I am the man who will marry your daughter as he foresaw and I can make your small fortune into a very great one'. All eventually agreed that it must be so and he married the girl to whom he was a very good husband. One of the first things he did was to buy the building he had vowed to buy and he became one of the richest men in Burma. The building in later years seemed small and mean to his son, but never could he be persuaded to part with it.

The Chinese friend who told me the story related how, when he was an impecunious youngster of ten, he, with others who had heard the story in popular gossip, used to choose a time when the owner was outside the building and walk ceremoniously round it, if they could dodge the caretaker who was paid to drive them away, and say earnestly : 'May I some day be the owner of this building'. The now wealthy Chinese owner, who had come up the hard way, would never spend a copper coin that he could avoid spending, let alone give anything away, yet he would at once offer money to the young blackmailers to take back their words.

Now to put the whole case down to 'chance plus psychology' does not explain everything as the old man knew when he paid blackmail to the youngsters. He was as hard-headed a realist as any that has traded in the world, and he had proved the efficacy of the 'Earnest Wish'.

In just the same manner any man can prove its efficacy, especially if he makes it an Act of Truth. But in making the Act of Truth and the Earnest Wish one should be very careful that there is a moral motive behind it. Otherwise there can be the danger of obtaining one's desire at a time when one no longer desires it, and that has proved, at times, calamitous. This is shown very well in the folk-lore of most peoples where the man who gets his wish finds that it brings disaster.

And many a man who has said 'I'll be damned if I do it' and then does it, damns

himself for a period in actuality. Indeed, benediction, the speaking of good wishes, and malediction, the speaking of bad wishes or cursing, has been used by almost every man who has ever lived. The ancients had a sure instinct which has been practically lost in the mad whirl of the modern world, of the potency of these, which are both earnest wishes. Although an earnest wish can

change outside circumstances, it the more quickly and the more surely changes the one who wishes.

There is really only one Earnest Wish that is at all worth the making, since all things change and all times are dangerous times. That is the Earnest wish : 'May I, by virtue of my past good deeds and my earnest striving, attain Nibbāna'.



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THE BUDDHIST VIEW ON RACE RELATIONS

By Venerable Aggamahāpāṇḍita U Thittila

The problem of race, of the idea of superiority of race, of race prejudice, of "colour bar" and consequently of the implementation, in the fullest and broadest sense of the word, of the Charter of Human Rights, is one which, apart from some of its terms of reference, is not new. Neither does it appear from its latest forms of expression to be nearer to solution than on any previous date. That the problem as such may be settled on paper by making use of the data (or lack of it) available from the many scientific bodies concerned with such matters, is proved beyond all possible doubt. That the problem still remains, however, regardless of its apparent theoretical solution, is a matter of grave concern. It indicates that an aspect of the problem has either not been appreciated, or if appreciated has not been approached with anything other than prejudice or a complete lack of understanding of the fundamentals of the psychology of beings in general and of human beings in particular. Before enlarging on these fundamentals, however, let us examine briefly what would, in the more usual sense of the word, be considered the scientific approach to the subject. Let us satisfy ourselves again that by means of this approach we have clearly proved to ourselves without a shadow of doubt the groundlessness of race prejudice. Let us show by means of our scientific knowledge that there is no basis whatever on which we can say, on any pretext, that, given suitable environment, there is the slightest evidence of a difference of ability between racial groups.

Besides the scientific method, and before it in matter of time, is the literary approach, dealing as it does with considerations of historical background and the authoritative opinion of the ancients. Then there is the religious attitude shown, in principle, as the statement or command of a humanly-created "Almighty God" or, in extenso, as the "Law of the Prophets" and the commentarial elucidations of the scholar—teachers. Morally, as an aspect of the literary approach, the problem has been treated from almost every quarter. It is here, however, that we so often find how far man is from appreciating the utterly uncompromising dicta of an absolute morality, how, in obedience to his desire, man will construct an opinion, a

relative morality, quite inconsistent with the principles of his outwardly accepted canons of moral teaching. Here, of course, our duty is to deal with the distinct problem of race, but it is clearly to be observed that such matters arise fundamentally from an attitude of mind which is intolerant of the smallest difference between individuals. Differences in habit, appearance, gesture, speech, outlook or opinion of another individual as genetically and anatomically related to one as one's own brother can cause this intolerance to arise. Extend this and we witness, within the confines of what is called a race, the religious persecutions of the earlier centuries based on a relative morality prescribed by political necessity founded on a desire for power and position. Extend this and we witness the true race prejudice, born of a relative morality urged in the name of true religion, which spread over areas of the South American continent. See, though, how this arose from a deceptive state of mind which cloaked its desire to explore, to become rich and powerful, with the majesty of the "Word of God" carried to "the benighted—the heathen, the pagan, the inferior—the coloured man." A man fit only to be killed if he stood in the way of—what?—The Word of God, or Desire.

To return to the scientific aspect of this very important problem. Here is an occasion to observe with what care and with what objectivity the individual scientist has pursued his task. Whether his task was originally framed to prove an absolute and fundamental race difference, or whether to indicate conclusively, once and for all, that all men are brothers, he has pursued it. Regardless of this task, however, data has been collected; data which, according to the bias of the statistician, has been formulated in such a manner that political necessity has been able to elevate one group to the level of master race and condemn another to extermination on the grounds of racial inferiority.

Only the completely unprejudiced mind can examine statistics and discover in that data the knowledge it seeks. There have been many such who have laboured honestly and tirelessly at the very detailed and complicated tasks of collecting and editing anthropological, genetical, psychological, historical,

sociological, political and cultural material with the true aim of discovering why one group of individuals should show prejudice against another.

Let us then review, summarize and try to draw a conclusion from some of the aspects analysed by researchers in their various fields. Psychology is perhaps a good aspect on which to begin, since it is a subject of growing importance in the examination of human behaviour. A subject which has been approached by Western workers in a manner quite different from that traditional to the Eastern hemisphere. The Western method seeks to analyse individuals in terms of the results arising from their behaviour and reaction to set problems and stimuli associated, to a greater or lesser degree, with the environment of the subject, that of the researcher, or in terms of an artificial set of conditions by which neither side is unduly affected. The Eastern method, and particularly the Buddhist approach, seeks to interpret the very thought of the individual in terms of a root structure bearing in its very nature the tendency and bias which will warp the absolute clarity of experience. A warping which renders us all, to a greater or lesser degree, what one might in Western terminology call "psychopathic". Psychopathic when equated with the universal yard-stick of ethical purity, unbiased perception and equanimity. (The Buddha it was who said: "Putthujjano ummattako": All ordinary men are mad.) The approaches to this subject are clearly quite different, and the results may at first sight appear sometimes to be at variance with each other. Nevertheless, where one system may by persistent and detailed examination of experimental data fail to perceive differences which could be interpreted as sufficient grounds for racial prejudice, the other will show and prove beyond all doubt that the individual is the only unit. This latter system will show that root structure is invariably comparable, and that behaviour and performance are matters of environment coupled with personal, not parental or racial, tendency.

Professor Otto Klineberg in his excellent little pamphlet "Race and Psychology", deals with the problem of possible racial differences in a helpful and systematic manner. He groups the various aspects of the experimental approach to the question in an all-embracing and logical fashion. He shows that tests imposed on individuals

intended to illustrate difference of ability are almost always inconclusive, since by far the greater part of an individual's reaction to any test is dominated by the effect of his environmental background. Moreover, tests however cleverly devised can never quite be freed from such deficiencies owing to their having been framed initially on the basis of another environmental background. He does show, however, and this is important, that when members of different ethnic groups are subject to the same environmental conditions their I. Q's. (intelligence quotients) show only the expected individual difference, never superiority or inferiority of ethnic group. Now it is clear that people exhibit considerable physical difference, differences which give to the popular mind the idea of race. He shows, however, that variations such as white skin, black skin, yellow skin, straight hair, woolly hair, blue eyes, black eyes, long heads, broad heads, etc., in their many combinations and permutations exhibit no greater tendency to variation than is demonstrated between the individuals showing dominance of one particular characteristic. That is, they never show a mental capability or deficiency associated with a physical characteristic. He indicates that tests designed to demonstrate the upper limit of ability among the various ethnic groups show that every such group possesses roughly the same percentage of high I.Qs. Moreover, he says, it is quite evident that race mixture as such never of itself brings about inferiority. It is the environmental conditions built largely on the prejudices of others which cause these groups so often to become degraded and to be of apparently lower mental standard. It would appear also that in matters such as rate of mental growth, of specific ability, of temperament and differences of personality, the factor showing controlling influence is again environment. If this factor is not taken into account the resulting tests have only the effect of showing how "white" a particular ethnic group may be. It can readily be appreciated how misleading, and dangerous, data of this kind may become if used by the unscrupulous to satisfy personal, political and nationalistic ends. One may go much further than this and say how misleading data of this kind has been in the past and still is at this very moment, and how it continues to be used for these same personal, political and nationalistic ends. On paper, however, this short psychological analysis shows that no differ-

ence in expected performance between ethnic groups may be found, provided the environmental basis is a constant in the experiment. Remove this constant and we can prove how black, white, or yellow a man is in just the same way as in the well known school algebraic problem the student is asked to express "b" and "c" in terms of "a", or "a" and "c" in terms of "b". Several times the term "ethnic group" has been used in the foregoing, perhaps in the sense of its having some specific meaning. It may seem as though one were speaking of a pure race with decided characteristics and in which the individuals could be said to be comparable in their major and minor details. Such, however, is by no means the case, for although the main and usually quoted feature of skin colour may be a fairly constant aspect of human grouping, inter-breeding between the various groups may be and is practised without any degrading effect whatever, either mentally or physically. The only effects are those produced purely artificially by the prejudices of others and resulting in inferior environmental conditions.

When the subject of race and individual capability is dealt with in accordance with the methods of genetical study, it would appear that the case for non-discrimination becomes greater even than is shown by Western psychological studies. According to the theories of geneticists which have grown and been expanded from the original experimental work of Gregor Mendel, it would appear that the hereditary characteristics of an individual are the result of the combinations and permutations of innumerable discrete particles called genes. Each of these genes transmits without change, except in the specific case of mutation, a characteristic and deterministic quality in the overall growth and structure of a new individual from the moment of conception onward throughout his life. It also enables him in turn to propagate a gene structure which will again determine the detailed form of a further being in accordance with these individually unchanged but variously combined ultra-microscopic bodies. To what extent the gene theory can be observed in the mental structure and behaviour of related beings is, however, another matter. One will appreciate that it is often easy to perceive a physical similarity between parents and their children, nevertheless it is usually readily realizable, by honest self examination, that one's own mental characteristics are

quite different from those of one's parents, similarities being the result of education and environment. The basic, underlying and governing bias of one's character is clearly a feature quite peculiar to the individual. This, however, departs from the point somewhat. It was intended to show, on the findings of geneticists, that dominant physical characteristics may be perceived locally, due to the perpetuation of certain gene combinations by environmentally selective mating, that these same genes may be present in any individual on the globe and may be transmitted freely and in accordance with regular laws between individuals of any other gene structure whatsoever. This would prove again that the so-called racial characteristics are, as such, only the result of a few of the many thousands of genes which according to modern theory determine the detailed physical and operative structure of the individual.

On paper, therefore, it can, as previously stated, readily be proved that there is no physical or mental foundation whatsoever for these very prevalent racial prejudices. Yet, despite all this, the fact remains that they are still strong and show too little sign of abating. Consequently we must turn our attention in other directions to see what aspect has been left unexamined which might give a clue to the problem. It may be that this problem is one which from its very nature cannot be solved in anything other than an individual manner. However, the possibility of general solution must not be abandoned at this stage for lack of examination.

Two things remain to be spoken of, they are environment and mental nature. The first of these two has been mentioned frequently in connection with every kind of examination of the point at issue, whether it be psychological, genetical, anthropological, historical or literary. It is, admittedly, an aspect of the greatest importance, for it points the way to what could—if it were so desired—be a general solution to the question. It would appear from all the tests made, however efficient or inefficient they may have been, that provided a being is subject to a particular kind of environment from a very early age he will react to that environment and develop a mental outlook influenced by it. Moreover, he will be comparable with any other individual of whatever group one may choose who has been subject to the same environment. If, therefore, the tests are formulated by a member

of one particular set of dominant environmental conditions, beings who are examined in accordance with that series of tests will show a greater or lesser aptitude and could be awarded a higher or lower quotient of intelligence accordingly as their own environmental background approximated to, or deviated from, that dominating the test. As it is clearly observable that there are many varying environmental backgrounds to which individuals may be subjected, either singly or in groups, it becomes very clear that unless these backgrounds were swept away in every detail, however small, and replaced by one in which every detail were identical—even geographically and climatically—there would always arise what would eventually be called different “cultures”. This is not to say that if such an impossible thing could be achieved we would have “one universal culture”. Far from it, but we shall deal with this when we speak of Kamma. Since the stabilizing of environment on a common basis is fundamentally an impossibility, and a contradiction of the very order of things, the environmental solution on a general basis would in any case be useless.

Now we speak of culture in broad terms such as Eastern culture, Western culture, European culture, Chinese culture, Asian culture and so on, thereby signifying basic differences of what we personally either approve or disapprove, to a degree depending on our own knowledge, education and perception. Does not this very point then give the clue to the whole problem of race prejudice, a clue not to be found in any of the physical studies made, or in what one might call psycho-physical examinations of representative subjects. Does not the explanation, and the elucidation, of this great question lie in the individual's own attitude to the way of life, habits and customs of other individuals or groups. His attitude to their culture and to their environment in terms of his own experience and in accordance with the underlying structure of his own mental process. His mental process, that personal bias or habitual form of mind, which, quite irrespective of the theoretical proof of a problem in physical terms, will strike an attitude depending upon whether he likes or dislikes the local characteristics and habits of other beings. The great teaching of Dependent Origination of the Buddha is :

.... “Phassa paccayā vedanā
Vedanā paccayā taṇhā
Taṇhā paccayā upādānaṃ
Upādāna paccayā bhavo”

Freely translated this says that from the contact we make with various objects there arise in us feelings, which are either painful, pleasant or neutral. From these feelings there arise cravings either to possess the object or to have it removed. From these cravings there arise positive graspings which make one wish not only to possess but to retain, not only to remove the undesirable but to keep it away at all times. In this manner existence proceeds based on an ignorance of the real nature of things, and, by this latent bias of ignorance, expressing itself in the type of feeling arising after contact with an object and proceeding to craving and grasping, the cycle of laying down the bias for future life (and opinion) proceeds.

If we are to solve the race problem at all there is but one way in which it can be done. What is that way ? It is by the examination of one's own biases and characteristics. It is by the gradual extirpation of those biases and characteristics with the consequent disappearance of the conceit which says, “I am the better man”. To be subject to an environment is in the very nature of things, but, by persistent analysis and understanding, to free oneself mentally from the bonds of that or any other environment is the solution to the problem. It is not a mass solution, but it answers the question, “Can the race problem be solved ?” by the simple answer, “Yes, if you wish it to be solved, now, here, and for yourself”.

The very small saying given above regarding contact, feeling, craving and grasping, is but a tiny fraction of the Buddhist attitude to the questions of race, individual and existence, so it would be profitable in the following pages to examine this attitude in greater detail. It is an attitude which shows that the problem can be solved, not by legislation, not by research into the characteristics of others, but by gaining understanding of oneself and thereby of the true underlying cause of the trouble. What is the cause ? The three roots which dominate the existences of us all : Greed, Hatred and Ignorance.

These three roots are roots in full reality. They go deep down in the very fibres of our being, they are thus part of what we call

“Us”, “I”, “Personality”, for animals as well as for humans and Devas.

Even in the “colour bar” we are considering, we find that this goes deeper than thought, down to the depths of our emotionality, our instinct. Put a Black Orpington hen in with some White Leghorns or *vice versa* and you will see an instant mass attack against the intruder of another colour. In the animal world the instinct to attack, to destroy that which shows a difference, even if it is one of the herd in other respects, can be noticed. For “difference” spells “danger” to the herd instinct.

A truly civilised man is one who has succeeded to some extent in controlling his instincts. Full control of the instincts and of the mind is prerequisite to Arahathship or Supreme Buddhahood, one of which is the goal of every Buddhist.

The worm, the God, the man, none is free from instinct, and none is free from the roots of Craving, Aversion and Ignorance.

That it is that hinders the acceptance of logical, scientific proofs that colour or shape of the head make no final difference, in the mass (though it is still true that individual differences can make great differences in the world: as Pascal said: “If Cleopatra’s nose had been shorter, the whole face of the earth would have been changed”.) In every ethnic group there are, on the one hand, outstanding individuals and, on the other, individuals repressed economically and culturally. There are Negro Prime Ministers who dine and dance with white royalty and “poor whites” who could never get that opportunity, which shows that political and economic considerations leap the “colour bar”.

Why this should be so is a “Divine mystery” to the believers in “Divine Providence” but quite understandable to those who have a knowledge of Kamma and Rebirth. Indeed even if one accepts the idea of Kamma and Rebirth as a theory merely, it still remains the only theory that will fit the facts and give any sort of logical reason and “raison d’etre” to the world.

Before entering on a further consideration of this, let us consider some other aspects of the Buddhist view on race and colour prejudice generally.

This is not the place to moralise on the modern manifestations in various countries of colour prejudice nor to prophesy as to the ultimate fate of those “systems” based on this and of the countries that cling tenaciously to them, but to quote what the Buddha said so long ago :—

“Not by birth is one an outcaste,
Not by birth is one a noble ;
But by deeds is one an outcaste,
And by deeds is one a noble.”

—Khuddaka-Nikāya, Suttanipāta,
Vasala-Sutta, Verse 142.

And in the Visuddhimagga it is put very plainly : “ This is the body’s nature : it is a collection of bones plastered over with pieces of flesh, enveloped in moist inner skin, enclosed in the outer cuticle, with orifices here and there, constantly dribbling and trickling like a grease pot, inhabited by a community of worms, the home of disease, the basis of painful states, perpetually oozing from the nine orifices like a chronic open carbuncle, from both of whose eyes eye-filth trickles, from whose ears ear-filth, from whose nostrils snot, from whose mouth food and bile and phlegm and blood, from whose lower outlets excrement and urine, and from whose pores the broth of stale sweat seeps, with blue-bottles and their like buzzing round it, which when untended with tooth sticks and mouth-washing and head-anointing and bathing and underclothing and dressing would, judged by the universal repulsiveness of the body, make even a king, if he wandered from village to village with his hair in its natural wild disorder, no different from a flower-scavenger or an outcaste or what you will. So there is no distinction between a king’s body and an outcaste’s in so far as its impure stinking nauseating repulsiveness is concerned.”

Also, in the Agañña Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, the Buddha showed that some people of the ‘highest caste’ performed good actions and thereby after the death of their present bodies, manifested in better realms, while there were those of the same caste who performed evil actions which caused their manifestation in worlds of greater suffering. Similarly there were those of the despised castes or ‘out-castes’ whose deeds took them to higher or lower existences ; while in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, He showed that even in this world the king himself would pay

reverence to a man of low caste if that man became a monk. This, by the way, shows that there was not the rigidity of the caste system which grew up later.

In the Majjhīma Nikāya we find that the Buddha treated of caste pretensions in two separate Sermons. In the Assālāyana Sutta He pointed out that the fire produced by a person pretending to kingly rank and high caste and using for the purpose of making fire, the costliest of sandal wood, would differ in no respect from the fire produced by a poor man of 'low caste' using the common castor-plant stubble from pigsties, as regards the production of heat and light. In the Madhura Sutta, He drove this idea home by showing that spiritual advancement of both rich and poor, those claiming high caste and those despised as of low caste, differed in no respect whatsoever. The 'spiritual fire' is the same. And both types will pass away according to their deeds, since both types produce evildoers and the doers of good.

KAMMA AND REBIRTH.

'Men are heirs of their Kamma': said the Buddha. Kamma means deeds and therefore men are the heirs of their deeds, the deeds done in the remote past as well as in the present 'life'.

A definite knowledge of this or, in those cases where there is no definite knowledge, a belief in this, is natural to Buddhists since it was stated so unequivocally and so often by the Buddha.

Here we must digress a little to show how 'beliefs' are held by Buddhists, since otherwise we may be accused of 'blind belief' and 'dogma' both of which are foreign to Buddhism.

Naturally one doesn't call oneself 'a Buddhist' unless one accepts the Teaching of the Buddha, which has been so well preserved in the Pāli Canon, that never contradicts itself and that is susceptible of proof in every particular.

This is where 'belief' must come in and where there is 'dogma' in the sense of the word that means 'strongly-held opinions'. But these beliefs are to be taken, until there is full knowledge and realisation, as working hypotheses, and not as 'dogmas' in the sense

that they must be blindly believed in and must not be disputed. Knowledge and full realisation are attained only by fitting oneself to perceive Truth.

So in the case of Kamma and Rebirth, one can attain to unshakable realisation of this truth, but even if one accepts it merely as a hypothesis, it is the only hypothesis that fits all the known facts and has been such for twenty-five centuries. And if it is still 'unproven' for some, it has also, in all that time, never been disproved.

Acceptance, then, in whichever way one does accept it, of the facts of Kamma and Rebirth, naturally precludes the type of thought that would allow the opinion, 'I am superior because of my colour; or the shape of my head.' It is so clear that one has been in so many families and so many castes, even in the lower spheres of animals etc., and will probably be so again in no long time unless one has gained at least the first stage on the Path of Enlightenment. This essential part of the teaching of the Buddha thus deals a death-blow to all pretensions of superiority.

This is all against the background of eternity, pictured by the Buddha in His famous parable of the mountain, seven leagues high and seven leagues through each way, of pure ironstone, with no crack or cranny, and with nothing to weather it away. At the end of a hundred years a man comes with a fine handkerchief of Benares cloth, and strokes that rock, and so at the end of another hundred years, and another hundred years. At the end of each hundred years this happens and there is nothing else to wear away the mountain. Sooner would this mountain be worn away thus, said the Buddha, than would an aeon pass, and of such aeons, there have been many hundreds, many thousands, since this world system began and there will be many hundreds, many thousands before this world system is destroyed to give place to another. Against such a background the pretensions of superiority of an individual or a class seem as childish as they really are.

Then there is the Buddha's dynamic teaching of Mettā Bhāvanā. This has been translated best as 'Meditation of Loving-kindness' and that seems to be the best translation that one can give in English. But these words express the merest fraction of the full meaning. It is a dynamic, intense radiation of a positive force that even the

words 'loving-kindness', 'benevolence' and 'goodwill' only faintly express. This Mettā is radiated with a concentrated mind to the front, to the right, to the rear, to the left, above and below, through the whole universe with no sense of 'I' am radiating Mettā but one IS Mettā. There can be, then no mental reservation to exclude a supposed 'enemy' or 'inferior' and this at-oneness with all gives ineffable peace and well-being and there is neither 'higher' nor 'lower' nor 'equal', neither 'individual' nor 'race'. Yet it is not, as the Buddha pointed out, annihilation except the annihilation of 'Self' and of 'Craving'.

All this lays the foundation for the Buddhist outlook on caste and colour : there is no difference and should be no distinction. The great teaching of Mettā, of loving-kindness to everything that lives and breathes, to humans with different customs and different ideologies as well as to those of the same herd, precludes in a Buddhist any compromise with the ignorant error of a significant difference because of colour or cranial configuration. In this respect the Buddhist is at one with the English mystic and poet William Blake : 'Everything that lives is holy'..



NEITHER CASTE NOR COLOUR

'This two-footed dirty body
Which carries about a bad odour
And which is full of impurities
Which pour out from different places;
With a body of this sort
If one thinks highly of oneself
And looks down upon others,
Due to what can it be except ignorance ?'

—Sutta Nipāta—No.11 Sutta, Vijaya Sutta,
Verses 207,208.

A REMEDY FOR WORLD SUFFERING

By U Sobhana of Myingyan

The Exalted One, the great spiritual physician saw that the world was sick with Suffering and prescribed the only possible remedy: His remedy is the method of Meditation—the development of systematic thinking to take one to the farthest limits of thought and beyond thought. The journey of religious life, as described in the Piṭakas, is at once a progress of increasing peace and of increasing intellectual power and activity, which is induced by meditation. It is real intellection, not the “turning round and about” that sometimes passes for thought.

Bhāvanā is the term used in the Pāli Canon, and it means the developing or the cultivation of the mind. Meditation is taught in a methodical and scientific way in the Buddhist texts. Sīla or moral conduct is the starting point in the progress of mental enlightenment. It is the right control of mental, physical and vocal actions. Anyone who has secured a firm footing on the ground of morality becomes a fit person to embark upon the higher practice of Bhāvanā the control and culture of the mind.

There are two kinds of Bhāvanā—Samādhi Bhāvanā and Vipassanā Bhāvanā. In the former the meditator acquires mental fixity in the sense of perfect poise free from wavering and enjoys inward peace. In the Cūlavedalla Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya, we get a good discussion of Samādhi Bhāvanā. Here the lay disciple Visākha questions the Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā in this wise: “What, sister, is rapt concentration? What cultivates it?”

“Rapt concentration is the focussing of the mind; its phenomena are the fourfold mustering of mindfulness, its requisites are the four right exertions; the practice, the cultivation and increase of these states of consciousness develop rapt concentration”, replies the Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā. This passage emphasises the importance of mental power and activity to reach this state of one-pointedness of mind. Certain “philosophies” speak of “the head and the heart”, “emotion and the will” and often in terms of conflict. In Bhāvanā these are fused into one mighty dynamic force. Various methods are used to attain this state of mental equipoise.

The Pāli texts speak of Kammāttanas and Kasinas, used to attain this state of mental tranquillization. Kammāttānas are topics on which attention should be focussed and

Kasinas are external objects which engross the attention. The Suttas also recommend the practice; in the Mahārāhulovāda Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya, the Buddha says: “Cultivate, Rāhula, the meditation of mindfulness on inhaling and exhaling. This, Rāhula, when constantly cultivated brings about manifold advantages.” These breathing exercises are used to calm and concentrate the mind and provide a point of focus. At the beginning of the discussion on Adhi-citta, in the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa enumerates forty subjects for meditation. The ten impurities (Asubha-bhāvanā), the four sublime states (Brahma-vihara), namely, Lovingkindness (Mettā), Compassion (Karuṇā), Sympathetic joy (Muditā) and Equanimity (Upekkhā), and the four formless states (Arupajjhāna) are some of the subjects recommended. Taking one of these topics, the disciple, mindful and self-possessed should concentrate his attention on it, and be *fully absorbed in it*, till he finally reaches one-pointedness of mind.

From this complete absorption, the ‘Jhānas,’ are sometimes translated as ‘absorptions’. As a result of successful Samādhi-bhāvanā, on one of these subjects, the disciple experiences four blissful states of consciousness, called the Jhānas. Successful Samādhi-bhāvanā leads the disciple to experience the Ecstatic (Jhāna) states in succession.

In the first blissful state the mind will be impregnated with joy and a sense of physical and mental well-being—rapture—is experienced. Present in the First Jhāna are the qualities of analysis, investigation, joy, happiness and concentration. In each Jhāna, the mind becomes progressively more concentrated and consciousness becomes more and more subtle.

The second blissful state is described in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta—Dīgha-Nikāya thus: “By allaying analysis and investigation, with inner faith, the mind concentrated and one-pointed, he enters on and abides in this stage, which is without analysis, without investigation, is born of contemplation (Samādhijam), and is rapture and happiness.

The third Ecstatic state is characterised by equanimity, mindfulness and ease.

In the fourth blissful state of meditation, this feeling of ease is allayed and there is only a sense of equanimity, a state of mind which, rising above hedonistic views, is yet positiver

and not merely the negation of interest and desire. When the meditator reaches this state, his mental development is such that he experiences neither suffering nor happiness and his condition is described as the utter purity of mindfulness, which is indifference. In this state the meditator experiences transcendental, blissful and complete tranquillization of body and mind. The Buddha describes the mental state of such a person, in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* as “with his mind thus serene, made pure, translucent, cultured, void of evils, supple, ready to act, firm and impenetrable”, and proceeds to give us an idea of the serenity of mind left after the fourth Ecstatic state is reached.

In these blissful states there is no suggestion of trance, but of enhanced vitality. By wrongly translating “Jhāna” as “trance” much misunderstanding has been caused by some scholars who had not themselves experienced the Jhānas. To imagine that experiencing them is equal to Arahatsip is condemned as a deadly heresy in the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, *Dīgha Nikāya*. The *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, *Majjhima Nikāya* shows that the Buddha rejected the doctrines of Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāma-Putta, because they made this the aim of their teaching. As such, these Ecstatic states are only the means to an end, but not the end in itself. After the fourth Jhāna, even higher mental states can be attained, for instance, the *Pañca-abhiñña*, which are five profound intellectual attainments. They are classified as supernormal vision, supernormal hearing, ability to remember past births, insight into the mental processes or thoughts of others, and various psychic powers. These supernormal powers are described in great detail in the Pāli texts, but the Master expressly states that they are not essential to attain Nibbāna, which is the true Goal of all Buddhist meditation.

Reaching the fourth Ecstatic state, the pilgrim, on his path of progress, should turn his mind towards *Vipassanā-bhāvanā*. *Samādhi-bhāvanā* merely inhibits the passions, which can be completely annihilated only by *Vipassanā-bhāvanā* through which the meditator experiences an intuitive vision of Reality. He begins to see life as it really is, and also acquires Right Knowledge. Thereby he comes to understand the three characteristics of phenomenal life, as transiency, suffering and non-self. Everywhere he sees these three characteristics standing out in bold relief. He comprehends that life is merely a flux, a continuous undivided movement. To him, every form of pleasure is only a prelude to pain. He is detached from all conditioned things and has neither attachment nor aversion for anything in the world. He has a clear vision of the true nature of the world. As he is deeply absorbed in meditation, he perceives an aura emanating from his body and he experiences a serenity, hitherto unknown. As he develops insight, he becomes even-minded and strenuous, his attention is perfected, and his intellect becomes extraordinarily keen.

Reaching this state of mental culture, he meditates on one of the three characteristics and continues intently to reflect on it till to his great joy a flash of Insight dawns upon him, which gives him the first glimpse of Nibbāna.

The possibility of light is within us, it can be kindled and made to shine forth by meditation. The highest state of bliss, which is Nibbāna, the Peace Eternal, can be achieved only by *Vipassanā* meditation as shown by the Enlightened One.

Thus the Buddha gives the only permanent cure—Supreme Nibbāna where one never ails again and where all diseases cease for evermore.

“ The burden is indeed the fivefold mass :
The seizer of the burden, man :
Taking it up is sorrow in this world :
The laying of it down is bliss.

If a man lay this heavy burden down,
And take not any other burden up :
If he draw out that craving, root and all,
No more an-hungered, he is free.”

—*Samyutta-Nikāya xxii, Sec. 22.*

THE ESSENTIALS OF BUDDHISM

The Eightfold Noble Path:—The Middle Way

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THE Eightfold Noble Path enshrines the eight desiderata or factors for a successful and effective treading of the Middle Way. The farer on the Middle Way is to be lighted along by eight beacons. What is this Middle Way? It is a way which lies mid-way between one which is not at all productive of any positive good and another which is fruitful of much positive evil. It is thus a way which is not characterised by barrenness and sterility or by the stink of a charnel-house. It is clean, wholesome, fragrant and fruitful of blessings.

Is it a hard way? That depends upon the rate of speed with which one wishes to reach the goal. Some may slip or dally by the way, but others may and can push on and on. The Middle Way is more than "Plain living and high thinking". There is a definite ultimate. For those who wish to develop into the highest disciples of the Buddha it demands nothing less than the highest stage or standard of *Sīla* (morality), *Samādhi* (mental purity and development) and *Paññā* (wisdom). This ultimate was attained to by thousands of Arahats during the lifetime of the Enlightened One. Who knows how many have silently climbed the pinnacle since the Master's passing away to *Nibbāna*? The Dhamma is still vigorous and fresh. The path remains clear, precise and inviting. Arahats are still attainable. If the West has produced Newtons, Rutherfords and Einsteins of Science, why can she not produce her own *Sāriputtas* and *Moggallānas*? The glory of this path is the grand adventure that now beckons to the West.

So much for the ultimate. Below this ideal there is ample room and range for treading the way according to one's *Kamma* and one's moral equipment and development. Those readers, who will please turn their attention back to the way of life indicated in the *Mangalasutta* or the *Sutta of Thirty-eight Great Blessings*, will find the range of the Middle way in those blessings. Remember that the Tathāgata preached the *Mangalasutta* way of life for all *Devas* and men whereas the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path were addressed, in the first, instance, to *bhikkhus*. This, of course does not mean that the Noble Path is shut out

to ordinary people. For these latter, there is the preparatory Middle Way for wholesome social living in town and village. Living the home-life and tasting as many of the *Man-galas* as possible, the earnest and sincere will naturally progress to the fuller and fuller practice of the Middle Way in its highest key. So the Eightfold way of life is for every one, *Bhikkhu* or layman, who shuns a life characterised by ignorance, sensuality and worldliness on the one hand and a life characterised by frenzied and misdirected asceticism of the old type and the equally misdirected ideologies and 'isms' of the present.

Here is the Good Life, the heroic and the grand, laid down by the Enlightened One, who had trodden it through thousands of lives and had discovered the solution to the problem of Becoming, the only solution possible. He exhorts us to lift ourselves out of our besetting ignorance, to cleanse ourselves entirely of the delusion "Self" and "Soul". The pristine Dhamma will then unfold itself to our hearts and minds. Accepting the law of *Kamma* and the fact of re-birth, we can rest assured that way-faring in accord with the *Mangalasutta* or the Noble Eightfold Path will make our future lives more and more blessed and auspicious until Arahats are eventually reached, by those who are ripe and can develop or arrive at a constant mindfulness of *Anicca* (impermanence), *Dukkha* (sorrow) and *Anattā* (absence of a Soul).

Whether we consider the Noble Eightfold Path in the context of the Four Noble Truths or the latter in terms of the former, we should learn or habituate ourselves to do so against the background of *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, *Anattā*, that is, "All is Impermanence"—"All is Sorrow"—"All is without Soul". The background is the sad and solemn truth of the universe because we have made it such through our ignorance, cravings and attachments. To the degree that this sad, solemn truth permeates our constitution to that degree we are nearing perfection and deliverance.

So we now see the implications of the Noble Eightfold Path and how the truth of *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, and *Anattā*

together with the Four Noble Truths make up the solemn theme of the Buddha-Dhamma, incomparable in its starkness, profound, unique and overriding the fetters and the flatteries of "I", the child of delusion and ignorance.

And what are the assurances given by the Master in respect of the Noble Eightfold Path? We have already read how the Tathāgata spoke of the Four Noble Truths in terms of His Enlightenment: "Then there arose in me the eye to see, vision, knowledge and understanding, insight, wisdom and light. We have to note that the realisation of the great truths involves very much more than mere intellection and mundane thinking. The Noble Path is an avenue to the higher and purer mind, buttressed by mindfulness and tranquillity and concentrated on perfection.

In propounding the Grand Path the Buddha said, "The Middle Way which has been fathomed by me in conjunction with the Four Noble Truths is verily pregnant with deliverance; for it gives wisdom, it brings clarified knowledge, it is productive of peace, develops higher wisdom, it brings enlightenment and the attainment of Nibbāna." Such are the grand words of assurance the distinctive qualities of the Middle Way.

The Middle Way, in the words of the Buddha is this :

"There are two extremes which should not be followed and acted upon by one who is not enamoured of the worldly life and has taken up the supramundane (Lokuttarā) way."

"What are these two extremes?" They are:—(i) the extreme of a worldly life steeped in sensual indulgence, a life of low worth, vulgar, ignoble, harmful and deserving of censure by the wise and (ii) the extreme of senseless asceticism, of self-torture and penances, which is painful, devoid of nobleness and hence unprofitable.

"Between these two extremes is the truly noble, Middle Way which induces vision, which gives knowledge, which is conducive of peace, which promotes higher wisdom and ensures enlightenment and Nibbāna." Such are the sweet words of assurance of the Master.

"Between these two extremes is the truly noble and peace-giving Middle Way leading

straight to enlightenment and Nibbāna. It is the way of the Eightfold Noble Path comprising Right Views, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Efforts, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration."

These eight ingredients are usually divided into three interlinked groups, namely (i) factors of morality (ii) of mindfulness and concentration, and (iii) of wisdom. Right Understanding and Right Aspiration, the two wisdom factors, are placed foremost in the list as one cannot arrive at full wisdom unless one begins initially with some degree of Right Understanding and Right Aspiration. These two should govern the practice of morality if it is to be sincere and deep and not merely an eye-wash and a sign of respectability. To attain Mindfulness and Samādhi, our attitude must be sound and the understanding must be sure and properly directed so that we can get true light, which is the main objective of Samādhi. Thus understanding and aspiration pave the way and accompany our efforts.

Morality is conjoined with Right Speech, Right Actions and Right Livelihood and these are summed up in Pañca Sīla or the Five Precepts. Looking at these precepts in their full import and intent, we see that we are taught to cease from all sins, to practise virtue and to make our hearts pure.

Not to kill; not to steal; not to indulge in unchastity; not to indulge in falsehood; and not to excite or stupefy our minds with intoxicants and drugs. These are abstinences from interfering with the rights and freedoms of others. They are equally abstinences from all that which degrades us. They require us to be free from anger, hatred, ill-will, greed, passion, and incontinence. They, if followed understandingly, bring about the aspiration to be kind, loving and respectful to all. The crowning position of these abstinences is comprised in truth, purity and compassion.

The remaining three ingredients are Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration. Mindfulness is, we may say, a moment to moment business sustained by steadfast endeavour. Only strenuous endeavour can lead to Samādhi or single-minded intentness. The understanding must be tuned up to fruitful discrimination, thus:—This is Matter. This is Mind. Both are

fluxes; both are impermanent. This is Subject and this is Object. Both are fluxes and impermanent. There is no 'I' in or behind the Subject or the Object. Gradually the awareness of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no Self will ripen in degree till our insight-knowledge (Nāṇadassana) of these aspects of the phenomenal world is strongly entrenched.

Thus the Noble Path reaches down to the dynamic processes of life. It helps us to get the right vantage ground from which to view the life scene in its proper perspective. It is a guided path, but for that reason it is no less exploratory. Prayers, rites, ceremonies and sacrifices are the shibboleths of other ways and creeds but not of the Buddha's Truth of Suffering. "This is the Noble Truth of Suffering. It ceases with the complete cessation of Taṇhā or Thirst—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion with the abandoning of this Thirst, with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it and with its destruction.

It is a remarkable fact that the Buddha did not begin His mission as the Enlightened One by putting forth some doctrine which was not at variance with the popular and optimistic belief, and which, appealing more to the emotions than to the head, was more palatable. On the contrary, His very first discourse, was on the Four Noble Truths and His congregation consisted of the Pañcavaggiya or five ascetics, His erstwhile companions who had broken away from Him for giving up extreme asceticism.

It is recorded that immediately after the attainment of Buddhahood, the Buddha hesitated to propound the doctrine of Sorrow and its cessation—a doctrine which He knew to be difficult and profound for shallow and worldly minds. He, however, remembered the Pañcavaggiya and to them, in the Deer Park at Sarnath, He preached His first sermon, the Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta or the Turning of the Wheel of the Law.

With wonderful solemnity and impressiveness the Buddha affirmed the Four Great Truths and He, in the same manner, made clear His eminent qualification for speaking so assuredly. He assured His listeners, firstly, in these words:

'Now, O Bhikkhus, as long as my knowledge and insight of each of the Four Noble Truths under their three aspects and twelve

modes, was not clear to me in their essential nature—so long, O Bhikkhus, I refrained from professing that I had gained the incomparable and Supreme Enlightenment. Only when I had attained to the full insight of that wisdom, which is unsurpassed in the heavens or on earth, I felt fully qualified to proclaim my Enlightenment together with the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Path—the Middle Way.'

Secondly, the Buddha also made the solemn declaration as to how the Four Truths arose in Him, each under their three aspects and, therefore, in twelve modes. He prefaced this declaration by emphasising that the Four Truths were not among those doctrines that were handed down through revelation or otherwise. They were among those never heard before.

This was how the Buddha expounded the truths elaborately showing that at each step He rose to Enlightenment.

A. The Noble Truth of Sorrow and Suffering.

1. This is the Noble Truth concerning Suffering: Birth is painful; decay and disease are painful; death and its attendant griefs are painful. Union with the unpleasant, the disharmonious, the undesirable and the unloved is painful. Separation from the pleasant, the loved and the desirable is painful. In brief, the five aggregates of body and mind which spring from attachment and from belief in individuality, and their causes are painful.

By virtue of this veritable truth there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge and understanding; further there arose in me wisdom, insight, and there arose in me light concerning things unknown before.

2. Then there came the thought that the Truth of Suffering has to be understood. Thereof there arose in me again the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

3. Then there came the thought that the Truth of Suffering has been understood by me. Thereof there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

B. The Noble Truth concerning the Origin of Suffering.

1. I saw the Noble Truth that Suffering has its origin and source. Verily the Origin of Suffering is that Thirst or Craving for existence and the renewal of existence;

craving for sensual delight; seeking of satisfaction now here and now there, that is to say, craving for the gratifications of sensuality and passions, craving for success and craving for everlasting life or annihilation.

By virtue of this veritable truth there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

2. Then there arose in me the thought that this origin of Suffering has to be eliminated or eradicated. Thereon there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

3. Then there arose in me the satisfying thought that this origin of Suffering has indeed been eradicated. Thereof, there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

C. The Noble Truth concerning the Destruction of the Causes of Suffering and thereby its Cessation.

1. Then there arose in me the Noble Truth of the cessation of Suffering. Verily it lies in the destruction of this very Thirst till no passions remain; the laying aside of, the getting rid of, the being free from and the harbouring no longer of this Thirst. Then there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

2. Thereof, there arose in me the thought that cessation of Suffering was nobly to be realised. Then thereon arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

3. Thereof, there arose in me the thought that the cessation of Suffering has been nobly and worthily achieved. Thereon there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

D. The Noble Truth of the Eightfold Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering.

1. Then there arose in me the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of Suffering. Verily the cessation of Suffering is provided for by the Eightfold Noble Path—the path of Right Views, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Actions, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

Then there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

2. Thereof there arose in me the thought that this Noble Path has been nobly cultivated. Thereon there arose in me the seeing eye, vision, knowledge, understanding and wisdom; there arose insight and light.

At the end of the exposition of the Four Noble Truths in their respective aspects and modes, the Buddha made the supreme declaration that by virtue of the wisdom, insight and light gained by Him, He became supremely confident: 'Sure and unshakable is the deliverance of my heart and mind. This is my last birth. There is no more Becoming for me'.

Thus spoke the Buddha and the five Bhikkhus, glad and serene at heart, joyfully approved of the Blessed One's words. And Kondañña was the first of the five to attain the pure and stainless eye of Truth, namely the truth that everything that has the nature of arising has also the nature of cessation. And the Buddha made this utterance: 'Kondañña has indeed understood! Kondañña has indeed understood!'

The reader will have seen that the Buddha-Dhamma is not a creed of despondency and despair. It recognises and maintains that all existence is Sorrow. But if with Thomas Hardy we can see: '.... the Dreaming, Dark Dumb Thing, that turns the handle of this Idle Show', we may with absolute reliance on the Noble Path say:

There is a Grand Way out of the Dark Abyss of Life and we can emerge into glorious light and supreme peace.

NIBBĀNA IN THE LIGHT OF THE MIDDLE DOCTRINE

By Nyanaponika Thera

“This world, Kaccāna, usually leans upon a duality : upon (the belief in) existence or non-existence.... Avoiding these two extremes, the Perfect One shows the doctrine in the middle : Dependent on Ignorance are the Kamma-formations.... By the cessation of Ignorance, Kamma-formations cease.”

(*Saṃyutta-Nikāya* 12, 15)

The saying of the Buddha quoted here, speaks of the duality (*dvayatā*) of existence (*atthitā*) and non-existence (*natthitā*). These two terms refer to the theories of eternalism (*sassata-diṭṭhi*) and annihilationism (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*) which are the basic misconceptions of actuality that occur again and again, and in many variations, in the history of human thought. *Eternalism* is the belief in a permanent substance or entity, be it conceived as a multitude of individual souls or selves (created or not), as a monistic world-soul, a deity of any description, or as a combination of any of these notions. *Annihilationism*, on the other hand, believes in the temporary existence of separate selves or personalities, which are entirely destroyed or dissolved after death. Accordingly, the two key words of the text quoted above, refer (1) to the absolute, *i.e.* eternal, existence of any assumed substance or entity, and (2) to the ultimate, absolute annihilation of separate entities conceived as impermanent, *i.e.* their non-existence after the end of their life-span. These two extreme views stand and fall with the assumption of something static of either permanent or impermanent nature. They will lose their basis entirely if life is seen in its true nature, as a continuous flux of material and mental processes arising from their appropriate conditions—a process which will cease only when these conditions are removed. This will explain why our text introduces here the formula of Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), and its reversal, Dependent Cessation.

Dependent *Origination*, being an unbroken process, excludes the assumption of an absolute Non-existence, or Naught, that is supposed to terminate, by necessity, individual existence ; while the qualifying word *dependent* indicates that there is also no absolute *i.e.* independent existence, no static Being *per se*, but only an evanescent arising of phenomena, dependent on likewise evanescent conditions.

Dependent *Cessation* excludes the belief in absolute and permanent Existence, and shows, on the other hand, that there is no

automatic lapse into Non-existence, but that the cessation of relative existence is likewise a conditioned occurrence.

Thus these teachings of Dependent Origination and Dependent Cessation are a true Doctrine in the Middle, transcending the extremes of Existence and Non-existence.

Thinking by way of such conceptual contrasts as Existence and Non-existence, has, however, a powerful hold on man because that way of thinking is perpetually nourished by several strong roots, deeply embedded in the human mind. The strongest of them is the practical and theoretical assumption of an Ego or self, the existence of which as a separate entity is taken for granted. It is the powerful wish for a preservation and perpetuation of the personality (or a refined version of it), which is at the background of all the numerous varieties of eternalistic belief. But even with people who have discarded eternalistic creeds or theories, the instinctive belief in the uniqueness and importance of their particular personalities is still so strong that for them the end of the personality, *i.e.* death, is tantamount to complete annihilation or non-existence. Thus the belief in a self is responsible not only for eternalism, but also for the annihilationist view (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*) which may express itself either in the popular unphilosophical materialism (“death is the end of it”), or in elaborate materialist theories.

There are also other contributory roots of these notions of existence and non-existence which, however, are closely connected with the main root of Ego-belief. There is, for instance, a *linguistic* root, consisting in the basic structure of language (subject and predicate, noun and adjective) and its tendency to simplify affirmative and negative statements for the sake of easy communication and orientation. The structural features of language and linguistic habits of simplified statements have exercised a subtle, but strong influence on our way of thinking, making us inclined to assume that “there must be a thing, if there is a word for it.”

For holding these one-sided views, there may be also *emotional* reasons, expressive of

basic attitudes to life. They may reflect the moods of optimism and pessimism, hope and despair, the wish to feel secure through metaphysical support, or the desire to live without inhibitions in a materialistically conceived universe. The theoretical views of eternalism and annihilationism may well change during life-time, together with the corresponding moods or emotional needs.

There is also an *intellectual* root : the speculative and theorizing preoccupation of certain minds* creating various and elaborate philosophical systems in which these and other conceptual opposites are played off against each other with an ingenuity that provides great satisfaction to those engaged in these thought-constructions.

From these brief remarks, one will be able to appreciate the strength and variety of the forces which induce man to think, feel and speak in the way of these opposites, the belief in either absolute existence or absolute non-existence. It was, therefore, with good reason that the Buddha said, in our introductory passage, that men *usually* lean upon that duality. Hence we need not be surprised that even Nibbāna, the Buddhist's goal of deliverance, has been wrongly interpreted in the sense of either of these extremes : existence or non-existence. But these rigid conceptual terms cannot do justice to the dynamic nature of actuality, and still less to Nibbāna which has been declared to be supramundane (*lokuttara*) and beyond conceptional thinking (*atakkāvacara*).

In the early days, when knowledge of Buddhist teachings had just reached the West, most of the writers and scholars took Nibbāna as *non-existence*, pure and simple, with a few exceptions like Schopenhauer and Max Mueller. Consequently, Western writers all too lightly condemned Buddhism as a nihilistic doctrine, teaching annihilation as its highest goal, which these writers described as philosophically absurd and ethically reprehensible. Similar statements can be read also nowadays in prejudiced non-Buddhist literature. The pendular reaction to that view was the conception of Nibbāna as *existence*, in the sense of Pure Being, Pure Consciousness, Pure Self, or any other metaphysical concept, seeing it in the light of religious and metaphysical notions familiar in the West and in the East alike.

But even Buddhist thought could not always keep clear of a lop-sided interpretation of Nibbāna. This happened even in early times : the sect of the Sautrantikas had a rather negativistic view of Nibbāna, while the Mahayanistic conceptions of Buddha-fields (*Buddha-ksetra*), Primordial (*Ādi*-) Buddha, Tathāgatagarbha, etc., favoured a positive-metaphysical interpretation.

It is therefore not surprising that both these extremes are also advocated by modern Buddhist authors. In Buddhist countries of the East, however, there is, as far as is known to the writer, not a single Buddhist school or sect that favours now a nihilistic interpretation of Nibbāna. Contrary to erroneous opinions, voiced mainly by uninformed or prejudiced Western authors, Theravāda, *i.e.* the tradition prevalent in Burma, Ceylon, Thailand, etc., is definitely averse to a view that regards Nibbāna as mere extinction. The first main section of this essay will substantiate this statement.

For reasons mentioned earlier, it is not easy, indeed, to steer always clear of those two opposite views of existence and non-existence, and to keep closely to the Middle Path shown by the Buddha, that is, the teaching of Dependent Origination and Dependent Cessation. Until that way of thinking has been fully absorbed in the texture of one's mind, constant watchfulness will be required against the mind slipping unawares into either of the two extreme views of eternalism and annihilationism, or coming too close to them. When discussing these questions, there is the danger of being carried away by one's arguments and countering one extreme by its opposite. Therefore, in the treatment of that problem, great caution and self-criticism is required lest one may lose sight of the Middle Path.

It is therefore the primary purpose of this treatise to offer material for a clear demarcation of the Buddha's doctrine of Nibbāna from both misinterpretations of it. It is not the intention of these pages to encourage any speculations on the nature of Nibbāna, which are bound to be futile and may even prove to be detrimental to the endeavours for an actual attainment of it. Nibbāna is to be realized (*sacchikātabbām*), not to be understood (as the first Truth), nor to be developed (as the fourth Truth). It will also be improper if the material presented here is used

* They correspond to the *ditthi-carita*, the theorizing type of character, in Buddhist Psychology.

in a onesided manner as arguments in favour of one of the extremes against the other one. Each of the two main sections of this treatise requires the other for its qualification and completion. It is hoped that the material from canonical and commentarial sources collected in these pages, will at least reduce the point of conflict between the opposing interpretations, by clarifying the position of Theravāda.

1. *The nihilistic-negative extreme*

§ 1

We shall first consider the basic work of post-canonical Theravāda literature, "The Path of Purification" (*Visuddhi-magga*), compiled in the 5th Century C.E. by the great commentator, Bhaddantācariya Buddhaghosa. This monumental work furnishes a comprehensive and systematic exposition of the principal Buddhist doctrines, derived from the Pāli Canon and ancient commentarial literature which partly incorporates material that may well go back to the earliest times of the teaching.

In that work, in the chapter on the Faculties and Truths, in the section dealing with the 3rd Noble Truth, we find a lengthy disquisition on Nibbāna. It is striking that the polemical part of it is exclusively directed against what we have called the "nihilistic-negative extreme" in the interpretation of Nibbāna. We cannot be sure about the reason for that limitation, since there is no explicit statement on it. It is, however possible that the Venerable Buddhaghosa (or perhaps already the traditional material he used) was keen that the Theravāda teachings on that subject should be well distinguished from those of a prominent contemporary sect, the Sautrantikas, which, in other respects, was close to the general standpoint of Theravāda. It belonged to that group of schools which we suggest should be called *Sāvaka-yāna* (following the *early* Mahayanist nomenclature), instead of the derogatory Hīnayāna. The Theravādins obviously did not want to be included in the accusation of nihilism, raised by the Mahayanists against the Sautrantikas. This might have been the external reason for the *Visuddhi-magga's* emphasis on the rejection of the nihilistic conception of Nibbāna. As to the positive-metaphysical view, the

Venerable Buddhaghosa thought it, perhaps, sufficiently covered by the numerous passages in the *Visuddhi-magga* dealing with the rejection of the eternity-view and of a transcendental Self. However that may be, also nowadays Buddhism, and Theravāda in particular, is quite often wrongly accused of nihilism. It is therefore apposite to reproduce here extracts from the respective arguments found in the *Visuddhi-magga*, followed (in 2) by additions from the commentary to that work.* Many of the passages from the Suttanta which are relevant to a rejection of nihilism, are quoted in both these extracts, making it unnecessary to deal with them separately.

In the aforementioned chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*, the argument proper is preceded by a definition of Nibbāna, by way of three categories usually employed in commentarial literature for the purpose of definition :

"Nibbāna has peace as its characteristic. Its function is not to die ; or its function is to comfort. It is manifested as the signless [*i.e.* without the "signs", or marks, of greed, hatred and delusion] ; or it is manifested as non-diversification."

[The first assertion about Nibbāna as non-existence, which follows now, is not a view about the nature of Nibbāna, but a simple denial of it, on account of the alleged illogical nature of the conception itself :]

"(Question 1.) [Is it not true that] Nibbāna is non-existent because it is unapprehensible like the hare's horn ?

"(Answer.) That is not so, because it is apprehensible by the (right) means. For it is apprehensible by some, (namely the Noble Ones) by the right means, in other words, by the way that is appropriate to it, (the way of virtue, concentration, and understanding) Therefore it should not be said that it is non-existent because unapprehensible ; for it should not be said that what the foolish ordinary man does not apprehend is unapprehensible."

[And for those who are followers of the Dhamma, it is added :]

"Again it should not be said that Nibbāna does not exist. Why not? Because

* The rendering in the extracts from both works has mainly been taken, with a few alterations, from the excellent new translation of the *VisM*, by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ("The Path of Purification"; XLIX, 886 pp; publ. by R. Semage, 1956; available at Lake House Bookshop, Colombo, Ceylon). Explanatory additions by the writer are in [square brackets]; while those by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli are in (curved brackets).

it then follows that the way would be futile. For if Nibbāna were non-existent, then it would follow that the right way, which includes the three Aggregates beginning with Virtue and is headed by right understanding, would be futile. And it is not futile because it reaches Nibbāna.

“(Q.2) But futility of the way does not follow because what is reached is absence [which has been aspired for] (that is, absence of the five aggregates, consequent upon the cutting off of the defilements) ?

“(A.) That is not so. Because, though there is [always] absence of past and future (aggregates), there is nevertheless no reaching of Nibbāna (simply because of that).

“(Q.3.) Then is the absence of present (aggregates) as well Nibbāna ?.....

“(A.) That is not so. Because their absence is an impossibility (being self-contradictory), since their absence means that they are *not* present. (Besides if Nibbāna were absence of present aggregates too,) that would entail the fault of excluding the arising of the Nibbāna element with result of past clinging left [*sopadisesanibbāna* ; i.e. Nibbāna during lifetime], at the path moment which has present aggregates as its support.

“(Q.4.) Then will there be no fault if it is non-presence of defilements (that is Nibbāna) ?

“(A.) That is not so. Because it would then follow that the noble path was meaningless. For if it were so, then, since defilements (can be) non-existent also before the moment of the noble path [of arahantship, e.g., temporarily, in every profitable (kusala) state of mind], it follows that the noble path would be meaningless.....

“(Q.5) But is not Nibbāna destruction (*khaya*), because of the passage beginning ‘That, friend, which is the destruction of greed (of hate .. of delusion .. is Nibbāna)’ (S.IV, 251) ?

“(A.) That is not so, because it would follow that arahantship, also, was mere destruction. For that, too is described in the (same) way beginning ‘That, friend, which is the destruction of greed .. (of hate .. of delusion is arahantship)’ (S. IV, 252) *

“And what is more, the fallacy then follows that Nibbāna would be temporary,

etc.; for if it were so, it would follow that Nibbāna would be temporary [being limited to the moment of the destruction of greed, etc.], formed [conditioned (*saṅkhata*); because the destruction of greed, etc., is a conditioned phenomenon, but not Nibbāna]

“ .. Because [Nibbāna] serves figuratively speaking as decisive-support (*upanissaya*) for the kind of destruction called ‘cessation consisting in non-arising’ (*anuppattinirodha*), that (Nibbāna) is called ‘destruction’ (*khaya*) as a metaphor for it.

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“(Q.7.) Why is Nibbāna not described in its own nature [but only circumlocutions and negations] ?

“(A.) Because of its extreme subtlety. And its extreme subtlety is established because it inclined the Blessed One to inaction (that is, to not teaching the Dhamma ; see M.I, 186) and because a Noble One’s eye is needed to see it (M.I, 510). It is not shared by all because it can only be reached by one who is possessed of the path. And it is uncreated because it has no first beginning.

“(Q.8.) Since it *is*, when the path is, then it is not uncreated ?

“(A.) That is not so, because it is not arousable by the path; it is only reachable, not arousable, by the path; that is why it is uncreated. It is because it is uncreated that it is free from ageing and death. It is because of the absence of its creation and of its ageing and death it is permanent.

“ .. The Buddhas’ goal is one and has no plurality. But this (single goal, Nibbāna,) is firstly called ‘with result of past clinging left’ (*sa-upādisesa*) since it is made known together with the (aggregates resulting from past) clinging still remaining (during the Arahant’s life), being thus made known in terms of the stilling of defilement and the remaining (result of past) clinging that are present in one who has reached it by means of development. But (secondly, it is called ‘without result of past clinging left’ [*anupādisesa*]) since after the last consciousness of the Arahant, who has abandoned arousing (future aggregates) and so prevented kamma from giving result in a future (existence), there is no further arising of aggregates of existence, and those already arisen have disappeared. So the (result of past) clinging that remained is non-existent ; and it is in

* “But,” says the commentary, “Arahantship is certainly not mere destruction, since it consists in the four mental aggregates having the highest fruition (of arahantship) as their foremost.”

terms of this non-existence, in the sense that 'there is no (result of past) clinging here' that that (same goal) is called 'without result of past clinging left' (see It. 38).

"Because it can be arrived at by distinction of knowledge that succeeds through untiring perseverance,* and because it is the word of the Omniscient One**, Nibbāna is not non-existent as regards its nature in the ultimate sense (*paramatthena nāvijjamānam sabhāvato nibbānam*); for this is said: 'Bhikkhus, there is an unborn, an unbecome, an unmade, an unformed' (It. 37; Ud.80)."

§ 2.

Taking up the last quotation, the Commentary to the Visuddhi-magga (Paramatthamañjūsā)*** says:

+ "By these words the Master proclaimed the actual existence of Nibbāna in the ultimate sense. But he did not proclaim it as a mere injunction of his [*i.e.* as a creedal dogma], saying: 'I am the Lord and Master of the Dhamma'; but, in his compassion for those to whom intellectual understanding is the highest (attainable; *padaparama*), he also stated it as a reasoned conclusion (*yuttito*), in the continuation of the passage quoted above (Ud.80): "If, bhikkhus, there were not the unborn, etc., an escape from what is born, etc., could not be perceived (*na paññāyetha*). But because, bhikkhus, there is an unborn, etc., an escape from what is born, etc., can be perceived." This is the meaning: if the Unformed Element (*asañkhata-dhātu*=Nibbāna), having the nature of being unborn, etc. did not exist, no escape from the formed (or conditioned; *sañkhata*,) *i.e.* the five aggregates, could be perceived in this world; their final coming-to-rest (*i.e.* cessation) could not be perceived (*na paññāyeyya*), could not be found (or apprehended; *na upalabheyya*), would not be possible (*na sambhaveyya*). But if Right Understanding and the other path factors, each performing its own function, take Nibbāna as object, then they will completely destroy the defilements.

Therefor one can perceive here a getting-away, an escape from the suffering of existence in its entirety.

"Now in the ultimate sense the existingness of the Nibbāna-element has been demonstrated by the Fully Enlightened One, compassionate for the whole world, by many Sutta passages such as "Dhammas without condition," "Unformed dhammas" (see *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*) "Bhikkhus, there is that sphere (*āyatana*) where neither earth" (Ud.80), "This state is very hard to see, that is to say, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of all substance of becoming" (D.II, 36; M.I, 167), "Bhikkhus, I shall teach you the unformed and the way leading to the unformed" (S.IV, 362), and so on, and in this Sutta "Bhikkhus, there is an unborn..." (It.87; Ud.80)

".... the words "Bhikkhus, there is an unborn, an unbecome, an unmade, an unformed" and so on, which demonstrate the existingness of Nibbāna in the ultimate sense, are not misleading [or: have not an ambiguous meaning; *aviparītatta*] because they are spoken by the Omniscient One, like the words "All formations are impermanent, all formations are painful, all *dhammas* (states) are not-self" (Dh. 277-9; A.I, 286; etc.).

+ "If Nibbāna were mere non-existence (or absence; *abhavamattam eva*), it could not be described by terms as "profound [deep, hard to see, hard to comprehend, peaceful, lofty, inaccessible to ratiocination, subtle, to be known by the wise]" etc.; or as 'the unformed, [the cankerless, the true, the other shore],' etc.****; or as 'kammically neutral, (without condition, unincorporated [within the three realms of existence], etc.'*****

I, § 3

The references to Sutta-texts, quoted in the extracts from the Visuddhi-magga and its commentary, make it quite clear that the Buddha declared Nibbāna to be an attainable entity (see § I, Q.1, §8) and did not conceive it

* Comy.: "This is to show that, for Arahants, Nibbāna is established by their own experience (*paccakkhasiddhatam*)."

** Comy.: "For others it is established by inference [based on the words of the Master: *anumāna-siddhatam*.]"

*** The paragraphs beginning with a plus sign (+) are translated by the author; those without, by Bhikkhu Ñānamoli (taken from the notes to his translation of the Visuddhi-magga).

**** These are some of the altogether 33 designations of Nibbāna, in Saṃyutta Nikāya 43, 12-44.

***** This refers to Abhidhammic classifications in which Nibbāna is included, occurring, for instance, in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.

as the mere fact of extinction or cessation (see § 1, Q.5). All negatively formulated statements on Nibbāna should be understood in the light of the Sutta passages quoted here, and do not admit an interpretation contradictory to these texts. Any forced or far-fetched interpretation of them will be contrary to the whole straightforward way of the Buddha's exposition.

If we have spoken above of Nibbāna as an "entity", it should be taken just as a word-label meant to exclude "non-existence". It is used in the same restricted sense of a linguistic convention as the emphatic words in the Udāna: "There is an unborn . . .", "There is that sphere where neither earth . . .". It is not meant to convey the meaning of "existence" in the strict sense, which should be kept restricted to "the five aggregates or any of them". Nibbāna is indescribable in the strictest sense (*avacanīya*, *avyākata*).

Our extracts from such an authoritative work as the Visuddhi-magga will have shown how emphatically the Theravāda tradition has rejected a nihilistic conception of its highest ideal, Nibbāna. This fact may perhaps help to remove one of the points of controversy among modern writers and Buddhist schools: the prejudice that Theravāda, or even the Pāli Canon, advocates a form of annihilation as its highest goal.

There is, however, another principal point of difference in the interpretation of Buddhism, and of the Pāli Canon in particular which is likewise closely connected with the conception of Nibbāna. It is the question of the range of validity, or application, of the Anattā doctrine, *i.e.* the doctrine of impersonality. It applies not only to the world of conditioned phenomena, but also to Nibbāna. The denial of its application to the latter falls under the heading of the "positive-metaphysical extreme" which will be treated in the following section.

II. The positive-metaphysical extreme

§ 1

In India, a country so deeply religious and philosophically so creative, the far greater danger to the preservation of the Dhamma's character as a "Middle Way", consisted, in identifying, or connecting, the concept of Nibbāna with any of the numerous theistic, pantheistic or other speculative ideas of a positive-metaphysical type and, chiefly, with various conceptions of an abiding self.

According to the penetrative analysis in the Brahmajāla Sutta (Dīgha Nik.1), all these various notions of a self (and this applies also to other metaphysical or theological statements) arise from either of two sources: (1) from a limited and misinterpreted meditative experience (where we may also include supposed revelations, prophetic inspirations, etc.), (2) from bare reasoning (speculative philosophy, and theology without personal experiential basis). But as the driving force behind all these metaphysical and theological productions of the human mind looms the powerful urge in man to preserve, in some way or other, his belief in an abiding individuality, or in any mental projection of that urge which he can invest, by proxy, with all his longings for permanency, security, eternal happiness, etc. It is therefore not surprising that, yielding to that powerful, instinctive urge for "self"-preservation, and under the influence of long-cherished and widely held views, there are also nowadays advocates of the positive-metaphysical interpretation of Nibbāna and Anattā, who sincerely believe themselves to be true Buddhists; and among them are many who have a genuine devotion towards the Buddha and a fair appreciation of other aspects of his teachings. With these views we shall now be concerned.

In the spirit of the Middle Way, the following refutation of the positive-metaphysical extreme is also meant to guard against any metaphysical conclusions which may be wrongly derived from our rejection of nihilism, in the first section of this essay. In the reverse, that first section may serve to counter an excessive "defence-reaction" against the metaphysical views to be treated now.

The positive-metaphysical extreme in the interpretation of the Buddhist conception of Nibbāna consists in the identification, or metaphysical association, of a refined or purified self (*attā*) with what, in the context of the respective view, is held to be Nibbāna. Two main types of the metaphysical view can be distinguished which are already implied in the preceding sentence.

(1) The assumption of a universal and unitary (non-dual and non-pluralistic) principle with which a purified self, *i.e.* one thought to be liberated from the aggregates (*khandhā*), either merges, or is assumed to be basically one. These views might differ in

details, according to their being influenced either by Theosophy, Vedānta or Mahāyāna (the latter, with varying degrees of justification). *

(2) The assumption that the transcendental “selves” of the Arahants, freed from the aggregates, enter Nibbāna which is regarded as their “eternal home” and as “the only state adequate to them”. Nibbāna itself is admitted to be not-self (*anattā*), which the Holy Ones (Arahants) are supposed to retain “in Nibbāna” some kind of individuality, in a way unexplained and unexplainable. This view is, to our knowledge, advocated in such a way only by Dr. Georg Grimm and his followers. **

II, § 2

(a) Common to both views is the assumption of an eternal self supposed to exist beyond the five aggregates (*khandhā*) that make up personality and existence in its entirety. The supposition that the Buddha should have taught anything like that, is clearly and sufficiently refuted alone by the following saying :

“Any ascetics or brāhmins who conceive manifold (things or ideas) as the self, all of them conceive the five aggregates (as the self) or any among them.”

Ye hi keci bhikkhave samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā anekavihiṭṭam attānam samanupassamānā samanupassanti, sabbe te pañcupādānak-khandhe samanupassanti etesaṃ va aññataram. (Saṃyutta-Nikāya 22, 47)

This textual passage also excludes any misinterpretation of the standard formulation of the Anattā doctrine : “This does not belong to me, this I am not, this is not my self.” Some writers believe that this statement permits the conclusion that the Buddha supposed a self to exist outside, or beyond, the five aggregates to which the above formula usually refers. This wrong deduction is finally disposed of by the words of the Buddha quoted above, which clearly say that all

the manifold conceptions of a self can have reference only to the five aggregates or to any one, or several, of them. How else could any idea of a self or a personality be formed, if not from the material of the five aggregates and from a misconception of them ? On what else could notions about a self be based alternatively ? This fact about the only possible way how ideas of a self can be formed was expressed by the Buddha Himself, in the continuation of the text quoted above :

“There is, bhikkhus, an uninstructed worldling . . . He regards corporeality as self, or the self as possessing corporeality, or the corporeality as being within the self, or the self within corporeality [similarly with the four mental aggregates].** In this way he arrives at that very conception ‘I am’ (*iti ayaṇ-c’eva samanupassanā asmi’tī c’assa adhigatam hoti*)” (Saṃy. 22, 47).

Further it was said : “If there are corporeality, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness, on account of them and dependent on them arises the belief in individuality . . . and speculations about a self”. (Saṃy. 22, 154. 155).

(b) If the words “I”, “ego”, “personality”, “self”, etc., should have meaning at all, any form of an ego-conception, even the most abstract and diluted one, must necessarily be connected with the idea of particularity or separateness, i.e. with a differentiation from what is regarded as *not* “ego”. But from what could that particularity or differentiation be derived if not from the only available data of experience, i.e. the physical and mental phenomena which have been comprised by the Buddha under the classification of the five aggregates ?

In the Discourse called “The Simile of the Serpent” (Majjh.22), it is said : “If, bhikkhus, there is a self, will there also be something belonging to a self ?” — “Certainly, Lord.” — “If there is something belonging to a self, will there also be (the view) ‘My self’ ?” — “Certainly, Lord.” — “But since,

* The *theosophical* variant is, e.g., represented by neo-buddhistic groups in Britain, which otherwise have done good work in introducing Westerners to Buddhism or to their conception of it.—The *vedantic* influence is conspicuous, e.g., in utterances of well-meaning Indians, among them men of eminence, maintaining the basic identity, or similarity, of the vedantic and buddhistic position concerning Ātman. This is, by the way, quite in contrast to the opinion on that subject, expressed by the great classical exponents of Vedānta.—*Mahāyānistic* influence may be noticeable in some representatives of the former two variants. But also in Mahāyāna literature itself, the positive-metaphysical extreme is met with, in varying degrees : ranging from the Mādhyamika scriptures where it is comparatively negligible, up to the Yogāvacara school where Asaṅga uses even the terms *mahātma* and *paramātma* in an approving sense (see *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra-sāstra* and Asaṅga’s own commentary).

** These are the twenty kinds of individuality-belief (*visati sakkāya-diṭṭhi*).

bhikkhus, a self and anything belonging to a self cannot truly and really be found, is it not a perfectly foolish doctrine to hold the point of view 'This is the world. This is the self. Impermanent, abiding, eternal and immutable shall I be after death, in eternal identity shall I persist' ?"—"What else should it be, O Lord, than a perfectly foolish doctrine."

The first sentence of that text expresses, in a manner as simple as emphatic, the fact pointed out before: that the assumption of a self requires also something 'belonging to a self' (*attaniya*), i.e. properties by which that self receives its distinguishing characteristics. To speak of a self devoid of such differentiating attributes, having therefore nothing to characterize it and to give meaningful contents to the word, will be entirely senseless and in contradiction to the accepted usage of these terms "self", "ego", etc. But this very thing is done by those who advocate the first of the two main-types of the "positive-metaphysical extreme": that is, the assumption of a "great, universal, or over-self" (*Mahātman*) supposed to merge, or be basically identical with, a universal and undifferentiated (*nirguṇa*) metaphysical principle which is sometimes equated with Nibbāna. Those who hold these views are sometimes found to make the bold claim that the Buddha wanted to deny only a "separate self", and that, in none of His utterances, He rejected the existence of a "transcendental self". What has been said before in this section, may serve as an answer to these beliefs.

Those views, however, which we have assigned to the second category, insist on the separate existence of liberated, transcendental "selves" within the Nibbāna-element. They leave quite a number of issues unexplained: how they arrive at any idea of separateness without reference to the world of experience; in what that "separateness" actually consists and how it can be said to persist in the Nibbāna-element, which, by definition, is undifferentiated (*nippapañca*), that is, the very reverse of separateness.

Both varieties of individuality-belief wish to combine various conceptions of self with the Buddhist teaching of Nibbāna. They are, at the very outset, refuted by the philosophically very significant statement in the Discourse on the "Simile of the Serpent", implying that I and Mine, owner and property, substance and attribute, subject and

predication are inseparable correlative terms, which, however, lack reality in the ultimate sense.

II, § 3

The two main-types of a positive-metaphysical interpretation of Nibbāna can be easily included in a considerable number of false views, mentioned, classified and rejected by the Buddha. A selection of applicable classifications will be presented in what follows. This material, additional to the fundamental remarks in the preceding sections, will furnish an abundance of documentation for the fact that not a single eternalistic conception of self and Nibbāna, of any conceivable variety, is reconcilable with the teachings of the Buddha as found in their oldest available presentation, in the Pāli Canon.

(a) In the Saṃyutta Nikāya (22,86; 44,2) we read: "Do you think, Anurādha, that the Perfect One is apart from corporeality (*aññatra rūpā*) . . . apart from consciousness ?" * — "Certainly not, O Lord." — "Do you think that the Perfect One is someone without corporeality (*arūpī*) . . . someone without consciousness?" ** — "Certainly not, O Lord." — "Since the Perfect One, Anurādha, cannot, truly and really, be found by you even during lifetime, is it befitting to declare: 'He who is the Perfect One, the highest being . . . that the Perfect One can be made known outside of these four possibilities: The Perfect One exists after death . . . does not exist . . . exists in some way and in another way not . . . neither can be said to exist nor not to exist ?' " — "Certainly not, O Lord."

This applies to both main-types which assume a self beyond the aggregates. It deserves to be mentioned here that the Commentary paraphrases the words "the Perfect One" (*tathāgato*) by "living being" (*satto*). That is probably meant to convey that the statements in the text are valid not only for the conventional term "the Perfect One", but that they hold true also for any other terms designating an individuality.

(b) Since the concept of a self is necessarily linked with that of an ownership of qualities and possessions (see II, § 2 b), both main-types come under the following headings of the 20 kinds of individuality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*; see II, § 2 a):

* That is, outside the aggregates taken singly.

** That is, outside the aggregates as a whole.

"He regards the self as possessing corporeality .. as possessing feeling .. perception ... formations .. consciousness."

This applies, in particular, to the second main-type advocated by Dr. Georg Grimm who expressly speaks of the five aggregates as "attributions" ("Beliegungen") of the self. It does not make here any difference that these "attributions" are regarded by Grimm as "incommensurate" to the self and as capable of being discarded. What matters, here, is the fact that such a relationship between the self and the aggregates is assumed, and this justifies the inclusion of that view in the aforementioned type of individuality-belief.

(c) From the "Discourse on the Root Cause" (*Mūlapariyāya Sutta*; Majjh. 1), the following categories apply to both types: "He thinks (himself) different from (or: beyond) the four material elements, the heavenly worlds, the uncorporeal spheres; from anything seen, heard, (differently) sensed and cognized; from the whole (universe; *sabbato*), to the second type: "He thinks (himself) in Nibbāna (*nibbānasmim*) or as different from Nibbāna (*nibbānato maññati*; that is, he believes the liberated self supposed to enter the Nibbāna element, as different from it)."

(d) In the Sutta "All Cankers" (*Sabb'āsava Sutta*; Majjh. 2), the following instances of unwise and superficial thinking (*ayoniso manasikāra*) are mentioned and rejected:

Six theories about the self, from which the following are applicable here: "I have a self", "By the self I know the self" *.

Sixteen kinds of doubt about the existence and nature of the self, with reference to the past, present and future, e.g.: "Am I or am I not?", "What am I?", "Shall I be or not?", "What shall I be?"

Hereby any speculation about an alleged self is rejected.

(e) In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* (Dīgh.1), the theories about a self are specified as to their details. Those, however, who advocate the two main-types of the positive-metaphysical extreme, with which we are here concerned, generally avoid or reject detailed statements on the nature of Nibbāna and the self. But if, by them, an eternal and transcendental self is assumed, it must be thought as being

of a passive nature (Pāli: *vañjho*, barren, unproductive) and motionless, i.e. immutable. For, any creative or other relationship to the world would involve an abandonment of the transcendental state assumed. Therefore both main-types fall under the eternalist view, characterized in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* as follows:

"Eternal are self and world; barren (*vañjho*), motionless like a mountain peak, steadfast like a pillar."

(f) The rejection of any belief in a self (as abiding or temporarily identical) and of the extremes of existence and non-existence cannot be better concluded than by quoting the continuation of the saying that forms the motto of this treatise:

"For him, Kaccāna, who considers, according to reality and with true wisdom, the origination of [and in] the world, there is not what in the world [is called] 'non-existence' (*natthitā*). For him, Kaccāna, who considers, according to reality and with true wisdom, the cessation of [and in] the world, there is not what in the world [is called] 'existence' (*atthitā*). This world, in general, Kaccāna, is fettered by propensities, clingings and biases. But he [the man of right understanding, *sammā-diṭṭhi*], concerning these propensities, clingings, fixed mental attitudes, biases and deep-rooted inclinations, he does not come near, does not cling, does not have the mental attitude 'I have a self' (*n'adhiṭṭhāti attā me'ti*). He has no doubt or uncertainty that it is suffering, indeed, that arises, and suffering that ceases. Herein his knowledge does not rely on others. In so far, Kaccāna, is one a man of right understanding". (Saṃy 12, 15).

III. Transcending the extremes

If we examine the utterances on Nibbāna, in the Pāli Canon, we find that it is described (or better: paraphrased) in positive and negative terms. Statements of a positive nature are, e.g., designations like "the profound, the true, the pure, the permanent, the marvellous," etc. (Saṃy. 43; see I, §2); further texts such as those quoted above I, §2): "There is that sphere ..", "There is an unborn ..", etc. Statements of a negative character are, e.g., definitions of Nibbāna as "the destruction of greed, hatred and delu-

* Pāli: *attanā'va attānaṃ sañjanāmi*. This refers to vedantic conceptions. Quite similar formulations are found already in the Saṃhita, the pre-Buddhist Upanisads, and, later in the Bhagavadgīta.

sion", as "cessation of existence" (*bhava-nirodha*; Samy. 12, 68). If the Buddhist doctrine of Nibbāna is to be understood correctly, one will have to give full weight to the significance of both types of utterance. If one were to quote only one group of them, as a vindication of one's own one-sided opinion, it would result in a lop-sided view.

To the utterances of positive character we may ascribe the following purposes: (1) to exclude the nihilistic extreme, (2) to allay the fears of those who are still without an adequate grasp of the truths of Suffering and Anattā, and consequently shrink back from the final cessation of suffering, *i.e.*, of rebirth, as if recoiling from threatening fall into a bottomless abyss, (3) for showing Nibbāna as a goal capable of attainment and really worthwhile.

The emphatic "There is" that opens the two well-known texts on Nibbāna, in the Udāna, leaves no doubt that Nibbāna is not conceived as bare extinction or as a camouflage for an absolute Zero. But, on the other hand, as a precaution against a metaphysical misinterpretation of that solemn enunciation "There is . . . (atthi)", we have that likewise emphatic rejection of the extremes of existence (*atthitā*) and non-existence (*natthitā*).

But even those utterances on Nibbāna which are phrased positively, include mostly also negative terms:

"There is that sphere where there is neither earth . . neither this world nor the next, neither coming nor going . . ",

"There is an *unborn*, an *unbecome* . . "

"I shall teach you the Unformed . . the Profound . . , and the way to it. What now is the Unformed . . the Profound . . ? It is the destruction of greed, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion . . "

These texts, combining positive and negative statements, illustrate our earlier remark that both the positive and the negative utterances on Nibbāna require mutual qualification, as a precaution against sliding into an extremist position.

Negative utterances are meant to emphasize the supramundane and undepictable nature of Nibbāna that eludes any adequate description in positive terms. Our language is basically unsuited for it, since it is necessarily related to our world of experience, and its structure and terms are derived from it. Therefore the positive

statements in the Suttas cannot be more than allusions or metaphors (*pariyāya-desanā*), making use of emotional values intelligible to us, and of experiences and reactions known to those who have trodden the path to the Pathless. In brief, they are evocative, and not truly descriptive, but they have nevertheless great practical value for the reasons mentioned above. Negative statements, however, are quite sound and legitimate in themselves. They relate Nibbāna to the world of experience only by negations. The negating method of approach consists in a process of eliminating what is inapplicable to Nibbāna and incommensurate with it. It enables us to make much more definite and useful statements about the supramundane state of Nibbāna than abstract terms, the positive character of which can be only metaphorical. Negative statements are also the most appropriate and reverential form to speak of that which has been called the Marvellous (*acchariya*) and the Extraordinary (*abhūta*).

Negative ways of expressions have also another important advantage. Statements like those defining Nibbāna as "the destruction of greed, hatred and delusion", at the same time, indicate the direction to be taken, and the work to be done, for actually *reaching* Nibbāna. And it is this which matters most. These words on the overcoming of greed, hatred and delusion set a clear and convincing task which can be taken up here and now. Further they do not only point to a way that is practicable and is worthwhile for its own sake, but they also speak of the lofty goal itself which likewise can be experienced here and now, and not only in an unknown Beyond. For it has been said:

"If greed, hatred and delusion have been completely destroyed, insofar is Nibbāna visible here and now, not delayed, inviting of inspection, and directly experiencible by the wise" (Aṅguttara Nik. III, No.55).

That visible Nibbāna has been lauded by those who attained to it, as an unalloyed and unalienable happiness, as the highest solace, as the unspeakable relief of being freed from burden and bondage. A faint foretaste of it may be experienced in each act of joyful renunciation and in moments of serene detachment. To know oneself; if but temporarily and partially, free from the slavery of passions and the blindness of self-deception; to be master of oneself and to live and think in the light of knowledge, if but for a

time and to a limited extent—these are truly not “mere negative facts”, but are the most positive and elevating experiences for those who know more than the fleeting and deceptive happiness of the senses. “There are two kinds of happiness, O monks : the happiness of the sense-pleasures, and the happiness of renunciation. But the greater of them is the happiness of renunciation”. (Aṅguttara-Nikāya, Duka-nipāta).

Thus, these seemingly negative words of the destruction of greed, hatred and delusion, will convey to the thoughtful and energetic a stirring positive message: of a way that can here be trodden, of a goal that can here be reached, of a happiness that can here be experienced.

That aspect of a lofty happiness attainable here and now should, however, not be allowed to cover for us the fact that the attainment of Nibbāna is the end of rebirth, the cessation of becoming. This end or cessation is, however, in no way the destruction or annihila-

tion of anything. What actually takes place is the ending of new origination owing to the stopping of its root-causes: ignorance and craving.

He who sees the Truth of Suffering deeply and thoroughly, is “no longer carried away by the unreal, and does no longer shrink back from the real”. He knows, “It is suffering indeed, that arises, it is suffering that ceases”. With a mind unswerving, he strives after the deathless state, the final cessation of suffering—Nibbāna.

“The Holy Ones know it as bliss; the personality’s cessation;
Repugnant to the worldly folk, but not to those who clearly see.
What others count as highest bliss, as pain regard it Holy Ones;
What those as painful do regard, is for the Holy Ones sheer bliss.”

(Sutta-nipāta, Verses 761/2)



‘As to those recluses and brāhmins who hold and teach : — Whatsoever weal or woe or neutral feeling is experienced, all that is due to the creation of a Supreme Deity, I question them: “Is it true, as they say, that you worthy sirs teach that all this is due to the creation of a Supreme Deity?”’

Thus questioned by me they reply :— “Yes, we do.”

Then I say to them:— ‘So then, owing to the creation of a Supreme Deity, men will become murderers, thieves, unchaste, liars, slanderers, abusive, babblers, covetous, and perverse in view. Thus for those who fall back on the creation of a Supreme Deity as the essential reason there is neither desire to do, nor effort to do, nor necessity to do this deed or abstain from that deed. So then, the necessity for action or inaction not being found to exist in truth and verity, the term “recluse” cannot reasonably be applied to yourselves, since you live in a state of bewilderment with faculties unwarded.’

Such, monks, is my reasonable rebuke to those recluses and brāhmins who thus teach, who hold such views.’

Aṅguttara-Nikāya

THE DHAMMAPADA COMMENTARY

The Story of the Virtuous Lay-disciple (DHAMMIKA-UPĀSAKASSA VATTHU)

Translated by the Department of Pāli, University of Rangoon.

Idha modati pecca modati
Katapuñño ubhayattha modati,
so modati so pamodati
disvā kammavisuddhim attano ti.

Dhammapada, v. 16.

‘A person who has done meritorious deeds rejoices here in this world as well as in the next. He rejoices in both places. He rejoices, and rejoices all the more observing the purity of his own deeds.’

The Master, while residing at Jetavana delivered this religious discourse beginning with ‘Here, in this world, he rejoices’ (*Idha modati*) in connection with a righteous lay-disciple.

It is said that at Sāvattthī there were five hundred virtuous lay-disciples, each of whom had a following of five hundred lay-disciples. The leader of the lay-disciples had seven sons and daughters. Each of them used to offer rice-gruel and food by tickets,* fortnightly-food, food by invitation, food on the fast day, food for visiting monks and offerings for monks who observed the lenten period. All the children followed the example of their father in the performance of good deeds. Thus, the virtuous lay-disciple with his wife and fourteen children habitually offered sixteen units of rice-gruel by tickets and so on. In this way, the lay-disciple with his wife and children became virtuous, good in conduct and devoted to charity.

Later he fell ill and his forces of vitality were on the decline. Intent on listening to a religious discourse, he sent a request to the Master to depute eight or sixteen monks. The Master did so. The monks came and sat round his bed on the specified seats. He told them: ‘Reverend Sirs, as I am weak in strength it is difficult for me to go and see you. Would you please recite a *sutta* to me?’ Thereupon the monks asked, ‘Well disciple, which *sutta* would you like to listen to?’ He mentioned the Satipaṭṭhāna which he said was the *sutta* which had never been neglected by any of the Buddhas. The monks recited it beginning with ‘O monks, this is the one and the only path for the purification of beings’.

At that instant, from six celestial worlds there descended six chariots, each measuring

one hundred and fifty *yojanas*, and each yoked with one thousand horses like those of Sindh and adorned with all kinds of decoration. Said each of the deities from those chariots, ‘We will take you to our celestial abode’, and added, ‘O man, just as one takes a gold vessel after the clay pot is broken, take this rebirth so that you may enjoy yourself in our celestial world’. Not liking to be interrupted in the hearing of the religious discourse, the lay-disciple said: ‘Please wait awhile, please wait awhile’. The monks thought that he was speaking to them and kept silent. Thereupon, his sons and daughters cried aloud and said: ‘Formerly our father was never satiated with listening to a religious discourse, but now after sending for the monks and requesting them to recite, he himself is stopping them. After all, there is no one who is not afraid of death’. Saying ‘This is not the proper time’, the monks rose up and left the place.

After a short while the lay-disciple regained consciousness and asked his sons why they were weeping. They replied: ‘Father, you sent for the monks and while listening to a religious discourse, you yourself stopped them. We cried as we thought that there was no one who was not afraid of death’. He enquired, ‘But where are the reverend monks?’ They answered: ‘The monks said, “It is not the proper time”, rose up and left’. He told them: ‘My children, I was not talking to the reverend ones’. They asked, ‘Then, with whom were you speaking, father?’ ‘From six heavenly worlds the deities brought six decorated chariots, and while remaining in the air they called out to me saying “Come and enjoy yourself in our celestial world, come and enjoy yourself in our celestial world”, and with them I was speaking’. Then, being asked, ‘Father, where are the chariots? We do not see them,’ he replied: ‘Will you get me a garland of flowers?’ ‘Yes, Father’, ‘Which celestial world is delightful?’ ‘Father, the Tusita celestial world, the abode of all the Bodhi-sattas and the parents of the Buddhas, is delightful’. ‘Well then, throw the garland saying “Let this hang on the chariot that has come from the Tusita heaven”.’ They did so.

* Rationing was known in those days, and this presumably was based on this practice, a giving of “tickets” which could be exchanged for food.

It stuck on to the pole of the chariot, and remained hanging in the air. That only the people saw, but not the chariot. The lay-disciple asked 'Do you see the garland?' and being answered in the affirmative said: 'This garland is hanging on the chariot which has come from the Tusita heaven; I am going to the Tusita heaven. Be not worried. If you wish to be reborn in the same place with me, do meritorious deeds in the same way as I have done'. So saying, he passed away and was seated in the chariot. Immediately he was reborn as a deity with a body three *gāvutas* in extent and adorned with sixty cart-loads of ornaments. A thousand celestial maidens waited upon him, and a golden mansion, twenty-five *yojanas* in size, appeared for him.

When the monks reached the monastery, the Teacher asked them, 'Monks, did the lay-disciple listen to the religious discourse?' They replied: 'Yes, Lord, but he interrupted us in the middle of the discourse saying "Please wait". Then his children cried aloud and we, saying "This is not the proper time", got up from our seats and left the place.' 'Monks, he was not talking to you; but from six celestial worlds came the deities bringing six decorated chariots and called the lay-disciple to them; not wishing to interrupt the discourse, he was speaking to them'. 'Is it so, Lord?' 'Yes, monks'. Being questioned by the monks as to where he was born, the Master replied, 'In the Tusita heaven, O monks'. Said the monks, 'Lord, having enjoyed himself here in this world amidst

his kinsmen, now again immediately after passing away is he reborn in the world of joy?' 'True, monks, earnest people, be they householders or recluses, rejoice everywhere'. So saying, the Master uttered this stanza:

Idha modati pecca modati
katapuñño ubhayattha modati,
so modati so pamodati
disvā kammavisuddhim attano ti.

Dhammapada, v. 16.

'A person who has done meritorious deeds rejoices here in this world as well as in the next. He rejoices in both places. He rejoices, and rejoices all the more observing the purity of his own deeds.'

Therein, *katapuñño* means a person who performs various kinds of meritorious deeds. Reflecting 'Verily, I have not done any evil, on the other hand I have done good' he enjoys himself in this life on account of his good deeds and after death he rejoices as a result of the good deeds he has done. Thus, indeed, he enjoys in both worlds. Observing the purity of his own deeds (*kammavisuddhim*) — the accomplishment of his meritorious action—the lay-disciple rejoices here in this life before his death, and after passing away also he rejoices all the more indeed in the next life.

After the verse was spoken, many persons became *Sotāpannas* and so on. The religious discourse became beneficial to the multitude.

The story of the Virtuous Lay-disciple, the eleventh.

"A brother may say thus:— 'From the mouth of the Exalted One himself have I heard, from his own mouth have I received it. This is the truth, this is the law, this is the teaching of the Master.' The word spoken, brethren, by that brother should neither be received with praise nor treated with scorn. Without praise and without scorn every word and syllable should be carefully understood and then put beside the Suttas and compared with the Vinaya. If when so compared they do not harmonize with the Suttas, and do not fit in with the rules of the Order, then you may come to the conclusion:— 'Verily, this is not the word of the Exalted One, and has been wrongly grasped by the brother.' Therefore, brethren, you should reject it. But if they harmonize with the Suttas and fit in with the rules of the Order, then you may come to the conclusion:— 'Verily, this is the word of the Exalted One, and has been well grasped by that brother.'

This, brethren, you should receive as the first Great Authority."

Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta.

NOTES AND NEWS

WESAK IN PARIS

The "Friends of Buddhism" held Wesak celebrations in Paris on Sunday, May 12th and Monday, May 13th.

Like last year, the Meditation Room was open during seven hours to all those wishing to offer to the Buddha the homage of their meditation, and many more people than last year came to meditate before the statue of the Buddha, surrounded with flowers and light. It was a homage of pure and noble dignity.

Venerable Amritananda Thera of Nepal gave the Precepts twice during the afternoon and also a lesson to the constant flow of people who came to meditate in the Meditation Room. At 9 p.m. Venerable Dr. Rahula came and gave the Precepts again and addressed a few words to those present. Some of our members remained all afternoon and evening meditating or reading in our library. It was, for many, a day of profound and sincere homage to the Buddha.

On the evening of Monday, May 13th, at 9 p.m., we held a public meeting in the big lecture hall of the Musee Guimet under the auspices of His Excellency Major General Chai Prathipasen, Ambassador of Thailand in Paris. The 2500th anniversary of the Buddha was celebrated this year by Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. The three diplomatic representatives of these countries were asked to speak.

On the platform a beautiful bronze statue of the Buddha, kindly lent for the occasion by the Directors of the Museum, Mr. P. Stern and Miss J. Auboyer, was surrounded by yellow roses and in front of Him, as on an altar in Thailand, were placed candlesticks and a bowl of rice containing tapers of incense, and a tray of flowers among the garlands of white and orange flowers. To the right of the statue were Venerable Amritananda Thera of Nepal, Venerable Shin Kelasa and Venerable Dr. W. Rahula. To the left of the statue, near His Excellency the Ambassador of Thailand, who presided, were His Excellency the Ambassador of Laos and Mr. Poc Thieun, Charge d'Affaires of the Cambodian Embassy.

The flower offering was presented by a charming young Thai girl, Miss Nuanchan Watanakun, and received by the three Venerable Bhikkhus. Then the three Ambassadors pronounced their speeches,

uniting us in thought with the magnificent celebrations taking place at the same time in their far-away lands. Professor P. Mus, of the Collège de France, gave a short speech which was followed by a religious Buddhist chant recorded in India. Four of our members, Mr. Goury, Mr. Barbarin, Mr. Coulon and Mr. Marc, then read passages from the Suttas on the Birth, the Enlightenment and the Parinibbāna of the Buddha, along with messages sent by Mahāthera Nārada and Professor J. Filliozat who, as the guest of the Royal Government of Cambodia was taking part in the celebrations in Phnom Penh. Then followed a beautiful Song for Wesak sung by a group of Thai students. After the recitation of the three Homages by the Venerable Bhikkhus our President, Miss G. Constant Lounsbery B. Sc. expressed her heartfelt thanks for the collaboration given us by the Embassy of Thailand in organizing the meeting and for the help extended to Madame La Fuente by Mr. P. Maolanon and Mr. Watanakun and for the songs and recitations by the young Thai students. Our President also gratefully thanked the Government of Thailand which, on the request of His Excellency the Ambassador, sent us for this beautiful Fete of Wesak a generous gift to enable us to publish the second volume of the French translation of the Suttas of Majjhima Nikaya, the first volume having been already published through the generosity of the Royal Government of Thailand.

The evening closed by the recitation of the Mettā Sutta in Pāli by a choir of young Thai students, young boys and girls whose sweet voices filled the hall singing the noble words of the Sutta.

Among the many distinguished guests of the evening were the Minister of Burma and the First Secretary U Ba Yi, the Charge d'Affaires of Ceylon, Mr. W. L. B. Mendis and Mrs. Mendis, Mr. R. Jeudy from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Henry Holland of the Australian Embassy, the First Secretary of the Indian Embassy, Mr. and Mrs. A. Bareau, Mr. Ph. Stern, Director of the Musee Guimet, together with our members and our many friends. We are very happy that Wesak has once again been celebrated in France in deep sincerity and beauty.



His Holiness Somdet Phra Vajirayaṇṇāvongs, Sangharāja
of Thailand

BUDDHA JAYANTI MESSAGES

Message of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council to the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Thailand.

We the members of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council most respectfully send this Message of cordial Greetings on the occasion of the Celebrations held in Thailand to mark the 2500th Buddha Jayanti.

Our two countries are akin in all ways : of the same race and religion, of culture and manners, and in geographical situation next-door neighbours.

In helping to establish Buddhism firmly for another 2500 years we acted together as one, thereby inseparably joining our fate and our fortunes for great good and in great goodwill. Together we have established the Pariyatti Sāsana, the foundation of the whole Sāsana, by holding the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, a joint effort of the five Buddhist countries in which Thailand's participation made possible the production of an authentic edition of the Tipiṭaka.

His Holiness the Sangharājā of Thailand presented to the Ovādācariya Sanghanāyaka Organisation of the Union of Burma the Chulalongkorn edition of Pāli Texts printed and published by H. M. the King of Thailand after it was edited and re-edited by Thai Piṭakattayaseka Piṭakakovida Mahātheras, proficient and well versed in the Scriptures.

There was the heartiest co-operation from the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand, both in the preparations for the holding of the Sixth Great Synod and the actual holding of it.

A Buddhist Goodwill Mission from Burma comprising Venerable Aggamahāpaṇḍita Anisakhan Sayadaw, a member of the Sangha Supreme Council, Venerable Aggamahāpaṇḍita U Visuddha, Honorary Secretary of the Sangha Supreme Council, Hon'ble Justice Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Mahā Thray Sīthu U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union and Vice-President, Union of Burma

Buddha Sāsana Council, and Hon'ble Justice Thado Mahā Thray Sīthu U Chan Htoon, Honorary General Secretary of the Buddha Sāsana Council, was sent to Thailand on the 3rd. May 1954 to request the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand to depute Bhikkhu and lay Delegations to the proceedings of the Sixth Great Buddhist Synod and this Mission was received and treated in brotherly fashion.

After the despatch of that Buddhist Goodwill Mission to Thailand, Burma achieved advantages not only in respect of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā but basing on this pure and sublime Sāsana mentality, the diplomatic relations between the two countries have been much improved.

Apart from Thailand and Burma's sending their Goodwill Missions to each other's country, the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council has been subsidising the Thai Bhikkhus and nuns who are prosecuting their studies in Buddhist literature in Burma for the promotion of the Pariyatti and Paṭipatti Sāsanas. In addition, branch Meditation Centres of the Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw have been successfully opened in Thailand.

We firmly believe that the Aṭṭhakathā Sangāyanā now being held in Burma will be brought to a successful conclusion, just as was the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, owing to the wholehearted support of the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand.

In conclusion, we earnestly wish that not only may the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations now held in Thailand be brought to a successful conclusion, but also that, henceforth, we may see enduring perfection in,

- (a) Thai-Burma cordial relations based on the Sāsana,
- (b) The cordial relations between all Buddhist countries basing on the Sāsana, and
- (c) Peace of the world as the result of the endeavours of the Bhikkhus, the Government and the peoples of all Buddhist countries.

An Address of Veneration at the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Thailand by Hon'ble Justice Thado Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Mahā Thray Sithu U Thein Maung, Chief Justice of the Union and Vice-President of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council.

The Presiding Mahāthera of the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations, Thailand, and Venerable Bhikkhus.

Most Respectfully, Bhante,

By the nature of the Teaching of the Omniscient Buddha, it is evident that, of the three parts of the Good left by the Buddha 2500 years ago, comprising Pariyatti (Learning), Paṭipatti (Practice) and Paṭivedha (Realisation), Pariyatti is the pivot around which the other two revolve.

For the purpose of preserving the Pariyatti Sāsana in its pristine purity, the First Great Buddhist Council was held at Rājagaha, the Second at Vesālī, the Third at Pāṭaliputta, the Fourth at Ceylon, and the Fifth at Mandalay Burma.

Five years ago, the Bhikkhu and lay leaders of the various Buddhist Organisations in the Buddhist countries decided to convene the Sixth Great Buddhist Council, before the completion of the 2500th Sāsana year.

The Preparations for the holding of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā which lasted for about two years and the actual holding of the Council which lasted for two years, were eminently successful due in large measure to the ardent and whole-hearted support of the Sangha, the Government and the people of Thailand.

For the purpose of editing and re-editing the Pāli Texts which task was the most essential in the proceedings of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, His Holiness the Sangharājā of Thailand presented to the Ovādācariya Sanghanāyaka Organisation of the Union of Burma, a set of Tipiṭaka (Chulalongkorn Edition) printed and published under the authority of His Majesty the King of Thailand.

Also, seven learned Thai Mahātheras acted as the members of Boards of Revisors (Paṭivisodhaka); two scholarly Mahātheras acted as the members of the Board of Final Proof Readers (Osāna Sodheyyapatta Pāṭhaka); three eminent Mahātheras from Thailand acted as the Chaṭṭha Sangīti Mahānāyakas (Chairmen) of the Proceedings during the Sixth Great Synod; while seventy-nine Sangīti-kāraka Bhikkhus from Thailand participated in the proceedings of the Sixth Great Synod which was held in five sessions.

Of the five sessions of this Great Synod, the Fourth Session (Siyāma Sannipāta) which lasted for 54 days commencing on 16-12-55 and terminating on 16-2-56, was enabled to be successfully held owing to the leadership of the Sangha and the Government of Thailand.

As a mark of respect and veneration and in recognition of the valuable part played by Thailand in the deliberations of the Sixth Great Synod, 32 sets of Tipiṭaka in Burmese characters are being presented one to each of 32 monasteries in Thailand from which Sangīti-kāraka Bhikkhus attended the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā. A set each has already been presented to six such other monasteries.

Similarly, as a mark of respect and veneration and in recognition of the valuable part played by the Paṭivisodhaka (Text Re-editors), Osānasodheyyapatta Pāṭhaka (Final Proof Readers) and Sangīti-kāraka Bhikkhus from Thailand, Testimonials acknowledging their valuable help are offered to these 91 Mahātheras.

Bhante, we ardently hope that Thailand will be able to participate with Burma throughout all the remaining sessions of the Aṭṭhakathā Sangāyanā, just as the Thai Bhikkhus headed by Venerable Bhaddanta Sudassanamuni participated in the First Session of the Great Recital of the Commentaries.

In conclusion, I earnestly wish that all the peoples of the world may be able to follow the Teaching of the Buddha, practise the Dhamma and enjoy the fruits of Realisation derived therefrom.



**His Holiness Somdej Phra Vanarat Kittisobhana, the Sanghanāyaka
(Ecclesiastical Premier) of Thailand**

An Address of Veneration delivered by the Hon'ble U Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma at the Ceremony for the Burma Government's presentation of titles and certificates, held in Thailand in 1957 C.E.

Venerable Mahātheras of Thailand who possess the inherent quality of the Sangha, Suppaṭipanna (practising well the Buddha-Dhamma) and honourable friends.

Two thousand five hundred years ago, after the Mahāparinibbāna of the Omniscient Buddha, His great disciples such as Arahāt Mahā Kassapa, Arahāt Ānanda and Arahāt Upāli convened the First Great Buddhist Council in order that the Buddha Sāsana might endure for a great length of time, and they taught the Buddha-Dhamma to their disciples.

After that, Venerable Arahāt Mahā Yasa and Venerable Arahāt Mahā Moggalliputtatissa convened the Second and the Third Buddhist Councils with the support of King Kālāsoka and Emperor Āsoka respectively, for the purpose of enabling the Buddha Sāsana to last for a great length of time, and they, after teaching the Buddha-Dhamma to their disciples deputed Buddhist Missions to nine different places.

As the result of those Missions, the Buddha Sāsana began to shine brilliantly in Thailand, Ceylon, Burma, Cambodia and Laos almost at the same period.

Later, in the Island of Laṅkā (Ceylon), during the reign of King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, the Fourth Great Buddhist Council was held under the leadership of Arahāt Dhammarakkhita and the Teaching of the Buddha was first committed to writing. Again, during the reign of King Mindon in Burma, the Fifth Buddhist Council was held, and the Buddha-Dhamma was inscribed on marble slabs. Thus the disciples of the ancient Mahātheras taught the Buddha-Dhamma to their disciples so that the Buddha Sāsana might endure for a long time.

Bhante, in accordance with the Declaration made by the Mahātheras at the Third Great Buddhist Council—"Paccantimesu janapadesu, sāsanaṃ, suppaṭiṭṭhitam bhavissati" (In future, the Buddha Sāsana will be well established in the neighbouring countries)—, the Sixth Great Buddhist Council was able to be convened in Burma in 2500 B.E., under the sponsorship of the A.F.P.F.L. Government as hosts, and with

the co-operation and collaboration of all the five Theravādin countries—Thailand, Burma, Ceylon, Cambodia and Laos, for the purpose of the recension of the Pāli Texts—the five Nikāyas. The Aṭṭhakathā Sangāyanā is now being held in Burma.

Bhante, of all the eminent personages who strove their best to discharge the Sāsana duties such as the holding of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, His Holiness Somdet Phra Vajirayaṇṇāvongs, Supreme Patriarch of Thailand is one of those of whom it has been said "Puggala viseso jānitabbo" "Distinguished persons should be known," and therefore, the highest Sāsana title in the Union of Burma, of Abhi Dhaja Mahā Raṭṭha Guru is offered to His Holiness.

Again, the title of Agga Mahā Paṇḍita the second highest ecclesiastical title in Burma is offered to His Holiness Somdej Phra Vanarat Kittisobhana, the Sanghanāyaka (Ecclesiastical Premier) of Thailand for his outstanding work in bringing the proceedings of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā to its successful conclusion. Also the Government of the Union of Burma as a token of cordial friendship with the Thai Government is presenting to the Thai Government a specially bound set of Tipiṭaka as "Asadisa paṇṇākāra" (the highest Dhamma gift).

The Venerable Mahātheras of Thailand who are preserving the Teaching of the Buddha have participated in the holding of the Sixth Great Buddhist Council, thus making it possible to hold the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā in the 2500th Sāsana year, have made it possible for their disciples to learn the Tipiṭaka by heart, and have taught the definitions, expositions and etymology of the Pāli Texts. In accordance with the phrase "Purisa viseso nāma ñātabbo" "A man endowed with special talents should be understood as such", these exalted ecclesiastical titles are offered them.

In conclusion, Bhante, I most respectfully and earnestly wish that for the purpose of making the Buddha Sāsana to endure for a great length of time the Bhikkhus and Upāsakā and Upāsikāyo may practise the Threefold Sikkhā (Training), and that the Buddha Sāsana may remain free from all blemishes and last for another 2500 years.

Jina sāsanaṃ nimmalaṃ, ciraṃ loke tiṭṭhatu.

May the Sāsana of the Conqueror remain free from all blemishes and last in the world for a great length of time.

Speech delivered by the Hon'ble U Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma, at the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations held in Thailand.

I am very happy indeed to have this opportunity to greet my friends at the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Thailand and also to say a few words on the Buddha-Dhamma.

The people of Thailand and the people of the Union of Burma, both Buddhist and both striving for the common spiritual goal—Nibbāna, are indeed, friends and brothers who are co-travellers on this way of Saṃsāra and are co-partners in fulfilling the Perfections and performing meritorious deeds.

Buddhists perform wholesome actions to attain Nibbāna, which is devoid of all the unsatisfactoriness of life. There are briefly three kinds of such wholesome actions, (1) Dāna (giving), (2) Sīla (observing moral precepts) and (3) Bhāvanā (mental development). One will not be able to attain Nibbāna by practising Dāna, Sīla or Bhāvanā alone, but will have to practise all the three, of which Dāna is the simplest, Sīla is somewhat higher and Bhāvanā is the highest. A person with meagre saddhā (confidence of heart and faith in the teachings of the Buddha) will not be able to perform all of them ; only a person with good saddhā will be able to perform all these wholesome actions. Some also are not able to attain Nibbāna although they strive earnestly, because there are two methods. They are (1) Sammā-paṭipadā (Right Way) and (2) Micchā-paṭipadā (Wrong Way). In giving bountifully, in observing moral precepts and in practising Vipassanā-bhāvanā, one should aim at Nibbāna only. This is Sammā-paṭipadā and by this Right Way only will one be able to attain Nibbāna.

On the other hand, if one aims at becoming in future existences a rich man, king, emperor or universal monarch, a Deva or Brahmā, he is on the Wrong Way. He will not be able to attain Nibbāna, but will have to wander in

the Round of Rebirths, experiencing various kinds of suffering.

Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā practised by many people nowadays are mostly on the Wrong Way because they see themselves as powerful beings moving in higher circles and not as renouncing all worldly things and attaining Nibbāna.

One thing we should remind ourselves of is that while we are in contact with the Buddha-Sāsana, we should endeavour our utmost to attain Nibbāna in this very life failing which we should aim at attainment in one of our future existences during the remaining 2500 Sāsana years and if we feel that we may fail in this, should so orient our thoughts and practise that we may be certain to attain Nibbāna during the period when the next Buddha, Buddha Metteyya arises.

The holding of the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Buddhist countries and in particular this Ceremony in the great Buddhist country, Thailand, reminds us all that of the 5000 Sāsana years half has already gone and we have not yet attained the Real Freedom we aim at, and that we should strive our best to attain that Freedom during the remaining 2500 Sāsana years.

In conclusion, my ardent and earnest wishes are :

- (1) May all beings be able to practise Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā according to the Right Way !
- (2) May every Buddhist be able to attain the spiritual goal he aims at !
- (3) May the tie of friendship between Thailand and the Union of Burma remain firm and unshakably cemented till this world-system comes to an end !
- (4) May the Buddha-Sāsana shine brilliantly as the sun and the moon !
- (5) May the whole world enjoy Peace and Happiness by the Grace of the Buddha-Sāsana !



His Holiness Samdach Prah Mahāsumedhādhīpati C.N. Jotaññāno,
Agga Mahā Paṇḍita, Sangharājā of Cambodia

IN CAMBODIA

The English translation of the speech given by the Hon'ble U Ba Saw, Minister for Religious Affairs & Social Welfare on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma at the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations, Cambodia.

VENERABLE THERAS, YOUR MAJESTY, HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER AND PEOPLE OF CAMBODIA.

I feel it a great privilege to address, on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma, this august gathering of monks and laymen on such an auspicious occasion as the Buddha Jayanti Celebration, commemorating the 2500th year of the Buddha Sāsana.

This celebration is a most remarkable one in connection with the Sāsana and is well attended by great personalities, such as the Sangharājā, leading the monks, and His Majesty the King, leading the people and guests from Theravādin countries.

At this celebration, the Government of the Union of Burma has the honour to present the precious gift of a special set of the Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā Tipiṭaka.

Though our two countries are geographically divided, yet our friendship tie has been quite firm and strong since time immemorial because of the similarity in religion, race and culture.

When the 6th Great Synod was held in Burma, the Venerable Sangharājā and great Theras of Cambodia, and also His Majesty the King, the Hon'ble Prime Minister and people of Cambodia attended the Celebration. It shows that our two countries are co-workers in the fulfilment of the Pāramīs and in the propagation of the Sāsana for the attainment of Nibbāna.

Such meritorious deeds can only be carried out because we are living during the period of the Sāsana. It is believed that any meritorious deed done during such a period of Sāsana will bear abundant fruit, as seeds sown in a fertile soil.

In conclusion, may I request all Buddhists to follow the maxim of "Make hay while the sun shines" and while we are living in the Sāsana period practise the Teachings of the Buddha for the attainment of Magga, Phala and Nibbāna.

May the friendship tie between Cambodia and the Union of Burma be strong and firm for ever. May both countries be prosperous and may the Buddha Sāsana be long lasting and illumine the whole World.

The speech given by the Hon'ble U Ba Saw, Minister for Religious Affairs & Social Welfare, on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma, at the ceremony of the conferring of titles, in Cambodia.

YOUR HOLINESS AND VENERABLE THERAS,
May the Sāsana shine supreme for ever.

May I on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma, be permitted to deliver an address at this great ceremony.

It is a great honour for me to pay my homage to His Holiness the Sangharājā and the Theras of Cambodia.

This is a Celebration specially held for conferring titles by the Government of the Union of Burma. This tradition of conferring titles has existed since the time of the Buddha. Such titles are conferred on those of outstanding virtues and learning. The Buddha Himself conferred *etadagga*-ship on Sāriputta for wisdom, on Moggallāna for supernormal powers and on Rāhula for discipline.

Following this long-standing tradition of the Buddha and the Buddhist Kings, the Government of the Union of Burma also confers titles.

His Holiness the Ven'ble Sangharājā Jotaññāno, who is very virtuous, well-disciplined and greatly learned, took part in the Sixth Great Synod in Burma, which is the most remarkable event in the history of Buddhism. Because of his great service for the promotion of Buddhism in the world, the Government of the Union of Burma is pleased to confer on His Holiness the highest title of Abhidhaja Mahā Raṭṭhaguru; the conferring of other titles and the presentation of 8 sets of Tipiṭaka are also made to other Theras of Cambodia for their active participation in the Sixth Great Synod.

In conclusion, may I earnestly wish that these meritorious deeds be the strong support for the attainment of Nibbāna.

Message of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council to the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Cambodia.

The Presiding Mahāthera of the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Celebrations, Cambodia, and Venerable Bhikkhus.

Most Respectfully, Bhante,

We the members of the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council most respectfully send this Message of cordial Greetings on the occasion of the Celebrations held in Cambodia to mark the 2500th Buddha Jayanti.

Bhante, we have noticed that only after a long duration is a Sangāyanā for the purpose of the recension of the Piṭaka Texts able to be held, and during a period of 2500 years, only six Sangāyanās have been possible.

We have been inseparably joined in friendship, love and truth by having the great good fortune to be able to hold, together, the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā. This great synod and recension of the Scriptures would have been impossible for one country to bring to a

successful conclusion and it was performed only by the joint efforts of all the five Buddhist countries. The part played by Cambodia, famous for its learned and virtuous Bhikkhus, was no mean one.

Bhante, the presentation to Burma by His Holiness the Sangharājā of Cambodia of a set of Tipiṭaka which was edited by himself and about to be published, testifies to the fact that Cambodia co-operated with the other Buddhist countries in discharging a very effective work relating to the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā, and this is only one instance.

Bhante, we ever remember the fact that during the five Sessions of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā which lasted for two years, Cambodia participated in the proceedings from the beginning to the end, and also that the Third Session of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā was convened under the patronage of Cambodia and Laos and was known as the Cambodia-Laos Session of the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā.

May Cambodia and Burma which are akin in racial stock, geographical situation, culture and religion, be able to discharge all mundane and supramundane affairs with similar loving-kindness and co-operation from this day onwards.

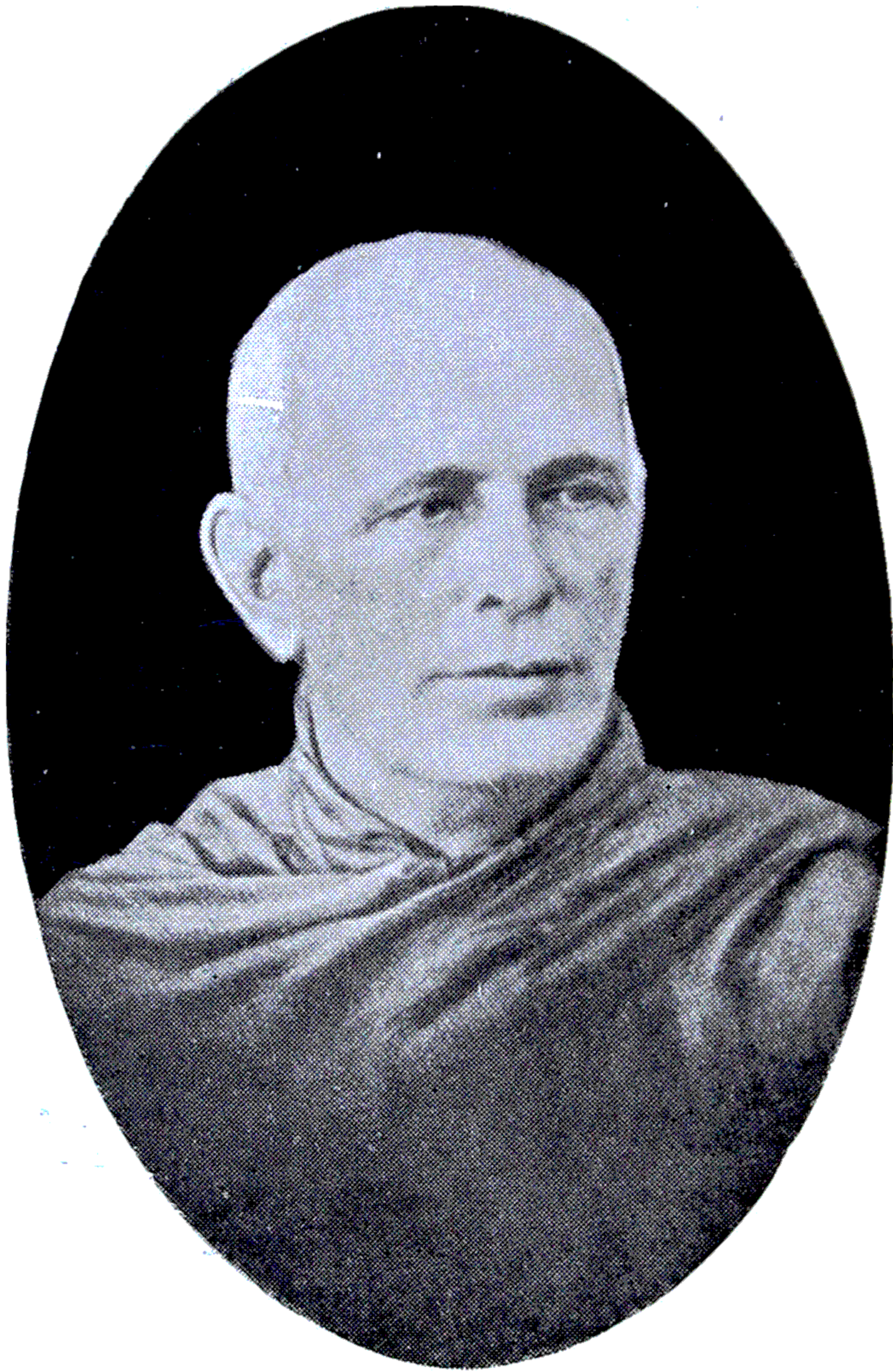


‘Monks, eleven advantages are to be looked for from the release of heart by the practice of amity, by making amity to grow, by making much of it, by making amity a vehicle and basis, by persisting in it, by becoming familiar with it, by well establishing it. What are the eleven ?

One sleeps happy and wakes happy ; he sees no evil dream ; he is dear to human beings and non-human beings alike ; the devas guard him ; fire ; poison ; or sword affect him not ; quickly he concentrates his mind ; his complexion is serene ; he makes an end without bewilderment ; and if he has penetrated no further (to Arahatship) he reaches (at death) the Brahma-world.

These eleven advantages are to be looked for from the release of the heart by the practice of amity by well establishing amity.’

Aṅguttara-Nikāya



The late Venerable Nyanatiloka Mahāthera

OBITUARY

Venerable Bhadantācariya Nyanatiloka Mahāthera

We have to record with deep sorrow the passing of one of the most venerated figures of this age, a Westerner by birth who as a Buddhist Bhikkhu has given more than fifty years of service to the world in making known the Teachings of the Exalted One.

Only in the last hundred years has there been any attempt at real Buddhist studies by the West and this has produced a few outstanding Buddhist monks of Western origin and a few outstanding Buddhist scholars.

Absolutely pre-eminent among these was the late Mahāthera Nyanatiloka. He was born on the 19th. February 1878 at Wiesbaden in Germany and at an early age his keen intellect and direct, logical mind was attracted by Buddhist philosophy. In 1903 he went to Ceylon and later that year came to Burma where he received the lower ordination in the same year and the higher ordination in 1904. He remained in the Noble Order, keeping the Vinaya Rules as they should be kept.

Quite a few 'Buddhist scholars' have been scholars but not Buddhists. Naturally they have not had that 'feeling' for the Teaching nor the opportunity to test their ideas, nor the Insight that comes from practice and from living the life. In the Venerable Nyanatiloka we had a scholar in the fullest sense of the word who was also a Buddhist in the fullest

sense of the word; a simple, unassuming, kind-hearted Buddhist leader of keen intellect and logical brain.

He was a top-ranking Pāli scholar and his translations in his mother-tongue, German, and in English are authoritative.

He visited Burma from time to time and was a great link between Burma and Lañkā (Ceylon) especially, as well as between Asia generally and the West.

His 'Guide through the Abhidhamma Piṭaka' is perhaps the most scholarly work of its kind that has ever appeared, while his 'Buddhist Dictionary' of which a new, revised and enlarged edition has just appeared, is a real necessity to every Buddhist scholar.

His best-known book is 'The Word of the Buddha' which appeared first in German in 1906 and in English a year later, in Rangoon, and has run into 12 editions. This is so much a classic among the many not very informed books on Buddhism by lesser men that we reproduce below a review which appeared in these pages some time ago.

Sabbe Saṅkhārā aniccā. All compounded things are subject to decay. The great Mahāthera has passed but we can take some consolation in that his great works are living and will be of continuing benefit to the world while this civilisation lasts.

—:o:—

"THE WORD OF THE BUDDHA"

By

VENERABLE NYANATILOKA MAHĀTHERA

Vital and interesting as well as learned and authoritative, this book is valuable to one beginning a study of Buddhism and as valuable to the Buddhist scholar.

The Author covers the whole ground in less than 100 pages of a clear and simple exposition, clearly and simply and readably printed.

This is the Buddhism of the Buddha presented by one of the Buddhist scholars, himself for many years now a Mahāthera (leading Buddhist Bhikkhu) who has brought his great attainments of mind and learning to the task and has produced a finished work of great interest and value.

The book was published originally in German and the first English version was published in 1917. This is the 11th edition which has been revised throughout with additions to the introduction and to the explanatory notes and with some addition of Texts.

Our copy is from the "WORD OF THE BUDDHA" Publishing Committee, "Asoka" 139 High Level Road, Nugegoda, Ceylon, and the price is only Re. 1. (paper cover) or, bound in cloth, Rs. 3. We understand that special rates are applicable for orders above 25 copies.

BOOK REVIEW

THE CAT IS OUT OF THE BAG.

'The Goose is out' by W. J. Gabb, The Buddhist Society, London, 9/6d.

This curious and revealing book has a lesson to teach. That lesson is that without some standard of judgment, some criterion, some touchstone, the mind can work in devious ways its wonders to perform, and those wonders, insofar as they have no secure base of Teaching, usually are of doubtful value to the owner of the mind and to the world at large.

This is where one has to reiterate the distinction, which seems somewhat too subtle for some few undeveloped minds, between 'dogmatic authority' and 'an accepted standard of values'.

If we are to call ourselves 'Buddhists' we must have some confidence in the Buddha and His Teaching, and some confidence that what we believe the Buddha taught really is, as close as man can possibly evaluate, really what the Buddha did teach. We must not accept in blind faith and we must not expect others to accept in blind faith. We must scan the proofs and we must be ready to furnish our proofs and our reasons; and we must be ready to examine evidence offered by others for a contrary view and to accept any proofs or reasons as long as they are proofs and based on reason. That is surely neither dogmatic nor authoritarian. And just as surely is it poles removed from any idea of a 'Mother Church'.

There is ample proof of the veracity of the Pāli Canon, of its continued veracity through the ages. It has enshrined the Word of the Buddha from the beginning as a definite act of will and discipline. Groups of Bhāṇakas or Reciting Monks, Groups that still exist, have learned and recited their portions daily for more than 25 centuries. That, to some, seems incredible : as it seems incredible that any human could learn whole passages by rote without error. Yet here in Burma there is a monk who knows the whole Canon (estimated at eleven times in volume the Old and New Testaments of the Christians combined) and who can recite any or all of it, understanding it and being able to explain it. There is also other evidence whose place is not here. Now for some of the epic poems composed, as is admitted even by their devout followers, some seven hundred years after

the passing away of the Buddha, there is no such proof that they enshrine the Word of the Buddha.

The source, then, is Pāli, and only by ever returning to the source can we be sure of the veracity of the Teaching, of the Word of the Buddha.

Professor Rhys Davids had occasion to show how in one instance especially, a whole verse lost its meaning completely when translated into Chinese, so that the verse, in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, by a mistranslation in one clause and a grammatical blunder in another, was changed as follows:—

From the Pāli :—

'They're transient all, each being's
parts and powers,

Growth is their very nature, and
decay.

They are produced, they are dissolv-
ed again :

To bring them all into subjection—
that is bliss.'

This became in the Chinese :—

'Whatever exists is without endura-
ance,

And hence the terms 'flourishing'
and 'decaying'.

A man is born and then he dies.

Oh, the happiness of escaping from
this condition.'

It may be noted that the word 'Dhamma' as Rhys Davids points out, is an extremely difficult word to translate, but it can never be 'term'.

When, added to certain mistranslations and misconceptions, there are the epic poems composed at so much later a date, with the quite unverified assertion, and, indeed, unverifiable assertion, that a 'secret transmission' was handed down, privately whispered from one to another, this mixture can in nowise be accepted as 'Buddhist' except it be subjected to the 'Great Authority' mentioned by the Buddha Himself:—'(Anything that is represented as the teaching of the

Master) should be put beside the Suttas and compared with the Vinaya. If, when so compared, they do not harmonize with the Suttas and do not fit in with the Vinaya, then you may come to the conclusion:— 'Verily this is not the Word of the Exalted One.'

Here, in this book under review, is a case, an extreme case admittedly, of the mind wandering in underground realms with no real guide. When the Buddha gave His famous sermon to the Kalamas, He told them what not to believe in. He also told them what to believe in, and gave a touchstone. He certainly did not tell them: 'Whatever comes into your mind, that believe' but exactly the opposite. That too needs re-stressing. He told them to realise things for themselves and gave the basic moral teaching. 'Above mere logic' is the understanding of the sages but the Way thereto is 'With reasoning and investigation going on the while'. That too needs re-stressing.

Hitler, Mussolini and scores of others before them and some since, have attained to a sort of 'power' as has, if he is to be believed, the author of this book, though by his own evidence a much lesser degree of 'power'; and this 'power' bears about the same relation to real power as does low cunning to real intellect.

The book shows, again taking for granted the veracity of the author, what the mind, tapping the same subconscious source, can do without the guide of a full morality and reason, which has been stressed as so necessary by the Buddha.

For real power, and this is stressed in the Buddhist Teaching, one must have complete Truth, the unflinching facing of truth and telling of truth. No lie, even for the sake of a joke, can be even considered. The standard is, admittedly, rather high for moderns.

The author of the book, in which is incorporated some previous fragments he wrote for a 'Buddhist' magazine, tells how these, published as 'Tales of Tokuzan' and in the style of the Japanese fables, had deceived two well-known men, whom he mentions, and how he felt a 'puckish glee' thereat. Well, this is not a serious matter in ordinary journalism. It is certainly serious when put up against the high standard of Truth demanded by that Discipline which is Buddhism.

Mr. Gabb then tells of how he performs minor miracles by 'affirmations' ('though',

he says : 'in point of fact I do nothing but act as go-between') to, presumably some sort of Theosophical 'Oversoul'.

If we can believe his accounts of modern 'miracles' he has performed by these 'affirmations', he has merely used a subconscious force which is not at all miraculous and which, since it is always allied with Craving, really, always kicks back. And it IS allied with craving even when the user thinks he is performing 'miracles' 'just to help friends'.

Mr. Gabb's first 'affirmation' was when he was practically penniless and he asked for a job of a particular sort. He got the job, made possible by the advent of a war in which very many thousands of little children died horribly by bombing. A 'loving God' or, if you will 'Oversoul', in other words, rescued Mr. Gabb from poverty at his urgent plea by murdering millions. That is not actually what did happen. There is an old story of an Egyptian priest who used to go and bathe his feet in the Nile every year, just before the Nile flooded. Finally he got to believe that the Nile flooded because he bathed his feet there. But when "miracles" happen as the result of what for want of a better phrase we must still call 'subconscious force'; something rather amoral when not immoral (and the immorality is always there since it stems from Craving in the user's mind), it lasts for a time only. Take the case of the man who was saved by Mr. Gabb. The man was worried sick because he was about to go bankrupt and then, according to Mr. Gabb, by the manipulation of Mr. Gabb's 'affirmations' he discovered that he really had made a mistake in his accounts and had £3500 that he had presumably, failed to notice in adding up his 'Profit and Loss.' That man must die and lose his money and no God and no Mr. Gabb can save him permanently. Mr. Gabb tells how his 'Tales of Tokuzan' deceived a well-known psychiatrist. It is quite certain that the present book would deceive no-one with the slightest knowledge of psychology.

The 'Zen Tales' (the imitations) have the genuine flavour of Sadism. Whether the kicks and slaps are really administered and the legs broken and the fingers cut off by the Abbots or whether these are mere 'figures of speech', the flavour of Sadism yet remains, and Sadism is the very opposite of the kind and firm teaching of the Buddha.

The 'back to front' method of writing (analogous to the 'mirror-writing' of certain

psychotics, is also not Buddhist. The Buddha had said to a certain Brahman 'There are those, Brahmin, who say that day is night and night is day. I say to you that day is day and night is night.' *

On page 69 of 'The Goose is Out' is a saying of an old master of 'Zen' Yoka-Daishi, (unless Mr. Gabb is pulling our leg again) as follows :—

'Who has gone beyond learning and is not exerting himself in anything.

He neither endeavours to avoid idle thoughts nor seeks after the truth.

For he knows that ignorance in reality is the Buddha-nature,

And that this empty visionary body is no less than the Dhamma-body.'

We use the Buddha's 'Great Authority' and put this against the Suttas and the Vinaya and pronounce it non-Buddhist and anti-Buddhist.

Tokuzan, who is now revealed as a figment of Mr. Gabb's imagination, says :

'Life can be pleasurable.

Union with the pleasant is pleasurable.

Separation from the unpleasant is pleasurable.

And craving that is satisfied, that also is pleasurable.

Pleasure is caused by craving.

Pleasure more abundant is caused by cultivating the art of craving.

The way to cultivate this art is the Eight-fold Path.

I call the path, "Right Play".

We use the Buddha's 'Great Authority' and put this against the Suttas and the Vinaya and pronounce it non-Buddhist and anti-Buddhist.

In showing what the mind can do when unguarded by a standard, a Norm, and undisciplined ; and in showing how the petty magicks and makings of myths originated and were fobbed off as 'Buddhism', 'The Goose is Out' lets the cat out of the bag with a vengeance.

We have a Norm, we have a touchstone, for which there is plenty of proof. Let the great Asian philosophers of the last eighteen centuries and their modern imitators flourish and flourish exceedingly. Some of their work is better than some of their other work. But let them not pass it off as 'Buddhism' unless it agrees with the Suttas and the Vinaya as the Buddha Himself said it should.

* Bhaya-Bherava-Sutta, Majjhima-Nikāya.



" I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine ; for in respect of the truths, Ānanda, the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who keeps something back. "

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta.

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